Relationship Between Job Stress and Work Performance Among Librarians in University Libraries in Edo State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the relationship between job stress and work performance among librarians in University libraries in Edo State, Nigeria. Descriptive survey research design of the correlational type was used in this research. The population of the study was 117 librarians working in 8 University libraries in Edo State, Nigeria (Federal, State and Private). The total population was used, because the population was small. Questionnaire was used to elicit data from respondent, out of the 117 questionnaire that was administered 110 (94%) was found usable. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer research questions 1 and 2, while Anova was used to answer research question 3. The finding revealed that the extent of job stress is low while the extent of work performance is high among the librarians in University libraries in Edo State, Nigeria. The study also revealed that there is a weak negative relationship between job stress and work performance among the librarians. The R-value of 0.274 indicates a weak negative correlation between job stress and work performance. The R² value of 0.075 means that only 7.5% of the variance in work performance is explained by job stress, which suggests a weak explanatory power. The p-value of 0.004, which is below the conventional significance level of 0.05, indicates that this relationship is statistically significant. The coefficient for job stress is -0.163, with a p-value of 0.004. This negative coefficient indicates a weak negative effect on work performance, meaning that higher job stress is associated with lower work performance. Based on the findings, it was recommended that Library management should embark on regular evaluations of job responsibilities and deadlines to help ensure that tasks are manageable and are equitably distributed to reduce job stress to the minimal.

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1. Introduction

Work performance is defined by James (2020) as the act of carrying out a command, duty or purpose and equally an observable and measurable behavior of a person in a particular situation. Work performance of librarians is determined by many factors such as work environment, professional efficacy, abilities, training skills, job stress, technology or equipment availability and willingness to improve on the work (Ajila, 2017). A study conducted by Shahu and Gole (2018) on the relationship between job stress and work

performance of workers found that high stress level leads to low work performance whereas, high job satisfaction and professional efficacy influence work performance in positive ways. They suggested that organizations (libraries) should send their workers for training regularly to improve their professional efficacy, create a conducive work environment to reduce job stress etc. all these will eventually lead to high work performance on the part of the workers and consequently improve their services.

Work performance of librarians in University libraries is very paramount to the achievement of the objective of the libraries. Work is a purposive human activity; it is an exercise of man's energy and expertise for the production of services to achieve a particular desired goal, while work performance on the other hand is an act of executing a command, duty and purpose etc. (Ezeani, 2019).

University libraries need highly performing librarians in order to meet their goals (Motowidlo & Cross, 2020). University libraries are challenged with the delivery of quality services with a view to respond to greater and changing demands of their clients which are primarily the staff of their parent institutions. This makes the work performance of librarians' in University libraries of great interest to their parent institutions (Razak, 2021). Since high work performance has been given priority by every institution, University libraries have to give considerable attention to the work performance of their librarians.

The following was provided by Hakala (2018) as work performance indicators: effectiveness, value, efficiency, profits, innovation, creativity, work relationships, job stress, decision-making, communication etc. The rapid industrial, social, political and technological developments in the world today have resulted to great challenges in the management of University libraries in Nigeria. The management of University libraries is no longer as it used to be, due to changes in the above-mentioned areas (Hakala, 2018). The challenges that one faced in the management of University libraries in Nigeria includes, inadequate funding of the University libraries among others, these challenges often have effect on the work performance of librarians working in such institutions of higher learning (Hakala, 2018). Consequent upon this, is job stress on the part of the librarians working in such libraries, the scenario has led to general dissatisfaction with the work performance of librarians, lack of commitment and loyalty, lack of confidence in the ability of the librarians and lack of comfort for the librarians in discharging their duties in their respective University libraries (Hakala, 2018).

Job stress is an adaptive response to a situation that is perceived as challenging or threatening to a person's well-being in the process of carrying out a job (McGrath, 2016). Job stress is defined by McGrath (2016) as a condition within which employees are needed to satisfy the duties that exceed the person's ability, and also, if the resources which are required to perform these duties are not available. Job stress ends up in decreasing employee overall wok performance (McGrath, 2016). Job stress is the response people may have when presented with work demands and pressures that don't seem to match with their knowledge, talents and ability (Robins & Sanghi, 2016).

