

The Sources of Occupational Stress and its Effect on Employees Effectiveness in Higher Education: A Study of West Africa Theological Seminary

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Abstract

Occupational stress is stress caused by work-related factors which are detrimental to employees' wellbeing and effectiveness in the workplace. In previous studies conducted, 96% of teaching and non-teaching staff indicated that stress has negative effects on job performance and this is associated with psychological and physiological illnesses which occasionally affect their effectiveness in the workplace (Chukwuma, 2017). Identifying the sources of occupational stress will enable both leaders and individual employees in higher educational institutions to manage stress appropriately. The wellbeing of employees plays a significant role in achieving organizational goals. In higher education, leaders require employees to work sufficiently towards the success of the institution in promoting quality education within its threshold. This study is based on quantitative research methods conducted in West Africa Theological Seminary Lagos, Nigeria, to determine the sources of occupational stress and its effect on workers' effectiveness in the workplace. The descriptive survey design was adopted to describe the phenomenon under study. Purposive sampling technique was used to gather information from the respondents. Pertinent data were collected through a questionnaire based on open and closed-ended questions. Subsequently, the regression model was used to test the significant relationship between variables. The key areas covered in the literature focused on the sources of occupational stress, the effect of job stress and stress management.

Keywords: Occupational stress, employee wellbeing, job effectiveness, theological seminary, stress management

INTRODUCTION

In higher education, employees are required to work effectively in order to promote quality education within the threshold of their institution. Nonetheless, if measures are not put in place by the leadership of the institution to manage stress appropriately, it may prevent the institution from achieving its objectives. According to Michie, "stress can undermine the achievement of goals, both for individuals and for organisations" (2002, p. 67). Occupational stress has been shown to have negative effects on workers' wellbeing and productivity in the work place. The effect of stress can be physiological, psychological and behavioral.

(Champoux, 2006; Leka & Cox, 2004; Bickford, 2005). The mental aptitude of an employee can be affected by acute responses to stress which may affect an employee's ability to think and act intelligently in service delivery. Subsequently, the physical strength of an employee can be affected due to sicknesses caused by work-related stress. In addition, the behavior of an employee can change over a period of time by adverse effects of stress resulting in aggression, drunkenness, and isolation. Champoux notes that:

Understanding stress especially stress in organizations, is important because it can have both positive and negative effects. For individuals, dysfunctional stress is associated with increased cardiac risk and the abuse of alcohol or other drugs. For organizations, dysfunctional stress is associated with high absenteeism rates, high turnover, reduced productivity, and poor decision-making (2006, p. 80).

Positive response to stress enables an employee to assess the work environment to know how his or her body responds to stressful circumstances. Human beings respond to stress differently depending on individual personality. In fact, some employees require a certain level of stress to motivate them to work better. However, research has shown that continuous exposure to stress can be detrimental to human health. (Graham & Bennett, 1994; Bickford, 2005). Stress can be managed in order improve job effectiveness and productivity in the workplace. However, it requires a collaborative effort from both the employees' and the leaders of the organization to overcome the menace of occupational stress.

Background information of West Africa Theological Seminary (WATS)

West Africa Theological Seminary is an interdenominational institution of higher education. It was founded under the leadership of Dr. Gary S. Maxey from the United States of America to address the growing needs of the churches in Nigeria and across African nations. The school, which began in 1987, was formerly known as Wesley International Theological Seminary. Now known as West Africa Theological Seminary, it is accredited by the association of Christian Theological Education Africa (ACTEA). The school was

established to provide sound theological training for church leaders and pastors on leadership development and discipleship of believers.

West Africa Theological Seminary has helped to train more than 1000 pastors across the globe. WATS has continued to receive students across different state in Nigeria and other African countries (West Africa Theological Seminary, 2019)

Purpose of studies

This paper investigates the sources of occupational stress among employees in West Africa Theological Seminary with the aim of alerting both employees and the leadership of the institution on the adverse effect of stress on workers' health so that appropriate measures are put in place in managing occupational stress.

