UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

INVESTIGATING THE EFFECTS OF OCCUPATIONAL STRESS ON THE JOB PERFORMANCE OF ACADEMIC STAFF OF COLLEGE OF DISTANCE EDUCATION, UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

WILLIAM JACKSON ACKON

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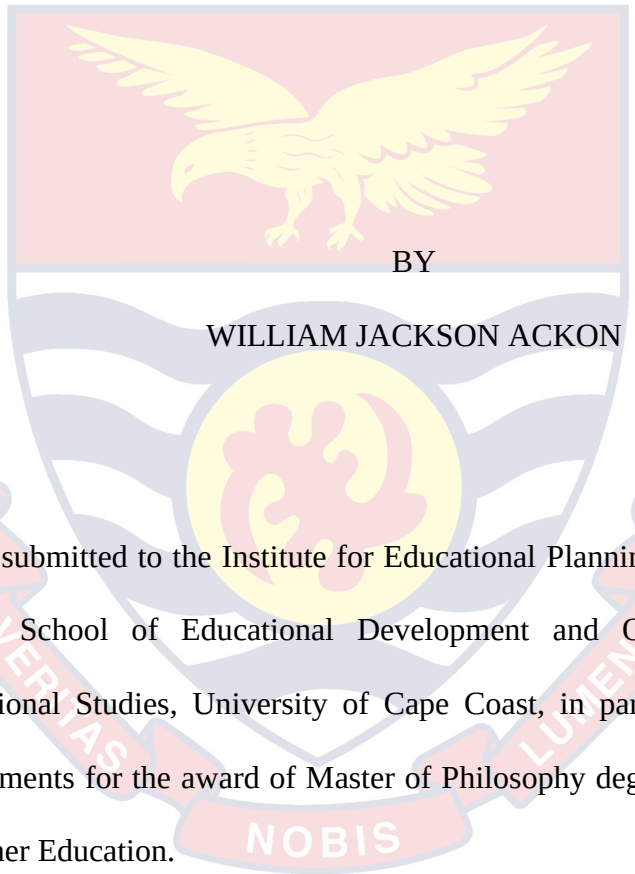

BY

WILLIAM JACKSON ACKON

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SEPTEMBER 2020

DECLARATION

Candidate's Declaration

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

Candidate's Signature: ……. Date: ……

Name: William Jackson Ackon

Supervisors' Declaration

We hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this thesis were supervised in accordance with the guidance on supervision of dissertation laid down by the university of Cape Coast.

Principal Supervisor's Signature: ..... Date:.....

Name: Bro. Dr. Michael Amakyi

Co-Supervisor's Signature: ..... Date:.....

Name: Dr. Mrs. Janet Koomson

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigating the effects of occupational stress on the job performance of academic staff of College of Distance Education, University of Cape Coast in the Central Region of Ghana. The study adopted a sequential explanatory mixed method research design. The population comprised all teaching staff at CoDE. A quota sampling of twenty (20) academic staff was selected for the quantitative data whiles purposive sampling was used to select ten (10) participants for the qualitative data. The main data collection instruments used were questionnaires and a semi-structured interview guide. Descriptive statistics (frequencies and percentages) was used to analyse the quantitative data whiles the qualitative data was analysed using thematic analysis. The findings revealed that work make full use of their skills and abilities as well their workload is too heavy to be completed during their ordinary working hours as the main causes of occupational stress experienced by the academic staff at CoDE. Also, the experience of constant inner tension; constant fatigue; pounding of heart; high blood pressure at the alarming stage as a symptom of occupational stress. Furthermore, the experience of depression; experience of migraine and anxiety as their psychological effects; feeling of helplessness and easily getting angry as their social/behavioural effects as well as experience of musculoskeletal disorder; experience of regular cold and flu and chest pains as their physiological effects of occupational stress among academic staff of CoDE in the University of Cape Coast. It is recommended that academic staff of CoDE should be made to undertake a compulsory medical examination at a regular interval to help detect the alarming stage of stress before it escalates into the exhaustive stage.

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DEDICATION

To my Mum

Mad. Elizabeth Ampiah

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

This current study seeks to investigate how the academic staff of the University of Cape Coast are affected by stress, in relation to their job performance. Medical Scientists opine that, a moderate amount of stress is needed to boost one's performance. However, as the saying goes, "too much of everything is bad". It is against this backdrop that this current study is undertaken to find out the effects of occupational stress on the job performance of the academic staff of College of Distance Education (CoDE) in the University of Cape Coast. The study specifically looked at the causes, symptoms, effects and their interventional development strategies. In this chapter, we consider the background to the study and the problem statement.

Background to the Study

The study of stress and its effects on the individual have attracted the attention of both social and natural scientists. It is perceived to be directly related to how one behaves and for that reason, affects one's attitude and job performance. Hans Selye firstly introduced the term "stress" into the health psychology language in 1926. Although the term "stress" is a household word, Selye (1956) actually used the descriptive term "strain" to denote his concepts, since it suggested structural changes whereas stress emphasized external factors. In his opinion, "stress" was made up of "the sum of all non-specific changes caused by function or damage" or "the rate of wear and tear in the body" (Selye, 1956). After Hans Selye had introduced the term "stress", other researchers started using the term "stress" in the index of psychological abstracts in 1944 (Folkman & Lazarus, 1984).

Other authors such as Pollock (1988) opine that the use of the term "stress" is relatively recent and it is of recent development. She however suggests that although it was used to some extent throughout the 19th century and was loosely associated with ill health, it is only in the last few decades that it has really become an established term. Newton (1995) however, disagreed that the term is of recent origin, having found definitions of "stress" in the Oxford Dictionary, which are very close to our present understanding of the term, dating back to the 16th and 17th century. There seems to be general consensus that popularity of the concept gained ground from the Second World War to date (Kugelman, 1992; Newton, 1995). Academic staff in the University talk about stress and how stressful their work is. However, when some people talk about stress, they in a way, referring to the term pressure they are feeling or experiencing in the performance of their work as academics. Teachers talk about the pressure of maintaining professional currency and research while still managing to keep up with teaching and advising (Rice, 1999).

Most people see stress as a bad thing but we can all use bit of stress. That is to say that stress has gotten some positive impact on human wellbeing. Stress makes us do things which otherwise we would not do or are not prepared to do and at times, we require a push. Stress gets us out of our chair; it makes us think about things differently; it makes us seek solutions to problems, and it sometimes makes us sensitive to what others may think about things differently; it makes us seek solutions to problems; and it sometimes makes us sensitive to what others may think of us and our actions (Smith, 1990). The experience of stress is relative. One person's stress may well be another's pleasure. For

example, the hustle and bustle of a crowded city street may be sweet music to ne driver and unbearable to another.

Every individual has developed mechanisms which enable him or her to cope with life styles which are associated with stress. Sacchi (2000) indicates stress coping strategy to include behaviour and thoughts employed by the individual to manage the stressing situation. Sacchi (2000) further defines two coping principles: the first category, problem focused coping, refers to strategies employed to alter or manage source of stress. The second category, emotions focused coping, has to do with the strategies used to manage emotions. Problem focused coping is aimed at problem solving or doing something to alter the source of the stress. Emotion focused coping is aimed at reducing or managing the emotional distress that is associated with the situation.

Occupational stress is any discomfort which is felt and seen at an individual level and triggered by instances, events or situations that are too intense and frequent in nature so as to exceed and individual's coping capabilities and resources to handle them adequately. Occupational stress often displays high dissatisfaction among the employees, job mobility, burnout, poor work performance and less effective interpersonal relations at work (Manshor, Rodrigue & Chong, 2003).

Botha and Pienaar (2006) posit that the causes of occupational stress include perceived loss of job, and security, sitting for long periods of time or heavily lifting, lack of safety, a complexity of repetitiveness and lack of autonomy in the job. Besides, occupational stress is caused by lack of resources and equipment; work schedules (such as working late or overtime and organisational climate) are considered as contributors to employees' stress. Stress is perceived

to have positive impacts on the individual and organisational performance: if properly managed, stress can energise, stimulate and induce growth and performance in one's profession. One can accomplish new objectives, and there can be positive personal changes (Folkman & Moskowitz, 2004).

A lot of studies have been conducted to examine the relationship between stress and performance. For instance, in a study conducted by Elovainio, Kivimaki and Vahtera (2002), it was found that occupational stress inadvertently contributes to low organisational performance. According to Bowing and Harvey (2001) the interaction between the environment and the individual results in stress, which brings about emotional discomfort which inevitably affects the physical and mental condition of the person. This tends to affect the people and consequently the job performance. It is important to note that stress is caused by stressors which are the situations or circumstances that bring a state of disequilibrium within an individual. Bowing and Harvey (2001) further argue that there exists an impeccable cost on people, organisations, and society as a result of stress. This is because stress brings about a lot of anxiety and stress related disorders on the part of the employees which lead to low productivity on the part of employees.

Many interactions between individuals and the environment produce stress. It is popularly said that life is full of stress, that the ordinary daily activities of life which are naturally supposed to be a routine, but sometimes become very difficult in carrying out same normal activities (Oginska-Bulik, 2006; Adebiyi, 2013). Stress that is intrinsic or otherwise related to job or the organization is referred to as job or occupational stress (Okorie, 2007). The notion of stress in connection with the work environment became an important

topic during the 1960's especially during industrial revolution (McGuire, 1999). With regard to occupational stress, multiple research studies have identified lecturing or teaching as a high stress occupation (Bellingrath, Weigl, & Kudielka, 2009; Kyriacou & Sutcliffe, 1977; Pearson & Moomaw, 2005; Russell, Altmaier, & Van Velzen, 1987). Results from these studies conclude that between 19.9% and 30.7% of teachers reported feeling their job was either very stressful or extremely stressful (Kyriacou & Sutcliffe, 1977, 1978, 1979).

Tytherleigh, Webb, Cooper, and Ricketts (2005) posits that major change initiatives, excessive work hours, heavy workloads, poor management, diminishing resources, unfavourable student to staff ratios, pressure to attract external funds, job insecurity, lack of recognition and reward, and role ambiguity, have frequently been reported by academic staff in the universities as correlates of occupational stress. Occupationally, stress is the reactive response from individuals when presented with tasks beyond their ability in the work place. Stress is conceptualized in terms of its physical and physiological effects on a person, which can be mental, physical or emotional strain. It can also be tension, a situation or a factor that can cause stress. It is perceived that lecturers undergo undue stress as a result of poor working conditions, overloaded academic work, numerous community services and research to generate as well as expand knowledge. This can be attributed to the fact that as academicians carry out their day-to-day activities, they do come to experience opportunities or threats they perceive so critical that they feel they might not be able to handle or execute their mandates as lecturers effectively and efficiently.

Despite the nation's declaration of the importance of university education in national development and the role it plays in satisfying human

needs, there are growing evidences that no African universities either private or government owned can genuinely claim to be immune from stress (Adebiyi, 2013). Stress, particularly those that relate to teaching could be defined as unpleasant emotions experienced by a teacher such as anger and depression resulting from aspect of his work as a teacher (Kyriacou, 2001). Teachers have been identified as an occupational group that functions under high stress. United Kingdom Health and Safety Executive reported that two out of every five teachers were highly stressed as against one in every five in the other occupation such as nursing, security, management etc.

Fako (2010) observes that, there is an increase and expansion in education whilst the resource availability levels have not kept pace. In most part of the world, the education sector has experienced a great measure of changes and re-orientation, this sector being the major source of all innovation and creativity. Hence, personnel in these fields are expected to keep up with the pace of the change and not just keeping up to but to significantly contribute to the wealth of knowledge in providing solution to problems facing humans.

Robbins (2001) perceives stress as a dynamic condition which an individual is confronted with an opportunity, constraints or demand related to what he or she desires and for the outcomes perceived to be both uncertain and important. It is generally believed that some stress is acceptable, sometimes referred to as challenges or positive stress. A healthy pressure stimulates or energizes human beings and promotes motivation and creativity. Distress which is either too little stress that creates boredom or apathy or too much stress can result in fatigue, health problems, burn out and in the worst scenario destruction and uncontrolled rage (Vinassa, 2003). Occupations in the field of human

services are considered to be stressed occupations, dealing with pervasive, social as well as individual problems (Greenberg, 2002). The education profession is a stressful profession. In recent years, occupational stress has been a popular discussion topic in many professional fields, including education (Goldenburg & Waddell, 1990; Vakola & Nikolaou, 2005; Oginska-Bulik, 2006).

