

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN OCCUPATIONAL STRESS AND JOB SATISFACTION AMONG TEACHERS IN TANZANIAN PUBLIC PRIMARY SCHOOLS

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Abstract

This study examined the relationship between occupational stress and job satisfaction among teachers in Tanzania public secondary schools. The study used a sample of 618 teachers from 51 public schools located in Morogoro Municipality. Multiple regression analysis was used which involved stress related to working conditions, stress related to leadership and stress related to workload as independent variables. Age, gender and education level were used as control variables. It was found that stress related to working environment ($\beta = -.198, p = .001$), stress related to leadership ($\beta = -.141, p = .015$) and stress related to workload ($\beta = -.270, p = .042$) have a significant negative relationship with job satisfaction. Two control variables; gender (female) ($\beta = -1.735, p = .000$) and education level ($\beta = -.501, p = .046$) were also found to have a significant negative relationship with job satisfaction while age ($\beta = .705, p = .004$) was found to have a significant positive relationship. The study recommends provision of leadership training to heads, deputy heads and all people holding leadership positions in public primary schools, employing more teachers in schools, allocation of manageable workloads to teachers and improvement of teachers' working environment to help them increasing job satisfaction.

Keywords: *Job satisfaction, occupational stress, job related stress, school leadership, working conditions.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Stress has been drawing attention of many scholars due to its effects on individual and organizational performance. It is one of the most dangerous issues in the working place if it is not properly managed (Yeboah-Kordee, Amponsah-Tawiah, Adu, & Ashie, 2018). Ahmed and Ramzam (2013) remind that for the past decades stress has been increasingly becoming more problematic. Mohajan (2012) defines stress as body's physical and emotional reaction that frightens, irritates, confuses, endangers, or excites us and places demands on our bodies. It can be a result of both negative and positive experiences.

The role of teachers in all education levels cannot be underestimated. Although all professions can be perceived to be equally important for the human development, teaching is the profession which has been facilitating success of many people in different areas of life (Solmon, Robinson & Cathrine, 2017). However, teaching profession is currently becoming a more challenging profession in the world due to the effects of stress that educators are increasingly facing (Parray, Kumar & Awasthi, 2016). Job satisfaction among teachers in Tanzania has not been satisfactorily researched and few researchers studied the area have largely been associating it with remuneration (Nyamubi, 2017; Msuya, 2016; Paulo, 2015). There is lack of sufficient empirical evidence on the relationship between occupational stress and job satisfaction among primary school teachers in Tanzania. Job satisfaction has something to do with how one feels about his or her job and therefore it is associated with the extent to which job holders like their jobs. Javen, Balouch and Hassan (2014) argue that job satisfaction is the result of assessment of

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various features of work and the workplace a particular person is currently in. According to Baluyos, Rivera and Baluyos (2019) job satisfaction has a positive effect on overall commitment of employees and productivity of schools. The teachers' job satisfaction has an ability to significantly influence their commitment to their respective schools. This study sought to establish the relationship between occupational stress and job satisfaction among teachers in Tanzanian public primary schools and identify the coping strategies used by the teachers in dealing with occupational stress.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

This study was guided by two-factor theory. The theory was developed by Frederick Herzberg in 1959 following his study which was done to 200 engineers and accountants aiming at understanding employees' feelings towards their jobs (Tan & Waheed, 2011). The study concluded that there are two sets of factors which may lead to either satisfaction or dissatisfaction which are motivating factors (satisfiers) and hygiene factors (dissatisfiers) respectively. Yussof, Kian and Idris (2013) describe that motivating factors are those intrinsic factors that will increase employees' job satisfaction. On the other hand, hygiene factors are extrinsic factors which can prevent employees' dissatisfaction. According to the theory absence of hygiene factors leads to dissatisfaction but their presence does not necessarily lead to satisfaction or higher motivation among employees. On the other hand, absence of motivating factors (satisfiers) does not necessarily lead to dissatisfaction but their presence leads to satisfaction or higher motivation (Dartey-Baah & Amoako, 2011).

