

Original Research Article

Occupational Stress as Determinant of Job Productivity of Nurse Educators in the Universities, Plateau State Nigeria

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Abstract

The study investigated occupational stress as determinant of nurse educators' job productivity in the universities, Plateau State Nigeria. The objectives were to ascertain the level of occupational stress and job productivity; and examine role stress, interpersonal relationship stress, and organizational style stress as predictors of job productivity. Two research questions and three hypotheses formulated to guide the study. Correlational research design was employed for the study. Eighteen (18) out of twenty (20) nurse educators consented to participate in the study. Data were collected at baseline using Nurse Educators Occupational Stress Scale (NEOSS, Cronbach's alpha = .83) and Nurse Educators Job Productivity Rating Scale (NEJPRS, Cronbach's alpha = .77). Content and constructs validity were established for the instruments. Analysis was done using descriptive statistics and simple linear regression. Results from the baseline data showed that nurse educators indicated high occupational stress and low job productivity. More so, occupational stress (role stress, interpersonal relationship stress, and organizational style stress) negatively predict job productivity. The study concluded that occupational stress is a good determinant of job productivity. It was recommended that stakeholders should always organize workshop for nurse educators on occupational stress and job productivity. Whereas, nurse educators should endeavour to attain such workshops and conferences for job productivity efficiency.

Keywords: Occupational Stress, Role Stress, Interpersonal Relationship Stress, Organizational Style Stress, Job productivity, and Nurse Educators

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INTRODUCTION

Quality nurse education is determine by the job productivity of educators. Job productivity is a performance measure encompassing both efficiency and effectiveness of workers. It is the state of achieving institutional goals and objectives by transforming inputs such as human, financial and material resources into outputs such as competent service delivery (Bhatti and Qureshi, 2007; Robbins and Judge, 2011). Job productivity in nursing education is one of the significant measures of the academic success of any nursing institution and a measure of job performance amidst other factors. It is the measure of competency of nurse educators teaching in nursing institutions. However, job

productivity has suffered from different factors such as high level of neglect (Gerhart and Milkovich, 2010), lack of adequate skills and knowledge, which are acquired through training and manpower development that brings about increase in absenteeism rate, low output, poor quality and results (Adeniji, 2013). Occupational stress which may also be another determinant factor of job productivity of nurse educators, has been given little or no attention in recent times.

Occupational stress is regarded as the perception of a discrepancy between environmental demands otherwise known as stressors and individual capacities to fulfill these demands in the job (Topper, 2007). Where there is

too much work demand from nurse educators by the school management, the final outcome may be stress accumulation, resulting to lower job productivity. In addition, occupational stress is perceived when the requirements of a job do not match the resources, capabilities and needs of the worker attributing to harmful physical and emotional responses (Safarpour et al., 2018). Where nurse educators' job experiences, abilities, energies, time, and resources did not balance their work expectation, low job productivity may emanate. Occupational stress increase absenteeism, attrition rate, injury claims, infection rates, errors in treating patient, reduced productivity, and health care resources (Faremi et al., 2019; Hanson et al., 2017). Whereas, increased staff conflicts, recruitment and retention problems, burnout, absenteeism, litigation and rapid turn-over, and inadequate job satisfaction are function of low job productivity (Labrague et al., 2016).

If an organization's employees (such as nurse educators) are under stressed, factors such as job productivity, job satisfaction, and staff retention may also suffer (Jepson and Forrest, 2006). This may lead to depreciation in nurse educators' morale and commitment, and as well adding further financial difficulties to the nursing institutions. These occupational stressors could be internal or external, and include: factors unique to the job (job condition), role management in the organization, career development, interpersonal work relationships, organizational style, working conditions, and home-work interface or conflict. However, the present study focused on role stress, interpersonal relationship stress and organizational style stress as determinants of job productivity.

Role stress occurs when a worker is required to perform a role that conflicts with their values or when they are torn between incompatible job demands. Role stress can include role overload, role ambiguity, sex bias and sex-role stereotypes, and role responsibility. Conflicting or uncertain job expectations, too much responsibility, too many "hats to wear" are also role stressors (Narban et al., 2016). Interpersonal relationship stress refer to stress experience by an employee as a result of different existing opinions and conflicts between individuals and others in the organization (Gittleman et al., 2010). Stressors from interpersonal relationships include poor social environment, lack of support or help from co-workers and supervisors (Narban et al., 2016), poor work and social support systems, lack of management concern for the worker, political rivalry, jealousy, and anger among many.

