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RESEARCH ARTICLE

A STUDY OF FACTORS INFLUENCING JOB STRESS AMONG NIGERIAN WORKERS

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Abstract

The study was conducted to examine workplace stress based on delayed promotion and workplace welfare packages. The study adopted a cross-sectional survey. Workers from Federal, state, and private sectors were drawn from ministries, agencies, and departments as the research participants. The participants included a total of one hundred and thirty-eight (138) workers comprising male and female. A self-developed scale was used for data collection. The findings revealed that delayed promotion in the workplace does not necessarily predict workplace stress. On the other hand, the result also found that workplace welfare packages significantly predicted job stress. The current study concludes that workers observed non-promotion in work is not a contributory factor in job stress among workers. However, workplace welfare packages are implicated in job stress. Therefore, the study recommends that functional workplace welfare packages be established in the workplace.

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Introduction: -

Today, workplace stress is becoming a significant issue of increasing concern to employees and organizations (Bewell et al., 2014). The phenomenon of workplace stress is widely experienced by many employees worldwide (Osibanjo et al., 2016). Stress is a ubiquitous outcome of contemporary lives and a typical result of modern-day activities (Masoom & Hoque, 2018). The experience of workplace stress has been widely researched, and has continue to gain momentum (Aderibigbe et al., 2020). Job stress could be seen as the body's response to a change that involves a physical, mental or emotional adjustment or reaction to work responsibilities (Essiam et al., 2015). Work-related stress is a pattern of physical, emotional, cognitive, and behavioral responses to extreme taxing work content, work organization, and work environment (Bewell et al., 2014). Stress is a common element in any job, and persons have to face it in almost every walk of life (Chinyere et al., 2019). Stress may be acute, psychological, emotional, social, or job-related (Chikwendu, 2016). There is overwhelming evidence that attitudes about one's job, such as stress and job satisfaction, are critically necessary to the efficient and effective functioning of work organizations such as the public service (Obiora & Iwuoha, 2013).

One of the organizational outcomes affected by job stress is performance (Owolabi & Osekita, 2016). Undoubtedly, work-related stress negatively impacts productivity in that stress is accompanied by cognitive, affective, and behavioral implications capable of disrupting work-related inputs. Ashton (2017) noted that occupational stress produces employee absenteeism, intention to quit, interpersonal difficulties, and poor performance in an organization. Research has attributed workplace stress to various factors that occur on or away from work (Obiora & Iwuoha, 2013). In Nigeria, occupational stress and burnout are likely to occur among workers due to a combination

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of job demands, environmental situations, and family relationships. Job demands can be stressful when it collides with a family situation such as attending to a child's health or environmental challenges such as road traffic situations. Family obligations exert pressure on workers and cause stress, especially when the problem is threatening.

Previous research has widely explored conditions that trigger stress in the workplace. For instance, factors such as downsizing, sudden reorganization and unexpected changes in the work schedules and competition for promotional opportunities (Harvey and Brown, 2006), marital status (Thyrum & Siegel, 2005), work-family role conflict (Ajaja, 2004; Williams & Warrens, 2003), long work hours (Aluko 2007), poor relationship with boss and co-workers (Hicks, Caroline 2007). Therefore, an individual's occupation should be a significant stress source in the given circumstances (Chinyere, Ngige, & Mojekeh, 2019). With the increase and growth of industries, pressures in the urban areas, quantitative growth in population, and various problems in day-to-day life are some of the factors that can increase job stress. While previous studies have explored the determinants of job stress, relatively little attention has been paid to the role of promotions and workplace welfare packages. Promotion is an essential issue in the workplace (Razak, Sarpan, & Ramlan, 2018), and there could be a possible association between workplace promotion and job stress. Promotion refers to the employee's shifting for a job of higher significance and higher compensation (Lazear, 2000). Promotion is supposed to be a normal progression in the workplace. Still, an observation of the trends and patterns of promotion in the work setting reveals a wide workplace promotion delay.

Furthermore, the workplace welfare package is used in this study as the incentives designed to cater to workers other than their salary. Research has shown that lack of inadequate welfare packages and other incentives leads to poor worker's motivation which significantly affects their outcomes (Okafor, Daramola, & Tafa, 2018). Although, much research has been done in relation to work stress. This present study intends to examine further the predictive role of delayed promotion and inadequate workplace welfare packages on job stress among Nigerian workers. The following hypothesis was formulated:

H¹, Delayed promotion will significantly predict job stress

H², Workplace welfare package will significantly predict job stress.

Method: -

The study adopted a cross-sectional survey. Workers from the Federal, state, and private sectors were drawn from Abuja and Enugu as the research participants. The rationale for selecting Abuja for the study is many federal and private-sector workers in the area, while Enugu is chosen because of the state workers. The participants included total of one hundred and thirty-eight (138) workers comprising male and female. A self-developed scale was used for data collection.

Result: -

Table 1: -Table showing multiple regression analysis conducted to determine the predictive effect of delayed promotion and welfare package on job stress.

	B	SEB	β	t	Sig.
(Constant)	1.72	.079		1.58	.000
Delayed Promotion	.108	.063	.92	1.72	.086
Welfare Package	-.864	.057	-.811	-15.14	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), Job stress

A multiple regression analysis was conducted to predict job stress based on participant's perceived delayed promotion and welfare package. A significant regression equation was not found between delayed promotion and job stress $F(1, 136) = 1.079, P > .089$, with an R^2 of .008. The result indicates that participant's perceived delay in promotion does not predict job stress, which means that irregular promotions in the workplace do not contribute to workplace stress. With this result, our assumption that delayed rise in the workplace will predict workplace stress was rejected. Additionally, we expected that the lack of welfare packages in the workplace would not predict job stress. However, the result revealed a statistically significant equation between job stress and workplace welfare packages $F(2, 135) = 116.148, P < .000$, with an R^2 of .627. The result indicates that the workplace welfare package

significantly predicted job stress. Thus, the assumption that the workplace welfare package will not predict job stress was rejected.

Discussion: -

The study was conducted to examine workplace stress based on delayed promotion and workplace welfare packages. The findings revealed that delayed promotion in the workplace does not necessarily predict workplace stress. As witnessed in the world of work, the result indicates that obstructed promotion is not a factor in job stress. Perhaps, the frequency of promotion in the workplace does not contribute to stress occasioned by one's job. The probable explanation for this finding could be attributed to the established workplace promotion pattern/migration in Nigeria. Workers in different workplaces are getting used to irregular promotions associated with Nigeria's working environment. Perhaps, delayed promotion characterizes the work setting, and the trend extends to public and private establishments.

Although the second hypothesis was rejected, as seen in the result. However, a critical revelation was made in the result obtained on the second assumption, where workplace welfare packages significantly and positively predicted job stress. The finding indicates that the unavailability of available welfare packages in the workplace could trigger workplace stress. Thus, the result agrees with (Ankita, 2010) who associated welfare services and programs with stress-free workers. Additionally, the finding supports the view that lack of welfare packages negatively affects worker's motivation (Okafor et al., 2018). This presupposes that worker's sense of neglect can impede their contribution to work output. On the other hand, a welfare package is found to impact the employees' performance positively.

Conclusion: -

The current study concludes that workers observed non-promotion in work is not a contributory factor in job stress among workers. It is noted that whether workers are promoted or not does lead to workplace stress. Also, it is confirmed that workplace welfare packages are implicated in job stress. However, caution should be applied in generalizing due to the sample size and the fact that there was no established cause-effect relationship. Whereas future researchers are advised to expand the scope and search for possible cause-effect. The study recommends that functional workplace welfare packages be established in the workplace.

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