

Causes and Impact of Stress on Teachers' Productivity as Expressed by Primary School Teachers in Nigeria

Florence Adeoti Yusuf¹, Yinusa Rasheedat Olufunke¹, Metu David Valentine²

¹Department of Arts and Social Science Education, Osun State University, College of Education, Ipetu-Ijesa, Nigeria

²Department of Science, Technology and Mathematics Education, Osun State University, College of Education, Ipetu-Ijesa, Nigeria

Email: olasokoadeoti@yahoo.com, yrasheeday@yahoo.com, davidmetu@outlook.com

Received 13 September 2015; accepted 26 October 2015; published 29 October 2015

Copyright © 2015 by authors and Scientific Research Publishing Inc.

This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution International License (CC BY).

<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by/4.0/>



Open Access

Abstract

The study investigated the causes and impact of stress on Teachers' productivity as expressed by primary school teachers in Nigeria. A total 300 primary school teachers were randomly selected to form participants for the study. Four research questions formulated were directed towards issues investigated. A validated Instrument titled "Causes and Impact of Stress on Teachers Productivity Questionnaire" was administered to the participants. The survey research type was employed. Data collected were subjected to percentage analysis of variance and t-test analysis. The result revealed that majority of primary school teachers were stressed on the job and this had negative impacts on their productivity. The study revealed that lack of job satisfaction, inadequate school facilities, were major causes of stress among primary school teachers. The study also revealed that stress had negative impacts on teachers' productivity. The study recommended the need for government to improve teachers' conditions of service; teachers special salary scale to be implemented by government; adequate facilities should be provided in schools; establishment of counselling unit in schools to cater for both teachers and students. If the predisposing factors for stress are left unattended to, resultant consequences can have substantial effects on teachers' productivity.

Keywords

Causes, Impact, Stress, Teachers Productivity

1. Introduction

Stress is a psychological and physiological reaction to situation that affects individual total well being. Selye (1978) defined stress as any external events or internal drive which threatened to upset the organism equilibrium. While, Kyriacou & Sutcliffe (1978) defined teacher stress as a response to negative effect such as anger or depression by a teacher, usually accompanied by potentially pathogenic, physiological and biochemical changes resulting from the aspects of the teacher's job and mediated by the perception that the demands made upon the teacher constituted a threat to his or her self-esteem or well being and by coping mechanisms activated to reduce the perceived threat.

Nowadays, many challenges faced by individual in life can produce stress. Stress has become a common issue that almost everyone has to cope with especially those who engage in intellectual activities such as teaching profession.

Teaching as a profession is a demanding job that requires highly intellectual activities however, there are various intellectual symptoms of stress that can affect people in the profession, these includes memory problem, confusion, poor judgment, lack of concentration, while the emotional symptoms can be anger, irritation, moody, and depression, all of these can have negative adverse effects on the teachers' functionality (Morgan & Kitching, 2007).

According to Hock & Roger (1996), the degree of stress which teachers experience is positively related to the degree which he/she perceives as a lack of control over a potentially threatening situation. Kyriacou & Chien (2004) found that 26 percent of the teachers reported that being a teacher was very or extremely stressful. According to Kyriacou, Kunc, Stephens, & Hultgreen (2003), higher levels of dissatisfaction with work and occupational stress have been associated with teacher performance, absenteeism and leaving the job.

Kyriacou (2001) listed the main sources of stress faced by teachers as teaching pupils who lacked motivation, maintenance of discipline, time pressures and workload, coping with changes, being evaluated by others, dealing with colleagues, self-esteem and status, administration and management, role conflict and ambiguity and poor working conditions and these could also affect teachers' productivity as earlier research work had shown.

The study conducted by Ololube (2005) assessed the relationship between the level of teachers' job satisfaction, motivation and their teaching performance in Rivers State, Nigeria. The results of the survey revealed that teachers' dissatisfaction was associated with educational policies, administration, pay and fringe benefits, material rewards and advancement. Also, Lee (2006) found that the job satisfaction of Primary school teachers in Cambodia was closely associated with salary level and welfare conditions.

2. Statement of the Problem

In recent times, there has been an enormous increase in research into job stress. Studies have shown that stress is the cause of a number of physical and psychiatric ailments (House, 2007; Copper, 2004). Stress has been proven to hinder effectiveness at work and can lead to low performance and productivity especially in teachers, job dissatisfaction, poor motivation, absenteeism and turnover (Copper, 2002). Teachers are often exposed to high level of stress as reported by Reglin & Reitzammer (2008).

