



Occupational Stress and Job Satisfaction among Secondary School Teachers in Port Harcourt Local Government Area of Rivers State

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ABSTRACT

The study examines occupational stress and job satisfaction among secondary school teachers in Port Harcourt Local Government Area of Rivers State. In order to achieve the purpose of the study, the researcher formulated two (2) objectives of the study, research questions and null hypotheses that guided the study. The researcher adopted a correlational research design. The population of the study comprised eight hundred and thirty-one (831) teachers in public senior secondary schools' teachers in public secondary schools in Port Harcourt Local Government Area of Rivers State. The entire population of the study was sampled due to the manageable size of the population using census sampling study. A self-structured instrument titled "Occupational Stress and Teachers Job Performance Questionnaire was used for collection of data for the study. Based on the analysis, it was found that work overload and work-family conflict have significant relationship on job satisfaction among secondary school teachers in Port Harcourt Local Government Area of Rivers State. Based on the findings of the study, it was therefore, recommended that; leaders in public primary schools should be offered capacity building training on leadership to improve their leadership knowledge and skills, in order to deal with stress related to workload more teachers should be employed in public schools and allocation of manageable workloads to teachers should be considered.

Key Words: Occupational stress, job satisfaction, secondary school, teachers, work overload, work-family conflict.

INTRODUCTION

Stress has been drawing attention of many scholars due to its effects on individual and organizational performance. It is one of the most dangerous issues in the working place if it is not properly managed. Ahmed and Ramzam (2013) remind that for the past decades stress has been increasingly becoming more problematic. Mohajan (2012) defines stress as body's physical and emotional reaction that frightens, irritates, confuses, endangers, or excites us and places demands on our bodies. It can be a result of both negative and positive experiences.

The role of teachers in all education levels cannot be underestimated. Although all professions can be perceived to be equally important for the human development, teaching is the profession which has been facilitating success of many people in different areas of life. However, teaching profession is currently becoming a more challenging profession in the world due to the effects of stress that educators are increasingly facing. Job satisfaction among teachers in Tanzania has not been satisfactorily researched and few researchers studied the area have largely been associating it with remuneration. There is lack of sufficient empirical evidence on the relationship between occupational stress and job satisfaction among primary school teachers in Tanzania. Job satisfaction has something to do with how one feels about his or her job and therefore it is associated with the extent to which job holders like their jobs. Kyriacou (2011) argue that job satisfaction is the result of assessment of various features of work and the workplace a particular person is currently in. According to Oginska-Bulik (2016) job satisfaction has a positive effect on overall commitment of employees and productivity of schools. The teachers' job satisfaction has an ability to significantly influence their commitment to their respective schools. This study sought to establish the relationship between occupational stress and job satisfaction among teachers in Tanzanian public primary schools and identify the coping strategies used by the teachers in dealing with occupational stress.

Occupational stress has become one of the most serious health issues in the modern world. Occupational stress has become one of the most popular topics for applied research in psychology, and in the broader areas of social and medical sciences. Occupational stress, also known as job stress, has been defined as the experience of negative emotional states such as frustration, worry, anxiety and depression attributed to work related factors (Kyriacou, 2011). Occupational stress is also defined as the perception of a discrepancy between environmental demands (stressors) and individual capacities to fulfill these

demands (Topper, 2017). Occupational stress, in particular, is the inability to cope with the pressures in a job, because of a poor fit between someone's abilities and his/her work requirements and conditions.

According to Jahanzeb (2010), workplace has become a source of extreme stress as a result of technological changes, mass retrenchment, information overload, and demand for greater productivity, fierce competition and uncertain future. So as to keep pace with this competitive world, employees in the work place 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. Demands of the work place may prove harmful to the employee both mentally and physically.

