

Prevalence and Sources of Stress among Employees in Civil Service Commission in Bayelsa State, Nigeria

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.6583147>

Published Date: 26-May-2022

Abstract: The aim of this study was to investigate the prevalence and sources of stress among employees of civil service commission of Bayelsa state, Nigeria. Three objectives and research questions were formulated to guide this study. A descriptive cross sectional design was adopted for this study with the population of 12,671 employees from different ministries of Bayelsa state. The sample size of 402 was calculated using Taro Yamene method and simple random sampling technique was used to select the sample for the study. The instrument for collect of data for this study was self structured questionnaire titled Prevalence and Sources of Stress Questionnaire (PSSQ) which was validated by three experts. The reliability coefficient of 0.84 of the validated instrument was obtained using Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC). Data collected were analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 25.0 based on the 72.6% return rate of the instrument. The result of this study indicated that the grand mean of 3.30 was greater than the criterion mean of 2.50 depicting that the prevalence of stress among employees was high. Also the result of this study revealed that environmental factors were the sources of stress among employees (grand mean 3.30 vs criterion mean 2.50). The result also indicated that work related factors were the major sources of stress among employees (mean 3.38 vs criterion mean 2.50). The study concluded that the prevalence of stress among employees was high and the major sources were environmental and work related factors. It was recommended among others that the management of the organization should take the responsibility of employees' stress conducting stress management and coping programs at the institute level.

Keywords: prevalence, sources, stress, employees, civil service.

1. INTRODUCTION

From time immemorial there is no occupation without stress as far as workers are involved. Occupational stress is an increasingly important occupational health problem and a significant cause of economic loss. Occupational stress may produce both overt psychological and physiologic disabilities. However, it may also cause subtle manifestation of morbidity that can affect personal well-being and productivity (Khan, 2014). A job stressed individual is likely to have greater job dissatisfaction, increased absenteeism, and increased frequency of drinking and smoking, increase in negative psychological symptoms and reduced aspirations and self-esteem. The ever changing demands of the working world can increase levels of stress, especially for those who are consistently working under pressure such as bank workers, medical workers etc. Whilst pressure has its positive side in raising performance, if such pressure becomes excessive it can lead to stress which has negative consequences (Issa, 2010; Al-Khasawneh & Futa, 2013). For most people, work is a significant and meaningful feature of life with the majority of them spending around 25% - 35% of their adult lives working. While work can provide people with structure, purpose, satisfaction, self-esteem and spending power, the workplace can also be a source of stress and worry (Jungwee, 2012). Work related stress has been a topic that has received increasing attention, in the area of occupational health, over the last three decades. These authors (Ashcraft & Kirk, 2009; Eysenck, & Derakshan 2011; Eysenck, et al 2014) of the opinion that the world, especially the world of work and business, has

become increasingly subjected to fast changing forces like increased competition, the pressure of quality, innovation and an increase in the pace of doing business. The demands on employees grew equally dramatically and this created stress within employees. Apart from stress that arose from the work situation, other sources of stress could relate to personal factors such as relationships with others and use of free time. Pandey (2020), described stress is the body's reaction to a change that requires a physical, mental or emotional adjustment or response. Occupational stress is defined as the perception of a discrepancy between environmental demands (stressors) and individual capacities to fulfill these demands (Topper, 2007; Vermunt and Steensma, 2005; Varca, 2014). Robbins and Sanghi (2016) asserted that a dynamic condition in which an individual is confronted with an opportunity, constraints, or demand related to what he or she desires and for which the outcome is perceived to be both uncertain and important. Stress is an increasing problem in organizations or ministries and often causes adverse effects on performance.

The workplace is an important source of both demands and pressures causing stress and structural and social resources to counteract stress. The workplace factors that have been found to be associated with stress and health risks can be categorized as those to do with the content of work and those to do with the social and organizational context of work. Those that are intrinsic to the job include long hours, work overload, time pressure, difficult or complex tasks, lack of breaks, lack of variety and poor work conditions (for example, space, temperature, light) (Malik, 2015).

