Occupational Stress and Work Engagement Among Officers of the Nigerian Police Force

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Abstract

The study examined the effects of occupational stress on work engagement of the Nigerian Police Officers in Delta State. This study used a descriptive survey design, with a population of 251 police officers. The study used the simple random sampling technique. The research instrument used in this study was a structured questionnaire. Data collected from the field survey were analyzed using descriptive statistics, correlation and multiple regression. Findings showed that workload (β = 0.196, p < 0.05), role conflict and ambiguity (β = 0.524, p < 0.05), job demand (β = 0.313, p < 0.05) have positive effect on work engagement of the Nigerian Police Officers. Findings showed that the dimensions of occupational stress explained 58% of the variability in work engagement. The study concluded that occupational stress had positive effect on work engagement of Nigerian Police Officers in Delta State. It was recommended that there is need to periodically assess the workload of police officers to identify patterns of overload or underutilization. Adjust workload distribution as needed to maintain a balanced and manageable workload.

Keywords: Occupational Stress, Work Engagement, Workload, Job Demand, Role Conflict and Ambiguity

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Occupational stress (OS) is a known health risk that is associated with a wide range of behavioral, psychological, and medical conditions (Quick & Henderson, 2016). Occupational stress often comes from inadequate pay, job inequality, excessive workload, insufficient human resource capacity, poor recognition and promotion, time pressure, unstable work and lack of support from management, among many other reasons (Agyemang, et al., 2023). Global estimates of occupational stress range from 9% to 68%, with Sub-Saharan Africa among the regions most affected (Kaburi et al., 2019). Police have a very stressful job, full of risks and unexpected events. The psychological stress they are subjected to ranks first among all stressful professions (Maran et al., 2015). All workers are likely to experience OS. However, given the current security situation in Nigeria, police officers (PO) are more likely to face job stress.

There are two main characteristics of work stress; (1) the dimension or characteristics of the person and (2) the potential sources of stress in the work environment. The interplay between these two

features of work stress determines coping or maladaptive behavior and stress-related diseases (Rasool et al., 2020). Workplace stress presents a complex set of cognitive (belief or knowledge), emotional (feeling or development) and behavioral tendencies, namely absenteeism, tardiness, stress, fatigue and withdrawal. Because occupational stress is an invisible and unobservable variable and cannot be observed, inferred from the behavioral response, it affects the individual's work engagement (WE), leading to job dissatisfaction. Research has shown that potential stressors that these agents may experience include occupation or the job itself, environmental or organizational stressors, as well as external stressors in the workplace that can affect their job performance (Santos et al, 2021).

According to Akinola (2020), a person's passion for their work and their involvement, attachment, and dedication to it are signs of WE. To achieve desired workplace outcomes, a work-engaged worker possesses psychological, behavioral, and emotional traits (Eseadi et al., 2022). Consequently, WE gives workers the functional skills they need to accomplish the intended outcomes in a workplace with specific job requirements. As applied to this research, WE implies police officer's dedication, enthusiasm, and optimistic outlook about their work. High levels of WE create a healthy environment for PO to work (Allan & Rinante, 2022). However, low levels of engagement lead to a lack of behavioral patterns that play a role, leading to particular consequences for the individual and a negative impact on the organization due to a lack of vitality and effectiveness (Norris, & Norris, 2020). Disengaged employees will be detached, disconnected, unmotivated and unenthusiastic in their work, leading to reduced service delivery, increased turnover, and decreased customer satisfaction (Abu-Shamaa, et al, 2015).

Police officers as professional law enforcement officers are subjected to a number of stress inducing activities in Nigeria. This is particularly so because of the nature of their job. They are generally looked up to for the safety of other people's lives and property. While on duty, they frequently face violence from criminals, often participating in civilian rescue operations against armed robbers and other armed people, they directly deal with the toughest and worst criminals in society, sometimes they watch their colleagues get killed or injured in the performance of his or her lawful duties. In addition to numerous other duties, they are the ones who stand watch over the chaotic electoral process and maintain law and order on the streets. In addition, they run the possibility of losing their jobs or careers for even the smallest mistake; this is how dangerous being a police officer in Nigeria is. Because of the nature of police employment, in order for them to do their jobs to the best of their abilities, they need to minimize their stress levels.

