

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

**OCCUPATIONAL STRESS AND EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE: THE
CASE OF CAPE COAST TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY**

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UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

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CASE OF CAPE COAST TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY

BY

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DECLARATION

Candidate's Declaration

I hereby declare that this dissertation is the result of my own original work and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this university or elsewhere.

Candidate's Signature..... Date.....

Name: Evelyn Bartels

Supervisor's Declaration

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of the dissertation were supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision laid down by the University of Cape Coast.

Supervisor's Signature..... Date.....

Name: Dr. (Mrs.) Abigail Opoku Mensah

ABSTRACT

The study examined the effect of occupational stress on the performance of academic professionals at the Cape Coast Technical University within the Central Region of Ghana. Based on the conservation of resource (COR) theory, the study also assessed the sources of occupational stress and determinants of academic professional's performance. The study adopted the quantitative approach and explanatory research design. Using the Krejcie and Morgan (1970) sample size determination table, the study randomly sampled 113 members from the population size of 260 academic staff of the technical university. Structured questionnaires were used to obtain data from the respondents and processed using the IBM SPSS Statistics version 24. Using the mean, standard deviation scores and regression analysis, the study found task performance as the major and highest determinant of employee performance. Also, occupational stress was found to have a significant negative relationship with employee performance at the technical university. It was concluded that, occupational stress is a key contributor of poor performance among the academic staff of the technical university. The study recommended that management should adopt innovative strategies geared towards reducing occupational stress at the institution in order to enhance employee performance levels.

KEYWORDS

Occupational stress

Employee performance

Cape Coast Technical University

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DEDICATION

To my family.

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

CCTU	Cape Coast Technical University
TTU	Takoradi Technical University
OS	Occupational Stress
EP	Employee Performance
COR	Conservation of Resource

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Human resource is regarded as the backbone of organisations. Arguably, their performances primarily determine the success or failure of an organisation (Wagstaff, Hings, Larner & Fletcher, 2018). However, the present environment within which they work demand organisations to analyse their structures and processes (Johnson & Sohi, 2014; Davenport & Hall, 2011). Studies have proven that, academic institutions in most developed countries are abreast with employees' performance indicators and as such, have implemented strategies to positively influence them (Karunanithy & Ponnampalam, 2013; Lewin, 2009). This has invariably induced academic staff (lecturers, administrative staff) in such countries to perform beyond expectations thus contributing to the exceptional performances of their tertiary institutions (Franco-Santos & Doherty, 2017; Bodla, Hussain & Chen, 2014). On the other hand, the educational system in developing countries including Ghana have struggled to live up to expectations in spite of continuous restructuring exercises (Fafunwa, 2018, Perraton, 2012). It is on this note that the study examines occupational stress and employee performance at Cape Coast Technical University (CCTU).

Background to the Study

The immense contributions of human resource to the survival and development of any organisation across the globe can never be overemphasized (Dlamini, 2015). This is because, human resources use their capabilities and efforts to meet organisational goals (D'Netto, Shen, Chelliah & Monga, 2014;

Negussie & Demissie, 2013). Hafiza, Jamsheed, Shah and Zaman (2011) stressed that, achieving organisational goals primarily lie on the capabilities in terms of knowledge, skills, abilities and experiences of human resource (employees) which are evidenced in their performances. It is, therefore, imperative for organisations to attract and retain quality human resource by identifying and addressing the various challenges they could be exposed to.

According to Kshirsagar and Waghale (2014), organisations primarily expect their employees to perform at their maximum best to help attain organisational goals. However, the competitive and dynamic nature of modern working environments have exposed employees to various issues, which could negatively impact on their individual and organisational performances (Elmadag & Ellinger, 2017). Notable among these issues include occupational stress as result of role ambiguities, excessive job demands, work life imbalance and role conflicts (Kshirsagar & Waghale, 2014). Stress, in recent years, have risen across all spheres of life, especially in the workplace (Ajas & Jayaraju, 2020; Rangriz & Pashootanzadeh, 2014). It has become a widespread phenomenon with far-reaching practical and economic consequences (Amfo-Otu & Agyemang, 2017; Dar, Akmai, Naseem & Khan, 2011).

Samartha and Begum (2014) suggested that, occupational stress occurs when individuals interact with available resources as well as sources of demand within their environments. This is in line with the conservation of resource (COR) theory which suggests that within a working environment, an individual (employee) may feel stressed up if resources are not made readily available to them (Wright & Hobfoll, 2004). The COR further suggests that the absence of resources would make an individual struggle to positively interact with his/her

environment and this could lead to job stress (Westman, Hobfoll, Chen, Davidson & Laski, 2004). According to the theory, job stress occurs when employees perceive threat of resource loss, an actual or real resource loss and resource shortages.

Rangris and Pashootanzadeh (2014) also posited that job stress is predominantly caused by mismatch between individuals and their work roles. Stressful situations result in emotional reactions ranging from exhilaration to anxiety, anger, discouragement and depression (Amfo-Otu & Agyemang, 2017). Stress is the result of a mismatch between the challenges experienced by an individual and the belief in his/her ability to cope (Samartha & Begum, 2014; Kavitha & Chandra, 2009). The challenges may result from external sources or from within the individual. Others consider the interaction between environmental stimuli and the response to be the defining characteristic of stress (Karunanithy & Ponnampalam, 2013; Brannon & Feist, 2009).

In developed countries, for instance, occupational stress has been recognised as inevitable in most educational institutions (Davenport & Hall, 2011; Prasanna, 2016). Clearly, employees (management and teaching staff) of these institutions spend much of their time in their respective workplaces than in their homes (Najera et al., 2017). Most employees often than not become more exhausted after long hours of work due to basically their huge workloads and expectations (Najera et al., 2017). Stress is considered a normal part of any academic institution regardless of one's positions and salary levels (Metzger, 2018). World Health Organisation (2016) revealed that, most people in the developed economies including USA, England, Germany and France have devised stress management strategies and are becoming more aware of the

effects of work-related stress. But the story has always been different in most developing economies in Africa (Harris & Fleming, 2017).

In Ghana, a Sub-Saharan African (SSA) country, education plays significant roles in the social and economic development of the country, since it supplies the economy with human capital capable of transforming other resources into output of high value in an effective and efficient manner (Ahmad, Iqbal, Javel & Hamad, 2014). In any formal educational setting, there are two major parties (employees and students) who ensure that the goals of education are achieved (Amfo-Otu & Agyemang, 2017). Employees including academic professionals play key roles in transferring knowledge while developing the capabilities of students; exposing the former to job stress in various degrees on a daily basis (Franco-Santos & Doherty, 2017). A little of this stress can help keep people on their toes, ready to rise to challenge (Davenport, 2009; Prasanna, 2016).

As held by Beh and Loo (2012), a certain amount of stress is essential to sustain life and moderate amounts serve as stimulus to perform, however, overpowering stress causes one to respond in a negative physiological or psychological manner (Decker, Sullivan & Harrison, 2011). Stress becomes a problem when it is overwhelming and affects our physical or mental functioning. Depending on the level of stress in academic institutions, it can severely affect one's life where he/she begins to spend several long hours and thus have less time for other things (Ye & King, 2016; Beh & Loo, 2012).

In bid to assist academic professionals overcome their stress-related issues, management need to establish appropriate strategies to address them. Although policy makers in Ghana's education sector have implemented various

policies and strategies in bid to improve employee performance, the issues of stress still remain unsolved (Agyapong, Asiamah & Cudjoe, 2019; Essiam, Mensah, Kudu & Gyamfi, 2015). It is on this note that the study was conducted to examine occupational stress and employee performance.

Statement of the Problem

Tertiary institutions in sub-Saharan African (SSA) countries have struggled primarily because their governments and educational authorities have failed to clearly solve the occupational stress issues facing their academic staff (Al-Damoe, Yazam & Ahmid, 2012). Paladino (2008) added that, majority of tertiary institutions in SSA are very far from achieving the goals of education. Similarly, in Ghana, the educational system is declining basically due to inconsistent and poor measures implemented to address performances of academic professionals (Kwapong, Opoku & Donyina, 2015). The nature and working conditions of most tertiary institutions in Ghana have exposed their professionals to various stress-related issues. For instance, Nnuro (2012) revealed that, the physical and psychological demands of academic professionals make them vulnerable to high levels of stress.

Within the Cape Coast Technical University, for instance, its conversion from polytechnic in 2016 (Boateng, 2016) would arguably lead to increased workload and job demands of existing staff. Despite the technical university's urgent need to increase its current staff strength, it has been faced with major recruitment challenges such as inadequacy of skilled professionals, lack of governmental support coupled with increased minimum requirement for recruitment (minimum of doctorate degree for teaching staff) (Ofosuhene, 2018;

Cape Coast Technical University's Report, 2017). These challenges could expose its staff to excessive job demands, role conflicts, role ambiguities, procedural injustice and inflexible working hours resulting to occupational stress (Amfo-Otu & Agyemang, 2017; Owusu & Tawiah, 2014).

Arguably, academic professionals who struggle to overcome occupational stress have been found to regularly agitate for better working conditions, highly demotivated and dissatisfied and they are also unable to meet performance targets (Owusu & Tawiah, 2014; Dwamena, 2012). Generally, public sector employees in Ghana regularly agitate for better resources to carry out their daily activities; an indication of inadequate resources leading to increased occupational stress of employees (Owusu & Tawiah, 2014). This is not any different to the woefully inadequate resources at CCTU. These situations are apparent indications of stress among academic professionals in Ghanaian tertiary institutions including CCTU.

According to the Conservation of Resource theory, exposure of employees to inadequate or loss of resources could lead to occupational stress invariably affecting their performance levels (Wright & Hobfoll, 2004). As such, the more academic professionals of CCTU are exposed to resource loss, the higher their stress-related levels as they may have to spend more time in accomplishing assigned tasks with the inadequate resources. However, the extent to which occupational stress affect the performances of academic staff of CCTU remain undocumented. It could be argued that, management and academic staff of CCTU may continuously struggle to overcome occupational stress if such situations remain unresolved.

Although existing studies have found a relationship between occupational stress and employee performance (Dar et al., 2011; Karunanithy, & Ponnampalam, 2013; Ratnawat & Jha, 2014), now, the key concern is that, does occupational stress facing academic staff of CCTU affect their performances? This question is of prime interest because, in Ghana, studies on occupational stress and employee performance in tertiary institutions have failed to focus on CCTU. Studies by Owusu and Tawiah (2012) and Ofosuhene (2018), for instance, focused on academic staff in the University of Cape Coast, whereas Kusi, Mensah and Gyaki (2014) focused on staff of University of Education, Winneba campus. It is against this background that the study examined occupational stress and performance of academic professionals at CCTU.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to examine the effect of occupational stress on the performance of academic professionals at the Cape Coast Technical University within the Central Region of Ghana. The specific objectives of the study were developed to:

1. assess the sources of occupational stress among academic professionals at CCTU;
2. assess the determinants of academic professional's performance at CCTU;
3. examine the effect of occupational stress on performance of academic professionals at CCTU.

Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions:

1. What are the sources of occupational stress among academic professionals at CCTU?
2. What are the determinants of academic professional's performance at CCTU?

Research Hypothesis

The study was guided by the hypothesis below:

H₁: There is a significant negative effect of occupational stress on performance of academic professionals

Significance of the Study

Stress management is important to healthy functioning of organisations as it seeks to increase productivity since one can clearly focus on tasks, have better memory, improved immune system and better blood pressure (Elmadag & Ellinger, 2017; Nnuro, 2012). Much attention is not given to occupational stress and burnout in Ghana. It is in the view of this that this study is considered important. The study seeks to create awareness among educational authorities on the need to provide the needed support to help staff deal with stress related issues. The study adds to the wealth of knowledge in this field of stress management and also make information available for further research in this field. Findings would be of immense importance to authorities in the educational sector in policy formation aimed at improving the working conditions of academic professionals.

Delimitations

The study focused on occupational stress among academic professionals within the Cape Coast Technical University, reference to other sectors was only to either buttress a fact or make a comparison. Its scope was restricted to only administrative and teaching staff in the institution, as such non-teaching staff especially the junior staff were excluded. The study also excluded all the other technical universities in the country.

Limitations

The major limitation of this study is that, the use of a study organisation (Cape Coast Technical University) may affect the generalisation of the study's findings since they may not be applicable to all tertiary institutions in Ghana due to differences in management approaches and geographical areas. Thus, using results from one organisation may not give a fair representation of the issues in all academic institutions and as such, making inferences from such a study may be limited to some extent. Also, the use of primary data collected through structured questionnaires presents its own weaknesses that can affect the results of the study. Respondents may answer questions based on their own opinions, beliefs and judgments which may not be accurate and reliable and thus affect the study's findings.

Additionally, the use of simple random sampling as a sampling technique could affect the study's result due to the length of time needed to gather the complete list of academic professionals; retrieving and obtaining contact list from appropriate authorities. Also, with this sampling technique, it is difficult to access the list and locations of the entire population to be studied and this could

affect the study's response rate. This shortfall could clearly limit the study's ability to generalise its findings to the entire population.

Organisation of the Study

The study is presented in five chapters. Chapter one gives an introduction to the study in relation to the background to the study, statement of the problem, research objectives and research hypotheses. It includes significance of the study, delimitations, limitations as well as organisation of the study. Chapter two is based on literature review in terms of theoretical review, empirical review and conceptual framework of the study. Chapter three describes the research methods employed in the study. Chapter four presents the results and discussion of the findings of the study. Chapter five includes the summary and conclusion as well as recommendations based on the key findings of the study.

Chapter Summary

This chapter presented the introduction section of the study in terms of background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose, specific objectives, research questions and hypothesis. The chapter also discussed the significance of the study, delimitation and limitation as well as organisation of the study. The next section presented the literature review of the study.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

The focus of the study is to examine occupational stress and performance of academic professionals in the Cape Coast technical University. In view of this, this chapter reviewed related literature on occupational stress and employee performance. It focused on theoretical review, overview of occupational stress, overview of performance, empirical reviews and conceptual framework of the study.

Theoretical review

This study was underpinned by the Conservation of Resource (COR) theory due to its relatedness to the study's research objectives.

Conservation of Resource (COR) theory

The conservation of resource (COR) theory has been identified among the popular theoretical models of stress. This theory was developed by Steven Hobfoll in 1989 and bears resemblance with the P-E fit theory (Hobfoll, 2001). This is because, both theories examine the interaction of an individual (person) with his/her environment and the extent to which the interactions between environmental demands and one's resources deal with those demands (Hobfoll, 2001). One of the key assumptions of COR is that, "individuals strive to obtain, retain, protect and foster those things that they value" (Hobfoll, 2001, p.341). This means that, individuals strive to preserve and accumulate resources to

better navigate their way through demands of life and its associated challenges including job stress-related issues.

Hobfoll (2001) defined a resource as anything that is vital to individuals as it contributes immensely to their wellbeing and also help them to adjust. He therefore stressed that, individuals will require different types of resources in order to help them overcome their challenges including stress-related issues. Some of these resources have been found to include personal resources whereas the others possess features of external (environmental) resources (Nelson & Simmons, 2003; Hobfall, 2001). Nelson and Simmons (2003) revealed that, personal resources deal with an individual's attributes which include personality traits (internal locus of control, generalised self-esteem, and hardiness), personal values (need for achievement) and other features including positive effect. External resources have been found to vary depending on the nature of the environment including amount of feedback received, social support, etc.

The theory therefore explains that, within the working environment, an individual may feel stressed up if these resources are not made available to them. Simply put, the absence of resources would make an individual struggle to positively interact with his/her environment and this could lead to job stress. According to Hakanen, Perhoniemi and Toppinen-Tanner (2008), receiving regular feedback on one's job performance, for instance, could them make relevant corrections to current performance thus prevent them from wasting time and efforts on unnecessarily. This could in a way help these employees minimise their stress-related issues associated with their performances.

Also, Halbesleben (2006) stressed that, social support from peers and management support represent major external (environmental) resources which

could help employees overcome occupational stress. This is because, lack of social support, for instance, could induce employees to work individually regardless of the nature of the work and this could expose them to high stressors. Some jobs may require teamwork or peer support thus poor support from one's team members or peers imply that they have to work alone which could put more stress on them. The theory therefore emphasises that, there should be a simultaneous consideration of an individual's cognition and environmental factors with the support of resources (personal and environmental).

Although COR theory incorporates both resource losses (due to stressful environmental conditions) and resource gains (from occurrences of favourable events (Hobfoll, 2001), the key emphasis is on losses. This is because, resource losses represent a major threat to survival, and they have primacy over resource gains when the person is contending with unfavourable (stressful) circumstances. Resource losses could put individuals into stressful situations which could distract them from achieving their basic job tasks. Hobfoll (2001) suggested that, because resource losses represent a high threat to organisations' survival, they need to have primacy over resource gains when they are contending with stressful situations. He also posited that resource losses can distract the abilities of individuals to survive although resource gains are also vital to the overall development of employees' psycho-social wellbeing.

Overview of Stress

Studies have revealed that, there is no one best definition for stress since it neither a nervous tension nor a reaction to a specific thing, situation or event (Naqvi, Khan, Kant & Khan, 2013; Perera, Sardeshmukh & Kulik, 2015). As

such, various scholars have made efforts to define this concept as best as possible. According to Awathappa (2009), stress is a word given to the destructive nature of tension which is experienced by a person facing extraordinary constraints, opportunities or demands. Stress can also be defined as the response to events that threaten or challenge a person (Jankome, Mangoriand & Ritacco, 2013). Naqvi et al. (2013, p.3) also defines “stress as a condition of physical and psychological mental disorder which occurs in a situation of pressure, when resources are unable to fulfil the demands of an individual.”

Moreover, stress refers to an individual’s reaction to a disturbing factor in the environment; it is an adaptive response to an external situation that results in physical, psychological and behavioural deviations for employees (Nair, 2013). Beh and Loo (2012) defines work stress as “an adaptive response to an external situation that results in physical, psychological and behavioural deviations for organisational participants”. Griffin, Philips and Gully (2015) define stress “as a person’s adaptive response to a stimulus that places excessive psychological or physical demands on that person.”

Stress is that which comes about when one notices that the pressure on him are more than he can handle and if it continues for a long time without any interval, mental, physical or behavioural problems may occur (Priyadarshini, 2016). Hence, stress implies some form of demand on the individual and it can be perceived as a threat which may create psychological imbalance and can affect the individual’s performance. According to Perrera, Sardeshmukh and Kulik (2015), stress occurs when resources are threatened by high demands, when resources are lost or when resources invested yield unexpected returns.

Aswathappa (2009) and Nair (2013) stressed that, stress can be seen in two facets: eustress and distress. Eustress is regarded as a constructive stress which motivates an individual to improve performances. Examples include: tensions that push an individual to work hard prior to examinations, complete assigned tasks on time. On the other hand, distress is regarded as a destructive stress which affects the performances of individuals and organisations. Examples include: excessive tensions or stress that could lead to overload and breakdown of an individual's mental and physical wellbeing. Aswathappa concluded that, to some extent, stress is avoidable but excessive stress could be fatal to the point of causing life-threatening issues such as stroke, high blood pressure, stomach ulcers, heart disease, migraines and undesirable discomforts.

Based on the various definitions, stress could be conceptualised as the result of a mismatch between the demands of the work and the employee's belief in his/her capacity to meet this demand. This means that, individuals respond in different ways when subjected to certain stressors. A stressor is any stimulus, which the individual perceives as a threat (Beh & Loo, 2012). As such, depending on the kind of activity or situation, an individual may be exposed to specific stressors which could affect or improve his/her performance. Positive stressors have been found to improve performance whereas negative stressors, on the other hand, affect performances of an individual. The next section discusses occupational stress.

Overview of Occupational Stress

Stress, in recent years, has been common across all spheres of life, especially in the workplace (Archibong, Bassey & Effiom, 2010; Ajas &

Jayaraju, 2020). It has, therefore, become a wide-spread phenomenon with far reaching practical and economic consequences (Amfo-Otu & Agyemang, 2017; Dar, Akmai, Naseem & Khan, 2011). Tsai, Huang and Chan, (2009) defined occupational stress as harmful physical and emotional responses incurred in the work environment. Carr, Kelley, Keaton and Albrecht (2011), dispute this and state that occupational stress is not necessarily always harmful. Ambika and Kamalakumati (2013) assert that, stress helps employees to stay focused, energetic and alert at work. In other words, if the level of stress is acceptable, the employees' performance will be enhanced. Occupational stress becomes harmful if it is not manageable, and will therefore result in negative consequences like poor productivity, poor physical and mental health, and so forth (Ambika & Kamalakumati, 2013).

According to Khosa, Tiriyo, Ritacco and Lowies (2014), occupational stress is obtained from the interaction of employees and the conditions at work. Stressful situations result in emotional reactions ranging from exhilaration to anxiety, anger, discouragement and depression (Amfo-Otu & Agyemang, 2017). Occupational stress is recognised as an inevitable aspect of organisations which could negatively influence employees' performances (Nair, 2013). It is predominantly responsible for many challenges facing employees' mental and physical health, and could immensely impair individual and organisational performances (Kataoka, Ozawa, Tomotake, Tanioka & King, 2014).

