EMPLOYEE MENTAL HEALTH AND WORKPLACE PERFORMANCE IN THE NIGERIAN PUBLIC AND PRIVATE SECTORS

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Abstract

Notwithstanding the recognised importance of employee performance for organisational success, the specific impact of employee mental health on sustained productivity, particularly in the context of Nigerian organisations, remains an under-explored area in existing literature. This study addresses this research gap by examining the connection between employees' mental health and performance levels in specific organisations in Ibadan, Nigeria. The psychological, emotional, social, and occupational well-being of 400 employees from both public and private sectors was assessed using questionnaires that examined task, adaptive, and contextual aspects of performance. Findings from multivariate regression indicate that higher levels of mental health are associated with improved performance, accounting for 40.2% of task performance, 46.0% of adaptive performance, and 41.7% of contextual performance. These results underscore the critical importance of employee mental well-being for enhanced work outcomes and highlight the need for further research in this geographical and cultural context. The study implies that organisations should prioritise mental health initiatives, recommending policy updates to support wellness activities, foster safe work environments, and implement routine mental health checks.

Key words: *Mental Health, Task Performance, Adaptive performance, Contextual performance, Employee Performance.*

Introduction

Employee performance is significant for an organisation's success, although few people realise that mental health significantly affects how much employees can produce in the long run. In today's busy and challenging job situations, various stresses, such as large workloads, job insecurity, long working hours, and organisational changes, may noticeably harm the mental well-being of individuals (Asbe, 2021). Since mental health comprises several aspects, such as psychological, emotional, social, occupational, and physical well-being, dramatically influences an employee's ability to control stress, interact with others, and do their job well (Maluegha et al., 2024). Many studies have affirmed that poor mental health is associated with reduced work results, absenteeism, lack of motivation at the workplace, presence during work times while inefficient, and more counterproductive work activities (De Oliveira et al., 2023). According to Kim and Beehr (2021), people who look after their mental well-being find it easier to adapt, get involved more often, and interact better with colleagues in changing workplaces.

Even as mental health is recognised worldwide, many organisations in different developing countries, including Nigeria, are slow to introduce structured mental health policies. In Ibadan, workers from all sectors regularly show signs of a variety of economic issues, high work demands, little access to mental health services, and cultural stigmas related to mental health issues (Olabimtan et al., 2021). This situation adds to workplace tension and decreases how productive employees are as well as the performance of the organisation. Although mental health's impact on overall work performance has been explored in earlier studies, a large proportion of them do not fit the Nigerian context. Also, most research strongly focuses on how employees perform their assigned tasks but not on other important aspects, such as adaptable performance and appropriate actions in the workplace. The novelty of this study further lies in its specific focus on the Nigerian context and its application of the Conservation of Resources (COR) theory. COR theory posits that individuals strive to obtain, retain, and protect resources, and that stress occurs when resources are threatened, lost, or when individuals fail to gain resources after investing them. In this context, mental wellbeing is conceptualised as a crucial personal resource. While research on mental health and performance exists globally, there is a significant dearth of studies exploring this relationship within the unique sociocultural and economic landscape of Nigeria. The challenges faced by Nigerian employees, including economic pressures, work-life balance issues, and access to mental healthcare, can be viewed as significant resource threats or losses. Therefore, understanding how mental health, as a vital resource, impacts performance in this specific environment provides invaluable insights for developing culturally relevant and effective interventions that help employees conserve and gain resources.

Therefore, many important factors make this research significant. First, it adds to understanding the connection between mental health and employee performance by going deeper than the level of work tasks. Besides, it brings meaningful knowledge that matches Nigerian businesses, as mental health issues are not often managed among workers. Besides, this research will offer evidence-based tips to company leaders and HR workers to help employees adapt, be involved, and improve their work results. The study's main benefit is highlighting the key role of mental health in the workplace, which helps boost resilience and work quality and focuses on employees in developing countries such as Nigeria.

Objectives

This study, therefore, seeks to fill this gap by investigating the relationship between mental health and employee performance within selected organisations in Ibadan, Nigeria. Specifically, it aims to:

1. analyse the role of mental health on task performance;
2. investigate the relationship between mental health and adaptive performance;
3. evaluate the effect of mental health on contextual performance.

By addressing these objectives, the study contributes to a deeper understanding of how mental health interventions can be strategically designed to improve employee well-being and boost organisational effectiveness, particularly within the Nigerian context, where such research remains limited.

Literature Review

Conceptual Review

Mental Health

Mental health has been explained differently as ways of thinking have changed in psychology, psychiatry, public health, and social sciences. Previously, mental health meant a person did not have a mental illness, yet current studies stress that it is about more than that and includes multiple aspects. WHO has described mental health for 2018 as people making the most of what they can do, coping with daily stresses, performing well at work, and being part of community life. How this definition is made highlights that mental health helps us be strong, productive, and able to interact with others. On the same note, Iasiello (2023) explained that mental health is a sliding scale that goes from flourishing at one end to languishing at the other end, even when there are no serious mental illnesses. This approach fits the positive psychology movement by stressing that mental health includes building good moods, keeping busy, and interacting with others. From a clinical point of view, Arakelyan and Ager (2021) define mental health as changing due to biological, environmental, and psychological causes. Some psychologists say mental health results from genetics, growing up experiences,

financial status, and available resources for support. Ahmed et al. (2023) also underline the part that stigma and discrimination have in mental health. They note that how society sees mental health often prevents people from looking for or getting treatment.

