THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN GENDER, STRESS AND JOB PERFORMANCE AMONG ACADEMIC STAFF IN TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS IN ANAMBRA STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study investigated the relationship among gender, stress and academic job performance in tertiary institutions in Anambra State. The research design was descriptive survey of correlational type. Stratified random technique was used to select a total of 500 participants out of 1,200 target population from the four tertiary institutions in Anambra State of Nigeria. The data gathering instrument were Gender Stress Questionnaire (GSQ), Academic Staff Job Performance Questionnaire (ASJPQ), Academic Staff Stress Management Check List (ASSMCL) and Academic Staff Publication Proforma (ASPP). Five hypothesis generated were tested at .05 level of significance. The data were analyzed using Multiple Regression and Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient Statistics. The findings revealed that gender and stress significantly influenced academic staff job

performance in tertiary institutions in Anambra State. It was recommended that the workload of the lecturers should be reduced so as to achieve efficiency and effectiveness in their teaching career.

Keywords: Gender, Stress, Academic Staff Job Performance and Tertiary Institutions

Introduction

The will to work comes from the enjoyment of the work itself or from the desire to achieve certain goals. An attempt to increase the output of such work or achievement will require staff both male and female devoid of stress. A stress free person will achieve a great deal. A stressful individual will be slow, prone to error and not likely to achieve more. The University, being the highest institution of learning, must strive to attain the nation's state educational goals as stated by Federal Republic of Nigeria in the National Policy on Education (2004).

In translating, the goals of higher educational programme, policy and innovations into reality and success, it must reach the classroom, the heart of teaching with critical roles and support academic staff. In the course of discharging their numerous roles, they have been battling with the issues of stress by combining teaching, research, community service and publications alongside with other personal issues thus make the job of an academia more demanding in Nigeria. This was confirmed by Ijaiya (2002) that any job that is directed at shaping the behavior of young children up to adult life in the midst of conflicting and confusing cultures cannot be easy.

In addition, teaching at times for several hours as well as marking are so stressful and atimes overwhelming for academic staff of tertiary institutions regardless of sex but they are left with no choice due to the sense of need and the commitment to achieve the stated higher education goals. Invariably, this placed great challenges on the institutions and their academic staff job performance.

No doubt, the glamour for tertiary education and with each institution determined to achieve its goal becomes a stressor and thus exposed the academic staff to stress which in turn may affect their performance. While a considerable amount of evidence exist indicating that women are more psychologically and physiologically reactive to stressors than men, it has also been suggested that gender differences may depend on the type of

stressors (Strond, 2002).   Gender is a set of characteristics distinguishing between male and female, particularly in the case of men. Taylor (2004) in his study discovered that when faced with the same stress, women reactions are different from men, which accounts for differences in longevity and health.

However, the issue of gender stress has hardly caught the attention of our educational planner and the government even though research findings have confirmed its presence (Asonibare, 1984; Adeoye, 1991; Ijaiya 2002; Udoh,1997) and the signals and the effects are obvious in our educational system. It is necessary not only to understand and indicate statistically how female academic job performance situations differ from those of men, but to understand how women fared in employment in academic professions.

Based on this aforementioned and the situation under which academic staff have been working in all tertiary institutions in Nigeria, it will not be an overstatement to say that most of our academic staff regardless of gender are under stress. Therefore, it is the focus of this study to examine the relationship between Gender Stress and Job Performance among Academic Staff in tertiary institutions in Anambra State, Nigeria.

In order to find solutions to the problem, the study sought answers to the following questions.

1. What are the sources of stress for academic staff in tertiary institutions in Anambra State?
2. What is the total number of academic staff publication in tertiary institutions in Anambra State?
3. What is the influence of gender on stress and academic staff job performance in tertiary institutions in Anambra State?
4. Does gender have any relationship with academic staff stress in tertiary institutions in Anambra State?
5. Does gender have any relationship with academic staff job performance in tertiary institution in Anambra State?
6. Are there any relationship between stress and demographic factors such as age and work experience in tertiary institutions in Anambra State?

The study is significant because it reveals the areas of stress in teaching profession of academic staff and how it affects their productivity. Corrective measures propose will further ensure effective performance of

University academia in the state in particular and other tertiary institutions in the country in general.

