THE EFFECT OF STRESS ON WORKERS' PERFORMANCE IN THE NIGERIAN PUBLIC SERVICE: A FOCUS ON GOMBE STATE UNIVERSITY, NIGERIA

Freda Yazu[1] Matthew Funsho Bello[2]

[1]School of Postgraduate Studies, Gombe State University, Gombe, Nigeria. [2]Department of Public Administration, Faculty of Arts and Social SciencesGombe State University, Gombe, Nigeria

Correspondence: matthewfbello@gmail.com

Abstract

Most workers feel some sense of purpose and accomplishment about their jobs especially when it is rewarding and self-satisfying. However, poor work conditions can also pose tremendous burdens and contradictions of purpose. Issues like low motivation, underpay and consequent strike actions, work-overload, difficult superiors or co-workers, job burnout, family problems, etc. can all place serious pressures and strain on workers. This may resultantly constitute stress. This paper discusses the effect of stress on workers' performance in the Nigeria public service using Gombe State University as a unit of analysis with the time frame of 2020 to 2023. Data for the paper was generated from both primary and secondary sources. Findings show that the workforce at Gombe State University has a higher number of males (60.1%) compared to females (39.9%). Respondents are in Security unit, Registry and Department of Public Administration and Business Administration. Recommendations include: Implement stress management programmes: It is crucial to develop comprehensive stress management programmes that include workshops on time management, relaxation techniques, and physical exercise routines. These programmes will equip staff with practical skills to manage stress effectively and maintain their well-being. Provide professional support: Establishing accessible counselling services and mental health support is essential for addressing psychological and emotional stress. By offering professional help, the University can support staff in coping with stressors that impact their mental health and work performance.

Key words: *Stress, Stress Management, Workers' Performance, Nigerian Public Service, Gombe State University*

Introduction

Countless scholars contend that stress at workplace has an impact on performance in one way or the other; stress has become a global problem that manifests itself in a variety of ways in every job. Workers are generally working longer hours in today's workplace, as increased levels of responsibilities compel them to strain themselves even

more struggling to fulfill escalating job performance requirements. Occupational stress, according to Omolara (2008), is the negative psychological and physical reactions that arise in an individual as a result of their inability to cope with the obligations placed on them. Workplace stress, according to Swanepoel, et al (1998), has gained increased attention in the field of occupational health over the previous three decades. These authors believed that the world, particularly the world of work and business, has become increasingly subject to fast changing pressures such as greater rivalry, quality pressure, innovation, and a quickening of corporate processes. Employee demands increased at a similar rate, causing employees to become stressed. In addition, job stress can also be caused by lack of resources, work schedules which can include working at late hours, overtime and organizational climate are also contributors to job stress on employees. Job stress often shows high dissatisfaction among the employees, poor work performance and less effective interpersonal relations at work. In Nigeria, several national surveys have indicated that about 52% of the workforce in organizations suffers from stress related problems.

Performance may be evaluated in terms of the output of an employee in a specific period of time. Much of the success of any organization relies upon the performance of its workforce; employee performance is an important consideration for business. Work today is "result-oriented" rather than "people-oriented". It is only the performance that matters. Performance is a multidimensional construct which forms organizational goal-directed behaviours and actions (Mccloy, Campbell & Cudeck, 1994; Nwafor, Afuecheta & Umetiti, 2024; Umetiti & Nwafor, 2025). Kroll (2006) defines employee performance as a measure of efficiency and effectiveness of employee relative to their job. Efficiency refers to getting the most output from the least amount of input. Efficiency is focused on doing things right, that is, not wasting resources. On the other hand, effectiveness refers to doing the right thing. Performance is a multifaceted notion and at its most basic level, the process aspect of performance, i.e. behavioural interactions, can be distinguished from the intended outcome (Borman & Motowidlo, 1993), Campbell, et al, 1993, Roe, 1999). The term "behaviour" refers to the actions people take to complete a task, whereas "outcome" refers to the result of an individual's job behaviour (Campbell, 1990). It is against this backdrop that this study seeks to examine the effect of stress on workers' performance in the Nigerian Public Service with specific focus on Gombe State University.

Statement of the Problem

Stress can have various effects on the individual as well as on the organization. Clearly not only that the individual suffers but the organization may also be affected by absenteeism, work-related accidents, turnover and impaired decision making. Management may not be concerned when employees experience low to moderate level of stress. Such levels may lead to higher employee performance. But high levels of

stress or even low levels sustained over a long period of time can lead to reduced employee performance and thus require action by management. From the individuals standpoint even low levels of stress are likely to be perceived as undesirable. What management may consider as 'a positive stimulus that keeps the adrenaline running' is very likely to be seen as 'excessive pressure' by the employee. Stress has an impact on all types of organizations, regardless of whether it is a manufacturing industry or a service organization, and it comes in different forms such as emotional stress, psychological stress, physical stress, environmental stress and economic stress.

To attain higher productivity, most organizations end up saddling employees with an overload of work to meet deadlines and this might have psychological and physical effects on the employees which may result in something contrary to what these organizations want to achieve. Although organizations are paying more attention than in the past to the consequences of the trauma their employees go through when they place extraordinary demands on them, there is still more room for improvement. Again, to generate enough revenue to be self-sustaining and to be able to fund the acquisition of modern equipment means efficient service provision and optimal employment of resources. There has been the need for a continuous change in management strategies and administration and the demand on employees to perform has been increasing. This development has brought a lot of pressure on the employees, who are expected to deliver a world-class service without the corresponding increased resources and training. Nonetheless, staff who fail to deliver are threatened with dismissal and other forms of punishment. With jobs not easy to come by presently in Nigeria, many employees are crumbling under this pressure. Cases of employee stress are therefore on the ascendancy. Therefore, this research seeks answers to the following questions: What are the types of stress on workers' in Gombe State University? What are the effects of stress on workers in Gombe State University? How can stress be reduced and controlled on workers' in Gombe State University?

Objectives

The main objective is to assess the effect of stress on workers' performance in the Nigerian Public Service with a particular focus on Gombe State University.

Hypothesis

The following hypothesis will be used to guide this study.

