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# ANALYSIS OF WORKPLACE STRESS LEVELS ON EMPLOYEE PRODUCTIVITY AMONG NON-TEACHING STAFF AT THE NATIONAL OPEN UNIVERSITY OF NIGERIA

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## ABSTRACT

*This study, titled "Analysis of Workplace Stress Levels on Employee Productivity among Non-Teaching Staff at the National Open University of Nigeria," employs a descriptive survey design, supplemented by documentary analysis, to investigate the relationship between workplace stress and employee productivity. The population of the study includes 783 non-teaching staff members, encompassing administrative, technical, and support staff at the National Open University of Nigeria. Using Taro Yamane's formula, a sample size of 265 respondents was selected through a simple random sampling technique, ensuring equal representation across departments. Primary data were gathered using a structured questionnaire, while secondary data were sourced from institutional reports related to staff performance and absenteeism. The collected data were analyzed using frequency tables, simple percentages, regression, and ANOVA, providing both quantitative and qualitative perspectives on the issue. The findings of the study revealed significant correlations between key stress factors and employee productivity. The first hypothesis examined the effect of administrative workload on performance. The p-value of 0.125, which is greater than the estimated significance level of 0.005, indicates that there is no statistically significant effect of administrative workload on employee performance. However, the effect was found to be weak, suggesting that administrative workload does not strongly impact performance directly. The second hypothesis tested the influence of student complaint demands on performance. The p-value of 0.001, less than 0.005, indicated a statistically significant influence. This finding highlights the noticeable impact of student complaints on staff performance, with increased complaints correlating with a decline in productivity. The pressure to resolve these issues appears to drive a measurable reduction in employee efficiency. The third hypothesis explored the relationship between work-life balance and employee performance. The p-value of 0.034, greater than the estimated value, also indicated there is no statistically significant relationship. The analysis showed that poor work-life balance is strongly associated with decreased performance, reinforcing the notion that the more strained the balance between personal and professional life, the greater the negative impact on productivity. The study*

*concludes that although strategies to mitigate these stressors can improve performance, their overall impact is not highly significant. The study recommends implementing flexible work schedules to improve work-life balance and alleviate the negative effects of workplace stress.*

**Keywords:** Workplace Stress Levels, Employee Productivity, Non-Teaching Staff, administrative workload

## Introduction

There are a lot of opportunities and benefits for workers in today's fast-paced, ever-changing workplace. People who are already used to working under constant strain, like Nigerian workers, may find that the ever-changing demands of the workplace make them even more anxious. Although exerting adequate pressure might improve performance, going beyond can cause stress and have the opposite impact. Stress is a natural and necessary part of being human; it's a response to the pressures and difficulties of daily life. It is a complex phenomenon with varying effects on people depending on the amount and length of time they are exposed to it. A person experiences stress when they are subjected to overwhelming mental, behavioural, and physiological demands from their environment (Ivancevich, Konapske & Matteson, 2016). It has to do with how a person responds when faced with outside influences. According to Robbins and Sanghi (2016), it's a state of flux in which a person encounters a demand, restriction, or opportunity related to their desires, the result of which is both substantial and uncertain. According to Steve (2011), stress occurs when an employee's knowledge is inadequate to meet the demands, pressures, and professional considerations of their job. This, in turn, makes them feel threatened and challenges their abilities, which makes it harder for them to stay in their position. This suggests that stress develops whenever an external factor presents a challenge that could beyond the resources and talents of an employee.

Employees' physical and mental well-being are both affected by the multifaceted nature of workplace stress. Role stressors, insufficient rewards, poor interpersonal interactions, work-life conflict, organisational climate, and structure are just a few of the many drivers of stress in the workplace. Another major factor is one's personality attributes, such as their type and locus of control.

Occupational stress is a major concern for businesses and their workers alike. According to Boyd (2023), companies across the globe lose millions of dollars every year due to stress in the workplace. One of the biggest problems that workers face is occupational stress. Stress in the workplace affects many different fields of work and costs American businesses $51 billion a year in lost productivity and medical bills (Boyd, 2023). Also, stress in the workplace is a major contributor to absenteeism; on a daily basis, almost one

million workers miss work because of stress. Major firms in the United States could be on the hook for over $3.5 million year due to unexpected absence, which costs $602.00 per employee (Boyd, 2023).

Research on stress in the workplace has been extensive, with many studies attempting to dissect the phenomenon and understand the psychological and monetary costs it imposes on businesses. The direct effect of stress on workers' long-term productivity, especially in a faltering economy, and the monetary ramifications of this social and occupational phenomenon have received far less attention. Most companies put an emphasis on production, which leads to a culture where workers' demands are pushed to the back burner. Since voicing worries about mental health could be mistaken for disobedience, this creates the exact circumstances that lead to burnout. Most organisations' ambitious "goal-driven" strategies include overburdening employees with work in order to meet deadlines, which can have negative effects on employees' mental and physical health and could even hurt the company's ability to achieve its goals. Like the marketing and sales departments, companies and organisations believe that if they put too much pressure on their employees or create an extremely competitive and stressful work environment, they will achieve peak performance. On the other hand, that's not always the case.

The consequences of employee trauma are substantial because they persist in placing heavy demands on performance, even when organisations are placing a greater emphasis on employee welfare than in the past. Ongoing adjustments to management strategies and administration, along with increasing performance expectations for employees, have been necessary to attain the goal of self-sustainability and finance the acquisition of modern equipment for efficient service delivery and optimal resource utilisation. This has put a lot of strain on staff members who are expected to deliver world-class service without sufficient funding or training, and who are threatened with punishment or even termination if they don't. Many workers are giving in to this pressure because there aren't enough jobs in Nigeria. This has led to an upsurge in cases of stress among workers.

