

IMPACT OF COVID-19 ON NIGERIA HOSPITALITY WORKERS: RISK PERCEPTION AND DEPRESSION

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ABSTRACT: *Covid-19 pandemic has done more harm than good to hospitality sector globally. It crippled all hospitality activities in many countries especially the moment government of many countries restricted social gathering and travels in a bid to curtail the spread of the pandemic. The moment the directive was enforced in Nigeria; hospitality sector began to experience the worst period in their business. Since no official adequate support from the Nigerian government to the hospitality sector to cushion the effect of the covid-19 on the sector, hospitality owners and administrators had no other option than to either sack, suspend, reduced pay, reduced working days or out rightly refuse to pay salary to their workers throughout the period. With all these predicaments, Many Nigerian hospitality workers either stay at home without income or work without pay. The worst part of it was that despite been at home without income or proper support from their organization, family responsibilities like child and relatives cares never stops. All these negative incidences could aggravate pains and mental stress on Nigeria hospitality workers which could cause depressive symptoms. The research aims at examining the impact of covid-19 on Nigeria hospitality workers; risk perception and depression. Theories CID induced stress and transactional theory of stress and coping are linked to the study which analyses stress and depressive symptoms on Nigeria hospitality workers during the covid-19 pandemic lockdown and what could have buffered the risk perception and mental stress on the Nigeria hospitality workers are discussed in the research too. The research aims at analyzing the true impact of covid-19 pandemic on Nigeria hospitality workers. Finally, recommendations on how to support and encourage Nigeria hospitality workers during future pandemic and crisis are discussed.*

KEYWORD: stress and mental health, perceived Covid-19 Risk, stress and depressive symptoms, job satisfaction, work domain, family responsibilities, mental depression.

INTRODUCTION

Covid-19 virus was caused by SARS-Cov-2 which has really changed everything in the whole world, causing a long-lasting effect on individual and global economy (Barjrami et al.,2021). In mid-December 2019, the first case of covid-19 was reported in Wuhan, china and between six months of the infection more than 3.6 million people globally were confirmed positive of covid-19 with over 450,000 deaths from the confirmed positive (Worldometer, 2020) and in Nigeria as at 9th August 2021 a total confirmed case stood at 178,508, about 165,982 discharged (93%) and confirmed death cases stood at 2,192 (1.2%), (NCDC, 2021).

Immediately the covid-19 virus was declared a global pandemic, about 90% of the world population had no option than to face with severe restriction such as international and domestic travel ban, social gathering, hotel and restaurant ban etc. (Barjrami et al.,2021). Obi-Ani, (2020) asserted that Nigerian government in a bid to curtail the spread of the covid-19 virus came up with other measures such as prohibition of mass gathering of people at hotels, tourism sites, religious centers, sport arena, burials and schools were closed. Due to this severe restriction, hospitality workers were faced with very extreme challenges all over the world over the prohibition of social gathering and hotel operation to slow down the spread of the Covid-19 pandemic (Yan et al.,2021). This unplanned disruption and restriction threaten the mental and psychological health of hospitality workers by inflicting serious worries on their health and job security (Alonso et al.,2020). The world travel and Tourism council suggest that about 50 million hospitality jobs globally may be risked due to the impact of covid-19 pandemic restriction and prohibition of social gathering (Nicola et al.,2020). In hospitality sector, the greatest decline in staff numbers was noticed in hotels and restaurant, while at the peak of the Covid-19 pandemic about 65% of hospitality owners reported difficulties in salary payment and provision of essential logistics (Barjrami, et al.,2021) and as a direct consequences millions of hospitality workers lost their jobs and are exposed to severe hardship and poverty(Jones and Comfort, 2020) while many hospitality workers experienced extreme physical and psychological mental risk and job insecurity associated with the restriction (Barjrami et al.,2021).

This research is aimed at evaluating the situation under which hospitality workers are more or less likely to experience depressive symptoms during the covid-19 pandemic restriction. The Covid-19 induced stress scale theory and transactional theory of stress and coping which analyze acute and chronic stress outcome as the result of workers cognitive evaluation of a situation is used (Bliese et al.,2017). The research will hypothesize that hospitality workers perceived risk of covid-19 influences the possibilities of depressive symptoms, controlled by the workers working environment (job satisfaction) and possibly at home (parental obligation).