Jyothsna and Adinarayana (2014) suggested that, occupational stress is a dynamic state in which employees are confronted with opportunities and demand related to what they wish and for which the conclusions are perceived to be unclear. Khosa et al. (2014) argue that occupational stress occurs whenever job-

related stimuli cause a job holder's experienced activation level to deviate substantially from one's characteristic level of activation. That is, when an employee's resources have reached disequilibrium, the employee will experience an elevated level of strain. Therefore, occupational stress may occur under certain conditions and not others, and be experienced by some individuals and not others.

From the discussion, it could be deduced that, the nature of working environments including academic institutions expose their employees to various degrees of occupational stress-related issues. Thus, a little of this stress can help keep people on their toes, ready to rise to challenge (Beh & Loo, 2012; Prasanna, 2016). Stress becomes a problem when it is overwhelming and affects our physical or mental functioning. As such, management of various organisations including academic institutions should continuously review measures and policies in bid to address and control the stress-related challenges facing their employees.

Sources of Occupational Stress

Occupational stress has been recognised as an evitable part of organisations (Ashill, Rod, Thirkell & Carruthers, 2009; Nair, 2013). As such, sources of occupational stress have been identified by several researchers across various fields including educational contexts. According to Nair (2013), for instance, occupational stress could come from factors intrinsic to the job such as working conditions, nature of working environment, working for long hours (work overload) and excessive job demands. This finding was in line with studies by Beh and Loo (2012), Dwamena (2012), Paille (2011) and Prasanna (2016).

Also, Nair (2013) and Nyamubarwa (2013) found other sources of occupational stress to include role ambiguity (lack of clarity about work objectives, expectations and job responsibilities), role conflict, poor organisational culture and climate.

Khan and Zafar (2013) found poor interrelationships among co-workers or management contribute immensely to occupational stress. Similarly, mistrust among co-workers and inadequate communication or poor information transfer could in turn lead to psychological strain symptoms such as low job satisfaction and job-related threat to wellbeing (Gatchel & Schultz, 2012; Mxenge, Dywili & Bazana, 2014). Other occupational stress could come from poor employee development programmes, work life conflict (work-life imbalance), unclear job description and job insecurity (Bakker & Demerouti, 2014; Ramli, Salahudin, Zainol & Suandi, 2014). Khairuddin and Makhbul (2011) similarly revealed that, job insecurity, work-life conflict, mode of information transfer and unclear job descriptions could lead to occupational stress. This finding was in line with findings by Kar and Misra (2013).

Operationalisation of Job Stress

Despite the presence of several measurement of job stress, the study operationalised this variable based on job demand, role ambiguity and role conflict.

Job Demand

Leiter and Bakker (2010) defined job demand as the features of a job that can evoke strain when they exceed the capabilities of an individual. Similarly, Nyamubarwa (2013) also defined it as the psychological or physical efforts to be

undertaken from an employee in bid to meet the organisational expectation. From the definitions, job demand pertains to the psychological, social, physical or organisational features of a job (Bakker & Demerouti, 2014). According to Bakker (2011), job demands are not necessarily negative, but they could lead to job stressors when there are high demands which require much efforts. Excessive job demands can lead to deterioration of health, absenteeism, burnout and regular sick leaves which in turn affect overall performance. Bakker (2011) and Ramli et al. (2014) stressed that, job demand contain indicators such as emotional demands, time constraints, job insecurity and work overload.

Role Ambiguity

Chun and Rainey (2005, p. 277) defined role ambiguity as, “a lack of necessary information at a given organisational position”. It also deals with the lack of clarity about one’s expected behaviour from a job. Role ambiguity occurs when people face uncertain and unclear expectations within a given role in their workplace. Simply, put role ambiguity occurs when the definition of a worker’s role is ambiguous, ill-defined or unclear (Demerouti & Bakker, 2011). Chun and Rainey (2005) noted that, information about role ambiguity include quantum of authority, time allocation in one’s job and clearness of objectives. It also contains indicators such as role definition, role expectation, level of authority and work scheduling.

Role Conflict

Role conflict occurs when there are incompatible demands placed upon an individual such that compliance with both would be difficult (Macionis & Gerber, 2010). Marsick and Watkins (2015), stressed that, an individual

experience role conflict when they are pulled to various directions as they try to respond to the various positions or work roles they perform. Role conflict can occur for a short period or a long period of time and thus can be connected to situational experiences (Dell'Antonia, 2012). Gormley and Kennerly (2010) added that, role conflict occurs when one's responsibilities conflict and compete leading to role strain. It therefore contains indicators such as role overload, role clarity, resource availability, information conflict and feedback received (Liu & Hynes, 2012; O'Neil, 2015).

Overview of Employee Performance

Employee performance is normally looked at in terms of outcomes. However, it can also be looked at in terms of behaviour (Armstrong, 2009). Shaw (2015) viewed employee performance as a behaviour employee exhibit and not what they produce or the work outcomes. According to Kim, Nimon, Song and Zigarmi (2015), employee performance is a behaviour exhibited or something done by the employee to enhance organisational performance and is evaluated based on the results of operations, turnover and efficiency as well as the effectiveness of services. Employees are generally able to improve their performances when they actively partake in decision making and thus are allowed to contribute in the implementation of change that affect them.

In the book of Armstrong and Taylor (2014), performance is an accomplishment, execution or working out of anything and is highly influenced by several factors including leadership style. Ali, Hussain and Azim (2013) stressed that, employee performance is seen as an on-going process and thus, has been measured in several ways with different indicators. As such, employee

performance is measured against the performance standards set by the organisation. Hakala et al. (2008), for instance, measured staff performance in their study based on quality of work, cost-effectiveness, timeliness and responsiveness to one's work. It is to note that, this study measured employee performance using these indicators since they have been adopted in similar studies by Kinsambwe (2016) and Irimu et al. (2014).

Determinants of Employee Performance

The factors influencing motivation are also seen as determinants or factors of performance (Daniel & Metcalf, 2015; Reiss, 2014). These factors satisfy a need and stimulate people to bring out their natural drive in accomplishing a given task. Employees can therefore be motivated in the best way by providing them with meaningful rewards. Studies have revealed that, employee's performance in an organisation can be determined on the basis of task, contextual or counterproductive work behaviours (Koopmans, Bernaards, Hildebrandt, De Vet & Van der Beek, 2014).

Task Performance

Task performance or work behaviour can be defined as the proficiency (i.e. competency) with which one performs central job tasks (Koopmans et al., 2014). It can also be defined as the effectiveness with which an individual performs an activity that directly or indirectly contributes to the technical core of organisations by implementing an aspect of its technological process or providing needed materials or services (Jex & Britt, 2008). Other labels sometimes used for task performance are job-specific task proficiency, technical

proficiency, or in-role performance. It includes for example work quantity, work quality, and job knowledge.

Contextual Work Performance

Contextual work performance or behaviour can be defined as individual behaviours that support the organisational, social and psychological environment in which the technical core must function (Koopmans et al., 2014). It also refers to behaviours that go beyond the formally prescribed work goals, such as taking on extra tasks, showing initiative, or coaching newcomers on the job. Armstrong and Taylor (2014) stressed that, contextual work behaviour's activities contribute to the social and psychological core of the organisation and thus considered equally important as task performance. Several labels exist for this dimension such as non-job-specific task proficiency, extra-role performance, organisational citizenship behaviour or interpersonal relations.

Counterproductive Performance

Counterproductive performance or work behaviour is an employee's behaviour that goes against the expectations and interest of his/her organisation (Armstrong & Taylor, 2014). These behaviours harm the well-being of the organisation or people such as customers/clients, or patients in the organisation. Simply put, counterproductive work behaviour as a negative behaviour exhibited by employees has been on the rise in recent times and it includes absenteeism, complaints, expectations, lateness for work, engaging in off-task behaviour, theft, and substance abuse (Ahmad, Hashmi & Akhtar, 2016). These work behaviours have been found to directly influence performance thus formed part

of the study's indicators employees' performance in bid to achieve the objectives of the study.

From the foregoing, employee performance can be conceptualised as an employee's work outcome after putting in expected efforts on the job. Employee performance is largely associated with completing meaningful work with the contributions of compassionate employees/employers. The study, therefore, operationalised employee performance based on the three key dimensions: task, contextual and counter-productive performance. This is because, these measurement indicators have largely been used by researchers including Ahmad et al. (2016) and Armstrong & Taylor (2014).

Empirical Review

The study carried out empirical reviews in relation to occupational stress and employee performance. This was done in bid to support and/or disapprove the study's finding in relation to the third research objective of the study.

Effect of Occupational Stress on Employee Performance

Studies have been carried out on occupational stress and employee performance across various fields of study. Most of these studies have established relationships between these two (2) variables. For instance, Bashir and Ramay (2010) conducted a study on the impact of stress on employees' job performance in the Pakistan's Banking Sector. The study focused on banking staff of a well reputed growing bank in Pakistan. The convenient sampling technique was employed to sample 144 employees. The data obtained was analysed by statistical test correlation and regression. The results showed a significant negative correlation between job stress and job performance. The

study concluded that job stress significantly reduced the performance of an individual.

Another study conducted by Shahid, Latif, Sohail, and Ashraf (2011) on work stress and employee performance in banking sector evidence from district Faisalabad, Pakistan. The study examined the relationship between stress and performance and the impact of stress on employee performance. Questionnaires were used to collect data from a sample of 150 respondents out of which 144 were returned and analysed using SPSS v. 19. Results of the study revealed that, all the components of stress namely lack of administrative support, excessive work demand, problematic customer relations, co-worker's relationship, family and work life balance and riskiness of job cause great stress in bankers and then decrease their performance.

Nnuro (2012) did a study in Ghana to examine the effect of occupational stress on staff performance at Koforidua Polytechnic. Based on the purpose of the study, cross-sectional survey design was employed. Using the systematic sampling technique, the study selected 150 participants for the study. Based on the correlational results obtained during data analysis, the study found that, workload was the major cause of occupational stress among staff of Koforidua Polytechnic. The study therefore concluded that, job stress has a negative significant effect on staff performance.

Mosadeghrad (2013) did occupational stress and employee performance: implications for nursing management. The focus of the study was to explore the status of occupational stress among hospital nurses in Isfahan, Iran. It also examined the relationship between nurses' occupational stress and performance. The study employed the cross sectional, descriptive, correlational and survey

research designs. Using correlation and regression, the study found a negative and strong significant relationship between occupational stress and employee performance. It was concluded that, any increase in occupational stress among nurses could lead to a decrease in performance of the nurses.

In Ghana, Obirih-Opareh (2014) carried out a study on occupational stress and burnout in selected banking institutions in Kumasi aimed at assessing occupational stress and burnout, and their effects on performance of employees in selected banking institutions in Kumasi. The study adopted the descriptive survey method. The target population was 118 workers in four banks in Kumasi: Prudential Bank, CAL Bank, ECOBANK and Barclays Bank. Convenience sampling technique was used to select the participants of the study. A questionnaire was chosen as the data collection instrument. Data collected was analysed quantitatively and the study found that, the level of occupational stress and burnout were both moderate and that there was a significant positive relationship between occupational stress and burnout among the workers. Both occupational stress and burnout had significant negative relationships with work performance.