A reorganisation of workplace functions, most obviously the rise of remote employment, has occurred in the era after the COVID-19 epidemic. Work has changed as a result of globalisation in several ways: first, it has become easier to hire people from different continents; second, diversity in the workplace has brought attention to the value of unique perspectives, ideas, and abilities; and third, the pandemic has legitimised and mandated remote work, especially in knowledge-driven service industries (Olanipekun et al., 2023). This is now a phenomena in the work market all around the globe. There are those who believe that working remotely has several benefits for businesses and their employees, such as lower operational costs, higher productivity, less burnout, and better levels

of attention. The dramatic increase in the number of persons advertising their desire to work remotely on various employment sites suggests that many people are looking for ways to alleviate the stress that comes with their current jobs. Workers are more likely to be satisfied with their work-life balance when they are able to accomplish both their professional and personal obligations from a distance (Olanipekun et al., 2023). In general, most businesses and organisations have a strict policy about their employees, and they fail to acknowledge the substantial impact that stress in the workplace has on their ability to make money and progress. In the end, it is the people who have real emotions that build empires and drive progress. The study's central argument is that companies can't succeed unless they treat their staff like real people.

The main objective is to determine how occupational stress affects the productivity of non-teaching staff at the National Open University of Nigeria. The specific goals include

i. examine the effect of administrative workload on employee performance among non-teaching staff at the National Open University of Nigeria.
ii. investigate the influence of student complaint demand on employee performance among non-teaching staff at the National Open University of Nigeria.
iii. evaluate the relationship between work-life balance and employee performance among non-teaching staff at the National Open University of Nigeria.
iv. assess the combined effect of administrative workload, student complaint demand, and work-life balance on the overall performance of non-teaching staff.
v. identify strategies that can be implemented to mitigate the negative effects of administrative workload, student complaint demand, and poor work-life balance on employee performance.

The study seeks to answer the following questions;

i. What is the effect of administrative workload on the performance of non-teaching staff at the National Open University of Nigeria?
ii. How does student complaint demand influence employee performance among non-teaching staff at the National Open University of Nigeria?
iii. What is the relationship between work-life balance and employee performance among non-teaching staff at the National Open University of Nigeria?
iv. What is the combined effect of administrative workload, student complaint demand, and work-life balance on the performance of non-teaching staff?
v. What strategies can be implemented to enhance the performance of non-teaching staff in response to administrative workload, student complaint demand, and work-life balance?

The following Hypotheses were formulated to guide the study;

**$H_{01}$:** Administrative workload has no significant effect on the performance of non-teaching staff at the National Open University of Nigeria.

**$H_{11}$:** Administrative workload has a significant effect on the performance of non-teaching staff at the National Open University of Nigeria.

**$H_{02}$:** Student complaint demand has no significant influence on employee performance among non-teaching staff at the National Open University of Nigeria.

**$H_{12}$:** Student complaint demand has a significant influence on employee performance among non-teaching staff at the National Open University of Nigeria.

**$H_{03}$:** Work-life balance has no significant relationship with employee performance among non-teaching staff at the National Open University of Nigeria.

**$H_{13}$:** Work-life balance has a significant relationship with employee performance among non-teaching staff at the National Open University of Nigeria.

**$H_{04}$:** Administrative workload, student complaint demand, and work-life balance do not have a combined significant effect on employee performance among non-teaching staff at the National Open University of Nigeria.

**$H_{14}$:** Administrative workload, student complaint demand, and work-life balance have a combined significant effect on employee performance among non-teaching staff at the National Open University of Nigeria.

**$H_{05}$:** mitigating Strategies for administrative workload, student complaint demand, and poor work-life balance do not significantly improve the performance of non-teaching staff.

**$H_{15}$:** mitigating Strategies for administrative workload, student complaint demand, and poor work-life balance significantly improve the performance of non-teaching staff.

## Literature Review

### Conceptual Review

### Concept of Stress

In the 1930s, endocrinologist Hans Selye used the word "stress" for the first time in a scientific context. Additionally, he broadened the notion to include inappropriate physiological responses to any demand, which he subsequently spread. According to him, stress is a state of affairs and the stressor is the external factor that causes it. It covers a wide range of symptoms, from mild annoyance to major malfunction that may cause rapid decline in health. According to Robbins (2014), when someone is under stress, they are constantly dealing with opportunities, limitations, or demands related to their desires, and the results of these interactions are both uncertain and important. According to this theory, stress is not always bad; in fact, it can have a positive side when it brings up opportunities for growth. According to Moorhead et al. (1998), stress is the body's way of dealing with external stimuli that put emotional and physiological strain on the system.

Taylor (1995) defines stress as an unpleasant emotional state accompanied with expected

changes in biochemistry, physiology, cognition, and behaviour in an effort to change or adapt to the situation. According to Bennett (1994), stress is a wide range of symptoms, both physical and psychological, that an individual experiences when they face obstacles while adapting to their environment. This suggests that an individual may experience stress when faced with environmental demands that are too great for their resources and talents to handle. Excessive demands that affect a person physically and mentally are known as stress. Hence, the mental or physical condition that results from recognising a threat and feeling compelled to eradicate it. In the 1930s, endocrinologist Hans Selye used the word "stress" for the first time in a scientific context. Additionally, he broadened the notion to include inappropriate physiological responses to any demand, which he subsequently spread. According to him, stress is a state of affairs and the stressor is the external factor that causes it. It covers a wide range of symptoms, from mild annoyance to major malfunction that may cause rapid decline in health. According to Robbins (2014), when someone is under stress, they are constantly dealing with opportunities, limitations, or demands related to their desires, and the results of these interactions are both uncertain and important. According to this theory, stress is not always bad; in fact, it can have a positive side when it brings up opportunities for growth. According to Moorhead et al. (1998), stress is the body's way of dealing with external stimuli that put emotional and physiological strain on the system.