The aim of the study is to investigate the relationship between job stress and work performance among librarians in University libraries in Edo State, Nigeria. The specific objectives are to:

i. Determine the extent of job stress among librarians in University libraries in Edo State, Nigeria.
ii. To access the extent of work performance among librarians in University libraries in Edo State Nigeria.
iii. To ascertain the relationship between job stress and work performance among librarians in University libraries in Edo State, Nigeria.

The following questions are answered in the study:

i. What is the extent of job stress among librarians in University libraries in Edo State, Nigeria?
ii. What is the extent of work performance among librarians in University libraries in Edo State, Nigeria?
iii. Is there a relationship between job stress and work performance among librarians in University libraries in Edo State, Nigeria?

2. Literature Review

Stress is defined by Comish and Swindle (2017) as any condition that disturbs normal human functioning. Stress has been viewed as an environmental stimulus to an individual, work places and organizations. It is a person's reaction to a situation or event and not the event or situation itself.

Librarians around the world, like other professionals, experience stress caused by different factors. Stress is often used to describe either the external stimulus from the environment or the response in the individual subjective in nature, and can occur in anyone who feels he or she is under pressure. It is the product of an imbalance between environmental demands and individual capabilities (Rose, 2015). Job stress is seen as a physiological state of the individual which is influenced by a wide variety of factors known as stressors (Rose, 2015).

Omolara (2020) sees stress as a dynamic and reciprocal in relationship between the person and environment. Stressors can range from catastrophic events to irritating incidents (Omolaara, 2020). He emphasis that stressors do not elicit as stress response in the individual until the person appraise it as exceeding the available resources. A given level of stress leads to different effects across people and time (Omolara, 2020).

Gole and Sahu (2018) highlighted job insecurity, excessive competition, hazardous working conditions, task demands, long or usual working hours as employee stressors, while Okpara (2022) identified age, autonomy, commitment, communication with peers and supervisors, education and locus of control as stressors. Librarians face mental demands stemming from the need to communicate with others on a regular and ongoing basis. Their accuracy and attention to detail are essential when classifying and organizing resources to ensure accessibility to library users, all these constitute stressors to librarians (Ogunlana, 2013). Work performance of librarians leads to the attainment of the goals and objectives of the library, work performance is vital for library outcomes and success (Ojo, 2019). Work performance of librarians as explained by Hose (2012) is determined by factors such as knowledge, training, skills, ability, work environment, motivation etc. the primary purpose of employing workers (Librarians) in libraries is to carry out its day-to-day functions, so as to meet the goals which they want to achieve. The level of work performance of librarians to a great extent affects the general performance of the library as a whole. As such it is the responsibility of the management to provide the necessary facilities and atmosphere that will result to high work performance by its librarians.

Work performance, as defined by James (2020) is the act of carrying out a command, duty or purpose, and equally an observable and measurable behavior of a person in a particular situation. Work performance is referred to as both behavior and results which emanate from the performer and transforms performance from abstraction to action (Armstrong, 2016). Work performance is defined as the total expected value to the organization and the discrete behavior that an individual carries out over a standard period of time (Motowidlo, 2018).

Work performance is the ability of an employee to perform effectively in work requirement, understand a complete up-to-date description of his position and understand the work performance requirement that he is expected to meet (Abdullah *et al.*, 2021). ICT training, ICT competence, commitment, work environment, opportunities etc. have been found to affect work performance (Ojo, 2019). Work performance is an output of a staff on the job, work performance can be measured in terms of quality or quantity of work done and the measurement is done according to the level of work performance that is anticipated. Work performance is seen as how one carries out the tasks and responsibilities linked with a particular work (Oduwole, 2015). Librarians work performance is that aspect of work behavior that is of relevant to the library's success (Amusa, Iyoro & Ajani, 2018). Librarians working in University libraries are involved in the day-to-day management of the library along with teaching, giving instructions to users, ensuring an encouraging teaching and learning environment (Okpe, 2022). Work performed by librarians in University libraries is categorized by (Saka & Haruna, 2018) into cataloging and classification of

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information materials, provision of reference services, charging and discharging information materials to library users, among others. Each work performed by the librarian has its responsibilities, some of such responsibilities include online selection, ordering and acquisition, automated circulation services, preparing online public access catalogues, provision of online reference services and digitalizing information resources.

