

Occupational Stress and Academic Staff Job Performance in Two Nigerian Universities

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Abstract

Available reports provide an account of academic staff's poor job performance in higher education institutions and universities in particular. Consequently, a growing body of research has been attracted to this area, including those seeking ways to understand the problem and others aimed at proffering solutions. This study contributes to the literature by investigating the influence of occupational stress on the job performance of academic staff in universities. Three null hypotheses directed the study in line with the quantitative ex-post facto research design. A sample of 150 respondents was obtained using the systematic random sampling technique from a population of 400 lecturers in the Faculty of Education from two public universities in Nigeria. A 31-item questionnaire was used for data collection. The null hypotheses were tested at the .05 alpha level using simple linear regression analysis. It was revealed that remuneration is a significant positive predictor of academic staff job performance. The prediction of workload was negatively non-significant on the job performance of academics. The provision of institutional amenities has a positive but non-significant prediction on academic staff job performance in the two public universities. It was concluded that occupational stress significantly influences the job performance of lecturers in universities. The study recommended that the government constantly pay lecturers' salaries as and when due. Institutional managers should reward lecturers with outstanding performance to boost their morale for effective service delivery.

Keywords: institutional amenities, lecturers, occupation, remuneration, workload

1. Introduction

Stress is a universal phenomenon that every living organism experiences. Regardless of age, gender, occupation or socioeconomic status, humans experience stress. Hans Selye, the father of the modern concept of stress in 1975, described it as the "spice of life" in which complete freedom can only be attained at death. Factors, situations or conditions that tend to cause stress are generally referred to as "stressors" (Mohajan, 2012). Stress may be physical, biological, emotional or psychological and can be found everywhere (including at home, work and in a social environment). Nonetheless, even though stress is unavoidable, its effect can either be beneficial or harmful to an individual. Scholars have revealed that the harmful nature of stress affects two-thirds of the number of people who visit doctors (Drabick et al., 2021; Walkowiak et al., 2021; Zvada & Bhebhe, 2019). It has also been disclosed that

seven of the top leading causes of death are directly linked to stress (Goodday & Friend, 2019; Quick & Henderson, 2016; Yazon & Ang-Manaig, 2019). Given this outlook, stress can be considered one of the most formidable health and performance threats of the 21st century. This is because no one is immune to stress (Alam et al., 2018; Ashipala & Shilunga, 2020; Chowdary & Kumar, 2018) since it occurs in every occupation (Breitenbach et al., 2021; Masih, 2016; Jessop, 2019).

Occupational stress, known as professional stress (Mohamed, 2018), job stress or work-related stress, is an aspect of stress that an employee or a group of workers experience in their workplace. According to Mohajan (2012), it is an issue of great concern to both employers and employees because of its effect on well-being, performance, and productivity. Robbins et al. (2013) define occupational stress as the adverse reaction employees experience due to extraordinary demands, opportunities and constraints at the workplace. Scholars have credenced the prevalence of occupational stress among lecturers of higher institutions in Nigeria (Tijani, 2015; Usoro & Etuk, 2016; Usoro, 2018; Zvada & Bhebhe, 2019). Job stress may arise from lecturers performing their core functions which, according to Mushemeza (2016), centre on teaching, conducting and publishing research, and community service. Performing these functions may have the capacity to challenge, threaten or harm the well-being of academic staff. Stress can affect staff job performance if tasks are performed in an unpleasant “content” and “context”. According to the World Health Organisation (WHO, 2020), “work content” refers to the quality and quantity of workload, job demands and specifications, as well as the working hours that employees are expected to accomplish. The same source explains “work context” as the work situations (which include the physical and social environment, benefits, remuneration and opportunities) accrual from the job, organisational structure and institutional policies (WHO, 2020).