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**Nature of stress**

Because it is intangible and so difficult to physically feel, stress is often misunderstood. A person's emotional strain impacts their physical and mental health as a result of stress, which happens when an individual interacts with their surroundings (Bowing et al., 2001). Events that disrupt a person's internal balance are known as stressors, and they are the root cause of stress. Overstress has a hefty price for people, businesses, and society as a whole, according to these writers. Stress and anxiety problems may affect a large portion of the workforce. Every afflicted worker misses around sixteen workdays per year due to stress, anxiety, or depression, according to estimates.

**Types of stress**

Taylor (1995) and other authors state that there are five major types of stress and they explain them as follows:

**Work stress**

Researchers have found stress to be an intriguing issue since the Second World War. Companies have come to terms with the reality that stress on the job is causing a significant loss of talent. Workplace stress is a major issue for the vast majority of employees. Therefore, stress at work ranks high among the world's most pressing issues. As a natural and unanticipated side effect of dealing with the demands of an investigation, stress

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**Chronic stress**

She says that this kind of tension is like being under constant, never-ending pressure for what feels like forever. The kind of stress that drags a person down year after year with no apparent way to break free is known as chronic stress. A person's mental and physical well-being are eroded to the point of collapse or death as a result.

**Acute stress**

To put it simply, this is the most prevalent and easily identifiable kind of stress. This sort of stress manifests itself when the sufferer has a clear understanding of the source of his distress; for example, a bear wandered onto his campground, he was recently in a vehicle accident, or he received a call from the school nurse. It may also be something terrifying but exciting, like jumping out of a parachute. The body often recovers quickly after stressful events end and life returns to normal, as these effects are only temporary. Damage to the body from acute stress is often not severe or long-lasting.

**Traumatic stress**

Natural disasters, sexual assault, accidents that could kill you, and being in the military are all examples of the kinds of horrific events that can trigger this acute stress reaction. Here, many trauma survivors start to heal after the initial shock and emotional aftermath. However, for some, the aftermath of trauma lingers long after the initial shock has worn off, and they never fully recover or even get back to where they were before. Traumatic stress disorder is the medical term for this ailment. Flashbacks or nightmares about the trauma, avoiding locations or objects linked to the trauma, being overly vigilant for danger signals, impatience, tension, and hypervigilance are common indicators of this kind of stress.

**Episodic acute stress**

Additionally, she added that someone suffering from episodic acute stress would have a life that is completely disorganised and unpredictable, and that they would constantly be confronted with a number of unpleasant events. They never stop multitasking, never arrive on time, and never let anyone down. "Type A" personalities are more likely to experience this kind of stress. Even if someone is prone to sudden, intense stress episodes, he could not recognise or acknowledge it. His stress-inducing way of life may be his undoing. Regrettably, individuals afflicted with episodic acute stress may become so accustomed to it that they put off making necessary lifestyle

changes until they encounter serious health manifestations.

**Workplace Stress and Productivity**

Examining the effects of job stress on productivity is the main focus (Wilton, 2011). Stressed out workers are less invested in finding solutions to their problems, which leads to higher rates of turnover and absenteeism. Problems for management include poor performance, wasted resources, and difficulties for subordinates could arise if workers have a hard time quitting (Mansoor, 2011). This can have the worst possible effect on the company. Factors that lead to subpar performance or negative effects on the physical and mental health of employees are also known to create stress in the workplace. When employees are always under pressure at work, it has a negative effect on their productivity and the company's bottom line. Organisations must make strategic decisions due to the complexity of the relationship between stress on the job and performance.

According to multiple studies (Mansoor, 2011; Wilton, 2011; Elovainio, Kivimaki, & Vahtera, 2002), productivity is at its peak when job stress is at a moderate level; however, once this level is exceeded, productivity begins to fall rapidly. According to studies, workers' performance suffers under low stress levels since they aren't as invested or motivated as they would be under high stress. When workers are under a lot of pressure, they tend to daydream instead of focussing on their work.Workplace stress has multiple negative effects on productivity, according to a large body of studies. Organisational performance is negatively impacted by job stress, according to Elovainio, Kivimaki, and Vahtera (2002). Workplace stress can have a negative effect on an employee's health and productivity, much like a chronic illness. This is a typical reaction to things that make workers uncomfortable, but it can also help them overcome obstacles. Assuming this is true, it will have a beneficial effect on employee performance, which in turn will increase workplace motivation, creativity, and problem-solving skills. According to Thompson and Hugh (1995), results occur when an individual's actions are not in harmony with their surroundings, which forces them to push themselves beyond their limits. But no two people, given the same set of circumstances, will act in the same way. The reason behind this is that everyone has their own set of traits that can influence how much stress they feel. According to Bowin and Harvey (2001), people's emotions and stress management strategies change when faced with challenges in their personal lives compared to those in their jobs. This makes the issue more complicated. According to Blumenthal (2003), performance peaks and then drops sharply when stress levels go beyond an optimal threshold. He argues that when people are under too much stress, it takes a toll on their health and productivity, leading to problems in many areas of life. As a result, this has an effect on the company and reduces output. Due to its significant economic implications, stress has become

more apparent to many businesses.