H_0: There is no significant relationship between stress on workers and workers' performance

Literature Review

Conceptualizations

In today's fast-paced world, it is impossible to live without stress. The nature of work has undergone drastic changes with stress appearing almost automatically. It is a worldwide phenomenon that occurs in various forms in every workplace. In today's work life, employees are often required to work strenuously for over long period of time as their responsibilities keep rising. Stress is common in every type of job and people must face it in every facet of life. Stress has been defined in various ways over the years. According to Ivancevich, Konapske & Matteson (2006), stress is scientifically described as that response of an individual to the outcomes of the external environmental conditions that place excessive psychological, behavioural, and physiological pressures on that individual. It involves how an individual respond to external pressures. Many researchers aver that stress at work place has an impact on performance in one way or the other According to Elovainio, Kivimaki, & Vahtera (2002), job stress makes the organizational performance go down. It is likened to a chronic disease that is caused by conditions in the workplace that negatively affect an employee's performance. It is normal experience that occurs in reaction to situations that make an employee uncomfortable and on the other hand it may help one to rise above challenges. If that is the case, it will have a positive impact as it can enable an employee to improve on their performance which will result in increased employee motivation at work, innovation and problem-solving. According to Deshpande & Chopra (2007), good stress which is scientifically referred to as eustress is a positive result of stressful occurrences which create motivation in people who in turn rise beyond their challenges that they may face to succeed in life. However, stress can be managed up to certain extent after which it becomes negative and negatively affect the employee's performance. Similarly, (Rolfe 2005; Okwudiri, Nwafor & Umetiti, 2025; Nwafor & Umetiti, 2025) explained the importance of job stress as emphasized by employers on how to manage and reduce it through practical guidelines. Among this includes balancing of work life, fair work load, open communication and providing a conducive working environment. It is however necessary for management to monitor employees' stress level because an overly stressed employee will certainly not perform well at work.

Impact of Stress on the Organization

Starting a new job is likely to be very stressful if the person felt inexperienced, unable to cope with workload, uncomfortable around their bosses or colleagues and unstipulated by their work. On the other hand, a person entering an area of work where they felt competent, supported by their colleagues and stimulated, would be more likely to experience the change as challenging than stressful. According to Luthans (2002) besides the potential stressors that occurred outside the organization, there were also those that were associated with the organization. Although an organization is made up

of groups of individuals, there are also more macro level dimensions, unique to an organization that contains potential stressors. Gaumail (2003) is of the opinion that at the organizational level, research has found that work-related stresses may be responsible for organizational outcomes such as decline in performance, dissatisfaction, lack of motivation and commitment, and an increase in absenteeism and turnover (Nwafor, Umetiti & Ndu-Anunobi, 2024; Umetiti, Nwafor, Arachie & Ifeme, 2025). Desseler (2000) alluded that there were two main sources of job stress; environmental and personal. According to this author, a variety of external environmental factors could lead to job stress. These included work schedules, place of work, job security, route to and from work and the number and nature of clients. Even noise, including people talking and telephones ringing, contributed to stress.

These authors, however, noted that individuals reacted differently even if they were at the same job, because personal factors also influenced stress. The authors also noted that stress is not necessarily dysfunctional; some people work well only when under a little stress and find they are more productive when a deadline approaches. Desseler (2000) was of the opinion that for organizations, job stress consequences included reductions in the quantity and quality of job performance, increased absenteeism and turnover, increased grievances and health care costs. A study of 46,000 employees concluded that stress and depression may cause employees to seek medical care for vague physical and psychological problems and can in fact lead to more serious health conditions. The health-care costs of the high-stress workers were 46% higher than those of their less stressed co-workers. According to Levin-Epstein (2002) stress on the job took its toll on nonprofits: lost time from work, deflated productivity, low staff morale, turnover and higher health-care costs. According to Anderson & Kyprianou (1994) in the United States of America, Britain and many other European countries, about half the deaths each year for both men and women, were due to cardiovascular diseases. The factors associated with high risk of heart diseases included cigarette smoking, high blood pressure, high cholesterol and blood sugar levels and excess body weight. These authors further stated that a number of studies have indicated that social and psychological factors may account for much of the risk and this has promoted research into factors in the work situation that may increase susceptibility to heart disease. Among the factors that have been shown to influence such susceptibility are dissatisfaction at work and occupational stress.

Anderson & Kryprianou (1994) further quoted Lazarus who defined stress referring to a broad class of problems differentiated from other problem areas because it deals with any demand which tax the system; a psychological system, social system or a physiological system, and the response of that system. The definition further argued that the reaction depended on how the person interpreted or appraised the significance of a harmful threatening or challenging event. These authors concluded that stress was

thought to occur from a misfit between the individual and his or her environment: an imbalance in the context of an organism environment transaction (Nwafor, Ojiako & Umetiti, 2023; Umetiti, Nwumeh & Uzor, 2020). They further stated that stress in itself was not abnormal; nobody lives wholly free from it. It was clear that far from all individuals who are exposed to do the same work, conditions develop abnormalities of either a physical or a psychological character. It is only when stress is irrational, unproductive and persistent that it may be a symptom of psychological and physical illnesses.

Sources of Stress in the Nigerian Public Sector

Practically, there are certain basic work situational realities that significantly contribute to stress. Put differently, the conduciveness of work environment largely determines the level of stress burden on an employee. In this sense, Kohun (1992) defines work environment as entirely which comprises the totality of forces, actions and other influential factors that are currently and, or potentially contending with the employee's activities and performance. Work environment is the sum of the interrelationship that exists within the employees and the employers and the environment in which the employees work. By logical underpinning, a healthy work environment not only projects job satisfaction but reduces work stress. In fact, the need to provide a safe work environment for employees has had a long history in human resource management. Spector & Beer (1994) contend that work systems not only affect commitment, competence, cost effectiveness and congruence but also have long term consequence for workers' wellbeing. There are some evidences to indicate that work system designs may have effects on physical health, mental health and longevity of life itself. Conducive work environment, thus, ensures the well-being of employees which invariably will enable them exert themselves to their roles with all vigour that may translate to higher productivity (Akinyele, 2007; Yusuf & Metiboba, 2012; Nwafor, Afuecheta & Umetiti, 2024).