Several studies have shown that occupational stress can lead to various negative consequences for the individual and the workplace (Oginska-Bulik, 2016). Extreme stress can lead to decreased productivity and an overall negative impact on the organization itself. People with a higher percentage of occupational stress may not be satisfied with their job and therefore they will not feel happy working in the organization. Therefore, it is very important for employer and employees to realize the stress and the stressor that cause all the negative effects.

Concept of Occupational Stress

Teaching can be a very stressful occupation and teacher stress appears to have increased in recent decades. In educational sector, stress is increasing day by day because teaching today's young people is not only difficult work, but can be dangerously stressful (Mehta, 2013). Teachers have to cope with their task to give knowledge as well as to educate students to be good citizens. With the increase demand from students and parents, as well as the job requirement by Malaysia's Ministry of Education, the stress levels are readily increasing. In Malaysia, a total of 237 primary and secondary teachers out of 36, 000 teachers in the state, sought psychiatric treatment because of stress from work and personal problems over the last 10 months. The Malaysia State Education Department views this matter seriously although the number is smaller. Teachers reported stress out because of work pressure, financial problems, depression and loneliness. Nilufar (2019) identified occupational stress inducing factors in academic staff include work overload, home-work interface, role ambiguity and performance pressure.

The main cause of occupational stress in the organization is work overload. Malaysian teachers have raised serious concern about the long working hours reporting an average hours as high as 77 hours per week. Teachers being burdened with administrative and clerical work felt it was hard to focus on their core business which is teaching students. Besides, teachers are also engaged in administrative duties that take a large portion of their time resulting in a decrease in their ability to focus on teaching and learning. Sometimes teachers are also asked to attend meetings and courses that are not related to their job and take them away from their classroom. The workload and challenges faced by teachers increase each day and to burden them with more work. This will not go down well especially with the examination period being around the corner (Rutra, 2011). The increase in workload in the organization without taking into account the availability of time to carry out the tasks may lead to occupational stress.

When roles of the teachers are ambiguous, it will lead towards the conflicting demand placed on them and role ambiguity and role conflict are positively associated with the work stress experience by the teachers. Higher work stress experienced by the teachers, lower will be their satisfaction with their job. According to Usman (2011), teachers experience occupational stress due to the increase performance pressure. They experience role ambiguity where there is conflicting demands placed on them, their role is not very clear as to what to do, what not to do, who to report and what targets are to be achieved and also they have to work longer hours and feel overloaded in their role. Besides, the daily interaction with students and colleagues and the incessant and fragmented demands of teaching often lead to overwhelming pressure and challenges, which may lead to occupational stress.

Teachers are also under a lot of pressure because of work-family conflict. Teachers must do some work, such as preparing lessons plan for the next day and grading exam papers at home. They have to devote time to their work outside school hours, which result in sacrificing time that could be devoted to housework and their children (Simbula, 2010). This may cause problem known as work-life conflict or work-family conflict. The teachers can satisfy with their jobs and life if they can balance their work and family life. Anyway, work family conflict is one of the problems in modern society. The amount of stress a person experience at work is likely to be a result of the interaction of a number of factors such as types of work they are doing (their occupation), the present of work stressors, and the amount of support they received both at work and at home.

Several studies found that occupational stress influences the employee's job satisfaction and overall performance in their work. This is because most of the organizations are demanding for employees' better job outcome. Stress can bring undesirable impact on employees through job dissatisfaction. Teachers are also subject to problems of dissatisfaction at workplace. If they are not satisfied, they may not be committed to deliver the best to achieve the target in teaching. Research done by Antoniou (2013) showed that when sources of stress increase in the job environment, job satisfaction reduces. They also reported that low job satisfaction can be predicted through resources of stress such as demands of the profession and great volume of work. Employees with low occupational stress reported have more job satisfaction than those with high occupational stress.

Link between occupational stress and job satisfaction

According to some studies, employees with low occupational stress have more job satisfaction than employees with high occupational stress. The result of some studies showed that there is a strong negative relationship between occupational stress and job satisfaction. Studies with the adoption of job satisfaction as an indicator of occupational stress have shown that role overload, role ambiguity, and work-family conflict have been shown as a predictors of job satisfaction.