Studies have shown that occupational stress can lead to various negative consequences for the individual and the workplace (Oginska-Bulik, 2006). Some effects of stress in the workplace include robbing people of their spirit and passion for the job, resulting in impaired individual functioning (Fairbrother & Warn, 2003), low motivation (Vakola & Nikolaou, 2005), decreased morale (Faragher et al., 2004; Salmond & Ropis, 2005), dampened initiative, reduced interest in working (Fairbrother & Warn,2003), high absenteeism rates (Ho, 1997), decreased capacity to perform (Michie, 2002), poor job performance (Jepson & Forrest, 2006), reduced efficiency (Shain, 1999), poor quality control, decline in productivity (Faragher, Cass, & Cooper, 2004) and low quality products and services (Vakola & Nikolaou, 2005) as highlighted by Fako (2010).

Externally, Reedy and Poornima (2012) find that occupational stress contributes to organizational inefficiency, high staff turnover, absenteeism due to sickness, decreased quality, and quantity of practice, increased costs of health care, and decreased job performance. Also, Malikk & Waheed (2010) reveals that there is a strong correlation between stress and job performance of university staff. In the same vein, Nortje (2007) concludes that organizations whose workers are stressed are also less successful in a competitive market.

In Africa, specifically Ghana, studies on job stress conducted on academic staff show that administratively, the lecturers work as counsellors, examination officers, internal and external supervisors, postgraduate coordinators, departmental heads, directors, deans and many other positions of responsibilities (Kusi, Mensah & Gyaki, 2014). With regard to their teaching loads/responsibilities, some teach extremely large classes (up to 400 students per semester), supervise theses, dissertations and project work. Indeed, in some extreme cases, some lecturers supervise up to 30 students per semester, owing to the running of both regular and sandwich programmes.

Lecturers are expected to publish high-quality research in reputable journals to be promoted within the institution. This is primarily referred within the research domain as the "publish or perish" (O' Driscoll & Cooper, 2002). Also, lecturers work under increasing pressure to meet targets set by the university by adapting to the ever-changing curricula, and implement newly introduced quality assurance procedures, theories and knowledge. While lecturers have to keep abreast with rapid technological advances in all aspects of their work, administrative support is being cut down so that a substantial amount of administrative work is left for them to do. However, attempts made by the University to support the academic staff to cope with these increasing pressures appear to prove futile, as a research conducted by Kusi, Mensah and Gyaki (2014) suggests that the lecturers do not patronize the counselling services provided by the University to enable them overcome such pressures.

It is however noted that, occupational stress levels are high among the academic staff within the tertiary institutions in Ghana and if left unattended to or measures not put in place to mitigate it effects, such stressful moments will

weaken the quality, creativity and production of employees work, as well as the health and morale of academic staff of the university (Nowack, 1989; Matteson & Ivancevich, 1987; Terry, Tonge, & Callan, 1995; Everly & Lating, 2002). Awopegba (2001), Lam and Punch (2001) are in support of stress among academic staff of universities. Furthermore, Ahsan, Abdullah, Fie and Alam (2009) point out stress inducing factors in academic staff to include: work overload, homework interface, role ambiguity and performance pressure. Arguing about the causes of stress among academic staff in the university, Abouserie (1996) finds high teaching load as a contributing factor to stress. Listing the most related stressors on academic staff, Ahmandy, Changiz, Masiello and Bromnels (2007), included workload, conflict, demands from colleagues and supervisors, incompatible demands from different personal and organization roles, inadequate resources for appropriate performance, insufficient competency to the demands of their role, inadequate autonomy to make decision on different tasks and feeling of underutilization. In all the stress related jobs among academic staff in the university, the most stressful is the lecturers who teach distance education students. This is because, weekends which are supposed to be a resting and refreshing period for academic staff, are the days that are used by lecturers to teach distance students.

The International Labour Organization (2010) report of 2002 identifies work-related stress as a 21st-century disease. This was due to labour intensification, competitive pressures, time squeeze, modern technological innovations and lack of worker control in their jobs. Evidence abounds showing that more flexible labour relations, notably downsizing, contracting out types of labour and so on, are associated with deterioration in work security, resulting in

higher injury rates, hazard exposures, disease and work-related stress. It has gotten to a period where stress research must transcend beyond mere empirical and case studies findings on causes and consequences of work stressors to deliberations that scrutinize stress management interventions that can effectively mitigate this problem that ostensibly overwhelms employment relationships around the world.

Owing to the above scenario, the researcher set out to find out the effects of occupational stress on the job performance of the academic staff of College of Distance Education (CoDE) in the University of Cape Coast. The study specifically looked at the causes, symptoms, effects, their interventional development strategies and coping strategies.

Statement of the Problem

Work stress has been prevalent in universities all around the world (Fisher, 1994). This shows that, the academic environment no longer provides the low-stress working environment that the academician once enjoyed. Rapid development, global competition, technology and changes in the nature of jobs today could make the job more demanding than ever, and academic staff are more prone to health related psychological, mental and physical unfitness owing to this situation detected the impact of role conflict on faculties' job performance (Gellespie et al., 2001; Taris et al., 2001). University lecturers deal with substantial amount of occupational stress. Research (National Tertiary Education Union, [NTEU], 2000; Winefield, 2000 Boyd & Wylie 1994) shows that lecturers continually face increasing workloads, large class sizes, overtime, poor working environments, behaviour and unmotivated or indiscipline students, lack of chances for promotion, unsatisfactory relationships with

colleagues, students and administrators, are just a few of the many causes of stress in school.

The university, in its attempt to make education accessible to all has introduced the distance education programme. The distance education programme is run on weekend. Lecturers in the University of Cape Coast teach a minimum credit load of twelve hours per week. In the University of Cape Coast, lecturers in the College of Distance Education, as part of their duties, travel across the country to organize morning and evening classes on weekend for distance education students, they engage in a *face-to-face* interaction, write modules as learning materials for these students who are non-resident, organize quizzes, marking and grading of quiz and examination scripts. In addition to the above, lecturers at CoDE engage in supervision and assessment of distance education students who are on teaching practice, engage in postgraduate teaching and thesis or dissertation supervision as a requirement for the award of prospective students' degree. The above work schedules and descriptions undoubtedly pose and place academic staff under stressful moments.

The effects of stress are that, individual and organizational commitment, as well as physical health and psychological well-being of the employees suffer (Cooper & Cartwright, 1994; Gillespie, Dua, Winefield, & Stough, 2001). This in turn impedes the job performance of academic staff of the university in terms of teaching, supervision, publication, training, student service, administrative duties, and social responsibility productivity.

A cross analysis of the research conducted on the effects of occupational stress on the job performance of academic staff in Africa, Adeoye (2002), Kusi, Mensah and Gyaki (2014) and Oludeyi and Olajide (2006) suggested that there

seem to exist limited research on the effects of occupational stress on the job performance of academic staff of universities in Africa while the huge volumes of research on problems associated with workplace stress seem to outweigh research that probes how to deal with the social menace found to cripple organisational productivity. Consequently, this study seeks to find out the effects of occupational stress on the job performance of the academic staff of College of Distance Education (CoDE) in the University of Cape Coast, paying attention to the causes, symptoms, effects and their interventional development strategies.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to investigate the effects of occupational stress on the job performance among academic staff of CoDE, University of Cape Coast. The study specifically sought to:

1. find out the main causes of occupational stress among academic staff of College of Distance Education (CoDE) in the University of Cape Coast,
2. find out occupational stress symptoms among academic staff of College of Distance Education (CoDE),
3. ascertain the effects associated with occupational stress among academic staff of College of Distance Education (CoDE).

Research Questions

The study was guided by the following research questions:

1. What are the main causes of occupational stress among academic staff of College of Distance Education (CoDE) in University of Cape Coast?

2. What are the occupational stress symptoms among academic staff of College of Distance Education (CoDE) in University of Cape Coast?
3. What are the effects associated with occupational stress among academic staff of College of Distance Education (CoDE) in the University of Cape Coast?

Significance of the Study

Universities among other institutions, provide the highest training grounds for the requisite human capital for national development. If Ghana is to achieve her developmental goals through quality tertiary education, she needs to adopt practices and policies that will help alleviate stress among university academic staff. In the process of carrying out innovation to serve as a coping strategy to eradicate the numerous occupational stresses within our academic front, it is imperative to investigate the effect of occupational stress on the job performance of academic staff of the CoDE in the University of Cape Coast. It is against this backdrop that the present study derives its significance.

The study is expected to provide counsel and information to the university authorities in the University of Cape Coast to come up with strategies to dealing with stresses among academic staff of the College of Distance Education in the University of Cape Coast. This will help the university authorities to come up with interventional polices to ensure that academic staff of CoDE are not stressed up to affect their output negatively. This interventional policy could be to ensure that academic staff of CoDE proceed on annual leave when due and not to engage them in extra part time teaching programmes to generate funds for themselves, the University of Cape Coast or any other university. Moreover, it is envisaged that the findings of the study will enable

the university authorities to provide and boost recreational facilities and social support packages within the university. This will serve as co-curricular activities that will break boredom among academic staff of CoDE in the university.

Furthermore, it is envisaged that the findings of the study will enable the authorities of University of Cape Coast to establish a functional and well-equipped counselling centres for academic staff of CoDE in the institution. Here, competent counsellors could offer professional services which may alleviate the level of perceived stress. According to Manson (2007) before a situation can be regarded as stressful, the individuals' perception of that situation must be taken into account i.e. appraisal underlie the actual experience of stress. Though the counsellors may not be able to change the external environment of the lecturers, they may be able to change their internal environments (attitudes to situations). This may be achieved through counselling strategies focused on cognitive restructuring and behaviour modifications therapies.

Lastly, the study will provide relevant knowledge and literature on the effects of occupational stress on job performance among academic staff of tertiary institutions and provide a foundation vital to the development of future studies in the same or similar educational sector.

Delimitations of the Study

The was restricted to investigating the effects of occupational stress on the job performance among academic staff of CoDE in UCC. Also, the study was confined within the conceptual framework "Organizational Stress Screening Tool" (ASSET Model) by Cartwright and Cooper (2002). Moreover, the study is delimited to only the academic staff of CoDE in UCC.

Limitations of the Study

The first limitation to this current study bothers on data collection. Institutional lapses such as poor record keeping and unwillingness on the part of some respondents to disclose information on some key variables were common problems encountered during data collection. These limitations did not affect the validity and reliability of the findings of the study since the researcher verified all the responses with documented facts. The second limitation of this current study had to do with the fact that it is a case study and for that reason, does not permit generalisation. It therefore pertains and is peculiar to occupational stress and its management among academic staff of CoDE in UCC.

Definition of Terms

Academic Staff:

Academic staff refers to all the permanent teaching staff including research assistants, assistant lecturers, senior lecturers and professors.

Stress

It refers to any difficult experience encountered by an individual while attempting to adopt or cope in an environment or a phenomenon.

Academic stress:

Academic stress refers to all kind of things that trigger tension that can be interpersonal, intrapersonal, social, health-related, environmental related that impede academic growth in an educational institution.

Organization of the Study

The study is organized into five (5) chapters. The composition of Chapter One has been reviewed in the introduction part of this study. Chapter Two deals with the Review of Related Literature, documented by some

authorities. Chapter Three also discussed the research methodology. It covered issues relating to the research design, population, sample and sampling techniques, instruments and data collection procedure and the procedure for data processing and analysis. Chapter Four presented the results and the discussion of the findings of the study. Chapter Five, presents the summary, conclusions, recommendations and suggestions for further research.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Introduction

This chapter presents the literature review with respect to the study. It examines issues on occupational stress and job performance of staff of CoDE at UCC. According to Seidu (2003), the objective of the review of the related literature is to provide a conceptual/theoretical framework or a basis from which the researcher could draw conclusions or make generalization during the analysis of the data.

In respect to this, Beehr and Newman (1987) General Model of Stress will serve as the theoretical bases in finding intervening coping strategies or adaptive response to occupational stress among academic staff. In addition to the theoretical frame work, the researcher will adapt the "Organizational Stress Screening Tool by Cartwright and Cooper (2002) as the conceptual framework which will serves as the conceptual basis of the causes and the effects of occupational stress among academic staff of the UCC. Notwithstanding the theoretical and the conceptual framework chosen, the empirical review will cover the effect of occupational stress on the job performance of the academic staff.