The work environment is a significant factor that should not be underestimated. Warr (2013) stated that environmental pressures may sometimes cause problems for skilled performance, resulting in impaired quantity or quality of working output, or, for example, mistakes in decision making. Thus, it is important to take into consideration the environment in which employees operate. The physical work environment stressors have not been focused enough upon by previous research. However, it is significant to explore them since working environment and working tools are not only related to job performance; they are also one of the major factors of stress (as mentioned in the stress section). If work tools are not provided or provided insufficiently, it has a negative effect not only on the level of stress, but also on the ability to perform. In this situation, even though the employee feels job satisfied and performs at a permissible level, his/her general level of well-being might not be that acceptable (Wicks, 2016). Cooper & Marshall (2015) are of the view that by occupational stress is meant environmental factors or stressors such as work overload, role conflict, role ambiguity, and poor working conditions associated with a particular job. The Government of Bayelsa state has continuously developed and successfully implemented policies geared towards enhancing the productivity and well-being of its employees. However, psychological issues had posed a challenge in human resource management and development and most of its employees were constantly faced with challenges that relate to work and that these challenges not only impact negatively on their psychological well-being but also on their productivity and overall work performance. This was evident through the many cases of indiscipline, chronic absenteeism, negligence of duty, low motivation, social and financial difficulties at the work place. These challenges have both physical and psychological impact on civil servants and have necessitated the need for professional guidance and counseling services in the Public Service. However, the researcher saw the need to examine critically, the prevalence and sources of stress among employees in Civil Services in Bayelsa State.

Objectives of the Study

The objective of this study was to investigate the prevalence and sources of stress among employees in Civil Services in Bayelsa State. In specific term, the objectives of the study are to:

1. determine the prevalence of stress among employees in Civil Services in Bayelsa State.
2. ascertain environmental factor as a source of stress among employees in Civil Service in Bayelsa State.
3. determine work related factor as a source of stress among employees in Civil Service in Bayelsa State.

Research Questions

The following research questions were formulated to guide this study:

1. What is the prevalence of stress among employees in Civil Services in Bayelsa State?
2. To what extent does environmental factor constitute a source of occupational stress among employees in Civil Service in Bayelsa State?
3. To what extent does work related factor constitute a source of occupational stress among employees in Civil Service in Bayelsa State?

2. METHODOLOGY

Research Design: The research design of the study is descriptive cross sectional survey research design. This design was considered appropriate as it describes certain features of the sample from the large population of interest to the researcher.

Population of the Study: The population of the study consists of all civil servants in Bayelsa state civil service. The total population is about 12,671 civil servants which cut across eight ministries such as ministry of justice, ministry of health, ministry of education, ministry of trade and investment, ministry of transport, ministry of works, ministry of women affairs and ministry of Agriculture.

Sample and Sampling Techniques

The sample size for this research was 402 calculated by using Taro Yamane (Yamane, 1973) formula with 95% confidence level. The calculation formula of Taro Yamane is presented as below:

$$n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2}$$

Where n = sample size, N = population, e = margin of error (0.05)

4% of this number which is 15 was added to accommodate non responses i.e. $n = 387 + 15 = 402$.

A two stage sampling techniques were adopted to select the sample of the study. Firstly, the simple random sampling technique was employed to select the all the ministries in the civil service in other to give equal consideration to all respondents. Secondly, disproportion sampling technique was used to select 50 employees from each ministry to make up the sample of 402 for the study.

Table 1: showing the proportion of employees selected for the study

Civil service	Population
Ministry of Justice	50
Ministry of Education	50
Ministry of Health	51
Ministry of Agriculture	50
Ministry of Women Affair	51
Ministry of Works	50
Ministry of Transport	50
Ministry of Trade and Investment	50
Total	402

Instrument for Data Collection: The instrument that was used for the collection of data was a self-developed and structured questionnaire, Prevalence and Source of Stress (PSS). The questionnaires were design in an easy and unambiguous way to enable the respondent to understand the questions.