According to Kaczkurkin and Foa (2021), mental health from a cognitive-behavioural approach is the ability to deal with emotions, cope with stress, and show positive behaviour. They spend much time studying how others' thoughts and actions affect their emotional health, especially in situations of anxiety and mood problems. Forster et al. (2023) further confirm this by examining how using the internet and social networks and feeling digital stresses affect mental health. Today's researchers point out that social and environmental factors are key in determining mental health. According to Jones et al. (2024), mental health should be considered important for public health, and measures should be taken to ease people's stress, enhance well-being, and make mental health care more accessible. This accords with Imbur (2024) opinion that mental health inequalities are linked to poverty, not being able to work, and having limited health care. Also, Bennett et al. (2023) present an approach to mental health based on the environment, individuals, and their communities. It is suggested that mental health care should be a team effort supported by society, programs designed for the community, and rules in workplaces that help people's mental health. Lately, Klein et al. (2025) have found that one should consider mental health from a cultural standpoint, as well-being or distress is not the same in every society. They underline how family, culture, and religion help to form people's ideas about mental health and the way it is treated.

In this study, mental health refers to a person's psychological, emotional, social, and occupational well-being, which helps them succeed in their jobs. It requires people to relieve and handle stress, stay focused, adjust to new situations, develop good relationships, and help achieve the organisation's goals. Regarding employee performance, mental health means having an inner balance and clear thinking necessary for completing tasks, being flexible, and working with others.

Dimensions of Mental Health

Recent studies continue to highlight the importance of fostering mental health awareness within occupational settings. The impact of remote work and hybrid models, accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic, has brought new challenges and opportunities for mental well-being in the workplace (Kniffin et al., 2021; Van Tilburg et al., 2020). As organisations adapt to changing work environments, prioritising mental health strategies such as promoting work-life integration, fostering social support, and reducing job strain remains essential for ensuring a mentally healthy workforce. By addressing occupational stressors and cultivating a positive work culture, organisations

can enhance employee well-being, job performance, and overall life satisfaction.The following are the pertinent dimensions of mental health observable in literature:

i. **Psychological Health:** The psychological dimension of mental health encompasses an individual's ability to regulate emotions, maintain self-awareness, and adapt to challenges. Emotional regulation, as discussed by Gross (1998) and later highlighted by Aldao et al. (2015), involves strategies such as cognitive reappraisal, which help individuals manage stress and respond to difficulties in a balanced manner. Self-awareness, a critical component of psychological health identified by Brown and Ryan (2003) and further explored by Sutton (2016), enables individuals to recognise and understand their emotional states, fostering resilience and effective coping.

Resilience, defined by Masten (2001) and expanded upon by Southwick and Charney (2018), refers to the capacity to adapt and thrive despite adversity, playing a crucial role in maintaining motivation and a positive outlook on life. Therefore, adaptive coping strategies, including problem-solving and seeking social support, as explored by Folkman and Moskowitz (2004) and Zhou et al. (2020), contribute significantly to promoting constructive responses to stress. In addition, psychological flexibility, described by Hayes et al. (2006) and examined in depth by Kashdan and Rottenberg (2020), also enhances mental health by allowing individuals to adjust their thoughts and behaviours in response to situational demands, reducing anxiety, depression, and stress-related disorders.

ii. **Emotional Health:** Emotional health encompasses an individual's ability to experience, express, and regulate emotions in a balanced and adaptive manner. Emotional intelligence includes self-awareness, empathy, and emotional regulation, all of which are essentials for maintaining mental resilience. Personality traits, such as emotional stability and openness to experience, are crucial factors in adaptive emotional regulation and overall psychological well-being. Cohen and Wills emphasised the role of social support in providing emotional validation and buffering against stress, reinforcing mental health and resilience.

Fredrickson’s (2001) broaden-and-build theory highlighted the importance of positive emotions in expanding cognitive and behavioural flexibility, fostering long-term resilience and personal growth. Larsen and Prizmic (2008) further discussed how both positive and negative emotions, when managed constructively, serve as motivators for change and self-improvement. In addition, Aldao, Nolen-Hoeksema & Schweizer (2010) examined emotion regulation difficulties, linking them to increased stress, mood disorders, and impulsive behaviours. Gross (2015) elaborated on emotion regulation strategies such as cognitive reappraisal and expressive suppression, which influence how individuals respond to emotional experiences.

Keyes (2016), followed up by Zeidner, Matthews, and Roberts (2019), redefined mental health as not merely the absence of distress but the presence of positive emotions, psychological flourishing, and overall life satisfaction. More recent studies, such as those by Pakenham et al. (2021), emphasise the importance of integrating resilience interventions in educational and clinical settings to strengthen emotional regulation and coping strategies.

Emotional well-being remains a dynamic process influenced by social connections, personality traits, and environmental stressors. Developing emotional resilience requires intentional effort, including mindfulness, self-compassion, and positive social interactions. Strengthening emotional intelligence and adopting healthy emotion regulation strategies enable individuals to navigate life's challenges with stability, mental balance, and long-term psychological well-being. It involves the processes that shape perception, decision-making, problem-solving, and information processing, all of which directly influence emotional well-being and behaviour.

iii. **Social Health**: Involves the influence of human relationships, social interactions, and community engagement on psychological well-being. Social connections provide emotional support, reinforce a sense of belonging, and help individuals navigate life's challenges. Strong social support networks have been linked to improved resilience, reduced stress, and overall mental stability. Corrigan et al. (2019) emphasise that positive relationships foster emotional security, enhance coping abilities, and serve as protective factors against mental distress.