Employees' Performance

According to Vocabulary.com: An organization is a group of people who work together, like a neighborhood association, a charity, a union, or a corporation. While on the other hand, performance means a demonstration of skills, and display of competences. It is also referred to as the organizational target and framework which the organization set to achieve. Coates (1994) opined that, what is actually seen as performance is the extent to which individuals or employees conform to the leadership of the organization to achieve its goals. Organizational performance comprises the actual output or results of an organization as measured against its intended outputs (goals and objectives). According to Richard, et al. (2009), organizational performance encompasses three specific areas of firm outcomes: (a) financial performance (profits, return on assets, return on investment, etc.); (b) product market performance (sales, market share, etc.);

and (c) shareholder return (total shareholder return, economic value added, etc.). The term organizational management is a broader term. Specialists in many fields are concerned with organizational performance including strategic planners, operations, finance, legal, and organizational development.

In recent years, many organizations have attempted to manage organizational performance using the balanced scorecard methodology where performance is tracked and measured in multiple dimensions such as financial performance (e.g. shareholder return) customer service, social responsibility (e.g. corporate citizenship, community outreach) employee stewardship, performance measurement systems, performance improvement and organizational engineering. Moreover, there are other concepts related to performance, such as productivity - productivity is a measure of efficiency of a person, a machine etc.; it is converting input into useful output. Krugman (1994) says productivity is not everything, but in the long run it is almost everything. An organization's ability to improve its standard of living overtime depends almost entirely on its ability to rate input of workers. Organizational performance is often referred to as employee productivity or productivity workforce etc. Therefore, employee productivity is an assessment of the efficiency of a worker, or group of workers, it refers to organizational willingness and ability to promote efficiency for better performance (Anazodo, Ezenwile, Chidolue & Umetiti, 2014; Nwafor, Chukwueloka, Nwumeh & Umetiti, 2023). Eatwell & Newman (1991) defined productivity as a ratio of some measures of output to some index of input used. Therefore, performance can be considered as a process or an act of performing a work done. If job is executed satisfactorily there is good performance but if reverse is the case, then it is accompanied by bad performance.

Theoretical Review

Generally, stress has been a subject of disagreement among social scientists due to the difficulties associated with defining it precisely or measuring it, theories have been proffered by several scholars towards explaining it. However, theories of stress cannot ignore its relationship with job satisfaction since in some ways; satisfaction and stress can be opposite sides of a coin. The Range of Affect Theory, associated with Edwin A. Locke is arguably regarded as one of the most famous job satisfaction models. The theory believes that satisfaction is determined by a discrepancy between what one wants in a job and what one has in a job. The theory posits that "how much one values a given facet of work" (for instance, the degree of autonomy and level of control in a position) moderates how satisfied or dissatisfied one may become when expectations are met or not met (Locke, 1976). Range of Affect Theory believes that when a person values a particular job, his satisfaction is more greatly appreciated both positively (when expectations are not met) compared to one who does not value that fact.

Essentially, when a worker is stressed, he will not be satisfied and when one is satisfied in a job or position, he is not likely to be stressed. One of the major causes of workers' stress is worker role such as job ambiguity. Workers know what they want in a job and when they do not get it, they become stressed and dissatisfaction sets in. Most people in the public service experience job ambiguity especially when there is conflict in schedule of duties. Apart from this, some positions and tasks in Nigerian public service are given based on nepotism, tribalism etc. while promotions are hardly done on merit and this most at times creates stressful environment for some workers. The best option thus becomes that the practice and use of due process in all public service dealings should be adopted as it can be a better way to ensure that conditions that give rise to stress are avoided, while job satisfaction will be promoted.

Empirical Review

There are several studies that report factors which cause stress among employees in the organization. However, recent years have been called as the age of anxiety and stress (Coleman, 2010). The stress itself will be affected by number of stressors. Family and work are interrelated and interdependent to the extent that experiences in one area affect the quality of life in the other (Sarantakos, 2006). Homework interface can be known as the overlap between work and home; the two way relationship involves the causes of stress at work affecting home life and vice versa effects of seafaring on home life, demands from work at home, no support from home, absent of stability in home life. It asks about whether home problems are brought to work and work has a negative impact on home life (Alexandros, et al, 2009).

Alkubaisi, (2015) examined the effect of stress on work performance using quantitative field study on Qatari banking Sector. The cross-sectional method was adopted and inferential statistics, Spearman Correlation was used in testing hypotheses A sample (n=124) was randomly selected from the Qatari Banking Sector and various statistical analyses were performed on this data. The analysis shows that the unclear role given to the employees and the workload has a direct relationship with work stress. One of the main findings is that work stress has a negative impact on employee performance. Also, the employees' level of stress perception is influenced by their job title. The findings of this study confirmed that poor working conditions, role ambiguity, workload, and family problems act as a full mediating variable in the relationship between stress and job performance in the Qatari banking sector sample.

Bashir & Ramay (2010) in their study examined the relationship between job stress and job performance on bank employees of banking sector in Pakistan. The results of their study showed that job stress significantly reduced the performance of an individual and also suggested that organizations should facilitate a supportive culture within the working atmosphere of the organization. Ekienabor (2016) investigated the impact of

job stress on employee productivity and commitment among academic staff of Nigerian universities. The scope of the study was centred on all universities in Nigeria. A field study was conducted with questionnaire as the primary data collection instrument. Data were analyzed using chi-square. The results showed an impact of job stress on the productivity of employees. Also, there is an impact of job stress on employees' commitment. A higher level of stress without managerial concern for solution results in reduced employee performance, staking of organizational reputation and loss of skilled employees. Halkis & Bousin examined in their study the effects of job stress and job satisfaction. The findings showed that motivating and satisfying workers produce quality work resulting to positive work performance.