Validity of Instrument: To ensure the validity of the research instrument, the questionnaire was constructed and submitted to the researchers' supervisor and three other experts in the department of Human Kinetics, Health and safety Studies and others in related field for scrutiny and evaluation. Corrections were made on the content. Hence, the instrument was found to be valid for the study.

Reliability of Instrument: The test re-test reliability test was conducted on 20 respondents outside the sampled respondents over an interval of two weeks to ascertain the reliability of the instrument before it was administered on sampled respondents. The data collected from pre-test was analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) to determine reliability co-efficient 0.84. hence, the instrument was reliable and appropriate for the study

Method of Data Collection: The researcher received an approval and obtained a letter of introduction from the head of department Human Kinetics, Health and Safety studies Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Port Harcourt. To ensure cooperation of respondents the letter was presented first to the chairman of Bayelsa State Civil Service Commission for approval. The researcher administered the questionnaire to the respondent in various ministries through personal contact. Three research assistants were used to administer 402 copies of the questionnaires.

Method of Data Analysis: The data was analyzed using descriptive statistics (percentage, frequencies, tables, and mean) with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 25.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Presentation of Data

Data collected from respondents from the study participants in Bayelsa State Civil Service, were presented in the form of tables and analysed using percentages and frequencies.

Table 2: Administration and Retrieval of Questionnaires

Number of Questionnaires Administered	Number of Questionnaires Retrieved	Number of Questionnaires not Valid	Percentage of Questionnaires Retrieved
402	292	110	72.6%

Table 2 showed that four hundred and two questionnaires were distributed out of which two hundred and ninety-two were retrieved and one hundred and ten was invalid and not retrieved. This means (72.6%) of the questionnaires was retrieved and considered acceptable in the research because it is above 70%.

Research question 1: What is the prevalence of stress among employees in Civil Services in Bayelsa State?

Table 3: Responses on Prevalence of Stress

S/N	Items	SA (4)	A (3)	D (2)	SD (1)	AGG. SCORE	MEAN
1	I experienced stress during transportation to work.	174 (61.5%)	70 (23.2%)	38 (6%)	8 (2.7%)	990	3.4
2	I experience work related stress while performing my duties.	178 (62.7%)	90 (30%)	24 (8.2%)	0 (0%)	1004	3.4
3	It is quiet stressful dealing with my fellow workers.	121 (41.4%)	143 (47.5%)	19 (3.6%)	9 (3%)	965	3.3
4	My working environment contributes to my work stress.	150 (53.5%)	115 (38.2%)	16 (2%)	9 (3%)	986	3.3
5	My personal life attribute to my psychological stress at work.	140 (50.1%)	120 (39.9%)	24 (8.2%)	8 (2.7%)	976	3.3
Grand Mean							3.3

Mean Criterion = 2.50

Table 3 above shows the responses of respondent on the prevalence of stress among employees in Civil Service in Bayelsa State. The table shows the first, second, third, fourth and fifth items has a mean score of 3.4, 3.4, 3.3, 3.3 and 3.3 respectively which favored the agree option in the opinion scale.

Research question 2: To what extent does environmental factor constitute a source of occupational stress among employees in Civil Service in Bayelsa State?

Table 4: Response on Environmental factor

S/N	Items	SA (4)	A (3)	D (2)	SD (1)	AGG. SCORE	MEAN
6	Poor working environment is a source of stress to me.	155 (53.1%)	109 (37.3%)	23 (7.8%)	5 (1.71%)	998	3.4
7	Poor building structure is a source of stress to me.	141 (48.3%)	131 (44.9%)	15 (5.1%)	5 (1.7%)	992	3.4
8	Unconducive officer type is a source of stress to me.	146 (50%)	117 (40%)	20 (6.9%)	7 (2.4%)	987	3.4
9	The work building is a source of stress to me.	154 (52.7%)	118 (40.4%)	13 (4.5%)	7 (2.4%)	1003	3.4
10	The office design is another source of stress to me.	92 (31.5%)	143 (48.9%)	19 (6.5%)	38 (13%)	873	2.9
Grand Mean							3.30

Mean Criterion = 2.50

Table 4 above shows the responses of respondents on the extent to which environmental factors as a source of stress among employees in Civil Service in Bayelsa State. The table shows the first, second, third, fourth and fifth items has a mean score of 3.4, 3.4, 3.4, 3.4 and 2.9 respectively which favored the agree option in the opinion scale.