Within an academic setting, Mxenge et al. (2014) did a quantitative study on organisational stress and employee intention to quit among administrative personnel at the University of Fort Hare, South Africa. The study focused on the effect of organisational stress on employees' performance among administrative personnel at the University of Fort Hare. The study employed the survey design with a population of 638 employees of which 225 of them were randomly sampled. The study analysed data using Pearson Product Moment Correlation and linear regression analysis. The study found a negative relationship between

perceived organisational stress and staff performance. They concluded that, perceived occupational stress has a strong negative effect on the employees' performance.

Archibong, Bassey and Effion (2014) investigated how occupational stress affect non-teaching staff performance at University of Technology and University of Uyo in the Cross River State. The study focused on a sample size of 279 comprising 168 males and 111 females. Self-administered questionnaire was used to collect data from the staff and analysed using regression analysis. The study found occupational stress to negatively affect non-teaching staff performance in the universities studied. It was, therefore, concluded that occupational stress needs to be urgently addressed in order to overcome its negative consequences and invariably improve performance levels of the non-teaching staff.

Similarly, Gharib, Jamil, Ahmad and Ghouse (2016), studied the impact of job stress factors on job performance of academic staff of Dhofar University, Sultanate of Oman. The study used structured questionnaires to collect data from 102 academic staff and analysed data retrieved using multiple regression analysis, to find the impact of job stress on job performance. The results showed that the level of academic staff of job stress was medium and sometimes low. In addition, the level of job performance was somewhat high, while workload was found to have a positive statistical effect on job performance among the academic staff of the university.

Aroosiya and Ali (2016) investigated how occupational stress impacts the performance of teaching staff in State Universities in Eastern Province of Sri Lanka. Among the specific objectives, the study looked at the impact of

occupational stress on employee performance at the universities using the deductive approach. The study collected data from 133 teaching staff using questionnaires. Analysis was subsequently done using Pearson Product Moment Correlation technique. The result revealed that occupational stress is significantly and negatively related with performance of the teaching staff. The study concluded that, the presence of occupational stress negatively affects teaching staff performance levels at the universities studied.

Murali, Basit and Hassan (2017) did a quantitative study and adopted the descriptive research design in bid to examine the effect of job stress on employee performance in Malaysia. Using the convenient method, the study selected 310 respondents from various sectors in Malaysia. The survey questionnaire was distributed via Facebook and the data gathered from 136 respondents were analysed using regression analysis. The study found that, role ambiguity and time pressure have significant and negative influence on employee performance while the other two factors of lack of motivation and workload do not have any significant influence on employee performance. It was therefore concluded that, any increase in role ambiguity and time pressure would invariably reduce employee performance.

Jayasinghe and Mendis (2017) conducted a quantitative study on stress and job performance with focus on the banking sector of Northern Region of Sri Lanka. Using survey method collected data via self-administrated structured questionnaire with the sample consisting of 125 banks in the industry. The industry had a total of 176 employees in all the branches of the selected banks in the Northern region. The results showed a negative correlation between job related stress and job performance, thus, showing a negative relationship

between organisational stress and performance. The study also revealed a negative relationship between individual stress and performance. The study concluded that, job stress negatively impacts on the performance of employees of bank industry.

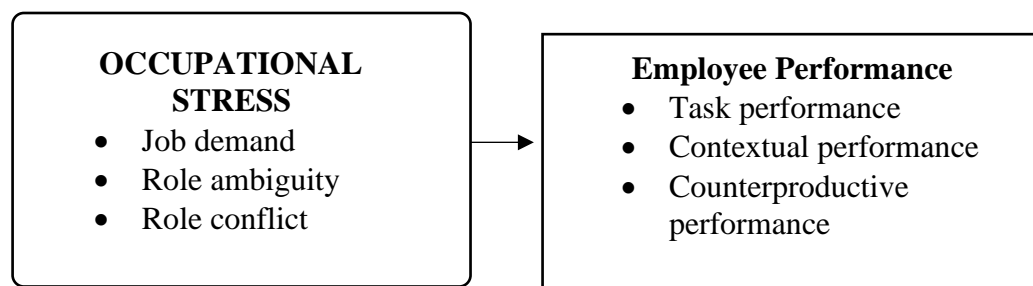
Chinenye, Chukwuemeka and Amobi (2017) conducted a descriptive study to investigate the effect of occupational stress and non-teaching staff performance in selected universities in the South Eastern Nigeria. The study collected primary data comprising face to face interview, focus group discussion, observation and questionnaire. Findings in the study revealed that occupational stress has a negative effect on non-teaching staff performance. The study concluded that occupational stress is a major determinant of performance of non-teaching staff in the South Eastern Universities in Nigeria.

From the various reviews, it could be concluded that occupational stress and employee performance are negatively correlated. It was also found that, occupational stress has an effect on employee performance. However, the magnitude and strength of the relationship varies per the various reviews. This is an indication that, although job stress has been found to be a major threat to employees' performances in most organisations, its magnitude varies from organisation to organisation. It is therefore important to also examine the effect of job stress on employee performance at Cape Coast Technical University (CCTU) in bid to identify the strength and magnitude of the effect. This finding would add to existing literature and also inform policies of CCTU on job stress and employee performance.

Conceptual Framework

This section presented the conceptual framework of the study in relation to the variables under consideration. The study's conceptual framework revealed that, job stress with measurement indicators including job demand, role ambiguity and role conflict represented the independent variable, whereas the dependent variable was represented by employee performance with measurement indicators comprising task, contextual and counterproductive work performances. It is to note that, the framework was informed by reviews of existing literature which were informed by the objectives of the study. The conceptual framework of the study was displayed in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Conceptual framework of the Study



Source: Author's Construct (2020)

From Figure 1, it could be seen that, occupational stress is represented by components such as job demand, role ambiguity and role conflict and they directly influence the employee performance either positively or negatively. Figure 11, therefore, outlines the possible courses of action to achieve the purpose of the study. Thus, it was designed to help readers understand occupational stress and performance in a pictorial manner.

Chapter Summary

This chapter presented the literature review of the study. The chapter discussed the theory underpinning the study. Also, key concepts of the study in

relation to occupational stress and employee performance were discussed. Also, empirical reviews in relation to occupational stress and employee performance were discussed. The reviews, for instance, revealed that, occupational stress is inevitable in organisations and they affect an individual's performance if not properly addressed. The chapter concluded with the conceptual framework of the study which provided a pictorial view of the study's variables.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODS

Based on the background discussion in chapter one, this study sought to examine occupational stress and performance of academic professionals at Cape Coast Technical University, Ghana. In light of this, this chapter discuss the research methods employed in the study in relation to research approach, research design, study area, population, sampling procedure, data collection instrument, data collection procedures, ethical consideration and data processing and analysis.

Research Approach

A research design cannot be adopted in a study without a given research approach. Thus, research approach plays vital roles in any scientific research. A research approach is a plan or procedure for a study which spans the steps from broad assumptions to detailed methods of data collection, analysis and discussions (Creswell, 2014). Creswell identified three (3) key research approaches to include qualitative, quantitative and mixed approaches respectively. A qualitative research approach explores for insights and understanding about an individual's perception of events. It is basically an inductive data analysis from themes and patterns, and from particular to general (Yin, 2016). According to Creswell, it also explores a program, activity, process, individual or groups in their natural setting.

Also, a quantitative approach/method is a type of approach in which quantitative techniques in the form of descriptive and inferential statistics are

used to describe issues in the study (Creswell, 2014; Salaria, 2012). This approach allows the study to collect and analyse data in quantitative terms in order to achieve its purpose. It is therefore suitable for examining the strength and magnitude of relationships likewise the effect or impact of a variable on another. Finally, the mixed approach involves conducting a research that involves collecting, analysing and integrating quantitative and qualitative research. It is used when the study is intended to provide a better understanding of the research problem (Salaria, 2012). It is to note that, the choice of an approach relies on the purpose of the study.

Based on the purpose of the study the quantitative research approach was employed as its goal is geared towards collecting and analysing data objectively. Creswell and Creswell (2017) added that, the quantitative approach enables the use of quantitative tools such as descriptive and inferential in describing key issues in the study. This approach best suits the purpose of the study. The study sought to examine the effect of one variable on the other and as such requires quantitative tools such as linear regression.

Research Design

A research design consists of three major types/forms comprising exploratory design (qualitative study), explanatory/causal design (quantitative study) and descriptive design (mixed study) (Creswell, 2014; Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2009). An explanatory design involves quantitative analysis because it is geared towards establishing relationships between variables of which the study intends to attain. Practically, the study sought to examine

relationship between factors and indicators of employees' performance thus it is appropriate to adopt this design.

The exploratory design, on the other hand, is intended to explore a research problem without intending to offer final and conclusive solutions to that problem (Saunders et al., 2009). It is therefore mostly conducted to study a problem which is yet to be clearly defined and as such, little information is known. Finally, the descriptive design is a design for which the purpose is to produce an accurate representation of persons, events or situations (Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson & Tatham, 2010). The design has an advantage of producing good amount of responses from a wide range of people (Creswell, 2014), and it can also be used with greater confidence with regards to particular questions of special interest or values to a study

According to Creswell (2014), the choice of a design is dependent on the type of approach employed coupled with the purpose of the study? As such, the study employed the explanatory/causal design although there exist the other designs. The explanatory/causal design likewise the other designs has some strengths and weaknesses (Creswell, 2014; Saunders et al., 2009). Some of the major strengths of this design include increase in understanding of a particular subject, flexibility of obtaining data, better conclusions and allows generalisation of findings. On the other hand, this design comes with some major weaknesses such as possibility of obtaining biased information (Saunders et al., 2009). This is because, respondents have the utmost right to fill the questionnaire without interferences and this privacy allows them to provide information that favours them against what actually exists.

Also, the study's findings could be affected by other uncontrolled variables. This means that, without keeping some variables constant, they could affect a study's finding since a phenomenon could be caused by several variables (Yin, 2016). For instance, one's performance could be caused by variables such as motivation, commitment, satisfaction, engagement, among others. Additionally, a causal research could be time consuming when ensuring a representative sample. In most instances, much time is spent by the researcher when ensuring that the right sample is obtained for a given study (Saunders et al., 2009). Despite these weaknesses, the explanatory design was appropriate due to the purpose of the study coupled with the approach employed.

Study Area

The study was carried out within the scope of Cape Coast Technical University (CCTU) which is situated about 5km from the Pedu Traffic Lights off the main road connecting Cape Coast to Twifu Praso in the Central Region of Ghana (CCTU, 2017). In 1984, CCTU was established as a second cycle institution. In 1986, CCTU was under the control of Ghana Education Service (GES) to provide immediate courses leading to tertiary certificates. In 1992, CCTU was upgraded to tertiary level under the PNDCL 322 to run programmes for the award of Higher National Diplomas (HNDs). It was known as Cape Coast Polytechnic and upgraded into a technical university in 2016. Under the new Polytechnic Act of 2007, Act 745, CCTU has been mandated run degree programs.