Objective of study

- To identify the sources of occupational stress among employees at West Africa Theological Seminary Nigeria.
- To find out the effect of occupational stress on workers' health.
- To find out the techniques that can be employed in managing occupational stress in West Africa Theological Seminary.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

In a competitive work environment where job is focused on productivity, employees can be exposed to stressful circumstances that may affect their health conditions and lower productivity in the workplace. An International Labour Organization report shows that “work-related stress can severely impact workers' general achievement levels in a negative way with respect to both efficiency and accuracy” (2017, p. 9). In theological seminaries where faith is integrated in teaching and learning processes, work demands and other related factors may trigger stress that may hinder employees from working effectively

towards the goal of the institution. Stress does not only affect individual employees but also hinders organizational success. Bickford notes that;

stress is not something to be dismissed as being just part of job, or the price you pay for being successful in your career. Stress has shown to be either directly or indirectly responsible for early and untimely deaths through heart attack, stroke, high blood pressure, and a multitude of other stress-related illnesses. (2005, p. 38)

The notion that stress is part of life has prevented many employees from taken appropriate measures in managing stress.

In a normal organization context, two types of personality can be deduced. Firstly, a pessimist's personality. These are people who do not care about work-related stress, even when they perceive it and understand the negative consequences, they tend to ignore and keep living in stressful circumstances. Secondly, an optimist's personality. These are people who, as soon as they perceive it, respond quickly to stressful circumstances by taking appropriate measures in managing stress (Sims, 2000). In view of this, it is imperative to create awareness among individual employees and the leaders of Christian institutions on the threat of stress so that proactive measures are put in place to manage stress in the workplace.

Significance of the study

Leaders play a significant role in the success of any organization. Therefore, this study will provide vital information to help the leadership of West Africa Theological Seminary to respond sensibly to work-related stress in order to improve job effectiveness and productivity in the workplace. Secondly, this study will help individual employees in WATS to learn how to cope with work-related stress for personal wellbeing and effectiveness in the workplace. Lastly, this study will add knowledge in academia by identifying the sources of work-related stress in the Christian higher education context. There are few studies conducted in theological seminaries on work-related stress.

Research questions

1. What are the sources of occupational stress?
2. What are the effects of occupational stress on workers' health?
3. What could be done by individual employees and leaders in managing work-related stress?

Research Hypothesis

1. There is no significant relationship between job demand and employees' effectiveness.
2. Experiencing moderate levels of stress in the workplace has no negative effect on job effectiveness.

LITERATURE UNDERPINNING

The areas covered in this section includes; the theory of human relationship by Abraham Maslow's theory of motivation, the concept of occupational stress, the source of occupational stress and the management of occupational stress.

Needs-hierarchy Theory-Abraham Maslow's Needs Hierarchy

According to Okumbe, "human relations movement developed as a reaction against the formal tradition of the classical model. Whereas classical theorists were principally concerned with the structure and mechanics of organization, the human relations theorists were concerned with the human factor in organizations" (1999, p. 30). Abraham Maslow's theory of motivation has continued to play a significant part in organizations in terms of productivity in the workplace. Learning to motivate workers plays a significant part in increasing efficiency in the workplace. According to Maslow;

Scientists are motivated, like all other members of the human species, by species-wide needs for food, etc.; by needs for safety, protection, and care; by needs for gregariousness and for affection-and-love relations; by needs for respect, standing, and status, with consequent self-respect; and by a need for self-actualization or self-fulfillment of the idiosyncratic and species-wide potentialities of the individual person. (1954, p.2)

Abraham Maslow's motivation theory can be employed in educational settings to meet the holistic needs of workers in order to reduce psychological and physiological stress experienced in the workplace. Maslow's idea of developing this theory was to encourage employers to provide a conducive environment for their employees to fulfil their maximum potential which he referred to as self-actualization. Abraham Maslow identified five levels of needs as follows:

The physiological needs: Need for food that satisfies the body. When the basic needs of workers are met it relaxes the mind and body to function properly. Adequate financial aid through salary payment and other allowances can be utilized to meet the basic needs of employees.

The safety and security needs: Need for safety and security comes to play after basic needs are met. Every worker requires safety and security in the workplace. Educational administrators are expected to maintain security and safety of their workers in order to eradicate sexual harassment and violence among workers so that emotional stress is overcome in the workplace.

The love and belonging needs: To feel the need for friendship, love and affection either in the home or in the workplace. The breakdown of love and belonging needs can trigger stress that could affect the proper functioning of the mind from concentrating properly on the job. Thus, showing care for workers in the workplace is very significant in maintaining the proficiency of workers as they carry out their respective duties.

