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Kathryn James Philip

Library, University of Uyo, kathwiz2@gmail.com

Ekemini S. Effiong

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Work Load, Librarians Output and Satisfaction in Select Academic Institutions in South – South Zone, Nigeria

Effiong, Ekemini S.

Library, University of Uyo (UNIUYO), Nigeria.

&

***Philip, Kathryn J.**

Dept. of EduTech. & Library Sc., UNIUYO

[*Kathwiz2@gmail.com](mailto:Kathwiz2@gmail.com) (corresponding)

Abstract

This paper notes that workers in a bid to be productive in order to actualise organisational goals, become overloaded with tasks. This naturally leads to feeling pressure which can result in stress feelings of not being satisfied with the job situation workers find themselves in. These are issues discussed in relation to library staff in six universities in three states in South – South region of Nigeria. Questionnaire was instrument used for data gathering and administered to 102 academic librarians working in the universities under study. Mean, Standard Deviation and t-tests were statistical tools used for analysing the data. Major findings designates that librarians who are motivated to work can be affected (adversely) in their job as a result of work pressure. The result indicates that librarians who have heavy work load are not as satisfied in the job as those with less work load. The study recommends among others that organisations should adopt and implement practical solutions in career path. For instance since people use energy, work should be spread out evenly to avoid draining energy. More so, the librarian diligently involved in responsibility, deserves recognition and rewards as incentive to do more and even better.

Key words: Work pressure, Universities, Academics, Library, Services.

Introduction

It is essential that the work environment meets emotional and psychological needs of the individual to large extent as these serve as incentive to work earnestly, while earning lawful income and increasing in level of knowledge. The occupational conditions including work environment like job task, work overload, working hours, worker' role conflict, role ambiguity among others can lead to stress. Stress is a vigorous state in which a person is confronted with an opportunity, demand or resource relating to what the individual wishes and for which the outcome is perceived

to be both vague and vital. Anything that causes stress is called a stressor. The Health Safety Executive (HSE) (2007) defined stress as an undesirable response people have due to tremendous pressures or other types of demands placed upon them. The World Health Organisation (WHO) (2010) and the International Labour Organisation (ILO) (2014) jointly wrote that work stress was recognised worldwide as a major challenge to worker's health and the healthiness of their organisation, noting that workers who were stressed were more likely to be unhealthy, poorly motivated, less productive and less safe at work. The authors of this work define stress as physical, mental and emotional strain or tension or a condition, feeling and experience when a person perceives the demand exceeds the personal and social resources the individual is able to cope with. Khan, Yusoff & Khan (2014) add that working under pressure causes burnout especially from high work demands and unsatisfactory resources. The authors further state that it differ in different working sectors and can cause decrease in job performance, self-esteem and job satisfaction.

Indeed, excessive or prolonged work pressure in the workplace is a health and safety issue that can result to grave consequence to the organization and individual (London School of Economics, 2016). Work stress may have a negative effect on the health of workers as Mooney (2014) asserts that personal health status is one of the determinants of employee's job satisfaction. Ekpu (2006) notes that increased work load, poor working environment, extremely long hours and intense pressure to perform at peak levels at all the time for the same pay can actually lead librarians to job dissatisfaction. Work stress is considered rising and the high level results increases absenteeism, a collection of other employee problems and low productivity. Where expectations and demands from the librarians are more than what is given to them to be able to be productive, it then results to work stress for the librarians, which in turn threatens the health and wellbeing of employees and affect their job satisfaction. The researchers observe that library work is one of the most stressful work and librarians tend to experience more work stress. Due to these, librarians may find it difficult to meet up with their professional duties and general responsibilities. The question that arises from the above submissions are: Does work load and pressure influence librarians' job satisfaction in South – South university libraries? This study also considers a null hypothesis that there is no significant influence of work load and pressure on librarians' job satisfaction in university libraries in south-south Nigeria. These factors are slated to guide the study.