**Theoretical Framework**

While studying the dynamics of roles in organisations, Kahn and colleagues developed the Role Stress Theory in 1964. Organisational responsibilities, as pointed out by Daniel Katz, Robert L. Kahn, and others, greatly amplify stress due to overload, disagreement, and ambiguity. This theory has its roots in sociology and organisational psychology, which have long sought to understand the complexities of different job roles and how they impact people mentally. The purpose of developing Role Stress Theory was to shed light on how organisational structures, specifically those pertaining to expectations of roles, impact the health and happiness of workers. According to this theory, personal obligations are a contributing factor to stress in the workplace, along with external expectations. Ambiguous expectations, inconsistent demands, and excessive workloads are hallmarks of modern organisational settings, making the hypothesis relevant.

**Basic Assumptions of the Theory**

The Role Stress Theory is based on the following essential premises: Role Ambiguity: When workers aren't clear on their responsibilities, goals, or the standards set for them, they experience stress from ambiguity. When duties are not clearly stated, confusion occurs. In a role conflict, an employee is confronted with demands that are at odds with one another. Internal strife can occur when employees are asked to do different things by different managers or coworkers. Role Overload: When an employee is under too much pressure, it might be from a large quantity of activities or from the difficulty of the job itself. Workers may feel pressured because they believe they can't meet expectations. A person's mental, emotional, and physical health are all negatively impacted by these issues, which in turn leads to decreased performance and job dissatisfaction.

**Criticisms of the Theory**

Despite its usefulness in understanding stress in the workplace, Role Stress Theory has been criticised: Simplifying too much: Critics of the idea argue that it oversimplifies the causes of stress in the workplace by putting too much emphasis on roles. Factors beyond the purview of the theory, such as individual experiences, company values, and interpersonal dynamics, contribute to the complex nature of workplace stress. The hypothesis does not take into account the fact that people are different when it comes to their ability to withstand stress. A person's resiliency, coping strategies, and personality traits could affect how they interpret a given level of role ambiguity or conflict. Ignored Company Culture: The plan places an emphasis on personal responsibilities while reducing the influence of company culture on stress. The idea does not take into account the reality that role ambiguity and conflict may have less of an impact in cultures that provide support.

**Relevance of the Theory to the Study: "Analysis of Workplace Stress Levels on Employee Productivity among Non-teaching Staff at the National Open University of Nigeria"**

This study applies Role Stress Theory to examine the impact of several role-related stressors on productivity among non-teaching professionals at the National Open University of Nigeria. Uncertainty over task prioritising and expectation management can cause stress for non-teaching staff when duties are not clearly defined. The result could be a decrease in productivity due to decreased motivation and efficiency. Discord in Roles: Administrators, coworkers in the non-teaching staff, and students can all make demands that are at odds with one another. Dealing with these competing demands without a clear path forward can drain resources, lead to emotional exhaustion or burnout, and ultimately affect productivity on the work. Duties Overload: Non-teaching staff at universities and colleges often have to juggle multiple tasks at once due to a lack of funding. Their stress levels rise and their productivity plummets when they are unable to handle the workload. By drawing on Role Stress Theory, this study may look at how different types of role stress interact with one another and how it relates to the productivity of employees who aren't teachers. Improved task conflict management, more equitable workload distribution, and better job description clarity are all areas where the theory can guide solutions aimed at reducing stress and increasing productivity. To clarify how organisational roles are impacted by ambiguity, conflict, and overload, Kahn et al. (1964) put out the Role Stress Theory. In order to better understand the stress levels among non-teaching professionals, the concept has been extended to study other types of workplaces, such as universities (Kahn et al., 1964).

**Empirical Review**

The authors Swaminathan and Rajkumar (2013) examined the relationship between organisational stress and employee behaviour. The effects of the workplace on employees' stress levels were investigated in a study that included participants of varying ages, occupations, job titles, shift lengths, and other variables. Worker anxiety is relative. This research pinpoints three sources of stress in the workplace and finds the sweet spot where people may function at their peak. Managing Multiple Roles and Duties Function self-sufficiency Thirdly, role stagnation.

The study "Emotional Intelligence as a Predictor of Occupational Stress among Working Professionals" was carried out by Satija and Khan (2013). Employees' attitudes and actions on the job will suffer if job stress, which they claim is the same thing as occupational stress, is not addressed in the workplace. The relationship between EQ and Occupational Stress is investigated in this research. The results of this study show that EQ is the most important factor in determining the likelihood of experiencing stress on the job. The book "Role of Stress Among Women Employees Comprising the Majority Workforce in the IT Sector of Chennai and Coimbatore" was written by

Kavitha (2012). She has zeroed in on the IT industry's unique brand of role stress among employees. According to her findings, women face more stress than men do at work, and married women even face more stress than single women. According to Khalid's (2012) research on the topic, "Role of Supportive Leadership as a Moderator between Job Stress and Job Performance," there is a link between stress and performance on the job in firms. It is essential for employees to have sufficient support from their supervisors in order to improve their performance inside the organisation. Even in challenging times, a supportive supervisor can boost an employee's output. The relationship between stress appraisal and quality of life, including compassion satisfaction, compassion fatigue, and burnout, was studied by Prati, Pietrantoni, and Cicognani (2011). They looked at how coping mechanisms and collective efficacy mediated this correlation. In the line of duty, first responders, paramedics, and emergency medical technicians frequently face potentially traumatic situations. The 463 rescue personnel from Italy who took part comprised firefighters and other emergency healthcare professionals. Participants were asked to fill out questionnaires that measured their quality of life, coping strategies, stress levels, and collective efficacy. Stress assessment was associated with compassion fatigue, according to the results, and self-blame coping, self-support coping, and emotion and support coping were the mediators. There was a modulation of the link between stress appraisal and burnout by social efficacy, self-blame coping, and religious coping. Collective efficacy, problem-focused coping, and self-blame coping were found to modulate the association between stress evaluation and compassion fulfilment in the end. No quality-of-life attribute was influenced by cognitive restructuring or denial in regard to stress assessment.

