

**OCCUPATIONAL STRESS AS PREDICTOR OF JOB PERFORMANCE
OF BUSINESS SUBJECT TEACHERS IN PUBLIC SECONDARY
SCHOOLS IN CROSS RIVER STATE, NIGERIA**

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Abstract

This study assessed occupational stress as predictor of job performance of business subject teachers in public secondary schools in Cross River State, Nigeria. The research design adopted for this study was a correlational research design. The population of the study comprised 476 business subject teachers from 169 secondary schools in Cross River State. In order to obtain a sample that properly represented the population of the study, a stratified random sampling technique was employed. The secondary schools in Cross River State were grouped into the three Education Zones in Cross River State and 286 business subject teachers representing 60% of the population were selected using proportionate sampling technique. The researcher developed a structured questionnaire titled "Occupational Stress and Job Performance Questionnaire (OSJPQ)". Data collected was subjected to Cronbach Alpha statistics to obtain reliability estimates. Simple linear regression statistical tool was employed to answer both the research questions and test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The findings from the study revealed that long working hours and role overload significantly predicts job performance of business subject teachers in public secondary schools in Cross River State. Based on the findings, it was recommended that government should employ more hands to reduce the long working hours teachers spent on the job. It was also recommended that school management should clearly specify teachers' job to avoid role overload.

Key words: *Occupational stress, Job performance, Business subject teachers*

Introduction

One of the most distributing issues that bothered stakeholders in the educational industry in recent times is the declining level of productivity among teachers in public secondary schools in Cross River State, Nigeria. It has been observed that some teachers in public secondary schools in may not be effectively discharging their jobs. Some teachers do not present themselves in school regularly while others that are present, may likely come late. With respect to creativity and innovation which is an aspect of job effectiveness, some

business subject teachers hardly prepare well before coming to the class to teach, which affects students' understanding of the content and subject matter. Most teachers fail to utilise appropriate instructional materials to enable students appreciate the lesson more. Some fail to create an active learning environment and collaborate learning, which makes the lesson, teacher-centered and boring to students. Many Business Studies teachers still use the traditional chalk and talk method, which discourages students from participating actively in class discussions.

Business subjects are being offered in all levels of education, including secondary schools. According to the Federal Republic of Nigeria (FRN, 2013), two tiers of secondary education emerged- the junior and senior secondary. At the junior secondary level, typewriting, shorthand, book keeping, office practice and commerce are integrated as business studies. Business subjects offered in the senior secondary school are Financial Accounting, Economics, Commerce, Insurance, Marketing, Tradesmanship, Computer Studies/ Keyboarding, Shorthand, Office Practice and Marketing, out of which students choose two or three business subjects in addition to other areas to make up for West African School Certificate Examination (Rahman, 2014). Business subjects in this study encompasses vocational subjects taught at the junior and senior secondary school level with the aim of preparing students for entry into business related areas in tertiary institutions, or to make an earn to a living

Stress is a feeling of tension which is both physical and mental; it is any kind of change that brings about physical, emotional or psychological strain. It can also be seen the body's response to anything that requires attention. It is a fundamental part of the challenges which prompt mastery of new skills and behaviour patterns. Occupational stress refers to the ongoing or progressing stress an employee experiences due to the responsibility, conditions, environment, other pressures of the workplace (Kura et al, 2013). Occupational stress can occur when workers do not feel supported by the supervisors or co-worker, feel as if they have little control over the work they perform. Occupational or job stress may be defined as a mechanism whereby the human body attempts to adapt to the environment. There are many occupational stress factors that may affect job performance; however, this study covers the following occupational stress factors: long working hour, role overload, career development, role conflict, new technology,

relationship at work, poor working condition and physical environment.