No matter the level of professional efficacy of a worker, certain factors do hinder the work performance except if such factors are not undermined. Work place stress among others, affects work performance of any worker. In Kenya, with excessive pressures, work demands could not be met, relaxation turns to exhaustion and a sense of satisfaction replaces with the feelings of stress, motivation sheds away and the workers starts losing interest in the work, hence performance charts show a negative trend (Suliman & Iles, 2020). The impact of Job stress on work performance of library staff in University libraries in Karachi, Pakistan was investigated by (Ali, Raheen, and Imamudin (2014). A total of 2500 library staff working in University libraries in Karachi, Pakistan were the population of the study but, 360 library staff were selected as sample using random sampling technique. However out of the 360 questionnaires administered, 330 were retrieved and found usable. The findings revealed that workload, unpleasant work environment, busy schedule, work interfering with family life etc. are prime reasons for job stress among the employees and that this stress reduces the efficacy and overall work performance of the staff. Many librarians face very busy and highly unpredictable work days, this is because working in the library has its own fair share of risk and stress (Oyeniran, 2023). Stress may be caused as a result of the inability of individual to maintain a reasonable balance between family life and work life, as he/she has to spend a lot of time in his/her work. Oyeniran (2023) conducted a survey on 27 librarians working in three University libraries in Anambra State, and found that librarians who are under the siege of job stress would show signs of job and life dissatisfaction, escapist drinking and smoking, low motivation to work, intention to quit work, lateness to work, feeling weak and faint, thereby having difficulty in sleeping. He would also have a feeling of loss of thinking, attitudes of detachment, reduced work aspiration and dread going to work, which may lead to absenteeism.

The existing literature showed that most of the studies carried out by scholars are mostly in Nigeria, and did not address job stress, as a factor influencing work performance of librarians in University libraries in Edo State, Nigeria. Therefore, this study will fill this research gap.

3. Methodology

The study adopted the correlational research design. A correlational research design is considered appropriate because it helps establish the relationship between two or more variables. In this study, correlational research design was used to examine the relationship between the independent variables (job stress) and the dependent variables (work performance) among librarians in University libraries in Edo State. Correlational research design is a type of non-experimental design that examines the relationship between two or more variables. It is used to determine whether there is a correlation between the variables and if so, what kind of correlation exists. Correlational research does not involve manipulating any variable, instead looks at existing patterns in the data. The population for the study comprises 117 librarians in the eight (8) University libraries in Edo State (Federal, State and Private Universities). The breakdown of the population for the study is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Population of the Study

No.	University Libraries	Ownership	State	No. of Respondent
1	University of Benin Library (UNIBEN), Benin City	Federal	Edo	41
2	Ambrose Alli University Library, Ekpoma (AAU)	State	Edo	30
3	Edo University Library, Uzaire	State	Edo	10
4	Wellspring University Library, Benin City	Private	Edo	6
5	Benson Idahosa University Library, Benin City	Private	Edo	10
6	Igbinedion University Library, Okada	Private	Edo	9
7	Samuel Adegboyega University Library, Ogwa.	Private	Edo	6
8	Mudiame University Library, Irrua	Private	Edo	5
	TOTAL			117

Source: Administrative officers of the various University libraries under study (2024)

The sample of the study comprised 117 librarians in the University libraries covered in the study. The total sampling technique was adopted due to the small size of the population. Babbie (2013) noted that if a study population is small, it is preferable to sample everyone in the population for precision, confidence level and variability. Total sampling technique is used when the population is small and shares well defined features, as using only fraction of it may not measure what is desired and can eliminate any potential bias from the sampling technique.