The vision statement of CCTU is to, "be a leading Technical University in Ghana that offers high quality career-oriented vocational and technical

education for national development. Its mission is also, “to provide increasing access to tertiary education for all people who have a yearning to acquire a hands-on training for academic and professional excellence” (CCTU, 2017). In bid to achieve its core mandate coupled with the targets expected of them, the university could expose its academic professionals to various stress-related issues. Despite efforts to address these stress-related issues, academic professionals are still faced with various stress issues which are affecting their performances. However, scanty literature exists on occupational stress and employee performance focusing on CCTU. It is on this note that, this study was carried out this study in this study area.

Population

A population as a complete group of entities sharing particular features or characteristics (Creswell, 2012). The population of the study comprised all academic professionals consisting of assistant lecturers, lecturers, senior lecturers and administrative staff of the technical university. The target population size was 160 academic professionals as at 2018 (Cape Coast Technical University Academic Records, 2018). These members were chosen due to their involvement in academic activities in the institution coupled with the focus of the study. Administrative staff, for instance, oversee the operations of the technical university while providing support to the other academic professionals. Thus, their inclusion in the study’s target population.

Sampling Procedure

Given the relatively large number of teaching professionals in the Cape Coast Technical University (CCTU), any attempt to cover all of them would be practically difficult. In this regard, (Saunders et al., 2009) argued that the basic idea of sampling is by selecting some elements in a population from which conclusions can be drawn about the entire population. Sampling is less costly, and less time-consuming (Saunders & Lewis, 2009). As such, using the Krejcie and Morgan (1970) sample determination table, a sample size of 113 academic professionals were selected from the target population.

The simple random sampling technique was then employed to select the actual respondents. This tool was chosen in order to give each member an equal chance of being selected to participate in the study. Also, this technique is easy to use, provides fairness in selecting members and it is the most straightforward probability sampling technique (Creswell, 2014). This choice was also prompted by the purpose of the study which requires generalisation of findings. More precisely, the study used the lottery method to randomly sample the respondents. With this, the researcher obtained the list of all the respondents from the Human Resource Department of the technical university and assigned numbers to each of them. These numbers were then put into a ballot box and randomly picked without replacement until the sample size was met. The randomly selected numbers represented the target population.

Data Collection Instrument

Based on the objectives of the study, a structured questionnaire was employed to collect data from respondents. A structured questionnaire is a

method of data collection in which each member is asked to respond to the same set of questions in a prearranged order (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). It is the major collection instrument used in quantitative study and thus is the most appropriate as compared to the others such as observation and interviews which are appropriate for qualitative study. It is to note that, the questionnaire was self-constructed from reviews of related literature in relation to the study's objectives.

The questionnaire was basically structured in five (5) sections with Section A gathering information on the respondents' demographic characteristics. Section B, with 12 sampled items, also solicited for information from respondents in bid to answer the first objective in relation to sources of occupational stress among academic professionals. These question items were adapted from previous studies by Ashill et al. (2009), Gangadathan (2013) and Prasanna (2016). Section C solicited for information on the determinants of academic professionals' performance with 12 sampled items. The measurement indicators of employee performance comprising task (i.e. 5 sampled items), contextual (i.e. 5 sampled items) and counterproductive work (i.e. 5 sampled items) performances were adapted from Andrich and Styles (2009) and Koopmans et al. (2014).

Also, Section D solicited for information in relation to the measurement of occupational stress with 12 sampled items. The measurement indicators comprising role ambiguity (i.e. 4 sampled items), job demand (i.e. 4 sampled items) and job conflict (i.e. 4 sampled items) were adapted from Chun and Rainey (2005), Leiter and Bakker (2010), Hynes and Liu (2012) and Bakker and Demerouti (2014). Finally, Section E solicited for information in relation to the

measurement of employee performance (i.e. 8 sampled items). The study tested hypothesis based on data obtained from Sections D and E. It is to note that, question items on Sections B-E in terms of measuring occupational stress and employee performance were measured on a five-point Likert-like scale (using interval data) with 1 representing least agreement whereas 5 represented highest agreement.

Validity and Reliability

It is vital that a research collect empirical findings that replicate the reality of situations. One needs to be sure that data are easily accessible and also answer the research questions (Saunders & Lewis, 2009). As such, the best way to evaluate a primary source is to use the concepts of validity and reliability. According to Rönkkö and Evermann (2013), the degree of reliability measures the extent to which data collection can be trusted. To ensure reliability of the data collection instrument, pretesting was carried out at the Takoradi Technical University (TTU) within the Sekondi-Takoradi metropolis. The target population size for the exercise comprised 30 academic professionals consisting of assistant lecturers, lecturers, senior lecturers and administrative staff of the technical university.

A reliability test was done to check the internal consistencies of the indicators used to measure the various variables under study. Cronbach's Alpha (α), on a scale of 0 to 1, was used to test the reliability of these measurements. The rule of thumb is that the α of 0.6 any construct's question items should be ≥ 0.6 (Cohen, 1988). Creswell (2014) suggested that the closer the α value to 1, the better its reliability. The result was presented in Table 1. From Table 1, it

could be seen that, in terms of sources of occupational stress, a α of 0.886 was obtained indicating reliability of the question items. In terms of determinants of employee performance, a α of 0.824 was obtained indicating reliability. Also, in relation to measurement of Job stress, a α of 0.879 was obtained indicating reliability.

Table 1: Reliability results

Cronbach's Alpha	Variable
.886	Sources of occupational stress
.824	Determinants of employee performance
.879	Job stress
.904	Employee performance

Source: Field survey, Bartels (2020)

In terms of measuring employee performance, a α of 0.904 was obtained indicating reliability. It is to note that, all the indicators for each of the objectives obtained α more than the acceptable value of 0.6 as suggested by Cohen (1988). This implies that, the items used for measuring all the research objectives in the structured questionnaire were reliable. Validity, on the other hand, deals with trustworthiness, in other words, it discusses how well the result of a study agrees with reality (internal validity) while, external validity talks about the degree of generalisability (Rönkkö, & Evermann, 2013).

The degree of validity explains the extent to which data methods accurately measure what they are intended to measure. This was achieved by allowing two (2) research experts to scrutinise the questionnaire prior to its administration. These experts painstakingly went through each item in the questionnaire to ensure that each question answered what it was intended to measure. Many items/constructs on the questionnaire were then reconstructed

with minor language adjustments to ensure clarity and thus validity. As such, all possible efforts were undertaken to ensure validity of the research instrument in bid to obtain relevant data for analysis.

Data Collection Procedure

Before the data collection exercise, permissions were sought from the appropriate authorities at the technical university through an introductory letter obtained from the Head of Human Resource Management, University of Cape Coast. Upon being granted permission, the questionnaires were then distributed and collected with the help of a trained and well-equipped assistant. This assistant is currently a national service personnel at the University of Cape Coast. The assistant carries out various research related activities in the university and as such, has adequate knowledge in regards to data collection. The assistant was employed due to the difficulties associated with collecting data on time and also the need to provide further explanations to respondents who had challenges understanding some statements in the questionnaire despite efforts to ensure they were self-explanatory.

The data collection exercise took two weeks to complete due to the difficulties associated with accessing respondents to participate in the exercise. However, the exercises were marred with several challenges such as difficulty in allocating respondents, unwillingness of some of them to participate in the exercise and delays in returning completed questionnaires. Moreover, all efforts were made to correct the major problems in bid to attain a reasonable amount of data for analysis and generalisation of findings.

Ethical Considerations

An ethical consideration in research refers to the standards or norms for conduct that differentiate between right and wrong. Ethical considerations therefore help to determine differences between acceptable and unacceptable behaviours in research (Creswell, 2014). According to Patten and Newhart (2017), the major ethical issues that needs to be considered in every research comprise voluntary participation, right to privacy, anonymity and confidentiality of information. As such, all efforts were geared towards ensuring that all these ethical issues were attended to. For instance, with voluntary participation, all respondents were allowed to participate in the data collection exercise willingly.

Also, the possible issues of right to privacy was realised by allowing respondents to answer the questionnaires on their own and they were informed to leave unclear statements unanswered for further explanations through their own convenient medium. The issue of anonymity was also attended to by restricting respondents from providing their names and contact numbers on the questionnaire. Respondents were therefore assured that, none of their identities would be leaked to the public domain nor used for any purpose other than this study. Finally, the study ensured confidentiality of information by assuring respondents that all information provided would be kept confidential. They were assured that, none of their information would be used against them nor found the public domain. In view of these, all major ethical issues/considerations were met in the study.

Data Processing and Analysis

Data collected from the exercise underwent rigorous scrutiny to ensure that any error arising from incomplete and wrongly filled questionnaires were eliminated or minimised drastically. The error-free data were then carefully coded and edited to avoid missing values. The data were then entered and processed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) (v.24) software and the results attained were displayed in tables. Also, the processed data were analysed using statistical tools such as descriptive and inferential tools. The descriptive statistical tools, consisted of frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviations, whereas the inferential statistical tool specifically linear regression. The first and second research objectives were analysed using means and standard deviations whereas the hypothesis was tested using linear regression.

Chapter Summary

The chapter discussed the research methods employed to achieve the study's purpose. The chapter therefore discussed key elements of research methods in relation to research design, population, sampling procedure, data collection instrument, validity and reliability, data collection procedure, ethical considerations and data processing and analysis. The quantitative research approach and explanatory research design were adopted. Both descriptive and inferential statistical tools such as percentages, frequencies, means, standard deviations and linear regression were used to analyse the data from questionnaires in bid to answer the research questions of the study.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The previous chapter presented the research methods of the study and discussed key elements including research approach, design, data collection instrument, data processing and analysis. This chapter, therefore, presented the results and discussion of the study. The chapter specifically comprised: socio-demographic information, sources of occupational stress and determinants of academic professional's performance. The chapter also discussed the results in relation to the effect of occupational stress on performance and finally presented the summary of the entire chapter.

Socio-demographic Characteristics of Respondents

The section discussed respondents' socio-demographic characteristics include sex, age, level of education, marital status, job position and number of years the academic professionals have worked with the technical university. The socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents were based on the 113 valid responses obtained. The result was presented in Table 2.

From Table 2, in relation to sex of the respondents, majority (73) of them representing 64.6 percent were males while 35.4 percent of them were females. This means that majority of the academic professionals at the technical university are males. In relation to the age groups of the respondents, Table 2 revealed that, majority (40) of them representing (35.4%) were between the ages of 31-40 years. Also, 40(35.4%) of the respondents were between the ages of 41-50 years. This was followed by respondents between the ages of 51-60 years

who represented 15.9 percent. Also, 8.8 percent of the respondents were within the age bracket of 18-30 years and finally, 4.4 percent of them were above 60 years.

