WORKPLACE, WORKLOAD AND STRESS MANAGEMENT IN A PUBLIC ORGANISATION: A CASE STUDY OF UNIVERSITY OF PORT HARCOURT TEACHING HOSPITAL, RIVERS STATE

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INTRODUCTION

The concept of a "workplace" extends beyond just a physical location where employees perform tasks; it is a multifaceted environment that encompasses both tangible and intangible elements affecting employee well-being, performance, and job satisfaction. Physical aspects such as layout, lighting, and ergonomics play a critical role in influencing employee comfort and productivity (Dul & Weerdmeester, 2008). However, the psychosocial dimensions, including organizational culture, interpersonal relationships, and job autonomy, are equally crucial in shaping an employee's experience and overall well-being (Karasek & Theorell, 1990). In today's digital age, the definition of a workplace is evolving, with remote work and flexible schedules challenging the traditional notion of a fixed physical space. Regardless of its form, the workplace serves as a critical ecosystem that can either enable or hinder productivity and satisfaction, thus warranting attention from both employees and employers to optimize its structure and culture for mutual benefit.

The term "workload" refers to the amount of work assigned to an individual or a team within a specific timeframe. While workload is often quantified in terms of tasks or projects, its impact on employees is multifaceted, affecting stress levels, job satisfaction, and overall well-being. Karasek and Theorell's (1990) job demand-control-support model elucidates how high workloads, when paired with low control and low support, can lead to job strain and negative health outcomes. Moreover, excessive workload can also create an imbalance between work and personal life, contributing to burnout and decreased productivity (Schaufeli et al., 2009). It is, therefore, essential for organizations to manage workloads effectively, ensuring that employees are neither underutilized nor overwhelmed. Proper workload management not only enhances employee satisfaction and well-being but also optimizes productivity and operational efficiency. Thus,

organizations should aim for a balanced workload, taking into consideration both the quantitative and qualitative aspects of work, to foster a healthy and productive work environment.

Workplace stress is a widespread concern that has far-reaching implications for both individual employees and the organizations for which they work. Various factors contribute to workplace stress, including but not limited to, excessive workloads, looming deadlines, and conflicts with colleagues or supervisors. Karasek and Theorell's (1990) job demand-control-support model offers valuable insights into how specific job conditions, such as high demands coupled with low control and inadequate support, can lead to increased stress and negative health outcomes. These stressful conditions not only impact an employee's mental and physical health but also have organizational repercussions, such as decreased productivity, increased absenteeism, and higher turnover rates (Schaufeli et al., 2009).

Given the multifaceted impact of stress, effective stress management strategies are crucial for both individual and organizational well-being. Mindfulness-based interventions, for example, have been shown to improve employees' ability to cope with stressful situations (Kabat-Zinn, 2003). By focusing on the present and becoming aware of their reactions, employees can gain better control over their stress responses. Organizational initiatives, like employee wellness programs, can also play a pivotal role in stress management. These programs often incorporate elements like exercise, nutrition, and mental health resources to provide a holistic approach to stress reduction (Chen et al., 2015). Implementing such comprehensive stress management strategies not only benefits individual employees but also contributes to a more engaged, productive, and healthier workforce.

The University of Port Harcourt Teaching Hospital in Rivers State, like many healthcare institutions, faces unique challenges related to workplace dynamics, workload, and stress management. Hospitals are inherently high-stress environments, and the quality of the workplace can significantly influence both healthcare providers and patient outcomes. The physical aspects of the workplace, such as the layout of wards, availability of equipment, and overall cleanliness, are critical components that directly impact the staff's ability to provide effective healthcare services (Dul & Weerdmeester, 2008). Poor ergonomics and inadequate facilities not only hinder performance but can also exacerbate stress levels among the staff, which in turn, can compromise patient care.

Workload is another pressing issue that has direct and indirect repercussions. Healthcare providers in teaching hospitals often juggle multiple roles, from patient care and administrative duties to educational responsibilities. The high workload can lead to burnout and decreased job satisfaction, affecting both the well-being of the healthcare providers and the quality of healthcare services rendered (Schaufeli et al., 2009). When healthcare providers are stretched thin, the risk of medical errors, patient dissatisfaction, and decreased quality of care escalates.

Stress management, therefore, becomes a crucial aspect that organizations like the University of Port Harcourt Teaching Hospital must address proactively. The stress levels among healthcare providers can be elevated due to the emotional intensity of their work, long hours, and the constant need to update their medical knowledge. Strategies like mindfulness and resilience training can offer healthcare providers tools to better cope with high-stress situations (Kabat-Zinn, 2003). These strategies can also lead to better patient outcomes, as healthcare providers who are less stressed are more likely to make accurate diagnoses and offer higher levels of patient care.