Theoretical Review

Theories help in understanding the underlying process and on that basis, enables a researcher to choose effective course of action. According to Stoner and Freeman (2000), theory is coherent group of assumption put forth to explain the relationship between two or more observable facts. Valid theories enable researchers to predict what will happen under certain situations. It is a truism

that no matter the degree of the grasp of a principle, the history and theories of any field help humanity to apply them to actual cases. Owing to this, the Beehr and Newman's Model (1978) Facet Model would be used to re-emphasize occupational stress and its effects on job performance.

The Facet conceptualized model serves the categorization within stress research. Each facet represents a chunk of stress process element to be studied. Overall, there are seven elements or facets that exist in this model, namely: personal facet, environmental facet, process facet, human consequences facet, organizational consequences facet, adaptive responses facet, and time facets (see Figure 1).

The Meta-Model Facets of Occupational Stress

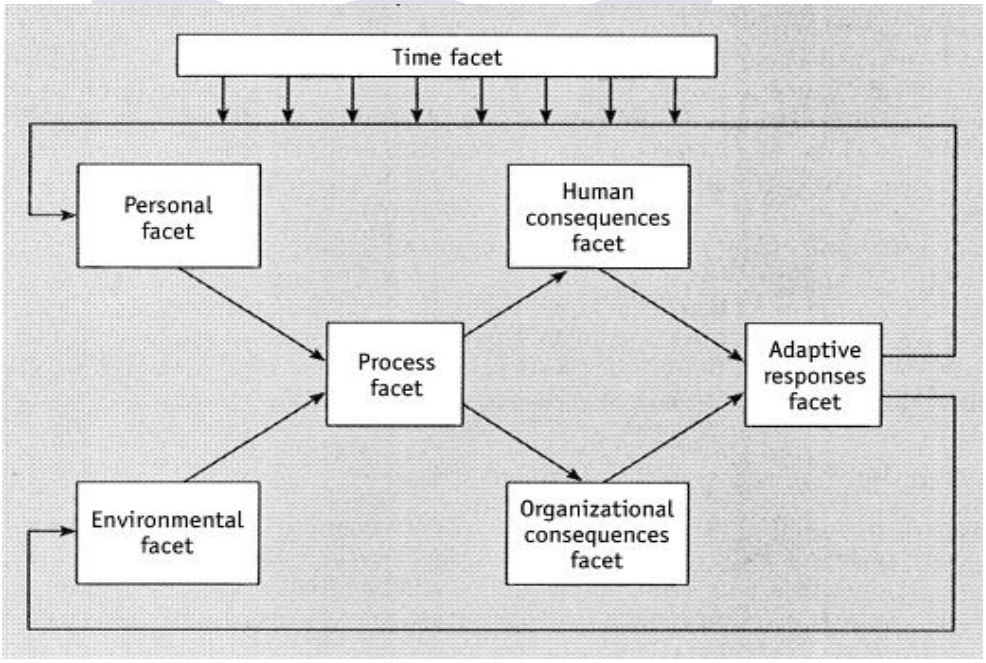

Figure 1: Beehr and Newman's General Model of Stress

Source: Beehr & Newman (1987).

First the personal and environmental facets interact via the process facet to produce human and organizational consequences facets. Various agents undertake the task of adaptation to reduce the undesirable effects of stress or

increase the beneficial effects of stress. The adaptive responses facet in turn affects the personal and environmental facets. The time facet runs through all of the other facets. For example, the elements of the environmental facet require time to exhibit their effects, etc. The environmental facet contains the elements of the employee's work environment that are likely to be involved in job-related stress. Some of the elements are job demand, job security, and characteristics of the task, the role, and the organization. Meanwhile, the personal facet is the characteristics of the person that are likely to affect exposure and susceptibility to stress, experience of stress, and reaction to stress. Examples of the elements can be found in personal facet are age and education. The third element of the model is the process facet. The process facet represents the physical or physiological and psychological processes that may link personal and environmental facets together. Some of the ego needs found in the process facet are perceptions and evaluation of the situation. The human consequences facet consists of all the positive and negative aspects of physical and mental health that can be affected by job stress. An example in the human consequences facet is depression.

The organizational consequences list all the key aspects of organizational effectiveness that may be affected positively or negatively by job stress. Job performance is one of the examples from the organizational consequences facet. Meanwhile, the adaptive responses facet represents various approaches to handling stress. This indicates that various agents can attempt to eradicate undesirable effects of stress in a manner that creates long-term health for the individual and the organization. And the final facet is the time facet whereby time is a factor in the stress process. Stress requires time to manifest

in all of the facets discussed above. Therefore, one example of the time facet would be time as a variable in development of stress. Also, stress can have immediate, short-term, middle-term or long-term effects. All depends upon passage of time (e.g. the long-term health effects of working in a bureaucratic organization).

Causal relationships may come in either direction depending upon the time cycle is sampled. For example, Kahn, Wolfe, Quin, Snoek, and Rosenthal (1964) model indicates that stressful aspects of the environment may cause individual responses, but those responses also change the environment, either directly or through intervening variable. So, time is obviously important in the stress-health phenomena. It follows that any facet could serve as independent, dependent, intervening, or conditioning (moderator) variables – depending on which time period or segment of events is sampled and studied.

To the researcher, the process by which the personal facet and the environment facet amalgamate produces some interaction effects such as the human and organizational effects. This may hinder the personal, health and professional development of the employee or the worker. On the other hand, the organizational effects may be either short or long term since the immediate effect on the organization may be a reduction in productivity or output, absenteeism, exhibiting underprivileged work ethics and professionalism whiles the long-term effects may be employee retention, lack of patronization of services and product as well as a decline in recognition and reputation.

Origin, Terminology and Definition of Stress

The term stress was first employed in a biological context by the endocrinologist Hans Selye in the 1930s. He later broadened and popularized

the concept to include inappropriate physiological response to any demand. In his usage, stress refers to a condition and the stressor to the stimulus causing it. It covers a wide range of phenomenon from mild irritation to drastic dysfunction that may cause severe health breakdown. McGrath (1976), state that stress is an imprecise term. It is usually defined in terms of internal and external conditions that create stressful situations, and the symptoms that people experience when they are stressed. Hence there is a potential for stress when an environmental situation is perceived as presenting a demand that threatens to exceed the person's capabilities and resources for meeting it, under conditions where he expects a substantial differential in the rewards and costs from meeting the demand versus not meeting it.

McGrath's definition implies that the degree of stress is correlated with a person's perceived inability to deal with an environmental demand. This would lead to the conclusion that a person's level of stress depends on their self-perceived abilities and self-confidence. Moreover, stress was correlated with a person's fear of failure. Arnold and Feldman (1986) define stress as "the reactions of individuals to new or threatening factors in their work environment". Since our work environments often contain new situations, this definition suggests that stress in inevitable. This definition also highlights the fact that reactions to stressful situations are individualized, and can result in emotional, perceptual, behavioral, and physiological changes.

According to Robbins (2004), stress is a dynamic condition in which an individual is confronted with opportunity, constraint or demand related to what he desires and for which the outcome is perceived to be both uncertain and important. From this definition one can say that stress is not necessarily bad, it

also has a positive value when it offers potential gain. Moorhead and Griffen (1998) also defined stress as a person's adaptive response to a stimulus that places physical and psychological demands on a person.

Similarly, Sherman, Bahlander and Snell (1996), also defined stress as any adjustive demand on an individual caused by physical, emotional or mental factors that requires coping behavior. Also, Taylor (1995) describes stress as a negative emotional experience accompanied by predictable biochemical, physiological, cognitive and behavioral changes that are directed either toward altering the events or accommodating its effects. Again, Bennett (1994) defines stress as a wide collection of physical and psychological symptoms that results from difficulties experienced by an individual while attempting to adopt to an environment. This means the potential for stress exists when an environmental situation presents a demand threatening to exceed a person's capabilities and resources.

Cryer, McCraty and Children (2003) referred to stress as: two simultaneous events; an external stimulus called a stressor, and the emotional and physical response to that stimulus (fear, anxiety, surging heart and blood pressure, fast breathing, muscle tension, and so on). Good stressors (poetry contests) inspire people to achieve.

Stress was the object of study in early clinical research. The emotional breakdown of men in military combat was studied in clinical research in the early 1949's known as 'combat fatigue'. Psychotic behaviour, extreme fearfulness, anxiety, ulcers and hypertension were found to result from this stressful experience. Furthermore, shock reactions to civilian disaster were also studied in early research as well as living in chronically stressful situations for

prolonged periods resulting in symptomatic patterns in the likes of combat fatigue being observed (Beery, 1998). Stress can derive from life events and according to Fisher, life event stressors' fall into the following categories: unavailable stress; such as death, illness, and injury. A crisis that creates stress; such as financial, marital problem, and work problem. Events that require some adjustments such as moving to a new house, children starting school and many more (Fisher, 2003).

Positive stress is healthy pressure that stimulates, energizes people and promotes motivation and creativity. Vermeulen (2001) explained that, stress is anything that causes us to feel we are losing control. It includes anxiety and fear where anxiety deals with imagined or unreal dangers whilst fear deals with actual or threatened danger. Because stress includes both fear and anxiety stress according to Vermeulen (2001), it can be defined as the feeling that result from the desire to terminate, escape from or avoid real or imagined, current or imminent, negative event. Vermeulen further distinguished between three types of stress, namely:

Physical stress, Psychological stress and Psychosocial stress. To him, physical stress is a stress a human body can feel. It causes physical discomfort such as headaches, ulcer, sleeplessness or pain of muscles and organs. Psychological stress result from our attitudes, emotions and reactions such as depression, habitual negativity, lack of concentration and low creativity whilst psychosocial stress involves the stressors that arise from interpersonal relationships and inadequate or in appropriate social interactions such as aggression. Morgan (2000) explained that stress is an individual experience,

depending on the traits of individuals, in that not all people react to events the same way.

From the above definitions and descriptions, stress can best be seen as excessive demands that affect a person physically and psychologically. Thus, the mental or physical condition that results from perceived threat or danger and the pressure to remove it. Moreover, it can be deduced from the origin, terminologies and definitions of stress that there are three types of definition of stress. This confirms Beehr and Franz (1987) position that stress is defined as the stimulus that came from the environment or situation that impinges on the person.

Kahn (1986) defines stimulus-based stress as external forces or conditions that are hypothesized or demonstrated to have negative (painfully damaging, incapacitating) effects on the organization of interest. Stimulus-based stress theorists believe that the factors in the environment exert an influence on an individual (Derogates & Coons, 1993; Larzarus and Folkman, 1986; Meichenbaum, 1986). Essentially this model proposes that external stressors in the environment result in a stress reaction or stain (Cox, 1978). In addition, different categories of stimulus stressors have been identified in terms of their ability to induce stress such as: (a) acute, time-limited stressors; (b) Chronic intermittent stressors; (c) stressors sequences; and (d) chronic stressors; (Derogatis & Coons, 1993).

Second type of the definition of stress is response-based. It is defined as the individual's physiological or psychological response to the environment or situation. However, the third stress definition is more generally accepted. It is interactional-based definition of stress, and often called the stressor-strain

approach. The interactional approach to stress incorporates both stimulus-based and response-based approaches (Cox, 1978; Richard & Krieshok, 1989). This theory has also been referred to as the stimulus-response interaction (Greenberg, 1999). The interactional approach stipulates that situational variable interact with personal variable from which stress result (Ryan, 1996).

Current research supports the theoretical construct set forth by the interactional approach. Fogerty, Machin, Albion, Sutherland, Lalor and Revitt (1999) conducted four separate studies which analyzed occupational stress, strain and coping through path analysis. Decker and Borgon (1993) also advocated for an intersectional approach for researchers interested in studying variables related to occupational stress, strain, and coping because they feel it fully examines the individual's unique psychological experience of work.

Cox and Mckay (1981) took the interactional approach to stress one step further and have proposed that there is another to this approach (Cox, 1978). This theory has been referred to as transactional (Greenberg, 1999). The Transactional approach incorporates the stimulus, response, cognitive appraisal of the stressors, coping style of the individual psychological defenses, and social milieu into account (Folkman & Lazarus, 1988).