Although there is a dearth of stress rates data globally, reports from different studies have provided ample evidence that academic staff face stress across different parts of the world. For instance, the American Psychological Association (APA) estimated that as many as seventy-five per cent of individuals in America suffer stress-related symptoms, such as headaches, fatigue, and sleeping difficulties (APA, 2020). Other studies have shown that university academic staff or workers face stress in Asian countries such as China (Yang et al., 2021), Indonesia (Lestari & Rizkiyah, 2021), Malaysia (Manaf et al., 2021; Yousefi et al., 2019), and Romania (Duman et al., 2018). In Europe, studies have shown that academic staff of universities experience work-related stress in the United Kingdom (Johnson et al., 2019; Wray & Kinman, 2022), Spain (Odrizola-González et al., 2020), Italy (Brondino et al., 2022), Austria (Komlenac et al., 2022) and Serbia (Ignjatović et al., 2020). In Africa, evidence abounds from recent studies in South Africa (Poalses & Bezuidenhout, 2018), Egypt (Gabr et al., 2021; Soltan et al., 2020), Ethiopia (Kabito et al., 2020; Tesfaye et al., 2022), Ghana (Kodua-Ntim et al., 2021) and Nigeria (Aderibigbe et al., 2020; Aduma et al., 2022; Ene et al., 2021; Ogba et al., 2020) that university academic staff are facing one form of stress or the other.

The above suggests that stress occurrence among university academic staff or other workers is a pervasive trend in almost all nations worldwide. The COVID-19 pandemic has also compounded issues by heightening the stress levels experienced by adults. For instance, the Harris Poll conducted on behalf of APA in 2021 found that one in three persons (32 per cent) had difficulty making even the most fundamental choices because of the stress associated with the coronavirus outbreak (APA, 2021). Various studies prove that tertiary institutions’ academic staff work under unfavourable conditions in Nigeria (Aina & Adeleke, 2018; Archibong et al., 2010; Osaat & Ekechukwu, 2017). This may arise from irregular, partial or no payment of salaries and wages. Others may include inadequate, non-functional or unavailable resources and amenities such as conducive classrooms, laboratories, libraries and offices (Gabrielli & Lund, 2020; Giauque et al., 2019; Zaidman-Zait et al., 2017). Excessive workload (such as heavy teaching schedule for lecturers), large class size, attendance for administrative duties, incessant strikes, school interruptions, students’ delinquencies, obnoxious institutional policies, and poor working environment could be other unfavourable conditions contributing to stress. Such factors may have the capacity to affect the job performance of academic staff in public universities.

Job performance is a concept that scholars have viewed as the degree to which a combination of duties (such as teaching, research and community service) are performed by academic staff of universities (Mbon et al., 2019; Odigwe et al., 2020; Owan et al., 2020). Academic staff job performance has also been defined as the association between teaching features and educational success in the classroom (Okoi & Odigwe, 2018). Thus, the influence of stress on the job performance of academic staff may be observed by their teaching effectiveness, job commitment, satisfaction and motivation to perform, among others. From the preceding, the importance of lecturers’ job performance cannot be overemphasised because of the lingering and far-reaching effect it may have on the educational outcome of students and the nation.

Numerous studies have been carried out on occupational stress and job performance. For instance, Usoro (2018) found that stress-causing factors such as workload, career progress, facilities and the work setting were significant predictors of academic staff job effectiveness. Likewise, Blumenthal (2003) illustrated the effect of stress on employees' performance using an inverted U-type curve. The study revealed that employees' performance increases as stress increases. However, when the stress becomes excessive, the performance of employees will reach a peak and then begin to decline. Nevertheless, a significant positive relationship between work stress and job performance was found by scholars (Amoako et al., 2017; Mathur et al., 2007; Muis, 2021). These studies argue that stress and job performance of academic staff increase or decrease in the same direction but to varying degrees. Other studies have shown that occupational stress contributes to low performance of duties (Adenuga, 2021; Agu, 2021), poor productivity (Osumah et al., 2017; Hegmann, 2020), increased absenteeism (Odugwe, 2018), poor health (Malik & Björkqvist, 2018; Spanos et al., 2020) and aggression (Leila et al., 2017; Masa'Deh et al., 2020), creativity and innovation (Rich, 2016).

