

Impact of Stress on Tertiary Institution Academic Staff Performance in Nigeria

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DOI: 10.56201/ijee.v9.no7.2023.pg23.43

Abstract

This study examined the Impact of Stress on Tertiary Institution Academic Staff Performance in Nigeria. The specific objective of this study is to evaluate the impact of stress on the Performance of academic staff of tertiary institutions in Nigeria and used Nnamdi Azikiwe University Awka as its sample. Primary source of data was used for the research via questionnaire and interview method to a sample of 303 respondents from the selected tertiary. The findings show a significant relationship between stress and the performance of the teaching staff of tertiary institutions and concluded that a significant relationship exists among the variables. The studies recommend that Loan advances should be made available to the teaching staff and that government should provide Improved working environment required for stress free environment for the teaching staff.

Keywords: *Stress; Tertiary Institutions; Academic Staff; Nnamdi Azikiwe University*

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Stress is triggered not by the external problems forced by individuals, but by the way they cope (or fail to cope) with those problems (Bryant, 2001). Thus, Most people can cope with a variety of pressures in their lives, and may seem to thrive on pressures especially at work. However once individuals fail to deal adequately with pressure symptoms of stress appear (Cole, 2005; Colbert, 2005). While in the short term, these can manifest in such conditions as indigestion, nausea, headache, back pain, loss of appetite, loss of sleep and increased irritability in the long term. However the symptoms can lead to coronary heart disease, stomach ulcer, depression and

other serious conditions (Colebert, 2005). Clearly., the effects of stress, whether triggered by work problems or domestic/social problems will eventually lead to the reduction of employee performance at work, increase sickness and even early death.

In a widely reported study of stress carried out in the 1960s (Holmes and Rahe, 1967) in Bratton and Gold (1999). Most of life's event referred as potentially leading to stress, occur in a person's domestic and social life, not at work. Critical events include death of relatives, personal injury or illness, marriage, loss of job, retirement and change of financial state. However, since individuals bring their problems to work, it scarcely matters in any sense whether the trigger for stress is work related or not, for the effect on individual is just the same as his/her work performance is likely to be adversely affected. This is therefore, the crux of Azikiwe University cope with stress and their performance in the job.

It is out of contention that stress impedes human performance. A lot of work has been done on stress. According to Lazarus (1981) as modified in 1993, normally occurring stress are seen as a transaction between individual and his environment rather than a property of either the person or the environment alone. Lazarus propounded a "transnational theory of stress". For him, just as the amount to stress on a rope is jointly determined by the quality of rope and the amount of weight pulling on it, so too, is the amount of stress a person experiences, a joint function of the individual's internal resources and the external situation "tugging" at the person.

Stress entails an individual's perception of his environment that demands him to behave antithetical to his available psychosocial resources. Thus, in this view, stress depends on the meaning of an event to an individual: and event that fills one person with excitement, such as new business opportunity, may make another feel overwhelmed and anxious. The extent to which an event is experienced as stressful therefore depend on the person's appraisal of both the situation and his ability to cope with it.

Lazarus's theory identifies two stages in the process of stress and coping, neither of which is entirely conscious. In a primary appraisal of the situation, the person decides whether the situation is benign (not harmful), stressful or irrelevant. If the situation is appraised as stressful, solution must be worked out. The second stage during which the person evaluates the options and decides how to respond is called secondary stage.

Lazarus further distinguishes three types of stress; harm or loss, as when a person loses a loved one or something greatly valued, such as a job; which refers to perceived anticipated harm; and challenge which refers to opportunities for growth that may nonetheless be fraught with disruption and uncertainty. The theory proves that stress is not always negative. Positive form of stress or challenges include events such as getting married or getting into the university. These events can be exceedingly stressful - that is psychologically and physiologically tasking because of the changes and adjustments they entail. Thus, while stress is often associated with anxiety, sadness and anger, it can also entail pleasure, excitement and interest.

In the light of the on-going reform programmes of the government, most staff work long hours with consideration pressure to meet deadlines and targets. The Nnamdi Azikiwe University staffs are not left out. Lecture schedules are too tight, overcrowded and overloaded. There are numerous programmes - regular, CEP, sandwich, pre-science and post graduate, etc all begging for attention by university management and students. The economic melt down compelled the staff to work continuously, and around the clock in order to meet the academic or sessional deadlines, hence compounding stress situations.

Apparently, the excessive workload of the teaching staff has contributed to the stressful experiences in most universities in Nigeria.

The problem of this study therefore, rest on finding out the factors that actually causes stress among Nnamdi Azikiwe University teaching staff, with a view to highlighting appropriate measures to deal with them. To this end, the specific objectives of this study shall include;

1. To identify the impact of stress on the performance of the teaching staff of Unizik.
2. To ascertain whether Unizik management has stress management strategies or mechanisms installed for the benefit of its teaching staff.