More so, organizational style stress is that which developed as a result of rigid and impersonal organizational structures, organizational politics, inadequate supervision or training and non-participation of workers in decision making. Organizational style stressors may include rigid staff rules and regulations, poor reward systems, lack of freedom, clear career path,

lack of gains (such as rewards, support and career opportunities) from management (Ogundela, 2005; Wang et al., 2017). Montano, Hoven and Siegrist (2014) identified variety of processes and procedures required to accomplish work tasks (such as methods of work, order of tasks, team organization, structure of hierarchy, security guidelines training) as part of organizational structure that influence stress. From the descriptions of occupational stress factors, role stress, interpersonal stress, and organizational style stress may negatively predict job productivity of nurse educators in the universities.

Empirical review of previous studies on occupational stress and job productivity unveiled gaps to be addressed in this study. For instance, Nabirye (2010) investigated occupational stress, job satisfaction, and job performance among hospital nurses in Kampala Uganda. Findings demonstrated that there were significant differences in levels of occupational stress, job satisfaction and job performance between nurses in public and private nonprofit hospitals. Similarly, Qureshi, Iftikhar, Abbas, Hassan, Khan and Zaman (2013) carried out study on relationship between job stress, workload, environment and employees turnover intentions. Results demonstrated significant effects of job stress on turn over intention. In Nigeria, Ojo, Ogunleye and Olatunji (2014) assessed the impact of job stress on job performance among workers of Nigeria Security and Civil Defense Corps. The results indicated that job stress positively influenced job performance. All the findings from the reviewed studies tend to suggest significant influence of occupational stress on job productivity of employees.

In subsequent review, Usoro and Etuk (2016) explored workload related stress and job effectiveness of University lecturers in Cross River and Akwa Ibom States, Nigeria. The results showed that, workload related stress significantly influence the job effectiveness of lecturers in terms of publication, community service and teaching effectiveness. Safarpour, Sabzevari, and Delpisheha (2018) assess occupational stress, job satisfaction and job performance and how they are influenced by personal and work characteristics among hospital nurses in Ilam, Iran in 2013. Findings indicated that the mean of occupational stress and job satisfaction of nurses was moderate and the mean job performance was at a high level. There was a significant relationship between occupational stress and job satisfaction and also occupational stress and job performance. The reviewed studies of Usoro and Etuk (2016), Safarpour, et al. (2018) revealed much emphasis on occupational stress as correlate of job satisfaction and effectiveness, but no attention was placed on the components of occupational stress as determinants of job productivity.

Further reviewed on effects of cognitive behavioral therapy on job productivity of health personnel with insomnia in Bingham University teaching hospital, revealed that CBT significantly influence job productivity

(Chinazor et al., 2019). Moreover, Faremi et al. (2019) assessed occupational related stress among nurses in two selected hospitals in a city southwestern Nigeria. Result showed that frequently stressful aspect of nurses' work includes; inadequate staff to cover ward workload, performing procedures that patients experience as painful, and lack of drugs and equipment required for nursing care. Generally, the reviewed studies focused on job stress, job performance, satisfaction, or turnover of employees as key variables. This showed dearth of empirical studies on occupational stress as determinant of job productivity of nurse educators in the universities. Thus, the need for the present study.

Theoretical Framework

This study is pinned to Person-Environment fit (PE-Fit) theory propounded by French and Kahn in 1962. According to the principles of the theory, stress and strain at job come into action when the individual interacts with the environment. This applies that nurse educators who work under unfriendly or distress environment characterized by high workload, high job demand, poor management policy, hostile relationship, and too much work responsibilities may experience role stress, interpersonal relationship stress, and organizational style stress, thereby leading to low job productivity.

Aim and Objectives

This study examined occupational stress as determinant of job productivity of nurse educators in the universities, Plateau State Nigeria. The specific objectives are to:

1. Determine the level of occupational stress of nurse educators at baseline;
2. Ascertain the level of job productivity of nurse educators at baseline; and
3. Determine the extent occupational stress (role, interpersonal relationship, and organizational style stress) significantly predict job productivity of nurse educators.

