

## **STRESS AS PREDICTOR OF PRINCIPALS' WORK PERFORMANCE IN PUBLIC SCHOOLS IN EDO STATE**

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**ABSTRACT:** *The work assessed stress as predictor of principals' work performance in public schools in Edo State. Two research objectives gave focused to the study and one null hypothesis was tested. Descriptive survey research design gave credence to the study. The entire population of 140 principals was used for the study. Data was obtained with the aid of Questionnaire. Chronbach Alpha method gave reliability coefficient of 0.76 for the instrument. Data collected were answered using mean. The t-test answered the hypothesis. From the results, it was concluded that the job stress indicators that influence principals' job performance are workload and role ambiguity. Male & female principals did not differ significantly with respect to influence of stress on their job performance in public schools in Edo State hence the null hypothesis acceptance. Consequently, it was recommended that development and implementation of stress management strategies for principals should be a major option for effective and efficient public school administration. Furthermore, principals should be encouraged with extra allowance for their excess job functions as to reduce brain drain in public senior secondary schools.*

**KEYWORDS:** stress, workload, role ambiguity, job performance.

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### **INTRODUCTION**

Secondary education in Nigeria is the second level of education that is headed by a school administrator called the principal. The administering and managing functions of secondary education falls on the principal. For effective learning and teaching to be successfully carried out, human and material resources are to be well organized in the school to attain educational goals. Therefore the school environment needs to be conducive for principals and other members of staff to perform their duties effectively. If the environment is not conducive, it may result stress on principals.

Stress is the inability of an individual to cope with the environment. According to Muhammad (2014), work stress is an employee's awareness or feeling of personal dysfunction as a result of apparent conditions or activities in the workplace, and the employees' psychological and physiological reactions caused by these uncomfortable, unwanted, or threats in the employee's work environment. Psychological stress happens when an individual perceives that environmental

demands is more than the adaptive capacity and the consequences can lead to emotional instability and moodiness which may affect an individual well-being.

Leka, Griffiths and Cox (2004) define job related stress as the feeling persons may have when their knowledge, abilities is overwhelmed by work demands and pressures and which challenge their ability to work. Stress could be eustress or distress. Eustress is a low stress level while the distress is high stress level. Principals who experience eustress will be able to meet the demands of job and may improve positively, while principals who experience distress may not be able to meet job demands which may affect efficiency, personal health and quality of work. Work stress may be harmful to physical and emotional responses when job requirements do not blend with workers' resources, capabilities, and needs. Workers are likely to be less productive and less safe at work. In such situation the organization will not be able to succeed in a competitive market. Stress may occur as a result of competing demands.

At work, overload pressure coming from work, role ambiguity, role conflict in the work place and other characteristics are stressors that may affect an individual. Work load pressure may affect employees' job performance when the work load is too much for them to handle. A heavy workload with little time generally features as a stressor. Most often educators are not able to achieve the standards of teaching and learning they would like due to there being large student numbers and the unfavourable post provisioning norms. In addition, poor learner discipline includes disruptive behaviour, negative attitudes toward work, aggression and violence towards the educator. The lack of student motivation may lead to a failure which impacts negatively on educators thus resulting in stress and the decline in work performance.

Role ambiguity affect employees when the job is not clear and as a result may not be able to carry out their responsibilities effectively (Roohangiz, Zoharah, Farhad & Zinab, 2014). Focal person feels that he or she was entrap in situation which the job obligation is unclear and not stated in straightforward manner is caused when the job to be done, the task to be accomplished, and the duty to be assigned to the employees are not clearly defined, described and specified. Unclear role-related information may lead to role ambiguity. Oboegbulem and Onwurah (2011) stated that stressors which are intrinsic to the job and which border on unpleasant working conditions as total school working hour, inadequate motivation and resources to run the school, low prospects of advancement, lack of job security and poor staff development programmes, may affect staff job performance.

Job performance is the task of work-related that is fulfilled by an employee. It is also used for factors associated with success or failure in job situations. Performance of job can be the attainment of expectations and organizational goals via individual accomplishment (Ismail, Suh, Ajis, & Dollah, 2009). Principals' job performance is an essential factor to organization becoming more effective and efficient. Job performance is the attitude and much required in a specific job from an employee to perform their jobs well, which may be as a result of the time determined, encouragement and the will and ability of the individual employee to do the job.