Conceptual Analysis
Gender

Gender is misused as a major reason for discrimination. Gender is often assigned the status of natural law, but it is not absolute and its concepts vary overtime and between cultures. The current social power structure rigorously enforces a set of arbitrary gender rules. This enforcement in some way damages everyone but it is extremely restrictive for males who cannot or will not follow the rules or play the roles and responsibilities of men and women that are created in the various families, societies and cultures.

Men and women perform different roles. This leads to women and men having different experience, knowledge, talents and needs. Gender analysis explores these different needs of men and women. It also facilitates the strategic use of distinct knowledge and skills possessed by men and women. Concept of Gender also includes the expectations held about the characteristics aptitudes and likely behaviours of both women and men femininity and masculinity (March & Mulchopadhyay, 1999).

Stress

Stress is a state of physical or mental tension resulting from factors that affect the body's equilibrium or the body's reaction to either pleasant or complement simulation. This according to Tanner (2006) stress is any action or situation that placed special physical and psychological demands upon a person. It is anything that can unbalance and individual's level of equilibrium.

The World Health Organization (WHO) calls stress a "Worldwide Epidemic". The reason is that it has been discovered that stress is the most cause of visit to physicians. Thus, they see stress as a force which affects human beings physically, mentally, emotionally, socially and spiritually.

Occupational or work stress can be described as stress arising mainly from work and work related concerns or activities. It is also stress arising from the work environment which may be physical or chemical (Kasl, 2000). It is the harmful physical and emotional responses that occur when the capabilities, resources, or need of the worker, this concept often confused with challenges but they are not the same. Challenges energized

psychologically and physically and they motivate the people to learn new skills and master their job. Occupational stress can bring about depression, anxiety, public behaviour, poor health and even injury.

Occupational stress has special meaning in relation to the teaching profession. Teaching appears to be a very stressful job requiring an individual to stand for many hours daily alone, before a group of sometimes alienated students. It was noted that "the universities basic tasks – teaching and research are undertaken by the same individuals" (Cuthberth,1996). According to this report, research and teaching are complementary in true foundation for academic staff in the university but they are also in conflict because the time spent on teaching is not directly the time spent on research and these different tasks are both labour – intensive. The instructional goals of high quality research and teaching of tertiary institutions may lead to job-related stress. Occupational stress includes the tendency of academics to evaluate themselves negatively particularly with regards to their work with students.

Academic Staff Job Performance

Job performance is a commonly used yet poorly defined concept in industrial and organizational psychology, the branch of psychology that deals with workplace. It must generally refer to whether a person performs the job well. Campbell (1990) with his colleagues described job performance as an individual level variable. That is, performance is something a single person does.

Academic staff job performance can be viewed or assessed through these dimensions: goal consensus, empowerment, student support, affiliation, professional interest and resources adequacy and work pressures. So to increase their job performance, academics needs to be motivated and provided a stress free workplace. Staff's performance is a measurement of evaluating the academic performance of the teacher.

Adeyemo and Ogunyemi (2005) gave a justification that Academic Performance is a variable that depends on many other variables by submitting that teacher performance is a function not only of initial academic professional preparation but also the result of insight, concepts and personality traits of an individual. Performance is the output record of a specific job function or activity at a particular time. Job performance is the result of specific functions or activities of workers in a given period of time.

Bernadin and Beatly (2004) defined job functions according to the six dimensions of job performance – quality, quantity time, cost, effectiveness, high demand and interpersonal impact. This definition extends beyond the expression of a single activity or task. It is a clear however, that the interactive activities of the six dimensions will affect their result or performance. Even if a work activity is accomplished with very good quality and quantity but if you miss the best time, it may not benefit the organization.

Objectives of the Study

The central focus of the study was to investigate whether or not significant relationship existed among gender, stress and academic staff job performance in the tertiary institutions in Anambra State. The study will among other things, achieve the following objectives.