Role overload was demonstrated to be a source of stress which acts as a significant negative predictor of job satisfaction and positive predictor of negative emotions directed to work. A relationship between role overload and job satisfaction has been reported in various occupational groups. According to

Correa and Ferreira (2011), people who perceived that they were required to work in a position with demands greater than their own abilities tended to be less satisfied and direct more negative emotions towards their work.

In a study, Kemery (2016) found that, although role conflict and role ambiguity individually had negative relationships with job satisfaction, the combined effect of the two factors on appointment satisfaction was more complex. When role conflict and role ambiguity were both high, appointment satisfaction was low, but when role conflict was low, satisfaction was actually higher when role ambiguity was high. On the other hand, Mohajan (2018) analyzed the effect of role conflict and role ambiguity on job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Their findings indicated that both role conflict and role ambiguity were negatively related to employees' job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Their study concluded that managers must reduce the level of role conflict and role ambiguity if they want to increase job satisfaction and organizational commitment.

Work-family conflict has become an issue of particular concern among employees and the negative consequences of this conflict for employee's job satisfaction. There have been researches into the relationship between work-family conflict and job satisfaction. Most studies have found a negative relationship between occupational stress and job satisfaction. Lambert (2012) studied found that time-based work-to-family conflict negatively affects job satisfaction. Due to the nature of correctional work (i.e. shift, rotation on weekends/holidays, and job transfer), their study predicts that Taiwanese correctional officers may experience work-family conflict, which in turn could negatively affect their job satisfaction. While, Lu (2018) found that organizational policies and practices such as work flexibility could alleviate feelings of work interfering with family, further enhancing job satisfaction and organizational commitment.

Stress can bring undesirable impacts on employees through creating low organizational commitment and job dissatisfaction. Antoniou (2013) believed that when sources of stress increase in job environment, job satisfaction reduces. So, job satisfaction has an important role in improving the performance of employees. Consequently, if there are discrepancies between individuals' desires and expectations and condition of their present jobs, negative thoughts and dissatisfaction arise at work.

Stress and Job Performance

The literature suggests the existence of an inverse relationship between stress and job satisfaction, this implies that as occupational stress increases job satisfaction decreases. Moreover, employees who are not satisfied with their jobs become less efficient (Topper, 2011). This implies that occupational stress does not only affect individual employees but also organizations at large since organizational performance depends on individual performance. Job satisfaction is also linked with organizational citizenship behaviour, employee commitment and absenteeism. Kemery (2016) conducted a study among primary school teachers in Kenya which investigated the impact of occupational stress on their job satisfaction. The study did not only find adverse effect of occupational stress on job satisfaction, it also revealed that the majority of Kenyan teachers do not enjoy the teaching profession and if they would be given another job they would leave the teaching profession. According to the study which was done by Kanene (2016) in Choma District, Southern Province of Zambia it was found that teachers were experiencing a moderate level of stress that was associated with work related stressors, professional distress, discipline and motivation, time management and professional investment. Further, stress was accelerated by other factors such as slow career progression, perception of low status and lack of respect for their job, inadequate salary and lack of recognition for what they were doing.

The study of Usman (2018) which involved a sample of 103 teachers in Turkey sought to study sources of occupational stress among teachers. Nature of work, relations with others, physical work environment, social and educational relations, wages and incentives were found to be the top stressors that teachers were experiencing. Usman found that stress that teachers in Terengganu, Malaysia were experiencing was related to poor behaviour of students and workload. However, there was an inverse relationship between supervisory support and teachers' stress levels. This study informs that, in order to deal with stress, it is important for management to ensure the supervisory role is well played by immediate supervisors of school teachers. The study by Simbula (2010) which was done in Kenya, found out that workload, long working hours, inadequate teaching materials, poor living conditions and low salary were the most stressful factors at their working places.