The research instrument used for the collection of data is the questionnaire. 117 questionnaires were administered, 110 (94%) were found usable. Questionnaire is reliable for collecting data, especially from academic community, and it ensures the anonymity of respondents' responses. A questionnaire titled "Job stress and Work Performance Questionnaire" (JSWPQ) was used for the study. The questionnaire was made up of two scales; scale, i. Job stress scale and ii. Work performance scale. Each of the two is a five-point Likert Scale of Very Great Extent, Great Extent, Moderate Extent, Small Extent and No Extent. Job Stress Scale is 8 item scales which was adapted from Shahu and Gole (2018) while Work Performance Scale is 17 item scales adapted from Razak, (2021). The instrument was subjected to both face and content validity. To ensure the face and content validity of the questionnaire, copies of the questionnaire was given to two lecturers in the department of library and information science, Delta State University, Abraka, for thorough scrutiny and cross checking, this is to ensure that only questions relevant to the study were asked. To ascertain the level of reliability of the instrument, Cronbach's alpha reliability test technique was used. Twenty copies of the questionnaire were administered to the librarians of Nnamdi Azikiwe University library, Awka, which never formed part of the study population. The test obtained a reliability level of the job stress scale = 0.90, and the work performance scale = 0.81, in whole the reliability is 0.97. This is sufficient for the study as the standard level for reliability test is 0.60 or above.

The researcher and three trained research assistants administered the questionnaire to the respondents within two weeks. The research assistants were instructed to administer the questionnaire to the librarians of some of the University libraries, while the researcher administer to librarians of other libraries under the study. They were also advised to respect the privacy of the respondents and never to tamper with responses. Lastly, the researcher also made multiple follow-up contacts to the three trained research assistants through telephone calls to encourage high responses from the respondents. The data that was generated from the administered questionnaire were analyzed using mean and standard deviation for *Research Questions 1-2*, while ANOVA was used to analyse *Research Question 3*.

Five-point Likert option scale of Very Great Extent (VGE), Great Extent (GE), Moderate Extent (ME), Small Extent (SE), and No Extent (NE) was used. Decision rule was used to interpret the data, and answer the descriptive research questions that involve mean and standard deviation. The decision rule that was used includes: Very Great Extent 4.51-5.50; Great Extent 3.51-4.50; Moderate Extent 2.51-3.50; Small Extent 1.51-2.50 and No Extent 0.51-1.50.

3.1 Structure of Research Questions

This section is dedicated to the details of the research questions that were used for the study, the results are presented in Tables 2 – 4.

Table 2: Extent of Job stress among librarians in University libraries in Edo State

Num.	Please indicate (√) the option that best express the extent of your opinion on each of the following statements:	VGE	GE	ME	SE	NE	$\bar{x}$	Std. Dev.	Decision Rule
1	Library work often interferes with my family, social obligation or personal needs.	1	1	6	91	11	2.00	0.53	Small Extent
2	Regular/ constant breakdown of computer and internet service brings a lot of frustration and depression.	2	1	7	72	28	1.88	0.71	Small Extent
3	Most of the time, there are little or no control over life at work because of work overload and pressure at work.	0	0	11	67	32	1.81	0.60	Small Extent
4	Vandalism of information materials and pains in recovering them back has been a serious threat to work performance.	0	0	13	59	38	1.77	0.65	Small Extent
5	Librarians could do a much better job, if given more time to finish given tasks.	0	1	14	52	43	1.75	0.71	Small Extent
6	Discharging duties as a librarian and having to publish paper for promotion affects work performance.	6	3	14	62	25	2.12	0.97	Small Extent
7	Library workplace or working environment is unpleasant or not safe to work.	1	7	12	43	47	1.84	0.92	Small Extent
8	Librarians regularly experience fatigue and low energy level at work because of busy schedule.	1	3	16	48	42	1.85	0.84	Small Extent
	Grand mean/Std. Dev.						1.88	0.74	

Key: (VGE) Very Great Extent, (GE) Great Extent, (ME) Moderate Extent, (SE) Small Extent, and (NE) No Extent.