Social support plays a crucial role in buffering against stress and promoting psychological well-being. Cohen and Wills (1985) introduced the stress-buffering hypothesis, which suggests that emotional and practical support from family, friends, and communities can mitigate the negative effects of stress and adversity. Similarly, Uchino (2006) highlighted the physiological benefits of social connections, demonstrating that strong interpersonal relationships are associated with lower levels of cortisol, reduced inflammation, and improved cardiovascular health. People with meaningful social ties tend to experience greater life satisfaction and lower rates of depression and anxiety (Holt-Lunstad, Smith, & Layton, 2010).

Conversely, social isolation and loneliness have been identified as significant risk factors for mental health issues. Cacioppo and Cacioppo (2014) found that chronic loneliness is linked to increased levels of stress hormones, higher risks of depression, and cognitive decline. Discrimination and social stigma further compound mental health struggles, particularly among marginalised populations. Link and Phelan (2001) argued that social stigma can lead to internalised shame, reduced access to resources, and avoidance of seeking professional help, worsening psychological distress.

A sense of belonging is a fundamental psychological need that contributes to emotional stability. It was proposed that the belongingness hypothesis, which suggests that humans have an innate drive to form and maintain close relationships. When this need is unmet, individuals may experience feelings of emptiness, anxiety, and decreased self-worth. In contrast, participation in social activities, community engagement, and positive group interactions strengthen mental health by fostering inclusivity and shared purpose (Putnam, 2000).

Interventions aimed at enhancing social well-being can significantly improve mental health outcomes. Social skills training, community-building initiatives, and peer support programs have been effective in reducing loneliness and increasing social connectedness (Hogan, Linden, & Najarian, 2002). Online social networks also play an evolving role in mental health, providing virtual support and social interaction; however, excessive reliance on digital communication can sometimes contribute to social disconnection and increased anxiety (wenge et al., 2018).

Recent studies continue to emphasise the importance of fostering strong social bonds. The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted the psychological toll of social isolation, leading to increased research on the mental health benefits of social reconnection and mutual support (Kniffin et al., 2021; Van Tilburg et al., 2020). As societies move toward recovery, prioritising social engagement and reducing barriers to interpersonal connection will be crucial for promoting overall mental well-being. By nurturing meaningful relationships, creating inclusive environments, and addressing social determinants of mental health, individuals and communities can work toward building a more supportive and resilient society.

iv. **Occupational Health**: Highlights the critical role of work in shaping psychological well-being, as employment provides structure, purpose, and social interaction. Occupational well-being is influenced by job satisfaction, work-life balance, and the overall work environment. Jones and Taylor (2024) emphasise that a positive workplace experience contributes to increased motivation, self-esteem, and personal fulfillment, whereas negative occupational conditions can lead to chronic stress, burnout, and mental health disorders.

Job satisfaction is a key determinant of occupational well-being. Hackman and Oldham's (1976) job characteristics model suggests that factors such as autonomy, skill variety, task significance, and feedback enhance job satisfaction and psychological engagement. Employees who find meaning in their work tend to experience lower levels of stress and greater emotional resilience (Wrzesniewski et al., 2003). Conversely, dissatisfaction with job roles, lack of career growth opportunities, and poor interpersonal relationships in the workplace can lead to disengagement and increased mental distress (Spector, 1997).

Work-life balance plays a crucial role in maintaining occupational health, as excessive workload and long working hours can contribute to exhaustion, irritability, and strained personal relationships. The effort-reward imbalance model, introduced by Siegrist (1996), highlights that when employees perceive their job demands to outweigh the rewards—whether in salary, recognition, or career advancement—they are at a higher risk of stress-related disorders. Greenhaus and Beutell (1985) further describe work-life conflict as a significant stressor that negatively affects overall well-being, leading to anxiety, depression, and reduced life satisfaction. Employees with greater flexibility in managing their professional and personal responsibilities report higher levels of happiness and job engagement (Kossek et al., 2014).

Toxic workplace environments, characterised by excessive pressure, lack of support, or workplace bullying, are major contributors to occupational health challenges. The job-demands-resources model by Bakker and Demerouti (2007) suggests that when job demands exceed available resources, employees experience emotional exhaustion, leading to burnout. Burnout, as defined by Maslach et al. (2001), is a state of emotional depletion, cynicism, and reduced professional efficacy that significantly impacts mental health. Work-related stressors such as micromanagement, discrimination, and job insecurity further increase the risk of anxiety, depression, and even physical health issues (Kim & Stoner, 2008).

Employee Performance

Employee performance happens when objectives are completed, and correct standards, efficiency, and effectiveness in job performance are used (Maryani et al., 2021). This includes behaviours and actions that help the organisation achieve its goals by doing required tasks and voluntary actions that are not part of direct job duties. How an employee works and achieves results is important for the company's success because it is influenced by personal actions (Hermanto & Srimulyani, 2022). Besides performing tasks, it means engaging in options that enhance the usefulness of an organisation (Ostermeier et al., 2022). According to Daniel (2024), performance management boosts an organisation's performance by building up its employees' capabilities. Armstrong further explains this in later editions (2022) by discussing the benefits of structured goal-setting, helping employees develop skills, and regular management under planned standards and goals. It points out that performance management significantly influences how successful teams and individuals work together.

The definition helps you understand employee performance by connecting individual efforts, extra effort, and formal performance management, leading to quality results for

the company.

Dimensions of Employee Performance

i. **Task Performance:** As conceptualised by Novitasari (2022), refers to the effectiveness with which employees carry out their core job responsibilities. In order to successfully execute duties, employees highlight business goals, which are necessary for the organisation's success. Campbell brought attention to task performance, pointing out that knowledge, skills, abilities, and motivation shape it, significantly influencing a person's ability to work efficiently.