Review of Studies

Studies have confirmed that the combination of high demands on workers produce work stress (National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, 2010). A report by Verhaeghe (2003), Rees & Cooper (2006), Karahan (2009) and Ogunsemi, Alebiosu & Shorunmu (2010) indicated that there was much pressure in library work and overall stress among library workers which might be higher than in other occupational groups.

Job satisfaction is the level of contentment employees feel about their work, which can affect performance. It is more of an internal state as it describes the feelings, attitudes or preferences of individuals regarding work, and usually linked with motivation. It could for example, be associated with a personal feeling of achievement, either quantitative or qualitative (Mullins, 2005). On the other hand, negative and unfavorable attitudes towards the job indicate job dissatisfaction (Armstrong, 2006). It follows that people's levels or degrees of job satisfaction can range from extreme satisfaction to extreme dissatisfaction. In addition to having attitudes about their jobs as a whole, people also can have attitudes about various aspects of their jobs such as the kind of work they do, their coworkers, supervisors or subordinates and their pay (George, Louw & Badenhorst, 2008). In fact, many people perform best when they work under pressure. The situation is more problematical when pressures at work become so great that the employee concerned is consistently unable to meet the demands that the work makes on him or her, and on top of that, is unable or forbidden to do anything to tackle the cause or causes. These demands may involve the amount of work the employee is required to perform, quality standards that he or she is supposed to meet, or the amount of time in which he or she has to complete the work.

Bhatti, Hashmi, Raza, Shaikh, & Shafiq (2011) studied 400 university faculty regarding job stress. The study focused on factors of occupational Stress which include workload pressure, role ambiguity, management role, performance pressure and relationship with others. The study revealed that work pressure is attributed to varying factors of management policy, inter-personal relationship and the work design. The study also showed that work pressure when excessive has a negative relationship on job satisfaction, and salaries paid to worker were significant determinant of satisfaction as 70 percent of faculty members were not satisfied with salaries.

Also, Manzoor, Usman, Naseem, & Shafiq (2011) in their study of job stress and job satisfaction, revealed that job is an essential part of life and dissatisfaction with it negatively affects quality of life especially when the jobs assigned exceed their knowledge and abilities and also lack of institutional support. The authors further state that more attention used be paid to work design to ensure that workers are adequately informed about their roles and have the capacity to function in the assigned roles as this lead would lead to job satisfaction.

Similarly, Schaufeli & Bakker (2004) in their study on job demands, burnout and work engagement found out that there was a positive relationship between workload and burnout. It was stated the demands of a job were good predictors of work pressure when there is lack of resources and support from management. Equally, Adeoye & Afolabi (2011) on the basis of experience and research favoured the view that heavy workload played a primary role in causing work stress. Although the importance of individual characteristics could be ignored, scientific evidence suggests that certain working conditions were more stressful to most people. The excessive workload demands and conflicting expectations were good examples and this evidence argued for greater emphasis on heavy workload as the key source of work stress.

Workload and Librarians' Job satisfaction

Workload in this study is the amount of work apportioned to an individual worker. Factors carved out of workload is excess workload, work overload, role overload or heavy workload, is when an employee has excessive and over challenging work to accomplish in the time available. Researchers of work overload had differentiated overload in terms of qualitative and quantitative overload. Quantitative overload has to do with more work than could actually be accomplished in a given period of time; a work that is too difficult to accomplish (Ogunlade, 2004).

In today's typical workplace, stress is seen as becoming increasingly more common. People appear to be working longer hours, taking on higher level of responsibilities and exerting themselves even more strenuously to meet rising expectations about occupational performance and neglecting self (Srivastava, 2000). It was furthermore found that stress at work resulted from increasing complexities of workload and the divergent demands had become prominent and pervading feature of the workplace. A record by Jennings (2008) showed that the role of library workers had long been regarded as stress-filled based upon the physical labour, human suffering,

long work hours, relationship that were central to their duties and the increasing demand of their users. The above statement is supported by Kazmi, Amjad & Khan (2008) stressing that library work was inherently stressful with long irregular working hours and conflicting demands. They noted that the physical and psychological demands of work made workers more vulnerable to high levels of stress and role overload which correlates positively with work stress, causing job satisfaction to decline. Majority of these workers as observed by Adeoye & Afolabi (2011) were unhappy where the work required working extended hours and coping with large workload while simultaneously meeting job targets and deadlines, stressing that these had significant effects on work stress which hindered job satisfaction.