Table 2: Socio-demographic Characteristics of Respondents

	Frequency	Percent
Sex		
Male	73	64.6
Female	40	35.4
Age		
18-30	10	8.8
31-40	40	35.4
41-50	40	35.4
51-60	18	15.9
Over 60	5	4.4
Level of Education		
Certificate	2	1.8
Diploma	10	8.8
First Degree	29	25.7
Master's degree	68	60.2
Doctorate	4	3.5
Marital status		
Single	21	18.6
Married	83	73.5
Others	9	8.0
Job Position		
Administrative staff	46	40.7
Assistant lecturers	14	12.4
Lecturer	40	35.4
Senior lecturer	8	7.1
Research Assistants	5	4.5
Number of years worked		
Below 5 years	21	18.6
5– 10 years	38	33.6
11 – 15 years	30	26.5
16 – 20 years	18	15.9
Over 20 years	6	5.3
Total	113	100.0

Source: Field survey, Bartels (2020)

Table 2 also presented the respondents' level of education: From the table, majority (68) of them representing 60.2 percent had masters' degree. This was followed by 25.7 percent of the respondents having first degrees, 8.8 percent were diploma holders and finally, 1.8 percent of them had certificates. Also, the result of the marital status of the academic professionals were presented in Table 2. The result indicates that 73.5 percent of the academic professionals are married. This was followed by 18.6 percent of them who are single and finally, 8.0 percent of them have either divorced, separated or were widows and widowers.

In relation to the current job positions of the respondents, the table reveals that, majority (46) of them representing 40.7 percent are administrative staff while 59.3 percent of them are tutors comprising lecturers (35.4%), assistant lecturers (12.4%), senior lecturers (7.1%), teaching assistants (2.7%) and research assistants (1.8%) respectively. Finally, this section presented the number of years respondents have worked with the technical university. Table 2 revealed that, majority (38) of the respondents representing 33.6 percent have worked for 5-10 years. This was followed by 26.5 percent of them who have worked for between 11-15 years. Also, 18.6 percent of them have worked for less than 5 years, 15.9 percent of them have worked for 16-20 years and 5.3 percent of them have worked for over 20 years.

Sources of Occupational Stress among Academic Professionals

This section presented the results on the first research objective in relation to the sources of occupational stress among academic professionals at the Cape Coast Technical University (CCTU). The mean score with standard

deviation were used for analysis as they are appropriate for ranking. A mean score, for instance, provides the arithmetic average of a set of given numbers whereas a standard deviation is a formal measure of central tendency which determines how deviated some values are from the mean. It also determines how dispersed or identical values of the mean are. According to Cohen (1988) and Creswell (2014), the higher the mean score, the higher it explains a particular phenomenon. The result of the mean scores were discussed with 1 to 2.9 indicating low source while 3 to 5 indicate high source of job stress levels. the result was presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Sources of occupational stress among academic professionals

Factors	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Working conditions	113	2.65	1.093
Nature of working environment	113	3.12	0.914
Workload	113	3.15	1.182
Job demand	113	3.68	1.037
Role ambiguity	113	1.79	1.184
Interrelationships	113	4.07	1.374
Job descriptions	113	3.45	1.558
Monetary incentives	113	3.42	5.890
Employee development programmes	113	3.22	3.076
Job security	113	3.30	4.029
Work-life conflict	113	4.04	3.945
Mode of communication	113	3.15	2.164
Valid N (listwise)	113		

Source: Field survey, Bartels (2020)

Table 3 revealed that, job stress facing the academic professionals could be derived from various sources. Among these sources, the level of interrelationships with colleagues and management had the highest mean with

standard deviation ($M=4.07$; $SD=1.374$). This means that, all the respondents were of the view that the level of interrelationship with their colleagues and management was a major source of job stress to them. This implies that the more the existing relationships between management and employees and/or among the employees themselves become poor, the higher their levels of job stress. Arguably, poor relationships among individuals in an organisation lead to internal conflicts which affect team work, employee commitment, job satisfaction levels and invariably employee performance levels.

The study's finding is in line with a study by Khan and Zafar (2013) who found poor interrelationships among co-workers or management to contribute immensely to occupational stress. They argued that organisations where poor interrelationships are prevalent is mostly prone to internal conflicts between management and employees and even among the employees themselves. This could be a major source of job stress since the employees may not be able to work under conducive working environment. Also, this finding was supported by Gangadathan (2013) who found poor interrelationships among employees as a key source of occupational stress in several institutions across the globe.

Also, work-life conflict was revealed as the next major source of job stress. This is because, the result had a higher mean score of 4.04 with standard deviation of 3.945. This means that all the respondents agreed that work life conflict is a major source of job stress in the technical university. This implies that exposing academic professionals to conflicting roles from home and the workplace could increase their work demands which invariably increases their stress levels. Gangadathan (2013) and Nyamubarwa (2013) found work life

conflicts or work life imbalance as possible sources of occupational stress and this could negatively impact on employees' overall performance levels.

The result was followed by the demanding nature of work ($M = 3.68$; $S.D. = 1.037$). This means that all the respondents agreed that job demand is another major source of job stress at the technical university. This is an implication that the more the academic professionals are exposed to high/excessive workloads/demands, the higher their levels of job stress. Job demand basically focuses on key elements such as hours of work, job requirements and mode of delivering assigned tasks. These elements are arguably high in teaching environments including CCTU thus a contributory factor to occupational stress. Khairuddin and Makhbul (2011) similarly revealed that, demanding jobs expose employees to high levels of job stress. Similar finding was revealed by Ramli et al. (2014).

Table 3 further revealed other major sources of job stress to include unclear job description ($M=3.45$; $S.D.=1.558$), poor monetary incentives ($M=3.42$; $S.D. = 5.890$), job insecurity ($M=3.30$; $S.D.=4.029$), inadequate employee development programmes ($M=3.22$; $S.D.=3.076$), unclear mode of information transfer or communication ($M=3.15$; $S.D.=2.164$), excessive workload ($M=3.15$; $S.D.=1.182$) and unfavourable working environment ($M=3.12$; $S.D.=0.914$). This is because, the mean scores of these sources of job stress were greater than 2.9 thus indicating high levels. These results imply that the more academic professionals are exposed to factors such as unclear job descriptions, poor monetary incentives including salaries, research grants, etc. and job insecurity, the more they feel stressed out in the institution.

Job insecurity as a major source of job stress could be attributed to the conversion of polytechnics into technical universities which has led to increased job specifications. Existing teaching staff, for instance, have clearly been tasked to upgrade their current academic qualifications to a minimum of doctoral degrees in order to safeguard their teaching profession. This restructuring exercise which is geared towards improving the current tertiary educational system in Ghana arguably exposes academic staff to high job insecurity. This is because, those who fail to comply with obtaining a minimum of doctoral degrees risks being sacked from the institution. This could, therefore, be a contributory factor to why the academic professionals view job insecurity as a major source of job stress in the institution.

These findings are in line with findings by Khairuddin and Makhbul (2011), Gatchel and Schultz (2012), Kar and Misra (2013) and Ramli et al. (2014). Khairuddin and Makhbul (2011) similarly revealed that, job insecurity, inadequate employee development programmes, mode of information transfer and unclear job descriptions could lead to occupational stress. Similarly, Mxenge et al. (2014) found that inadequate communication or poor information transfer could in turn lead to psychological strain symptoms such as low job satisfaction and job-related threat to wellbeing. Gatchel and Schultz (2012) also revealed that poor monetary incentives, unclear job description and job insecurity could lead to occupational stress if they are not well attended to.

However, the table revealed minor sources of job stress to include working conditions (M=2.65; S.D.=1.093) and role ambiguity (M=1.79; S.D.=1.184). This is because, these factors had mean scores between 1-2.9 thus indicating low levels. This could imply that, the academic professionals are

currently satisfied with the working conditions in the institution thus even if they are poor or inadequately provided, they do not lead to job stress. Working conditions could include teaching materials, infrastructural development, noise levels, etc. available to the academic professionals at the institution. Also, the academic professionals were currently satisfied with their job specifications although they view job description as a major source of stress to them. This could be because they feel they have the required capabilities and academic qualifications to work in the institution.

This finding is in line with existing studies by Beh (2012), Paille (2011) and Dwamena (2012). These studies found working conditions and role ambiguity as other sources of job stress which could affect employee performance levels if organisations fail to address them. Dwamena (2012), for instance, emphasised that employees with poor working conditions may struggle to meet their job expectations and this could invariably lead to occupational stress. Nyamubarwa (2013) similarly found role ambiguity (lack of clarity about work objectives, expectations and job responsibilities) as another source of occupational stress.

It could be deduced that, major sources of job stress in the institution include poor interrelationships among colleagues and management, work life conflicts and excessive work demand. Other major sources of job stress included unclear job description, poor monetary incentives and high job insecurity. On the other hand, the study revealed better working environment and clarity of work roles as the minor sources of job stress at the institution. As such, management can only address the job stress facing their academic professionals by paying keen attention to the major sources while monitoring the minor

sources to prevent them from eventually becoming key stressors in the near future.

Determinants of Employee Performance

This section presented the results on the second research objective in relation to the determinants of academic professionals’ performance at the Cape Coast Technical University (CCTU). The determinants of performance were based on 3 key elements: task performance, contextual work behaviour and counterproductive work behaviour. The result was presented based on the mean score with standard deviation. The higher the mean score, the higher that indicator explains a particular phenomenon (Cohen, 1988; Creswell, 2014). The result of the mean scores were discussed with 1 to 2.9 indicating low determinants while 3 to 5 indicate high determinants of employee performance. The result was presented in Table 4, 5 and 6.

Table 4 presented the result of the determinants of job performance among the academic professionals based on task performance.

Table 4: Task performance dimension of employee performance

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Establish work plans	113	4.58	0.787
Clear work targets	113	4.69	0.669
Adequate knowledge about work	113	4.64	0.720
Work independently	113	4.62	0.748
Set priorities right	113	4.73	0.655
Valid N (listwise)	113		

Source: Field survey, Bartels (2020)

From Table 4, all the respondents agreed that their performances are determined by task performance arising from setting priorities right (M=4.73;

S.D.=0.655), keeping expected targets in mind (M=4.69; S.D.=0.669), having adequate knowledge about the job (M=4.64; S.D.=0.720), working independently (M=4.62; S.D.=0.748) and having well-structured plans to achieving work roles (M=4.58; S.D.=0.787). This is because, all the indicators of task performance had mean scores between 3 and 5 which represent high determinants. This implies that, the performances of academic professionals at the technical university are highly determined by their task performances. As such, management can improve their overall performance levels when they lay much emphasis on the task performances of the academic professionals.