Nature of Stress

One believes that stress is a complex phenomenon because it is not tangible so it cannot be overtly touched. According to Bowing and Harvey (2001), stress occurs with the interaction between an individual and the environment, which produces emotional strain affecting a person's physical and mental condition. Stress is caused by stressors, which are events that create a state of disequilibrium within an individual. These authors also stated that the

cost of too much stress on individuals, organizations, and society is high. Many employees may suffer from anxiety disorders or stress-related illnesses. In terms of days lost on the job, it is estimated that each affected employee loses about 16 working days a year because of stress, anxiety or depression.

According to Ritchie and Martin (1999), for years stress was described and defined in terms of external, usually physical, forces acting on an individual. Later it was suggested that the individual's perception of, and response to, stimuli or events was a very important factor in determining how that individual might react, and whether or not an event will be considered stressful. These authors further contended that most researchers acknowledged that both external and internal factors affect stress. They viewed stress as a response to external or internal processes, which reach levels that strain physical and psychological capacities beyond their limit.

According to Blumenthal (2003), for thousands of years, the bodies of cavemen/women were primed to deal with the harsh rigors of their environment. In the face of danger, a rush of adrenaline would prepare cave dwellers to either fight or run for their lives. In the face of adversity, muscles and nerves were charged for sudden movement, heart rates would increase and blood would course through the veins with sugar released into the blood stream. The flight or fight response would ready them for action: powerful hormones epinephrine and none epinephrine, released by the adrenal glands, endowed humans with enhanced alertness, strength and energy. Thousands of years later humans live in the same bodies and possess the same human brains but in a world with completely different stressors and hassles. While few humans may face danger from wild animals and unsuccessful hunting, urban life is equally demanding.

The urban environment is rife with stressors (such as pollution, noise, violence, traffic) that stimulate the nervous system into a flight or fight response but it is only in rare instances that an aggressive or vigorous physical response is appropriate.

Blumenthal (2003) viewed stress as anything that upsets people's ability to maintain critical variables (which can be social, psychological, spiritual or biological in nature) within acceptable limits. The experience of stress involves an event that is demanding or resources as well as the subjective feeling of distress experienced in its face. An event could be experienced as stressful if people appraised (evaluated) it as distressing. Whether an event is experienced as stressful depends on a person's psychosocial orientation with things like culture, spirituality, values, beliefs and past experiences influencing the appraisal. Events that are appraised as being overwhelming, threatening, unsatisfying or confliction are more likely to be experienced as stressful.

Blumenthal (2003) differentiated different effects of stress as follows:

a. Subjective effects: stress leads to anxiety, depression, frustration, fatigue and low self-esteem.
b. Behavioral effects: stress leads to accident proneness, substance abuse, impaired speech, restlessness and forgetfulness.
c. Cognitive effects: stress affects our thought process, leading to a difficulty or fear of making decisions, forgetfulness, hypersensitivity, mental blocks and difficulty concentrating or thinking clearly. This may be intensified by substance abuse.
d. Physiological responses: begin in the brain and spread to organs throughout the body. Catecholamine from the adrenaline medulla causes

the kidneys to raise blood pressure and the liver to release sugar into the blood stream. The pituitary gland stimulates the release of corticosteroids, which helps to resist stress but, if in the system for a prolonged period of time, suppresses the immune system. These responses are adaptive for dealing with stress in the form of 'fight or flight" but this response is rarely useful in urban work, instead the accumulation of stress products in the body is immune-suppressive playing a part in degenerative processes and disease

e. Effects on health: prolonged exposure to stress has profound and detrimental effects on health. Among possible complications stress may exacerbate or play a role in causing ailments like asthma, amenorrhea, coronary heart disease, chest pains, diarrhea, dyspepsia, headaches, migraines, diabetes mellitus, ulcers and decreased libido. In a world where AIDS is frighteningly prevalent, people need to be aware that stress is immuno-suppressive. HIV breaks down a person's immune system, which leaves them vulnerable to potentially fatal infections and diseases.

Stress Process or Response Stage

According to Arnold, Robertson and Cooper (1993), stress response is in three stages. The researcher will put these three stages of stress process flow model into the perspective of employee's stress outlines.

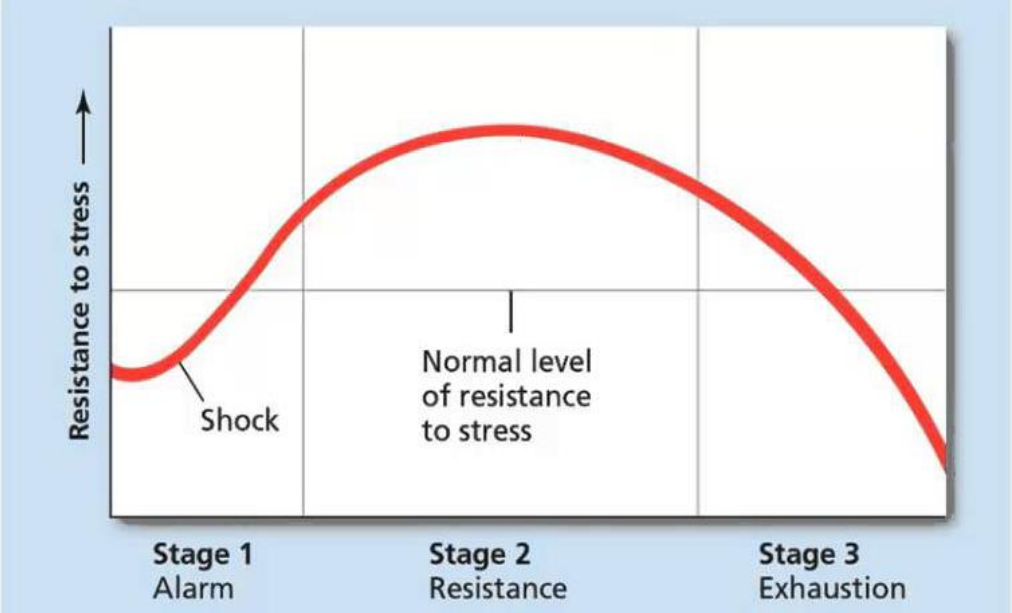

Figure 2: Stress Process

Source: Arnold, Robertson and Cooper (1993)

Alarm Stage

The first stage of stress is the Alarm stage. This is where the individual experience some shock or when the threat or stressor is identified or realized. The body's stress response will be in a state of alarm. During this stage, adrenaline would be produced in order to bring about the "fight-or-flight response. These adrenalines produced speeds the heart rate, slowing digestion, shunting blood flow to major muscle groups, and changing various other autonomic nervous functions and giving the body a burst of energy and strength. The Alarm response or shock is to give the individual the ability to either physically fight or run away when faced with danger, it's now activated in situations where neither response is appropriate, like in traffic or during a stressful day at work. When the perceived threat is gone, systems are designed to return to normal function via the relaxation response, but in our times of chronic stress, this often doesn't happen enough, causing damage to the body.

The fight-or-flight response, also known as the acute stress response, refers to a psychological reaction that occurs in the presence of something that is terrifying, either mentally or physically. Essentially, the response prepares the body to either fight or flee the threat. This is the lowered resistance and followed by counter attack that occur during which the individual's defence mechanism is achieved.

Resistance Stage

The resistance stage is where the body has to decide to 'fight or flight'. Here there is maximum adaption which enables the individual to return to equilibrium. The body tries to add resources to help it cope through maximum adaption and hopefully, successful return to equilibrium for the individual. However, if the defense mechanism does not work, or fails to cope, it will lead to the third stage which is Exhaustion.The normal indications of this level are exhaustion, weariness, anxiousness, and being forgetful. You start smoking and drinking more to come out of your stress. One becomes weak and easy target for colds and flu.

Exhaustion Stage

Exhaustion stage is the third and final stage of the stress process. At this point, all of the body's resources are eventually depleted and the body is unable to maintain normal function. The initial autonomic nervous system symptoms may reappear (sweating, raised heart rate, etc). If stage three is extended, long term damage may result as the body, and the immune system is exhausted and the function is impaired resulting in decomposition. This is as a result of the collapse of adaptive mechanism. If this stage continues, the individual is affected physically and mentally. Some psychological changes such as mood

change, negative emotion and feeling of helplessness will occur causing the individual's decision to leave the job and profession. Examples of obvious illnesses can be ulcers, depression, diabetes or even cardiovascular problems.

The diagram in Figure 2 indicates that on the horizontal axis's the level of resistance to stress. As the individual's stress begins or at the shock mode the level of stress is low but at the individual fails to manage or put some interventions to curb the experienced stress, the level to which the resistance to stress can contain increases. At this level, the individual goes about his/her normal routine with severe stress symptoms but as the level escalate the individual becomes exhaustive.

Types of Stress

According to Taylor (1995), there are four major types of stress and she explains them as follows:

a. Chronic Stress: She describes this type of stress as unrelenting demands and pressures for seemingly interminable periods of time. Chronic stress is the type that wears the individual down day after day and year after year with no visible escape. It grinds away at both emotional and health of the individual leading to breakdown and even death.

b. Acute Stress: This type of stress is the most common and most recognizable form of stress. It is the kind of stress which the individual knows exactly why he is stressed; he was just in a car accident; the school nurse just called him; a bear just ambled onto his campsite. It can also be something scary but thrilling, such as a parachute jump. Normally, the body rest when these stressful events cease and life gets

back to normal because the effects are short-term. Acute stress usually does not cause severe or permanent damage to the body.

c. Traumatic Stress: It is a severe stress reaction that results from a catastrophic event or intense experience such as a natural disaster, sexual assault, life-threatening accident, or participation in a combat. Here, after the initial shock and emotional fallout, many trauma victims gradually begin to recover. But for some people, the psychological and physical symptoms triggered by the trauma do not go away, the body does not return to equilibrium, and life does not return to normal. This condition is known as post trauma stress disorder. Common symptoms of this type of stress are flashbacks or nightmares about the trauma, avoidance of places and things associated with the trauma, hyper vigilance for signs of danger and irritability and tension.

d. Episodic Acute Stress: She went further to explain episodic acute stress as where the individual experiencing this type of stress lives are very chaotic, out of control and they always seem to be facing multiple stressful situations. They are always in a rush, always late, always taking on too many projects and handling too many demands. Those who are prone to this type of stress include the “Type A” personality types. If an individual is prone to episodic acute stress, he may not know it or admit it. He may be wedded to a life style that promotes stress. Unfortunately, people with episodic acute stress may find it so habitual that they resist changing their lifestyles until they experience severe physical symptoms.

The Signs and Symptoms of Stress

Selye (1946) was the first to describe the phases that the body goes through in response to a threat. The general adaptation syndrome model states that the body passes through three stages. The first stage is an alarm reaction. The body prepares for a potential emergency. Digestion slows down, the heart beats faster, blood vessels dilate, blood pressure rises, and breathing becomes rapid and deep. The second stage is resistance where all bodily systems work together to provide maximum energy for fight or flight. The body becomes habituated to the effects of the stressor; however, the bodies adaptive energies are being used as a shield against the stressor.

The third stage is exhaustion. When the body's adaptive energies are depleted, the symptoms of the alarm reaction reappear, and the stress manifests itself as an illness, such as ulcers, heart ailments, and high blood pressure. During the first or second stages, the removal of the stressor will eliminate the symptoms. Job stress can have a substantial negative effect on physical and emotional health.

Williams (2000) provide a comprehensive list of the symptoms of stress. These are: "constant fatigue, low energy level, recurring headaches, gastrointestinal disorders, chronically bad breath, sweaty hands or feet, dizziness, high blood pressure, pounding heart, constant inner tension, inability to sleep, temper outbursts, hyperventilation, moodiness, irritability and restlessness, inability to concentrate, increased aggression, compulsive eating, chronic worrying, anxiety or apprehensiveness, inability to relax, growing feelings of inadequacy, increase in defensiveness, dependence on tranquilizers, excessive use of alcohol, and excessive smoking." Furthermore, job stress can

make people more susceptible to major illnesses. High stress managers are twice as prone to heart attacks as low stress managers (Friedman & Rosenman, 1971).

Conceptual Framework

Stress is readily acknowledged to be a common occurrence of modern life; however, defining stress, its causes, symptoms and effects is a very complex matter. Stress can be defined from a health perspective, organizational perspective and from an individual perspective. The ASSET model, which stands for An Organizational Stress Screening Tool is the latest stress model used and adapted to study stress in the workplace (Viljoen & Rothmann, 2009). The Asset model of stress by Cartwright and Cooper (2002) was adopted to suit the purpose of this study. The model is influenced by existing established models of stress (e.g. Cooper & Marshall, 1978). The modified aspect will include the coping strategies (problem focused and emotion focused) and the original work is individual characteristics, the perception of stressors, stressors and the experience on stress itself.