It follows that employees become uncomfortably stressed when there was work overload, distractions, difficulties, anxiety and negative thinking crowding their minds. These thoughts compete with performance of the task for the employees intentional capacity for concentration suffers, while focus narrows as their brains become overload which result in job dissatisfaction (Mind Tools, 2011). In jobs where work overload is the cause of stress, the employees might take time off to deal with the stress, only to return to work and discover that the already unmanageable workload had substantially increased in their absence, thereby increasing the source of the stress and might ultimately lead to complete breakdown in health (Mitchell, 2005). This writer continued that the work stress becomes so extreme at times that the employees grow aversive and try to avoid it by withdrawing either psychologically or physically through absenteeism, frequently reporting late for work and even while working an attitude of lethargy from exhaustion persisted. Wolfe (2004) observes that stressful working conditions were actually associated with increased absenteeism and exhaustion, all of which had negative effects on librarians' job satisfaction. The researcher posit that the employees must recognise or be aware of these problems well in advance to be able to cope or deal with them in order to enhance satisfaction of their employee.

Working under Pressure and Librarians' Job Satisfaction

Pressure is the adverse reaction people have due to excessive demand placed on them at work. There is a difference between pressure and stress. Pressure can be positive and a motivating factor, and is often essential in a job. It can help one achieve goals and perform better, while stress occurs when pressure becomes excessive. In other words, stress is a natural reaction to too much

pressure. According to Leka, Griffiths & Cox (2003) work pressure is the sum of the amount of work (workload) and the time set aside to finish that work as compared with the employee's ability to cope. The authors further stress that the ability to cope depends on the employee's personality and is influenced by circumstances in the home and in the workplace.

Stress can also result from having too few demands, as people become bored, feel undervalued and lack recognition. Experts uphold that it is the most committed, hard-working employees who are the first to succumb to work stress, particularly when the extra time and energy they are investing is not appreciated by their boss or co-workers. Also, when a worker feels they have little or no say over the work they do or how they do it, this may cause them stress. Work pressure and stress can lead to deterioration in the way employees work or even result in their becoming sick which will in turn have an impact on the atmosphere in the workplace, the quality of the work produced, and so on.

This also includes not only when the work pressure exceed the workers ability to cope but also where the workers' knowledge and abilities are not sufficiently utilised (Leka, Griffiths & Cox, 2003). Employees can also get into difficulties if the work they are assigned consistently under-utilises their knowledge and skills. Work pressure is actually a neutral term without immediate negative implications. When an employee is unable to meet the demands of work (within the time available), a work pressure problem arises that can lead to work stress. Work stress can eventually cause the employee to feel excessively tired, exhausted and depressed, as well as to suffer physical ailments. The employee can become overstrained or, if the situation persists for a lengthy period of time, start to suffer from burn-out. According to Usman, Ahmed & Akbar (2011), librarians experience occupational stress due to increased work 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 to 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 student and colleagues and the incessant and fragmented demands of teaching and the normal library work often lead to overwhelming pressure and challenges which may lead to occupational stress (Brown & Uehara, 2008).

The causes of work pressure problems/work stress are known as "stressors". Stressors can be the result of many different factors; researchers make a distinction between work-related factors and person-related factors. Difficult jobs with strict deadlines make more demands on an employee

than simple jobs without deadlines. A further factor is the extent to which employees are in control of their work. The assumption is that when employees are given a lot of freedom to do their work as they please, work pressure problems can be avoided. Employees can change the order in which they do things, modify procedures, and even transfer or delegate certain tasks. If the requirements are too strict, however, even having more control over the work will not solve a work pressure problem entirely. Also work-related factors may also refer to management style, interpersonal relationships in the workplace, or organisational changes (such as re-organisations)

A person-related factor has to do with how employees are equipped to deal with difficulties at work. Work becomes a stressor and a pressure problem if the employee is inexperienced, or if he or she is unable to meet the demands for other reasons, for example owing to personal problems. Another person-related factor that influences how people perceive work pressure is their ability to recover from stress.