It has been noticed that workers especially the hospitality workers are seriously enduring mental health challenges, anxiety, depression, loneliness and unsettled mind due to the covid-19 pandemic restriction and prohibition of social gathering (Murray,2020). Despite all these, not all hospitality workers view the same level of risk in the covid-19 pandemic, restriction and risk perception shows a subjective judgement that people usually do about the severity of a risk (Spencer,2016). Individual perception of the covid-19 risk seems to increase depressive symptoms (Ding et al.,2020) to influence their likelihood of depressive symptoms and behaviors despite the actual risk (Birtch et al.,2018).

Within Nigeria, many hospitality workers are very careful about been infected with the Covid-19 virus, job laid off, no salary, reduced working days and no pay while others attach spirituality to the whole situation and some people have different view about be infected (Yanez et al.,2020).

Academic Studies has shown that perceived risk has influenced on distress, anxiety, worries and sleepless night (Casagrande et al.,2020). These result shows that individual perceived risk is a critical concern during the covid-19 pandemic.

STRESS AND MENTAL HEALTH IN THE HOSPITALITY SECTOR.

Firstly, hospitality workers psychological stress and mental condition occupies an important position in the hospitality sector especially during the covid-19 pandemic (Teoh et al.,2019). Academic studies has shown that hospitality workers are easily exposed to emotional and psychological stress due to the nature of their work, they constantly come in constant with unruly bad manners of some customers and still go back home to face family work related issues(Cheng and Yi, 2018), cases has shown that hospitality workers are bullied at work place(Arinza-montes et al.,2017) and most times stay behind to cover unscheduled overtime shift(Tromp and Blomme,2012) coupled with job insecurity(Wang and Xie,2020).All the above are capable of causing high blood pressure, psychological stress and mental depression on hospitality workers(Yan et al.,2021).

Secondary, hospitality workers have no option other than meet the needs and demands of their customers even in the midst of abuse or molestation especially during the covid-19 pandemic (Boukis et al.,2020). Research has shown that hospitality workers are prone to customers uncultured behavior (Han et al.,2016) and most times aggression (Kim et al.,2014), all these are capable of causing psychological stress and mental depression on hospitality workers (Yan et al.,2021)

Thirdly, work-family related issues most times have a great influence on the hospitality workers psychological stress and mental depression (Yan et al.,2021). Academic research shows that hospitality workers find it very stressful to balance between work and family related issues due to their long and unscheduled shift which is more often during the covid-19 pandemic due to many factors such as lack of public transportation to come to work and lack of interest by some workers and these affect them from taking proper care of their family duties which can cause a psychological and mental stress on them (Xu et al.,2020). The complex situation of combining hospitality work stress and family responsibilities can cause psychological stress which can lead to mental anxiety (Vander-pool and Way.,2013) to be too tired (Zhao et al.,2014) and totally weak (Mansour and Tremblay.,2018). As a result of the above analysis, a hospitality worker feels discouraged (Kong,2013) and most times contemplate quitting the job (Park and Min,2020) which pose danger to the hospitality sector (Darvishmo-terali and Ali,2020).

Considering the presence of psychological stress and mental depression associated with hospitality sector, Yan et al., (2021) suggest that academic researchers are deeply concerned with circumstances under which hospitality workers are able to cope with the stressors. Some scholars identified some relevant job-related issues such as independent (Amran et al.,2019), interpersonal

relations with coworkers (Arinza-montes et al.,2017) job security (Lee and Ravichandran,2019) and possibly job expertise (Cheng and Yi, 2018) in coping with stress associated with hospitality sector. Research also show that financial satisfaction of hospitality worker is another strategy in coping with the hospitality stress (Yan et al.,2021). some scholars suggest that workers with self-emotional control tactics such as empathy, feeling belonged and self-control can manage the stress associated with hospitality sector (Teoh et al.,2019)

It is evident that hospitality workers are constantly faced with stressful situation as a result of major crisis not only limited to the current covid-19 pandemic (Yan et al.,2021).

PERCEIVED COVID-19 RISK AND THE POSSIBILITY OF EXPERIENCING STRESS AND DEPRESSIVE SYMPTOMS OF HOSPITALITY WORKERS.

Perceived risk (workers believe of crisis) is a major issue in hospitality sector because it has a negative effect on the workers' health conditions (Brewer et al.,2007), perceived risk such as disaster (Sullivan-wiley and Gianotti, 2017), customer reaction and feedback (Cheng, 2011) can have great effect on the individual psychological stress and possible mental depression. Good knowledge of hospitality workers perceived risk is very vital because it reflect in their psychological and mental health conditions irrespective of the real crisis (Qin et al.,2020).