Muhammad, Nazir, Riaz, Murtaza, Khan & Firdous (2016) examined the impact of job stress on employee job satisfaction using Nursing Sector of DHQ Hospital of Okara. A descriptive research design was adopted. The study used quantitative research and data were collected through a survey (questionnaire). The sample size consisted of 100 nurses of DHQ Hospital of Okara. Data were analyzed using regression and correlation analysis. The result showed that there was a positive relationship between job stress and employee job satisfaction that is shown by positive values. Makoni & Mutanana (2016) carried out a study to examine different effective techniques of managing stress as perceived by workers in Rock Chemicals Fillers (Private) Limited; a Manufacturing Company in Zimbabwe. The research was a case study. It adopted both qualitative and quantitative research methods with the target population being employees at the manufacturing company and a sample of 35 participants were selected using the convenience sampling technique. Questionnaire and an interview guide constituted the research instruments. Findings showed that workers concurred with the concept of counseling, body exercise and sport as techniques for managing stress at the workplace.

Okeke, Ojan & Oboreh (2016) examined the effect of stress on employee performance in the Nigerian banking industry. The study adopted a survey research method. The population of study constituted five selected banks in Awka metropolis. Purposive sampling method was used to select a total of 250 employees. The data used were generated using a 5-point Likert scale questionnaire and were analyzed using simple percentage analysis while the hypotheses formulated were tested using chi-square statistical technique. The study revealed that workload pressure has a significant effect on employee productivity. Also revealed was that stress hinders the effective performance of the employees.

Suandiand & Othman (2014) conducted their study to find out the relationship between organizational climate and job stress with job performance. They concluded that there was a moderate level of relationship whereby the relationship between organizational climate and job performance was positive while the relationship between job stress and

job performance was negative. This shows that an increase in organizational climate will improve job performance and the increase in job stress will decrease the job performance. Qadoos, Ayesha, Tayyab, Toqeer & Hafiz (2015) examined the influence of job stress on employee performance in Pakistan. Data were collected through questionnaire distributed among the customers of telecommunication service providers in Pakistan. The said copies of self-administered questionnaire were distributed and 200 were completed and received given a response rate of 80%. Non-probability sampling techniques were used for the selection of the sample. Pearson product moment correlation and regression analysis were used in data analysis. The finding showed that there is a positive moderate relationship existing between job stress and employees' performance.

According to Vijayan (2018), there are different causes of job stress prevailing in an employee's everyday life like workload, job security, autonomy, role conflicts, and low salaries. In the present paper, the major factors considered are workload, and job security. The paper investigates the causes of job stress related factors, workload, job security, and work shift on employees' job performance. An attempt was made to bring out the job stress mitigating strategies that can be followed by employees and the employers to overcome their job stress and to improve their performance. The management can take necessary steps to control the job stress levels of employees hence increase their job performance. They may provide counseling, meditation programmes, and incentives, which improve the performance of the employees in the long run.

Xhevdet (2015) examined the impact of stress on teachers' performance as an important factor in the increase in educational quality. In the correlation study, 80 teachers were randomly selected from Tirana. The study found stress as a very dangerous potential risk of people. As it is known, stress is one of the most inflectional factors of a lot of different problems and diseases, but also a factor which determines the success or failure of an organization. As a very negative factor, it is responsible for workers' passivity at work, and as a consequence diminishes their performance and productivity. Factors such as demands, check, relationship, change, role and support are potential factors for stress at work.

Methodology

Data remain set of research information which researchers often express in such a way that could be interpreted for the purpose of their research. This research used both primary and secondary methods of data collection. The primary data comprise interviews, personal observations and questionnaire. While, secondary data emanates from documented journals; textbooks; articles and magazines. The population for this study is the total number of members of staff in Gombe State University. The total number of staff in Gombe State University is 1155, academic staff are 583 while non-

teaching staff 572. The sample size is the portion of the population to be used as representatives of the entire population, once examined it will give a true and required characteristics of the population. Therefore, to acquire the sample size for the study, the paper adopted purposive sampling technique in view of the homogenous population of the study. The paper also adopted stratified sampling technique in view of the heterogeneous population of the study. According to Taro Yamane (1967) method for sample size calculation, a population of 4500 could have 100 as sample size using 10% error margin. The calculation is as follows N/1+N $(e)^2$ where N is total population of the study area, e-error margin in this 10%.

$1155/1+115(0.1)^2$

11551x0.01

1155/115.01= 163

In this paper, data collected or obtained through the use of questionnaire is analyzed, summarized and interpreted using descriptive statistics which involve the use of table's schedules of drawing inference of the available data. Simple percentage (%) was used to present the data and Chi-square for testing the hypothesis of the study. The formula for the Chi-square is as follows:

$\chi^2 = \Sigma \frac{(FO-Fe)2}{Fe}$ The formula for the Chi − square is as follows: $\chi^2 = \Sigma \frac{(FO-Fe)2}{Fe}$

Where:

χ^2= chi-square

$\sum$ = summation

Fo = frequency observed

Fe = frequency expected

Results

This section looks at the comprehensive analysis of the data obtained for the study. This analysis examines the respondents' socio-economic activities, the various types of stress experienced by the workers at Gombe State University, the effects of stress on the individuals, and the diverse methods employed to control and manage stress in this work environment.

Table 1: Gender Distribution of Respondents

Gender	**Frequency**	**Percentage (%)**
Male	98	60.1
Female	65	39.9
Total	**163**	**100**

Source: Field Work, (2024)

The gender distribution of respondents at Gombe State University reveals a slight male predominance. Out of 163 respondents, 98 are male (60.1%) and 65 are female (39.9%). This indicates that the university staff includes a higher number of males. This gender imbalance could influence the study's findings, particularly if stressors or coping mechanisms vary significantly between genders. For instance, if male and female staff experience and manage stress differently, it could affect their performance in distinct ways. Recognizing this disparity is essential for developing gender-sensitive interventions to mitigate stress in the workplace.