Nevertheless, a growing body of literature shows that stress and workload are significant predictors of teachers' effectiveness (Magalong & Torreón, 2021; Suraiya & Shakir, 2020). On the contrary, a study has revealed that stress due to workload has no significant influence on the professional effectiveness of teachers (Amalu, 2014). The difference in the results of various studies is attributable to the type of occupation understudied or the type of stress considered. However, in the current study, we investigated the extent to which occupational stress (such as remuneration, workload and the provision of institutional amenities) influences the job performance of the academic staff of two Nigerian public universities.

1.1 Remuneration and Job Performance

Remuneration refers to a reward, benefit, compensation or emolument an individual or group of individuals receive on account of services rendered. It includes any financial rewards that an employee or group of workers gets from an employer for their work, services, and loyalty (Ogunyemi et al., 2019; Ojeleye, 2017). In other words, remuneration can be viewed as part of a transactional process whereby rewards or benefits are exchanged for services rendered by an individual. Kassim (2011) noted that remuneration could either be extrinsic or intrinsic. Whereas, Akter and Husain (2016) averred that it could be performance-based, merit-based, outcome-based, competency-based, or equity-based. There seems to be a general agreement among studies on remuneration and job performance of employees. This is because the bulk of studies in the literature has found a strong positive correlation between remuneration and job performance (e.g., Akter & Husain, 2016; Babagana & Dungus, 2015; Ojeleye, 2017; Onyancha et al., 2014; Yamoah, 2013). This suggests that the job performance of academic staff in universities increases with remuneration and vice versa. Besides, Victor and Babatunde (2014) noted that most teaching staff in Nigeria's public universities are unmotivated and unhappy due to inadequate pay.

Nonetheless, Muchai et al. (2018) averred that remuneration represents a significant challenge for African employees' performance, especially in public sector organisations or institutions. Evidence of this is the incessant strike embarked on by the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU), with the most recent one spanning over eight (8) months from March 2020 to January 2021 when this research was being carried out. At the time of writing, from 14th February 2022, all the academic staff at Nigerian public universities embarked on industrial action over disagreements with the Federal Republic of Nigeria. The reasons for the strike are not disconnected from the government's non-adherence to implement several remuneration terms in the agreement it signed with the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) in 2009 (Owan & Basse, 2021). According to Usoro (2018), uncertainties like this would predispose lecturers to high levels of stress, affecting their job performance. Despite the high degree of acceptance among studies in the literature, one gap the present study addresses is the dearth of empirical literature treating remuneration as a stress-inducing factor. Past studies have dwelt more on remuneration as income offered to staff for their jobs. In the present study, we viewed remuneration concerning the stress it imposes or otherwise on workers and how that impacts their job performance.

1.2 Workload and Job Performance

Workload refers to the quantity, quality and intensity of a job performed by an individual within a certain period. In the context of academic staff, a workload can be defined as all the activities instructors perform that are directly or indirectly linked to teaching and other commitment to the institution. Amini-Philips and Okonmah (2020) defined it as the professional and non-professional duties lecturers perform as they carry out their instructional activities. It is the totality of periods a lecturer engages in classroom interaction with students and other schedules related to their job, which may be performed within or outside the school (Osifila & Aladetan, 2020).

Workload is a factor that has been found to affect the performance of university academic staff (Fadlurrahman et al., 2021; Janib et al., 2021; Zainuddin et al., 2021). Under a manageable workload, employees are likely to be motivated

to perform, overcome or accomplish tasks. However, a high amount of workload in terms of the quantity (amount of work) and quality (difficulty or complexity of the task) tend to affect performance (Osaat & Ekechukwu, 2017). Moreover, Zaidan and Juariyah (2020) expressed that employees have different capacities to perceive and respond to their workload. While some employees can perform well under a particular workload level, others may be negatively affected. Sudarijati and Kartiwi (2018) stated that internal and external factors could impact the reaction to workload. According to them, external factors include burdens from outside employees' bodies, such as the quantity, difficulty and intensity of job tasks, hours spent on task, and the work situation. Internal factors refer to conditions within employees due to reaction to external factors. Internal factors include somatic factors in age, gender, body type or health status and psychic factors such as motivation, experience, desire, satisfaction and interest in others.