Research question 3: To what extent does work related factor constitute a source of stress among employees in Civil Service in Bayelsa State?

Table 5: Response on Work related factor

S/N	Items	SA (4)	A (3)	D (2)	SD (1)	AGG. SCORE	MEAN
11	My job designation is a source of stress to me.	159 (54.4%)	109 (37.3%)	16 (5.4%)	8 (2.7%)	1003	3.4
12	My role in the office is a source of stress to me.	140 (47.9%)	132 (45.2%)	15 (5.13%)	5 (1.7%)	991	3.3
13	My time spent during meeting is a source of stress to me.	166 (56.8%)	110 (37.6%)	17 (5.8%)	8 (2.7%)	1036	3.5
14	Conflict during working hours is a source of stress to me.	151 (51.7%)	111 (38%)	22 (7.5%)	8 (2.7%)	989	3.4
15	Working with difficult personality is also a source of stress to me.	121 (41.4%)	143 (48.9%)	19 (6.5%)	9 (3.1%)	960	3.3
Grand Mean							3.38

Mean Criterion = 2.50

Table 5 above showed the responses of respondents on the extent to which work related factor as a source of stress among employees in Civil Service in Bayelsa State. The table shows the first, second, third, fourth and fifth items has a mean score of 3.4, 3.3, 3.5, 3.4 and 3.3 respectively which favored the agree option in the opinion scale.

4. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The result of this study in table 2 indicated that the prevalence of stress was high among civil servants in Bayelsa state as the grand mean 3.30 was greater than the criterion mean of 2.50. This implies that there is high level of stress among civil servants in Bayelsa State. The result of this study is expected because almost all the civil servants in Bayelsa state irrespective of gender, age, department, work experience, marital status, and level of education among others do experience one form of stress from time to time. Little wonder if the prevalence of stress among civil servants should be grossly blamed for poor work out come in Nigeria. The result of this study is in line studies of Gheshlagh et al., (2017) that the prevalence of a survey among 4630 workers reported about 90% increase in occupational stress among personnel. Teixeira, et al (2016) buttressed that the 87% prevalence rate of occupational stress among workers. The result of this study is in credence with studies of Adzakpah et al. (2018) that over 68.4% of workers encounter work-related stress in Ghana is above average which suffice to underscore that majority of nurses in Ghana are being stress at the workplace (Adzakpah, 2018). Studies of Routsalainen et al (2015) affirmed that stressful occupation is not in any way detachable from bad health conditions of the body which also in chain reaction constitute poor healthcare service delivery. However, no previous studies was found contradicting with result of the current study showing that stress have been existing right from time immemorial. Furthermore, the slight difference in prevalent rates recorded in different countries could be accounted for by population of people seeking healthcare services in relation to the numbers of workers providers. In Nigeria, there are high demand workers. A very high prevalent rate of this nature discovered in this study calls for serious action among labour organizations to look into the working conditions and policies to ensure workers are not been over-laboured. The International Labour policy on maximum working hours has to be implemented to the letter to ensure the reduction of occupational stress among healthcare workers and to reduce the negative health consequences that follows stressful jobs. The difference between the outcome of this present study and the previous findings was due to variation in the research design, sample of the study, location, and source of data among others.