(a)   Identify the sources of stress for academic staff in tertiary institutions
(b)   Determine the influence of gender on academic staff stress and job performance with respect to publications in tertiary institutions.
(c)   Investigate the extent to which the sources of stress influence academic staff gender and job performance in tertiary institution.
(d)   Examine the influence of academic staff stress on their job performance in tertiary institutions in Anambra State.
(e)   To ascertain the measures that can be adopted for effective control of work stressors in order to enhance academic staff job performance in tertiary institution in Anambra State.
(f)   To make recommendations to the appropriate authorities based on the research findings

Hypotheses
Main Hypothesis

There is no significant relationship among gender, stress and academic staff job performance in tertiary institutions in Anambra State.

Ho_1: There is no significant relationship between gender and stress in tertiary institution in Anambra State.

Ho_2: There is no significant relationship between gender and academic staff publications in tertiary institution in Anambra State.

Ho_3: There is no significant relationship between stress and academic staff job performance in tertiary institution in Anambra State.

Ho₄: There   is   no   significant   relationship   between   gender   and   stress
management strategies in tertiary institution in Anambra State.

Methodology

The design employed for this study was basically a descriptive survey
of correlational type. The three main variables used were Gender, Stress and
academic staff job performance Gender and Stress are Independent Variables
while   Academic   Staff   Job   Performance   is   the   dependent   variable.   The
indicator used to measure gender was the sex of the academic staff (male and
female). The indicators used to measure stress included: role conflict, work
overload,   performance   pressure,   and   staff   recognition.   Furthermore,   the
indicators used to measure academic staff job performances were teaching,
publications/research.

The target population for the study consisted of the six tertiary
institution in Anambra State of Nigeria as at the time of this study. However,
only four out of the six institutions were selected. The selected institutions
were   Madonna   University,   Nnamdi   Azikiwe   University,   Saint   Paul's
University and Anambra State University. 500 participants out of 1,200
target population were selected. To secure the needed information, two
questionnaires tagged "GSQ" Gender Stress Questionnaire and "ASJPQ"
Academic Staff Job Performance Questionnaire was constructed. Also,
Academic Staff Stress Management Strategies Checklist "ASSMSC" and
finally "ASPP" Academic Staff Publication Profoma were used to collect
relevant information.

The questionnaires were divided into two sections each. The first
section "A" contained the demographic or personal data of the participants
which is to be filled by Academic Staff, the part "B" of GSO was also
administered   to   the   Academic   Staff.   ASSMSC   was   administered   to
Academic Staff and finally "ASJPQ" was filled by the Head of department.

The reliability of the Head of department was established using test-
re-test method and Pearson product moment correlation statistical analysis.
The reliability co-efficient of 0.75 and 0.63 at .05 significance level were
obtained for GSQ and ASJPQ respectively. The main hypothesis was
analyzed using multiple regression statistical method, while the Pearson
product moment correlation statistic was used to test the null hypothesis. In
all the test of the hypotheses, the 0.5 confidence level was used for
determining statistical significance.

Results

Table 1 *Sources of Stress for Academic Staff in Tertiary Institution in Anambra State*

S/N	ITEMS	FREQUENCY & %	RANK
1.	Role Conflict	375 (75%)	2
2.	Lack of recognition and reward	152 (30%)	4
3.	Performance pressure	310 (62%)	3
4.	Work overload	412 (82%)	1

Table 1 shows the responses on sources of stress for academic staff in tertiary institutions in Anambra state. Work overload was ranked the most with frequency of 412 as the major source of stress, while lack of recognition and reward ranked the least. Role conflict and performance pressure were also ranked high and popular among sources of stress for academic staff in the selected tertiary instructions in Anambra State. Attempt to cope with so many work at a time could constitute a stress thereby adversely influencing job performance at a given point in time.

Table 2 *Academic staff publications for 2007 to 2010 in Tertiary Institution in Anambra State by Gender*

S/N	INSTITUTIONS	MALE	%	FEMALE	%	TOTAL	%
1.	Madonna University	30	58	22	42	52	100
2.	Nnamdi Azikwe University	40	62	25	38	65	100
3.	Saint Paul's University	18	51	17	49	35	100
4.	Anambra State University	30	70	13	30	43	100
	Mean	**30**	**61**	**19**	**39**	**49**	**100**

Table 2 shows participants' publications in the selected tertiary institutions in Anambra State for the period of three years. The mean publications for male are 30 (61%) and that of female is 19 (39%).