It was discovered by Akinmayowa and Kadiri (2014) in their study that academic employees were highly stressed by a variety of factors, including their workload, research, and professional growth, as well as administrative concerns. An increased stress level may likely affect lecturers' effectiveness in performing their job and result in them rushing over job tasks by not necessarily doing them well. Furthermore, Osaat and Ekechukwu (2017) submitted that lecturers' workload influenced their performance. The cited study concluded that excessive workload led to stress, which aggravated and caused physical and emotional exhaustion, lack of concentration, frustration, diminished effectiveness, lateness or absenteeism to class, anxiety and depression, among others. Furthermore, other studies have discovered a strong negative relationship between lecturers' workload and their productivity (Amini-Philips & Okonmah, 2020; Shah et al., 2011). This evidence implies that an increment in workload allocated to staff is connected to a decline in their job performance and vice versa.

On the contrary, some studies have concluded that stress resulting from the workload of lecturers positively influenced their teaching and research effectiveness to a significant extent (e.g., Larestan, 2020; Usoro & Etuk, 2016). A high amount of workload led to a higher degree of job performance among lecturers. Further arguments in the literature indicated that workload has a weak, positive, but not significant prediction on the job performance of employees (e.g., Pourteimour et al., 2021; Yousefi & Abdullah, 2019). This implies that even though assigning a high workload might improve teachers' job performance, the degree to which this happens is attributable to chance. It has also been revealed by other studies that workload has no significant relationship with teachers' job performance (e.g., Balducci et al., 2021; Johari et al., 2018). These studies did not indicate the direction (whether negative or positive) of the prediction or relationship. This makes it difficult to place these studies in one of the schools earlier presented above. There are further complexities in the debates because a study has also documented that the prediction of workload on employees' (doctors) work performance is both negative and positive in the short and long term (Ahmad et al., 2019).

The literature review suggests that there are four schools of thought in the debate on the effect of workload on academic staff job performance. This means that further research is still plausible in the topical area of workload and job performance. Besides, the study of Ahmad et al. (2019) placed a call for further studies to address some limitations and unexplainable findings in their study. The present study was conducted based on this call and the inconclusive arguments in the literature.

1.3 Provision of Institutional Amenities and Job Performance

Institutional amenities refer to all the workplace features that provide comfort and convenience to employees. They can make the work situation and environment conducive enough to enhance performance. According to Hafeez et al. (2019), the work environment makes up an essential aspect of employees' work-life and affects them in one way or the other. Kasule (2015) emphasised that procedures, systems, structures, tools, or factors in the workplace that favourably or unfavourably impact performance constitute a work environment (workplace). In a school setting, such an environment may include conducive offices and classrooms, laboratories, library facilities, sports and recreational facilities, office and classroom furniture, and a health/medical centre. These conditions would enable staff to have a good image of their job and remain committed (Akporehe, 2011). Isa and Yusoff (2015) opined that most tertiary institutions in Nigeria are faced with many challenges, which, among others, include the inadequacy of facilities and equipment. These challenges tend to have the capacity to influence the performance of academic staff.

An exploratory study by Babatope (2010) revealed that universities are faced with the challenge of inadequate amenities/facilities. It has been shown in some studies that academic staff performance is strongly correlated with the university's work environment (Akporehe, 2011; Kasule, 2015; Oyewole et al., 2019). More specifically, studies have revealed that spacious office(s) with good lighting and ventilation, devoid of noise, will boost staff performance (Agba & Ocheni, 2017; Nanzushi, 2015). In contrast, another research found that their work environment does not influence academics' job performance (Onoyase, 2017). It has been found extensively that a strong, positive and

significant connection exists between school facilities and teachers' job performance (Arop et al., 2019; Okai, 2020; Oyewole et al., 2019). It should be noted that most of these researches looked at school infrastructure and teacher performance in secondary schools. Few research has attempted to predict the work performance of university faculty members based on their access to facilities. This is a crucial gap in the literature that the current study addresses to expand the frontiers of knowledge. An understanding of the link between academic staff performance and access to facilities is critical to the success of the university system. This will promote context-based recommendations founded on research evidence for improvements.