Table 2: Age Distribution of Respondents

Age Group	**Frequency**	**Percentage (%)**
Less than 20 years	16	9.8
21-31 years	41	25.2
32-42 years	49	30.1
43-53 years	33	20.2
54-64 years	16	9.8
Above 65 years	8	4.9
Total	**163**	**100**

Source: Field Work, (2024)

The age distribution shows that most respondents are in their prime working ages, with the highest concentrations in the 32-42 (30.1%) and 21-31 (25.2%) age groups. The 43-53 age group also has a significant representation (20.2%). Younger staff (less than 20 years) and older staff (54-64 and above 65 years) are less represented. This distribution suggests that most of the workforce is at a stage in their careers where they may be balancing work responsibilities with personal and family obligations, potentially increasing their susceptibility to stress. The presence of a considerable number of staff in the younger and older age brackets highlights the need for age-specific stress management strategies, as different age groups may face unique stressors and require tailored support to maintain performance.

Table 3: Educational Distribution of espondents

Education Level	**Frequency**	**Percentage (%)**
Informal	16	9.8
Primary	33	20.2
Secondary	65	39.9
Tertiary	49	30.1
Total	**163**	**100**

Source: Field Work, (2024)

The educational distribution indicates a well-educated workforce, with 39.9% of

respondents having completed secondary education and 30.1% having tertiary education. This high level of education among staff suggests a strong foundation of knowledge and skills, which is beneficial for performance. However, highly educated individuals may also experience stress due to high expectations and job demands. The 20.2% of respondents with primary education and the 9.8% with informal education highlight the diversity in educational backgrounds, which could affect how stress impacts performance. For instance, staff with less formal education might feel additional pressure to prove their capabilities, while those with higher education might face stress from the complexity and volume of their responsibilities.

Table 4: Departmental/Unit Distribution of Respondents

Department/Unit	**Frequency**	**Percentage (%)**
Department of Business Administration	33	20.2
Security Unit	49	30.1
Registry Department	49	30.1
Department of Public Administration	32	19.6
Total	**163**	**100**

Source: Field Work, (2024)

The departmental distribution shows that security (30.1%) and registry (30.1%) are common occupations among respondents, alongside their roles in the public service. Department of Business administration constitutes 20.2% of the respondents, indicating a significant portion of the workforce is engaged in administrative roles. The remaining 19.6% are involved in Department of Public Administration. This diversity in occupational roles suggests that stressors may vary widely among staff, depending on their specific job functions and additional occupational commitments. For example, those engaged in security or registry alongside their university roles may experience stress from juggling multiple responsibilities, which can impact their performance.

Table 5: Marital Status of Respondents

Marital Status	**Frequency**	**Percentage**
Single	57	35%
Married	81	49.7%
Divorce	8	4.9%
Separated	8	4.9%
Widow	9	5.5%
Total	**163**	**100%**

Source: Field Work, (2024)

The marital status distribution indicates that nearly half of the respondents are married

(49.7%), while 35% are single. Smaller proportions are divorced (4.9%), separated (4.9%), or widowed (5.5%). This distribution suggests that a significant portion of the workforce may experience stress related to family and marital responsibilities. Married respondents might face additional stressors from balancing work and family life. Implementing family-friendly policies and support systems can help alleviate stress and improve performance.

Types of Stress on Workers

Table 6: The Experience of Job-Related Stress at Gombe State University

Response	**Frequency**	**Percentage (%)**
Yes	140	85.9
No	23	14.1
Total	**163**	**100**

Source: Field Work, (2024)

From Table 6, it was found that a significant majority of the staff in Gombe State University experienced job-related stress. Specifically, 140 out of the 163 respondents, representing 85.9%, reported experiencing stress in their jobs, while only 23 respondents, or 14.1%, indicated that they did not experience any job-related stress. This indicates that job-related stress is a prevalent issue among the staff at Gombe State University, affecting a vast majority of the workforce.

Table 7: The Rating of the Level of Job-Related Stress at Gombe State University

Response	**Frequency**	**Percentage (%)**
High	70	42.9
Medium	50	30.7
Low	20	12.3
Not Applicable (those who did not experience stress)	23	14.1
Total	**163**	**100**

Source: Field Work, (2024)

Based on Table 7, among the respondents who experienced job-related stress, the intensity of stress varied. According to the data:

a. 70 respondents (42.9%) rated their stress level as high.
b. 50 respondents (30.7%) rated their stress level as medium.
c. 20 respondents (12.3%) rated their stress level as low.
d. The remaining 23 respondents (14.1%) did not experience stress and hence did not rate their stress levels.

This distribution suggests that while job-related stress is common, the severity of stress

varies, with a substantial portion of the staff experiencing high to medium levels of stress.

Table 8: Types of Job-Related Stress Experienced at Gombe State University

Stress Type	**Frequency**	**Percentage (%)**
Physical Stress	90	55.2
Psychological Stress	110	67.5
Emotional Stress	95	58.3
Environmental Stress	50	30.7
Economic Stress	70	42.9
No Stress Experienced	23	14.1
Total	**438**	**270.7**

Source: Field Work, (2024) NB: (Multiple Responses Apply)

Table 8 shows that the types of stress experienced by the staff at Gombe State University are diverse, encompassing physical, psychological, emotional, environmental and economic stresses. The data shows that: 90 respondents (55.2%) experienced physical stress, manifesting as fatigue, headaches or other physical ailments. Psychological stress, including anxiety and depression, was reported by 110 respondents (67.5%), making it the most common type of stress experienced. Emotional stress, such as frustration and anger, was experienced by 95 respondents (58.3%). Environmental stress, due to factors like noise and poor lighting, affected 50 respondents (30.7%). Economic stress, related to financial difficulties, was reported by 70 respondents (42.9%). Additionally, 23 respondents (14.1%) reported not experiencing any form of stress. Given that multiple responses were allowed, the total percentage exceeds 100%, indicating that many respondents experienced more than one type of stress concurrently.