The result of this study in table 3 showed that the grand mean of 3.30 was greater than the criterion mean value 2.50 indicating that environmental factors such as poor working environment, poor building structure, uncondusive office type, poor lightning, and lack of space among others are sources of work stress. Coincidentally, the result of the study is in line with study of Onowhakpor (2018) that organizational structure and climate alongside intrinsic factors constitute the major sources of occupational stress among workers. Similarly, Collingan et al. (2013) buttressed that the various sources of

occupational stress to include; Work environment includes inadequate arrangement of equipment and materials, increase temperature, lighting problem, lack of space among others, negative workload such as attending to large number of patients at a time, lack of duty scope etc. Isolation, lack of competent staffs, financial pressures such as late payment of wages, poor remuneration. types of hours worked or prolong working time such as work overtime, no shifting, role conflict & role ambiguity, lack of autonomy, career development barriers, difficult relationships with administrators and/or co-workers, managerial bullying such as threat to personal status and employment status, excess work among others, and harassment includes sexual assault among male and female workers, abuse, indecent behaviour among others. The result of the study is in consonance with studies of Daggat, et al (2016) that the major sources of occupational stress among health care providers were dealing with death and dying mean score of 62.94%, uncertainty regarding patient treatment 57.72% and workload 57.6 whereas sexual harassment had 46.19%. This is an indication that occupational stress can be generated from several factors since the job of health care workers is hectic type. Also this study is in credence with studies of Adzakpa et al (2018) that several sources stress among workers are: handling a large number of patients alone (3.51), inadequate staffing level (3.44), lack of break period during shift (3.15), frequent night duty (3.12), lack of opportunity for growth/promotion (2.78) among others. More so, studies of Segal et al. (2010) agreed that some of the major sources of occupational stress include: lack of job security and fear of being laid off; heavy work load and overtime due to staff cutbacks; pressure to perform to meet rising expectations with adequate reward or job satisfaction; role conflicts and unclear expectations; poor or uncomfortable working conditions; lack of control over one's job; inadequate wages/salary or benefits; lack of participation in decision company policies making; poor communication; poor relationships among main agent, co-worker. It is clear that what constitute to occupational stress among workers varies due to the different roles or duties they played at work unit. To this extent, no previous studies disagreed with the findings of this study on sources of occupational stress but the variation with other studies were due to sample size, sources of data, design, and location of the study among others.

Work related Factor and Sources of Stress

The result of this study in table 4 depicted that the grand mean 3.38 was higher or greater than criterion mean of 2.50 revealing that work related factors such as job designation, office role, and time spent, duration at work and difficult personality among others serve as sources of work stress. The result of this study is required because occupational stress depends on the nature of the job an individual is employ to do. The nature of the job could be conflicting, ambiguous, job insecurity, overloading and poorly design may result to physical and psychological reactions that affect quality service and job performance. The result of this study is in keeping with studies of Kim, et al (2018) that occupational stress are more likely to significantly associated with job demand, insufficient job control and lack of reward among workers. Deguchi, et al (2018) buttressed that high level of work stress are due to variance in workload and over 2 times more likely to contribute to work stress among workers. Beh, and Loo (2012) affirmed that job ambiguity, excessive specialization, work overload, inequitable supervisor contribute to loss of concentration, headache, and boredom were the major sources of work stress among workers. Studies of Sparks and Cooper, (2013) agreed that conflict between home and work and the work impact on personal relationships is stressful. Also, physical conditions such as high noise levels, overcrowding in the workplace or a lack of privacy have been associated with stress (Burke, 2014). There were previous studies that contribute with the outcome of the current findings. Hence, work related factors are major sources of work stress among workers.

5. CONCLUSION

This study concluded that the prevalence of stress among civil servants in Bayelsa State was high and the major sources (environmental factor, and work related factor) of occupational stress.

6. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study the researcher recommends that:

1. The management of the organization should take the responsibility of employees' stress conducting stress management and coping programs at the institute level.
2. The organization should start employee motivation programmes, yoga and meditation. If employees are given control the job they perform, there will be job satisfaction and high quality of work, as the employee himself takes the decisions and organizes his work at optimal level.

3. Directors at all levels of the civil service commission, and Employers should truly value the health and the productivity of their workers by documenting the causes/sources of stress affecting workers (recognized employees stressors) at least once in six months to be able to develop the best possible working programmes that reduces workplace stress.
4. The government should also embark on the renovation of many offices with adequate facilities and equipment as well as the training of workers on the operation to improve effectiveness and efficiency.
5. Supervisors should address the issue of workload which was a risk factor in the development of stress at the workplace as identified by the employees.

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