Different studies found different ways that teachers normally use in coping with stress. The study of Lu (2018) which was done in Turkey among teachers working in private elementary schools found that looking at things from positive side, spending time with beloved ones and creating an environment to spend time with them were the major strategies used. A study by Osagie (2018) done in Nigeria using a random sample of 308 found that, teachers in Edo state use a combination of various stress coping strategies to help them dealing with stress. These strategies included receiving emotional support from other people, to see the situation in different perspective, accepting responsibility to deal with the stressful situation, finding comfort or solution through prayers and consumption of substances like stimulants or pain killers. Further, the study found that stress had something to do with low job satisfaction of teachers.

Statement of the Problems

Teaching has now become a very demanding occupation with lot of stress and responsibilities. Occupational stress is growing problem worldwide, which results in substantial loss to employees and organizations. Excessive workload and teaching hours, work-family conflict, work overload, overcrowded classes, poor working conditions and environment is affecting job satisfaction of secondary school teachers. Teachers are having the problem of breakdown at work, regular health challenges as a result of stress from the school or office. It is against the problems that study examines occupational stress and job satisfaction among secondary school teachers in Port Harcourt Local Government Area of Rivers State.

Purpose of the Study

The primary purpose of the study was to examine occupational stress and job satisfaction among secondary school teachers in Port Harcourt Local Government Area of Rivers State. Specifically, the objectives are to;

1. examine the extent of relationship between work overload and job satisfaction among secondary school teachers in Port Harcourt Local Government Area of Rivers State.
2. determine the extent of relationship between work-family conflict and job satisfaction among secondary school teachers in Port Harcourt Local Government Area of Rivers State.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study.

1. To what extent is the relationship between works overload and job satisfaction among secondary school teachers in Port Harcourt Local Government Area of Rivers State?
2. To what extent is the relationship between work-family conflict and job satisfaction among secondary school teachers in Port Harcourt Local Government Area of Rivers State?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses will be formulated by the researcher to guide the study.

1. There is no significant relationship between work overload and job satisfaction among secondary school teachers in Port Harcourt Local Government Area of Rivers State
2. There is no significant relationship between work-family conflict and job satisfaction among secondary school teachers in Port Harcourt Local Government Area of Rivers State

METHODOLOGY

The correlation research design was adopted for this study. Victor (2012), asserts that the purpose of correlation research is to determine whether a relationship exists or to what extent a relationship exists between two or more variables. Thus, the correlation design as adopted investigated and establish whether a relationship existed between occupational stress and job satisfaction among secondary school teachers in Port Harcourt Local Government Area of Rivers State. The population for this study consists of 831 teachers in public secondary schools in Port Harcourt Local Government Area of Rivers State. This figure was drawn from all the 16 public senior secondary schools in the study area. The sample size of the study is 831 teachers of all the public secondary schools in Port Harcourt Local Government Area of Rivers State. The instrument used for the study was self structured questionnaire titled: "Occupational Stress and Teachers Job Performance Questionnaire" (OSTJPQ). The questionnaire items were structured on a four likert point's scale including the following values: Very high extent (VHE = 4 points, High extent (HE) = 3 points, Low extent (LE) = 2 points and Very low extent (VLE) = 1 point. The instruments used for the study was given to two experts from Department of Educational Foundations, Faculty of Education, Rivers State University. Corrections and criticisms were presented to the supervisor whose expert judgments assisted the production of the final copy of the questionnaire. The internal consistency reliability through Cronbach Alpha was used to establish the reliability of the instruments for the study. Cronbach Alpha was used because the instruments were in sections and were one time administered to 831 respondents that were not in the sample of the study. The reliability coefficient of 0.86 was obtained. The data collected was analysed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation for the research questions and test of null hypotheses.