Time of work is one of the most basic components of occupational exposure; it structures all other aspects of life and has profound significance for the life of the worker both on and off the job (Akpan, 2013). Spending more than usual or normal hours of work at job place is seen as long hours of work. Long hours of work could lead to worker fatigue which goes a long to bring decrease in performance and productivity. Likewise, role overload is conceptualized as an incompatibility between work demands and the time available to fulfill those demands has been identified as a major cause of work stress among teachers. According to Mosaybian and Jafari (2014), teacher work overload is related to paper work, time budgets, and excessive deadlines. They also acknowledge that the teaching profession has become increasingly stressful as teachers have to meet many almost impossible deadlines and many responsibilities not to mention the excessive amount of time, they spend on work related tasks. All these responsibilities may compromise teachers' ability to make sound decisions as well as their concentration both related to inability to rest enough to be ready to work efficiently the next day.

Stress at work is a major problem for both individuals within an organization and for the organization itself. Severe occupational stress is dysfunctional and decreases commitment and productivity; while short-term outcomes of occupational stress have both physiological and behavioral effects leading to poor job effectiveness. Such a growing impression informs a compelling need to investigate the extent to which occupational stress influences job effectiveness of business subject teachers in public secondary schools in Cross River State Calabar, Nigeria.

Time at work is one of the most basic components of occupational exposure; it structures all other aspects of life and has profound significance for the life of the

worker both on and off the job (Johnson and Lipscomb, 2016). Spending more than usual or normal hours of work at job place is seen as long hours of work. The number of hours considered to be long hours varies from work to work and place to place. Long hours of work are very common among individuals who worked at more than one job or business and more strongly, high job strain, high job insecurity and low supervisor support are not necessarily related to working hours (Shield, 2019). Places of work and type of work also account to long hours of work. A person in shift work may not suffer long hours of work as a person without a shift work. This can be said of white-collar work and clerical, sales and service occupations or in blue-collar occupations. The former is likely to be prone to long hours of work.

Igbokwe, Itoya and Eziuzo (2020) examined the effect of job stress on employee performance in tertiary institutions, using Delta State University, Abraka Campus as the study area. The literature was partitioned into four main sections namely; conceptual review, theoretical framework, extant literature and empirical review. The study adopted descriptive survey design. Statistical tools of analysis were summary statistics of percentages and Chi-square (χ^2) test of independence. All tests were conducted at 0.05 level of significance. Findings indicate that long hours of work as a source of job stress has negative and significant effect on employee performance in tertiary institutions. The study concludes that putting too much pressure and stress on employees often results in negative consequences which are capable of reducing their performance.

Akinori (2017) investigated the moderating effect of job satisfaction on the relationship between working hours and Depression Scale (DS). A total of 2,375 full-time non-shift day workers (73% men), aged 18-79 (mean 45) years, in 296 small- and medium-scale businesses were surveyed using a self-administered questionnaire

evaluating working hours, job satisfaction, DS and covariates. The Center for Epidemiologic Studies Depression scale (CES-D) was used to assess DS. Risk of DS (CES-D) by working hours, job satisfaction, and both combined was estimated by multivariable logistic regression analysis. Compared to participants working 6-8 hrs/day, those working 12+ hrs/day had significantly higher odds of DS (adjusted odds ratio [AOR] 1.49), while participants with low satisfaction, as opposed to high satisfaction, had increased odds of DS (AOR 1.81). Furthermore, compared to those working 6-8 hrs/day with high satisfaction (reference group), participants working 6-8 hrs/day, > 8 to 10 hrs/day, and > 10 hrs/day combined with low satisfaction had dose-response increase of DS (AOR 1.48, 2.21 and 2.31, respectively, $p < 0.05$), whereas those working > 8 to 10 hrs/day and > 10 hrs/day combined with high satisfaction had not (AOR 0.93 and 1.39, respectively, $p > 0.10$). The results suggest that long working hours are associated with increased risk of DS only under reduced job satisfaction condition, which highlights the importance of improving job satisfaction, particularly among those working excessive hours.

Margot (2019) examined associations between long working hours, depression and changes in selected health behaviours. Based on an analysis of people followed over a two-year period, the relationship between changes in work hours and changes in health behaviours is explored. The data are from the household longitudinal component of the 1994/95 and 1996/97 cycles of the National Population Health Survey, conducted by Statistics Canada. Results are based on 3,830 adult workers aged 25 to 54 (2,181 men and 1,649 women) who worked 35 hours or more per week throughout the year before their 1994/95 interview. Multivariate analyses were used to estimate associations between working hours and depression, and changes in weight, smoking, drinking and exercise, while controlling for potential

socioeconomic and work-related confounders such as education, income, occupation, shift work and self-employment.