Research Questions

The following research questions are raised and answered in the course of the study:

1. What is the level of occupational stress of nurse educators at baseline?
2. What is the level of job productivity of nurse educators at baseline?

Hypotheses

The flowing null hypotheses are formulated and tested at

0.05 level of significance:

1. Role stress will not significantly predict job productivity of nurse educators in the universities.
2. Interpersonal relationship stress will not significantly predict job productivity of nurse educators in the universities.
3. Organizational style stress will not significantly predict job productivity of nurse educators in the universities.

MATERIALS AND METHOD

Research Design

Descriptive correlational design was employed for the study. This design describes the variables and examines the degree of relationship that exists between two or more variables in order to make prediction (Shaughnessy et al., 2011). In the current study, the authors assessed the level of occupational stress (role, interpersonal relationship, and organizational style stress), and then correlated with/ regressed on job productivity to ascertain both the strength of relationships (coefficients) and predictive power of occupational stress components on job productivity.

Participants

The population for the study comprised of all the 20 (male = 16, female = 4) Nurse Educators from the University of Jos. All the eighteen (18) nurse educators whose consents obtained constituted the sample of the study. Purposive sampling method was used to obtain nurse educators from the Department of Nursing Science, Faculty of Medical sciences, based on homogeneity reason. Inclusion criteria include: all participants (clinical instructors and academic staff) who gave informed consent to participate in the study were those recruited for the study.

Research Instruments

The instruments used for collecting data was questionnaire titled "Nurse Educators' Occupational Stress Scale (NEOSS)" adapted from Occupational Stress Indicator (Wu et al., 2018) and "Nurse Educators Job Productivity Rating Scale (NEJPRS)" adapted from Clinical Teaching Competence Inventory for Clinical Nursing Preceptors in Taiwan (Hsu et al., 2014). The NEOSS was designed to measure occupational stress. It is structured into sections A and B. Section A elicited information from the nurse educators' demographic variables such as gender. Section B consisted of twenty-two (22) items measuring three different components of

occupational stress (role, interpersonal relationship, and organizational style stress). Thus, sample of items include, "I do not know much about my job responsibility"; "Poor communication from management makes me stressful"; "Conflict with colleagues at work is a source of stress to me". Participants indicated the extent of their agreement about the statement by ticking the appropriate column on a scale as: 5 = Strongly agree (SA), 4 = Agree (A), 3 = Undecided (UD), 2 = Disagree (D), 1 = Strongly disagree (SD).

More so, the NEJPRS also has two sections. Section A assessed demographic data while section B measured job productivity competence (students evaluation and individual teaching. Sample of items include "I give students grades that truly reflect their efforts and performance"; I set performance standard for individual student and adjusting teaching practice where necessary"; "I set goals and objectives based on students' expectations and levels of experience".

Participants rated themselves, as well as students and supervisors also required to rate each nurse educator job competency using Likert scale as: 5= Extremely Competent (EC), 4 = Very Competent (VC), 3 = Moderately Competent (MC), 2 = Less Competent (LC), 1 = Not Competent (NC).

Content validity of the instruments was determined by experts from Educational Foundations Department, specifically, Psychology, and Research, Measurement and Evaluation units, University of Jos. Construct validity was carried out using Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA). Results of NEOSS established three (3) components (communalities extractions ranges from .627 to .971) accounted for 84.51% total variance. Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients yielded 0.83. Results of NEJPRS indicated two (2) factors extracted (communalities extractions ranges from .482 to .910) thereby explaining 76.41% total variance. Cronbach's alpha reliability test yielded reliability coefficient of 0.77.

Procedure

The researchers first identified and made contacts with the participants through consent letter for ethical ground. An introductory letter from the Department of Educational Foundations, university of Jos was presented to the school authority to use the educators and part of school facilities. The approval was obtained before embarking on the study. Baseline data were obtained using face to face method of administration. Two students were also asked to blindly rate the productivity of NEs by issuing NEJPRS to them. Participants were guided and encouraged to complete the questionnaire independently on reading the introductory letter and instructions. They were instructed to complete the questionnaire within 40 minutes and return directly to either the researcher or research assistant. The time and efforts of the

participants and research assistants were later appreciated. The responses of the participants were being assured of and treated with utmost confidentiality.