According to Dhruba (2020), stress is something that people deal with in many parts of their lives. Stress should be addressed by the workers employed by diverse organisations. There are a lot of things causing bankers a lot of stress. Organisational performance, employee productivity, labour quality, staff turnover, and absenteeism are all negatively impacted by these pressures. Anxiety, despair, migraines, and back pain are among the health problems it causes. Job insecurity, poor communication, work overload, lack of motivation, inadequate performance evaluation and appraisal systems, insufficient management support, and work kind were the eight components of employment stress that this study examined. This research aims to better understand the challenges that bankers confront while dealing with stress and to identify the factors that have a major impact on this epidemic. In the end, 200 bankers from different institutions in the Kathmandu Valley filled out questionnaires to measure the impact of stress on employee performance. According to the findings, performance is drastically reduced by all forms of stress. The negative effects of stress on people's health,

according to Ornek (2020), have been on the rise in recent years. It causes a wide range of stress reactions, related health problems, and negative behaviours in the workplace, especially among women. Examining how the Workplace Mental Health Promotion Programme, which is based on the work-related stress model, affected female employees' coping profiles, levels of salivary immunoglobulin A and cortisol, levels of social support, reactions, job performance, and absenteeism from work was the main goal of this study.

Stress in the workplace is defined by Ibe (2022) as a mental illness that manifests itself physically and psychologically when workers' needs are not adequately met by the resources that are available. This study seeks to address the issue of healthcare staff productivity being negatively impacted by a lack of appropriate ways for managing workplace stress. Public hospital healthcare workers in the US are the focus of this exploratory case study, which aims to analyse the methods used by management to reduce stress in the workplace and its impact on worker productivity. Demographic variables, psychological and social factors, and occupational stress may all interact to cause anxiety and depression, which are the hypothesised outcomes of this study. Interviews were conducted via phone, in-person, and email as part of this research's qualitative methodology and exploratory case study design. In response to the two research questions posed, this study found that burnout, initial emotions, development, productivity, teamwork, and team efficacy are elements impacting healthcare workers' workplace productivity.

A comprehensive analysis of the data and the development of conclusions with solid evidence were part of this study's examination of the implications of its findings in connection to the current literature. Additional research is needed to fully understand the precise differences through terminology standardisation, according to the suggestion. Future study may use different methods than this one, with different sample sizes and maybe even surveys conducted in a non-pandemic setting. The researcher can explain how this could differ from or match up with previous results by adjusting the study settings. According to Medes and Opra (2020), eustress, also known as good stress, is a positive reaction to stressful situations that helps people stay motivated and ultimately succeed in life. However, there is a limit to how much stress one can manage before it starts to negatively affect productivity on the job.

Also, Rolfe (2015) shed attention on the importance of work stress and how firms are focussing on managing and reducing it through practical advice. The provision of a supportive work environment, open communication, fair workload distribution, and work-life balance are all examples of what is required. Employees' stress levels should be closely monitored by management to ensure they are not overly anxious, as this can lead to poor performance on the job. According to new studies (Ahmed & Ramzan, 2013), stress on the job has a

negative effect on productivity. Workload, job conflict, and inadequate financial remuneration are major causes of stress, according to a similar study, which in turn reduces employee performance. Additionally, Jeyarai (2013) looked into how stress in the workplace affected educators and found that stress makes people less likely to stay in the teaching profession, more likely to quit, and more likely to miss days of work due to illness or other personal issues. Especially when none of them is teaching, their connection has been a major source of tension. But the results vary greatly across different types of organisations, according to the statistics.

There are four distinct kinds of relationships: there is a negative linear link between stress and productivity, meaning that stress makes people less productive; on the other hand, there is a beneficial form of stress that can actually make people more productive, called eustress. Finally, there may be a curved or U-shaped relationship where mild stress initially boosts production to a certain peak, then it decreases as the person starts to feel more distressed. The fourth point is that the two cannot be related in any way. Depending on its level, stress at work can either help or hurt productivity. When it's missing, the work becomes less challenging, which in turn lowers performance. As a result, job performance tends to improve as stress levels rise, since stress makes it easier to mobilise and use resources to meet job demands. Employees are more motivated and better able to overcome challenges when they experience constructive stress, also known as eustress. Because it pushes the worker to their boundaries to get the job done, stress at this level can be seen as a creative catalyst. As this continues, there comes a point where the employee's stress levels hit a saturation point, which is related to their daily performance capacity.