1.2 Statement of the Problem
Workplace has become a source of extreme stress because of technological changes, mass retrenchment, information overload, and demand for greater productivity, ferocious competition and uncertain future. To keep pace with this competitive world, employees in the workplace spend most of their time striving to meet their job obligations hence ignoring the stressors that have adverse effects on their domestic, social and personal life.

In the Nigeria Police Force (NPF), there are cases of PO confronted with OS in performing their civic duties of protection of lives and properties (Rose & Unnithan, 2015). Sixty-five percent of police officers in Nigeria face job stress and suffer from severe cognitive dysfunction, drunkenness, divorce, lower job satisfaction, aggression, burnout, weaker levels of commitment,

generalized disorder, mental illness and increased likelihood of resigning from the force (Gutshall et al., 2017; Halevi et al., 2016). Giga and Hoel (2003) argued that lack of effective treatment of occupational stress among police officers might increase posttraumatic stress disorder (PTSD) among them and affect their WE. Perceived stress of NPF will definitely reduce their level of WE. The general problem addressed in this study is that police officers in Asaba, lack adequate knowledge to manage the OS when deployed to that region to perform their civic duties to protect lives and properties (Ojedokun & Idemudia, 2014). There is inadequate public policies and programs available for Nigerian police officers on strategies useful to manage OS when deployed to Delta State to perform their civic duties so that they can work with vigour, dedication and absorption and that their total engagement in their job will increase. Therefore, this study looked at the connection between the Nigerian Police Force's WE and OS in Delta State.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Occupational Stress

Various job consequences, including a high employee turnover rate, absenteeism, low morale, low productivity, personal health and psychological pain, addictions, and family issues, have been linked to occupational stressors (Imbur et al., 2023; Eseadi et al., 2022). OS is described as a chronic strain that has its source in the incongruence between workplace requirements and workers' capabilities (Harwell, 2013).

According to Eseadi et al (2022), work stress occurs when employees are constantly stressed due to insufficient resources to meet job requirements or struggling with performance issues. An extensive list of contributing factors includes fatigue, stress, and repetitive activities. A lack of initial motivation and curiosity prior to taking on certain responsibilities occurs as a result of the rising stress. In contrast, Prasetio et al. (2019) contends that compensation that is out of proportion to output or work that is not consistent with output are two major factors that contribute to OS, which is frequently associated with excessive stress. Current position becomes redundant and unfulfilling. This exemplifies how police services are always changing. Three OS dimensions were the focus of this study. These include role conflict and ambiguity, workload, and job demands.

2.1.1 Workload

A person's workload is a source of stress or demand at work that takes up their time and psychological energy. Such needs necessitate the expansion of personal resources (time). Due to a lack of resources, people were unable to continue performing their other responsibilities (i.e., family roles) (Kamarudin et al., 2018). More specifically, a person's job demands more time, which means he has less time to fulfill family responsibilities and roles (Thompson et al., 1999). This affects other personal goals (unsatisfactory work and stress) in addition to creating conflict between dual roles due to limited resources. This study contends that police workloads must increase in order to maintain law. Research from the past indicates that a heavy workload leads to stress at work and emotional exhaustion (Karatepe, 2013).

2.1.2 Job Demand

Police officer job demands refer to various work situations that police officers face and consume energy, such as job content leading to job stress, task complexity and other issues. Its performance indicators include quantity demand, skill need, and emotional need (Chen & Wu, 2022). Job

demands are well-known sources of stress, and they can deplete an employee's coping mechanisms and create a vicious cycle of loss (Van Woerkom et al., 2016). Several studies divide police stressors into operational stress and organizational stress (Marcatto & Orrico, 2021). Po face operational risk due to their high-risk position and operational stress associated with specific police duties (Queirós et al., 2020). Therefore, operational and organizational work-related demands can be a source of stress for PO (Li, 2018). Accordingly, the study believes that a significant component affecting police stress is job demand.