On this basis, Klein et al. (2025) investigated how individual and work environment elements cooperate to keep performance high. Investigators revealed that employees' performance is flexible and depends on the organisation's diverse job aspects and circumstances. Self-control, emotions, and support from others at work helped people stay consistent.

Recent research has increased understanding of the effects of good or poor mental health on how workers perform their duties. Savvas et al. looked at High-Performance Work Systems and their role in building psychological empowerment, which makes workers feel motivated and more in control, resulting in better job performance. Using similar logic, Lu et al. (2022) discovered that mental wellness helps workers become more innovative, dedicated to their roles, and competent when handling various assignments.

Alternatively, workplace stress and high job demands seem to affect people's performance at their jobs negatively. Kim and Beehr (2021) discovered that work role overload could role overload which leads to poorer mental health among employees and makes it hard for them to keep up their productivity. When people get burned out, especially in intense jobs, they will likely be less accomplished, make less skilful decisions, and have more missed days at work. According to these reports, businesses are paying greater attention to mental health programs since they realise that staying psychologically strong and controlling emotions contribute to a person's job performance over time.

Today, people working on tasks recognise how shifting work structures, improved technologies, and more focus on remote jobs affect how they do their work. According to researchers, besides being proficient with tasks, employees must manage themselves well to stay productive. Since organisations are emphasising their performance more, focusing on mental health to ensure workers perform well remains important in research and at work.

ii. **Contextual performance:** According to Abduljabbar and Alharbi (2023), contextual performance practices involve employees' actions to make their workplace more positive and effective. Contextual performance and OCB are often used interchangeably because they involve helping workers cooperate and boost morale by caring for the organisation's well-being.

Studies by Annor et al. (2023) suggested that contextual performance differs from task performance since it involves what helps create a good work environment, while task performance merely looks at completing duties. Later, the theory was improved to include the influence of interpersonal relationships, the organisation's spirit, and people's proactive involvement in encouraging success. Researchers Erwanto et al. (2024) and Maryani et al. (2021) found that workers who strive for a good work setting can play a significant role in the organisation's success, regardless of their exact tasks.

According to Langreet (2024), choosing to collaborate, help with extra work, and remain positive can greatly support workplace productivity and workers' well-being. In their study, Kumar and Kumar (2024) pointed out that OCB helps reduce conflicts at work and strengthen team relationships, contributing to better organisational results.

On the other hand, not having enough support when teachers are evaluated by their contextual performance can result in overworking and exhaustion for the teacher. Kim and Beehr (2021) looked into the results of employees overburdened with additional work with no suitable rewards and found that such employees are more likely to feel stressed and have less job satisfaction.

Consequently, companies ought to give importance to reaching results based on context, yet take care not to strain employees. People now appreciate that contextual performance changes with digital tools and remote work. Experts point out that virtual teams, teamwork on digital platforms, and important company culture help sustain employees' loyalty. Since the workplace keeps changing, encouraging strong employee involvement is still vital for an organisation's success, which is why managing performance with context is extremely important in employee management.

iii. **Adaptive performance:** In the words of Park and Park (2021), adaptability means an employee can face changes, challenges, and uncertainty well at work. While task performance requires workers to handle particular duties, adaptive performance is how people navigate flexible and evolving workplace situations. Since organisations encounter new technologies, changing markets, and different job positions, adapting to one's job has grown very important for long-term employee success.

According to Moşteanu (2024), adaptability has multiple meanings, including adapting to surprises, acquiring fresh abilities, and managing changes at the office calmly. Malik (2023) also included in his framework the actions employees can take to foresee and face the difficulties ahead. Based on their study, people need to learn new things, regulate their feelings, and use their cognitive skills well to perform well on the job even when things change.

Park and Park (2021) explain that managing change mentally is important since more flexible employees tend to be more content at work, increase their productivity, and advance in their careers. Similarly, studies by Ewim et al. (2021) show that when digital transformation and automation occur, people in the workplace must develop new skills, making adaptability extra important.

Still, being able to adapt is important, but if people are expected to be flexible all the time, they can experience stress and exhaustion. According to Kim and Beehr (2021), having many changes at work and high adaptability rules put on employees without the required training or lack of clarity about their roles may result in employees becoming less interested and thinking about handing in their resignation. These results show that organisations should match flexible standards with well-planned programs, health-related resources, and frequent information about changing job duties.

It is recognised that adaptive performance is critical in work environments outside the workplace. Since digital transformation is progressing rapidly in workplaces, researchers believe companies should focus on helping employees develop flexible habits by giving them chances to learn, increasing their resilience, and providing leaders who help them adapt to changes. Being adaptable decides how much value employees bring to changing work patterns and a company's coping ability.

Underpinning Theory

The conservation of resources theory, developed by Hobfoll in 1989 and 2001, proves helpful in studying how mental health and job performance—adaptive and contextual—are related. The main idea of the conservation of resources theory is that everyone tries to gain, uphold, and keep their valuable resources, for example, emotional stability, mental toughness, and overall good health. Stress happens if our resources are under threat, lost, or do not meet the demands of the environment (Hobfoll, 2001). This means employees can adapt to various changes and face new problems well. Conservation of resources theory states that mental health helps to support a person's ability to deal with various situations. If people's mental health is strong and manifested as less stress and more capability to bounce back and control their emotions, they can adapt to job changes. On the other hand, mental health problems suggest a lack of necessary resources, which prevents someone from coping well (Halbesleben et al., 2014; Hobfoll

et al., 2018).