Role overload conceptualized as an incompatibility between work demands and the time available to fulfil those demands has been identified as a major cause of work stress among teachers. According to Hepburn and Brown (2021) teacher work overload is related to paper work, time budgets, and excessive deadlines. They also acknowledge that the teaching profession has become increasingly stressful as teachers have to meet many almost impossible deadlines and many responsibilities not to mention the excessive amount of time, they spend on work related tasks.

Tabitha and Lumumba (2014) investigated role overload, teacher-pupil-ratio, school type, years of teaching experience, gender and burn out as factors related to work stress among primary school teachers in Kasarani Division, Nairobi County, Kenya. Data were collected from 120 teachers through a paper based questionnaire. Majority of teacher reported work overload (50.83%) against 43.33% who reported mild overload while only 5.84% reported no overload. With regard to burn out, a high percentage of teachers 61.67 reported to have experienced burn out while 35.00% reported mild burn out and only 3.33% reported no burn out. Analysis of variance revealed statistical significance between role overload and burn out. The findings further revealed that teachers in public schools experienced higher work stress than their counterparts in the private secondary schools.

Perlito et al. (2021) investigated the relationship between teachers' workload, burnout, and job performance. In this quantitative study, the descriptive-correlational design was used. The respondents of the study were the 57 elementary teachers selected through convenient and purposive sampling. The Role Overload Questionnaire, Burnout

Questionnaire, and Individual Performance Commitment and Review Form (IPCRF) were used in this study. The statistical tools used in the study were the Mean, Standard Deviation, and Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient. The findings revealed that teachers have a high level of workload. Their burnout level is also high. Teachers' work performance, on the other hand, is very satisfactory. Workload has a significant impact on the level of burnout experienced by teachers. Workload has an impact on teachers' performance as well.

Amalu (2013) determined the impact of stress from workload on professional effectiveness of secondary school teachers in Cross River State, Nigeria. The ex-post facto design was used in a survey of 600 public secondary school teachers. Result of the data analyses indicated that stress from workload has no significant influence on seven dimensions (lesson presentation, use of instructional aids, evaluation of students, learning motivation, classroom management, supervision of co-curricular activities and personal/professional qualities) of professional effectiveness.

Statement of the Problem

The issue of occupational stress among teachers has been generating serious discussion among educational stakeholders in this recent time. This becomes an issue because in most secondary school, stakeholders in educational sectors have expressed concerned on the subject "Occupational Stress" which may have been responsible for teachers job ineffectiveness in areas such as: students poor performance in school entrances examination, admission test which are designed to predict achievement in specific area, achievement test which evaluate the achievement of students, the skills they needed to learn and the effectiveness of schools in teaching these skill, internal and external examination of students conducted by standard board.

The problem caused by occupational stress cannot be over emphasized.

Occupational stress can prove to be costly for organisations as it may become the cause of employee's poor performance, negative job attitude such as delay in job delivery and waste of organisational resources and may promote increased employee's turnover. This is because teachers/employees have to face conflicting demand of the organisation and students; this conflict can give rise to dissonance for teachers. Addressing the issue and making efforts to reduce stress, in public secondary schools is not only a noble goal, but a key element in reducing government expenses on public school. Occupational stress increase fatigue at workplace and reduces the ability of the employees to contribute towards the achievement of broad organizational goals. Despite the negative effects of occupational stress on human body and work performance of teachers in public secondary school and the employer of labour seem not to have seen the need to draw out a measure or put up a concrete measure to address those stress related factors that negatively affect productivity in the teachers.

Furthermore, there has not been any conscious establishment of linkage between occupational stress indices such as long working hour and overload, and their negative effect on productivity. It is on this note that it becomes imperative to answer the question; in what way does occupational stress predicts job effectiveness of business subject teachers in public secondary schools in Cross River State, Nigeria?