Despite the extensive literature on workplace environments and stress management in healthcare settings, there is a noticeable gap when it comes to specialized institutions like teaching hospitals. Most studies focus on general healthcare environments without considering the unique challenges posed by teaching hospitals, such as the dual roles of healthcare providers as both caregivers and educators. There is also a lack of research specifically targeting the experiences of healthcare providers in the Nigerian context, especially in Rivers State. This gap in the literature signifies an urgent need for studies that focus on understanding the specific issues related to workplace, workload, and stress management in teaching hospitals in developing countries. Such studies could provide insights that are culturally and contextually more relevant, thereby leading to more effective interventions. Therefore, it is against the above backdrop that this study was undertaken to fill the identified gaps in scholarship by examining the relationship between workplace, workload and stress management in University of Port Harcourt Teaching Hospital, Rivers State

Objectives of the Study
The following are the objectives of this study:
i.   To ascertain the relationship between workplace and workload and stress
ii.   To find out the effect of stress on the performance of the employees in the workplace
iii.   To find out how employees at UPTH handle stress.
iv.   To proffer solutions to the problems of workload, work place and stress

Hypotheses
The following hypotheses will be tested for this study
i.   There is no nexus between workload and stress among employees in UPTH.
ii.   There is no nexus between stress and job performance of the employees in UPTH.
iii.   The strategies adopted by the employers are not effective in managing stress

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE
Workplace

The concept of the workplace is a complex structure that goes beyond the mere physical location where work gets done. In today's dynamic world, a workplace can be a traditional office, a remote setup, or even a hybrid model. Regardless of the setting, the workplace's physical and psychosocial aspects profoundly impact employees' experiences, behavior, and overall well-being (Vischer, 2007). For example, the physical layout, lighting, and ergonomics significantly influence employee comfort and productivity. Dul and Weerdmeester (2008) emphasize that a well-designed ergonomic environment not only enhances employee comfort but also positively impacts their performance. Moreover, other tangible factors like noise levels and temperature also play a role in shaping the work environment. As Veitch et al. (2007) found, ambient features like lighting and temperature can have a substantial effect on employees' mood and overall job satisfaction.

While the physical environment is undeniably crucial, the psychosocial elements of a workplace should not be overlooked. These include job characteristics, workload, role clarity, social relationships at work, and the overarching organizational culture. According to Karasek and Theorell's (1990) job demand-control-support model, jobs that are high in demands yet offer low control and minimal social support are more likely to result in job strain and adverse health outcomes. In addition to physical and psychosocial factors, technological advancements are also changing the very notion of what constitutes a workplace. As Chen et al. (2015) point out, perceived workplace support, especially in remote settings, is increasingly being associated with employee productivity. The advent of technology has blurred the lines between personal and professional spaces, adding another layer of complexity to what we understand as the workplace. Therefore, understanding the multi-dimensional nature of workplaces is essential for both employers and employees to navigate the challenges and opportunities they present.

Workload

Workload is a complex issue that transcends the simplistic notion of the amount of work assigned to an individual or a team. It encapsulates various dimensions, including task complexity, time pressure, and the emotional demands of the job. In settings like healthcare and academia, high workload can be a major stressor, affecting both the mental well-being of professionals and the quality of care or education provided (Schaufeli et al., 2009). Overwork can also lead to burnout, decreased job satisfaction, and compromised work-life balance. In addition to these negative outcomes, excessive workload can precipitate a decline in organizational effectiveness. As noted by Schaufeli and his colleagues, when professionals are overwhelmed with work, the chances of errors and reduced quality of service escalate, thereby affecting the organization's credibility and efficiency.

While the problems associated with excessive workload are well-documented, there is also a psychological dimension to how workload is perceived. Not all employees experience high workload as stressful; some may find it motivating, especially if they have control over their work and receive adequate social support (Karasek & Theorell, 1990). Furthermore, the concept of "job crafting" suggests that employees can proactively shape their job demands and resources to make their workload more manageable and meaningful (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001). Recently, technological advancements have offered automated solutions to manage workload better. Tools like project management software can allocate resources efficiently, monitor workload in real-time, and even predict future workload scenarios, thus enabling organizations to take proactive measures (Chen et al., 2015). Therefore, while high workload is often seen as detrimental, its impact can vary depending on several factors, including individual perceptions, available resources, and organizational culture.