The esteem needs: Every employee in the workplace deserves some sort of respect and attention from colleagues and supervisors. Human beings by their nature are wired for respect for oneself and for others. Thus, disrespect of workers by employers could affect the self-image of workers which leads to low self-esteem and low performance.

Self-actualization: This is the desire for self-fulfillment. At this point, the workers identified their self-worth and put more effort into accomplishing organizational goals.

Maslow's theory helps to identify human needs at different levels. This theory can be applied in Christian institutions of higher education to motivate employees to perform effectively. Human needs are numerous and different from each other. Hence, it is significant to meet the needs of individual workers at different levels. Maslow's theory identified the hierarchy of needs that are relevant to the success of any organization. Leaders are to ensure that the basic needs of employees are met at the appropriate time through the payment of salaries and other allowances to enable their employees to take care of themselves and families. This relaxes their minds to work effectively. Subsequently, human security is very important in achieving organizational goals because human beings are fragile; any little infection or emotional instability could affect their productivity. Thus, ensuring safety in the workplace will encourage workforce towards accomplishing organizational goals.

Furthermore, every employee wants to feel the warmth of belonging as they discharge their respective duties. According to Graham and Bennett, "managers need to know about the factors that create motivation in order to be able to induce employees to work harder, faster, more efficiently and with greater enthusiasm" (Graham & Bennett, 1998, p. 60). Leadership skills in motivating employees will help to increase job effectiveness in the workplace.

One weakness observed in Maslow's theory is that the theory focuses totally on individual motivation through incentives and affection. This implies that when the basic needs of employees are not met it hinders self-actualization. In a Christian higher education

context, daily engagement is motivated by the love of Christ. This will help to trust in the Lord for provision when the incentive from the organization fails.

THE CONCEPT OF OCCUPATIONAL STRESS

Sims defined stress as “a pressure, strain, or force on a system” (2000, p. 110). When the body is strained beyond its capacity, it can lead to physical illness and lower productivity in the workplace. As reported by World Health Organization, “a healthy job is likely to be one where the pressures on employees are appropriate in relation to their abilities and resources, to the amount of control they have over their work, and to the support they receive from people who matter to them” (WHO, 2019). An employee looks for people who care about their wellbeing: she or he may expect lots of care from their employer. As noted by Leka and Cox, “Workers who are stressed are also more likely to be unhealthy, poorly motivated, less productive and less safe at work. Their organizations are less likely to be successful in a competitive market” (2003, p.1). The success of any organization depends on the wellbeing of employees. In a Christian institution of higher education, both individual employees and the leadership of the institution need to unite in managing occupational stress. The provisions of social support systems in managing occupational stress are required for the sustenance of employees for increased productivity.

Occupational stress has continued to remain a major challenge to organizational success. Newman and Beehr defined job stress as “a situation wherein job-related factors interact with the worker to change his or her psychological and/or physiological conditions such that the person is forced to deviate from normal functioning” (1979, p.1). This definition implies that stress can cause change in behavior from good to bad. This change in behavior is caused by work-related factors which are detrimental to employees’ wellbeing and effectiveness in the workplace.

McShane avers that “stress is an adaptive response to a situation that is perceived as challenging or threatening to the person’s well-being. The stress experience, called the general adaptation syndrome, involves moving through three stages: alarm, resistance, and exhaustion” (2009, p. 84). The adaptive response to stress requires self-examination to know when stress is gradually approaching by paying attention to the body signs. The resistant stage exhibits two characteristics. Firstly, a person tends to fight back the cause of stress through the adoption of a coping mechanism. Secondly, the person remains silent about the signal received at an early stage of warning and does nothing to manage the perceived stress. This can lead to exhaustion which has a long-term negative effect on human life.

Graham and Bennetti (1998) described stress in terms of positive and negative perspectives. The positive perspective is the person who thrives on pressure. Some employees are motivated to work better when they are under pressure. However, it is advisable not to expose the body to continuous stress because it can cause extreme tiredness and illnesses that can be harmful to an employee’s wellbeing. Subsequently, the negative perspective to stress is caused by life threatening circumstances that affect an employee physiologically and psychologically. This can result in a change in behavior and low productivity. The positive stress is called eustress while the negative stress is called distress. Mills et al. (2019) claimed that a major characteristic of eustress is based on the feeling of excitement. Eustress only lasts for a short time, while the characteristics of distress are based on the feeling of anxiety, an inability to cope with work demands, unpleasant feelings, decreased performance and mental and physical problems.