According to Reiss (2014) and Koopmans et al. (2014), employee performance is mostly determined by task performance. Organisations focus on task performance to identify the needs of their employees in order to satisfy them. Koopmans et al. (2014) added that, task performance or work behaviour is the proficiency (i.e. competency) with which one performs central job tasks. Jex and Britt (2008) posited that task performance is focuses on the effectiveness with which an individual performs an activity that directly or indirectly contributes to the technical core of organisations by implementing an aspect of its technological process or providing needed materials or services. It, therefore, represent a key dimension of their overall performance levels.

Table 5 presented the result of the determinants of job performance among the academic professionals based on contextual work behaviour as a job performance dimension. It could be deduced from Table 5 that the mean scores of all the factors of the contextual work behaviour dimension were between 3 and 5. This means that all the respondents agreed that contextual work behaviour also determines their overall performance levels. clearly, the respondents agreed

that they grasp every little opportunity available (M=4.32; S.D.=0.909), they ensure continuous performance improvement (M=4.22; S.D.=1.024) and they have problem solving skills which help them to quickly overcome difficult situations and setbacks (M=4.07; S.D.=0.997).

Table 5: Contextual work behaviour dimension of job performance

Factors	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Take extra responsibility	113	4.00	1.180
Look for new challenges	113	3.89	1.242
Grasp available opportunities	113	4.32	.909
Problem solving skills	113	4.07	.997
Ensure continuous improvement	113	4.22	1.024
Valid N (listwise)	113		

Source: Field survey, Bartels (2020)

Also, academic professionals take on extra responsibilities (M=4.00; S.D.=1.180) while searching looking for new challenges in their jobs in order to develop themselves (M=3.89; S.D.=1.242). This implies that, the overall job performance levels of the academic professionals could be improved when management focuses on the contextual work behaviour dimension. Andrich and Styles (2009) stressed that, contextual work behaviour’s activities contribute to the social and psychological core of the organisation and thus considered equally important as tack performance. Koopmans et al (2014) explained that contextual work performance or behaviour is an individual’s behaviour that supports the organisational, social and psychological environment in which the technical core must function. As such, employees are assumed to exhibit high performance levels if they exhibit positive behaviours that meet the organisation’s expectations.

Table 6 further presented the determinants of the academic professionals' performance based on the dimension of counterproductive work behaviour.

Table 6: Counterproductive work behaviour dimension of job performance

Factors	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Regular feedback	113	2.52	1.637
Meet expectations	113	4.23	1.217
Minimal workload	113	2.11	1.600
Communicate with outsiders	113	1.72	1.199
Engage off-the-job activities	113	2.39	1.497
Valid N (listwise)	113		

Source: Field survey, Bartels (2020)

From Table 6, majority of the respondents agreed that their performances can be determined by their ability to meet expectations. This is because, the mean score of 4.23 with standard deviation of 1.217 was within 3 and 5 thus indicating high determinant of job performance. On the other hand, factors such as providing feedback to peers and/or management about issues affecting my work (M=2.52; S.D.=1.637), engaging in off-the-job activities (M=2.39; S.D.=1.497), having minimal workloads (M=2.11; S.D.=1.600) and communicating with people outside the institution about issues pertaining the institution (M=1.72; S.D.=1.199) were minor determinants of job performance. This was because, these factors had mean scores within 1 and 2.9 indicating low determinants of job performance. This implies that, most of the academic professionals are of the view that counterproductive work behaviour, as a whole, is not a major determinant of their performance levels.

Andrich and Styles (2009) posited that counterproductive performance or work behaviour is an employee's behaviour that goes against the expectations

and interest of his/her organisation. These behaviours harm the well-being of the organisation or people such as customers/clients, or patients in the organisation. Ahmad et al. (2016) added that counterproductive work behaviour is a negative behaviour exhibited by employees and it includes absenteeism, complaints, expectations, lateness for work, engaging in off-task behaviour, theft, and substance abuse. Due to its negativities, most organisations have established clear measures to address it thus do not mostly consider counterproductive work behaviour as a major determinant of their employees' overall performance.

Finally, Table 7 presented the overall average mean score with standard deviation of the dimensions of job performance. This was done to identify which dimension was the highest or major determinant of the academic professionals' overall performance at the institution understudy.

Table 7: Determinant of academic professionals' job performance

Dimensions	Mean	Standard deviation
Task performance	4.65	0.716
Contextual work behaviour	4.10	1.070
Counterproductive work behaviour	2.59	1.430

Source: Field survey, Bartels (2020)

From Table 7, it could be deduced that the task performance dimension was the highest/major determinant of job performance at the institution. This is because, task performance had the highest overall mean score of 4.65 with standard deviation of 0.716. This implies that, management of CCTU can accurately determine the performance levels of their academic professionals by paying much attention to the task performance dimension of their overall performance levels. This would help them implement relevant policies and practices that would directly improve the performance levels of their staff. The

result was followed by contextual work behaviour dimension (M=4.10; S.D.=1.07). This means that overall performance levels can be determined when management also focuses on contextual work behaviour of the academic professionals.

Among the three (3) key dimensions of job performance, counterproductive work behaviour was found as least/minor determinant of job performance. This dimension had the lowest mean score of 2.59 with standard deviation of 1.430. Clearly, the mean score was between 1 and 2.9 meaning that management should pay less attention to the counterproductive work behaviour of the academic professionals when determining their performance levels at the institution. This is because, channelling huge resources to improving this dimension would not directly improve the performance levels of the staff. This could invariably affect the financial performances of the institution as a whole.

Effect of Occupational Stress on Employee Performance

This section presented the third research objective of the study in relation to the effect of occupational stress on employee performance at the Cape Coast Technical University (CCTU). The interpretations of the relationships were based on Cohen's (1988) suggestions. According to Cohen (1988), $r = 0.10$ to 0.29 represents very weak relationship, $r = 0.30$ to 0.49 represents weak relationship, $r = 0.50$ to 0.69 represents moderate relationship and finally, $r = 0.70$ to 0.99 represents strong relationship between/among the variables. Prior to the use of the regression analysis, its associated assumptions including normality, multicollinearity and use of large sample size were met. According to Creswell and Creswell (2017), Creswell (2014) and Cohen (1988), normality

is achieved when the sample size is large (i.e. > 30). As such, the analysis was then presented below:

Analysing data using linear regression, occupational stress (OS) represented the independent variable while employee performance (EP) represented the dependent variable. The regression analysis was interpreted using three tables comprising model summary, ANOVA and coefficient. The regression model was evaluated by the coefficient of determination denoted by R-square (R^2). This represents the proportion of variance in the dependent variable which is linearly accounted for by the independent variable (Cohen, 1992). Table 8 gives the model summary of the output.

Table 8: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.449 ^a	.202	.194	4.65588

a. Predictors: (Constant), occupational stress

Source: Field survey, Bartels (2020)

Table 8 displayed R, R squared, adjusted R squared, and the standard error. However, the R Square and Adjusted R Square were reported instead of the R is they are regarded as more robust for explaining the variation in the dependent variable caused by the independent variables. The R squared which represents the coefficient of determination is the proportion of variation in the dependent variable explained by the regression model. Thus, about (20.2%) of the variation in employee performance is explained by occupational job stress.

From Table 8, the Adjusted R^2 of 19.4% explains the variation in the dependent variable that is being explained by an adjustment in the independent variable in the regression model or equation. This implies that, any adjustment

made in occupational stress will cause about 19.4% change in employee performance. This is an indication that improving employee performance requires the institution to vary (overcome) the occupational stress of its academic professionals. Simply put, occupational stress was found as a key dimension of employee performance at the institution.

Khattak, Khan, Haq, Arif and Minhas (2011) found that job stress emanating from excessive workload, long working hours, inadequate salary and inadequate time for family and job are significant contributors of poor employee performance. These factors, for instance, could negatively impact on employee performance if they are not treated with urgency. A similar study by Shahid et al. (2011) found occupational stressors such as excessive work demand, poor relationship among co-workers and family and work life imbalances as key dimensions of employee work performance. As such, the more occupational stress is ignored the more the performance levels of employees drop.

Table 9 displays the ANOVA results which provides the test significance for R and R² using the F-statistic.

Table 9: ANOVAa result

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	579.871	1	579.871	26.750	.000 ^b
	Residual	2297.786	106	21.677		
	Total	2877.657	107			

a. Dependent Variable: EP

b. Predictors: (Constant), JD

Source: Field survey, Bartels (2020)

Table 9 also presented the F statistic of the regression analysis. The rule of thumb is that, if the significance value of the F statistic is small (<0.01) then

the independent variable does a good job explaining the variation in the dependent variable. In this analysis, the ρ -value is well below .000 (i.e. $\rho = 0.00 < .05$). This implies that, the R and R^2 between occupational stress (OS) and employee performance (EP) is statistically significant, and therefore OS can significantly influence EP of employees at the institution. Additionally, the table in the SPSS output labelled coefficients (Table 10) provides information that is useful for understanding the regression equation.

Under the column marked unstandardized coefficient and sub-column B, the numerical value for the first row, labelled (constant), is the *- value for the intercept (a) in the regression equation. The numerical value on the second row, labelled as occupational stress (OS) in this case (the independent variable), is the value for the slope (b) for the regression equation. Based on this result, the researcher can report the following regression equation, predicting firm employee performance based on occupational stress.

$$Y (\text{employee performance}) = 4.139 - 678X (\text{occupational stress})$$

Table 10: Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.
1	(Constant)	25.201	2.169		11.620	.000
	JD	-.678	.131	-.449	-5.172	.000

a. Dependent Variable: EP

From Table 10, taking the values for the slope and the intercept in the resulting regression equation, the following statements can be made: according to the intercept, when employees have no stress levels, their performance level is constant at 25.201. According to the slope (using standardised coefficient), a unit increase in the independent variable (occupational stress) will lead to a unit

decrease in the dependent variable (employee performance) by (.449) and vice versa. This implies that, increasing occupational stress would contribute to 44.9 percent decrease in employee performance. This is an indication that occupational stress has a major influence on the performance levels of the academic professionals at the technical university. Therefore, occupational stress has a negative but weak significant effect on the performance of academic professionals at Cape Coast Technical University.

It is to note that, the study's finding is in line with existing studies by Nnuro and Acheampong (2012) who examined the effect of occupational stress on staff performance at Koforidua Polytechnic. This is because, the study concluded that job stress has a negative significant effect on staff performance. Similarly, Mxenge *et al.* (2014) found a negative relationship between perceived organisational stress and staff performance at the University of Fort Hare, South Africa. A study by Gharib *et al.* (2016) on academic staff of Dhofar University found a negative effect of occupational stress on work performance of the academic staff at the university. It could, therefore, be concluded that occupational stress is a key factor to poor employee performance thus require keen attention in a bid to address it.