When risk perception is considered subjectively by looking at the likely cause is different from real risk (Yan et al.,2021). Real risk is associated with established statically data showing probability of an incident while risk perception is non-established feelings or reasoning over an incident (Sullivan-Wiley and Gianotti,2007) and because it is non-established feelings and reasoning, different workers react and reason to a particular incident in a different form even when it is same incident or issue (Hardy et al.,2021).

The connection between hospitality workers perceived covid-19 risk and the effect it has on their psychological stress and mental depression can be linked or explained by the transactional theory of stress and coping (Yan et al.,2021), this theory is an academically well-established view in work place (Bliese et al.,2017). Transactional theory of stress and coping explains the psychological and mental stress workers experiences in the process of transaction between the worker and the working environment like the hospitality sectors especially during the covid-19 pandemic (Yan et al.,2021), it pays attention on workers reaction and reasoning about the working situation as the reasons for their psychological stress or mental depression(Yan et al.,2021). When a worker is confronted with possible stressor like the covid-19 virus, the theory posit that the worker is pushed to take some personal reasoning and reaction (Yan et al.,2021). The first reaction and reasoning by the worker when confronted with the stressor is to evaluate if the stressor is harmful, life threatening or difficult, the reasoning of a stressor condition is based on worker and the working environment (Yan et al.,2021). This theory is strongly linked to hospitality sector especially during the covid-19 pandemic where workers are faced with many challenges or stressors. Dillard, (2019)

posit that the primary or first reaction of the worker when confronted with a stressor can be harmful, threatening and challenging, it is seen in hospitality sector during the covid-19 pandemic where workers are very confused on how to cope with the covid-19 virus. The second reaction or reasoning by the worker based on coping self-efficiency, is the strategies and ideals the worker put in place to cope with the treat, harm or challenging (Dilliard,2019).

An interesting issue about the transaction theory of stress and coping is that the same environmental incident like the covid-19 pandemic could pose a different threat to different workers, it all depend on how the worker view, react and cope with the incident (Yan et al.,2021). At the peak of the covid-19 pandemic, hospitality workers undertook a different view of the situation to make personal conclusion on how deadly the infection was to them (Yan et al.,2021). Hospitality workers perceive a high covid-19 risk when they reason that the possibility of been infected with the virus, job laid off, not been paid, reduced working hours and half salary payment is feasible while others do not believe they will be infected with the virus despite been deadly or affected with other risk (Yan et al.,2021). Riguzzi and Gashi, (2021) is of the opinion that workers would be disturbed in their level of reasoning and understanding of the deadly infectious risk of covi-19 on their health. Some workers will rely on their spiritual and religious faith to view the risk associated with the covi-19 pandemic (Hamilton et al.,2021) while some curved out a special attitude and emotional stress coping strategies which make them see covi-19 pandemic as not a source of risk (Jin et al.,2008).Due to these different view and reasoning used in evaluating the covid-19 pandemic, the use of transactional theory of stress and coping will result in different views and reasoning which could affect the possibilities of workers developing psychological stress and mental depression(Yan et al.,2021).

JOB SATISFACTION AS A WORK DOMAIN CONTRIBUTORY FACTOR ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN HOSPITALITY WORKER PERCEIVED COVID-19 RISK AND MENTAL DEPRESSION

The relationship between hospitality workers perceived covid-19 risk and their chances of experiencing psychological stress and mental depression can be influenced by their working environment experience, this is based on transactional theory of stress and coping. Transactional theory of stress and coping agrees that the outcome of the first reasoning or view of risk factors has influence on the secondary reasoning of the workers stress and coping strategies (Yan et al.,2021). This theory argues that the consequences of a stressor evaluation (that is the impact of perceived covi-19 risk of chances of experiencing mental depression) is influenced by the hospitality workers abilities to cope with the perceived stressor. So, if hospitality workers abilities to cope with the perceived working environment with good financial reward to cope with the stressor, it is possible that the worker will not develop mental stress (Yan et al.,2021).