The World Health Organization (2019) described work-related hazards as work contents and context. Contents include workload or too little work, lack of participation in active decision making, long working hours and time pressure to accomplish a given task. The context may include insecurity, low payment, low social value, lack of promotion, unfair

performance evaluation system, poor relationship with supervisors and no career development opportunities, lack of clarity about organizational objectives, harassment or violence. The job contents and work context are important areas to consider in order to understand the sources of occupational stress.

Nikki et al. (2011) described four areas of occupational stress experienced by social workers as follows:

- 1) Burnout is an emotional state and mental exhaustion caused when exposed to work demands and other related factors within the work environment over a long period in time which limits job effectiveness based on emotional exhaustion. The sign of burnout may include fatigue, depression, headaches, sleep disturbance, anger, etc.
- 2) Compassion fatigue occurs majorly among care-givers when attending to people who have been affected by stressful circumstances. The signs of compassion fatigue include, anger, irritability, lowered self-esteem, and withdrawing from others.
- 3) Secondary trauma stress is a stress that occurs when trying to help someone suffering from stressful circumstances. The signs include psychological and physiological distress, intense imaginings, suspicion, loss of personal control and freedom.
- 4) Vicarious traumatization is a psychological consequence that affects social workers most especially those who work among trauma survivors like sexual assault clients.

The above types of stress can affect workers' wellbeing and effectiveness in the workplace. Bickford confirmed that "people exposed to traumatic events in the workplace may display a range of reactions including emotional numbing, withdrawal, irritability, fearfulness, depression, sleep disturbance, substance abuse, and prolonged medical problems" (2005, p. 31).

From the assessment of the concept of stress it is obvious that stress is part of

daily routine in the workplace. As indicated in this section, stress affects the health of employees and lower productivity in the workplace. Hence, the role of individual employees and leaders in Christian higher education is vital in managing stress. Cole and Kelly argued that “strategies for coping with stress can be best analyze under two headings- personal strategies and organizational strategies” (Cole & Kelly, 2011). The process of handling stress is to identify the causes and to take proactive steps in dealing with the felt stress either on a personal or organizational basis.

THE SOURCE OF OCCUPATIONAL STRESS

Many empirical studies have been conducted in institutions of higher education to assess the source of occupational stress and its effect on employees’ wellbeing and effectiveness. For example:

Rosas et al. (2011) conducted a quantitative research to examine the impact of occupational stress among academic staff, administration staff, and students in a university in the US. A total of 272 samples were analyzed. The statistical test revealed that there is strong correlation between job stress and work overload, work saturation, sleeping problems, and feelings of being overwhelmed. Subsequently, the study shows no variation on the level of stress experienced among academic staff, administrative staff, and students. The mean score for academic staff, administrative staff, and students were 89.47, 100, and 97.90 percent respectively. Subsequently, a one-way ANOVA statistical test was conducted at significant level of 5%. The outcome of the test shows that the p-value is greater than 0.05. Therefore, the authors concluded there was no significant difference in the level of stress experience among academic staff, administrative staff, and students. ($p = 0.07 > 0.05$). This implies that stress is an issue that affects administrative staff, academic staff, and students in higher educational institutions.

Ahsan et al. (2009) adopted a mixed method approach to investigate the relationship

between job stress and job satisfaction. About 300 hundred respondents were selected in a public university in Klang Valley area of Malaysia. The main determinant of job stress is associated with workload pressure, homework interface, role ambiguity, and performance pressure. The outcome of multiple linear regression analysis shows that there is a significant relationship between workload and job stress. $\beta=0.283$, ($\rho= 0.001$). This implies that the more an employee is exposed to work overload, the higher the chance of experiencing high job stress.

Poalses and Bezuidenhout (2018) conducted a comparative stress risk assessment in Open Distance Learning University in South Africa. In the qualitative analysis, the study revealed six sources of stress among academic staff. These include: feelings of job insecurity, poor remuneration, high workload and time pressure, feeling excluded from decisions, and role clarity.