Many studies have proven that job demands can also play a positive role. Several studies divide police stressors into operational stress and organizational stress (Queirós et al., 2020). Inconvenient work demands are those that negatively influence the individual, such as role ambiguity and conflict, while difficult work demands are those that can promote growth, personal development and satisfaction, such as time-related stress and responsibility (Bakker and Demerouti, 2017).

2.1.3 Role Conflict & Ambiguity

Role conflict is also called role stress or role strain caused by the role that individuals need to internalize in an organization (Kamarudin et al., 2018). Although varieties of concepts are used to describe role conflict, the key element of all concepts is incompatibility or equivalence in the performance of job duties within an organization. Rizzo et al. (1970) defines role conflict as the incompatibility between needs and expectations in an attractive career role. Role conflict occurs when individuals do not know exactly how and when to perform a task (Kamarudin et al., 2018).

Role conflict is a situation, which occurs because of incompatible role demands. According to Kahn et al.'s (1964) role theory, role conflict includes two or more role pressures from various sources. According to the classical organization theory, role conflict has no place in a well-structured organization with a solid chain of command (Rizzo et al., 1970). Role conflicts arise when employees are faced with role expectations that are incompatible with the different social statuses they hold. It may also be linked to situational experiences and either a brief or extended length of time.

In addition, role ambiguity is defined as the degree of lack of clear and specific communication with role requirements (Yongkang et al., 2014). In other words, key workers feel they are in a difficult position; their professional obligations are not clear and not stated simply. It has also been shown to be an aspect of job dissatisfaction, affecting the creativity of employees and the tendency to quit in the organization. Ambiguity in how to perform a certain task is one of the main causes of work stress (CahayaSanthi & Piartrini, 2020). It is essential to lower stress in the workplace to an acceptable level in order to increase productivity, motivation, and commitment among employees. This is only possible with a comprehensive understanding of stressors and strong precautions against them (Ramgoolam-Atchiamith et al., 2022). According to Chen and Wu (2022) role ambiguity occurs when the employee "does not feel she/he has the necessary information to perform her/his role adequately, when she/he is uncertain about what the members of her/his role set expect of her/him" (Unguren & Arslan, 2021). This uncertainty may be task- or social-related. When an employee cannot be sure of the job requirements or the means to success, they may face

job ambiguity. Likewise, an employee suffers from social-emotional ambiguity when they cannot predict the possible consequences of their informal behaviour (Unguren & Arslan, 2021).

2.2   Work Engagement

Work engagement (WE) is a positive and comprehensive work-related emotional and cognitive state associated with the characteristics of persistence and distraction (Aldabbas et al., 2021). Research has shown that WE, which is defined as "a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind" (Wood et al., 2020), has a positive effect on a variety of not only the employee but also organizational outcomes, including job satisfaction, organizational commitment, work performance, financial returns, and customer loyalty (Osborne & Hammoud 2017; Yan et al., 2017; Aruoren, 2020; Aruoren & Isiaka, 2023).

Because of the great potential of job engagement to promote organizational well-being, organizations are interested in employee engagement at work (Aruoren & Oisamoje, 2020). At the same time, employers are increasingly trying to create supportive environments so that employees experience less stress when performing their jobs because stress cannot be completely eliminated. Engaged employees define themselves through their work and therefore have a high level of strength, dedication, and a deep sense of passion in their work (Odiri, Aruoren, & Obieroma, 2023; Timms et al., 2015). The absorption dimension of WE, which refers to total focus and immersion in one's work, is frequently characterized by a rapid sense of time passing or difficulty separating oneself from one's work (Wood et al., 2020).

Vigor is known by a high level of energy, willingness to work hard and perseverance in the face of difficulties. From an organizational point of view, strong employees persevere despite difficulties and find their work enjoyable (Timms et al., 2015). The last element of WE, dedication, is defined by a deep psychological involvement in one's work, along with a feeling of enthusiasm and challenge from the work itself. According to Bakker & Demerouti (2017), theoretically, work engagement is thought to represent a relatively steady state of work-related happiness, the extent of which is largely determined by work-related factors as well as available employee resources (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017).