Decision Rule: Very Great Extent falls within 4.51 - 5.50; Great Extent falls within 3.51 - 4.50; Moderate Extent falls within 2.51 - 3.50; Small Extent falls within 1.51 - 2.50; No Extent falls within 0.51 - 1.50

The decision rule was derived based on data analyzed using mean and standard deviation. Based on the distribution of the data, empirical grouping was done using 0.99 interval scale.

The grand mean of 1.88 for job stress among librarians in University libraries in Edo State, with a standard deviation of 0.74, falls within the "Small Extent" category based on the decision rule. This means that, on average, librarians experience job stress at low extent.

Table 3: The Extent of Work Performance Among the Librarians

Num.	Please indicate (√) the option that best express the extent of your opinion on each of the following statements:	VGE	GE	ME	SE	NE	$\bar{x}$	Std. Dev.	Decision Rule
1	I manage to plan my work so that it was done on time.	21	82	2	3	2	4.06	0.69	Great Extent
2	I can work well under pressure.	33	74	2	1	0	4.26	0.54	Great Extent
3	I kept in mind the result that I had to achieve in my work.	56	41	13	0	0	4.39	0.69	Great Extent
4	I was able to separate main issues from side issues at work.	42	60	5	1	2	4.26	0.75	Great Extent
5	I knew how to set the right priorities.	21	77	8	1	3	4.02	0.74	Great Extent
6	I was able to perform my work well with minimal time and effort.	49	44	12	1	4	4.21	0.94	Great Extent
7	Collaboration with others was very productive.	27	74	8	0	1	4.15	0.62	Great Extent
8	I took on extra responsibilities.	24	78	6	0	2	4.11	0.65	Great Extent
9	I started new task myself, when my old ones were finished.	61	38	9	2	0	4.44	0.72	Great Extent
10	I took on challenging work tasks, when available.	45	49	14	0	2	4.23	0.81	Great Extent
11	I worked at keeping my job knowledge up-to-date.	53	46	9	1	1	4.35	0.75	Great Extent
12	I came up with creative solutions to new problems.	49	41	19	0	1	4.25	0.80	Great Extent
13	I kept looking for new challenges in my job.	24	74	10	2	0	4.09	0.61	Great Extent

14	I did more than was expected of me.	19	77	12	1	1	4.02	0.64	Great Extent
15	I actively participated in work meetings.	18	76	12	2	2	3.96	0.72	Great Extent
16	I worked at keeping my job skills up-to –date.	18	75	15	2	0	3.99	0.61	Great Extent
17	I actively looked for ways to improve my performance at work.	42	42	22	4	0	4.11	0.85	Great Extent
	Grand Mean/Std. Dev.						4.17	0.71	

Key: (VGE) Very Great Extent, (GE) Great Extent, (ME) Moderate Extent, (SE) Small Extent, and (NE) No Extent

Decision Rule: Very Great Extent falls within 4.51 - 5.50; Great Extent falls within 3.51 - 4.50; Moderate Extent falls within 2.51 - 3.50; Small Extent falls within 1.51 - 2.50; No Extent falls within 0.51 - 1.50. The decision rule was derived based on data analyzed using mean and standard deviation. Based on the distribution of the data, empirical grouping was done using 0.99 interval scale.

The grand mean of 4.17 (standard deviation = 0.71), falls within the "Great Extent" range. This indicates that, on average, librarians perceive their work performance to be of great extent.