The literature suggests the existence of an inverse relationship between stress and job satisfaction, this implies that as occupational stress increases job satisfaction decreases. Moreover, employees who are not satisfied with their jobs become less efficient (Manzoor, Usman, Naseem & Shafiq, 2011). This implies that occupational stress does not only affect individual employees but also organizations at large since organizational performance depends on individual performance. Job satisfaction is also linked with organizational citizenship behaviour, employee commitment and absenteeism (Hans, Mubeen, Khan, & Al Said, 2014).

Koros, Momanyi and Chakua (2018) conducted a study among primary school teachers in Kenya which investigated the impact of occupational stress on their job satisfaction. The study did not only find adverse effect of occupational stress on job satisfaction, it also revealed that the majority of Kenyan teachers do not enjoy the teaching profession and if they would be given another job they would leave the teaching profession. According to the study which was done by Kanene (2016) in Choma District, Southern Province of Zambia it was found that teachers were experiencing a moderate level of stress that was associated with work related stressors, professional distress, discipline and motivation, time management and professional investment. Further, stress was accelerated by other factors such as slow career progression, perception of low status and lack of respect for their job, inadequate salary and lack of recognition for what they were doing.

The study of Mohamed (2018) which involved a sample of 103 teachers in Turkey sought to study sources of occupational stress among teachers. Nature of work, relations with others, physical work environment, social and educational relations, wages and incentives were found to be the top stressors that teachers were experiencing. Azhan, Majid, Marzuki, Majid (2016) found that stress that teachers in Terengganu, Malaysia were experiencing was related to poor behaviour of students and workload. However, there was an inverse relationship between supervisory support and teachers' stress levels. This study informs that, in order to deal with stress it is important for management to ensure the supervisory role is well played by immediate supervisors of school teachers. The study by Margaret, Simon and Sabina (2010) which was

done in Kenya, found out that workload, long working hours, inadequate teaching materials, poor living conditions and low salary were the most stressful factors at their working places. Different studies found different ways that teachers normally use in coping with stress. The study of Aydin and Kaya (2016) which was done in Turkey among teachers working in private elementary schools found that looking at things from positive side, spending time with beloved ones and creating an environment to spend time with them were the major strategies used. A study by Osagie (2018) done in Nigeria using a random sample of 308 found that, teachers in Edo state use a combination of various stress coping strategies to help them dealing with stress. These strategies included receiving emotional support from other people, to see the situation in different perspective, accepting responsibility to deal with the stressful situation, finding comfort or solution through prayers and consumption of substances like stimulants or pain killers. Further, the study found that stress had something to do with low job satisfaction of teachers.

3. STUDY METHODS

This study used a cross-sectional survey which included 51 public primary schools located in Morogoro Municipality. Cross-sectional survey examines information of many cases at one point in time which creates a ‘snapshot’ of a social life (Neuman, 2014). The study used a standardized questionnaire to collect data from a sample of 618 teachers. The study involved inferential statistics to establish the relationship between occupational stress and job satisfaction of primary school teachers through the use of multiple linear regression analysis. Data analysis was done with an assistance of computer software, SPSS version 21.

Multiple regression analysis is a method which is used to estimate the unknown value of a dependent variable from the known value of two or more independent variables. Multiple regression approach helps to predict the value of Y for given values of $X_1, X_2 \dots X_k$ (Singh & Masuku, 2013). Independent variables included in the analysis were stress related to working conditions, stress related to leadership and stress related to workload. Gender, age and education level were used as control variables. The study tested the following model:

$$JS = \beta_0 + \beta_1 WCS + \beta_2 LS + \beta_3 WLS + \beta_4 GEN + \beta_5 AGE + \beta_6 EDU + \epsilon \dots \dots \dots (1)$$

Where

JS= Job Satisfaction

β_0 = constant (coefficient of intercept)