This theory concentrates on the way the availability of resources and performance are linked. It is proposed in the conservation of resources theory that a lack of confidence and stability in emotions can directly reduce an individual's ability to do their jobs well. Since coping with situation changes and managing pressure is important in adaptive performance, mental health is a key resource. The theory suggests that better mental health allows individuals to use resources better and continue performing well in demanding situations (Grandey & Cropanzano, 1999). This form of performance consists of actions that maintain a positive atmosphere in the organisation, for instance, cooperating, trying new things, and continuing after challenges. COR theory notes that when an organisation looks after employees' mental well-being and provides support or stress relief, they often improve their overall performance. When mental health improves, employees can participate in helpful, extra efforts that benefit others at work (Ten & Bakker, 2012). Conservation of resources theory shows that if people gain resources, their past struggles can eventually be forgotten, and they may achieve better performance in the future (Hobfoll, 2001).

Overall, the conservation of resources theory describes precisely how mental health influences employees' skills to respond flexibly and suit the situation. It contributes to the belief that taking care of resources and investing in them supports employees in dealing with their duties and working at their best. Thus, this idea matches and improves the main ideas behind the study's aims.

Empirical review

Erwanto et al. (2024) reported that strong mental health influences a person's ability to perform well at their job by helping them to remain stable, measurable, efficient, and effective when encountering difficulties. According to researchers, the results of ADHD medication will improve even more if kids also engage in good physical exercise. The findings in this research are explained with the help of quantitative methods. The employees used for the research were 300 at Bank Permata, a position throughout Indonesia. Reviews on Mental Health indicate that if employees are in good mental health, it encourages them to work better, pay more attention, finish their tasks more easily, and solve problems effectively. As a result, the mental health variable benefits the performance of employees and should be considered important since the P-Values are all lower than 0.05 and range from 0.018 to 0.021. All in all, the data in the second row of the third path coefficient table suggests both researchers' expectations can be reached as the P-values are bigger than zero and below the significance level of zero point zero five because engaging in physical fitness encourages good health, attention and fulfilment of duties for employees.

Fleming (2024) looked at how different individual-level therapies, such as mindfulness, resilience training, and well-being applications, affect people compared to those who do not engage in these routines. The information gathered comes from 46,336 employees at 233 different organisations. Overall, the research notes that participants are not better off than those who do not. Because of possible selection bias in the cross-sectional data, the study looks at the findings by applying the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Theory. The study revealed that such interventions are ineffective in bolstering well-being because they fail to equip people with what they should have for their jobs.

Richemond and Needham (2020) discussed the effect of health programs on the job satisfaction of faculty members. Study results suggest that participating in wellness programs is not tied to academic' levels of job satisfaction. Besides that, interaction studies indicate that while both males and females rated their happiness at work highly, females had a stronger tendency to be more satisfied. Years of experience affected job satisfaction, too; those employed for 11 to 15 years were usually much happier with their job.

Maddock (2024) analysed the connections between stress, burnout, mental health, and social workers' well-being. These issues may negatively affect the social worker's abilities at work and have a bad impact on their mental health. The research was conducted to measure the frequency of stress, burnout, anxiety, depression and mental well-being in social workers and to determine the factors that relate to them using statistical tools. There was an observation that many social workers experience problems with anxiety, depression, and their mental health. It was realised that stress, as perceived, can have an impact on the anxiety, depression and mental health of all social workers. Burnout impacts such as being tired and stressed was linked to anxiety while doing well in important tasks was reported to prevent depression symptoms and keep someone's mind in a healthy state. Following this research, encouraging those who have anxiety, depression, and similar conditions to keep stress low and perform well at work may help them become healthier and more successful in their jobs.

Rughoobur-Seetah (2024) assessed how emotional labour and burnout impact employee work performance. To collect information, the survey technique was applied in the study. Service workers were targeted because they meet and interact with customers. One hundred and ninety-seven out of 300 people responded to this study. One aspect of analysing the data was performing a partial least square structural equation modelling. Only four out of the ten hypotheses produced by researchers remained valid after the experiment. Having job satisfaction helps people in the service sector achieve better results. The study showed that employees' work was little affected by their feelings, tiredness, or psychological state. According to the author, businesses should try to help their employees through counselling and career changes. Other methods that allow employees to speak freely about their ideas. It is advised that

employers keep a friendly attitude toward their workers even when they are pushed to earn more. Company managers should acknowledge that affecting employees' emotions creates a lot of work stress, which management should offset by letting employees work in new ways. The authors link the study's social exchange and psychological contract theories to help gain a clear view of the connections between the variables involved. The study added a second-order factor analysis of emotional labour and burnout to ensure the relationship with work performance is well understood.

Emmanuel (2024) looked into the wellness and mental health of employees working in public universities in Rivers State. 346 respondents were chosen randomly from a population of 3,440 academic staff in the public universities. Data was gathered with the help of questionnaires, and Spearman's rank correlation coefficient was used to analyse the connections between them. Studies have proved that employee wellness programs contribute significantly to good mental health in workers. The findings suggest that employee wellness programs can affect people's mental health. The researchers suggest boosting wellness programs to help people achieve better mental health.