1.4 Theoretical Framework

This study is rooted in Abraham Maslow's theory of human needs (1954) and the Transactional Theory of Stress by Richard Lazarus (1966). Maslow's hierarchy of needs theory states that the recognition and satisfaction of human needs progress through a sequential pattern that is alike and similar in every human. According to this theory, human beings will desire to satisfy their basic needs in the form of food, shelter, warmth and clothing before progressing to satisfy more complex needs like safety and security, social and esteem, and self-actualisation needs. This theory is vital to this study because academic staff have needs they desire to satisfy in their homes, careers, and lives. Thus, being unable to satisfy such needs adequately may place a challenge on their well-being, which could influence their job performance.

Richard Lazarus proposed the transactional stress theory in 1966; however, it has been modified multiple times, the most recent being in 1991 by Lazarus and Folkman. The theory posits that potentially stressful situations will trigger a primary and secondary appraisal whereby an individual evaluates the extent of how challenging, threatening or harmful the situation is in relation to life or well-being and the degree to which the individual feels capable of coping with such situations. The theory emphasises that both individual and situational factors simultaneously influence the occurrence of stress. The theory is essential to this study because it recognises employees' individual and situational uniqueness when exposed to stress. In line with the two theories and empirical studies cited, we formulated the following hypotheses:

Ho₁: Remuneration has no significant prediction on the job performance of academic staff in public universities.

Ho₂: There is no significant prediction of workload on the job performance of academic staff in public universities.

Ho₃: The provision of institutional amenities does not significantly predict the job performance of academic staff in public universities.

2. Methods

This study was conducted using the quantitative ex-post facto research design. Under the quantitative research methods, the ex-post facto research design allows researchers to assess the impact of one variable on another (Leavy, 2017). Furthermore, the design was considered because it does not involve controlling or manipulating independent variables since the situation already exists or has taken place (Cohen et al., 2018; Salkind, 2010). The participants of this study comprised 400 faculty of education academic staff at the two public universities in Calabar Metropolis, Nigeria. A systematic random sampling technique was adopted in selecting a sample of 150 respondents (representing 37.5% of the population). In achieving this, a list of all available academic staff in each department in the faculties of education across the two universities was obtained. After arranging the names of the academic staff alphabetically, the third position was chosen as the starting point. In a progression of three counts, academic staff occupying such positions as third, sixth, ninth, twelfth, fifteenth and so on were systematically selected. The process was stopped immediately the number of selected staff reached the intended number/proportion (37.5%) of the available staff in each department.

The analysis of biodata revealed that 26% of respondents were between the ages of 25 and 34, 48.7% were between 35 and 44, and 12.7% were between the ages of 45 to 54. According to the gender analysis, 60.7 per cent of the respondents were men, and 39.3 per cent were women. Assistant Lecturers accounted for 43.3 per cent of responses. Grade level 1 lecturers accounted for 30%, grade level 2 lecturers constituted 14%, Senior Lecturers were 6%, while Associate Professors and Professors were 3.3 per cent of the participants, respectively. In terms of marital status, 10% of respondents were single, while 90% were married.

The instrument for data collection was a 31-item four-points Likert type scale structured questionnaire on occupational stress and lecturers' job performance. Response options ranged from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree. Two sample items for remuneration are "*my present salary is commensurate with my rank*" and "*my school*

management recognises work that is well done.” Sample items for workload are “I work longer hours than expected in the conditions of service” and “I am often given unmanageable teaching schedules.” Sample items for institutional amenities include: “Electrical power supply to my office is regular” and “My faculty has adequate classrooms to promote effective teaching.” Sample items for academic staff job performance are: “I am always interested in performing my statutory responsibilities of teaching” and “I ensure that students are evaluated after each lesson.” Six items were used to measure remuneration, workload, and the provision of institutional amenities, respectively. However, job performance was measured with 10 items. Three Health Education experts validated the questionnaire at a public university in Cross River State. A trial test was conducted on 30 academic staff members from non-participating institutions. The questionnaire was administered once to them and, upon completion, retrieved for statistical analysis. The reliability index of the questionnaire was established using the Cronbach alpha method of internal consistency measure. A coefficient of .86 indicated that the instrument was internally consistent for measurement.