RESULTS

Research Question 1: To what extent is the relationship between work overload and job satisfaction among secondary school teachers in Port Harcourt Local Government Area of Rivers State

Table 1: Pearson Product Moment Correlation Analysis on the extent of relationship between work overload and job satisfaction among secondary school teachers in Port Harcourt Local Government Area of Rivers State

Variable	N	$\sum x$	$\sum y$	$\sum x^2$	$\sum y^2$	$\sum xy$	r-cal	Remark
Work Overload (x)	831	16251	16437	582099	594469	586807	0.84	High extent
Job Satisfaction (y)	831							

Source: Field survey, 2023

The data analysis in table 1 revealed that the Pearson Product Moment Correlation coefficient value (r) was 0.84. This showed that there is a positive high relationship between work overload and job satisfaction among secondary school teachers in Port Harcourt Local Government Area of Rivers State

to a high extent. This means that an increase in work overload leads to job satisfaction among secondary school teachers in Port Harcourt Local Government Area of Rivers State.

Research Question 2: To what extent is the relationship between work-family conflict and job satisfaction among secondary school teachers in Port Harcourt Local Government Area of Rivers State?

Table 2: Pearson Product Moment Correlation Analysis on the extent of relationship between work-family conflict and job satisfaction among secondary school teachers in Port Harcourt Local Government Area of Rivers State

Variable	N	$\sum x$	$\sum y$	$\sum x^2$	$\sum y^2$	$\sum xy$	r-cal	Remark
Work Overload (x)	831							
		15324	16437	518492	594469	553201	0.89	High Extent
Job Satisfaction (y)	831							

Source: Field survey, 2023

The analysis in table 2 indicated that the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient value (r) was 0.89. This showed that there is a positive and significant relationship between work-family conflict and job satisfaction among secondary school teachers in Port Harcourt Local Government Area of Rivers State to a high extent. This implies that an increase in work-family conflict leads to job satisfaction among secondary school teachers in Port Harcourt Local Government Area of Rivers State.

Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between work overload and job satisfaction among secondary school teachers in Port Harcourt Local Government Area of Rivers State.

Table 3: Pearson Product Moment Correlation Analysis on the no significant relationship between work overload and job satisfaction among secondary school teachers in Port Harcourt Local Government Area of Rivers State

Variable	N	df	r	z-cal	z-crit	Sig. level	Decision
Work Overload (x)	831						
		829	0.84	2.67	1.96	0.05	Rejected
Job Satisfaction (y)	831						

Source: Field survey, 2023

The analysis on table 3 revealed that the z-cal of 2.67 is higher than the z-crit of 1.96. The calculated z-ratio is not statistically significant at a 0.05 level of significant since it is higher than the given critical value of z-ratio. Therefore, the hypothesis 1 is thus rejected and the conclusion is that there is a significant relationship between work overload and job satisfaction among secondary school teachers in Port Harcourt Local Government Area of Rivers State.

Hypotheses 2: There is no significant relationship between work-family conflict and job satisfaction among secondary school teachers in Port Harcourt Local Government Area of Rivers.

Table 4: Pearson Product Moment Correlation Analysis on the no significant relationship between work-family conflict and job satisfaction among secondary school teachers in Port Harcourt Local Government Area of Rivers

Variable	N	df	r	z-cal	z-crit	Sig. level	Decision
Work Overload (x)	831						
		829	0.89	2.19	1.96	0.05	Rejected
Job Satisfaction (y)	831						

Source: Field survey, 2023

The analysis on table 4 indicated that the z-cal of 2.19 is higher than the z-crit of 1.96. The calculated z-ratio is not statistically significant at a 0.05 level of significance since it is higher than the given critical value of z-ratio. So, the hypothesis 2 is thus rejected and the conclusion is that there is a significant relationship between work-family conflict and job satisfaction among secondary school teachers in Port Harcourt Local Government Area of Rivers.