Concept of Stress

Stress is a ubiquitous phenomenon in modern workplaces, affecting employees across all sectors and positions. It arises from a multitude of factors such as excessive workload, tight deadlines, interpersonal conflicts, and job insecurity. The consequences of stress are far-reaching, impacting not just the individual employee but also the organization as a whole. According to Karasek and Theorell's (1990) job demand-control-support model, jobs characterized by high demands, low control, and low social support contribute significantly to job strain and negative health outcomes. These stressful conditions can lead to decreased productivity, increased absenteeism, and a higher risk of workplace accidents (Schaufeli et al., 2009). Moreover, chronic stress has been linked to a plethora of health issues including hypertension, depression, and cardiovascular diseases. The repercussions extend beyond the immediate work environment, affecting family life and social interactions, thereby contributing to a vicious cycle of stress and its detrimental outcomes.

Managing stress effectively is imperative for both individual well-being and organizational success. Various stress management techniques, ranging from mindfulness to cognitive-behavioral strategies, have been developed to help individuals cope better with stress (Kabat-Zinn, 2003). Mindfulness interventions, in particular, have gained prominence for their effectiveness in reducing stress by enhancing emotional regulation and promoting a focus on the present moment. On an organizational level, introducing employee wellness programs that incorporate stress management techniques can have a positive impact on the workforce (Chen et al., 2015). These programs often include elements like exercise, nutrition, and mental health resources, providing a holistic approach to stress management. However, for these interventions to be effective, organizational culture and leadership play a crucial role. Leaders who acknowledge the importance of employee well-being and actively promote a healthy work-life balance contribute significantly to reducing workplace stress. Given the complex interplay of individual, job-related, and organizational factors that contribute to stress, a multi-pronged approach to stress management is essential. Effective stress management is not just an individual responsibility but a collective endeavor that requires concerted efforts from employees, managers, and organizations.

Workplace, Workload and Stress Management

The workplace, as a structured environment where professional activities occur, has evolved to become a complex ecosystem. It's no longer just a physical space but also a web of relationships, technologies, and cultural norms. This intricate setting has a profound impact on employee well-being, job satisfaction, and overall performance (Vischer, 2007). From an ergonomics standpoint, the workplace layout, equipment, lighting, and other physical factors can either enhance or impair employee productivity (Dul & Weerdmeester, 2008). Moreover, the rise of remote work has blurred the lines between professional and personal spaces, adding another layer of complexity to the concept of the workplace (Chen et al., 2015). Consequently, organizations must navigate these multi-dimensional aspects to create a conducive environment that fosters productivity and well-being.

Workload, another critical aspect, is a double-edged sword. On one hand, a reasonable workload can provide a sense of purpose and motivation. On the other hand, excessive workload is often detrimental, leading to stress, burnout, and decreased job satisfaction (Schaufeli et al., 2009). The effects of workload are not limited to individual employees; they ripple through the organization, affecting operational efficiency, quality of service, and even the organization's reputation. High workload often results from poor resource allocation, unclear job roles, and inefficient processes. Organizations can employ various strategies to manage workload effectively. Tools like project management software can help in allocating resources, setting realistic timelines, and tracking progress, thus reducing the stress associated with high workload (Chen et al., 2015).

Stress and stress management in the workplace have garnered considerable attention, particularly because of the pervasive nature of stress and its far-reaching implications. According to Karasek and Theorell (1990), jobs that present high demands, low control, and minimal social support are likely to induce stress and lead to negative health outcomes. Stress not only affects the individual employee's health and well-being but also has organizational repercussions such as increased absenteeism, reduced productivity, and higher turnover rates. Effective stress management techniques like mindfulness interventions have shown promise in reducing workplace stress (Kabat-Zinn, 2003). Employee wellness programs that offer a comprehensive approach to stress management by incorporating physical fitness, mental health resources, and nutrition can also contribute significantly to reducing stress (Chen et al., 2015).

Relationship between Workload and Stress

The relationship between workload and stress is intricate, often exhibiting a cause-and-effect dynamic that extends to both individual and organizational levels. Workload, defined as the amount and complexity of tasks assigned to an individual or team, can serve as a potent stressor when mismanaged. According to the job demand-control-support model by Karasek and Theorell (1990), jobs that impose high demands (e.g., excessive workload), offer low control, and provide inadequate social support tend to generate high levels of stress. This stress can manifest as physical symptoms like headaches and fatigue, psychological issues such as anxiety and depression, and behavioral outcomes like absenteeism and reduced performance. In essence, excessive workload amplifies stress by creating a work environment characterized by pressure and a lack of control. As noted by Schaufeli et al. (2009), this often leads to burnout, characterized by emotional exhaustion, cynicism, and decreased professional efficacy, which further hampers productivity and engagement in the workplace.