Translating the above objectives into research questions, we have the following questions to deal with;

- a) What is the impact of stress on the performance of the teaching staff of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka?
- b) Does Nnamdi Azikiwe University management have any stress management strategy or mechanism installed for the benefit of its teaching staff?

This study will attempt to find answers to these questions.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Conceptual Framework

Cole (2000:203) maintains that the main sources of stress at work are located in a number of groupings. They may arise from environmental factors, job and organizational factors (including the organization culture,) workplace relationships, domestic situation, or personality factors. The effect of stress depends on:

The attitude of the individual towards what is perceived as the problem. The uncertainty and perceived importance of the outcomes for the individual. The individual level of self - confidence/assertiveness. Examples of factors that have been found to contribute to stress at work can be grouped into external environment, organizational factors, job characteristics, work relationships, domestic situation, and personal factors (Cole, 2000). They are discussed as follows:

External Environment:

- i. **Economic Situation** - for the industry - especially where the industry is in decline and redundancies are commonplace.
- ii. **Development of new technology** - may lead to fewer jobs and/or skill requirements; and pressure to acquire new knowledge and skills.
- iii. **Political change** - may affect organizations vulnerable to political influence - e.g. state-owned business, key industries in energy, military equipment etc.

Organizational Factors:

- i. **Organizational Structure:** especially where the pattern of jobs, rules and regulations, constrain the individual's range of choices on how to do job.

- ii. **Organization Culture:** especially if the dominant ethos is one of internal competition for resources, rewards, etc. or what a 'hire and fire operates.
- iii. **Management Styles:** especially where individual finds it difficult to adapt to a superior's management style because it is too autocratic, or too participative.
- iv. **Career Development:** especially where individual's efforts are unrecognized by promotion or further training or where a flatter structure limits prospects.

Job Characteristics:

- i. **Physical condition:** where the individual finds these uncomfortable and/or dangerous to health.
- ii. **Job demands:** where the task is seen as boring, repetitious, or offering insufficient challenges; or even simply too excessive for one person.
- iii. **Degree of autonomy:** where this is insufficient to meet either the demands of the job/or the expectations of job-holder.
- iv. **Role conflict:** where the organization's expectations of the role either lead to confusion with related roles or do not meet the job-holder's expectations.

Work Relationships:

- i. **Superior:** especially where individuals fail to achieve a reasonable working relationship with their immediate superior.
- ii. **Colleagues:** the inability to get on reasonable terms with fellow team members or colleagues from other sections can be source of considerable unhappiness; women in particular, may suffer male patronage or sexual harassment (Davidson and Cooper, 1983:123).
- iii. **Own staff:** many people appointed to a leadership role in the organization find it stressful to deal with the demands to their own staff.
- iv. **Customer/Suppliers/Others Outsider People:** these stakeholders can be a source of stress, especially for those dealing with customer services.

Domestic Situation:

i. **Home Life:** upheavals at home due to family illness, care of elderly parents, unhappy marriage, debt problems etc problems that can overflow into the workplace and adversely affect an individual performance and attitude. ii. **Outside Social Life:** individual with a rich with life may find that work and leisure clash, especially if their work requires unsocial social hours or availability at short notice. After getting lost and having inadequate shelter or clothing in extremely cold conditions.

Personal Factors:

- i. **Individual Perception of Role/Job etc:** as noted above, the individual's perceptions of task etc and their difficulty is a key factor in the stress formula
- ii. **Personality Type:** research suggests that certain types (e.g. Type A personalities) are much more vulnerable to symptoms than others (e.g. Type B).
- iii. **Ability to Adapt to Change:** adaptable individual are less prone to stress than those who are inflexible.

- iv. **Motivation:** where a person is deeply committed to his or her work, they are more likely to find ways of coping with potentially stressful situations than someone with a low commitment.
- v. **Tolerance for Ambiguity:** where an individual can tolerate uncertainty (e.g.

role/task ambiguity), stress is less likely. Given that stress is essentially related to personality and personal perceptions, the reverence above to Type A and B personalities is important. Friedman and Rosenman (1974:203) in a famous study identified what they termed the Type A personality in the researches into coronary patients. Type A are people who were identified as at great risk of heart disease. They were characterized by excessive competitiveness, a chronic sense of urgency of time, a constant search for achievement, and behaviour that tend to be aggressive, impatient and restless. Such personalities were constantly engaged in activity, and expressed guilty feelings when tried to relax. Type B personalities had none of these characteristics, and were altogether calmer and more relaxed.