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study was to determine the extent to which occupational stress predict job performance of business subject teachers in public secondary schools in Cross River State Calabar, Nigeria. Specifically, the study seeks to find out:

1. the extent to which long working hour predict Job performance of Business Subject Teachers in public

secondary schools in Cross River State.

2. the extent to which role overload predict job performance of business subject teachers in public secondary school in Cross River State, Nigeria.

Research Question

To guide the study, the following research questions will be raised.

1. What is the extent to which long working hour predict job performance of Business Subject Teachers in Public Secondary Schools in Cross River State?
2. What is the extent to which role ever load predict job performance of Business Subject Teachers in Public Secondary Schools in Cross River State?

Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses are formulated and will be tested at 0.05 level of significance:

H01 the extent to which long working hour predicts job performance of business subject teachers in public secondary schools in Cross State, Nigeria is not significant.

H02 the extent to which role overload predicts job performance of business subject teacher in public secondary schools in Cross State, Nigeria is not significant.

Methodology

The research design that was adopted for this study was a correlational research design. This

design was appropriate for the research because it gave the researcher the opportunity to study the relationship that exists between two variables, the independent (occupational stress) and dependent variable (job effectiveness of Business Education Subject teachers) in Cross River State. The population of the study comprises of 476 business subject teachers from 169 (one hundred and sixty nine) secondary schools within the studied area (Cross River State). In order to obtain a sample that properly represents the population of the study, a stratified random

sampling technique was employed. The secondary schools in Cross River State were grouped into the three education zones in Cross River State and 286 business subject teachers representing 60% of the population were selected using purposive sampling technique. The researcher moved from school to school with the aid of two research assistants to select the required number of business subject teachers until the total sample was ascertained.

The researcher developed a structured questionnaire titled "Occupational Stress and Job Performance Questionnaire (OSJPQ)". The OSJEQ consist of 15 items measured on a four point likert scale designed to access stress intensity experienced by business subject teachers in secondary school with the following response options: Strongly Agreed (SA) - 4, Agreed (A) - 3, Disagreed (D) -2 and Strongly Disagreed (SD) - 1. The instrument was validated by two experts from Business Education Department to check the content validity and one expert from the Department of Educational Foundation, measurement and evaluation unit, all from the University of Uyo. The

instrument was administered to 30 public secondary school teachers in Akwa Ibom State with the same characteristic with the study area which is outside the study area and who were not part of the main study. Data collected was subjected to Cronbach Alpha statistics to obtain reliability estimates. The data collected was thereafter subjected to reliability analysis to establish the reliability of the instrument and to ensure consistent measurement among the various items in the instrument (questionnaires). Simple linear regression statistical tool was employed to answer both the research questions and testing of the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Data analysed for answering of research questions and testing of hypotheses are presented in Tables under this outline:

Research Question 1

What is the extent to which long working hours predict job performance of business subject teachers in public secondary schools in Cross River State?

Table 1: Linear regression of long working hour’s prediction of job performance of business subject teachers in public secondary schools in Cross River State
N = 286

Variables	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²
Long working hours	.682	.438	.312
Job performance			

The result presented in Table 1 indicates that the R-value of .682 is the strength of the prediction of long working hours on job performance of business subject teachers in public secondary schools in Cross River State while the R² value of .438 was converted to percentage indicating moderate extent. The R² value of .438 also indicates that the independent variable long working hours for 43.8 % variance of the dependent variable (job performance). This result

implies that long working hours to a moderate extent predicts job performance of business subject teachers in public secondary schools in Cross River State.

Research Question 2

What is the extent to which role overload predict job performance of business subject teachers in public secondary schools in Cross River State?

Table 2: Linear regression of role overload prediction of job performance of business subject teachers in public secondary schools in Cross River State
N = 286

Variables	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²
Role overload	.772	.598	.502
Job performance			

The result presented in Table 2 indicates that the R-value of .772 is the strength of the prediction of role overload on job performance of business subject teachers in public secondary schools in Cross River State while the R² value of .598 was converted to percentage indicating high extent. The R² value of .598 also indicates that the independent variable role overload for 59.8 % variance of the dependent variable (job performance). This result

implies that role overload to a high extent predicts job performance of business subject teachers' in public secondary schools in Cross River State.