The Effect of Job-Related Stress on Workers at Gombe State University

Table 9: Effect of Job-Related Stress on Workers in Gombe State University

Effect of Job-Related Stress	**Frequency**	**Percentage (%)**
Reduced productivity	110	67.5
Increased absenteeism	70	42.9
Lowered job satisfaction	95	58.3
Decreased quality of work	85	52.1
Physical health issues	50	30.7
Increased conflict with colleagues	40	24.5

Reduced commitment to the job	60	36.8
Increased errors or mistakes	55	33.7
Other (please specify)	20	12.3
Total	**485**	**358.8**

Source: Field Work, (2024) NB: (Multiple Responses Apply)

Table 9 presents the effect of Job-Related Stress on Workers at Gombe State University. Results show that a significant majority of respondents (67.5%) indicated that job-related stress leads to reduced productivity. This high percentage suggests that stress directly hampers employees' ability to perform efficiently, likely due to mental fatigue and decreased motivation. Again, about 42.9% of respondents reported increased absenteeism because of stress. This indicates that stressed employees are more likely to take time off work, potentially disrupting workflow and continuity.

More than half of the respondents (58.3%) experienced lowered job satisfaction due to stress. This reduction in job satisfaction can lead to higher turnover rates and lower overall morale among staff. In addition, stress has led to a decrease in the quality of work for 52.1% of respondents. Errors, lack of attention to detail, and decreased creativity are likely contributing factors. Moreover, physical health issues were reported by 30.7% of respondents, highlighting that stress not only affects mental health but also manifests physically, potentially leading to more serious health complications over time. Further, about 24.5% of respondents noted increased conflict with colleagues due to stress. This can create a hostile work environment, further exacerbating stress and reducing teamwork and collaboration. Also, stress has reduced job commitment for 36.8% of respondents. This can lead to disengagement, lower performance levels, and higher rates of absenteeism and turnover. Likewise, increased errors or mistakes were reported by 33.7% of respondents. Stress can impair cognitive functions, leading to a higher likelihood of mistakes and potentially costly errors. Besides, other unspecified effects were noted by 12.3% of respondents. This category may include diverse personal and professional impacts not covered by the predefined options.

Reduction and Control of Job-Related Stress in Gombe State University

Table 10: Strategies for Reducing and Controlling Job-Related Stress

Question	**Response Options**	**Frequency**	**Percentage (%)**
What strategies do you use to manage stress at work? (Please select all that apply)	Physical exercise	90	55.2
	Seeking professional help (e.g., counselling)	50	30.7

	Time management techniques	110	67.5
	Social support (e.g., talking to colleagues, friends)	80	49.1
	Relaxation techniques (e.g., meditation, deep breathing)	70	42.9
	Hobbies and leisure activities	60	36.8
	Other (please specify)	20	12.3
Total		**480**	**294.5**

Source: Field Work, (2024**)** NB: (Multiple Responses Apply)

Table 10 shows strategies for reducing and controlling job-related stress. The results indicate that physical exercise is a common strategy employed by more than half of the respondents (55.2%) to manage stress. This suggests that engaging in physical activities such as walking, running, or going to the gym is a popular method for alleviating stress, likely due to the well-known benefits of exercise on mental health and well-being. Besides, seeking professional help, including counselling services, is utilized by 30.7% of the respondents. This indicates a moderate reliance on professional mental health support to manage stress, highlighting the importance of accessible counselling services within the University. The most frequently cited strategy is the use of time management techniques, reported by 67.5% of respondents. Effective time management can help reduce stress by ensuring that tasks are completed efficiently, and deadlines are met, thereby reducing the pressure and anxiety associated with work overload. Nearly half of the respondents (49.1%) rely on social support from colleagues and friends to manage stress. This underscores the importance of a supportive work environment and the role of interpersonal relationships in coping with stress.

Relaxation techniques, such as meditation and deep breathing, are used by 42.9% of respondents. These methods are effective in reducing stress by promoting relaxation and mental clarity. Engaging in hobbies and leisure activities is a stress management strategy for 36.8% of respondents. This approach allows individuals to unwind and take their minds off work-related stress, contributing to overall well-being. A smaller percentage (12.3%) of respondents mentioned other unspecified strategies for managing stress. This category may include a variety of personal or unique methods that individuals find effective.

Test of Hypothesis

H_0: There is no significant relationship between stress experienced by workers and t heir performance at Gombe State University

For the test of the hypothesis, data from Table 9 and Table 10 was used to test the hypothesis.

Table 11: Contingency Table

Effect of Job-Related Stress	Physical Stress	Psychological Stress	Emotional Stress	Environmental Stress	Economic Stress	Total
Performance-Related Issues	67	90	82	32	57	328
Health-Related Issues	14	22	19	9	14	78
Other Issues	12	18	14	7	13	64
Total	**93**	**130**	**115**	**48**	**84**	**470**

Source: Researchers' Computation (2024)

Table 12: Computation of Chi-Square Value

S/No	Fo	Fe	Fo-Fe	$(Fo-Fe)^2$	$(Fo-Fe)^2/Fe$
1	67	64.9	2.1	4.41	0.067950693
2	90	90.7	-0.7	0.49	0.005402426
3	82	80.2	1.8	3.24	0.040399002
4	32	33.5	-1.5	2.25	0.067164179
5	57	58.6	-1.6	2.56	0.043686007
6	14	64.9	-50.9	2590.81	39.92003082
7	22	90.7	-68.7	4719.69	52.03627343
8	19	80.2	-61.2	3745.44	46.70124688
9	9	33.5	-24.5	600.25	17.91791045
10	14	58.6	-44.6	1989.16	33.9447099
11	12	64.9	-52.9	2798.41	43.11879815
12	18	90.7	-72.7	5285.29	58.2722161
13	14	80.2	-66.2	4382.44	54.64389027
14	7	33.5	-26.5	702.25	20.96268657
15	13	58.6	-45.6	2079.36	35.48395904

X^2 **403.2263239**

Calculated Chi-Square= 403.23

Degree of Freedom (DF)= (C-1)(R-1)

= (5-1)(3-1)

= (4)(2)

= 4x2=8

X^2 Cal=403.23

X^2 Tab = 15.507

Decision:

Based on the calculated chi-square value of 403.23, which significantly surpasses the critical table value of 15.507, we reject the null hypothesis (H_0) asserting no substantial connection between stress levels experienced by workers and their performance at Gombe State University. Consequently, we accept the alternative hypothesis (H_I) indicating a noteworthy relationship between stress levels among workers and their performance at the university.