2.1.2 Strategies For Coping With Stress

How can one eliminate stress from his or her life? As we have seen, positive stress adds anticipation and excitement to life, and we all thrive under a certain amount of stress. Deadlines, competitions, confrontations, and even our frustrations and sorrows add depth and enrichments to our lives. Our goal is not to eliminate stress but to learn how to manage it and how to use it to help individuals and employees. Insufficient stress acts as a depressant and may leave us feeling bored or dejected; on the other hand, excessive stress may leave us feeling “tied up in knots”. What we need to do is find the optimal level of stress, which will individually motivate but not overwhelm each of us.

How can one tell what is optimal stress for oneself? There is no single level of stress that is optimal for all people. We are all individual creatures with unique requirements. As such, what is distressing to one may be joy to another. And even when we agree that a particular event is distressing we are likely to differ in our physiological and psychological responses to it.

The person who loves to arbitrate in disputes and moves from job site to job site would be stressed in a job, which is stable and routine, whereas the person who thrives under stable condition would very likely be stressed on a job where duties were highly varied. Also, our personal stress requirements and amount that an individual can tolerate before an individual become distressed changes with our ages. It has been found that most illness is related to unrelieved stress. If you are experiencing stress symptoms, you have gone beyond your optimal stress level; your need to reduce the stress in your life and/or improve your ability to manage it.

How can one manage stress better? Identifying unrelieved stress is being aware of its effect on our lives is not sufficient for reducing its harmful effects. Just as there are many source of stress, there are many possibilities for its management. However, all require work toward change: changing the source of stress and/or changing your reaction to it. How do we proceed? We shall examine the ideas and perspective of a few authors - Colbert (2005), Sarmiento (2007) and Cole (2000).

Colbert (2005) puts forward a 5point stress management strategy for individuals

1. **Become aware of your stressors and your emotional and physical reactions.**

Notice your distress. Don't ignore it Don't gloss over your problems. Determine what event distress you. What are you telling yourself about the meaning of these events?

Determine how your body responds to the stress. Do you become nervous or physically upset? If so, in what specific ways?

2. Recognize what you can change.

Can you change your stressors by avoiding or eliminating the competently? Can you reduce their intensity (manage them over a period of time instead of on a daily or weekly basis)?

3. Reduce the intensity for your emotional reaction to stress.

The stress reaction is triggered by your perception or danger. Physical danger and/or taking a difficult situation and making it a disaster? Are you expecting to please everyone? Are you overreacting and viewing things as absolutely critical and urgent? Do you feel you must always prevail in every situation? Work at adopting more moderate views; try to see the stress as something you can cope with rather than something that overpowers you. Try to temper your excess emotions. Put the situation in perspective. Do not labour on the negative aspects and the "what its".

4. Learn to moderate your physical reactions to stress.

Slow, deep breathing will bring your heart rate and respiration back to normal. Relax techniques can reduce muscle tension. Electronic biofeedback Can help you again voluntary control over such things as muscle tensions; heart rate, and blood pressure.

Medications, when prescribed by a physician, can help in the short run in moderating your physical reactions. However, they alone are not he answer. Learn to moderate these reactions on your own is a preferable long-term solution.

5. Build your physical reserve.

Exercise your cardiovascular fitness three or four times a week (moderate, prolonged rhythmic exercise is best, such as walking, swimming, cycling or jogging). Eat well-balanced, nutritious meals. Maintain your ideal weight. Avoid nicotine, excessive caffeine, and other stimulants. Mix leisure with work. Take breaks and get away when you can. Get enough sleep. Be as consistent with your sleep schedule as possible.

6. Maintain your emotional reserves.

Develop some mutual supportive friendship/relationships. Pursue realistic goals, which are meaningful to you, rather than goals others have for you that you do not share. Expect some frustrations, failures and sorrows. Always be kind and gentle with yourself- be a friend to yourself.

Sarmiento (2007) argued that there are no "one size fits all" solutions to managing stress. Every individual has a unique response to stress, so experiment with a variety of approaches to manage and reduce stress to learn what works best for you. Sarmiento (2007) suggested a number of stress management methods which he classified under key questions: how can I change my lifestyle habits to manage stress better? How can I meet the challenges of stressful situation?

How can I change my lifestyle to manage stress better?

Get enough sleep: Adequate sleep fuels your mind, as well as your body. Feelings tired will increase your stress because it may cause you to think irrationally.

Connect with others: Develop a support system and share your feelings. Perhaps a friend, family member, teacher, clergy person or counsellor can help you see your problem in a different light. Talking with someone else can help your mind of confusion so that you can focus on problem solving.

Exercise regularly: Find at least 30 minutes, three times per week to do something physical. Nothing beats aerobic exercise to dissipate the energy.