Research Hypothesis 1

The extent to which long working hours predict job performance of business subject teacher in public secondary schools in Cross River State, Nigeria is not significant

Table 3: Simple linear regression analysis of long working hour's prediction of job performance of business subject teachers in public secondary schools in Cross River State, N = 286

Model	Sum of squares	Df	Mean square	F-cal	Sig.	Decision
Regression	1.548	1	1.548	22.76	.002	*
Residual	19.231	284	.068			
Total	20.779	285				

*Significant at 0.05 alpha level; df = 1 and 284

Table 3 shows that the calculated P-value of .002 is less than the level of significance (.05) at 1 and 284 degrees of freedom. With this result, the null hypothesis which states that the extent to which long working hours predict job performance of business subject teacher in public secondary schools in Cross River State, Nigeria is not significant was rejected. This implies that long working

hours significantly predicts job performance of business subject teachers in public secondary schools in Cross River State.

Research Hypothesis 2

The extent to which role overload predict job performance of business subject teacher in public secondary schools in Cross State, Nigeria is not significant.

Table 4: Simple linear regression analysis of role overload prediction of job performance of business subject teachers in public secondary schools in Cross River State, N = 286

Model	Sum of squares	Df	Mean square	F-cal	Sig.	Decision
Regression	1.188	1	1.188	17.22	.000	*
Residual	19.591	284	.069			
Total	20.779	285				

*Significant at 0.05 alpha level; df = 1 and 284

Table 4 shows that the calculated P-value of .000 is less than the level of significance (.05) at 1 and 284 degrees of freedom. With this result, the null hypothesis which states that the extent to which role overload predicts job performance of business subject teacher in public secondary schools in Cross River State, Nigeria is not significant was rejected. This implies that role overload significantly predicts job effectiveness of business subject teachers in public secondary schools in Cross River State.

Discussion of the Findings

The result of hypothesis one revealed that long working hours predict job performance of business subject teacher in public secondary schools in Cross River State, Nigeria. This implies that long working hours significantly predicts job performance of business subject teachers in public secondary schools in Cross River State. The finding of this study precisely agreed with the finding of Igbokwe, Itoya and Eziuzo (2020) that long hours of work as a source of job stress has negative and significant effect on employee performance in tertiary institutions. The finding of the study also corroborated the finding of Akinori (2017) that long working hours are associated with increased risk of Depression Scale (DS) only under reduced job satisfaction condition, which highlights the importance of improving job satisfaction, particularly among those working excessive hours. Long working hours have negative effect on the job performance of teachers, so

teachers are expected to have reduced working hours to avoid unnecessary stress.

The result of this hypothesis indicates that role overload predicts job performance of business subject teacher in public secondary schools in Cross River State, Nigeria. This implies that role overload significantly predicts job effectiveness of business subject teachers in public secondary schools in Cross River State. The finding of the study contradicted Amadu (2013) that stress from workload has no significant influence on seven dimensions (lesson presentation, use of instructional aids, evaluation of students, learning motivation, classroom management, supervision of co-curricular activities and personal/professional qualities) of professional effectiveness. The outcome of the study however, agreed with Opunne and Fekarurhobo (2021) that teaching of many courses in a semester, supervision of large number of undergraduate projects and post-graduate theses influence job performance of academic staff in universities in Rivers State to a high extent. The finding of this study is also in tandem with Perlito *et al.* (2021) who revealed that workload has negative impact on teachers' performance.

Conclusion

Based on finding of the study, it was established that role overload and long working predict job performance of business subject teacher. Therefore, occupational stress should be taken into cognizance by business subject teachers and

employee as a whole for their optimum performance.

Recommendation

Based on the findings of the study, it was recommended that:

1. Government should employ more hands to reduce the long working hours teachers spent on the job.
2. School management should clearly specify teachers' job to avoid role overload.

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