Right now, I have to say that stress doesn't make him or her perform better. Workers whose stress levels are too high are less productive because they are unable to deal with difficult situations, make rational judgements, and maintain consistent behaviour. The employee's performance plummets as soon as they hit a breaking point because they get depressed and lose all motivation to work. This may cause the person to miss work, which could ultimately lead to their dismissal or resignation. Stress in the workplace is frequently downplayed by employers, according to Eze (2018), despite the fact that it has serious consequences for workers' well-being and productivity. Workplace stress is on the rise and is a major problem for businesses because it makes workers less productive, more likely to miss work, and more likely to experiment with drugs and alcohol. Employee performance is negatively impacted by mismanaged job stress, according to a study by Mead (2019). Consequently, stress has a negative impact on the organization's production. Mathis and Jackson (2020) state that productivity is defined as the ratio of output (in terms of both quality and quantity) to input (in terms of cost) of a system's resources. Organisational human resource productivity, according to the authors, should be

measured in terms of total labour cost per unit of production or unit labour cost per unit of output. Their claim was that there are three things that determine a person's performance: their ability to work, the amount of effort they put in, and the support they receive. Performance (P) is equal to Ability (A) times Effort (E) times time Support (S), where A, E, and S are the three components involved. This proves that removing or drastically reducing any component will have a negative impact on (P). Put simply, performance will decline. While production per hour of labour is one measure of productivity, this does not guarantee that the business will see a growth in income (Onaja, 2023 citing Chase & Aquilano, 1995). This is because excess production could go unsold and accumulate in inventory. In order to assess a productivity boost, specific questions need to be asked. Questions like, "What steps have been taken?" are common. Has the action reduced inventory or increased output? Were operational costs lowered as a result of the action? So, taking all of this into account, we can say that productivity is everything that helps the company get closer to its goals. Therefore, it is the responsibility of management to assess whether stress causes any unproductive behaviours

**Empirical analysis**

According to Watson, Goh, and Sawang (2015), professional stress is becoming more common and is having a negative impact on people and businesses around the world. The purpose of this research was to identify any gender differences in stress and coping strategies used by male and female employees. There were 258 participants from various walks of life and professions who took part in the study (106 men and 152 women). Men and women responded differently to stress in the workplace, with the results showing that they formed two distinct groups and used different process models. The results of the aforementioned evaluations were used to draw the following conclusions: Stress affects a large percentage of people, especially those who work in demanding jobs. Numerous physiological and psychological problems are triggered by stress, according to researchers and applied psychologists.

3. Highly qualified Stress and performance have a strong correlation. Individual performance is affected by occupational stress. 4: Coping methods are necessary due to diverse stressful circumstances. A person's ability and situation dictate whether they should use an approach or avoidance coping strategy. It was pointed out that in any stressful situation, people may use a variety of coping mechanisms. An empirical evaluation of the influence of occupational stress on the performance of Nigerian managers was conducted by Salami, Ojokuku, and Ilesanmi (2018). One hundred thirty-five managers with five years' experience or more in management positions were selected using a random selection technique. A standardised questionnaire was used to collect data relevant to the investigation. In order to test the study's hypothesis, the Z-score was used. The results showed that Nigerian managers experienced decreased focus, mental blockage, and reduced decision-making

abilities as a result of job stress-induced subjective impacts such as anger, fear, and anxiety. Workload, position ambiguity, and psychological strain can be reduced by job redesign initiatives, according to organisations in Nigeria. It is recommended that existing organisational support programs, such as counselling and stress reduction courses, be strengthened. Hotel workers in Central Florida were the subjects of a study on depression by Amir and Abraham (2019). Through analysing the relationship between occupational stress and job characteristics, they were able to ascertain the prevalence of depression among workers in the hospitality sector. Workplace stress, health decline, and loyalty to one's employer were the subjects of an investigation by Viljoen and Rothmann (2019). It was discovered that ill health and diminished organisational commitment are closely correlated with organisational pressures. Concerns about maintaining employment have had a negative impact on people's emotional and physical well-being. Individuals' lack of dedication to the company was found to be predicted by five stressors: work-life balance, control, job characteristics, workload, and pay. Stress in the workplace was studied by Schmidt (2020) in relation to nurses working in surgical settings. The purpose of this study was to determine how common occupational stress is among surgical nursing staff and to find out if there was a connection between stress and other performance indicators. The results show that stress is a part of the job, but it's manageable.

The research paper "Occupational Stress and Teaching Approaches among Chinese Non-Teachers" was written by Zhang in 2019. According to the research, participants' self-assessment abilities, positive conceptual changes in teaching methodology, and their perceived shortcomings all point to the adverse effects of a conceptual shift in teaching strategy. Based on their research published in 2020, titled "Sense of Coherence (SOC) May Reduce the Effects of Occupational Stress on Mental Health Status among Japanese Factory Workers," researchers Kayoko and Kazuhito discovered that SOC had a positive correlation with the negative impacts of job demands and stress on mental health. It had a good effect on the mental health of female coworkers but a negative one on male managerial colleagues. Researchers found that SOC significantly affects how well people of both sexes deal with stress on the job. Research by Agolla (2019) on Botswana police officers' experiences with stress on the job and methods for dealing with it was published in the journal Police Officers: The Case of Botswana Police Service. Injuries incurred while on duty and the occasional need to use force are two of the identified stresses in this research of police work. Physical activity, healthy eating, social support, career guidance, and employee education are some of the coping techniques discussed. Studying I) levels of overall psychological strain, ii) levels of job satisfaction, and iii) psychosocial working conditions, Connolly, John, Willock, Hipwell, and Chisholm (2021) investigate management standards

for work-related stress, specifically demand, support, control, role, relationships, and change. Researchers Urska, Sonja, and Simona found in their 2021 study "Effective Approaches to Managing Employee Stress" that stressed-out workers are more likely to make mistakes on the job. Effective approaches for preventing stress include a variety of stress management tactics, well-organised work, and competent management. It is common practice to classify stress as either transient, PTSD, or chronic.