According to the Beehr and Newman's general theory of stress (1978), the environmental facet consists of employee's work environment that are likely to be involved in job stress. The work environment is by no means a place where individuals are likely to be inflicted by stress since they spent most of their lives at work. Work-related stress is the adverse reactions people have to excessive pressures or other type of demands placed on them (Health & Safety Executive, 2006). The sources of stress or stressors are conditions that cause stress (Newstrom & Davis, 2002).

Main Causes of Occupational Stress Among Academic Staff

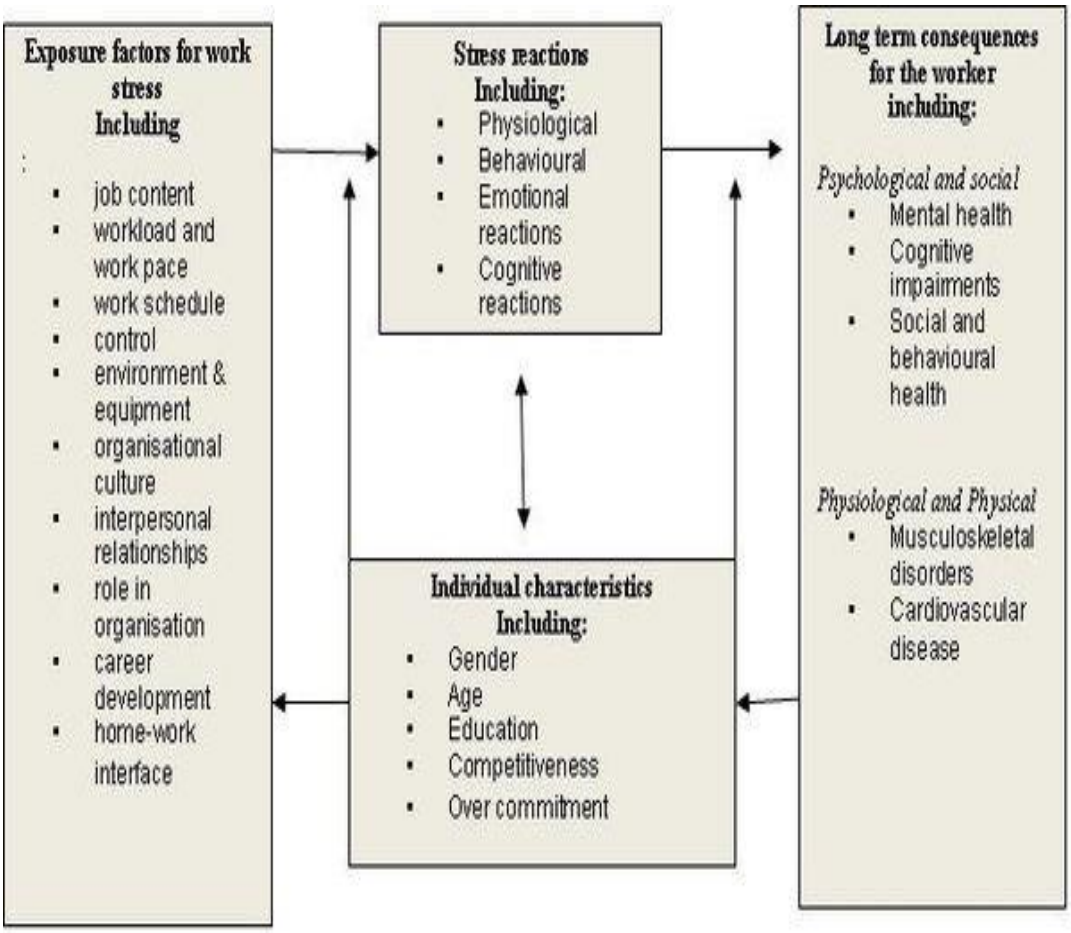

Figure 3: An Organizational Stress Screening Tool

According to the ASSET model of stress (Cartwright & Cooper, 2002), there are eight commonly found stressors in the workplace, namely:

a. Work Relationship,

b. Work-Life Balance,

c. Overload,

d. Job Security,

e. Control, Resources and Communication,

f. Pay and Benefits, and Job Aspects.

Work Relationship

Most jobs demand working with people. Thus, poor or unsupportive colleagues, clients, subordinates and bosses will be a potential source of stress (Cartwright & Cooper, 2002). Kahn et al, (1964) in their study of poor working relations found that mistrust of colleagues created role ambiguity that leads to psychological strain. Supportive managers and supportive colleagues are the two factors in the workplace that are most likely to help employees cope with stress (Industrial Society Survey, 2001).

Manshor et al, (2003) reported that relationship at work is a main source of stress among managers in all organizations. Confrontation with colleagues was also found to impact academic leaders' stress (Gmelch, 2006; Gmelch & Burns, 1994). Provost/supervisor-related stress such as, resolving differences with my superior is found to be the second most important factors of stress in US sample of deans (Gmelch, Wolverton, Wolverton & Sarros, 1999). Conflict-mediating stress such as, complying with rules and regulations, obtaining program approval and support, and resolving differences with/among colleagues registered the highest stress in stress for academic departments chairs (Gmelch & Burns, 1994). According to Janus description, chairs are caught in the middle and stressed by their need to mediate the constraints of the institutions and faculty differences.

Work-Life-Balance

The demands of work have the potential to spill over and interfere with one's personal life (Cartwright & Cooper, 2002). This can put a strain on the outside relationship and increase stress level (Confederation of British Industry, 1998), health and safety (Health & Safety Executive, 2000). The primary cause

of occupational stress is balancing the differing demands of work and home (Industrial Society Survey, 2001). Finding balance between professional and personal lives was found to be one the most important stressor in faculty deans (Gmelch et al., 1999; Gmelch & Burns, 1994).

Academic administrators also identified "being part of a dual career couple" as one of the main sources of stress in the Northern Arizona University Study (Northern Arizona University, 2005). Work imbalance was also one of the key stressors in head teachers' stress (Phillips, Dalmay & Bartels, 2007).

Overload

Unmanageable workloads and time pressure can be a source of stress (Cartwright & Cooper, 2002). Cartwright & Cooper (2002) for example, identified high workloads as the main cause of stress for employees. In addition, the Industrial Society Survey (2001) cited unrealistic deadlines/constant time pressures as the second most influential cause of stress. Furthermore, French and Caplan (1973) found that overload can produce symptoms of psychological stress. Chairs experienced most stress from their heavy workload, and time pressures (Gmelch & Burns, 1994). Attending too many meetings was ranked number 1 in the 10 most stressful individual stress variables in United States of America and Australian academic deans' study (Gmelch et al., 1999; Gmelch, 2006).

Meanwhile, Gmelch and Burns (1994) found out that task-based stress such as, heavy workloads, trying to keep current in their disciplines, and attending meetings were second highest categories of stress for academic chairs. Conflicting calls on their time was found affecting academic leaders' stress (Gmelch, 2006). Time pressures were also found to be the most important

stressor in department chair stress (Gmelch & Burns, 1994). Work load was also found to be one of the key stressors to head teachers' stress (Phillips et al., 2007). Workload for research universities has been reported to be the highest among other types of universities in US. In addition, all universities have been reported to have an increase in their faculty workload from the year 1972 to 1998.

Job Security

Fewer employees do not expect a life time employment today, but the fear of losing a job still remains a potential source of stress (Cartwright & Cooper, 2002). Job insecurity has been identified to be the most salient factors of stress (O'Driscoll & Cooper, 1996). For example, a quarter of the Industrial Society survey respondents rated job insecurity as one of the six most common causes of occupational stress. Source of pressure for three groups of staff namely are: administrators, faculty and coordinators were scored above average for career and achievement scales (Michailidis & Asimenos, 2002).

In addition, Tytherleigh et al. (2005) found out that job insecurity was the most significant source of stress in all staff categories in 14 UK universities and colleges. Universities have also been linked to cuts in staffing levels (Winefield, Gillespie, Stough, Du, Hapuarachchi & Boyd, 2003) and downsizing (Sarros, Doucha, & Mathijs, 1999).

Control, Resource and Communication

The experience of stress is strongly linked to perceptions of control. Lack of influence in the way in which work is organized and performed can be a potential source of stress (Cartwright & Cooper, 2002). Indeed, those who precepts that they can control the environment are less likely to suffer from

stress than those who do not (Makin, Cooper & Cox, 2000). In the study by Boice and Myers (1986) on stresses and satisfaction of chairing in psychology, the 4 most powerful stressors of chairing involved faculty control: they are, faculty misbehaviours (e.g. loud arguments at faculty meetings, refusals to cooperate) rank first, followed by the awkwardness of giving faculty evaluative feedback, dealing with faculty complaints, and faculty politics.

To perform their job effectively, they need to feel that they have appropriate training, equipment and resources. They also need that they are adequately informed and are valued (Cartwright & Cooper, 2002). A number of sources (e.g. Niosh, 1999; Health and Safety Executive [HSE], 2000; British Industrial Society, 2001) have associated all or some of these factors with stress. Furthermore, poor communications were found to be the third most highly rated stressor (in terms of its commonality) in the British Industrial Society referred to earlier. The conservation of resource theory by Hobfoll (1989) stated that people will protect their resources if they are threatened. Issues like inappropriate training facilities for example, are a threat to their resource conservation strategy and therefore could cause stress.

One of the general stressors of the department chair stress is the organizational constraints (Gmelch & Burns, 1994). University department chairs/heads in United States and Australia functioned under increased uncertainty and stress: such as a diverse student population, funding shortages, demands for great quality, finding the upside to downsizing, and balancing academic/administrative roles (Sarros et al., 1999). Big stressors for academic administrators were referred to as inter-playing multiple demands such as policy decisions, personnel and resource management (Hill, 2009).

Pay, Benefits and Aspects of the Job

The potential sources of stress can be related to the fundamental nature of the job itself. Factors, such as physical working conditions, type of tasks and the amount of satisfaction derived from the job itself are all included (Cartwright & Cooper, 2002). Job dissatisfaction can be the outcome of work-related stress or can be a source of stress in its own right. When job dissatisfaction is a reflection of reality, for example, if an individual is dissatisfied because they have outgrown their job, it is likely to be a cause of stress rather than an effect (Lyne, Barrett, Williams & Coaley, 2000).

According to the Northern Arizona University (NAU) study (Northern Arizona University, 2005), in comparison to the national norm, the administrators at NAU were less likely to identify aspects of their jobs satisfactorily. They are opportunity to develop new ideas, overall job satisfaction, teaching load, clerical/administrative support, relationship with administration, opportunity for scholarly pursuits, prospects for career advancement, quality of students, visibility for jobs at other institutions/organizations, salary and fringe benefits, and availability of child care at this institution.

Notwithstanding the above, student indiscipline is also a significant cause of lecturer's stress. Due to the level of indiscipline in our society, students extend this indiscipline to the lecture room making worse the lecturer's stress conditions. Lewis (1999) examines teachers' estimation of stress arising from being unable to discipline students in the way they will prefer. Overall, maintaining discipline emerges as a stressor with those worse being teachers who placed particular emphasis on students' empowerment. In a study of 1000

student teachers, Morten, Vesco, Williams, and Awender (1997) revealed that classroom management was the teacher's second greatest source of anxiety, the greatest being evaluation apprehension. Of all the stressors reported, classroom management anxiety was the only one that did not decline following teaching practice. Similarly, the research by Morten (above) found that of all sources of stress for student teachers, evaluation apprehension was the greatest although it declined following teaching practice. Evaluation apprehension is an issue of increasing import, as quality assurance procedures increasingly demand lesson observation.

Capel (1997) questioned student physical education tutors following first and second teaching practices on their levels and sources of anxiety. Evaluation apprehension emerged as the stressor in both practices. It can therefore be concluded that evaluation apprehension is also a source of teacher stress which cannot be over emphasized.