Physical activity plays a key role in reducing and preventing the effects of stress. During times of high stress, choose things you like to do. It also beneficial to have a variety of exercise outlets. Be physically fit in ways appropriate for your age, rather than being sedentary.

Eat a balanced, nutritious diet: Be mindful of what you put in your body. Healthy eating fuels your mind, as well as your body. Take time to eat breakfast in the morning, it help keep your going through the day. Eating several balanced, nutritious meals throughout the day will give you the energy to think rationally and clearly. Well-nourished bodies are better prepare to cope with stress.

Reduce caffeine and sugar: Avoid consuming too much caffeine and sugar. In excessive amount. The temporary “highs” they provide often end in fatigue or a “crash” later. You will feel more relaxed, less jittery or nervous, and you will sleep better. In addition, your will have more energy, less heartburn and fewer muscle aches.

Do something for yourself everyday: Take time out from the hustle and bustle of life for leisure time. Too much work is actually inefficient and can lead to burnout. Recognize when your scenery. Most importantly, have fun. Do things that make you happy.

How can I change thinking and emotional responses to handle stress better?

Have realistic expectations: Know your limits. Whether personally or professionally, be realistic about how much you can do. Set limits for yourself and learn to say “no” to more and commitments.

Re-frame problems: See problems as opportunities. As a result of positive thinking, you will be able to handle whatever is causing your stress. Refute negative thought and try to see the glass as half full. It is easy to fall into rut for seeing only the negative when your are stressed. Your thought can become like a pair of dark glasses, allowing little light or joy into your life

Maintain your sense of humour: This includes the ability to laugh at yourself watch a funny movie, the sillier the plot the better. The act of laughing help your body fight stress in a number of ways.

Express your feelings instead of bottling them up: In order to live a less stressed life, learn to calm your emotions. And good cry during periods, or sharing your concerns with someone you trust can be healthy way to bring relief to your anxiety.

Don't try to control events or other people: Many circumstances in life beyond your control, particularly the behaviour of others. Consider that we live in an imperfect world. Learn to accept what is, for now until time comes when perhaps you can change things.

How can I meet challenges of stressful situation?

Manage time: One of the sources of stress is over-commitment or poor time management. Plan ahead. Make a reasonable schedule for yourself and include time stress reduction as a regular part of your schedule. When you take care of everything at once it can seem

overwhelming and as a result, you may not accomplish. Instead, make a list of what task you have to do, and then complete them one at a time, checking them off as they are completed.

Give priority to the most important task and do those first: If a particularly unpleasant task faces you, tackle it early in the day and get it over with. You will experience less anxiety the rest of the day as a result. Most importantly, do not overwork yourself. Resist the temptation to schedule things back-to-back. All too often, we underestimate and can lead to burnout.

Delegate task and break up big recreations: Being efficient and effective means you must delegate tasks and prioritize, schedule, budget and plan your precious time. Aim to work in short, intensive periods, which allow you to rest in between. Break big projects into smaller, more manageable task so you don't feel overwhelmed and nothing gets done as a result. In his perspective, Cole (2000:233) opined that strategies for coping with stress can be best analyzed under headings: **Personal strategies and**

organizational strategies. The former include actions that individuals can take at work and outside of work to increase their ability to cope with sustained pressure and thus avoid the symptoms of stress. The latter include a number of organizational steps that can be taken to reduce the likelihood of stress due to structural and style problems.

Personal Coping Strategies

In their study of women managers, Davison and Cooper (1983) in Cole (2000) asked their respondents to give their answers to a number of questions relating to 'positive' coping categories'. These included such questions as 'how often you use the following to relax? On a 1 (Never) 5 (Always) scale: Relaxation techniques? Exercise? Talking to someone you know? Using humour? Leaving the work area?

These questions provided some clues as to the sort of actions at a physiological and psychological level that individuals themselves take to reduce the effects of stress in their lives. However, the responses implied by these particular questions are more concerned with external aspects of stress. What is especially important in becoming more stress-free is to examine one's own attitude towards and personal strengths and weakness, and this is matter of assertiveness and personal planning.

A good deal of stress could be avoided if people paid attention to their own right. Assertiveness, as noted earlier is a question of standing up for your own rights. But in a way that does not violate another person's rights. Assertiveness is also concerned with expressing (i.e. making known) personal wants, feelings and opinions in honest and appropriate ways. This latter point is important because, if other people do not know how we are feeling about a particular action, or decision, make on our behalf, how can they appreciate your problem and how can they begin to address? Stress according to Back and Back (1992), will result 'if there is a continuing conflict between who you want or would like what actually happening to you'.

The addition of the conflict to the stress equation is significant. Stress is not about excessive pressures and individual self-image, but conflict of interests if frequently asked to be away on business overnight or at weekends.