**Gap in Literature from Empirical Review**

Workplace stress has been the subject of much research on its effects on performance and productivity in the workplace. However, very little of this literature has addressed the problem in developing nations with weak labour regulations and an unstable economy, particularly in new industries like fintech. Understanding the unique effects of stress in the workplace on men and women, as well as the differences in response between the sexes, is crucial.

**Research Methods and Design**

The research strategy used in this study is a hybrid of descriptive survey and documentary analytic approaches. Researchers at the National Open University of Nigeria (NOUN) used a descriptive survey to collect quantitative data on the relationship between stress in the workplace and productivity among non-teaching personnel. A descriptive survey is the best way to study stress-related factors like workload, job security, work-life balance, and productivity because it can gather a lot of data from a large population in a short amount of time.
By including preexisting records, reports, and institutional data relevant to staff productivity, absenteeism rates, and other performance measures, the documentary analytic design strengthens the survey. The documentary style allows for a triangulated approach to the research by comparing quantitative data with existing records and reports from institutions. This helps to verify and validate the data. A comprehensive understanding of the effect of stress on output is achieved by combining these approaches. Research Subjects A total of 783 non-teaching staff members of NOUN, who represent the key stakeholders, make up the study's population. People in this category include those who provide technical assistance, administrative support, and any other type of non-teaching work whose productivity might be impacted by stress. Like teaching personnel, non-teaching staff are vital to the smooth operation of educational institutions, making the selection of this demographic all the more important. However, while studying occupational stress in educational settings, researchers often fail to take their function into account.
Staff members who are not instructors are vital to the success of the institution as a whole because of the work they provide in areas such as operations, student administration, and support services. The operational effectiveness of the institution could be affected if this group is stressed out and their output is hindered. Therefore, by focussing on non-teaching people, the

research will cover a demography that is often overlooked, providing a full view of occupational stress in the university context.

## Sampling Techniques

The study employs a simple random sampling technique to select participants from the population. The total sample size of 400 is determined using Taro Yamane's formula, which is:

$n=N/1+N\ (e)^2$

Where:

*n* is the sample size,

*N* is the total population (783),

*e* is the margin of error (0.05).

$n=783/1+783\ (0.05)^2$

$n=783/1+783\ (0.0025)$

$n=783/2.9575$

$n=264.7$

Sample=265

This sample strategy guarantees that all non-teaching staff members have an equal opportunity to be chosen, which helps to minimise bias and assures that the results are representative. If you need to pick people to interview from a big, homogeneous population, simple random selection is the way to go. To further guarantee that the non-teaching staff's different departments are well-represented in the sample, stratified sampling is employed. These departments include administrative, technical, and support services. The data collected should not be biassed towards any one department, but rather represent a wider range of non-teaching professions, and stratification makes sure of that.

## Data Collection Method

A whole dataset is available for examination because the research makes use of both primary and secondary sources of information. Primary Data: Three main instruments are used to obtain the primary data:

Surveys: A total of 400 respondents were chosen at random and asked structured questions. The stress levels and productivity of the respondents are assessed by means of both closed-ended and Likert scale items inside the questionnaire. Workload, role conflict, job stability, and work-life balance are some of the factors that are measured by the established stress and productivity measures.

Department heads and upper-level administrators are among the key stakeholders who are interviewed using a semi-structured interview format. The qualitative insights provided by the interviews supplement the quantitative findings and provide a more in-depth analysis of the stress variables. Observations: In order to detect non-verbal signs of stress, such as lethargy, disorganisation, or absenteeism, it is necessary to directly examine the conditions and behaviours of the workplace. This method is useful for finding stress symptoms that people don't mention on the questionnaire and for confirming their responses. Information Obtained from Secondary Sources: There is an examination of documentary sources, such as reports on productivity and absence from institutions and medical records of employees. Productivity metrics (such as job completion

rates, time management, and attendance) and stress indicators (such as medical leave for stress-related illnesses) can be better understood with the use of the data provided by these reports.

**Data Analysis Techniques**

Using the following approaches, the collected data are analysed quantitatively and qualitatively:

Quantitative Analysis: Regression analysis is applied to the quantitative data collected from the questionnaires. The relationship between stress in the workplace and productivity can be better understood with the use of this statistical tool. Using regression analysis, the study determines how specific pressures, such workload and job insecurity, affect productivity. Qualitative Analysis: Thematic content analysis is used to investigate the observational data and interview replies. Emotional exhaustion, burnout, and coping mechanisms are identified and categorised as stress-related themes. Researchers can examine the root causes and recurring patterns of stress among support staff using this method. Technical Details of the Model This model is utilised in the regression analysis: The model for Multiple Linear Regression can be written as: The equation $Y = \beta0 + \beta1X1 + \beta2X2 + \beta3X3 + e$ can be paraphrased as:

Employee performance is the dependent variable, or response variable, represented by Y.

In this case, β0 stands for the constant or intercept. The coefficients of X are represented by B1, B2, and B3. More specifically, β1 stands for the coefficient of X1, and β2 for the coefficient of X2.

The independent variable in this case is work-life balance, X2 is the demand for student complaints, and X1 is administrative workload. This study used stress in the workplace as an independent variable and productivity in the workplace as a dependent variable.

To better understand how changes in stress levels may affect employee results, this model provides a prediction framework that allows for the assessment of different stress aspects on productivity.