Another casual factor in teacher stress which is cognitive vulnerability refers to the physical and emotional weakness connected with mental processes of understanding. A substantial body of contemporary research has examined the cognitive factors affecting individuals' susceptibility. There was a significant association between internal attributions and symptoms of stress suggesting that teachers who blame themselves for difficulties are more vulnerable to stress (Chorney 1998, Bibou- Nakou 1999). In another study conducted by Chorney (1998), he investigated self-defeating beliefs by asking 41 teachers to identify what they must do to be good teachers. Ninety-two percent of responses were couched in absolute terms such as 'must', 'need' etc. Endorsement of these beliefs was widespread in the sample and significantly

associated with high levels of stress. Self-efficacy has also been researched as a cognitive vulnerability factor. Freidman (2000) examined the self-report of newly qualified teachers and described his findings as the 'shattered' dreams of idealistic performance (2000, p. 595). Respondents revealed sharp declines in self-efficacy as they found that they couldn't live up to their ideal performances. Moreover, teachers stress has over the time period originated by systemic factors. In this context, the term 'systemic' is used to denote broad cluster of organizational factors that are not intrinsic to the nature of teaching, but rather dependent on the climate of educational institution or the wider context of education including the political domain. Travers and Cooper (1997) found that teachers named lack of government support, lack of information about changes, constant changes and demands of national curriculum as among their greatest source of stress. These trickle-down systemic factors act in addition to and feed into the dynamics of individual organizations (Jennings & Kennedy, 1996, p. 117).

In sum, educators experience many different sources of stress. Qualitative research completed by Howard and Johnson (2004) revealed that Australian teachers experience stress as a result of threats of physical abuse, verbal abuse, work refusal by students, dealing with consequences of abuse or neglect of students, and dealing with aggressive/abusive parents. Austin, Shah, and Muncer (2005) found that the main sources of stress for teachers from the UK are work-related stressors, such as time management, student discipline, and student motivation. Other sources of teacher stress that have been documented include teaching a child with a disability (Forlin, 2001), discipline and handling difficult students (Onafowora, 2004), adapting to change

(Kyriacou, 2001), lack of time (Kyriacou, 1987), inadequate resources (Chaplain, 1995), poor student behaviour (Friedman, 1995), multiple roles and responsibilities (Hockley & Hemmings, 2001), and role conflict (Pearlin, 1989).

Empirical Literature

The impact of Job Stress on Job Performance of Academic Staff

Stress is a status which happens when individuals recognize that the conditions or strains facing them may be more than their endurance. The term job stress can be defined as a group of external harmful factors in the work environment, which may be psychological, physical or social (Greenberg & Baron, 2007; Arnold & Feldman, 2000). While Ivancevich, Jamal and others define job stress as an individual's reactions and interactions to characteristics of the work environment that seem morally, emotionally and physically threatening, mediated by individual differences and/or psychological actions (Ivancevich & Matteson, 2002; Jamal, 2005; Szilagy & Wallace,1983).

Job stress will be experienced, when the imbalance between demands of work environment and the individuals' abilities increases, so at work, stress may be an awareness indicated by ambiguity, conflict and overload arising from the work environment and the characteristics of the individual. We can note three main components of job stress process (Alamian, 2005; Alsharm, 2005): (1) stimulus: Is the primary stimulants resulting from feelings of stress which may come from the environment, organization or individual, (2) response: psychological, physical and/or behavioural reactions, which individual represents as anxiety tension and frustration (Sur & NG, 2014), (3) interaction: which explains the relationship between stimulus and response elements.

Job stress study's importance is clear when we know that 40% of workers who report their job are extremely stressed (Niosh, 1999), as Forbes website noted that work stress is responsible for up to 8% of national spending on healthcare in USA 2015, also according to (SWA.gov.au) official Australian website mental stress costs Australian business more than 10 B$ yearly.

Job stress can be classified into two types (Rizwan, Waseem, & Bukhari, 2014; Kotteeswari & Sharief, 2014; Kazmi et al., 2008). The first is the eustress or positive stress, which is beneficial in case we may feel challenged, but the reasons of stress will be opportunities that are meaningful to us, they help in providing us with energy and impulse in meeting our responsibilities and achieving our goals. This model supposes that at a low level or non-exist of stress, the individual does not face any challenge so he or she is not likely to offer any good performance, but at medium level of stress individuals will offer a mediocre or high performance, for example, as the manager puts the deadline earlier or shorter, because of stress employees will work hardly and effectively to accomplish their organizational goals. Some of organizations' management think that setting a reasonable degree of stress on employees can promote the employees' performance (Zafar, Ali, Hameed, Ilyas & Younas, 2015), as Muse, Harris& Field, (2003) supported the positive relationship between job stress and job performance; and a large number of researches indicate that as job stress increases, performance may at first rise, but at some degree begins to fall (Luthans, 2002).

The second classification is the distress is a condition which happens when an individual perceives a loss or risk or when it badly affects him or her (Kolt, 2003).

Workload as an Agent of Stress

Workload refers to the concentration or the number of assignments and tasks, which employee responsible at work. This aspect refers to the degree of stress experienced by individuals due to the conception that they are unable to adapt or be active with the amount of work assigned to them (Idris, 2011). Workload can be classified into role overload or role lower load. Role overload can be qualitative or quantitative (Trayambak, Kumar & Jha, 2012), qualitative takes place when individual does not have sufficient abilities to do work, while quantitative task happens when the individual has huge tasks to do or too time shortage to perform them (Conley & Woosley, 2000). On the other hand, role lower load occurs when tasks and duties of the role are less than the level of the individual capabilities, which generates bored feelings or stress, in both last cases, individuals face job stress, in the first case they may be afraid and tensed of their expected duties, and in the second they feel small work or lack of its importance, so this affects job performance.

Role Conflict

When role requirements of an individual are irreconcilable, it allows role conflict to happen, also role conflict occurs when individuals face many contradictory job tasks, or when they oblige to do things, they do not have the desire to do. It is a serious situation, because commitment to the role requirement makes it difficult to involve to the requirements of another (Seller & Damas, 2002). Role conflict can be defined as individuals jointly performing different roles which conflict each other. According to Luthans (2013), there are three types of role conflict. The first one is the conflict between the individual and the role. There may be confusion between the personality of the individual

and the expectations of the role, the second type is intra role created by conflict expectations about the method of doing the role, it occurs when role requirements do not agree with individual's attitudes and values. The last type is inter-role conflict which results from the contrast requirements of two or more roles the individual must play at the same time.

Role Ambiguity

Role ambiguity describes lack of information needed by the individual in accomplishing his or her role in an organization, such as limits of authority and responsibility, policies and rules of the organization, and methods of performance evaluation (Ammar, 2006). Role ambiguity comes when the individual does not have clear role to do the assigned job (Kahn *et al.*, 1964). Bandura and Locke, (2003) defined role ambiguity as employees who do not have clear direction to the expectations of their role in the organization. Employees usually face two models of role ambiguity: one about tasks and related activities; the second is related to feedback regarding to task performance. Feedback is critical to enable the employees in evaluating their performance and to inform them about progressing toward task accomplishing (Idris, 2011), role ambiguity is related to job performance (Bandura & Locke, 2003).

Stress as Occupational Hazard

The experience of stress involves situations that are demanding on resources as well as the feeling of distress experienced subjectively. An individual may experience stress at different levels based on what they view as stressful or not. According to Bowing and Harvey (2001), the interaction between the environment and the individual results in stress, which brings about

emotional discomfort which inevitably affects the physical and mental condition of the person. This tends to affect the people and consequently the job performance. It is important to note that stress is caused by stressors which are the situations or circumstances that bring a state of disequilibrium within an individual.

Bowing and Harvey (2001) further argue that there exists an impeccable cost on people, organizations, and society as a result of stress. This is because stress brings about a lot of anxiety and stress-related disorders on the part of the employees which leads to low productivity on the part of employees.

Sources (Causes) of Stress at Work

There have been five major sources of stress identified by Arnold, Robertson, and Cooper (1991). These are factors intrinsic to the job, the organizational role played, relationships at work, career development and organizational structure and climate.

Factors Intrinsic to the Job

The factors intrinsic to the job include:

Poor Working Conditions: This refers to the physical surrounding of the job which may include high level of noise, high or low lighting, fumes, heat, poor ventilation systems, smells and all the stimuli which bombard a worker's senses and can affect his moods and overall mental state. Also, an office that is poorly designed physically can be classified under poor working condition, because this may hinder communication which might lead to poor working relationships and might lead to stress.

Long Working Hours: Many jobs require long working hours which in turn take its toll on employee's health and makes them suffer a lot of stress. For

instance, an individual or a worker who may have had no sleep for long hours may find that both his/her work quality suffer. Also, the individual's health may be affected as well.

Risk and Danger: A job which involves more risk and danger put employees in higher stress level. This is because when an employee is constantly aware of potential danger and is prepared to react to any incident without hesitation, it brings about rush, respiration changes and muscles tension which are seen as potentially threatening to in the long-term.

New Technology: With the introduction of new technologies into the working environment, workers have to continually adapt to new equipment, new systems and new ways of working. This serves as a major source of stress because of the pressure it comes along with. For instance, being trained with current methods may be a burden for an employee who was trained and applied training methods the old ways.

Work Under-Load: This defines the situation whereby employees find their jobs not challenging enough or under their capabilities. This may be caused by doing the same work over and over which becomes a routine, work that is boring and not stimulating enough. This may lead to employee's dissatisfaction which can lead to stress (Anbazhagan, SoundarRajan, & Ravichandran, 2013).

Role Overload: This happens when the employee has so much work to do because of he/she has to meet some deadlines which often causes stress in employees. Osipow and Davis (1988), posited that role overload is the extent to which role demands are perceived by the respondents as exceeding personal and workplace resources and their perceived inability to accomplish the expected workload. Role overload, therefore, can be seen as relating to the performance

of a given amount of work in a given period and it is experienced when an individual decides to conform to some tasks and to refuse some in a given period.

Role in the Organization: When the role and expectations of an individual in an organization are defined clearly and understood it minimizes stress. However, role in the organization when unclear can bring about stress. Some of these roles include the following:

Role Ambiguity: Yongkang, Weixi, Yalin, Yipeng, and Liu (2014) defined role ambiguity as the degree to which clear and specific information is lacking with role requirements. In other words, the main employee perceived that he or she is in a difficult situation which the job obligation is unclear and not stated in straightforward manner. According to Yongkang et al. (2014), it has also been established to be an aspect of job dissatisfaction, influence employee creativity and tendency to quit in the organization.

Role Conflict: According to Jahanzeb (2010), role conflict occurs when employee is confronted with incompatible role expectations in the various social statuses they occupy. This appears as an unclear path of responsibilities of an employee or the existence of an overlap of job responsibilities within an organization.

Relationship at Work: How people relate at the workplace affects them and their work greatly, working in a stable environment where employees get to know one another very well helps to facilitate work and reduces pressure. When employees are able to deal with their bosses, peers, and subordinates very well, it affects how they feel but when an employee experiences poor working relationship with superiors, colleagues, and subordinates his stress level

increases. People who are in high need of relationships, work best in solid work teams and may suffer stress in unstable work teams and probably may not be able to give out their best. Stoetzer (2010) argued that this is because most employees spend so much time at the work place and thereby poor working relationship can affect them adversely.

Career Development: Organizations have become flatter, meaning that power and responsibility now radiate throughout the organization. The work force has become more diversified. Jobs and careers get scarcer. For the person who had been determined to rise through an organization, the challenge had recently become greater. Opportunities to learn new skills are now becoming requirements. Career development causes a lot of stress to employees through their working lives. Staying the same is quickly becoming an inadequate approach to work, which means that one would have to learn new ways of working through the upgrading of one's knowledge. Shortage of job security, fear of redundancy, obsolescence and many performance appraisals can cause pressure and strain. Also, the frustration of having reached one's career ceiling, or have been over promoted can result in stress (Hamer, 2012).

Physical Environment: Working conditions of jobs have been linked to physical and mental health. Physical environment that can be sources of stressors includes exposure to hot room temperatures, frequent light outs, and dangerous poisonous substances. Osipow (1998), found that poor mental health related directly to unpleasant work conditions, physical effort and speed in job performance and excessive, inconvenient hours (e.g., shifts). Also, researchers have found increasing evidence that repetitive and dehumanizing environment adversely affect physical health.

Symptoms and Effects of Stress on Performance

Stress shows itself in some ways. For instance, an individual who is experiencing a high level of stress may develop high blood pressure, ulcers and the like. These can be grouped into three categories; physiological, psychological and behavioural symptoms". They are discussed in the next section.

Psychological Symptoms and its Effects

These are the major consequences of stress. Then mental health of employees is threatened by high levels of stress and poor mental health. Employees work performance may deteriorate due to psychological symptoms, unlike the physical symptoms. Anger, anxiety, depression, nervousness, irritability, aggressiveness, and boredom is believed to result in low employee performance.