Table 3 *Gender, Stress and Academic Staff Job Performance in Tertiary Institution in Anambra State*

Variables	B	Std. Error	Beta	T	R^2
Constant	-1.618	.052		-23.782	.857
Gender	.725	.071	1.472	32.301	
Stress	-.039	.006	-.183	-6.532	

From Table 3, a regression weight (B) of .725 and -.039 for gender and stress were arrived at when multiple regression analysis was used to test the independent and dependent variables. The standard error of gender and stress were .071 and .006 respectively. This is shown y the following

regression equation: $Y^1 = -1.618 - 0.039x^1 + 0.725x^2$ where Y^1 is the criterion (predicted) variable, that is, academic staff job performance, while X^1, the first predicting variable is stress and X^2, the second predicting variable is gender. It shows that in the sampled institutions in Anambra State, as shown in the study, that every unit increase in academic staff job performance would be produced by .725 units of gender and 0.39 unit decrease in stress in the institutions. Academic staff job performance can be determined by gender and stress in the institutions.

Table 4 *Gender and Stress in Tertiary Institution in Anambra State*

Variables	N	$\overline{X}$	SD	DF	Cal. r-value	Critical r-value	Decision
Gender	500	5.77	3.42				
				498	.721	.062	Ho_1 Rejected
Stress	500	7.08	5.99				

From table 4, the calculated r-value (.721) is greater than the critical r-value (.062) at.05 level of significance for 498 degree of freedom. The null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between gender and stress is rejected. This implies that a significant relationship existed between gender and stress in the sampled institutions.

Table 5 *Gender and Academic Staff Job Performance in Tertiary Institution in Anambra State*

Variables	N	$\overline{X}$	SD	DF	Cal. r- value	Cri. r-value	Decision
Gender	500	5.77	3.42				
				498	.618	.062	Ho_2 Rejected
Academic staff job performance	500	6.68	4.05				

Table 5 shows that the calculated r-value (.618) is greater than the critical r-value (.062) at.05 level of significance for 498 degree of freedom. Hence, the null hypothesis formulated is rejected. This means that a significant relationship exists between gender and academic staff job performance in tertiary institutions in Anambra State.

Table 6 *Stress and Academic Staff Job Performance in Tertiary Institution in Anambra State*

Variables	N	$\overline{X}$	SD	DF	Cal. r- value	Cri. r-value	Decision
Stress	500	7.08	5.99				
Academic staff job performance	500	6.68	4.05	498	.553	.062	Ho₃ Rejected

The results in table 6 show that the calculated r-value (.553) is greater than the critical r-value (.062) at.05 level of significance for 498 degree of freedom.

Table 7 *Gender and Stress Management Strategies (SMS) in Tertiary Institution in Anambra State*

Variables	N	$\overline{X}$	SD	DF	Cal. r- value	Cri. r-value	Decision
Gender	500	5.77	3.42				
SMS	500	4.11	2.61	498	.812	.062	Ho₄ Rejected

Table 7 shows that calculated r-value (.812) is greater than the critical r-value (.062) at .05 level of significance for 498 degree of freedom. The null hypothesis formulated is, therefore, rejected. This shows that a significant relationship exists between gender and stress management strategies in tertiary institutions in Anambra State.

Discussion of Findings

The study revealed that work overload was ranked the most with frequency of 412 as the major source of stress, while lack of recognition and reward ranked the least. Role conflict and performance pressure were also ranked high and popular among sources of stress for academic staff in the selected tertiary instructions in Anambra State. Attempt to cope with so many work at a time could constitute a stress thereby adversely influencing job performance at a given point in time.

It further shows that male lecturers had more publications than the female lectures. Furthermore, Nnamali Azikwe University had the highest lectures publication while under consideration. Madona University had 52

publications, while sent parts University had the least publications with 35. Publications are essential in lectures job in the universities. In fact, promotions are based on number of publications in reputable journals across the globe at any point in time. Lectures with adequate publications in reputable journals are very versatile in their area of specializations thereby enhancing students learning outcomes in the universities. Job performance is a viable that depends on the result of insight concepts and personality traits of an individual (Adaralegbe, 2001). Men seem to be more agile than women which often positively influence their productivity. Furthermore, Taylor (2004) declared that when faced with the same stress, women reactions are different from men, which accounts for differences in their longevity and health..