WCS = Stress related to working conditions

LS = Stress related to leadership

WLS = Stress related to workload

GEN = Gender

AGE = Age

EDU= Education Level

$\beta_0 - \beta_6$ = Regression coefficient of five variables

ϵ = Error term

4. FINDINGS

4.1 Validity and Reliability of Research Instrument

Reliability and validity are the two most important and fundamental features in the evaluation of any measurement instrument or tool for a good research (Mohajan, 2017). Reliability measures stability or internal consistency of an instrument in measuring certain concepts (Jackson, 2003). Cronbach’s alpha was calculated to test the reliability of the instrument for each variable involved in the study. Cronbach’s alpha was found to be 0.74, 0.79, 0.754 and 0.81 for stress related to working conditions, leadership, workload, and job satisfaction respectively. Mugenda (2003) informs that a coefficient of 0.70 or above signifies a high degree of reliability. This

implies that the instrument used in the study had high degree of reliability. Validity explains how well the collected data covers the actual area of investigation (Ghauri & Gronhaug, 2005). Validity basically means “measure what is intended to be measured” (Field, 2005). In order to ensure the questionnaire for data collection was valid, the tool was given to two experts; one statistician and one researcher in the field of human resource management. The tool was improved based on comments offered by the experts. Further, a pilot study which involved 50 teachers was done. The pilot exercise helped to correct errors and mistakes detected in the questionnaire especially in sentences that were not well understood by the respondents.

Table 1: Coefficients of Cronbach’s Alpha

	No. of items	Cronbach’s Alpha
Stress Related to Working Conditions	4	.740
Stress Related to Leadership	4	.790
Stress Related to Workload	3	.754
Job Satisfaction	7	.810

4.2 Demographic characteristics of the respondents

The study involved a total of 618 respondents who had different characteristics as presented in table 2. Out of 618 respondents 130 were male (21%) while 488 (79%) were female. The study included respondents of different age categories. Four (4) respondents (0.7%) were of age ranging from 18 to 22 years, 182 (29%) of age ranging 23 to 33 years, 266 respondents (43%) were of age ranging from 34 to 44 years. Other 148 respondents (23.9%) were of age ranging from 45 to 55 years and 18 respondents (2.9%) were above 55 years. The study had 56 respondents (9.1%) who were single and 562 (90.9%) who were married. In regard to education level 248 (40.1%) were of certificate level, 246 (39.8%) were of diploma level, 118 (19.1%) were of bachelor’s degree level, and 6 (1%) of master’s degree level.

Table 2: Demographic characteristics of the respondents

Characteristic	Category	Frequency (%)
Gender	Male	130 (21%)
	Female	488 (79%)
Age	18-22 Years	4 (0.7%)
	23-33 Years	182 (29.5%)
	34-44 Years	266 (43%)
	45-55 Years	148 (23.9%)
	Above 55 Years	18 (2.9%)
Marital Status	Single	56 (9.1%)
	Married	562 (90.9%)
Education level	Certificate	248 (40.1%)
	Diploma	246 (39.8%)
	Bachelor’s Degree	118 (19.1%)
	Master’s Degree	6 (1%)

4.3 Model Summary

The model summary in table 3 indicates that correlation coefficient value $r = 0.279$ which means that the independent variables together are relatively good predictors of job satisfaction. Moreover, $r^2 = .578$ suggests that 57.7% variation in job satisfaction is explained by the independent variables included in the model. This means 42.3% of the variation is explained by other factors not studied.

Table 3: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.279 ^a	.578	.067	4.752

a. Predictors: (Constant), Working experience, Stress Related to Workload, Education Level, Gender, Age, Stress Related to Working conditions, Stress Related to Leadership

Table 4 shows that stress related to working environment ($\beta = -.198$, $p = .001$), stress related to leadership ($\beta = -.141$, $p = .015$) and stress related to workload ($\beta = -.270$, $p = .042$) have a significant negative relationship with job satisfaction. Further, two control variables gender (female) ($\beta = -1.735$, $p = .000$) and education level ($\beta = -.501$, $p = .046$) were also found to have a significant negative relationship with job satisfaction while age ($\beta = .705$, $p = .004$) was found to have a significant positive relationship.

Table 4: The estimated Coefficients^a

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
(Constant)	20.949	1.137		18.433	.000
Gender	-1.735	.479	-.144	-3.623	.000
Age	.705	.244	.118	2.895	.004
Education Level	-.501	.251	-.079	-1.999	.046
1 Stress Related to Working conditions	-.198	.057	-.164	-3.491	.001
Stress Related to Leadership	-.141	.058	-.128	-2.446	.015
Stress Related to Workload	-.270	.133	-.114	2.036	.042
Working experience	-.202	.081	-.100	-2.492	.013

a. Dependent Variable: Job Satisfaction

4.4. Stress management strategies

The study sought to identify stress management strategies employed by primary school teachers. Time management was found to be the most preferred strategy followed by spending time with families, taking regular physical exercises and sharing problems with colleagues. The use of alcohol was found not to be preferred by the teachers with 1.55 weighted mean score which signifies disagreement.