Employee WE has emerged as one of the greatest challenges in today's workplace. With the complexity and strict regulations in many organizations, WE will continue to be a challenge for organizations in the future (Orsbone & Hammoud, 2017). Keeping the organization's vitality, existence, and profitability depends on WE, which makes managing this component difficult (Albercht et al., 2015; Farndale & Murrer, 2015). Organizations with highly engaged employees will receive greater profits than those without (Society for Human Resource Management (SHRM, 2014). Organizations with highly engaged employees experience increased customer satisfaction, profits, and employee productivity (Ahmetoglu et al., 2015). Work engagement is a positive and holistic work-related emotional and cognitive state associated with the characteristics of persistence and distraction (Aldabbas et al., 2021). Some researchers have suggested that with an increase in job engagement, employees' emotional, cognitive, and outlook behaviors will improve positively, which will also lead to better and increased work performance (Wang & Chen, 2020).

Kim and Park (2020), highlights the many benefits of employee engagement. Engaged employees exhibit high energy and high mental resilience, and they tend to be willing to invest significant

effort in assigned tasks. Additionally, highly engaged workers typically see the value and difficulties of their jobs, exhibit excitement and pleasure in what they do, and perform better as a result. Khusanova et al. (2021) found that engaged employees outperform unwitting workers because they exhibit positive emotions (such as happiness, cheerfulness, and enthusiasm), good psychological and physical health, self-employment, and resources (like other people's support). According to current research, engaged workers are resourceful and enthusiastic (Demerouti et al., 2015; Scafuri Kovalchuket al., 2019). Workers who make use of these resources will also work more effectively. Engaged workers will support the growth of the company while fostering a healthy work environment because they have strong emotional and energetic connections to work, perceive themselves as capable of meeting job demands, and transfer their commitment to others at work (Khusanova et al., 2021; Bakker et al, 2011). For the purpose of properly defining the drivers of workplace engagement, it is imperative that businesses understand the genuine nature of this phenomenon, particularly with regard to policing (Mostafa & Abed El-Motalib, 2020). Figure 1 shows the conceptual framework for this study.

Independent Variables   Dependent Variable

Figure 1 ... rk
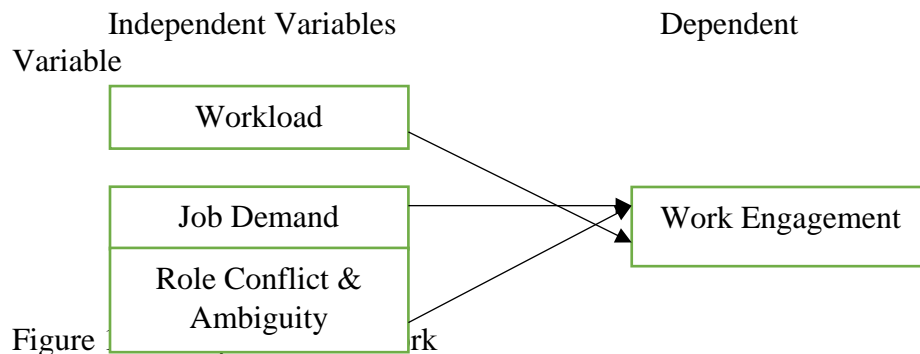
2.3 Theoretical Framework
Job demands-resources (JD-R) theory (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017) is one of the most-often used theories to explain work engagement. This theory proposes that the combination of job characteristics and personal resources will predict job performance through employee engagement in the workplace. As a result, job engagement is more likely to occur when workers face significant challenges and have sufficient professional and personal resources to address them (Bakker & Sanz-Vergel, 2013; Tadic et al., 2015).