Method

The area of the study comprised three (3) states in the south-south geo-political zone of Nigeria along the Atlantic Ocean and its estuaries. Educationally, some states in the zone are considered as advantaged area as there are over fifteen (15) universities (both Federal, state and privately-owned) in the zone. For this study the institutions used included: University of Uyo, University of Calabar, University of Port Harcourt, Akwa Ibom State University, Cross River State University of Technology and Rivers State University of science and Technology.

The population of the study comprised 102 academic librarians working in the three (3) federal and three (3) states university libraries in the south-south zone of Nigeria. Academic librarian is the nomenclature for library professionals with cognate status as those in the faculty by reason of their required academic duties, other than mainstream library practices.

Questionnaire was instrument utilised for data gathering in the study. The draft of the instrument, which contained 50 items, was subjected to face validation by three experts. The validates were expected to scrutinize and make amendments on the instrument where necessary. Following this, items in the questionnaire were scaled down to 40. 102 copies of questionnaire were consequentl administered to correspond with number of academics under study, while 92 were retrieved.

Mean and Standard Deviation were used to answer the research questions while Independent t-test was used to test the hypotheses at .05 level of significance.

Presentation of Data and Result

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation of the Influence of Work Load on Librarians' Job Satisfaction

Work Load	N	Mean of Job Satisfaction	SD
Agreed	51	24.18	6.58
Disagreed	41	28.46	5.06

The data presented in Table 1 shows that librarians who agreed with work load have a lower mean score of 24.18 for job satisfaction, while librarians who disagreed with work load have a mean score of 28.46 for job satisfaction. The result indicates that librarians who have heavy work load are not as satisfied in the job as those with less work load.

Hypotheses Testing: Independent t-test was adopted to test the null hypotheses and at 0.05 level of significance. Hypothesis 1 that there is no significant influence of work load on librarians' job satisfaction in university libraries in South-South Nigeria.

Table 2: Independent t-test of the Analysis of Influence of Work Load on Librarians' Job Satisfaction

Work Load	N	Mean of Job Satisfaction	SD	t-cal	t-crit
Agreed	51	24.18	4.84	3.434	1.987
Disagreed	41	28.46	2.51		

Significant at .05 level, df = 90

Table 2 shows the calculated t-value of 3.434 is greater than the critical value of 1.987 at .05 level of significance with 90 degree of freedom. The result is significant therefore, the null hypothesis that work load does not significantly influence librarians' job satisfaction in university libraries in

South-South Nigeria is rejected in favour of the alternate. The result means that work load significantly influence librarians' job satisfaction in university libraries in South - South Nigeria.

The findings from the results on tables 1 and 2 showed that librarians who have heavy work load are not as satisfied in the job as those with less work load and that there is a significant influence of workload and librarians' job satisfaction. Hence the null hypothesis 1 was rejected. This findings support Adeoye & Afolabi (2011) who stated that heavy workload played a primary role in causing work stress because when librarians are heavily loaded with work and the motivation aspect is absent, it thus causes stress and affect job satisfaction. Although the importance of individual characteristics could be ignored, scientific evidence suggested that certain working conditions were more stressful to most people. The findings of the study also supports Mind Tools (2011) who opines that when employees become uncomfortably stressed when there is work overload distractions, difficulties, anxiety and negative thinking begin to crowd their minds and these thoughts complete with performance of the task for the employees intentional capacity concentration suffers and focus narrows as their brains become overload and result in job dissatisfaction. This highlight the need for libraries in the universities libraries to recognise and be aware of these problems in advance to be able to cope or deal with them in order to enhance satisfaction of the employee.

Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviation of the Influence of Working under Pressure on Librarians' Job Satisfaction

Working under pressure	N	Mean of Job Satisfaction	SD
Agreed	59	29.20	5.20
Disagreed	33	20.52	3.71

The data presented in Table 3 indicates that librarians who agreed on the level of working under pressure have a higher mean score of 29.20 for job satisfaction while librarians who disagreed have a lower mean score of 21.52 for job satisfaction. The result designates that librarians who are motivated to work can be affected (adversely) in their job as a result of work pressure.

Null hypothesis 2 stated that there is no significant influence of working under pressure on librarians' job satisfaction in university libraries in South-South Nigeria.

Table 4: Independent t-test of the Analysis of Influence of Working under Pressure on Librarians' Job Satisfaction

Working under Pressure	N	Mean of Job Satisfaction	SD	t-cal	t-crit
Agreed	59	29.20	5.20	8.462	1.987
Disagreed	33	21.00	3.71		

Significant at .05 level, df = 90

Table 4 shows that the calculated t-value of 8.462 is greater than the critical value of 1.987 at .05 level of significance with 90 degree of freedom. The result is significant therefore; the null hypothesis that working under pressure does not significantly influence librarians' job satisfaction in university libraries in South-South Nigeria is rejected in favour of the alternate. The result means that working under pressure significantly influence librarians' job satisfaction in university libraries in South - South Nigeria.

The findings with respect to working under pressure and librarians job satisfaction in The findings showed that there is significance between the two variables hence null hypothesis 2 was rejected. This findings support that of Bakker & Rhenen (2009) that there is a significant relationship between job demand and burnout which is attributed to the pressure associated with work. This is also in line with that of Schaufeli & Bakker (2004) that there is a relationship between job demands, burnout and work engagement. It was stated that the demands of a job were good predictors of work pressure when there is lack of resources and support from management. A person experiences stress when they perceive that the demands of their work are greater than their ability to cope. For instance, if a library staff member is given tight deadline on a project they feel they have neither the skills nor ability to do well, they may begin to feel undue pressure which could result in work stress.

Recommendations and Conclusion

It is important to note that work plays an important role in the lives of most people as salaried job pays bill and enables individuals to survive. Work whether paid or unpaid, also helps to shape identities, gives purpose to existence, allows or forces individual to structure their time, gives useful ways to individuals on how to spend their days, contributes to social status, and finally, brings people together.

This work discussed pressure of work as a determinant of stress particularly when it becomes excessive or otherwise unmanageable. It is rather unavoidable at work place due to the demands of the contemporary work environment (Leka & Jain, 2013). Today, increasing number of academic librarians are experiencing complicated work stress, low-productivity, fatigue, insomnia and other stress related problems due to lack of balance in personal and professional lives (Beazley, 2008). Much of work pressure can generally lead to work stress, recognised worldwide as a major challenge to workers' health and the healthiness of their organisation. Nonetheless, stress from work pressure and related problems, result from a mismatch between the demands and pressures on the person on one hand and their knowledge and abilities on the other. Organisations and workplaces can be likened to a second home, and even there are people who spend more hours in their workplaces than they spend at home. It follows that librarians are also under a lot of pressure because of person-related factors including work-family conflicts and professionally work to serve the public in providing guidance, instruction, organization of information and day-to-day provision of same to those in need, liaison with faculty amidst other duties such as general administration.

Excessive work pressure can however be averted through provision of resources like autonomy, learning opportunities, performance feedback and social support. It is necessary that managers and business owners know factors affecting employees' job output and satisfaction respectively. To raise satisfaction in their organisations, they should adopt and implement practical solutions that can stop any negative connotations that is associated with stagnation in the career path. People use energy when they work. If they spread out their work evenly over the course of a day and take enough breaks, they can avoid depleting of their reserves of energy. The amount of time employees need to replenish their energy reserves, depends not only to some extent on their age and state of health, but also on the amount of time/ strain they are under and how long it lasts. The librarian having been given responsibility, needs recognition and rewards after carrying out certain responsibilities to spur him /her to do more and even better. It follows

that as the librarian works, the things that make him / her derive job satisfaction should be built into the work.

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