Finding of the study also indicates that the variance in academic staff job performance was as a result of gender and stress. This implies that gender and stress could explain the variability in academic staff job performance in tertiary institutions in Anambra State. Ability of an individual to cope effectively with stress depends on his/her gender which can be felt through accomplishment of a given task. Male lecturers are easily adjustable to stress then their female counter parts (Taylor, 2004). Stress can adversely influence the accomplishment of a given task within an organization, except it is adequately managed.

The null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between gender and stress is likewise rejected. This implies that a significant relationship existed between gender and stress. Gender refers to the role and responsibilities of men and women that are created in the various families, societies and cultures which can be influenced by stress. Vorvick (2010) declared that stress is something that can come from any situation or thought that makes one feel frustrated, anxious or angry that its management cannot be isolated from gender. Due to so many commitments by the female lecturers in terms of home and office work, stress serves as hindrance to accomplishment of certain goals and objectives. According to Wood and Eagly (2002) management of stress can be traced to the sex of the party involved. Gender differences may depend on the type of stressors.

The study shows that a significant relationship exists between gender and academic staff job performance in tertiary institutions in Anambra State. What constitutes the job performance of each staff in the institution is the total task assigned based on gender. The dimensions of measuring academic

staff effectiveness include teaching, research and publications and community service. Lecturers are often used as resource persons within the university environment. This finding disagrees with Jeremy (2005) that gender has no significant relationship with academic staff job performance.

Finding from the study also indicates that a significant relationship exists between stress and academic staff job performance in the sampled institutions. One must assume that degree of stress is a function of the number and mix of academic events. Consequently, it is cumbersome to determine exactly what factors will in what combination result in a high level of stress for a particular worker. Factors reported by academics as being troublesome or stressful in their work include performance pressure heavy workloads and frustration (Pethegrew and Wolfe, 2002).

Fisher (2004) noted that people who experienced stressful work problems were less efficient, depressed, angry as well as exhibited anxiety and phobic behaviours. Lecturers' loss of interest on job is one effect of stress and this often leads to low job performance and low productivity. A lecturer who is highly stressed will not do much or achieve much, thereby relegating the objective of the institution to the background.

It is worth noting that a significant relationship exists between gender and stress management strategies in sampled institutions. Organizational factors of educational institutions might be the contributing factors to teaching job-related stress in which its management would have less effect on job performance. Strategy adopted in managing Internal State of Psychological and emotional and physiological tension or imbalance is based on gender. Kreiner (2010) submitted that stress is a dynamic condition in which an individual is confronted with an opportunity constraints of demand related to what he/ she desires for which the outcome is perceived to be both certain and uncertain. The management strategy used could reduce its negative influence on activities to be carried out. Women are more likely to report physical systems associated with stress.

Conclusion

From the findings of the study, the following conclusions were drawn. Job stress poses a threat to physical health. Work related stress in the life of academic staff, consequently affects the health of organizations. This, therefore, accounted for the significant relationship which existed among gender, stress and lecturers job performance in the tertiary institutions in

Anambra State. The study revealed that job stress is a chronic disease caused by conditions in the workplace that negatively affects a lecturer's performance in teaching, research and publications and community service and/or overall well-being of his/her body and mind. The study equally established that stressors such as insufficient funding and resources, insufficient recognition and reward, job insecurity, poor management practice and work overload had great negative influence on academic staff performance. Thus, efficient and effective management of stress would enhance academic staff productivity.

Recommendations
      Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made.

i.   The workload of the lecturers should be reduced to the barest minimum. Lecturers perform better when they are assigned the work they can cope with at a given point in time.

ii.   University's management should encourage the lecturers to increase the number of their publications ensuring that the environment is made conducive.

iii.   Planning should be taken holistically by academic staff so that they would not be overwhelmed with so many works at the same time.

iv.   Job should be assigned to academic staff based on work experience and age which would enable them to cope with stress that may arise from the work environment.

v.   Gender should be considered when assigning roles and functions to lecturers in the University in order to achieve expected results. Female lecturers tend to perform better when given job related to home chores in the university.

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