However, the relationship between workload and stress is not entirely linear or uniform across different job roles and individuals. Some individuals may find high workload motivating and challenging rather than stressful, especially if they have control over their work and sufficient resources to manage the demands (Karasek & Theorell, 1990). This subjective experience of workload and stress underscores the importance of individual differences, such as coping strategies, personality traits, and personal life circumstances, in moderating this relationship. Recent research has also pointed out that "job crafting," where employees proactively adapt their job demands and resources, can be an effective way to manage workload and reduce stress (Wrzesniewski & Dutton, 2001). The implication is that both employees and organizations can take active roles in shaping workload to minimize stress.

Nexus between Stress and Job Performance

The connection between stress and job performance is a nuanced and multifaceted relationship that has garnered significant attention in organizational psychology and human resource management. Stress, often defined as a psychological response to environmental demands or pressures, can have both deleterious and facilitative effects on job performance. On the negative side, stress can lead to cognitive impairments, including reduced attention, memory, and problem-solving skills, thereby affecting job performance adversely (Kahneman, 1973). High-stress levels have also been shown to contribute to burnout, a syndrome characterized by emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and a diminished sense of personal accomplishment, which in turn leads to reduced productivity and effectiveness at work (Maslach & Jackson, 1981). Furthermore, stress can exacerbate physical health problems, leading to increased absenteeism and a decline in performance (Goetzel et al., 2004).

However, not all stress is bad. The Yerkes-Dodson Law suggests an inverted-U relationship between stress and performance, implying that moderate levels of stress can enhance performance up to a certain point (Yerkes & Dodson, 1908). This phenomenon is often referred to as "eustress," which can serve as a motivational force that drives individuals to meet deadlines, reach targets, and accomplish tasks efficiently. Some degree of stress can increase alertness, focus, and energy, enabling employees to perform at their peak. This aligns with the idea of "flow," a mental state of complete immersion and engagement in an activity, often facilitated by a balanced level of challenge and skill (Csikszentmihalyi, 1990). Therefore, stress, when managed appropriately, can act as a catalyst for superior performance.

Several moderating variables affect the relationship between stress and job performance, such as individual differences, job characteristics, and organizational culture. Personality traits like emotional intelligence and resilience can influence how stress impacts an individual's performance (Salovey & Mayer, 1990). Moreover, job autonomy, role clarity, and social support can serve as buffers against the detrimental effects of stress (Karasek & Theorell, 1990). Organizational interventions, including stress management programs and wellness initiatives, have also shown efficacy in mitigating stress and thereby improving performance (Chen et al., 2015).

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The study sought to empirically establish a connection between stress and employee performance, utilizing the "conservation of resources theory" as its foundation. As articulated by Hobfoll, Halbesleben, Neven, and Westman (2018), this theory revolves around the human inclination to not only maintain their current resources but also to pursue new ones. The introduction of this concept aimed to enrich the existing literature on workplace stress. The underlying premise is that individuals actively work to acquire, retain, foster, and protect what they hold dear.

This theory, as put forth by its advocates, rests on four core principles. Firstly, it posits that the value of maintaining existing resources is as critical, if not more so, than acquiring new ones. Here, resources can be tangible, like cars, work tools, and money, or intangible, like knowledge, seniority, and personal attributes. The second principle suggests that individuals must expend resources to safeguard them, recover from losses, and amass additional resources. Thirdly, the greater the resources employees have access to, the more they contribute to the organization. This is reflected in companies offering rewards to motivate heightened performance. The final principle emphasizes that when individuals feel their resources are being depleted or stretched thin, they become defensive, often acting in ways that can be confrontational or irrational.

In essence, this theory posits that stress arises when individuals perceive threats to their essential resources, which they deem crucial for their well-being or self-worth. Such threats might emerge from factors like excessive work demands, unsuitable work settings, or poor communication between different organizational levels. Given these foundational beliefs, this theory was selected to steer our research.