The reason for the focus on hospitality workers job satisfaction as a work domain psychological reward is that job satisfaction influences workers commitment as a result of their positive view

experience from their job (Hewagama et al.,2019). Academic research indicate that job satisfaction plays an important role in the psychological achievement of a worker which can prevent tiredness and burnout from the worker and thereby encourage them to get through the covid-19 pandemic (Zhang et al.,2020), in fact, job satisfaction has been seen as a defensive resource to withstand negative outcome of stress (Visser et al.,2003). Steel et al., (2019) contributed that job satisfaction as a reward encourages the worker to feel happy and not tired, it increases their level of tolerance at work (Kollmann et al.,2020).

Job satisfaction as a reward or resources can be the yardstick for coping strategy of stress effect (Hu and cheng,2010). Visser et al., (2003) argues that hospitality workers with much stress and low job satisfaction is prone to low motivation which can affect their mental health thereby leading to mental depression while high job satisfaction encourages the worker to do more against the negative effects of the stressor. In same vein, the transactional theory of stress and coping posit that job satisfaction can be viewed as emotion fulfilled protective reward, positively influencing the capability to cope with stress and stand against negative mental health that can lead to mental depression (Hu and cheng,2010).

So, it is established that job satisfaction weakens the relationship between risk perception and the possibilities of experiencing depressive symptoms.

FAMILY RESPONSIBILITIES AS A CONTRIBUTORY FACTOR ON THE RELATION BETWEEN INDIVIDUAL PERCEIVED COVID-19 RISK AND MENTAL DEPRESSION.

The tedious task of child caring responsibilities especially kids could fuel negative impact of covid-19 on hospitality workers risk perception and possible experiencing mental depression by non-availability of enough financial resources (Yan et al.,2021). The transactional theory of stress and coping suggest that stress is the outcome of the condition that exceed the perception of available financial resources (Session et al.,2020).In view of the above analysis, hospitality workers with many children especially little kids are prone to experiencing mental depression due to the lack of financial resources to cope with the extra responsibilities like high of food, fueling the generator set due to lack of constant electricity supply and private home tutors through the use of electronic device during the covid-19 pandemic(Yan et al.,2021).

Based on public health safety policies to curtail the spread of covid-19 transmission, The Nigerian government directed that all churches, sports arena, burials and schools be closed temporary thereby prompting the school children to either study from home or stay at home (Obi-Ani et al.,2020). This disruption in school activities affected family work schedule thereby increased the responsibilities of child parenting at home (Yan et al.,2021). Shahid et al., (2020) implore that the social distancing measures as directed by government makes it more complex for parents in finding alternative options for the child care such as family relatives, parent, grand parent or child care givers. So, hospitality workers have no option other than to take care of their children by

