

A CORRELATIONAL STUDY OF WORK STRESS AND JOB PERFORMANCE AMONG BANK EMPLOYEES IN ILORIN METROPOLIS

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Abstract

This study examined the relationship between work stress and job performance in the banking sector, within Ilorin Metropolis, Kwara State. The research method used was a descriptive survey of correlation type. The target population for this study consisted of all bank employees in Ilorin metropolis, Kwara State. A sample of 120 bank employees was randomly selected for the study. Data collection was done using a questionnaire called the "Work Stress and Job Performance Questionnaire" (WSJPQ). This is a self-constructed but well-validated instrument ($r = 0.78$ & 0.72). Data collected were analysed using percentage, mean and Pearson's Product Moment Correlation statistical tool. The study uncovered that the level of work stress among the sample bank employees is moderate and the level of job performance among the respondents is high. It was also observed that there was a significant negative relationship between work stress and job performance of the sampled bank employees in Ilorin Metropolis, Kwara State. The study recommended that the banking sector should increase the quality of their services to reduce pressure from customers on the employees. Management should explore the possibility of implementing flexible work arrangements, such as flexible hours or remote work, to give employees more control over their work schedules and reduce the pressure.

Keywords: work stress; job performance; banking sector

Introduction

Work is an essential aspect of human life because it is a means of survival, livelihood and social engagement. While employment plays a crucial role in the daily lives of individuals, it often leads to significant levels of stress. Owing to the highly competitive work market, a significant number of individuals worldwide, particularly professionals in the Nigerian banking sector, dedicate extensive hours to fulfilling their obligations and responsibilities. Any country's banking sector is its financial pillar because it mediates the country's economic development (Penrose, 2013). Nigeria's banking sector is no different, contributing significantly to the political, social, and economic development of the country; it facilitates capital formation, implements monetary credit, foreign exchange, and financial policies, finances the country's production systems, and fosters economic growth (Penrose, 2013). The majority of the nation's capital projects can only be realised and completed because of the financial facilities that the banks provide. These vital roles of the banks have made it crucial and extremely difficult for the workforce to be sufficiently motivated in terms of good performance.

Banking sector employees have a vital role in enabling financial transactions, managing client relationships, and assuring the efficient operation of financial institutions. Their duties involve a diverse array of jobs that enhance the overall effectiveness and reliability of the banking sector (Mishkin & Eakins, 2015). One primary function of

banking sector employees is customer service. They interact with customers daily, addressing inquiries, resolving issues, and providing information about various banking products and services. This requires strong communication skills, a thorough understanding of banking procedures, and the ability to handle diverse customer needs (Saunders et al., 2019). Moreover, employees in the banking sector are responsible for processing financial transactions, including deposits, withdrawals, and fund transfers. They must adhere to strict security protocols to safeguard customer assets and prevent fraudulent activities (Iyiegbuniwe & Imoni, 2020). Accuracy and attention to detail are paramount in these tasks, as errors can have significant financial consequences for both customers and the bank. Risk management is another critical aspect of the job. Banking employees need to assess and mitigate potential risks associated with loans, investments, and other financial activities. This involves analyzing market trends, evaluating creditworthiness, and implementing strategies to minimize financial losses (Mishkin & Eakins, 2015; Olatunji et al., 2015). Furthermore, employees in the banking sector are often involved in sales and marketing efforts to promote banking products such as loans, credit cards, and investment services. This requires a sound understanding of the financial products offered by the bank and the ability to effectively communicate their benefits to customers. Staff consistency and work environment lead to staff job performance.

Job performance is a multifaceted concept that encompasses the actions, behaviours, and outcomes associated with an individual's work-related tasks and responsibilities within an organizational context. It is a critical aspect in understanding how effectively employees contribute to the overall goals and objectives of their respective organizations. Task performance, contextual performance, and adaptable performance are some of the variables that are frequently used to measure job performance (Borman & Motowidlo, 2017; Pulakos et al., 2010). The concept of job performance is influenced by various factors, including individual characteristics, motivation, job satisfaction, and the work environment. Individual characteristics, such as skills, knowledge, and personality traits, play a significant role in determining an employee's capacity to perform tasks effectively (Barrick & Mount, 2015). Motivation, both intrinsic and extrinsic, serves as a driving force behind an individual's effort and persistence in performing well on the job (Locke & Latham, 2002). Job satisfaction, reflecting an employee's contentment with various aspects of their work, has been linked to higher levels of job performance (Judge et al., 2011). The work environment, including organizational culture, leadership, and support systems, can either facilitate or hinder job performance (Den Hartog et al., 2017).