Study Area

The University of Port Harcourt Teaching Hospital (UPTH) is a major teaching hospital affiliated with the University of Port Harcourt in Rivers State, Nigeria. The hospital serves as a center for medical research and training, providing opportunities for medical students, residents, and other healthcare professionals to gain practical experience in various fields of medicine. The institution often collaborates with the university's College of Health Sciences to offer students a well-rounded educational experience that combines theoretical knowledge with hands-on clinical practice (upthng.com). Students at various levels of their medical education, from undergraduates to postgraduates, engage in rotations through different departments of the hospital, gaining exposure to a wide range of medical conditions and treatment protocols.

The UPTH aims to provide high-quality healthcare services to the people of Port Harcourt and the surrounding regions. It offers a range of medical services across various specialties, including surgery, internal medicine, obstetrics and gynecology, pediatrics, radiology, and more (upthng.com). As a teaching hospital, it is often equipped with relatively advanced medical equipment and has a staff comprised of experienced clinicians who are also academically inclined. This contributes to its role as a center for medical research and professional development.

METHODOLOGY AND SETTING

The research took place at UPTH, encompassing the entire staff of the teaching hospital as its potential sample. To achieve a representative subset, a straightforward random sampling method was employed, ultimately selecting 400 respondents from UPTH. To facilitate this, Yes/No slips were randomly picked from a basket by groups of four from each department. Those who selected 'Yes' were included in the respondent group, and this process continued until the desired sample size was achieved. Data collection for the study was multifaceted, employing questionnaires, oral interviews, and archival resources.

The questionnaire, integral to the study, comprised 20 items derived from the research hypotheses. It utilized a Likert scale, prompting respondents to indicate their perspectives using Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Strongly Disagree (SD), and Disagree (D) as possible responses. The z-test of mean was chosen for data analysis. To ensure a comprehensive understanding of stress management across various employment levels, questionnaires were disseminated among senior and junior staff, department heads, supervisors, and even casual workers. Out of the distributed questionnaires, 340 were adequately completed and returned, providing a solid base for analysis and potential generalizations.

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Data Presentation and Discussion
Hypothesis I

There is no nexus between workload and stress among employees in UPTH

Description of Items	SA 4	A 3	SD 2	D 1	Total Responses
Item 4	150	130	36	24	340
Item 5	200	100	22	18	340

Item 6	180	140	12	8	340
Total frequency	530	370	70	50	1020
∑ Ranks x frequency	2120	1110	140	50	3420

Sources: Fieldwork 2019

Formula:

∑Ranks x frequency

Total Responses (n)

= $\frac{3420}{1020}$ = 3.35

x = 3

Decision: Accept the hypothesis if the computed value is greater than the critical value, otherwise reject it. Base on the above analyses we reject the hypothesis which states that there is no nexus between workload and stress among employees in UPTH. This implies that there is a nexus between workload and stress among employees in UPTH. The rejection of the null hypothesis positing no linkage between workload and stress among employees at UPTH aligns coherently with existing empirical studies in the literature. One seminal research is that of Bakker, Demerouti, and Schaufeli (2005), who empirically demonstrated that job demands, particularly workload, are strongly linked to stress levels and burnout among employees. Their study extends a robust validation of the UPTH findings, signifying that a high workload is a significant contributor to stress (Bakker, Demerouti, & Schaufeli, 2005). Also, the study of Dwamena (2012) who asserts that stress affects three major aspects of human life that constitutes huge implication on job performance… stresses have psychological, behavioural and physiological impacts on the employees, job performance as well as their social lives. Furthermore, the work by Sonnentag and Frese (2012) comprehensively examines the antecedents of workplace stress and identifies workload as a critical factor. Through a systematic analysis, they found that an increased workload directly correlates with elevated stress levels, thereby adversely impacting both physical and mental health (Sonnentag & Frese, 2012). Another study that bears mentioning is by LePine, Podsakoff, and LePine (2005). They postulate that workload and role ambiguity significantly contribute to employee stress and, consequently, reduced organizational commitment. This study validates the assertion by UPTH that workload has a nexus with stress among its employees (LePine, Podsakoff, & LePine, 2005).

Lastly, Cavanaugh, Boswell, Roehling, and Boudreau (2000) provide compelling evidence that workload, coupled with time pressures, dramatically increases stress levels, which in turn influences turnover intentions. Their conclusions harmonize with the UPTH findings, further confirming that excessive workload manifests as a stressor for employees (Cavanaugh, Boswell, Roehling, & Boudreau, 2000).

In sum, these empirical studies corroborate the conclusions drawn from the UPTH study, thereby collectively accentuating that there is a tangible and impactful relationship between workload and stress among employees.