A qualitative research was conducted by Darabi et al. (2017) to determine how employees in a UK university cope with stress at work. The data was collected through online interviews and a thematic analysis approach was employed. About 90% of academic staff indicated that they were extremely unhappy with the level of administrative responsibility given to them to undertake in the university. They indicated that an increase in student numbers led to time pressure, difficulty in marking at the appropriate time, and insufficient time to give pastoral care to individual students. In response to poor quality management, a significant number of respondents requested for professional help to deal with the threat of occupational stress.

Oruc (2011) conducted a study to investigate the effect of disruptive behavior among employees in higher education. The study comprises of a sample of 60 teachers working in the School of Foreign Languages Arastirmalari. The data shows that disruptive behavior is not only experienced in primary and secondary schools. It is an attitude that is observed in

higher education where students become disrespectful to teachers and violent towards fellow students.

Peretomode(2019) conducted a quantitative research among academic administrators in tertiary institutions in Delta State of Nigeria to determine the source of stress, stress level and coping strategy in managing stress. A total of 141 respondents were sampled. The study revealed five sources of stress among academic administrators. These include time pressure, lack of infrastructure, students' indiscipline, examination malpractices and overseeing the conduct of semester exams. The study also shows that academic administrators experience low to moderate levels of stress which has no negative effect on job performance. The academic administrators managed their stress through personal resources. These included having adequate sleep daily, positive thinking, setting realistic standards, personal prayers, physical exercise and a balanced diet. The interpersonal resources include engaging with social activities by sharing stressful circumstances with others.

The above empirical studies clearly indicate that work-related stress is an issue in higher education that requires adequate measures to manage its threats on employees' wellbeing and job performance.

MANAGING OCCUPATIONAL STRESS

The effective method in managing occupational stress requires an integrated approach which involves individual and organizational approach. Management Standards Approach by Health Safety Executive (2007) provides a guide for both employees and managers in managing occupational stress. The approach consists of five steps:

Step 1. Identify the risks: The first step involves the assessment of the work environment to determine the factors that contributes to work-related stress and its effects on employees' wellbeing and effectiveness. Work-related stress can be caused by different factors entrenched in an organization. Identifying the sources of occupational stress will help to

develop effective ways to cope with stress. When the cause of a problem is identified, it becomes easier to offer solution that will bring transformation in the organization.

Step 2. Decide who might be harmed and how: This is determined by gathering information from individual employees to understand the degree of stress experienced among employees and how its effects their wellbeing and effectiveness in the workplace. This is done by gathering and analysing data to identify areas of bad practices in the organization in order to improve employees' wellbeing and job effectiveness.

Step 3 Evaluate the risks: This is the ability to discover specific problems and to offer solutions. This is done through focused group consultation with the members of an organization. The discussion allows employees to freely share about their job experiences. The outcome of the discussion should be based on specific suggestions to handle specific issues identified as factors that may affect workers' wellbeing and performance.

Step 4 Record your findings: The discussions in step 3 will produce good responses and suggestions that can be implemented to overcome the effect of work-related stress on employees' wellbeing and performance. The implementation plan can be achieved through effective communication among employees.

Step 5 Monitor and review: Step 5 helps managers to assess the work environment to ensure that the action plan in managing stress in the workplace is implemented effectively. This stage helps to address the issues facing the organization and the appropriate measures put in place to solve the problem. Monitoring and reviewing are ongoing processes to improve workers' wellbeing and effectiveness.