Arising from the foregoing, this paper examines the causes and impacts of stress on teachers' productivity as expressed by Primary School Teachers in Osun State.

3. Research Questions

Two research questions were raised to guide the study, these are:

- 1) What are the causes of stress among teachers as expressed by primary school teachers?
- 2) What are the Impacts of Stress on teachers' productivity as expressed by primary school teachers?

3.1. Hypotheses

Two hypotheses were stated and tested:

- 1) There is no significant difference in the expression of primary school teachers on the causes of stress among teachers on the basis of gender;
- 2) There is no significant difference in the expression of primary school teachers on the impact of stress among teachers on the basis of gender.

3.2. Research Design

The research design adopted for this research study is the descriptive survey method which tries to collect information from a representative group and based on such sample, inferences are drawn about the opinion of the entire population. The researchers therefore, adopted descriptive survey research method and used questionnaire to determine the opinions of the respondents.

3.3. Population

The target population for the study comprises of primary school teachers in Osun State. The state is made up of 30 Local Government Areas.

3.4. Sample and Sampling Technique

Ten Local Government Areas were randomly selected for the study; Cluster random sampling was used in selecting 600 primary school teachers from the six Local Government Areas; teachers were stratified on the basis of gender.

3.5. Instrument

The instrument used for data collection is a researcher-constructed questionnaire titled: "Causes and Impact of Stress on Teachers' Productivity Questionnaire" (CISTPQ). The questionnaire contains 25 items designed to find out expression of primary school teachers on the causes and impacts of stress on teachers' productivity. The questionnaire is divided into three sections: section A requires the respondents' background information of gender, qualification and length of years of service. Section B consists of 15 items, on causes of stress among teachers, while, section C consists of 10 items on impacts of stress on teachers' productivity. Respondents were required to indicate their preference on a 4-point Likert type scale, viz: strongly agree, agree, disagree and strongly disagree.

3.6. Validity of the Instrument

The content validity of the measuring instrument was determined by giving the questionnaire to a panel of five experts in the field of Education. The experts made corrections and suggestions which were taken into consideration while producing the final draft of the questionnaire. The general consensus of the experts was that the instrument measures what it purports to measure and was therefore adjudged adequate for the study.

3.7. Reliability of the Instrument

Reliability of the instrument (CISTPQ) was established using a test re-test method of reliability before it was adopted. The instrument was administered twice with an interval of three weeks to the same respondents. The two sets of scores were correlated using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Co-efficient. A coefficient value of 0.75 was obtained. This value was adjudged high enough for the instrument usability.

3.8. Method of Data Analysis

In analyzing the data collected for this study, both descriptive and inferential statistical analyses were employed. That is, frequency counts, percentages were used and t-test statistical tool was used to analyze the data collected.

Research Question 1: What are the causes of stress among teachers as expressed by primary school teachers?

Table 1 shows that 96% of the primary school teachers agreed that lack of job satisfaction is the major cause of stress among teachers, the table also revealed that 88% agreed that delay in payment of salary is another major cause of stress among teachers, while 86% of respondents agreed that inadequate school facilities is the major cause of stress among the teachers.

Research Question 2: What is the Impact of Stress on teachers' productivity as expressed by primary school teachers?

Table 2 revealed that 92% of the respondents agreed that lack of commitment to work is one of the major impacts of stress on Teachers' productivity. While 90% of the respondents agreed that transferring of aggression

Table 1. Causes of stress among teachers.