Table 4: Relationship between Job Stress and Work Performance among the Librarians

Model Summary					
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	
1	.274a	.075	.066	.20810	
ANOVA					
Model	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	.379	1	.379	8.751	.004
Residual	4.677	108	.043		
Total	5.056	109			
Coefficients					
Model	Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients		T	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	4.477	.105		42.554	.000
Job Stress	-.163	.055	-.274	-2.958	.004

* Dependent Variable: Work Performance; Predictors: (Constant), Job Stress

The R-value of 0.274 indicates a weak negative correlation between job stress and work performance. The R² value of 0.075 means that only 7.5% of the variance in work performance is explained by job stress, which suggests a weak negative explanatory power. The p-value of 0.004, which is below the conventional significance level of 0.05, indicates that this relationship is statistically significant. The coefficient for job stress is -0.163, with a p-value of 0.004. This negative coefficient indicates a weak negative effect on work performance, meaning that higher job stress is associated with lower work performance. The significant F-test and low p-value for the coefficient suggest that job stress does have a statistically significant impact on work performance. Indicating that job stress significantly influences work performance among librarians in University libraries in Edo State, Nigeria.

4. Results and Discussion

The findings from data analyzed on the extent of job stress of librarians in University libraries in Edo State, revealed that work interfering with family or personal needs, constant breakdown of computers, work overload, pressure at work, vandalism of information materials, and unpleasant work environment does not constitute job stress in the library, as the librarians experience job stress at a relatively low extent.

The findings is at variance with that of Ali, Raheem and Imamudin (2014) who carried out a study on the impact of job stress on work performance in a private University in Karachi, Pakistan and the findings revealed workload, unpleasant work environment, busy schedule and work interfering with family life as prime reasons for job stress among the employees. The findings from data analyzed on the extent of work performance of librarians in University libraries in Edo State revealed that the work performance of the librarians is of a great extent, which indicates that their work performance is high, the librarians are able to: plan their work so that it was done on time, keep in mind the result they had to achieve in work, separate main issues from side issues at work, set the right priorities, perform work well with minimal time, collaborate with others, take extra responsibilities, do more than was expected and actively looked for ways to improve their work performance at work.

The findings corroborated that of Amusa, Iyoro and Ajani (2018) who investigated librarians' work performance in public universities in south-west, Nigeria and revealed high work performance with items such as professional practices, contribution to the overall development of the library, ability to attend swiftly to clients' request and performing well under pressure. The findings is at variance with that of Akor (2014) who found that the wok performance of librarians' in University libraries in Benue state was at a low level due to some factors that were undermined. This study found that there is a weak negative correlation between job stress and work performance of librarians in University libraries in Edo State. This means that there is a slight tendency for higher job stress to be associated with lower work performance among the librarians in University libraries in Edo State. The weak nature of the correlation implies that while job stress does affect work performance to some extent, other factors may also play a significant role. The findings buttressed that of Hakala (2018) who asserted that job stress is one of the indicators of work performance in University libraries in Nigeria.

Weak negative correlation is also known as inverse correlation, implying that as one value increase the other variable decreases. The variables move in opposite direction. Thus, an increase in job stress may lead to decrease in work performance. The study covers the following variables: Job stress and work performance, it is limited to librarians in University libraries in Edo State, Nigeria. Other studies can be carried out on these same variables in libraries in other states and zones in Nigeria. Other works can also be done on the relationship between other variables (professional efficacy, years of experience, educational qualification etc.) and work performance of librarians.

5. Conclusion

The study explores the relationship between job stress and work performance among librarians in University libraries in Edo State, Nigeria. Based on the findings it can be concluded that the extent of job stress among the librarians is at a low extent while the extent of their work performance is at a high extent and there is a significant relationship between job stress and work performance among librarians in University libraries in Edo State, Nigeria. The study established a weak negative correlation between job stress and work performance of the librarians, this means that there is a slight tendency for higher job stress to be associated with lower work performance among the librarians.

It is therefore recommended that:

i. Library management should embark on regular evaluations of job responsibilities and deadlines to help ensure that tasks are manageable and are equitably distributed to reduce job stress to the minimal.

ii. University library management should implement comprehensive stress management programs tailored to the needs of librarians. This could include workshops on time management, relaxation techniques and other training to help librarians better cope with job related stress.

iii. Librarians should be encouraged and assisted to continuously engage in self-professional development through advance training and educational opportunities, providing pathways for further education and specialization to reduce job stress.

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