Methods of Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation) were used to ascertain the level of occupational stress and job productivity. Simple linear regression analysis was used to test the hypotheses. This statistical method allows a single explanatory or criterion variable to be examined on a dependent variable (Tarafdar and Gordon, 2010).

RESULTS

Results are presented in tune with research questions and hypotheses:

As seen in table 1, baseline data showed that nurse educators had high role stress, interpersonal relationship stress, organizational style stress, and overall occupational stress (mean > 3.0).

Table 2 indicated that nurse educators had low job productivity (students' evaluation, and individual teaching) at baseline (mean < 3.0).

Table 3 showed that role stress is moderately related to job productivity ($\beta = -0.507$, $t = 3.793$, $p < 0.05$). Significant linear relationship existed between the variables [$F(17) = 2.629$, $p < .05$]. This fails to support our hypothesis that role stress will not significantly predict job productivity of nurse educators. Generally, role stress contributed 44.3% variance in job productivity with standard error = .382. It concludes that job productivity will decrease by approximately .303 units of role stress. This implies that role stress tends to reduce job productivity of nurse educators in the universities.

Table 4 indicated that interpersonal relationship stress also moderately predict job productivity ($\beta = 0.444$, $t = 2.854$, $p < .05$). The existing linear relationship between the variable was significant [$F(17) = 2.854$, $p < .05$]. Therefore, the hypothesis that interpersonal relationship stress does not significantly predict job productivity is rejected. Interpersonal relationship stress accounted for 39.7% transformation in job productivity with standard error = .358. More so, job productivity will decrease by approximately .664 units of interpersonal relationship stress. This suggests that job productivity of nurse educators in the universities will improve when interpersonal relationship stress reduced.

Table 5 reported that organizational style stress moderately predict job productivity ($\beta = 0.547$, $t = 3.952$, $p < 0.05$). The significant linear relationship established between the variables [$F(17) = 2.907$, $p < .05$]. Thus, the result did not support our null hypothesis that organizational style stress will not predicts job productivity significantly. Organizational style stress was

Table 1. Level of Occupational Stress at Baseline

Stress component	Mean	SD	Remark
Role stress	3.89	.55	High
Interpersonal relationship stress	3.29	.69	High
Organizational style stress	3.10	.66	High
Overall occupational stress	3.43	.63	High

Note: N= 18. Mean greater than/equal to 3.0 = High; less than 3.0 = low stress on 5-point scale.

Table 2. Level of Job Productivity at Baseline

Variable	Mean	SD	Remark
Students evaluation	2.12	.43	Low
Individual teaching	2.07	.51	Low
Overall job productivity	2.10	.47	Low

Note: N= 18. Mean greater than/equal to 3.0 = High; less than 3.0 = low stress on 5-point scale.

Table 3. Linear Regression of Role Stress on Job Productivity

Model 1/ Source	B	S.E	Beta	t	p	R ²	F	p
(Constant)	45.218	13.484		3.354	.000	.507	2.629	.000
Role stress	-.303	.382	.507	3.793	.000			

Note: Dependent Variable: Job Productivity. **S.E** = standard error. Degree of freedom = 17

Table 4. Linear Regression of Interpersonal Relationship Stress on Job Productivity

Model 1/ Source	B	S.E	Beta	t	p	R ²	F	p
(Constant)	40.510	8.424		4.809	.000	.397	3.437	.005
Interpersonal Relationship stress	-.664	.358	.444	2.854			.005	

Note: Dependent Variable: Job productivity. **S.E** = standard error. Degree of freedom = 17

Table 5. Linear Regression of Organizational Style Stress on Job Productivity

Model 1/ Source	B	S.E	Beta	t	p	R ²	F	p
(Constant)	47.376	9.044		5.238	.000	.461	2.907	.000
Organizational Style Stress	-.453	.476	.547	3.952	.000			

Note: Dependent Variable: Job productivity. **S.E** = standard error. Degree of freedom = 17

responsible for 46.1% change in job productivity with standard error = .476. More so, job productivity increased by decrease in .453 units of organizational style stress. This implies that organizational style can reduce job productivity of nurse educators in the universities.