Factors Influencing Stress

Demographic Factors and Stress

The relationship between demographic variables *viz.*, age, gender, education, occupation, experience, type of family, and stress is reviewed as follows:

Age

Reddy and Ramamurthy (1991) analyzed the influence of age on stress experience of a person. The sample consisted of 200 executives. The results revealed that executives in the age group of 41-50 experienced more stress than the age group of 51-60. Moderating variables among executives experiencing stress include not only age but also the years of service in the employment. Beena and Poduval (1992) conducted a study on sample of 80 (40 male and 40

female) executives in different organizations. They found that when age increased, experienced stress also increased due to the increase in the responsibility of the executives. Female executives showed higher rate of stress because women experience greater amount of work change than men do.

Mayes (1996) conducted a study on police officers, fire fighters, electrician and executives aged 18-63 years. Multiple regression revealed that age moderated the relationship among various stressors and physiological symptoms as well as psychological depression and life satisfaction. Aminabhavi and Triveni (2000) in their study found that age, sex, coping strategies of bank employees have not influenced their occupational stress. Virk, Chhabra and Kumar (2001) conducted a study on occupational stress and work motivation in relation to age, job level and type-A behaviour. He reported that age and job level can have strong influence on job stress. Rastogi and Kashyap (2003) conducted a study on "occupational stress and work adjustment among working women". Sample consisted of 150 nurses, clerks, and teachers. The average age of the sample is quite matured and experienced, which help them to ignore the stress and maintain the smooth adjustment in the organization. Bhatia and Kumar (2005) studied on occupational stress and burn out in industrial employees. The sample consisted of 100 employees belonging to supervisor and below supervisor level. Their chronological age ranged from 22-32 years and 33-42 years. Among the industrial employees at supervisor rank and below supervisor rank belonging to higher age group experienced more occupational stress. Anitha Devi (2007) aimed at identifying the degree of life stress and role stress experienced by professional women. A total sample of 180 women

professionals belonging to six occupations were chosen for the study. The results revealed that, the older person experience lower life stress and role stress.

Younger people experience more stress as compared to older people. The greater the numbers of years of service the greater life and role stress. The lower the income, the greater stress experienced that is stress decreases with increase in income. From the above studies, it can be concluded that younger age group is more susceptible to stress due to lack of experience and older age group experience stress due to the increase in the responsibility.

Education

Education acts as mediator, either increases or reduces stress depending on perspective of the individuals. Ansari (1991) studied the nature and extent of stress in Agriculture University teachers. Sample consisted of 235 respondents comprising 30 professors, 74 associate professors and135 assistant professors. The result revealed that the correlation between the nature of stress and qualification of teachers in different cadres was found to be non-significant. Chand and Monga (2007) examined the correlates of job stress and burn out among 100 faculty members from two universities. He found that, higher education can combat stress and burn out related problems among the faculty members.

Occupation and Position

Ryhal and Singh (1996) studied the correlates of job stress among university faculty. A sample of 100 faculty members which comprised of 30 professors, 31 associate and 39 assistant professors. Results revealed that assistant professors experienced higher job stress than associate professors and professors. Orpen (1996) examined the moderating effects of cognitive failure

on the relationship between work stress and personal strain. He compared the work stress among 136 nurses and 12 college lecturers. The results found that nurses experienced more stress than the lecturers. Ansari and Singh (1997) made an attempt to explore the contribution of demographic variables to the nature of stress experienced by the teachers in an agriculture university. The study comprised sample of 235 faculty members (23 professors, 74 associate and 138 assistant professors). The professors were either in moderate or in high stress categories as compared to associate and assistant professors.

Upadhayay and Singh (1999) studied the level of occupational stress experienced by 20 college teachers and 20 executives. The executives showed significant higher levels of stress than college teachers on role over load, role ambiguity, role conflicts factor. Gaur and Dhawan (2000) examined that the relationship between work related stressors and adaptation pattern among women professionals. A sample of 120 women professionals (30 teachers, 30 doctors, 30 bank officers and 30 bureaucrats) participated in the study. It showed that the four professional groups shared almost similar level of stress except in the categories of career development and stressors specific to working women.

Pandey and Srivastava (2000) had studied the female personnel working in rail way, bank and teaching institutions. A sample of 96 females, 16 subjects in each professional area were taken. The study identified that respondents among all the three dimensions, clerks of bank and railway experienced more work stress as compared to teachers. Aminabhavi and Triveni (2000) revealed that managers experience significantly higher occupational stress than clerks. The fact is that managers have greater responsibility of their position than the

clerks. Anitha Devi (2007) aimed at identifying the degree of life stress and role stress experienced by professional women. A total sample of 180 women professionals belonging to six occupations were chosen for the study. The result showed science and technology professionals and doctors experienced significantly greater life and role stress followed by administrators and self-employed. Teachers and bankers experienced comparatively lesser stress in both role as well as life.

Chand and Monga (2007) examined the correlates of job stress and burn out among 100 faculty members from two universities. Respondents with internal locus of control, high social support and high job involvement experience less stress. Results also revealed that, maximum stress is reported by professors and minimum by assistant professors. Kaur and Kaur (2007) attempted to make a study on occupational stress and burn out among women police. The sample comprised of 80 women police with age ranging between 25 and 45. The results concluded that police work is one of the most stressful occupations and as the occupational stress increases the level of the burn out also increases. From all these studies, it can be concluded that as the position of the worker increases, the stress level also increases. Teachers experienced low stress as compared to other professionals.

Experience

Blix, Cruise, Mitchell and Blix (1994) conducted a study on occupational stress among university teachers and found that faculty having less than 10 years of experience had higher stress than faculty with more than 20 years of experience. Ryhal and Singh (1996) considered university faculty for their study comprising a sample of 100 faculty members (30 professors, 31

associate and 39 assistant professors). Results revealed that those with 26-35 years' experience had higher job stress than those with teaching experience of 16-25 years and 5-15 years. Those with 16-25 years' experience had higher job stress than those with teaching experience of 5-15 years. Ansari and Singh (1997) made an attempt to explore the contribution of demographic variables to the nature of stress experienced by the teachers in an agriculture university. The study comprised sample of 235 faculty members (23 professors, 74 associate and 138 assistant professors). The associate professor's total service experience was positively related to stress.

Bhagawan (1997) conducted a study on 100 teachers selected from 20 schools in Orissa. The sample consisted of 100 teachers (53 male and 47 female teachers). The study revealed that the higher the teaching experience, lesser the perceived burn out. Bhatia and Kumar (2005) studied on occupational stress and burn out in industrial employees. The sample consisted of 100 employees belonging to supervisor and below supervisor level. Their experience/length of service varied from 2-6 and 7-12 years. Industrial employees at supervisor rank and below supervisor rank with more experience of service had more occupational stress due to more feeling of depersonalization and more emotional exhaustion. From the above studies, it can be concluded that the length of service has negative and positive relationship with stress. Even then more studies revealed that individuals with lesser experience, experienced more stress as compared to the individual with more service years.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effects of occupational stress on the job performance among academic staff of University of Cape Coast. The chapter discusses the methodology that was followed in carrying out the study. This includes the research design, population, the sample as well as the sampling procedure that was used for the study. The data collection procedure as well as how the data was analysed are included.

Research Design

The mixed method approach was used in the study. The mixed method approach is a methodology for conducting research that involves collecting, analysing and integrating quantitative and qualitative research (Creswell, 2003). This approach uses the strength of both methods to provide a broader perspective about the issue under investigation. Also, it provides strengths that offset the weakness of both quantitative and qualitative. Mixed methods approach is used when the researcher wants to expand the breadth, depth and range of the research by using different methods and different ways of inquiring resulting in more comprehensive result (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2018).

This study employed the sequential explanatory design to explain and offer insight into the effects of occupational stress on the job performance among academic staff of University of Cape Coast. Sequential explanatory design involves the collection and analysis of quantitative data followed by the collection and analysis of qualitative data (Creswell, 2008). This method is a two-phase design where the quantitative data is collected first followed by the

qualitative data. The purpose is to use rigorous quantitative research assessing magnitude and frequency of constructs and rigorous qualitative research exploring the meaning and understanding of constructs. In this case the priority is given to the quantitative data and the findings are integrated during the interpretation phase of the study.

The researcher used the sequential explanatory design because it enabled the researcher to examine the quantitative data (outcomes) and qualitative data (processes) to allow for an increased ability to detect the occurrences of a phenomenon. Additionally, sequential exploratory design allows for data results to inform a more complete picture for the researcher. The exploratory nature of the sequential mixed method design also afforded the researcher to "collect qualitative data to help explain or elaborate the quantitative results" (Creswell, 2008, p. 560). It further enabled the researcher to converge or validate results from different methods. Other reasons include to merge quantitative and qualitative data to develop a more complete understanding of a problem; to develop a complementary picture; to compare, validate, or triangulate results; to provide illustrations of context for trends; and to examine processes/experiences along with outcomes (Plano Clark, 2010). Notwithstanding the advantages, the sequential explanatory design requires a substantial extensive time to complete all data collection given the two separate phases.

Study Area

The study was undertaken in the University of Cape Coast which is situated in the Cape Coast Metropolis in the Central region of the Republic of Ghana. The University of Cape Coast was established in October, 1962 as a

result of international commission appointed by the Ghana government in December, 1960. The University of Cape Coast was chosen for this current study because of the complexity and variety of academic programmes it runs. The university offers regular, sandwich and distance learning programmes. The lecturers who teach regular students and programmes are the same lecturers who are sought to assist in teaching sandwich and distance students. This arrangement places a huge stress on the academic staff who after teaching regular students for four months have to be engaged to teach sandwich students during the long vacation.

The College of Distance Education (CoDE) formerly Centre for Continuing Education (CCE) of the University of Cape Coast was established in 1997 and upgraded to a college status on 1st August, 2014. There are currently three academic departments including Mathematics and Science, Business Studies and Education Studies. The objectives for establishing the College of Distance Education were to provide opportunities for people to pursue higher education; train more professional teachers for all levels of education in the Ghana Education Service (GES), as well as accounting and management personnel in civil/public service, commerce and industry.

The College of Distance Education in the University of Cape Coast currently runs programmes in education and business leading to the award of a diploma, post-diploma and master's degree. CoDE is made up of ten (10) academic departments/units namely: Department of Quality Assurance and Enhancement, Department of Education, Teaching Practice and Project Work Unit, Department of Business, Department of Arts and Social Sciences, Examinations Units, Department of Mathematics and Science Education,

Postgraduate Unit, Students Records Management Unit, Counselling Unit and the Admissions Unit. Each academic department is managed by a Head of Department or a Co-ordinator who is also an academic staff.

Population

The study comprised all academic staff at CoDE in UCC. The academic staff of the College are found in the academic departments. The total number of academic staff at CoDE (including regional co-ordinators) is thirty-nine (39).

Sampling Procedure

The sample size for the study consisted of 20 academic staff at CoDE. Out of the total number of academic staff at CoDE, fifteen which represented 75 percent were males while five which represented 25 percent were females. A quota sampling of twenty (20) academic staff was used for the study. The twenty respondents were drawn with two from each of the ten academic departments at CoDE. In the opinion of Gravetter and Forzana (2009), quota sampling is a non-probability sampling method; a type of convenience sampling involving identifying specific subgroups to be included in the sample and establishing quotas for individuals to be sampled from each group. The selection of two respondents from each academic department at CoDE is representative of the entire population. The academic staff at CoDE are also homogenous, with the same level and amount of teaching and work load.

All the twenty respondents were used for the quantitative (questionnaire) data collection whiles the researcher purposively selected ten (10) participants for the qualitative (interview) data collection. Specifically, the directors in charge of the various departments were used for the qualitative (interview) data collection.

Data Collection Instruments

The data collection instrument used for the study were questionnaire and interview guide. The two instruments were used to enable the researcher triangulate the information to test the consistency of the findings obtained from each of the instruments used. Bekoe (2006) supported this view when he stated "triangulation in research is to test for consistency of findings obtained through different instruments" (p.). It is therefore important that different instruments will be used to validate the information gathered.