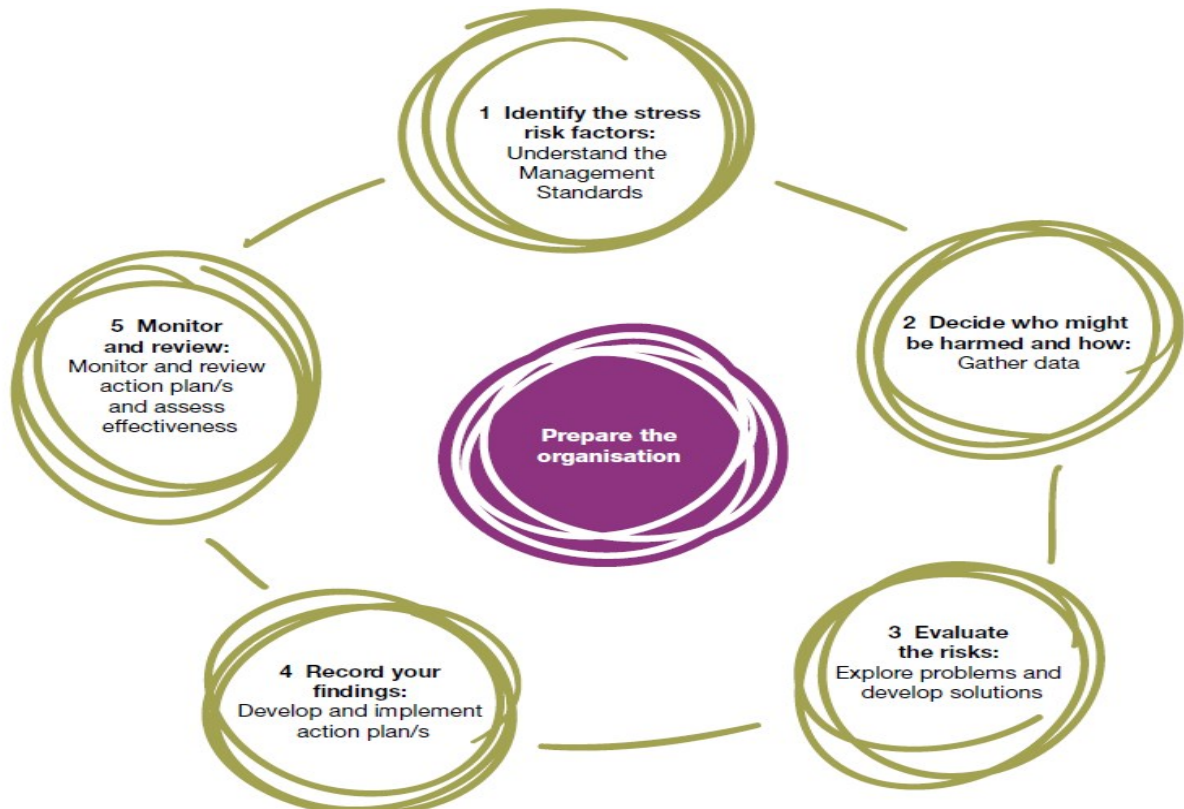


Figure1. Management Standards approach (Adopted from Health and Safety Executive 2007)

METHODOLOGY

The study will employ statistical (quantitative) method through descriptive survey design and regression analysis. According to Nassiuma, “Descriptive statistic deals with collection, classification, presentation and description of information and inferential statistics deals with the analysis, interpretation and decision making on the basis of the result” (2017, p. 3). The regression model was used to describe significant relationships between the independent variables and the dependent variables. The independent variables are sources and effects of stress while the dependent variable is employees’ effectiveness. The significant level will be determined by 0.5%. If the calculated p-value through SPSS is less than significant level of 0.5, we reject the null hypothesis and conclude that there is

positive significant relationship between the variables. Otherwise, we do not reject the null hypothesis. (If $p \leq \alpha$, reject or $p \geq \alpha$, fails to reject)

The population comprises employees both teaching and non-teaching staff at West Africa Theological Seminary. The total population of employees in WATS is 47. The sample size was statistically determine using Yaro Yamane formula for a finite population. The formula is given as thus: $n = N / (1 + N(e)^2)$

n = the sample size; N= the finite population; e= level of significant or limit of tolerable error; 1= unity -a constant. Source: (Uzoagulu, 1998, p. 66).

Significance level of 20% was used to determine the sample size. N= 47; e= 0.2

$$\frac{47}{1 + 47(0.2)^2} = 47/2.88. \quad \mathbf{n = 16}$$

The research questionnaires were distributed to all employees at WATS, but only 20 questionnaires were collected and used in this study. This was considered sufficient based on the calculated sample size.

The Chartered Society of Physiotherapy London tool in measuring work-related stress among CSP workers was adapted by the researcher. The tool was modified based on the variables identified in the tool which indicate the sources of work-related stress and their effect on job performance. The questionnaire was restructured to match the Likert Scale format for easy response and interpretation. In addition, Cronbach's alpha co-efficient was used to test the reliability of the tool. In social science research, a reliability coefficient of 0.70 is acceptable (Bruin, 2006). The outcome of the test was above 0.70% for each itemized variable.