Organization Responses to Stress Avoidance

What can employers do to help who are suffering from stress? Firstly, and this applies only if the causes of the stress are work-related, they investigate the sources and take appropriate

actions, such as (Cole 2000): Change individual's job responsibilities (give more or reduce)
Provide greater opportunity for personal autonomy in job.

Set agreed job targets training (e.g in time management assertiveness etc.) Permit flexible hours;
reduce time spent away from home etc. Put a stop to any bullying and sexual/racial harassment.
Improve physical working conditions.

Provide fitness centers/programmes for their employees. It is important to note that many Japanese employers insist on employees doing physical exercise before their daily work. Secondly, and this applies in all cases of employee stress, employers can help support employees' ability to cope with the stress. Steps that could be taken, in addition to those mentioned above, include the provision of :

Counselling services, Team/work-group workshops on stress, Sports and social facilities, Relaxation classes, Adequate canteen and rest-room facilities Managers may sometimes wonder why they have to spend time dealing with employee whose problems are domestically related, but the fact of the matter is that employees cannot help but bring personal problems with them to work. Most people are usually too embarrassed to admit that they are having acute problems with their spouse, teenage children or elderly parents. This they tend to suppress their anxieties when they come to work, and all too often first that a manager learns a problem is either when the employee begins to take increased amount of sick leave, or when confronted by requests for time off to attend a solicitor's or a juvenile court or a funeral!

Most managers are not, and probably do not want to become, trained counsellor. However, it is important for the well-being of a team that the leader should take sufficient time out to listen to a stressed employee's story, agree that the immediate situation should be taken into account in respect of performance, work-load etc. And propose that the employee seeks professional help. In other words, the manager's job in such circumstance is to reassure himself/herself that the employee's situation is not allowed to drift, but is being managed, both by the individual concerned and the manager. Looking more closely at Counselling at work, it will be useful to consider one of the and unfortunately growing, cause of stress that is work-related-sexual and embarrassment.

2.1.3 Time Management As A Strategy For Coping With Stress

It has been consistently show that a key strategy for managing and coping with stress is through effective time management (Colbert, 2005). Time management, according to Cole (2000) refers to the scheduling of work to time for effective performance of work as at when required. He sustained that the principal issues of time management in relation to stress management can be grouped under three headings. They include:

1. Those related to the nature of the job;
2. Those related to the personality and the attributes of the job holder;
3. Those related to the people who make up the job holder's role-set.

Nature of the Job

The nature of a person's job is fundamental to the amount of control over time that is both desirable and necessary, for example, a person whose job involves regular contacts with others is always going to be under greater pressure and stress interruptions than someone whose work is of a solitary nature. The way out is through a well tired of obtaining information about job

processing is that of keeping a detailed time-diary, in which the individual records his or her work activities every day for a week or a month.

2.2 Theoretical Framework

It is out of contention that stress impedes human performance. A lot of work has been done on stress. According to Lazarus (1981) as modified in 1993, normally occurring stress are seen as a transaction between individual and his environment rather than a property of either the person or the environment alone. Lazarus propounded a “transnational theory of stress”. For him, just as the amount to stress on a rope is jointly determined by the quality of rope and the amount of weight pulling on it, so too, is the amount of stress a person experiences, a joint function of the individual’s internal resources and the external situation “tugging” at the person.

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Lazarus’s theory identifies two stages in the process of stress and coping, neither of which is entirely conscious. In a primary appraisal of the situation, the person decides whether the situation is benign (not harmful), stressful or irrelevant. If the situation is appraised as stressful, solution must be worked out. The second stage during which the person evaluates the options and decides how to respond is called secondary stage.

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2.3 EMPIRICAL FRAMEWORK

The United Kingdom National Health Services (2001) asserts that stress is not a weakness, but if unnoticed it can lead progressively to a decrease in performance, poor health and long term absence from work. Simple put stress is essentially the rate of wear and tear of the body occasioned by certain by certain stimuli. It is impossible to live without experiencing some degree of stress at some point in ones life time (Wiley, 200). Job stress is a condition wherein Job-related factors interact with the worker to change his/her psychological or physiological condition such that he/she is forced to deviate from normal functioning Beehr and Newman, (1978). According to Overland (2000) the term stress is a problematic one, not least because of its common use but because it is hard to tie it down to a strict definition due to the subjective nature of the word. It might also be confusing because it is used quite loosely in conversation.