In addition, this theory suggests that employees can actively seek out career resources and challenges, such as asking for feedback, support, and growth opportunities, and initiating new and interesting projects. JD-R theory is relevant in this study because it specifically focuses on job characteristics, employee behavior e.g. job building, using strengths; playful job design (Bakker, 2017) and personal resources (e.g. self-efficacy, optimism, self-esteem) which increases WE at work.

2.4 Empirical Studies
The study conducted by Eseadi et al., (2022) investigated WE and OS among library staff members working in state and federal universities in Nigeria. The study employed a descriptive survey methodology, using questionnaires in data collection. 76 respondents participated in the study. The study's findings demonstrated that employees at libraries had high levels of OS and notably low

levels of WE. On the other hand, people who experienced little OS demonstrated noticeably higher levels of WE.

Suryanthini et al., (2020) investigated and tested the influence of job stress and employee engagement to organizational commitment and performance of employees of PT. Biseka Denpasar. The study population consisted of 106 employees. The data were analyzed using a structural variant of the analytical equation model known by partial least squares (PLS) analysis. The results of this study indicate that job stress does not affect the performance of employees, employee engagement has positive and significant effect on employee performance, job stress has positive influence and significant to organizational commitment, employee engagement has positive and significant effect on organizational commitment, and organizational commitment has positive and significant effect on employee performance.

Imbur et al., (2023) carried out a study that examined the impact of occupational stress on employees' performance in the banking industry within Makurdi metropolis in Nigeria. A cross sectional survey design was adopted for the study. A total of one hundred and fifty three (153) participants participated in the study. Two standardized questionnaires were used to collect data to test the hypotheses formulated for the study. Finding indicated that occupational stress was positive and significantly related to job performance ($\beta = .562$, $p < 0.01$).

Ragesh et al. (2017) conducted a study to report on the occupational stress and associated physical and mental health related issues of Indian police officers. Participants were 40 police personnel working in India. Findings from the study revealed that operational stress was higher among PO, and organizational stress was higher among the department officers. The results further revealed that 23% of the participants reported diagnoses with physical health problems (hypertension/diabetes/renal issues/allergies, etc.). The results further showed that the majority of the participants reported being diagnosed for mental illnesses (psychosis / anxiety disorders), with 29% reporting that they abused substances (nicotine, alcohol, cannabis), and a few of them abused multiple substances. From these discussions, the study proposes that:

H_1**:** Workload has no positive and significant relationship with work engagement
H_2**:** There is no positive and significant relationship between job demand and work engagement.
H_3**:** There is no positive and significant relationship between role conflict and ambiguity and work engagement.

3.0 METHODS
In this study, the survey design was descriptive. Since the design was helpful in obtaining data regarding OS and police officers' WE, the researchers deemed it adequate. The study population comprised of PO from the A and B Divisions in Asaba, which comprised of security, criminal investigation, traffic, and economic investigation PO. A total population of 251 police officers were studied. The sample size for the study was determined using Yamane (1964) formula. Using a margin of error of 5%, the formula yielded a sample size of 154. The sampling techniques used for the study was the stratified simple random sampling The instrument used for data collection was a structured questionnaire which responds format are in the five point likert scale form whereby the respondents was asked to give answers ranging from strongly disagreed to strongly agree. Copies of validated questionnaire were delivered to the respondents by hand. The following model guided the study:

WE = F(W, RCA, JD)   1

$WE = \beta_0 + \beta_1 W + \beta_2 RCA + \beta_3 JD + \varepsilon$ 2

Where: WE = Work Engagement; W= Workload; RCA = Role Conflict and Ambiguity; JD = Job Demand; ε = Error term

4.0 RESULTS
4.1 Analysis of Respondents Profile

Table 4.2 showed the background attributes of the research respondents. It was indicated on the gender composition that 72 (47%) were males while 82 (43%) were females. The age bracket of respondents showed that 54 (35%) were below 30 years; 65 (42%) falls within the age bracket of 31-40 years; lastly, 35 (23%) were above 41 years. The marital composition of the respondents indicated that 55 (36%) were single, 77 (50%) were married, while 22 (14%) were divorced. On the educational background of the participants, it was indicated that most have a tertiary background with 69 (45%) being HND/ BSc holders; while 67 (43%) were OND/ NCE holders, while 18 (12%) were MSc/MBA holders. On work experience, 75(49%) have below 5 years work experience; 56(36%) have 6-10 years work experience; while 23(15%) have above 11 years work experience.