Results and Discussion of Findings

Research question1: What are the sources of occupational stress?

Table 1. The sources of occupational stress

		Responses		Percent of Cases
		N	Percent	
Source	Job Demand	16	19.5%	84.2%
	Lack of control	14	17.1%	73.7%
	Relationships at work	8	9.8%	42.1%
	Change in organization	10	12.2%	52.6%
	Inadequate financial reward	16	19.5%	84.2%
	Job dissatisfaction	5	6.1%	26.3%
	Students' disruptive behavior in school	7	8.5%	36.8%
	Multiple job engagement	6	7.3%	31.6%
Total		82	100.0%	431.6%

The above output described eight sources of occupational stress. Five of the sources are highly rated as the main source of occupational stress. Job demands (84.2%), inadequate financial reward (84.2%), lack of control (73.7%), poor work relationships with immediate (42.1%) supervisors and changes in organization (52.6%).

The study shows that job demand prevents employees from having enough rest breaks to rejuvenate the body to function well. It also results in spending long working hours to meet up with deadlines. The body cannot function properly without adequate food and rest periods. Graham and Bennett affirm that “overwork, which may be quantitative –having too much work to do, or qualitative -finding work too difficult, long working hours are frequently connected with a poor diet, lack of exercise and inadequate relaxation” (Graham & Bennett 1998, p. 130).

Research Hypothesis 1

There is no significant relationship between job demand and employees' effectiveness.

Table 2: Regression analysis

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	.800	1	.800	14.400	.001 ^b
	Residual	1.000	18	.056		
	Total	1.800	19			
a. Dependent Variable: stress and negative effect on job effectiveness						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Job Demands						

The calculated value of the regression analysis shows that the p-value is less than 5% ($0.01 < 0.05$). Therefore, we reject the null hypothesis and conclude that there is a significant relationship between job demand and employees' effectiveness. The outcome of the study confirms the findings of Rosas et al. (2011) that there is a strong correlation between job stress and work overload, work saturation, sleeping problems, and feelings of being overwhelmed.

Research question 2. What are the effects of occupational stress?

Table 3. The effects of occupational stress

	Responses	Percent of Cases

		N	Percent	
Effect ^a	Physiological	4	15.4%	25.0%
	Behavioral	15	57.7%	93.8%
	Psychological	7	26.9%	43.8%
Total		26	100.0%	162.5%
a. Dichotomy group tabulated at value 1.				

Table 3 shows physiological, behavioral and psychological effects of stress. Most of the respondents (93.8%) indicated that stress results in change in behavior resulting in the neglect of responsibility, isolation from others and poor job performance. A significant number of respondents indicated that stress affects them physiologically and psychologically, 25.0% and 43.8%, respectively. The symptoms associated to stress include headaches, backache, neckache, anxiety, restlessness, burnout, irritation etc.

Research Hypothesis 2.

Moderate levels of stress experienced in the workplace have no negative effect on job effectiveness.

Table 4. Regression analysis of stress level

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	.185	1	.185	2.057	.169 ^b
	Residual	1.615	18	.090		
	Total	1.800	19			
a. Dependent Variable: stress and negative effect on job effectiveness						
b. Predictors: (Constant), How best can you describe the level of your stress in the workplace						

The calculated value of the regression analysis shows that the p-value is greater than 5%. (0.169 > 0.05). Therefore, we fail to reject the null hypothesis and conclude that moderate

levels of stress experienced in the workplace have no negative effect on job effectiveness. Moderate levels of stress do not affect job effectiveness. However, continuous exposure to work overload can lead to very stressful circumstances that may affect job effectiveness. About 60.0% of the respondents rated their level of stress as moderate. Subsequently, 25.0% of employees were of the opinion that they are very stressed in their work. Others indicated that they are mildly stressed.

Research question 3. What could be done by individual employees and leaders in managing work-related stress?