Discussion of Findings

The findings in research question 1: To what extent is the relationship between works overload and job satisfaction among secondary school teachers in Port Harcourt Local Government Area of Rivers State revealed that there is a positive relationship between works overload and job satisfaction among secondary school teachers in Port Harcourt Local Government Area of Rivers State to a high extent. This finding is in collaboration with Mehta (2011),

who observed that overall occupational stress has a significant and positive relationship with job satisfaction. The finding suggests that higher the occupational stress by the teachers, lower will be their job satisfaction. When occupational stress is lower, this obviously will lead towards teachers' job satisfaction. Occupational stress and job satisfaction are interrelated. If a person is stressed on his job, he will experience job dissatisfaction and will not be able to be productive and affected their efficiency to deliver 100% towards their work indicate that there is a negative relationship between job stress and job satisfaction. Employees who had high level of job stress had low job satisfaction. The result of this study also line with Nilufar (2019).

The study in research question 2: To what extent is the relationship between work-family conflict and job satisfaction among secondary school teachers in Port Harcourt Local Government Area of Rivers State indicated that there is a significant relationship between work-family conflict and job satisfaction among secondary school teachers in Port Harcourt Local Government Area of Rivers State to a high extent. This study is in the same view with Lambert (2012), who asserts that job satisfaction is significantly explained by occupational stress. Role overload and role ambiguity emerged as significant predictor of job satisfaction. It is evident that the most influential occupational stress on job satisfaction is work-family conflict. While, role overload explained the decreased of role overload can improve the level of job satisfaction. The results in this study were is in line with Topper (2017). The result found that role ambiguity related to job satisfaction. This is due to the individual perception that lacks of information necessary to perform a job or task given leading them to feel helpless. The uncertainty about the expectations is a result from inadequate information and knowledge to do a job. This study also revealed that role overload is negatively correlated with job satisfaction. This suggests that respondent who felt heavy demands made upon them are also less satisfied with their job. The pressure on teachers to do more work was extent of non-teaching task such as photocopying, filing, acting as social worker, paperwork, form filing, duplicating and typing letters.

CONCLUSION

In this study, occupational stress consists of role overload, role ambiguity, and work-family conflict. Based on the feedback obtained from respondents, it can be seen that the level of role ambiguity and role overload is high. However, there was a moderate level of work-family conflict. Overall, teachers at Malacca had reported high level of occupational stress. Although the level of occupational stress of the respondents is high, but there are also respondents who have a moderate level of occupational stress. The reason for increase in the stress level among respondents could be lack of clarity in their roles, overload of work, assignments, and relationship conflict at home and work. Besides, the high level of occupational stress is due to the response people may have when presented with work demands and pressures that aren't matched to their work knowledge and abilities which challenge their ability to cope with the problem. People with higher percentage of occupational stress may feel frustrated when they are having problems with colleagues or society and this may lead to the negative impact to the organization. They may not feel happy working and therefore may not be satisfied with their job.

The study also deduced that job satisfaction to be the function of working conditions, leadership and workload. Further, stress related to working environment, leadership and workload have a significant negative relationship with job satisfaction. Considering the role of job satisfaction on employee commitment, motivation, loyalty and performance the situation needs serious attention. Stress has been a challenge that many people across all sectors face but its effects in education sector require special attention to enable effective learning process for students. If this problem is not addressed the quality of education that students receive in the public schools is put into jeopardy.

RECOMMENDATIONS

This study recommends the following;

1. Improvement of working conditions through provision of necessary resources, formulating and implementing policies intending to offer supportive working environment for teachers in public schools. This may help to avoid unnecessary occupational stress and hence increase employee commitment, loyalty, performance and job satisfaction.
2. Leaders in public primary schools should be offered capacity building training on leadership to improve their leadership knowledge and skills. This will ultimately reduce stress that teachers are experiencing due to lack of proper leadership in primary schools.
3. In order to deal with stress related to workload more teachers should be employed in public schools 1.
4. Allocation of manageable workloads to teachers should be considered. Teachers in public schools should be offered with necessary skills needed for effective stress management. This will help them to understand and use adaptive stress coping strategies and increase job satisfaction.

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