Table 4.2 Frequency Analysis of Respondents Profile

S/N	Characteristics of the Respondents	Frequency	Percentage (%)
1	Gender:		
	Male	72	47
	Female	82	53
	Total	154	100
2	Age Range:		
	Below 30	54	35
	31-40	65	42
	Above 41	35	23
	Total	154	100
3	Marital Status:		
	Single	55	36
	Married	77	50
	Divorced	22	14
	Total	154	100
4	Educational qualification:		
	OND/ NCE	67	43
	HND/ BSc	69	45
	MSc/MBA	18	12
	Total	154	100
5	Work Experience:		
	1-5years	75	49
	6-10years	56	36

	Above 10years	23	15
	Total	154	100

Source: Field Survey, 2023

4.2 Correlation Analysis

Table 4.3 showed that all the correlation coefficients between the constructs in this study were positive and significant. The correlation coefficient between workload and work engagement showed strong positive relationship ($r = 0.229^{**}$, $p < 0.05$). Role conflict and ambiguity which is the second variable exhibited positive correlation with work engagement ($r = 0.683^{**}$, $p < 0.05$). Job demand showed positive correlation with work engagement ($r = 0.597^{**}$, $p < 0.05$).

Table 4.3 Correlation Analysis

S/N	Study Variables	1	2	3	4
1	Workload	1			
2	Role conflict and ambiguity	0.004	1		
3	Job demand	0.099	0.506^{**}	1	
4	Work engagement	0.229^{**}	0.683^{**}	0.597^{**}	1

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level.

4.3 Hypotheses Testing

The *F*-ratio in Table 4.5, showed that the dimensions of occupational stress such as workload, role conflict and ambiguity, and job demand statistically predict the dependent variable (work engagement), $F = 71.817$, $0.000 < 0.05$. This implies that the regression model is significant for the study. Furthermore, Table 4.6 showed that change in work engagement was brought about by the dimensions of occupational stress by 58% (0.581) as indicated by the adjusted R^2 value. The dimensions of occupational stress explained 58% of the variability in work engagement.

Table 4.5 Fitness of the Models

ANOVAª

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	56.428	3	18.809	71.817	0.000^{b}
	Residual	39.286	150	0.262		
	Total	95.714	153			

a. Dependent Variable: Work engagement
b. Predictors: (Constant), Job demand, Workload , Role conflict and ambiguity

Table 4.6 Model Summary

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	0.768ᵃ	0.590	0.581	0.512

a. Predictors: (Constant), Job demand, Workload , Role conflict and ambiguity

Table 4.7 showed the multiple regression analysis result for the effects of all the dimensions occupational stress. Hypothesis 1 (H$_1$) states that 'Workload has no positive and significant relationship with work engagement'. As shown in Table 4.7, workload has a positive and significant effect on work engagement (β = 0.196, $p < 0.05$). Since the p value calculated in Table 4.7 was lesser than the critical level of significance ($0.000 < 0.05$), the null hypothesis was rejected while the alternate hypothesis was accepted. Thus, workload has a positive and significant relationship with work engagement. Hypothesis 2 (H$_2$) states that 'There is no positive and significant relationship between job demand and work engagement'. As shown in Table 4.7, job demand has a positive and significant effect on work engagement (β = 0.313, $p < 0.05$). The p value calculated in Table 4.7 was lesser than the critical level of significance ($0.000 < 0.05$), therefore the null hypothesis was rejected while the alternate hypothesis was accepted implying that there is a positive and significant relationship between job demand and work engagement. Furthermore, hypothesis 3 (H$_3$) states that 'There is no positive and significant relationship between role conflict and ambiguity and work engagement'. As shown in Table 4.7, role conflict and ambiguity has a positive and significant effect on work engagement (β = 0.524, $p < 0.05$). Since the p value calculated in Table 4.7 is lesser than the critical level of significance ($0.000 < 0.05$), there was need to reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternate hypothesis indicating that role conflict and ambiguity has a positive and significant relationship with work engagement.