Teacher stress is defined as experience by a teacher of unpleasant emotions, such as tension, frustration, anger and depression resulting from aspects of his work as a teacher (Kyriacou, 1987). Malik. Mueler and Meinhe (1998) identified teachers as an occupational group that

functioned under conditions of high stress. Smith and Bourke (2000) UK national Union of Teacher (2000) and UK Health and Safety Executive (2000) reported that two out of every five teachers were highly stressed as against one in every five occupations such as nursing, management, road haulage and security. Stress and its effects on teachers in the university had been studied in developed countries under such variables as workload (Johnstone, 1993), working conditions poor motivation, external force and low status (Boyed and Wylie, 1994; Kyriacou in Cola and walker 1998 and Lam and Punch, 2001). The recent study on stress in Nigerian Universities by Nwadiani and Ofoegbu (2001) investigated the level of stress among fresh students in Nigeria universities and found out that their level of stress was very high.

There are no known and reported studies on stress among Nigerian universities lecturers. However a considerable number of studies have been conducted on stress generally particularly on the causes, symptoms and the effects of stress among workers (Ivanceyich et al, 1975; McGrath, 1978; Murphy et al 1996; Selye, 1999 and Wiley 2000), academic stress of collage students (Misra, et al 2000). Those studies were carried out in developed countries given their early concern (quite early) for industries and workers. Jarvis (2000) asserted that teachers are highly stressed and that stress imparts greatly on teacher retention. The National Association of Head Teachers (NAHT, 2000) observed that dominate representations of teachers a become that of a highly stressful occupation.

3.0 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research design relates to the general approach adopted to execute a study. Braider (1990) defines research design as "...a framework or plan used as a guide in the collection and analysis of data for study". According to Nachiamias and Nachimias (1981) in Agobifoh and Yomere (1998), research refers to "the logical model of proof that allows researchers to draw into perspective, relationships among variable under investigation".

However, research design may be exploratory, descriptive or causal (Hair et al, 2000; Onwe, 1998; Agbonifoh and Yomere, 1998 and Baridam, 1990). The researcher shall adopt the descriptive research design to the current investigation since the researcher wishes to collect data for the purpose of explaining and providing insight on stress management and employee performance among the teaching staff of Unizik, Awka.

Since this study is descriptive, questions were developed via structured questionnaire to secure specific kind of data that were capable of explaining the phenomenon (that is, work related stress) under study. Accordingly, the questionnaire were administered on a randomly selected sample of teaching staff of Unizik, thereby giving every staff equal chance of being selected.

3.1 Populations And Sampling Procedure

In this study, the population or "unit of analysis" is the aggregate of all the teaching staff of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. Since the researcher can identify all the "units of analysis" (that is all the teaching staff) with exactitude, the population of the study is defined as finite. There is total of population of one thousand, two hundred and fifty (1,250) teaching staff in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka.

Since the population of this study is finite and all cannot be used by the researcher, and appropriate sample size determination formula for a finite population characteristic was used.

As a result the Yaro Yamane’s formula for sample determination for finite population characteristics is here under adoption for this study (Okeke, 2005). the formula is stated thus:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where:

- n = Sample size
- N = Population figure
- E = error margin or 0.05%

Considering the population of one thousand, two hundred and fifty (1,250) teaching staff in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, the sample size was determined thus:

$$\begin{aligned} N &= 1250 \\ \frac{1 + 1250(0.05)^2}{1 + 1250(0.0025)^2} &= \frac{1250}{1 + 3.125} \\ &= \frac{1250}{4.125} \\ &= 303.030 \end{aligned}$$

303

So, the sample size is three hundred and three (303) teaching staff and this was used for the study.

3.2 Data Analysis Techniques

The statistical techniques or tools employed for analyzing or processing the data collected for this study includes frequency tables, simple percentage, mean, standard deviation, ranking and kruskal - Wallis non - parametric test. The computational formulae for the mean different tools are presented below:

Mean: $\bar{X} = \frac{\sum EX_i}{n}$

where X_i the score of a respondents, and
 n is the number of respondents.

Percentage = $\frac{\sum C_i}{N} \times 100$

1

C_i =Score of a subgroup

N =Total score

Standara Deviation

$$SD = \sqrt{\frac{\sum X^2 - \frac{(\sum X)^2}{n}}{n-1}}$$

n

n

The Kruskal - Wallis one -way Analysis variance by Ranks

$$H = \frac{12}{n(n+1)} \sum_{i=1}^K \frac{R_i^2}{n_i} - 3$$

$$R_i^2 - 3(n+1)$$

$$n(n+1)$$

$$\sum n_i$$

$$I = I$$

Where R_i = is the sum of ranks assigned to observations in the ith group.

$N = \sum n_i$ = number of observations in all the k. groups

H is Chi-square distributed with K - 1 degrees of freedom

4.0 DATA PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSIONS

Research Question

What stress management strategies/mechanisms have been instituted by the university management to curb the increasing incidence of stress among its employees?

This research question was answered using mean responses from question eleven. The mean opinion are ranked in order of magnitude and the results presented in the table 4.1 below.