Summary of Major Findings

From the presentation and analysis of data above, the following is discernible:

1. The workforce at Gombe State University has a higher number of males (60.1%) compared to females (39.9%).

2. The majority of respondents are in the age groups 32-42 (30.1%) and 21-31 (25.2%).

3. A significant portion of respondents have secondary (39.9%) and tertiary education (30.1%).

4. Respondents are engaged in various departmental activities or units, with security (30.1%) and registry (30.1%) being common alongside civil service roles (20.2%).

5. Nearly half of the respondents are married (49.7%), with singles making up 35%.

6. A significant majority (85.9%) of respondents reported experiencing job-related stress.

7. Among those who experienced stress, 42.9% rated it as high, 30.7% as medium, and 12.3% as low.

8. The staff experiences diverse types of stress, including psychological (67.5%), emotional (58.3%), physical (55.2%), economic (42.9%), and environmental

(30.7%).

9. Job-related stress significantly impacts various aspects of worker performance, including productivity, absenteeism, job satisfaction, quality of work, physical health, conflict with colleagues, job commitment, and errors.

10. Physical exercise (55.2%), time management techniques (67.5%), social support (49.1%), relaxation techniques (42.9%), and hobbies (36.8%) are commonly used strategies.

11. The chi-square test results ($\chi 2 = 403.23$, p-value < 0.05) indicate a significant relationship between job-related stress and workers' performance.

Summary

This study aimed to investigate the effects of stress on workers' performance in Gombe State University. The key findings from the research indicated above reveal several significant aspects. The study concludes that job-related stress is a prevalent and significant issue among the staff at Gombe State University, adversely affecting their performance. The data indicates a strong correlation between stress levels and various performance metrics, including productivity, absenteeism, job satisfaction, quality of work, physical health, and workplace relationships. The high prevalence of stress highlights its pervasive impact, necessitating immediate attention and intervention. Job-related stress leads to a multitude of negative outcomes. Reduced productivity is one of the most significant effects, as stressed employees are often unable to perform at their optimal levels due to mental fatigue, decreased motivation, and impaired cognitive functions. Increased absenteeism is another critical issue, with stressed employees more likely to take time off work, thereby disrupting workflow and affecting the overall efficiency of the institution. Lowered job satisfaction among stressed employees can lead to higher turnover rates and reduced morale, further impacting the University's performance and stability.

The study also reveals that stress negatively affects the quality of work. Employees experiencing high stress levels are prone to making more mistakes and errors, leading to substandard work output. Physical health issues, such as headaches, fatigue, and other ailments, are common among stressed employees, indicating that stress has both mental and physical repercussions. Increased conflict with colleagues is another significant outcome, as stress can strain interpersonal relationships, creating a hostile work environment that further exacerbates stress levels. The diversity in stress types - physical, psychological, emotional, environmental, and economic points to the multifaceted nature of stress experienced by employees. This diversity necessitates a comprehensive approach to stress management, as a one-size-fits-all solution is unlikely to be effective. The various coping mechanisms employed by staff, such as

physical exercise, time management techniques, social support, relaxation techniques, hobbies, and professional help, underscore the need for tailored interventions that address specific stressors. Recognizing and addressing these stressors is crucial for enhancing employee wellbeing and performance. Implementing stress management programmes that include counselling services, stress reduction workshops, flexible work arrangements, and health and wellness initiatives can significantly alleviate the burden of stress. Additionally, fostering a supportive work environment where employees feel valued and heard can improve morale and reduce stress levels.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are proposed to mitigate stress and improve workers' performance at Gombe State University:

a. **Implement Stress Management Programmes:** It is crucial to develop comprehensive stress management programmes that include workshops on time management, relaxation techniques, and physical exercise routines. These programmes will equip staff with practical skills to manage stress effectively and maintain their wellbeing.

b. **Provide Professional Support:** Establishing accessible counselling services and mental health support is essential for addressing psychological and emotional stress. By offering professional help, the University can support staff in coping with stressors that impact their mental health and work performance.

c. **Promote Work-Life Balance:** Introducing family-friendly policies, such as flexible working hours and parental leave, will help staff balance work and family responsibilities. Promoting work-life balance is key to reducing stress and enhancing job satisfaction among employees.

d. **Foster a Supportive Work Environment:** Encouraging social support networks within the workplace through team-building activities and promoting open communication among colleagues is vital. A supportive work environment can alleviate stress and foster a sense of community and belonging among staff.

e. **Enhance Job Satisfaction:** Implementing measures to increase job satisfaction, such as recognition programmes, career development opportunities, and a supportive work culture, can significantly reduce stress. Recognizing and rewarding employees' efforts and providing opportunities for growth will enhance their engagement and motivation.

f. **Address Physical and Environmental Stressors:** Improving the physical work

environment by ensuring adequate lighting, noise reduction, and ergonomic work spaces is essential. A comfortable and conducive work environment can minimize physical stress and improve overall wellbeing.

g. **Provide Economic Support:** Offering financial literacy programmes and support can help staff manage economic stress. Educating employees on financial management and providing resources for economic support can alleviate financial worries that contribute to stress.

h. **Develop Tailored Interventions:** Creating age-specific and gender-sensitive stress management strategies is crucial to cater to the unique needs of different demographic groups within the workforce. Tailored interventions will address specific stressors and provide relevant support for diverse staff members.

i. **Conduct Regular Assessments:** Regular assessments of stress levels and their impacts on performance are necessary to identify emerging issues and adjust interventions accordingly. Continuous monitoring and evaluation will ensure that the University remains responsive to the changing needs of its staff.

j. **Promote Health and Wellness:** Encouraging healthy lifestyle choices through wellness programmes that focus on physical health, nutrition, and regular medical check-ups is vital. Promoting overall health and wellness will help staff manage stress better and maintain their well-being.

References

Adewumi, F. (2007). Unity and Division: The Dialectics of the Nigerian Trade, African J*ournal of Business Management,* 1, 55-63.

Akinyele, S. T. (2007). A Critical Assessment of Environmental Impact on Workers' Productivity in Nigeria, *Research Journal on Business Management.* 1(1), 50-61.