Finally, Table 4.7 indicated that there is no multicolinearity among the variables because the VIF of workload (1.013), role conflict and ambiguity (1.347), and job demand (1.360) towards work engagement are below 10. The tolerance level is more than 0.1 where workload has 0.987, role conflict and ambiguity has 0.742, and job demand has 0.735.

Table 4.7 Multiple Regression Analysis of Occupational Stress

Coefficientsᵃ

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients B	Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics Tolerance	VIF
1 (Constant)	-3.969	2.262		-1.755	0.081		
Workload	0.205	0.055	0.196	3.733	0.000	0.987	1.013
Role conflict and ambiguity	0.492	0.057	0.524	8.625	0.000	0.742	1.347

| Job demand | 0.464 | 0.090 | 0.313 | 5.131 | 0.000 | 0.735 | 1.360 |

a. Dependent Variable: Work engagement

4.4 Discussion of Results

Table 4.7 showed that workload has positive effect on work engagement ($\beta = 0.196$, $p < 0.05$). Test of hypothesis one showed that workload has significant positive relationship with work engagement ($0.000 < 0.05$). The result is in agreement with Crawford, Lepine and Rich (2010) study findings that to some individuals, workload may not necessarily be stressful. They added that excessive work can also be seen as a challenge by employees thus, resulting in energizing them to work with more engagement. Table 4.7 showed that job demand has positive effect on work engagement ($\beta = 0.313$, $p < 0.05$). Test of hypothesis two showed that there is significant positive relationship between job demand and work engagement ($0.000 < 0.05$). Thus, job demand have a direct positive impact on work engagement (Tims et al., 2013). Table 4.7 showed that role conflict and ambiguity has positive effect on work engagement ($\beta = 0.524$, $p < 0.05$). Test of hypothesis three showed that role conflict and ambiguity has significant positive relationship with work engagement ($0.000 < 0.05$). This finding is in tandem with the work of (Kamarudin et al., 2018) who asserted that role conflict occurs when individuals are uncertain about how and when to perform a task. This was also confirmed by (Cahaya, Santhi & Piartrini, 2020) who sees ambiguity about how to perform a certain task as one of the main causes of work stress and can affect job engagement.

5.0 CONCLUSION

The study concluded that occupational stress had positive effect on work engagement of Nigerian Police Officers in Delta State. More specifically, workload, role conflict and ambiguity and job demand have positive effect on work engagement. Thus, when these factors are managed effectively, aligned with individual capabilities, and balanced appropriately, they can contribute to a state of engagement where employees feel motivated, satisfied, and absorbed in their work. A balanced workload that aligns with an individual's skills and abilities can lead to a state of "flow," where employees are fully absorbed in their tasks, experience a sense of accomplishment, and exhibit high levels of work engagement. However, when employees are unsure about their roles, responsibilities, or performance expectations, it can lead to uncertainty and anxiety. This uncertainty can hinder their ability to effectively engage in their tasks and contribute to overall reduce work engagement. The availability of control over one's work processes and access to necessary resources can buffer the negative effects of high demands. Employees who have the autonomy to manage their tasks and access to adequate resources are more likely to feel engaged despite high demands. When job demands align with an individual's skills and resources, they are more likely to feel competent and capable in meeting those demands. This alignment contributes to a sense of accomplishment and enhances work engagement.

6.0 RECOMMENDATIONS

The study recommended that:

i. Periodically assess the workload of police officers to identify patterns of overload or underutilization. Adjust workload distribution as needed to maintain a balanced and manageable workload.

ii. Clearly define the roles, responsibilities, and expectations of each police officer. This helps mitigate role ambiguity by providing a comprehensive understanding of their duties.

iii. Regularly assess the job demands placed on police officers to identify potential sources of stress. Use this information to make informed decisions about workload distribution.

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