Table 4.1. Mean Opinion on the effective ways of managing stress in Unizik.

S/N	Statement	NO.	S.D.	Mean	Remark
11i	Reduction of workload	297	2.3856	7.0370	Accepted
11e	Improving physical working environment.	297	2.3636	7.0337	Accepted
11g	Setting agreed job targets for employees	297	2.3655	6.8754	Accepted
11b	Provision of effective healthcare programme in the university	297	2.42997	6.8519	Accepted
11j		297	2.7004	6.7441	Accepted
11d	Provision of Counselling programme	297	2.4849	6.6700	Accepted
11c		297	2.4111	6.6364	Accepted
11h	Provision of loan advances for lecturers	297	2.4851	6.3805	Accepted
11f		297	2.87709	6.1315	Accepted
11a	Provision of fitness control programme	297	2.7266	6.0673	Accepted
	Adequate communication system				
	Childcare centres be provided Adequate maternity advances for pregnant lecturers.				

Source: Field Survey, 2022

4.1 Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis One:

There is no significant difference in the causes of stress among the various ranks of the teaching staff in Unizik.

To objectively test hypothesis One, the respondent's responses to question 1 of section A and that of question 2 of section B are combined.

The responses to question 2 are ranked and since they are non-parametric in nature, Kruskal-Wallis test is used. Table 4.2 below shows the result to the various options of the question items.

Table 4.2 Kruskal - Wallis Test Result for Hypothesis One.

S/N	Rank of Respondents	Mean Rank	Chi-square Value	Probability Value (0.05)	Remark
Quest 8a	Professor	176.1	3.00	0.70	Accepted
	Associate Prof.	161.75			
	Senior Lecturer	139.95			
	Lecturer I	145.25			
	Lecturer	149.82			
	Assistant Lecturer II	156.47			
8b	Professor	150.73	6.13	0.294	Accepted
	Associate Prof.	120.83			
	Senior Lecturer	157.03			
	Lecturer I	146.46			
	Lecturer II	156.11			
	Assistant Lecturer	123			
8c	Professor	169.07			
	Associate Prof.	162.50			

	Senior Lecturer	136.81	4.546	0.474	Accepted
	Lecturer I	140.62			
	Lecturer II	158.92			
	Assistant Lecturer	151.33			

8d	Professor	128.23	4.482	0.482	Accepted
	Associate Prof.	161.13			
	Senior Lecturer	135.51			
	Lecturer I	157.00			
	Lecturer II	148.97			
	Assistant Lecturer	162.90			
8e	Professor	162.50	11.076	0.05	Rejected
	Associate Prof.	191.71			
	Senior Lecturer	146.10			
	Lecturer I	162.98			
	Lecturer II	144.64			
	Assistant Lecturer	115.69			
8f	Professor	149.43	10.159	0.071	Accepted
	Associate Prof.	110.00			
	Senior Lecturer	152.42			
	Lecturer I	153.17			
	Lecturer II	160.95			
	Assistant Lecturer	115.20			
8h	Professor	139.3	5.875	0.319	Accepted
	Associate Prof.	116.67			
	Senior Lecturer	144.18			
	Lecturer I	139.49			
	Lecturer II	160.27			
	Assistant Lecturer	164.37			
8i	Professor	144.57	15.908	0.007	Rejected
	Associate Prof.	190.17			
	Senior Lecturer	154.88			
	Lecturer I	161.34			
	Lecturer II	148.16			
	Assistant Lecturer	101.13			

8j	Professor	201.4	19.814	0.001	Rejected
	Associate Prof.	215.85			
	Senior Lecturer	136.99			
	Lecturer I	159.99			
	Lecturer II	130.79			
	Assistant Lecturer	151.27			

Source: Field Survey, 2022

From the table 4.2, the null hypothesis was rejected in three cases while it shows that there is significant differences in the causes of stress among the various ranks of the teaching staff in Unizik.

Hypothesis Two.

There are no significant difference in the strategies applied in the management of stress among the teaching staff in Unizik.

To test this hypothesis the responses to section B of the questionnaire are combined with the number three question from section A. KRUSKAL - WALLIS test was

also used to test the hypothesis and the result are presented in table 4.3.