Yu et al. (2021) assessed the effects of the pandemic on employees' levels of work stress, wellness, mental health, involvement in their organisation, and how they relate to customers. Although the pandemic is not yet over, few research studies have examined the stress people experience because of it. Employees' views of epidemics were looked into and found to trigger changes in their stress levels, health, mental health, dedication to the company, and how they dealt with customers. Qualitative and quantitative research methods supported the four characteristics we used. According to the outcome of the structural equation analysis, all the relationships had a significant effect. This research analyses epidemic issues to see how hotels and their workers manage them. Since more cases of COVID-19 are still appearing, not much research has looked into how the pandemic affects mental well-being. The research looked at the influence of the pandemic on hotel workers' job stress, health, mental health, activities at work, and identity with customers. With qualitative and quantitative research, we selected four important aspects. Using structural equation modelling, it was realised that the suggested variables were strongly correlated. It explains how hotel workers' work was influenced by issues they experienced during the pandemic.

Critique summary

The reviewed literature consistently affirms the significant impact of mental health on employee performance, irrespective of the specific workplace setting. Studies such as Erwanto et al. (2024) highlight that improved individual mental health, particularly when complemented by physical activity, correlates with enhanced performance. This

broad consensus underscores the theoretical and practical importance of addressing mental well-being within organisational contexts to foster productivity. However, the nuances of this relationship and the efficacy of various interventions remain subjects of ongoing discussion and require careful consideration.

Despite the general agreement on the positive correlation, the effectiveness of specific well-being initiatives at the individual level in directly improving job performance is not always clear. Fleming (2024) points out this ambiguity, suggesting that the link between individual-focused wellness programs and tangible performance gains might be less straightforward than assumed. Similarly, Richemond and Needham (2020) found that employee satisfaction was not directly tied to participation in wellness programs but rather to demographic factors like gender and length of experience. These findings introduce a critical perspective, indicating that while mental health is crucial, the mechanisms through which it influences performance, and the types of interventions that are most effective, are complex and may vary based on individual and contextual factors.

Further complicating the landscape are studies that delve into specific occupational groups, revealing unique challenges. Maddock (2024) identified high levels of stress, burnout, and mental health issues among social workers, demonstrating a clear link between stress and overall well-being in this demanding profession. Conversely, Emmanuel (2024) provided evidence that wellness programs significantly improved the mental health of public university staff, emphasising the importance of visible and clear support systems. Collectively, these studies suggest that while psychological support at work is vital for performance, its successful implementation necessitates a tailored approach, adapting to the specific needs of different employee groups and ensuring comprehensive integration across the entire organisation. This highlights the need for context-specific research to inform effective mental health strategies.

Conceptual Framework

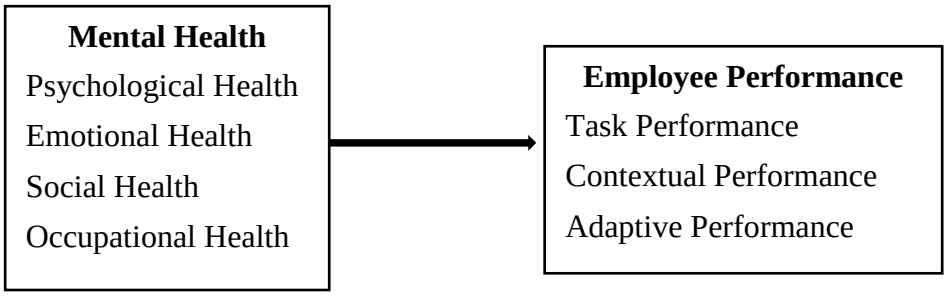

Figure 2.1: Adapting the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Model to depict the conceptual relationships.

Methodology

This research used quantitative methods to analyse how mental health affects employee performance at some organisations in Ibadan, Nigeria. Survey questions formed the main way to collect data by measuring employees' psychological, emotional, social, occupational, and physical health along with their task performance, coping with changes, their general contribution, and misconduct on the job. Researchers chose employees from public and private companies using stratified random sampling to guarantee that people were chosen from the various sectors and hierarchies. The sampling frame for this study involved employees within both public and private sector organisations in Ibadan, Nigeria. From the records of the Oyo State Ministry of Commerce and Industry and National Bureau of Statistics records in 2023, many organisations met the required criteria of having with at least 20 full-time staff and also active in high-stress sectors. To ensure the reliability of findings regarding the effects of mental health on performance, only respondents who had been in their current jobs for a minimum of 3 years were included in the study. This criterion helps to ensure that participants had sufficient experience in their roles to provide meaningful insights into their performance and mental health in the workplace.

Employees were therefore selected using a stratified random sampling technique. This approach ensured representation across different segments of the workforce. The stratification was based on two primary criteria. First, employees were stratified by their affiliation with either the public or private sector. Second, employee hierarchies were considered i.e. stratification based on roles, positions, or levels of experience within the organisations. This ensures a diverse representation of employee levels. Cochran's formula was used to calculate the minimum sample size required to achieve a desired level of precision given the inherently large population in this study.

An online form was set up using Google Forms and used to send the questionnaire to participants using email, LinkedIn, and WhatsApp. This is to ensure more people took part and there was minimal bias. Prior, a pilot study helped to identify ambiguities, inconsistencies, and potential difficulties in the questionnaire items. Participants were encouraged to provide feedback regarding the clarity, relevance, and length of the survey. Based on the feedback received, minor adjustments were made to simplify the wording of certain questions and improve the logical flow of the sections. To evaluate the internal consistency of the questionnaire, a reliability analysis was performed using Cronbach's Alpha**.** The overall Cronbach's Alpha coefficient obtained was 0.876, indicating a high level of reliability and internal consistency among the questionnaire items (as values above 0.70 are considered acceptable in management and social science research).