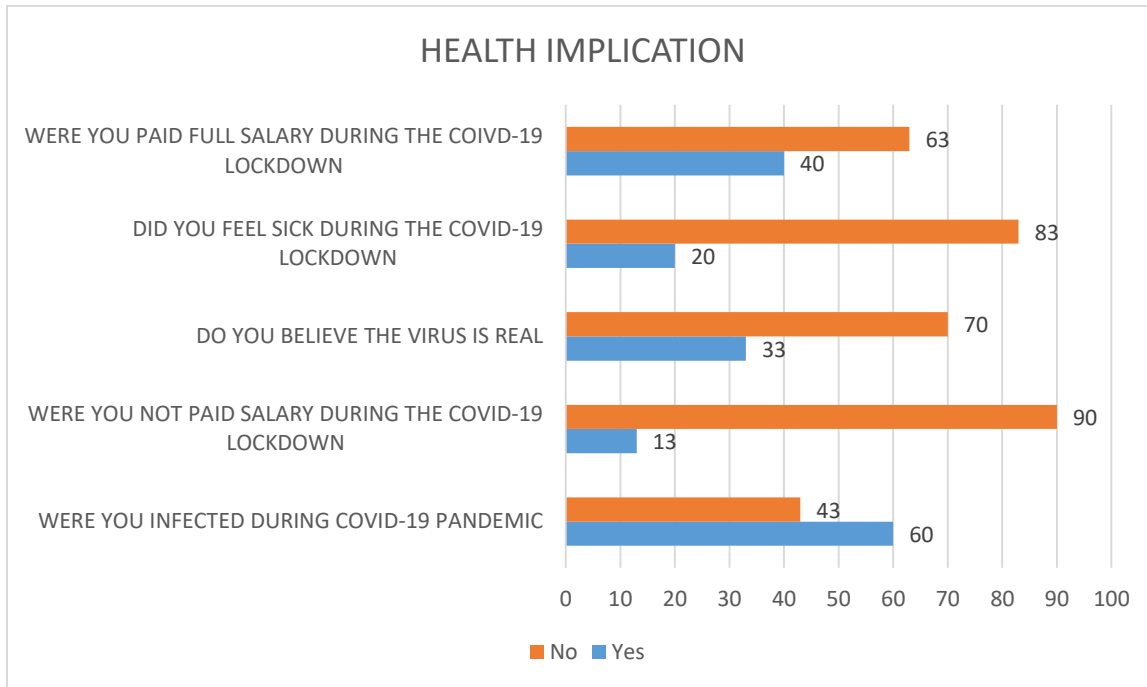
themselves thereby increasing the pressure on their mental health which could lead to mental depression (Yan et al.,2021). Taking care of children during the covid-19 pandemic is very tedious that it is emotionally and physically challenging and at such, mental depression could be developed due to the financial loss incurred because of the unplanned child care duties (Yan et al.,2021). According to Vaziri et al., (2020) the availability of more children in the family could possibly influence the negative effect of covid-19 risk perception due to the added child care duties which they are not sure of coping with the new situation. Additionally, the immediate and extended family's issues as it is practiced in Nigeria could be another financial worry affecting the hospitality workers abilities to cope with the stress factor. The transactional theory of stress and coping posit that healthy financial condition could encourage hospitality workers to initiate a good plan on how to overcome the threat stress factor (Ben-Zur,2019) and in same vein, bad or unhealthy financial situation of hospitality workers could mitigate the negative effect of the stress factor (Ben-Zur,2019). Fegert et al., (2020) suggest that workers with child care responsibilities are under serious financial pressure because they need steady income inflow to their bank account to enable them take care of the children and so, they desire job security. So, the covid-19 pandemic has pushed many hospitality workers out of the job and many working at a reduced shift thereby inflicting economic hardship on hospitality workers (Probst et al.,2020).

So, considering the tedious duties of childcare parenting and family financial demand, it is believed that hospitality workers number of children and family demand links the relationship between their covi-19 risk perception and the possibilities of experiencing depressive symptoms (Yan et al.,2021).

METHODOLOGY

The researchers to properly assessed the Impact of Covid-19 on Nigeria Hospitality Workers; Risk Perception and Depression, Human Resources managers, supervisors and Directors were sampled; about 103 persons were interviewed and their responses were analyzed and presented in charts.

HEALTH IMPLICATION			YES	60	58.3
WERE YOU INFECTED DURING COVID-19 PANDEMIC			NO	43	41.7
YES	13	12.6	WERE YOU NOT PAID SALARY DURING THE COVID-19 LOCKDOWN		
NO	90	87.4	YES	33	32.0
DO YOU BELIEVE THE VIRUS IS REAL			NO	70	68.0
YES	90	87.4			
NO	13	12.6			
DID YOU FEEL SICK DURING THE COVID-19 LOCKDOWN			WERE YOU PAID FULL SALARY DURING THE COIVD-19 LOCKDOWN		
YES	20	19.4	YES	40	38.8
NO	83	80.6	NO	63	61.2



JOB SATISFACTION, INDUCED STRESS AND DEPRESSION AFTER COVID-19 PANDEMIC LOCKDOWN

JOB SATISFACTION			COVID-19 INDUCED STRESS AFTER LOCKDOWN. CAN YOU MANAGE EFFECTIVELY YOUR PROBLEM, AFTER THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC LOCKDOWN		
WERE YOU SATISFIED WORKING DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC LOCKDOWN			STRONGLY AGREE	33	32.0
STRONGLY AGREE	25	24.3	AGREE	40	38.8
AGREE	8	7.8	NOT SURE	5	4.9
NOT SURE	30	29.1	DISAGREE	5	4.9
DISAGREE	10	9.7	STRONGLY DISAGREE	20	19.4
STRONGLY DISAGREE	30	29.1	CAN YOU FREELY COMMUNICATE WITH OTHERS AND CUSTOMER AFTER THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC LOCKDOWN		