Table 4.3 Kruskal - Wallis Test for Hypothesis Two

S/N	Rank Respondents of	Mean Rank	chi-Square Value	Probability Value (0.005)	Remarks
Question 11a	Professor	98.83	27.594	0.000	Rejected
	Associate Prof.	142.63			
	Senior Lecturer	119.12			
	Lecturer I	184.13			
	Lecturer II	155.96			
	Assistant Lecturer	137.18			
11b	Professor	109.73	9.581	0.088	Acceptd
	Associate Prof.	123.29			
	Senior Lecturer	155.63			
	Lecturer I	156.46			
	Lecturer II	138.52			
	Assistant Lecturer	173.34			
11c	Professor	160.67	4.089	0.537	Accepted

	Associate Prof.	155.00			
	Senior Lecturer	164.05			
	Lecturer I	140.87			
	Lecturer II	140.71			
	Assistant Lecturer	151.93			
11d	Professor	150.40	10.485	0054	Accept
	Associate Prof.	100.50			
	Senior Lecturer	152.65			
	Lecturer I	150.13			
	Lecturer II	134.68			
	Assistant Lecturer	172.19			
11e	Professor	127.87			
	Associate Prof.	176.46			
	Senior Lecturer	152.76			
	Lecturer I	158.13			
	Lecturer II	129.54			
	Assistant Lecturer	172.93	10.871	0.054	Accepted
11f	Professor	150.93			
	Associate Prof.	102.92			
	Senior Lecturer	181.70			
	Lecturer I	130.66			
	Lecturer II	146.13			
	Assistant Lecturer	147.37	1.7.144	0.004	Rejected
11g	Professor	139.00			
	Associate Prof.	139.38			
	Senior Lecturer	170.21			
	Lecturer I	154.1			
	Lecturer II	133.99			
	Assistant Lecturer	144.11	7.846	0.165	Accepted
11h	Professor	109.93			
	Associate Prof.	91.63			
	Senior Lecturer	170.49	22.117	0.00	Rejected

	Lecturer I	141.42			
	Lecturer II	138.48			
	Assistant Lecturer	187.56			
11i	Professor	122.63			
	Associate Prof.	160.29			
	Senior Lecturer	151.04			
	Lecturer I	141.26			
	Lecturer II	148.08			
	Assistant Lecturer	171.49	4.814	0.439	Rejected
11j	Professor	183.03	14.08	0.015	Rejected
	Associate Prof.	115.38			
	Senior Lecturer	169.66			
	Lecturer I	157.15			
	Lecturer II	130.55			
	Assistant Lecturer	136.84			

Source: Field Survey, 2022

From the table 4.3, the null hypothesis was rejected in four cases, while it was accepted in six cases. This shows that the teaching staff of Unizik differs in the strategies applied in the management stress.

5.0 CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The major effects of stress include decrease in productivity, social withdrawal and depression. Others are anxiety, relationship conflicts, lack of focus, high blood pressure and decreased immunity. Of course, Colbert (2001) comments that mental depression often arises from a feeling of being overwhelmed, losing control or feeling trapped. According to him, perfectionists who continually drive themselves with no feeling of satisfaction at their own performance are generally prone to mental depression.

The most effective ways of managing stress among the teaching staff of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka include the reduction of workload, improved physical work environment and setting agreed job targets for employees. Others are provision of effective healthcare programmes in the university system, provision of Counselling programmes, provision of loan advances to lecturers and an adequate communication system. In support of the above Samiento (2007) remarks that identifying unrelieved stress and being aware of their effects in our lives is not enough for reducing their harmful effects. Just as there are many sources of stress, there are also many

possibilities for their management. However, all requires change by working towards achieving stress-free activities, and or changing one's reaction to it.

And finally result from hypothesis two (2) revealed that there is significant difference in managing stress among the teaching staff of Nnamdi Azikiwe University. Indeed, they differ greatly in the strategies applied in the management of stress.

We thus conclude that stressors abound in our tertiary institutions of learning and affects the academics. That these stressors retard teachers' productivity and impede the academic performance of students, as they are not adequately attended to. Owing to the above, there is therefore, the need to determine the optimal level of stress, which can individually motivate and not overwhelm the teaching staff of the university. And as the incidence of stressors increase among the teaching staff, there should be different management strategies for coping with it.

Based on the findings of this study, we recommend as follows;

1. Loan advances should be made available to the teaching staff. Because salaries are never enough and can not handle pressing projects which teaching staff may intend to undertake, the university management should advance loans to help them actualize their dreams. This is because, once certain priorities such as car, housing, children's education fees, etc are not met, it would be affecting the psyche of staff concerned and if not controlled would amount to stress.
2. Children's centre and creche should be established in the university too help take care of staff children. Often times home stress affects the official activities and child breeding contributes so much to home stress. Children centre will help to take care of the children when their parents are away to the office. For the female teaching staff or even to a caring father, children's centre is essential, as it will help parents to handle their job with less stress.
3. Improved working environment is essential way of addressing stressful conditions among the teaching staff. This implies providing welfare and motivational packages such as good office appliances, staff development through seminars conferences, workshop and short training courses; good relaxation outlets such staff canteens, the thing that lubricates life and which spurs people on to render maximum service. They are indeed, very essential.

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