During the survey process, participants rights were respected, and data were collected only when consent was given and allowed. The power of mental health to predict how people perform was assessed by carrying out a multivariate regression analysis. Multivariate regression is deemed appropriate for this study because it allows simultaneous analysis of multiple mental health factors on various performance outcomes. It allows the isolation the distinct effect of each predictor while controlling for others, such as sector type (public/private) and demographic variables. The key assumptions checked for validity include linearity, normality of residuals, homoscedasticity, and the absence of severe multicollinearity among the mental health variables. All the hypotheses were analysed with a 5% significance level ($p < 0.05$). This framework helped ensure that mental health and employee performance findings were transparent and honest and could be used for other services.

Results

The section explains the results of the statistical review, which was meant to determine how mental health affects workers' performance in Ibadan, Nigeria. Data were studied using multivariate regression to find the connection between mental health and three performance features. The analysis explains the effect of mental health on workers' results and identifies individual actions within each performance area.

Test of Hypotheses

Table 1

Multivariate Tests[a]

Effect		Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.
Intercept	Pillai's Trace	.940	2060.693[b]	3.000	393.000	.000
	Wilks' Lambda	.060	2060.693[b]	3.000	393.000	.000
	Hotelling's Trace	15.730	2060.693[b]	3.000	393.000	.000
	Roy's Largest Root	15.730	2060.693[b]	3.000	393.000	.000
MH	Pillai's Trace	.938	44.945	12.000	1185.000	.000
	Wilks' Lambda	.283	52.992	12.000	1040.072	.000
	Hotelling's Trace	1.759	57.401	12.000	1175.000	.000
	Roy's Largest Root	.993	98.079[c]	4.000	395.000	.000

a. Design: Intercept + MH (Mental Health)
b. Exact statistic
c. The statistic is an upper bound on F that yields a lower bound on the significance level.

The multivariate analysis revealed a statistically significant effect of mental health (MH) on the combined dependent variables, as indicated by all four multivariate test statistics: Pillai's Trace = .938, $F(12, 1185) = 44.945$, $p < .001$; Wilks' Lambda = .283, $F(12, 1040.072) = 52.992$, $p < .001$; Hotelling's Trace = 1.759, $F(12, 1175) = 57.401$, $p < .001$; and Roy's Largest Root = .993, $F(4, 395) = 98.079$, $p < .001$. These results suggest that mental health levels significantly influence the combined outcomes of the

three dependent variables, warranting further examination of the individual effects through tests of between-subjects effects and post hoc comparisons.

Table 2
Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Source	Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Corrected Model	task performance	149.926[a]	4	37.482	66.381	.000
	adaptive performance	205.308[b]	4	51.327	84.233	.000
	contextual performance	253.996[c]	4	63.499	70.578	.000
Intercept	task performance	2015.628	1	2015.628	3569.743	.000
	adaptive performance	1910.264	1	1910.264	3134.931	.000
	contextual performance	1937.242	1	1937.242	2153.208	.000
MH	task performance	149.926	4	37.482	66.381	.000
	adaptive performance	205.308	4	51.327	84.233	.000
	contextual performance	253.996	4	63.499	70.578	.000
Error	task performance	223.034	395	.565		
	adaptive performance	240.692	395	.609		
	contextual performance	355.382	395	.900		
Total	task performance	6028.000	400			
	adaptive performance	5922.000	400			
	contextual performance	5815.000	400			
Corrected Total	task performance	372.960	399			
	adaptive performance	446.000	399			
	contextual performance	609.377	399			

a. R Squared = .402 (Adjusted R Squared = .396)
b. R Squared = .460 (Adjusted R Squared = .455)
c. R Squared = .417 (Adjusted R Squared = .411)

The Tests of Between-Subjects Effects reveal that mental health (MH) has a statistically significant impact on all three dependent variables: task performance, adaptive performance, and contextual performance. Specifically, for task performance, the effect of MH is significant with $F(4, 395) = 66.381$, $p < .001$; for adaptive performance, $F(4, 395) = 84.233$, $p < .001$; and for contextual performance, $F(4, 395) = 70.578$, $p < .001$. These results indicate that differences in mental health levels are associated with significant variations in each type of performance. The high F-values and extremely low p-values suggest strong effects of MH across the three outcome variables.

Additionally, the R-squared values show the proportion of variance in each dependent variable explained by mental health. Mental health accounts for approximately 40.2% of the variance in task performance (Adjusted $R^2 = .396$), 46.0% in adaptive performance (Adjusted $R^2 = .455$), and 41.7% in contextual performance (Adjusted R^2

= .411). These are substantial proportions, suggesting that MH is a meaningful predictor of employee performance dimensions. This result shows that an employee's mental health is a very powerful factor in determining how well they perform at work. Although it's not the only factor, it explains a large portion, i.e. 40% or more of the differences in performance between employees. Specifically, mental health has the strongest influence on an employee's ability to adapt to new situations and learn new skills (adaptive performance), accounting for 46% of the variation in this skill. It is also a major driver of both completing core job duties (task performance - 40%) and of being a good coworker, like helping others and being reliable (approximately contextual performance - 42%). The result therefore confirms that investing in employee mental health isn't just a wellness issue; it's a direct investment in the overall performance and adaptability of the workforce. The analysis supports the conclusion that mental health significantly influences workplace performance.

Discussion of Findings

The analysis reveals that employee mental health is a robust predictor of workplace performance, accounting for a substantial proportion of variance across key performance domains. Specifically, mental health explained approximately 40.2% of the variance in task performance, 46.0% in adaptive performance, and 41.7% in contextual performance, as indicated by adjusted R^2 values. These findings underscore that mental well-being is not merely a peripheral concern but a central determinant of how employees execute core duties, adapt to novel challenges, and contribute to the social and interpersonal fabric of the organisation.