S/N	CAUSES OF STRESS	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	S.D
1.	Indiscipline among students	14 14%	34 34%	35 35%	17 17%	2.450	0.936
2.	Parents bad attitude to education	20 20%	27 27%	36 36%	17 17%	2.500	10.000
3.	Bad leadership style	22 22%	33 33%	37 37%	8 8%	2.690	0.907
4.	Overcrowded Classrooms	32 32%	46 46%	13 13%	9 9%	3.010	0.905
5.	Students' poor assimilation	26 26%	55 55%	14 14%	5 5%	3.020	0.778
6.	Poor study habits	39 39%	38 38%	14 14%	9 9%	3.070	0.946
7.	Students' poor academic performance	37 37%	41 41%	15 15%	7 7%	3.080	0.895
8.	School distance to home	35 35%	43 43%	19 19%	3 3%	3.100	0.810
9.	Unstable family	37 37%	52 52%	7 7%	4 4%	3.220	0.746
10.	Inadequacy of instructional materials	41 41%	49 49%	6 6%	4 4%	3.270	0.750
11.	Inadequate school facilities	46 46%	40 40%	10 10%	4 4%	3.280	0.805
12.	Poor remuneration	47 47%	39 39%	11 11%	3 3%	3.300	0.785
13.	Delay in payment of salary	49 49%	39 39%	6 6%	6 6%	3.310	0.837
14.	Poor school infrastructure	46 46%	43 43%	8 8%	3 3%	3.320	0.750
15.	Lack of job satisfaction	58 58%	38 38%	4 4%	- -	3.540	0.576

Table 2. Impact of stress on teachers' productivity.

S/N	IMPACT OF STRESS	SA	A	D	SD	Mean	S.D
1.	Embarking on industrial action (sifting strike)	19 38%	25 50%	4 8%	2 4%	3.220	0.764
2.	Poor attitude to work	24 48%	19 38%	7 14%	- -	3.340	0.717
3.	Transferring of aggression to students	20 40%	25 50%	5 10%	- -	3.300	0.647
4.	Having high blood pressure	21 42%	22 44%	5 10%	2 4%	3.240	0.797
5.	Distraction at work	22 40%	28 49%	- 11%	- -	3.290	0.645
6.	Staying out of work	25 50%	17 34%	6 12%	2 4%	3.300	0.839
7.	Frequently taken excuse from duty	23 46%	17 34%	6 12%	4 8%	3.180	0.941
8.	Ineffective teaching	23 46%	18 36%	7 14%	2 4%	3.240	0.847
9.	Lack of commitment to work	21 42%	25 50%	2 4%	2 4%	3.300	0.735
10.	Not attending to students' needs	29 58%	18 36%	1 2%	2 4%	3.480	0.735

to students is one of the major impacts of stress on Teachers' productivity, 89% of the respondents agreed that distraction at work is also one of the major impact of stress on teachers productivity.

Hypotheses 1: There is no significant difference in the expression of primary school teachers on the causes of stress among teachers on the basis of gender.

Table 3 shows that there is no significant difference on the expression of male and female primary school teachers on the causes of stress among teachers. This implies that expression of primary school teachers on the causes of stress among primary school teachers are not differing based on gender.

Hypotheses 2: There is no significant difference in the expression of primary school teachers on the impact of stress among teachers on the basis of gender.

Table 4 shows that there is no significant difference on the expression of male and female primary school teachers on the impact of stress on teachers' productivity.

4. Discussion

This study was primarily undertaken to investigate the causes and impact of stress on teachers' productivity in order to proffer quick intervention strategies that would help the teachers' to live stress free life. Analysis of the items in the questionnaire revealed the causes and impact of stress on teachers' productivity.

The findings on **Table 1** show the primary school teachers expressed lack of job satisfaction as one of the major causes of stress among teachers because the items with highest agreement leading include item 1 which sought to know if lack of job satisfaction can stimulate stress among teachers. The item has the highest mean of 3.540 which means that primary schools teachers expressed lack of job satisfaction to be major causes of stress among teachers. This is in line with findings of [Ololube \(2005\)](#) that teachers' dissatisfaction was associated with educational policies, administration, pay and fringe benefits, material rewards and advancement.

Items 13 stated that stress among teachers can be caused by delay in payment of salary, this item has mean of 3.310, and this means that primary school teachers expressed delay in payment of salary to be major causes of stress among teachers. This is in line with previous study of [Lee \(2006\)](#) which says job satisfaction of primary school teachers is closely associated with salary level and welfare conditions.

Also, the findings on **Table 2** show that primary school teachers expressed lack of commitment to work as the one of the major impacts of stress on teachers' productivity because the items with highest agreement leading include item 9 which sought to know if lack of commitment to work can be due to the impact of stress on teachers. The item has the highest mean of 3.300 which means that primary school teachers agreed that stress has negative impact on teachers' productivity. The findings of this study supported the findings of [Kyriacou, Kunc, Stephens, & Hultgreen \(2003\)](#), that higher levels of dissatisfaction with work and occupational stress have been associated with teacher performance, absenteeism and leaving the job.