Primary data were obtained for the study after administering the instrument to the randomly selected respondents. The respondents voluntarily participated in the study after a clear explanation about the nature of the study and their expected roles was offered. Written informed consent was obtained from all participants who signed a “consent to participate” form. Data collection was done physically, and upon completion, we were able to retrieve all the administered copies without any loss. Before processing collected data for analysis, a preliminary examination of all retrieved copies was done to check for any incomplete response that might give rise to missing data. However, our examination did not show any incomplete or incorrectly filled items. Collected data were coded and processed for analysis. Considering that all the Likert scale data were summed to obtain continuous data for all variables, a simple linear regression analysis was performed. Besides, the dataset passed the normality assumption as the skewness and kurtosis values were below 0.5 and 3.0 respectively. The linearity assumption was met because the scatter plot revealed a linear pattern in the relationship between job performance and all the three predictors, respectively.

3. Results

3.1 Hypothesis 1

Remuneration has no significant prediction of the job performance of academic staff in public universities. The predictor variable of this hypothesis is remuneration, while the response variable is lecturers’ job performance. The null hypothesis was tested at the .05 level of significance using simple linear regression analysis. Table 1 revealed that remuneration is responsible for 11% of the total variance in university lecturers’ job performance. This implies that 89% of the unaccounted variance may be due to other factors excluded from the model. The regression model revealed that remuneration is a significant positive predictor of the job performance of academic staff in public universities, $F(1,148) = 19.08$, $p < .05$. The null hypothesis was rejected due to this finding, suggesting that remuneration had a strong predictive effect on the job performance of academic staff in public universities. The result also revealed that other things being equal, a 1% increase in lecturers’ remuneration would lead to a 0.61 increase in their job performance. Based on this result, the regression line of this hypothesis fits as:

$$\text{Job performance} = 41.308 + 0.338 * (\text{Remuneration}) + 1.98 \quad (1)$$

Table 1. Simple Linear Regression Result of the Influence of Remuneration on the Job Performance of Lecturers in Universities

R	R ²	Adj. R ²	SE	B	t
.34	0.11	0.11	3.66	0.61	4.368
Model	SS	Df	MS	F	P
Regression	254.84	1	254.84	19.08	.00
Residual	1,976.91	148	13.36		
Total	2,231.74	149			

3.2 Hypothesis 2

There is no significant prediction of workload on the job performance of academic staff in public universities. Workload is the independent variable in this hypothesis, whereas the job performance of academic staff at public universities is the dependent variable. Simple linear regression analysis was performed to test the null hypothesis at

the .05 level of significance. According to the report in Table 2, academic staff workload accounts for 1% of the variation in their job performance in public universities. In other words, we may assume that 99% of the unexplained variation is attributable to factors not included in the model. The regression coefficient of -0.13 indicates that workload contributes negatively to the job performance of academic staff. More emphatically, a 1% increase in the workload of academic staff is predicted to be associated with a 0.13% drop in their job performance, other variables being constant. However, the model revealed that the prediction of workload on job performance of academic staff in public universities is not statistically significant, $F(1, 148) = 1.46, p > .05$). Consequently, the null hypothesis, which was earlier stated, is supported by the statistical evidence of this study and is, therefore, retained. The regression line of this hypothesis was fitted as follows:

$$\text{Job performance} = 34.59 - 0.099 * (\text{Workload}) + 1.53 \quad (2)$$

Table 2. Simple Linear Regression Result of the Influence of Workload on the Job Performance of Academic Staff in Public Universities

R	R ²	Adj. R ²	SE	B	t
.099	0.01	0.003	3.86	-0.13	-1.21
Model	SS	Df	MS	F	p
Regression	21.72	1	21.72	1.46	.23
Residual	2210.02	148	14.93		
Total	2231.74	149			