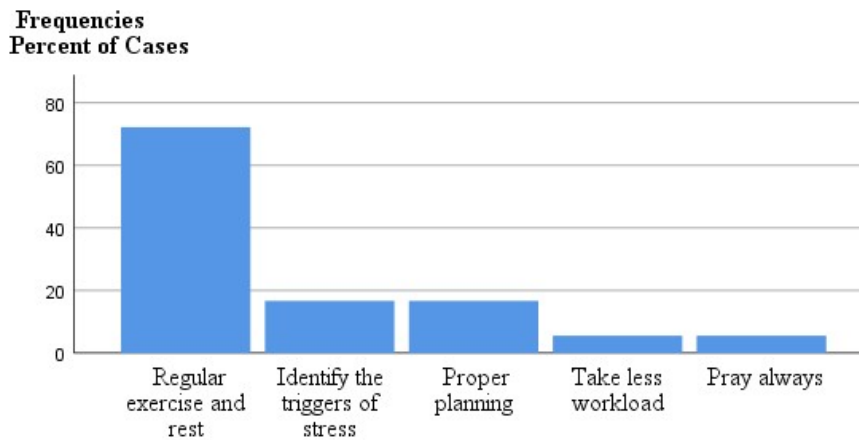


Figure 2. The role of individual employees in managing stress

A majority of the respondents (65.0%) consider regular exercise as an effective method in managing occupational stress. Other ways include identifying the triggers of stress, proper planning, taking less workload, and praying always.

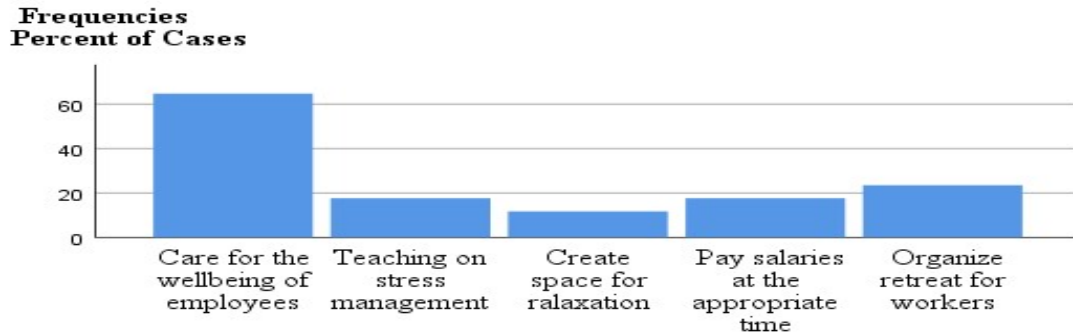


Figure 3. The role of leaders in managing stress

Most of the respondents (64.7%) indicated that care for the wellbeing of employees' by leaders in Christian higher education plays a significant role in managing occupational stress. Other effective techniques include organizing retreats for workers, teaching on stress management, payment of salaries at the appropriate time and creating space for relaxation.

CONCLUSION

Stress has been shown to have a detrimental effect on employees' wellbeing and effectiveness in the workplace. The major sources of stress in West Africa Theological Seminary have been identified as job demands, inadequate financial reward, lack of control in one's job, poor work relationship with immediate supervisors and changes in the organization. According to Boa, "in the university of life, stress and affliction are not elective courses; they're a required part of the curriculum. Stress is not a negative thing; if properly managed, it can lead to development and growth" (Boa, 2005, p.1). Stress can be managed appropriately in the workplace to increase the proficiency of workers to fulfil organizational goals.

RECOMMENDATION

- 1) Every employee should develop personal mechanisms in coping with stress. Regular

physical exercise, self-assessment to know the cause of stress, proper planning on job demands and sufficient moments of rest and prayer are effective coping mechanisms.

- 2) Leaders in Christian higher education should minimize stress in the workplace by lowering job demands. Thus, job description documents should be reviewed from time to time to re-define workers' roles so that every employee understands what they are assigned to do.
- 3) Leaders should build strong working relationships among employees through open dialogue forum. Proper communication on organizational changes will help to overcome anxiety among employees about their future work in the institution. This will help workers to have a sense of control over their job by making best use of their skills to think and solve organizational problem.
- 4) Leaders are to take proper care of their employees by treating them with respect. This will help workers to identify their self-worth and be more effective in the workplace. Care of employees includes safety in the work environment, adequate financial and the respect of every employee.

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