Table 5: Stress Management Strategies Adopted by Teachers

	Mean		Std. Deviation
	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic
I organize my time effectively	3.78	.040	.990
Spending leisure time at home with family	3.59	.051	1.259
Taking regular physical exercises	3.47	.046	1.154
I share my problems with my colleagues	3.38	.048	1.206
I take alcohol as strategy to deal with stress	1.55	.043	1.060

5. DISCUSSION

The study found a negative relationship between stress related to working conditions and job satisfaction. This implies that the worse the working environment the lower the job satisfaction experienced by primary school teachers. These findings are consistent with those of various studies including that of Kumar and Singh (2012) which found a strong relationship between working conditions of teachers and their satisfaction. According to Taylor and Tashakkari (1995), workplace condition is important in making employees happy and able to work well with their colleagues. When employees are not satisfied with their work, they are more likely to become less committed and will probably look for other opportunities elsewhere.

Further, the current study found that when stress related to leadership increases primary school teachers experience lower job satisfaction. This finding is consistent with what Herzberg's two factor theory propounded since leadership falls under the hygiene factors and the theory postulates that these factors may prevent employees from being dissatisfied and therefore when leadership does not lead to unmanageable level of stress teachers may be prevented from disliking their job. The study which was carried out by Ali and Dahie (2015) in Somalia found that leadership styles affect job satisfaction of secondary school teachers in the country. Similarly, the study of Machumu and Kaitila (2014) which was done in Morogoro and Songea districts in Tanzania found a positive relationship between democratic leadership style and teachers' job satisfaction. Democratic style was found to be dominant in best performing schools. This implies that, teachers who experience the right leadership style are more likely to have higher level of job satisfaction than those who do not.

This study found that stress related to workload negatively affects teachers' job satisfaction. The findings are consistent with those of Usman and Kabir (2019) which found a negative relationship between workload and job satisfaction of teachers in public secondary schools in Kaduna Metropolis in Nigeria. Further, the study of Mbogo (2015) which was done in Kenya found that when teachers handle manageable workload leads to teachers' commitment and loyalty to the job. Regarding stress coping strategies that teachers resort to, this study confirm what other studies found including that of Aydin and Kaya (2016) and Osagie (2018). The use of alcohol was found to be the least strategy used and it has been proven to be one of the most harmful and unhealthy strategies to be used for coping with stress by numerous studies including Yikealo and Tareke (2018); Baqutayan (2015); and Mphele, Gralewski and Balogun (2013).

6. CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study found job satisfaction to be the function of working conditions, leadership and workload. Further, stress related to working environment, leadership and workload have a significant negative relationship with job satisfaction. Considering the role of job satisfaction on employee commitment, motivation, loyalty and performance the situation needs serious attention. Stress has been a challenge that many people across all sectors face but its effects in education sector require special attention to enable effective learning process for students. If this problem is not addressed the quality of education that students receive in the public schools is put into jeopardy.

This study recommends the following; improvement of working conditions through provision of necessary resources, formulating and implementing policies intending to offer supportive working environment for teachers in public schools. This may help to avoid unnecessary occupational stress and hence increase employee commitment, loyalty, performance and job satisfaction. Leaders in public primary schools should be offered capacity building training on leadership to improve their leadership knowledge and skills. This will ultimately reduce stress that teachers are experiencing due to lack of proper leadership in primary schools. In order to deal with stress related to workload more teachers should be employed in public schools. Also, the government through the Ministry of education should consider transferring teachers from schools where the problem of insufficient manpower is not relatively big to schools where the problem is more critical. Moreover, allocation of manageable workloads to teachers should be considered. Teachers in public schools should be offered with necessary skills needed for effective stress management. This will help them to understand and use adaptive stress coping strategies and increase job satisfaction.

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