Assessing and understanding job performance is crucial for organizations to make informed decisions regarding employee development, promotions, and overall workforce management. Performance appraisal systems, feedback mechanisms, and performance metrics are commonly employed tools to evaluate and measure job performance within organizations (DeNisi & Pritchard, 2016). A bank employee's performance may occasionally be influenced by their mediating functions.

In the banking industry, work stress and job performance are complex phenomena that are influenced by several elements, some of which are crucial for success: assertiveness, workplace ethics, organisational commitment, and self-efficacy. Job ethics, encompassing moral principles and values in the workplace, significantly impact an individual's behaviour and decision-making. Employees adhering to high job ethics contribute to a positive work environment, fostering trust and cooperation. Research by Jones and Parker (2017) suggested that ethical behaviour is associated with lower levels of stress, as employees feel a sense of purpose and alignment with organizational values, ultimately enhancing job performance. Organizational commitment, defined as an individual's attachment and loyalty to the organization, is a crucial determinant of stress and performance. Meyer and Allen (2018) argued that high organizational commitment

mitigates the negative effects of stress on job performance. Employees are more likely to handle pressures well and maintain job performance when they have an emotional investment in their company.

The belief in one's ability to complete tasks successfully, or self-efficacy, is a key factor in the relationship between job performance and work stress. According to Bandura's (2016) hypothesis, those who have high self-efficacy are more robust to stressors and take on difficulties head-on. Employees in the banking industry who have a strong sense of self-worth are probably better at handling stress at work, which improves their output. Assertive skills, the ability to express one's thoughts and needs while respecting others, contribute to effective communication and conflict resolution. Research by Smith and Johnson (2019) indicated that employees with assertive skills are better equipped to handle workplace stress, as they can communicate boundaries and address concerns constructively. This, in turn, positively influences job performance by fostering a collaborative and supportive work environment. To comprehend how work stress affects job performance in the banking industry, it is imperative to consider the interaction of workplace ethics, organisational commitment, self-efficacy, and assertive abilities.

Many bank personnel in Nigeria are carrying out their obligations under adverse circumstances (Olatunji, 2009). While bank workers are working hard to fulfil their obligations, all these problems with unpleasant working conditions may cause a significant level of stress. Stress is the way human beings react both physically and mentally to changes, events, and situations in their lives. People experience stress in different ways and for different reasons (Bernadette & Ukaegbu, 2017). According to Teixeira et al (2014), there is a contention among scholars that although the names and meanings of stress, occupational stress, work-related stress, and job stress are interpreted differently, they share a common meaning. According to Johari (2020), work-related stress can be characterised as an employee's response to job tasks that are not in line with their expertise, competencies, and capabilities. From a more modern standpoint, the National Institute for Occupational Health and Safety (2014) noted that detrimental physical and emotional reactions frequently arise when job demands do not align with an employee's requirements, resources, or capabilities. This is known as work-related stress. This makes work-related stress significant since it has detrimental effects on both organisations and employees (Bahari et al., 2016).

Literature has identified some factors within work environments that affect employees' behaviour negatively and lead to stress (Kozusznik et al., 2012). Alias et al. (2019) reported that work overload; role ambiguity and role conflict have significant positive effects on job stress. Work-family conflict was found to exert no effect on job stress. Malik et al (2013) found that "role overload has a significant negative effect on employee productivity". Employees' role overload leads to lower employee' productivity. Ashfaq and Muhammad (2013) discovered a negative association between job stress and job performance, leading them to conclude that job stress considerably diminishes an individual's performance.

The banking sector is characterized by its fast-paced nature, constant regulatory changes, and the need for employees to meet demanding targets. Consequently, employees in this sector may experience heightened levels of stress, stemming from factors such as workload, job insecurity, and the expectation for accuracy in financial transactions. Also, factors such as excessive workload, stringent performance expectations, and the pressure to meet sales targets are likely contributors to heightened stress levels. Additionally, the constant evolution of technology and the need for employees to adapt to new systems and regulations further exacerbate stress among banking professionals. Work stress has the potential to adversely affect job performance in various ways. Decreased concentration, burnout, and increased likelihood of errors are among the potential consequences.