Item 3 stated that teachers' stress can lead to transferring of aggression to students. The item has the mean of 3.300 which means that primary school teachers agreed that stress can lead to transferring of aggression to students is one of the impacts of stress teachers' productivity.

Table 3. Means, standard deviation and t-value of the causes of stress among teachers as expressed by male and female primary school teachers.

Variable	No.	Mean SD	df	Cal-t-value	Critical t-value
Gender					
Male	90	35.6	298	-0.39	1.96
Female	218	35.8			

Table 4. Means, standard deviation and t-value of the expression of male and female teachers on the impacts of stress on teachers' productivity.

Variable	No.	Mean SD	df	Cal-t-value	Critical t-value
Gender					
Male	90	37.8	298	0.18	1.96
Female	218	37.7			

The study revealed no significant difference on the expression on the causes of stress among teachers on the basis of gender. The calculated t-value was less than the critical t-value, hence, there is no significant difference. Therefore, the male and female primary school teachers agreed on the causes of stress among teachers. The findings of this study corroborates the findings of Kyriacou and Chien (2004) that 26 percent of teachers reported that being a teacher was very or extremely stressful.

The study also revealed that the male and female respondents do not express the impacts of stress on teachers' productivity differently. The result may be due to the fact that they are in the profession and they are directly affected by the conditions meted out to the teachers.

5. Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions are drawn, the major causes of stress among teachers are: lack of job satisfaction; delay in payment of salary and inadequate school facilities. The major impacts of stress on teachers' productivity are: lack of commitment to work; transferring of aggression to students; and distraction at work. There was no significant difference in the expression of male and female primary school teachers on the causes and impacts of stress on teachers' productivity.

Recommendations

For teachers to discharge their duties effectively and efficiently there is need for Government to improve teachers' condition of service. Government should implement the teachers' special salary scale this will serve as motivation for them to perform their duty with sense of commitment and dedication as this would reduce the financial stress among teachers. Government should provide adequate school facilities in schools to make teachers to discharge their duties without stress, a conducive environment and well equipped classroom will aid effective teaching and learning.

The school authorities should establish counseling units where both students and teachers could be helped to deal with psychological problems associated with stress.

The Government should employ professional counselors for schools to operate or manage the counseling units.

References

- Copper, C. L. (2002). *Psychosocial Stress and Cancer*. Chichester: John Wiley and Sons.
- Copper, C. L. (2004). *The Stress Check*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall Inc. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1002/9780470774755>
- House, J. S. (2007). Occupational Stress and Coronary Heart Disease: A Review and Theoretical Investigation. *Journal of Health Social Behaviour*, 4, 17-27.
- Hock, & Roger (1996). Professional Burnout among Public School Teachers. *Public Personnel Management*, 101, 167-189.
- Lee, M. (2006). What Makes a Difference between Two Schools? Teacher Job Satisfaction and Educational Outcomes. *International Education Journal*, 7, 642-650.
- Kyriacou, C., & Sutcliffe, J. (1978). Teacher Stress, Prevalence, Sources and Symptoms. *Journal of Educational Psychology*, 48, 323-365. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1111/j.2044-8279.1978.tb02381.x>
- Kyriacou, C. (2001). Teacher Stress: Directions for Future Research, *Educational Review*, 53, 27-35. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/00131910120033628>
- Kyriacou, S., Kunc, R., Stephens, P., & Hultgren, A. (2003). Student Teachers' Expectations of Teaching as a Career in England and Norway. *Educational Review*, 55, 255-263. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/0013191032000118910>
- Morgan, M., & Kitching, K. (2007). Teaching in Disadvantaged School: Job Satisfaction of Beginning Teachers. In A. L. Gilligan, & P. Downes (Eds.), *Educational Disadvantage in Ireland* (pp. 367-378). Dublin: Institute of Public Administration.
- Ololube, N. P. (2005). *Teachers' Job Satisfaction and Motivation for School Effectiveness: An Assessment*. <http://www.usca.edu/essays/vol182006/ololube.pdf>
- Reglin, G., & Reitzammer, A. (2008). A Dealing with Stress. *Teachers Educational Journal*, 118, 590-597.
- Selye, H. A. (1978). *Stress without Distress*. Philadelphia, PA: Lipincott.