Principals seem to be stressed up to the extent of challenging their health which has become worrisome to their family as well as their association. This scenario is very much likely to lead to a situation whereby principals reject the position owing to the stress inherent in the job which has gained regular attack against their stability. It appears many retired ones are spending high amount of their pension and gratuity on illness as a result of stress they developed when they were in service. Principals working in educational institutions especially the senior school experience high levels of stress and increased levels of stress related illness which could affect their job performance.

Administrative stress of principals seems to be unpleasant emotions such as anger, tension, frustration, depression and nervousness, resulting from work as principals. The principals have, the responsibilities and expectations loaded on them leave no doubt that they are likely to be stressed up. It is therefore pertinent to ascertain the influence of stress on principals' work performance in senior secondary school in Edo State.

### **Research Objectives**

The objective of the study was to ascertain stress as predictor of principals' work performance in public senior secondary schools in Edo State. Specifically, the study determined the extent:

1. work load pressure has influence on principals' work performance.
2. role ambiguity has influence on principals' work performance.

### **Hypothesis**

The following hypothesis was formulated and tested at significance level of 0.05.

H<sub>01</sub> There is no significant difference in the mean ratings between male and female principals on the influence of job stress on their job performance.

### **Scope of the Study**

The scope of the study covered the influence of stress on principals' work performance in public schools in Edo State. The study also covered the extent of workload pressure and role ambiguity. The schools to cover are schools in Edo South Senatorial district of Edo State.

### **Research Design**

Descriptive survey gave focus to the study. The population of the study consists of 140 principals in all public schools in Edo South senatorial district of Edo State. Therefore there was no sampling due to manageable population.

The instrument used for the study was structured questionnaire titled Influence of Stress on Principals Work Performance (ISPWP) in Public Senior Secondary Schools in Edo State. The instrument is an adapted version of job stress questionnaire that was developed by Caplan (1975) and Sahu and Gole (2008). Section A was designed for principals' demographic data. Section B reflects 21 items statements. Research question 1 had items 1-7 and research question 2 had items 8-21. The respondents will be able to show the extent to which they feel those items as being stressful base on 4 point rating scale for job performance. The instrument is a 4 Point Rating Scale of VHE-4, HE-3, LE-2 and VLE-1.

The reliability of the instrument was determined by administering the instrument to 20 principals in schools in outside the population with a coefficient of 0.76 indicating that the instrument is reliable. The data collected were answered via mean and standard deviation to answer all the research questions and t-test for the hypothesis at 0.05 significance level. The decision rule was based on a mean ( $\bar{X}$ ) value of 2.50 and above was regarded as high extent, while less than 2.50 were regarded as low extent and on the bases of hypotheses, where calculated t-test exceeds the table or critical value, the null hypothesis was rejected otherwise retained.

## RESULTS

**Purpose One:** extent of work load pressure influence on principals' work performance

### Report 1: Extent of Workload on Principals' Job performance.

S/N	Item Statement	Mean(x)	SD
<b>Remarks</b>			
1	I am stressed when many duties are given to me	2.90	1.13 HE
2	My responsibilities reduce when colleagues assist me	2.87	1.02 HE
1	My job performance reduces when co-workers are not efficient	2.73	1.16 HE
4	Taking office task home affect my job performance	2.93	1.18 HE
5	Many duties reduce my capability	2.91	1.01 HE
6	Lack of motivation affect my work performance	3.12	0.97 HE
7	Overloaded work makes me feel hurried	3.24	0.84 HE
<b>Total</b>		<b>2.98</b>	<b>1.01 HE</b>

Source: Field Study, 2019

Data shown on table 1 revealed that mean of the respondents is between 2.73 to 3.24. The variables were rated high extent.

The result implied workload has a high extent influence on principals' work performance.