Moreover, the psychological and physical toll of persistent stress may lead to absenteeism and a decline in overall job satisfaction. By investigating these relationships, this study aims to provide insights into work stress and job performance in the banking sector: The role of mediating factors. What is the level of work stress among bank employees in Ilorin metropolis?, What is the level of job performance among bank employees in Ilorin metropolis?. There is no significant relationship between work stress and job performance among bank employees in Ilorin metropolis.

Method

The research methodology employed in this study was a descriptive survey focused on correctional practices. The study population consisted of bank employees in Ilorin metropolitan, Kwara State. The target population included bank employees selected from several banks in Ilorin metropolis, Kwara State. This study utilised a sample of 129 bank employees. A simple random sample approach was employed to pick bank employees across banks in Ilorin metropolis. The instrument used for this study was a researcher-designed questionnaire tagged “Work Stress and Job Performance Questionnaire” (WSJPQ) which is divided into 3 sections (A, B & C). Section A requests for Demographic information of the participants. Section B contains 10 items used to determine the work stress of the participants. This section was structured in four Likert with response options ranging from strongly agree (4) to strongly disagree (1). The minimum and maximum obtainable scores are respectively 10 and 40. A score from 10 to 20 indicates a low-stress level; a score from 21 to 30 indicates moderate stress; and a score from 31 to 40 indicates a high-stress level. Section C contains 10 items used to determine the job performance of the respondent. This section is structured in four Likert formats with the response options ranging from Very True of Me (VTM) = 4; True of Me (TM) = 3; Occasional True of Me (OTM) = 2; Not True of Me (NTM) = 1. The minimum and maximum obtainable scores are respectively 10 and 40. 0 and 25 indicate a low job performance and a score between 26 and 40 represents a high job performance in this section. To establish the validity of the instrument, the first draft was given to five experts in the Department of Educational Management and Counselling, Al-Hikmah University, Ilorin. The observations and corrections of the experts were incorporated into the final copy. The reliability of the instrument was determined by administering 30 copies of the questionnaire to carefully selected 30 bankers in Ogbomoso, Oyo State. The internal consistency form of reliability was used to establish the split-half method. The scores of the 30 respondents were split into halves and the halves were correlated using P.P.M.C. The reliability returns coefficients of 0.78 for Section B and 0.72 for Section C of the questionnaire.

The questionnaire forms were personally administered to the randomly selected sample of 120 bank employees in the Ilorin metropolis, Kwara State with the help of two trained research assistants. Also, personal administration enabled the researcher to establish rapport which in turn motivated the respondents to cooperate or respond without coercion. The researcher collected the questionnaire forms on the spot after the items had been completed to minimize the loss of the questionnaire. The data obtained from the study were subjected to several statistical methods, including percentage calculations, mean calculations, standard deviation calculations, and P.P.M.C. The null hypothesis formulated was tested using Pearson’s Product Moment Correlation statistical tool at 0.05 level of significance.

Result and Discussion

This section presents the results of data obtained from the respondents in frequency and percentages.

Table 1 Percentage Distribution of Respondents Based on Gender and Age

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	37	30.8
Female	83	69.2
Total	120	100
Age		
18-30 years	55	45.8
31-42 years	32	26.7
43 years and above	33	27.5
Total	120	100

According to Table 1, 37 respondents (30.8%) were male, while 83 respondents (69.2%) were female. The data indicates that 55 (45.8%) of the respondents were aged 18-30, 32 (26.7%) were aged 31-42, and 33 (27.5%) were aged 43 and above.

Research Question 1: What is the level of work stress among bank employees in Ilorin metropolis?

Table 2 Percentage Distribution of the Respondents' Stress Level

Stress Level	Frequency	Percentage
Low	9	7.5
Moderate	62	51.7
Severe	49	40.8
Total	120	100

Table 2 reveals that 9 (7.5%) of the respondents reported low levels of stress, 62 (51.7%) reported moderate levels of stress, and 49 (40.8%) reported severe levels of stress related to their jobs. This implies that the level of work stress of the majority of the respondents is moderate.

Research Question 2: What is the level of job performance among bank employees in Ilorin metropolis?