DISCUSSION

The study investigated occupational stress as determinant of job productivity of nurse educators in the universities, Plateau state Nigeria. Baseline information revealed that nurse educators have high occupational

stress, specifically, role stress, interpersonal relationship stress, and organizational style stress. This may be compounded by the nature of job nurse educators are exposed to. Previous studies coincided that teachers of primary education experience higher levels of stress in their job (Antoniou et al., 2013; Yusuf et al., 2015). Nurse educators unlike other lecturers in the university carry out both classroom activities, clinical teaching, as well as teaching practice supervision in addition to record management. Doing all these activities and many more at a moment amounting to heavy workload, and eventually stress accumulation.

Another finding indicated that nurse educators have

low job productivity in terms of students' evaluation, and individual teaching. Little competences about students' assessment and teaching effectiveness was reported by nurse educators themselves, their students, and supervisors. Although, other factors could be responsible, present finding suggested that most of the influence can be attributed to occupational stress. Yusuf, Olufunke, and Valentine (2015) investigated causes and impact of stress on teachers' productivity found low productivity by due to stress. Contrastingly, Gharib, Jamil, Ahmed, and Ghouse (2016) found high job performance among employees despite high stress level.

More so, role stress was found to be moderately related to job productivity. Role stress highly accounted to changes in job productivity. It is highly possible that educators who do not have a detailed written description of job responsibility; experiencing conflicting job requirements from superiors; being assigned to different positions at the same time; performing tasks without resources to complete; often have a tight time deadlines for assignment; doing task that they never been trained; and the pressure from student may have low job productivity than those who don't have such encounter. Previous finding almost corroborate that workload has a positive statistical effect on job performance, while role conflict has negative statistical effect (Gharib et al., 2016).

Interpersonal relationship stress was also reported as significant predictor of job productivity. Findings portrayed that high interpersonal relationship stress tends to lower job productivity of nurse educators. This outcome is traceable to the reports by nurse educators about experience of conflict with colleagues at work; lack of support from colleagues; uncooperative students' behaviour; little misunderstanding with superior; and dealing with many students during the day among many. It explains that educators with high interpersonal relationship stress will be less productive on the job. Almost in line, Usoro and Etuk (2016) explored workload related stress and job effectiveness of University lecturers. Results showed that, related stress from other people significantly influence job effectiveness.

Moreover, organizational style stress was a negative predictor of job productivity. Organizational style stress tends to reduce job productivity among nurse educators. This alights that lower job productivity is common among nurse educators who experienced poor communication from management; unwilling attitudes of the management to solve their job problems; unhealthy school politics; rigid nature of the school policies; as well as lack of opportunity for decision making, than educators who do not had such experiences. This finding is consistent with Ojo, Ogunleye and Olatunji (2014) that assessed the impact of job stress on job performance among workers of Nigeria Security and Civil Defense Corps. The result indicated that stress from administration and rigid

policy influenced job performance.

CONCLUSION

Job productivity of nurse educators has found to be influenced by number of factors. The current study focused on occupational stress as one of the forces and concluded that occupational stress is a good determinant of job productivity. Specifically, role stress, interpersonal relationship stress, and organizational style stress predict job productivity measured in terms of students' evaluation and individual teaching among nurse educators. In summary, occupational stress lower job productivity of nurse educators. However, it implies that the less occupational stress among nurse educators, the higher the job productivity.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations are made based on the findings of the current study:

1. Low occupational stress can be improved through stress management such as reduction of workload and conflict, effective communication and interpersonal relationship, as well as clear organizational style structure which encourage decision making, healthy school, politics, staff autonomy, and positive management attitudes towards employee.
2. Apart from enhancing job productivity through reducing occupational stress, there should be complementary factors like staff motivation and development by school authorities and government to further heighten job productivity among the nurse educators.
3. Since less role stress, interpersonal relationship stress, and organizational style increase job productivity, school authorities should be checking levels of occupational stress and job productivity of nurse educators from time to time, apply interventions or use related stress reduction programmes that have evidence of efficacy on stress reduction and job productivity enhancement.

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