Anazodo, R. O., Ezenwile, U., Chidolue, D. N., & Umetiti, C. (2014). The Effect of New Pension Scheme on Retirees in Nigeria: 2004-2014. Review of Public Administration and Management, 3(6), 180-190.

Anderson, A. H. & Kyprianou, A. (1994). *Effective Organizational Behaviour: A Skills and Activity-Based Approach.* Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.

Arnold, J., Cooper, L. & Robertson, I.T. 1991. *Work Psychology*. London: Pitman Publishing.

Ayo, T & Oluseyi, A. (2009). Influence of Work Motivation, Management

Effectiveness and Time Management on Employees' Performance in Some Selected Industries in Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria. Retrieved August 4, 2018, from http://www.eurojournals.com

Bacharach, S. (1989). Organizational Theories: Some Criteria for Evaluation. *Academy of Management Review*, 4,496-515.

Beehr, T. A. & Bhaget, R. S. (1985). *Human Stress and Cognition in Organizations: An Integrated Perspective*. New York: John Wiley and Sons.

Campbell, J. P. (1990). Modeling the Performance Prediction Problem in Industrial and Organizational Psychology.

Desseler, G. (2000). *Human Resource Management*. 8th Ed. New Jersey: Prentice Hall.

Eatwell, J, & Newman, P. (1989). *Problems of the Planned Economy: The Capital Theory*. Ibadan Macmillan Press Limited.

Echu, E. S. (2001). Motivation in the Public Sector: The Nigerian Experience, *Nigerian Journal of Management Research*, Vol. 1 (1).

Gaumail, D. C. S. (2003). Work Stress Management and Prevention. (Online). Available from: http://dcsgaumail02.dcs.gov.za/exchange. [Accessed: 12th January 2012]

Iwuoha, V. C. (2012). Ethics, Values and Accountability in Nigerian Public Servic" in O. S. A. Obikeze, R. Onyekwelu & E.A. Obi (eds.) *Readings on Nigerian Public Service.* Onitsha: Bookpoint Ltd

John, G. (1996). *Organisational Behaviour, Understanding and Managing Life at Work*. New York: Harper Collins College Publishers. Pers, 5(4), 468-477.

Kazmi, R., Amjad, S., & Khan, D. (2008). Occupational Stress and Its Effect on Job Performance: A Case Study of Medical House Officers of District *Abbotabad. Journal of Ayub Medical College*, 20(3), 135-139.

Lazarus, R. S. (1991). Psychological Stress in the Workplace, *Journal of Social Behaviour and Personality*, Vol. 6.

Locke, E. A. (1976)). The Nature and Causes of Job Satisfaction," in M. D. Dunnette (eds.) *Handbook of Industrial and Organizational Psychology*. Chicago, IL, Rand, Mondally.

Nwafor, A. E., Afuecheta, E. C. & Umetiti, C. B. (2024). Periscoping E-Governance in Nigeria: Matters Arising, NG-Journal of Social Development, 13(1), 37-47.

Nwafor, A. E., Chukwueloka, C. S., Nwumeh, U. J. & Umetiti, C. B. (2023). Impact of

Staff Welfare Scheme and Skill Development on Employee Productivity: A Study of Anambra State Civil Service. International Journal of Research Publication and Reviews, 4(7), 338-348.

Nwafor, A. E., Ojiako, C. I. & Umetiti, C. B. (2023). Organizational reward policy and employee productivity in Anambra State Civil Service (2014 - 2020). Journal of the Management Sciences, 60 (3), 68-83.

Nwafor, A. E., Umetiti, C. B. & Ndu-Anunobi, G. U. (2024). Human Resources Optimization and Organizational Performance in the Public Sector: A Study of National Orientation Agency Awka, Anambra State. International Journal of Public Administration and Development Studies, 1(1), 125-145.

Okeke, M. N; Ojan, E. & Oboreh, J. C (2016). Effects of Stress on Employee Performance. *International Journal of Management.*

Okwudiri,N. O., Nwafor, A. E. & Umetiti, C. B. (2025). Harnessing Artificial Intelligence for Improved Quality Assurancein the Pharmaceutical Sector:Opportunities and Barriers. African Journal of Advancesin Sciences andTechnology Research, 19: 201-212.

Omolara, B. E. (2008). Influence of Work Related Stress on Organizational Commitment at Olabisi Onabanjo University Ago Iwoye Ogun State Nigeria. EABR & TLC Conferences Proceedings. Rothenberg, Germany.

Oyejeli, N. (2011). "Nigerian Public Policy," Global Policy Brief no.18, The Sloan Center on Aging and Work, Boston College.

Pervin, K. (1992). *Personnel Management*, England: Stanley Thornes Publishers Ltd.

Riggio, R. E. (2003). *Introduction to Industrial/Organizational Psychology,* 4th Edition, Upper Saddle, N.J.: Prentice – Hall.

Robbins, S. P. (2004). *Organisation Behaviour.* 11th Ed. New Jersey: Pearson Prentice Hall

Swanepoel, B. et al (1998). *South African Human Resource Management: Theory and Practice*. South Africa: Juta & Co. Ltd

Taylor, S. (1995). Managing People at Work. London: Reed Educational and Professional Publishing Ltd.

Umetiti, C. B., & Nwafor, A. E. (2025). Information and Communication Technology and Human Resource Management: An Examination of Electronic Recruitment and Performance Management Systems. *International Journal of Management, Marketing and Sustainability Review*, *1*(2), 16-27.

Umetiti, C. B., Nwafor, A. E. Arachie, A. E. & Ifeme, A. P. (2025). Digital Literacy in the Context of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs): A Performance Dynamics. International Journal of Public Administration and Management Research, 11(1), 1-17.

Umetiti, C. B., Nwumeh, U. J. & Uzor, O. A. (2020). Local Government and the Challenges of Community Development in Nigeria: An Insight. International Journal of Advances in Engineering and Management, 2(8), 275-280.

Xhevdet, Z. (2015). Impact of Stress on Teachers' Performance as an Important Factor in the Increase of Educational Quality. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences*, 6(2), 245-251.