The multivariate analysis reveals a statistically significant effect of mental health on the combined dependent variables of workplace performance, as evidenced by all four multivariate test statistics (Pillai's Trace, Wilks' Lambda, Hotelling's Trace, Roy's Largest Root) yielding significance values of ($p < .001$). This strong and consistent result indicates that mental health is a substantial predictor of employee performance in Nigeria, across multiple dimensions. These findings align with established literature emphasising the critical role of psychological well-being in occupational functioning. For instance, Wright and Cropanzano (2000) demonstrated that employee well-being significantly influences job performance, while Taris (2006) highlighted that mental health correlates with both in-role and extra-role performance, supporting the notion that psychological states permeate various aspects of work behaviour.

The exceptionally high effect size for mental health, particularly Pillai's Trace = .938, suggests that mental health accounts for a significant aspect of the variance in the performance constructs measured. This result underscores the pervasive influence of mental health, extending beyond task performance to include adaptive and contextual domains. Such broad impact resonates with research indicating that mental health

affects cognitive, emotional, and social resources necessary for performance (Ford et al., 2011). However, the strength of the association found in this study appears notably larger than the observation of Nielsen et al., (2017), which often reported moderate effects. This discrepancy may be attributable to contextual factors specific to the Nigerian public and private sectors, such as heightened job stressors or limited structural support, potentially amplifying the role of mental health.

According to results, a strong and significant positive relationship exists between mental health and employee performance in all areas: task performance, adaptive performance, and contextual performance. This is in line with Erwanto et al. (2024), who also discovered that mental health is an important factor affecting work performance for bank employees in Indonesia. Fleming (2024) and Richemond and Needham (2020) report that health programs or interventions do not significantly influence subjective well-being or job satisfaction. Even though certain studies find that wellness plans miss employees' needs, the new research points out that a strong internal mental health basis is directly linked to performance. It demonstrates that keeping one's mind and heart strong over time is more important for improved performance than short-term strategies. Emmanuel (2024) shares this opinion, showing that wellness programs usually improve employees' mental health and should, therefore, prioritise doing so.

Also, our findings support Maddock's (2024) and Yu et al.'s (2021) findings on how problems such as stress, burnout, and the COVID-19 pandemic affect people's mental health and job performance. Maddock points out that stress negatively affects depression and work-related burnout in social workers' youth mental health in the same way as our findings show that having good or better mental health reduces unproductive behaviour and improves work performance. The results of Yu et al.'s study during the pandemic show that psychological well-being has a changing influence on organisational commitment and job-related performance. For this reason, the study encourages organisations to keep mental health support in their policies, matching Rughoobur-Seetah's (2024) suggestions for counselling, help with emotions, and job design to help employees stay well and be productive.

These findings reinforce the necessity for organisations to integrate mental health support into core human resource strategies. The results suggest that interventions aimed at improving employee mental health could yield substantial improvements across performance outcomes. This aligns with calls by Richardson and Rothstein (2008) for evidence-based mental health interventions in workplaces. It is necessary to state at this juncture that the significant correlations observed between mental health and workplace performance, while robust, do not establish causation. The cross-sectional nature of our study design, wherein both predictor and outcome variables are

measured at a single point in time, fundamentally limits our ability to determine the direction of the observed relationships.

For instance, while the data and literature support the hypothesis that poor mental health leads to diminished performance, the reverse causality model that that poor performance (e.g., due to high workload or criticism) leads to deteriorated mental health is equally plausible based on these results alone (Spector, 2019). Furthermore, the potential influence of unmeasured confounding variables presents an alternative explanation for the associations observed between the variables. Factors not included in the model, such as personality traits, external life stressors, or specific job characteristics, could be the underlying cause of both poorer mental health and lower performance (Kessler et al., 2022). Future research should explore the mechanisms linking mental health to performance in this context and examine whether cultural or sectoral moderators influence these relationships.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The research analysed how employee performance is affected by mental health in chosen organisations in Ibadan, Nigeria. Responses from 400 people and regression analysis revealed a positive and statistically significant relationship between mental health and all forms of employee performance. Mental health played a large part in explaining each performance outcome, demonstrating that employees must meet work tasks, withstand changes, and participate meaningfully in their organisation's activities. Based on the results, those with sound psychological, emotional, and social well-being are likely to do well and engage actively at their jobs.

These findings accord with other studies, like those of Erwanto et al. (2024) about the impact of mental health and physical activity and Emmanuel (2024), who focuses on the importance of wellness programs for individuals' mental health. At the same time, the study makes an original contribution by showing how some aspects of mental health affect performance directly, revealing that mental health strategies should be given grave importance in organisational strategy.

This study's results recommend that organisations support their staff's mental health by including counselling, lessons in stress management, and flexible schedules in their central HR policies. Wellness programs and meditation sessions might make employees feel healthier and work more productively. Managers should learn to identify mental issues and establish workplaces that respect and value employees. Mental health needs should be checked regularly to match employees' wants and needs. Besides, businesses can help remove the negative attitudes toward mental health by raising awareness, encouraging people to talk about it, and making the workplace culture helpful for mind and body.

The practical implications of these results are profound, positioning mental health support as a critical strategic investment rather than an optional welfare initiative. For organisations, these effect sizes suggest that interventions aimed at enhancing psychological well-being, such as access to counseling, manager training in mental health awareness, and the cultivation of psychologically safe environments. This can be expected to yield significant returns in performance, resilience, and overall operational effectiveness. This evidence provides a compelling business case for integrating mental health into core human resource and organisational development strategies.

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