For the purpose of ensuring that the research tools are valid and reliable: In order to ensure that the questionnaire is easy to understand and use, a pilot research is conducted with 50 participants. The pilot ensures that the instruments measure the specified parameters and helps to answer any queries that are not obvious. To ensure the accuracy and relevance of the questionnaire to the study objectives, experts in occupational stress and human resource management verify it. In order to determine how reliable the questionnaire is internally, Cronbach's Alpha is used. When evaluating the reliability of questionnaire items, a Cronbach's Alpha score of 0.7 or higher is considered good.

Important Moral Factors In the following ways, the study follows all applicable ethical standards:

All participants are informed of the study's goals and their specific roles before giving their consent. In order to take part in the

study, participants must first provide their written consent.

Participants' responses are treated with the utmost care to ensure confidentiality. Without consent, no personal information is divulged, and the data is used only for research.

Participants are assured that their participation is completely voluntary and that they are free to withdraw from the study at any moment without penalty. safe and harmless The research ensures that participants will not experience any harm, either emotionally or physically, while they are participating in the data collection process. The study's scientific rigour and ethical validity are ensured by this methodically comprehensive approach to examining the relationship between stress in the workplace and productivity.

**Result and Discussion**

Correlations

| Control Variables | | | Administrative workload has a significant effect on the performance of non-teaching staff at the National Open University of Nigeria | Student complaint demand has a significant influence on employee performance among non-teaching staff at the National Open University of Nigeria | Work-life balance has a significant relationship with employee performance among non-teaching staff at the National Open University of Nigeria | mitigating Strategies for administrative workload, student complaint demand, and poor work-life balance do not significantly improve |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| stress effects and employee performance among non-teaching staff at the National Open University of Nigeria | Administrative workload has a significant effect on the performance of non-teaching staff at the National Open University of Nigeria | Correlation | 1.000 | .102 | -.042 | .138 |
| | | Significance (2-tailed) | . | .125 | .527 | .038 |
| | | Df | 0 | 225 | 225 | 225 |
| | Student complaint demand has a significant influence on employee performance among non-teaching staff at the National Open University of Nigeria | Correlation | .102 | 1.000 | -.140 | .220 |
| | | Significance (2-tailed) | .125 | . | .034 | .001 |
| | | Df | 225 | 0 | 225 | 225 |
| | Work-life balance has a significant relationship with employee | Correlation | -.042 | -.140 | 1.000 | -.197 |
| | | Significance (2-tailed) | .527 | .034 | . | .003 |
| | | Df | 225 | 225 | 0 | 225 |

| | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| performance among non-teaching staff at the National Open University of Nigeria | | | | | |
| mitigating Strategies for administrative workload, student complaint demand, and poor work-life balance do not significantly improve | Correlation | .138 | .220 | -.197 | 1.000 |
| | Significance (2-tailed) | .038 | .001 | .003 | . |
| | Df | 225 | 225 | 225 | 0 |

**Interpretation of the Correlation Data**

An examination of the correlations between administrative workload, student complaint demand, work-life balance, stress mitigation measures, and employee performance among non-teaching personnel at the National Open University of Nigeria is presented in the table below.

**Administrative Workload**:

There is a weak statistical relationship (p=.125) between administrative burden and employee performance, while the correlation coefficient (r=.102) is not statistically significant at the p<.05 level. Although administrative workload does correlate positively with performance, the correlation is small and not statistically significant. Hence, administrative workload does not have a direct and significant impact on employee performance.

**Student Complaint Demand**:

There is a favourable and statistically significant association between the demand for student complaints and employee performance (r=.220, p=.001). It appears that staff performance is substantially impacted by the demand for student complaints, meaning that the number of complaints has a discernible effect on staff performance.

**Work-Life Balance**:

There is a significant relationship between work-life balance and employee performance (r = −.140, p=.034). There is a negative correlation here that is statistically significant.

Employee performance is negatively correlated with work-life balance. Negative effects on performance are proportional to the degree to which juggling one's personal and professional lives becomes challenging.

**Mitigating Strategies**:

A statistically significant positive link is indicated by the correlation between mitigation techniques and staff performance (for administrative burden, student complaint demand, and work-life balance) (r=.138, p =.038).

The influence of mitigation methods is small, despite the fact that they are significantly related to performance. This indicates that efforts to lessen workload and complaints can enhance performance, but their effects are not particularly noticeable.

## Conclusion

Notably impacting employee performance among non-teaching staff are student complaint demand and work-life balance. There is a positive correlation between high complaint demands and performance, suggesting that meeting student expectations could motivate better results. But productivity takes a hit when people don't strike a good work-life balance. Workload, student complaints, and poor work-life balance are all problems that can be helped in small ways, but mitigation techniques won't solve the problem entirely. Targeted policies to enhance the performance of non-teaching staff could be informed by these observations.

## Recommendations

The following suggestions were put forth in light of the results;
One solution to the problem of employees' lack of productivity due to an unhealthy work-life balance is for companies to provide more flexible work schedules. Employees who aren't teachers may be able to improve their work-life balance through flexible work arrangements including shorter work weeks, staggered hours, or working remotely.
2. Establish Thorough Mechanisms to Address Student Dissatisfaction: Institutions should establish organised methods for efficiently managing and resolving student complaints, as there is a significant correlation between complaint demand and performance. Staff stress levels, complaint management, and performance results could all be improved with the implementation of automated complaint monitoring systems and training in student interaction and dispute resolution strategies.

3. Establish Wellness Programs for Employees: Since existing strategies for minimising the consequences of workload and poor work-life balance have not been very effective, organisations should put money into wellness programs that help people physically and mentally. To assist staff in better managing the stress associated with their job, which in turn improves their performance, these could include wellness activities, counselling services, and workshops on stress management.

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