3.3 Hypothesis 3

The provision of institutional amenities does not significantly predict the job performance of academic staff in public universities. In this hypothesis, the independent variable is institutional amenities, while the dependent variable is the job performance of lecturers. This hypothesis was tested at the .05 level of significance using the simple linear regression statistical technique. The output of the analysis, summarised in Table 3, indicates that the provision of institutional amenities is accountable for 1% of the total variance in the dependent variable. The unaccounted variance of 99% may be attributed to other factors not included in the model. The unstandardised regression coefficient shows that a 1% increase in the provision of institutional amenities (holding other variables constant) will boost the job performance of academic staff in public universities by 0.02%. Further evidence from the model revealed that the provision of institutional amenities does not significantly predict the job performance of academic staff in public universities, $F(1, 148) = 0.02, p > .05$). For receiving statistical support, the null hypothesis was upheld; thus, the adjusted R square value of 0.01, earlier reported, may have been due to chance. The regression equation of this hypothesis was fitted as follows:

$$\text{Job performance} = 32.61 + 0.012 (\text{provision of institutional Amenities}) + 1.19 \quad (3)$$

Table 3. Simple Linear Regression Result of the Influence of Institutional Amenities on the Job Performance of Academic Staff in Public Universities

R	R ²	Adj. R ²	SE	B	T
.012	.00	0.01	3.883	0.02	0.15
Model	SS	Df	MS	F	Sig.
Regression	0.35	1	0.35	0.02	.88
Residual	2231.39	148	15.08		
Total	2231.74	149			

4. Discussion

This study discovered that remuneration positively and significantly predicted the job performance of academic staff in public universities. This result is not surprising because remuneration is responsible for 11% of the total variance in university lecturers' job performance. The low extent in the job performance variation due to remuneration is that most academic staffs were paid salaries that did not correspond with their ranks and the work they do. Allowances were rarely paid, and monthly salary payments and staff promotion were often delayed. Also, some academic staff were rarely given meaningful recognition by the university management, with many of them being dissatisfied with

their earnings. This finding seems justified because lecturers' remuneration increases their motivation level and reduces the burden likely to induce stress. Academic staff may become stressed through overthinking about how to meet end needs when salaries are delayed, partly or inconsistently paid. This may affect the degree of their readiness for quality service delivery in universities. Conversely, constant remuneration of academic staff makes them happy and increases their readiness and job satisfaction, especially when their pressing needs are met.

This aligns with Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory (Maslow, 1954), which postulates that humans desire to satisfy basic needs (such as food, clothing, shelter, warmth and so on) before progressing to higher-order needs. Moreover, remunerating workers appreciate their efforts and will increase their job satisfaction for increased performance. This study's finding extends this theory by adding that the non-provision of remuneration or incentives increases stress and decreases the chances of lecturers meeting basic needs. People who cannot meet or that struggle to meet basic needs may not even consider higher-order needs. This result agrees with Babagana and Dungus's (2015) results that staff remuneration strongly and positively affected job performance. Similarly, other studies (e.g., Akter & Husian, 2016; Onyancha et al., 2014; Ojeleye, 2017) have also submitted a nexus between staff remuneration and performance of their jobs at all levels of education.

The second main finding of this study established that the prediction of workload on academic staff job performance in public universities is negative but not statistically significant. This result may have been so because the negative influence of workload contributed weakly (1%) to reduce the job performance of lecturers in universities. This finding is not a surprise due to the high degree of stress associated with academic staff with a heavy workload. For instance, some of the respondents agreed to have worked longer hours than expected in the conditions of service. Some also admitted teaching very large classes, with others expected to produce students' results/grades within a limited time. These tasks are often performed along with other unmanageable teaching schedules. Almost all the senior academic staff indicated being stressed by many administrative, research and publication engagements. A lecturer's workload imposes several cognitively, physically or psychologically demanding responsibilities.