**Purpose Two:** extent of role ambiguity influence principal's work performance

**Report 2: Extent of Role ambiguity on Principals' Job Performance.**

S/N	Item Statement	Mean(x)	SD
	<b>Remarks</b>		
8	Lack of clarity of supervision/colleagues affect my job performance	2.94	0.99 HE
9	Job requirements that do blend with my duties affect me	2.82	0.97 HE
10	When job is not clear makes me work less effectively	3.11	0.96 HE
11	Assigning duties in a short time hinders my efficiency		2.90
	1.07 HE		
12	Insufficient job information limits my efficiency		2.59
	1.84 HE		
13	Inadequate security to my job affects my performance	2.86	1.18 HE
14	Adequate training and development enhance my job performance	3.03	1.13 HE
15	Poor attitude to work of colleagues limit my efficiency		2.80
	1.14 HE		
16	Adequate motivation to work encourages me	2.69	1.18 HE
17	Task more than my ability makes me less efficient	2.57	1.24 HE
18	Having satisfaction from my boss aids me to perform better	3.01	0.97 HE
19	Poor description of job affects my job performance	2.81	0.84 HE
20	Assigning too many tasks at the same time affects my job	3.19	0.82 HE
21	Addition of other duties to my job get me confuse	2.89	1.05 HE
	<b>Total</b>	<b>2.87</b>	<b>1.18 HE</b>

Source: Field Study, 2019

Data shown on table 2 revealed that mean ratings of the respondents ranged from 2.57 to 3.19. The table shows that all the variables (8-21) were rated high extent.

The result implied role ambiguity has high extent influence on principals' work performance.

**Hypothesis One:** There is no significant difference in the mean ratings between male and female principals on the influence of job stress on their work performance.

**Report 3:** Summary of t-test Mean Response Between Male and Female Principals on Job Stress influence on their work performance.

Respondents	N	X	S.Dev	Df	t-Calculated	t-Critical	Decision
Male	81	2.26	0.87	138	1.031	1.450	Accept Ho
Female	59	2.45	0.92				

Source: Field Study 2019

The information shown on report 3 revealed that the t-critical value indicated 1.450. The t-calculated value showed 1.031. The mean ratings for male and female principals indicated 2.26 and 2.45 respectively. The standard deviation for male principals showed 0.87 while that of female principals indicated 0.92. The degree of freedom showed 138. The number of male respondents was 81 while the female respondents were 59. On this note the null hypothesis that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings between male and female principals on the influence of

job stress on their work performance was accepted based on fact that the t-critical value of 1.450 was greater than t-calculated value of 1.031.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

The result of report 1 for research question one as shown in table one revealed that principals rated workload as having a high extent influence on their job performance as principals. This is in consonance with Ngari, Ndungu, Mwonya, Ngumi, Mumiukha, Chepchieng & Kariuki (2013) that school administrators experienced stress in their work from workload. Kalu (2006) also found out that factors which constitute stress to principals in their administration include Personal organizational demand, family versus organizational demand, role over-load, role ambiguity, role conflict, under promotion, poor communication, excessive time pressure, too much autonomy, organizational politics, inadequate performance feedback, large school population, poor working conditions, inadequate supervision, inadequate funds, and students' indiscipline, societal encroachment to school land.

The report 2 for research question two shows that principals in public schools in Edo State rated role ambiguity as having a high extent influence on their job performance as principals. Roohangiz, Zoharah, Farhad&Zinab (2014) noted that job stress results from role ambiguity (lack of clarity of supervisor or colleagues' expectations) and likelihood of job abandonment. Kalu (2006) also found out that factors which constitute stress to principals in their administration include Personal organizational demand, family versus organizational demand, role over-load, role ambiguity, role conflict, under promotion, poor communication, excessive time pressure, too much autonomy, organizational politics, inadequate performance feedback, large school population, poor working conditions, inadequate supervision, inadequate funds, and students' indiscipline, societal encroachment to school land.

The test of hypothesis 1 as shown in report three also shown that there is no significant difference in the mean ratings between male and female on the influence of stress on their job performance in public senior secondary schools in Edo South Senatorial District of Edo State. This implies that the principals in Edo South did not differ in their rating based on gender.

## **CONCLUSION**

The researchers concluded that the job stress indicators that influence principals' work performance in public schools in Edo State are workload and role ambiguity. This implies that effective strategies should be developed and implemented to reduce job stress so as to have effective and efficient administration in senior secondary schools. The following recommendations were made:

1. The development and implementation of stress management strategies for principals should be a major option for effective and efficient public school administration.
2. Principals should be trained and retrained on stress management approaches so to prevent dereliction of duty.

3. Principals should be encouraged with extra allowance for their excess job functions as to reduce brain drain in public senior secondary school

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