WERE YOU TREATED WELL BY YOUR ORGANIZATION DURING THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC			STRONGLY AGREE	30	12.1
STRONGLY AGREE	50	48.6	AGREE	40	38.8
AGREE	10	9.7	NOT SURE	20	19.4
NOT SURE	10	9.7	DISAGREE	3	2.9
DISAGREE	10	9.7	STRONGLY DISAGREE	10	9.7
STRONGLY DISAGREE	23	22.3	AFTER THE COVID-19 PANDEMIC LOCKDOWN, ARE YOU STILL CONFIDENT WORKING IN HOSPITALITY SECTOR		
DID YOU HAD OTHER JOB OPPORTUNITY			STRONG AGREE	80	77.7
STRONGLY AGREE	30	29.1	AGREE	5	4.9
AGREE	5	4.9	NOT SURE	5	4.9
NOT SURE	10	9.7	DISAGREE	3	2.9
DISAGREE	15	14.6	STRONGLY DISAGREE	10	9.7
STRONGLY DISAGREE	43	41.7			



SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

The theories of CID induced stress (Kang et al., 2021) and transactional theory of stress and coping (Yan et al., 2021) which were analyzed by the researcher are linked to the impact of covid-19 on Nigeria hospitality workers; risk perception and the possibility of them experiencing depressive

signs (Yan et al.,2021) with the three established indicators that could aggravate it. The three indicators are job satisfaction, organizational trust and family responsibilities like taking care of many children and relatives during and after the covid-19 pandemic.

Many hospitality workers in Nigeria face a very difficult and unimaginable working condition due to the negative impact of covid-19 pandemic lockdown on the sector. Kang et al., (2021) posit that it still very uncertain to what extent of stress, anxiety and depression that is been experienced in the hospitality sector by the hospitality workers due to the covid-19 pandemic lockdown and how these unpleasant experiences affected the operation and management of the sector. He went ahead to argue that during the covid-19 pandemic, many researchers only focused on the well-beings of health workers with few considering frontline providers like those in transportation, hotels, supermarket, restaurant (Kang et al.,2021). The study contributes to the stress and depression management literature by exploring a deeper understanding of the negative implication of stress and depression which could change the commitment and behavior of the workers towards the organization.

The research examined how perceived risk, job stress and mental depression as caused by covid-19 is linked to job satisfaction. The study implores that despite the risk and stress posed by covid-19 pandemic, job satisfaction by the workers reduces the risk attached to the risk (Yan et al.,2021). organizational support buffers perceived risk, stress and depression to hospitality workers (Kang et al.,2021), kang et al., (2021) went ahead to list those incentives and supports by the management such as provision of hand sanitizers, face mask, latest gloves and protective wears. When workers perceive that they have a strong support from their organization, they display high levels of job satisfaction which will encourage more commitments to the organization (Kurtessis et al.,2007).

The unplanned closure of schools by government to curtail the spread of the virus which forced the children to stay at home, the research identifies that the number of children at home as a contributory factor that could aggravate the mental stress of hospitality workers covid-19 risk perception which could lead to depression (Yan et al.,2021). Further, the research postulate that the family responsibilities at home like many child cares directly influences the relationship between covid-19 risk perception and the possibilities of experiencing depressive signs (Yan et al.,2021), this finding implore hospitality owners and administrators to give special consideration to those with more children especially those with little pay as it will reduce the stress and depressive signs they experience.

Limitation and Future Research

The research has many limitation and potentials for future research and investigation. Firstly, the research could not ascertain all the possible incidence that could aggravate the mental and psychological depression of Nigeria hospitality workers. Secondly, the sampled questionnaire collected may not represent all the true feelings of the impact of cocovid-19 pandemic on all Nigeria

hospitality workers. Therefore, future researchers may carry out their survey with more questionnaires which may result to more responses to verify the result which will ensure the generalization and acceptance of this research. Finally, future research can conduct survey with restaurant workers, Airline operators and travel agents to ascertain if same risk perception is applicable to them.

CONCLUSION

The study encourages hospitality owners and administrators to consider giving support and incentives to their workers during pandemic as a way to buffer the stress and depressive symptoms that such pandemic could pose to their workers. Job satisfaction and psychological support to hospitality workers in Nigeria can buffer the negative impact of the covid-19 pandemic and another future pandemic.

Recommendation

From the above discussion, the following recommendations are suggested.

- 1 Good working environment supported by the company's administrators encourages hospitality workers to do their best despite stress experienced.
- 2 Physical and emotional support to hospitality workers during stress or crisis buffers the stress and depression experienced by the workers.
- 3 Hospitality owners and administrators should take the welfare of their workers serious as such will give them the courage to work even during crisis.

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