Hypothesis II

There is no nexus between stress and job performance of the employees in UPTH

Description of Items	SA 4	A 3	SD 2	D 1	Total Responses
Item 7	140	160	20	20	340
Item 8	196	120	10	14	340
Item 9	188	124	18	10	340
Frequency	524	404	48	44	1020
∑ Ranks x frequency	2096	1212	96	44	3448

Sources: Fieldwork 2019

Formula:

∑Ranks x frequency

Total Responses (n)

= $\frac{3448}{1020}$ = 3.33

= 3

Decision: Accept the hypothesis if the computed value is greater than the critical value, otherwise reject it.

Based on the above analysis we reject the hypothesis which states that there is no nexus between stress and job performance of the employees in UPTH. This implies that there is a nexus between stress and job performance of the employees in UPTH. Moreover, the intricate interplay between workplace stress and job performance has been extensively scrutinized by notable scholars, thereby corroborating the refutation of the null hypothesis in the study. Among the seminal research in this domain is the comprehensive study by Ganster and Rosen (2013). Their work unambiguously elucidates a negative correlation between elevated stress levels and workforce productivity, thereby reinforcing the argument that stress is inimical to optimal job performance.

Also, the present study confirms the research of Pantang (2007) who asserts that;

> … job performance is a human behaviour, the result of which is an important factor for individual work effectiveness evaluation… It could be inferred that organizations' success or failure depends on job performance of the individuals in that organization.

Additionally, the pioneering study by Kahn and Byosiere (1992) warrants attention. Their investigative lens focused on stressors such as role conflict and ambiguity, unearthing their detrimental impact not only on job satisfaction but also on performance metrics. This study resonates with the empirical evidence from UPTH, further emphasizing the cascading consequences of stress on multiple facets of employee well-being and organizational output. Lastly, a targeted examination of stress dynamics within the blue-collar sector has been astutely conducted by Melamed et al. (1995). Their work suggests that stress levels possess a direct, adverse relationship with job performance, especially in tasks demanding high cognitive involvement. As stress intensifies, the discernible decline in productivity emerges, corroborating the data that stem from the UPTH research.

In sum, these comprehensive empirical studies collectively serve as compelling corroborative evidence for the rejected hypothesis at UPTH. They unequivocally underscore that stress is a critical determinant negatively affecting job performance, thereby extending the scholarly consensus on this pervasive organizational issue.

CONCLUSION

In light of the empirical data amassed and analyzed, this study unambiguously refutes the initial hypotheses, which posited a lack of correlation between workload and stress, as well as between stress and job performance, among employees of UPTH. The findings indicate that not only does a substantive nexus exist between workload and stress, but stress also manifestly impacts the job performance within the organizational context under scrutiny.

The implications of these findings are manifold and substantively consequential. They underscore the imperativeness of systematic and strategic workload management as a substantive component of stress mitigation within organizations. Poorly managed workloads invariably amplify stress levels, which, in turn, compromise employee performance and overall organizational productivity. Thus, it is incumbent upon management to instigate and sustain proactive strategies for workload allocation, balanced against individual employee capacities, to engender a conducive work environment. Furthermore, the clear link between stress and diminished job performance accentuates the necessity for robust stress management programs, which may encompass mindfulness training, counseling services, and workload assessments, among other initiatives.

In summary, this study serves as an evidence-based clarion call for a more integrative approach to workload and stress management within organizations. Such an approach is not merely beneficial but essential for the sustained productivity and well-being of the workforce.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are posited:

1) Organizations should actively address stress by curbing excessive workloads. Additionally, frequent consultations with medical and psychological professionals can provide guidance on best practices for stress management.
2) Employers should regularly evaluate the degree of hazards an employee faces in their role. Upon identifying these risks, measures should be put in place to mitigate the potential harm or stress they may cause.
3) Organizational leadership must recognize that insufficient managerial policies can severely hinder performance, amplifying stress levels. Effective and clear policies at the managerial level are essential for maintaining a harmonious and productive work environment.
4) A multitude of factors play into an employee's performance and stress levels. Elements like an individual's intellectual and physical capacities, qualifications, training, experience, the organizational culture, reward mechanisms, prospects for career advancement, behavior of colleagues, the balance of authority and responsibility, workload, and the overall organizational structure all impact employee performance and stress. Recognizing and adjusting these variables can lead to improved performance and reduced stress.
5) Lastly, organizations should strive to foster an environment that promotes optimal output from its employees while ensuring their well-being by minimizing stressors. This balanced approach not only benefits the employees but also enhances the overall productivity and morale of the organization.

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