Meeting these responsibilities may further compete with the time required for staff to manage themselves, their homes/families, and then rest. At the university level, staff are expected to engage in active teaching, research and perform a non-exhaustive list of community services (as may be assigned by superiors or undertaken from time to time). Allocating too many courses to an academic staff engaged in various research and community services may hamper their chances of effective service delivery. This is because different activities compete with their limited available time. This finding aligns with the Transactional Stress Theory (Lazarus, 1966) because the workload imposed on lecturers usually emanates from the school environment. This study aligns with that of Amini-Philip and Okonmah (2020), which also documented a negative relationship between lecturers' workload and productivity. There is also an agreement between the result of the present study and other previous studies (e.g., Osaat & Ekechukwu, 2017; Shah et al., 2011; Usoro & Etuk, 2016) that also concluded that excessive workload negatively affected the job effectiveness of lecturers. Nevertheless, since the prediction of workload in the current study was insignificant, it implies that most academic staff in this study were highly effective in their job performance or had good stress management techniques.

The third finding documented a positive but non-significant prediction of institutional amenities on academic staff job performance in public universities. Although the provision of institutional amenities was predicted to increase academic staff jobs by 1%, the contribution is so small that (if other factors are not present) the effect may not be noticed. It must be stated that providing institutional resources is one thing, and it is also another thing to ensure that they are adequate, functional, accessible and utilised by those intended to use them. It is no surprise that the availability of institutional facilities contributes to staff job performance. This finding is attributed to the functionality, accessibility and utilisation of the available resources. Although it was beyond the scope of this study to assess these suspicious variables, we strongly believe that the weak contribution of the provision of institutional amenities may have resulted from a low degree of their status. Besides, many respondents admitted to having poor office conditions and layouts, uncondusive classrooms for teaching, inadequate teaching facilities and lecture venues and poor electricity supply. Institutional amenities are meant to support lecturers as they discharge duties, but where they are not provided in sufficient and functional quantities, it may affect access and utilisation, causing lecturers stress. For instance, where lecture venues are not adequate, lecturers may be forced to use tree shades, umbrellas, and other uncondusive environments not likely to promote effective teaching and learning.

This finding supports the Transactional Theory of Stress, which postulates that both individual and situational factors simultaneously influence the occurrence of stress. In the context of this finding, situational factors, such as the presence of institutional amenities or otherwise, may reduce or induce stress among lecturers in universities. The

finding also tallies with the results of other studies (Agba & Ocheni, 2017; Kasule, 2015; Nanzushi, 2015), which all established a positive relationship between the work environment and academic staff job performance. Based on the arguments of the cited scholars, the implication is that the job performance of staff is more favourable in institutions with the provision of institutional amenities such as good offices, proper lighting and ventilation, and electric power supply than those without them. However, this study contradicts the result of Onoyase (2017) that there is no significant relationship between lecturers' work environment and job performance without providing a direction of the relationship (whether positive or negative). In other words, Onoyase found that lecturers' performance will be unaffected whether required institutional amenities are provided or not. The variation in the findings may be due to scope, area, methodology, or the nature of respondents in both studies.

5. Conclusion

The outcomes of this research indicate that occupational stresses have a considerable impact on the work performance of university faculty. As previously stated, the findings of this study have consequences for theory, practice, and research. The study has been able to extend the works of all the theories cited beyond the original thinking of the proponents, adding another perspective to them. Practically, this study can enable lecturers at universities to understand how stressful activities contribute to their job performance, enabling them to develop stress management skills. Research wise, this study has contributed to the academic debate ongoing in the literature in related areas, with new evidence from universities in Calabar Metropolis. Therefore, future studies on related areas can build on this study to expand the frontiers of knowledge. The following recommendations were made based on the conclusion of this study:

1. The government should constantly pay lecturers' salaries when they are due. Institutional managers should reward lecturers with outstanding performance to boost their morale for effective service delivery. The promotion of lecturers should not be unreasonably delayed.
2. More academic staff should be employed. School leaders, including vice-chancellors, deans of faculties, and heads of departments, should ensure that lecturers are assigned duties in line with their carrying capacities. This will help reduce the workload burden, which will reduce the level of stress among staff for optimal performance.
3. The government, non-governmental organisations, donor agencies as well as private philanthropists should ensure that they support the educational development of universities by providing amenities like classroom blocks, good offices, electrical and ICT resources to support lecturers, provide a comfortable teaching and learning environment and reduce workplace stress among workers for quality service delivery.

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