Chapter Summary

This chapter presented the results and discussion of the study's research objectives. The results revealed that, major sources of job stress in the institution include poor interrelationships among colleagues and management, work life conflicts and excessive work demands. Among the 3 key dimensions of job performance, task performance was the highest determinant of job performance

while counterproductive work behaviour was found as the least/minor determinant of job performance. The study finally revealed that occupational stress had a negative but a weak effect on employee performance at the Cape Coast Technical University. The next chapter presents the summary, conclusions and recommendations of the study based on these results.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

The chapter presents the summary of the main findings, conclusions drawn from the findings and recommendations for policy consideration and suggestions for further research.

Summary

The purpose of the study is to examine the effect of occupational stress on the performance of academic professionals at the Cape Coast Technical University within the Central Region of Ghana. The specific objectives of the study are to:

1. assess the sources of occupational stress among academic professionals
2. assess the determinants of academic professional's performance
3. examine the effect of occupational stress on performance of academic professionals

The quantitative research approach and the explanatory research design were employed due to the purpose of the study. The structured questionnaire, a primary data collection instrument, was used to gather data from 113 randomly sampled members in a target population of 160 academic professionals. All the questionnaires (113) administered were reliable and valid for the study and as such, obtained a response rate of (100.0%). The data obtained were processed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 24 and analysed using descriptive and inferential tools such as frequencies, percentages, means,

standard deviations, and linear regression respectively. The results were presented in tables and discussed in Chapter four. The next section presents the summary of the study's key findings.

Key findings

The following is a summary of the study's key findings.

The first research objective focused on assessing the sources of occupational stress among academic professionals at the Cape Coast Technical University (CCTU). Among the various sources of occupational stress, the study found poor interrelationships among colleagues and management, work life conflicts and excessive work demand as major sources. These factors were, therefore, identified as high stressors at the institution. On the other hand, the study found minor stressors to include better working environment and having clear work roles. The study's finding implies that the more academic professionals are exposed to the high stressors the more they feel stressed up and in turn perform below expected levels.

The second research objective focused on the determinants of academic professionals' performance at the Cape Coast Technical University (CCTU). These determinants were based on the three key dimensions of performance comprising task performance, contextual work behaviour and counterproductive work behaviour. From these dimensions, the study found task performance as the highest and major determinant of staff performance at the institution. This implies that the task performance dimension serves as basis for determining the performances of the academic professionals at the institution. The study, therefore, reveals that the academic professionals' performances are majorly

determined by their ability to set priorities right, keep expected targets in mind and working independently.

Finally, the third research objective examined the effect of occupational stress on employee performance at the Cape Coast Technical University (CCTU). The found that, occupational stress has a negative but weak significant effect on the performance of academic professionals at Cape Coast Technical University. The implication is that, a unit increase in occupational stress would lead to a unit decrease in turnover intention among the academic professionals at the institution. Therefore, for any improvement made in occupational stress would lead to a significant improvement in employee performance.

Conclusions

This study provided an overview and relevant discussion on occupational stress and employee performance within academic literature. It has brought to bear relevant information that could inform policies in relation to addressing occupational stress while improving employee performance levels at the institution. Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions were hereby drawn:

With respect to the first research objective, the study emerged that major sources of job stress in the institution include poor interrelationships among colleagues and management, work life conflicts and excessive work demand. This result has been supported by previous empirical studies by indicating that poor interrelationships among employees and/or management, for instance, create avenues for in-house conflicts, exit intentions, high dissatisfaction etc., which negatively affect the conduciveness of the working environment. This

could in turn lead to high job stress among the employees. The study concluded that occupational stress exists in academic institutions including Cape Coast Technical University and it could primarily be sourced from poor interrelationships, work life conflicts and excessive work demand.

With respect to the second research objective, the study emerged that, task performance dimension is the highest determinant of employee performance at the institution understudy. This result has been supported by previous empirical studies that indicate that, employees are able to determine their performance levels by focusing on setting their job priorities right, keeping expected targets in mind and working independently thus with minimal interferences from co-workers and management. This objective was largely achieved and the study concludes that task performance is a major determinant of employee performance at the Cape Coast Technical University.

Finally, with respect to the first research objective, the study emerged that, occupational stress has a negative but weak significant effect on the performance of academic professionals at Cape Coast Technical University. This result has been supported by previous empirical studies that indicate that, occupational stress is predominant among employees in various organisations and its presence negatively affect their performance levels. This objective was achieved and the study concludes that occupational stress is negatively related to employee performance, thus, the more academic professionals are exposed to occupational stress, the less their performance levels at the institution.

Recommendations

On the strength of the research findings and conclusions made, the following recommendations are hereby made:

The prime sources of occupational stress among the academic professionals at the Cape Coast Technical University were found to include poor interrelationships among colleagues and management, work life conflicts and excessive work demand. The study recommended that policy makers including management of CCTU should establish measures aimed at strengthening existing interrelationships among colleagues and management. This would help the staff of CCTU to overcome their job stress-related issues including work life conflicts and excessive work demand while improving their performance levels. Also, reallocation of workloads should be encouraged to help the staff reduce the excessive work demands and invariably minimise existing job stress.

Secondly, the study found task performance dimension as the highest and major determinant of employee performance at the Cape Coast Technical University. Based on this, it is recommended that, management especially the Human Resource Department of the institution should set up a committee to review and/or amend its current performance evaluation/appraisal system. The review should focus on amending the current evaluation system in line with the elements in the task performance dimension. This would help ensure that the performance evaluation system truly evaluates the performances of the academic professionals at the technical university in a bid to improve their performance levels.

Finally, the study found that occupational stress has a negative significant effect on employee at the Cape Coast Technical University. To address this

challenge, the study recommends that, management should adopt innovative strategies geared towards reducing occupational stress at the institution in order to enhance employee performance levels. Examples of such strategies focus on increasing both financial support services (salaries, allowances, bonuses) and non-financial support services (counselling, coaching, mentoring). These strategies would help the academic professionals manage occupational stress in a bid to improve their current performance levels. As such, the absence of these strategies would expose the academic professionals to high job stress which will invariably affect their job performances.

Suggestions for Further Research

Although the study provides useful insight into occupational stress and employee performance, the results cannot be generalised to the entire academic institutions in Ghana. This is because, the study relied on the opinions and suggestions of academic professionals at the Cape Coast Technical University. The study therefore recommends that, further research should focus on a broader based research by including other technical or tertiary institutions within the country. This would help strengthen generalisation of findings across the tertiary or technical universities in the country.

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APPENDICES

University of Cape Coast
College of Humanities and Legal studies
School of Business, Department of Management

QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear Sir/Madam, I am a Master student from the Department of Human Resource Management. I am carrying out my Dissertation work on the topic “Occupational stress and employee performance at Cape Coast Technical University”. Your views are very much important to the study. Every information you provide would remain highly confidential. Thanks for accepting to participate in the study.

Kindly tick in the box

SECTION A: SOCIO-DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

1. Sex: Male [] Female []
2. Age: 18- 30 years [] 31-40 years [] 41-50 years []
51- 60 years [] Over 60 years []
3. Level of education
Certificate [] Diploma [] Degree []
Master’s Degree [] Other (Please specify)
4. Marital status
Single [] Married [] Others []
5. Job Position
Administrative staff [] Assistant Lecturer []
Lecturer [] Senior Lecturer []
Other, please specify.....
6. Number of years worked
< 5 years [] 5-10 years [] 11-15 years []
16-20 years [] Over 20 years []

SECTION B: SOURCES OF OCCUPATIONAL STRESS AMONG ACADEMIC PROFESSIONALS

7. On a scale of 1 – 5, please rate the various sources of occupational stress among academic professionals in your institution. **With 1 – Weak agreement and 5 – Strong Agreement**

No.	Factors	1	2	3	4	5
1	My institution has conducive working conditions (adequacy of infrastructure, teaching materials, etc)					
2	My institution has favourable working environment					
3	My institution allows us to work longer than scheduled time (work overload)					
4	My institution’s work roles are demanding					
5	My institution’s work roles have insufficient information (Role ambiguity)					
6	My institution encourages developing interrelationships with colleague and management					
7	My institution has unclear job descriptions which makes my work stressful					
8	My institution’s monetary incentives are adequate					
9	My institution has employee development programmes to assist employees					
10	My institution has adequate level of job security					
11	My institution exposes its employees to work-life conflicts (spending more time at work than at home)					
12	My institution’s mode of information transfer or communication is appropriate					

SECTION C: DETERMINANTS OF EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE

For each of the following statements, please indicate your level of agreement. **The ratings range from 1 to 5; where 1= least agreement and 5= highest agreement.**

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
Task Performance					
I manage to plan my work so that I can accomplish them on time					
I keep in mind the targets I have to achieve at work					
I have adequate knowledge about my work					

I am able to perform my well work with minimal time and effort					
I know how to set my priorities right					
Contextual work behaviour					
I usually take on extra responsibilities					
I keep looking for new challenges in my job					
I grasp opportunities when they present themselves during work					
I know how to quickly solve difficult situations and setbacks					
I actively look for ways to improve my performance at work					
Counterproductive work behaviour					
I complain about issues affecting my work to peers and management					
I did what was expected of me					
I sometimes do nothing while I should have been working					
I speak with people outside my organisation about the negative aspects of my job					
I engage myself in off-the-job activities					

SECTION D: MEASUREMENT OF JOB STRESS

8. On a scale of 1 – 5, please rate your level of agreement with the following factors that contribute to job stress in your institution. **With 1- Weak agreement and 5 – Strong agreement**

No.	Factors	1	2	3	4	5
ROLE AMBIGUITY						
RA1	My work roles are clearly defined					
RA2	I feel certain about how much authority I have					
RA3	I am aware of the time allocated for me to execute my tasks					
RA4	The objectives associated with my work roles are clear and unambiguous					

JOB DEMAND					
JD1	I I feel secured in my work place				
JD2	I find it easy adapting to changes in my work				
JD3	I am aware of the emotional demands associated with my work				
JD4	I am mentally prepared to handle my job				
JOB CONFLICT					
RC1	The tasks I am assigned at work rarely come into conflict with each other				
RC2	I receive an assignment with the necessary resources and materials to execute it				
RC3	I do things that are accepted by all but not some people and not accepted by others				
RC4	I have to deal with competing demands at work				

SECTION E: MEASUREMENT OF EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE

On a scale of 1 – 5, please rate your level of agreement to each of the following statements. **With 1- Weak agreement and 5 – Strong agreement**

	Work performance	1	2	3	4	5
1	I adequately complete my work roles					
2	I am loyal to the institution					
3	I complete assigned tasks with quality					
4	I am punctual to work					
5	I perform the task that are expected of me professionally (Quality of work done)					
6	I fulfil the responsibilities specified in my job description on time					
7	I have adequate control over the stressful conditions of my work					
8	I am responsive to all those who need my services at the institution					

THANK YOU