Table 3 Percentage Distribution of the Respondents' Job Performance Levels

Stress Level	Frequency	Percentage
Low Job Performance	(10 to 25) 38	31.67
High Job Performance	(26 to 40) 82	68.33
Total	120	100

Table 3 shows the result obtained from answering research question 2. From the table, it is shown that 38 participants had a score ranging from 10 to 25 and this indicates low job performance representing 31.67% of the respondents. It was also disclosed by the table that 82 (68.33%) respondents had a score between 26 and 40 which indicates high job performance. To answer this research question, the level of the majority of the participants on job performance is high.

A null hypothesis was postulated and tested for this study. The hypothesis was tested using PPMC statistical methods at 0.05 level of significance.

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between work stress and job performance among bank employees in Ilorin Metropolis.

Table 4 P.P.M.C table Showing the Relationship between Work Stress and Job Performance of the Respondents

Variable	N	Mean	SD	Df	Cal. value	r- p. value
Work Stress	120	22.88	4.10	396	-0.32*	.020
Job Performance	120	28.22	4.52			

*Significant, $p < 0.05$

Table 3 indicates the result obtained from testing hypothesis one. From the table, it is shown that the calculated r - is -0.32 and the P - value is 0.02 . Since the p -value of 0.02 is less than 0.05 significant level, the null hypothesis is rejected. Thus, there is a significant negative relationship between job stress and the job performance of bank employees in Ilorin Metropolis.

The results showed that a large number of bank workers in the city of Ilorin were under a lot of stress at work. The results corroborate those of Kumar and Sundaram's (2014) study, which indicated that most bank workers had high to extremely high levels of stress. This study aligns with previous research that has consistently identified the banking sector as a high-stress industry. The reason could be the demanding nature of the financial sector, characterized by tight deadlines, constant pressure to meet targets, and the responsibility of handling substantial financial transactions, which has created an environment conducive to heightened stress. The finding also revealed that bank personnel in Ilorin City perform well on the job. The finding supports the studies of Anekwe and Purity (2020) and Morshador et al., (2014) whose findings not only affirmed the exemplary performance of bank personnel but also underscored the multifaceted skills and attributes that contribute to their success on the job. Similarly, Smith et al. (2019) conducted a detailed examination of the banking industry, highlighting the consistent and proficient performance demonstrated by employees across different positions. The cause can be attributed to workers' assertiveness and self-efficacy, which may have affected their commitment to their banking jobs.

The outcome of the null hypothesis test showed that among bank employees in the city of Ilorin, there was a significant association between work stress and job performance. This suggests that the respondents were able to perform well at work despite their work-related stress. The study's findings corroborate those of Alias et al. (2019), who discovered that workers in the manufacturing sector experience significant levels of workplace stress. Additionally, research has shown that role ambiguity, role conflict, and task overload all significantly reduce job stress. Conversely, Ashfaq and Muhammad (2013) discovered a negative relationship between job stress and performance, concluding that job stress considerably lowers an individual's performance. The reason could be that banking job ethics and commitment, as well as employees' self-efficacy and assertive skills, influence their stress levels.

Conclusion

The results of the study carried out in the city of Ilorin indicate that bank personnel have two different situations. On the one hand, the finding of a high degree of workplace stress suggests that Ilorin's banking industry workers are subjected to a great deal of strain and difficulty at work. This is concerning since extended exposure to high-stress levels can be harmful to a person's physical and mental health. However, the good news is that bank employees in Ilorin City are doing a good job at their jobs even with high levels of work-related stress. This may imply that workers are robust and able to control their stress levels to continue doing their jobs to a high standard. It might also draw attention to the productivity and efficacy of the people working in the Ilorin banking industry as well as the institutional support systems that are in place. It is implied that there is a relationship

between these two variables among bank employees in the Ilorin metropolitan by the considerable relationship between work stress and job performance that has been found. This link may be complicated, encompassing several elements like personal resilience, organisational support, and coping strategies. The study concludes by highlighting the importance of stress management and staff well-being in the Ilorin banking industry. Even though workers are doing a good job, reducing high levels of workplace stress can help create a more sustainable and healthy work environment. Based on the findings of this study, it was recommended that: 1. The banking sector should increase the quality of its services to reduce pressure from customers on the employees. 2. Management should redesign jobs and place employees where their tasks would not be complicated such that they can perform their jobs at their best capacity, Management should ensure that their employees are not overworked. 3. Management should explore the possibility of implementing flexible work arrangements, such as flexible hours or remote work, to give employees more control over their work schedules and reduce the pressure.

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