Questionnaire

Questionnaires were used to solicit information from the academic staff of CoDE at the University of Cape Cost. The questionnaire (Appendices B) used was adapted and modified from Organizational Stress Screening Tool by Cartwright and Cooper (2002). The questionnaire had five sections and that each section covered each research question. For accurate representation of data, items on the questionnaire were on a five-point Likert-scale. Numerical weights assigned to the scales were:

1 – Strongly Disagree

2 - Disagree

3 - Undecided

4 – Agree

5 – Strongly Agree

Forty-eight item questionnaire was prepared (see appendix B) with section A consisting of the bio graphic data of the respondents. Also, section B consisted of eleven items of the causes of occupational stress among staff of CoDE; section C consisted of twenty-three items on the symptoms of

occupational stress among staff of CoDE; furthermore, section D consisted of fourteen items on the effects of occupational stress among staff of CoDE at the University of Cape Coast.

Interview Guide

A semi-structured interview guide adopted from Organizational Stress Screening Tool by Cartwright and Cooper (2002) was designed to aid in eliciting responses from respondent on the causes, symptoms and the effects of occupational stress. Semi-structured interview guide was used in this research, because "interaction between the researcher and the participants bring the researcher into contact with the phenomenon being studied" (Kumekpor, 2002, p.31). In this way, semi-structured interview guide becomes an effective means of reporting precisely what prevails about the phenomenon under study with greater reliability.

The data collection made use of two distinct data collection instruments (a questionnaire and an interview guide) to bring richness and in-depth description of the phenomenon. Bekoe (2006) supported this view when he stated "triangulation in research is to test for consistency of findings obtained through different instruments from both quantitative and qualitative form. Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007) define triangulation as the use of two or more methods of data collection in the study of some aspect of human behaviour. They further added that triangulation technique in the social sciences attempts to map out, or explain more fully the richness and complexity of human behaviour by studying it from more than one stand point thereby making use of both quantitative and qualitative data.

In view of this, Thomas and Nelson (1996), point out that triangulation is valuable because of the increased quality control achieved by combining methods and data sources. The complementary function of each of these data collection methods enriched the quality of this study. The overall intent of this approach is to have the qualitative data help explain in more detail the quantitative results. Thus, it is important to tie together or to connect the quantitative results to the qualitative data collection. It is therefore important that different instruments will be used to validate the information gathered.

Pre-testing of Data Collection Instrument

Validity and reliability are essential features of any research (Creswell, Piano Clark, Gutmann & Hanson, 2003; Robson, 2002). To ensure the reliability and validity of the data collection instruments (questionnaire and interview guide) developed, the researcher subjected it to expert views. The validity of the data collection instruments (questionnaire and interview guide) developed, particularly the face validity, the construct validity and content validity, was ascertained by the researcher's supervisors and peers pursing Master of Philosophy in Educational Administration in Higher Education. This was done by the researcher's supervisors re-wording some words used, rephrasing some ambiguous statements in the data collection instruments and removing misleading items from the data collection instruments (questionnaire and interview guide) developed to fairly and comprehensively cover the domain or scope the research purport to cover. Also, the researcher's supervisors tailored the questionnaire to the concentration span of the respondents whiles the interview guide items addressed factors concerning the participants.

The reliability of the data collection instrument (questionnaire) was ensured by pre-testing the data collection instrument. The staff of Distance Education Centre (e - Learning Distance Education) of University of Education of Winneba were used for the pre-testing. The staff of e - Learning Distance Education Centre were selected because they share similar characteristics with the respondents of the actual study in terms of qualification, responsibilities, duration and intensity of workload. After the pre-testing, the feedback gathered and the responses collected enabled modification, clarification and the restructuring of items in the questionnaire that appeared ambiguous and misleading to respondents. Specifically, some of the items on the causes and the effects of occupational stress among academic staff on the questionnaire were modified and restructured to ensure equivalence reliability with the semi-structured interview guide.

The data collection instrument (questionnaire) yielded a reliability Cronbach alpha value of 0.78. According to Fraenkel and Wallen (2003), Cronbach alpha is an appropriate measure of internal consistency of an instrument hence the reliability Cronbach alpha co-efficient was used to determine the degree of its validity and reliability of the instruments. According to Fraenkel and Wallen (2003) and De Vellis (1991) a reliability coefficient within 0.6 to 0.9 is considered very respectful for determining the appropriateness of the instrument. Undoubtedly, according to Fraenkel and Wallen (2003) and De Vellis (1991), the items on the questionnaire had the potential of eliciting the desired information.

Data Collection Procedures

The data were obtained through self-administered questionnaire and a semi structured interview guide. The researcher obtained an introductory letter from the Head of Department of Institute for Educational Planning and Administration. The introductory letter spelt out the purpose of the study, the need for individual participation, anonymity as well as confidentially of respondents' response. After establishing the necessary contact with the various directors and administrators of CoDE, permission was sought for the administration of the questionnaire and the semi structured interview guide.

The data were collected in two phases. The first phase covered the administration of questionnaires. At this stage, the researcher explained the purpose of anonymity of the study and procedure for responding to the questionnaire to respondents one after the other as the respondents agreed to be part of the study. The respondents were assured of anonymity in order to inspire them to respond to the items without any suspicion. The researcher personally administered the questionnaire to twenty (20) respondents of the study at the Centre for Distance Education. The respondents were given ample time to complete the questionnaires, after which the questionnaires were collected by the researcher. Return rate of the questionnaires was 97%.

Data were also gathered through the use of a semi-structured interview guide. From the twenty (20) respondents used for the study, 10 participants were selected to be interviewed. Specifically, the directors in charge of the various departments were interviewed due to their oversight responsibilities as academic staff as well as their rich knowledge and experiences of the stressful

moment academic staff go through in order to fulfil their responsibilities and duties.

The researcher conducted a face-to-face interview with the participants. The researcher sought the permission of the participants to be recorded during the interview session using a tape recorder. Also, the researcher took note of salient points raised. With the aid of the semi-structured interview guide, the researcher interviewed the participants on the causes, symptoms, effects and suggested remedies to curb the existing occupational stress among academic staff of CoDE at the University of Cape Coast. The interview was conducted at the office space of the participants whiles the duration of the interview was determined by the richness of information of the participants, the openness and willingness to share his/her experiences, thought and feelings about their academic work. Again, the participants were assured of confidentiality of the responses in order to inspire them to respond to the items without any suspicion. The whole data collection exercise lasted for 32 working days. Research is a dynamic process which involves researchers and respondents, and which is based on mutual trust and cooperation, as well as on promises and well accepted conventions and expectations. It is important that the rights and freedom of the respondents are respected. Data that were obtained from the respondents through interviewing were handled with confidentiality. This was meant to ensure that no other person than the researcher had access to the information apart from the purpose for which the data were obtained.

It was also to ensure that no respondent was identified with the kind of information they provide. That is, the respondents were assured the ethics of anonymity. The consent of the respondents was obtained before approaching

them to provide information for the research. This was to ensure that their privacy was not compromised or intruded. Permission letters from the Director of Institute for Educational Planning and Administration (IEPA) in the University of Cape Coast were obtained and sent far in advance before the respondents were approached. This was to ensure that the consent of the respondents and the authorities at CoDE in the University of Cape Coast had been sought. In an instance where the respondents felt hesitant to provide some vital information for the research, their rights in this regard were respected by freely allowing them to withhold any information they so wished.

Data Processing and Analysis

First, the questionnaires were serially numbered for easy identification. The data collected were edited, not necessarily altering responses to suit the researcher but to ensure that responses were suitable. The editing also helped to eliminate responses on the questionnaires which were found to be invalid. Finally, for accurate representation of data, items on the questionnaire were on a five-point Likert-scale. Numerical weights assigned to the scales were:

1 – Strongly Disagree

2 - Disagree

3 - Undecided

4 – Agree

5 – Strongly Agree

Also, the items on the questionnaires were transferred unto Statistical Product for Service Solution, (SPSS) Window Version 21.0 Descriptive statistics such as frequencies and percentages were used to summarise and to determine the direction of responses for research question 1, 2, and 3.

Recordings of the semi-structured interview were transcribed. The transcription involved listening to each session of the tape repeatedly to become familiar with the conversations, terms, and points raised by each of the participants. The paper manuscripts represented the transcribed version of the recorded interview. The paper manuscripts were then cleaned, edited to eliminate typographical errors to represent the exact words and expressions of the participants. This manuscript was sent to the various emails of the participants to crosscheck and verify the transcription of the recorded interview to ensure validity and reliability of data findings. Thematic analysis was used to analyse the responses from the respondents. The findings of the individual interviews were interpreted with reference to the conceptual framework which is situated within the framework of an Organisational Stress Screening Tool postulated by Cartwright and Cooper (2002). To ensure the confidentiality of the participants, pseudonyms was used in the write up to protect the anonymity of the interviewees. Finally, the data from the questionnaire and the semi-structured interview were triangulated to provide well-validated and substantiated findings to answer the research questions.

Chapter Summary

The sequential explanatory mixed method design was adopted for the study. The College of Distance Education, UCC, academic staff formed the population whiles quota sampling was used to select the accessible population. The study adapted the Organizational Stress Screening Tool by Cartwright and Cooper (2002) to modify the data collection instruments.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Introduction

The purpose of the study is to investigate the effects of occupational stress on the job performance among academic staff of CoDE of University of Cape Coast. The study adopted the sequential explanatory mixed method design. The sample size for the study consisted of 20 academic staff at CoDE whiles quota sampling technique was used in selecting the respondents for the study. All the twenty respondents were used for the quantitative (questionnaire) data collection at the first stage. During the second stage of the data collection, the researcher purposively selected ten (10) participants out of the twenty (20) for the qualitative (interview) data collection.

This chapter deals with the presentation and discussion of the results that were collected from the respondents in order to find answers to the research questions. The data collected through the questionnaire was analysed with the use of descriptive statistics (frequencies and percentages) whiles the data collected from the semi-structured interview was analysed thematically to validate the findings gathered from the questionnaire.

The results of the questionnaire are presented in tabular form with a general discussion of the result at the end of each section aimed at answering the research questions. Before turning to the main findings, it is important to present the demographic characteristics of the academic staff of CoDE of University of Cape.

Demographic Data of Participants

This section presents the demographic characteristics of the respondents who took part in the study. The result of this findings on the demographic data of respondents and the participants will be shown in Table 1 and Table 2 respectively.

Table 1: Demographic Data of Respondents

Gender		Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
	Male	15	75
	Female	5	25
Total		20	100
Age distribution			
	31- 40	5	25
	41 -50	9	45
	51 -60	4	20
	60 +	2	10
Total		20	100
Educational levels			
	Master's	14	70
	PhD	6	30
Total		20	100

Source: Field survey, Ackon (2019).

Table 2: Demographic Data of Participants for Interview

Pseudonyn	Age	High Academic Qualification	Gender
Kofi	52	PhD	Male
Esi	49	PhD	Female
Kwesi	50	MPhil	Male
Kwamina	47	PhD	Male
Ama	45	MPhil	Female
Kwofi	40	PhD	Male
Esi	53	MPhil	Female
Kaa	45	MPhil	Male
Abena	50	MPhil	Female
Kwaku	63	PhD	Male

Source: Field survey, Ackon (2019).

The issues of gender and age representation of academic staff have become an important subject in development studies and administration in higher education. It was therefore important to ascertain the gender representation of academic staff at the College of Distance Education (CoDE) of the University of Cape Coast. From Table 1, it could be observed that 15(75%) of the respondents were males whiles 5(25%) of the respondents were females. The above finding indicates that there was more male representation in this study than female. The male to female ratio for academic staff of CoDE who participated in this study stood at 4:1.

Furthermore, the measure of occupational stress and the ability to cope with stress takes into consideration the age range of individuals. It was for this

reason that this current study investigated the age distribution of the respondents. The findings of the study showed that 9(45%) of the respondents were within the ages of 41 – 50 years, 5(25%) of the respondents were also within the ages of 31 – 40 years whiles only 2(10%) of the respondents were above the age of 60 years.

The educational background of academic staff and the department these staff are working within CoDE of the University of Cape Coast is crucial in determining the level of stress that one is exposed to. Result from Table 1 shows that 14(70%) of the respondents held a Master's degree certificate whiles 6(30%) of the respondents held a Doctorate degree. Even though the minimum academic qualification required to lecture at the university is Master's degree preferably Master of Philosophy (M. Phil) there are some courses and programmes that requires a doctorate degree holder to handle.

Level of Stress and Demographic Factors

The relationship between demographic variables viz gender and age have a strong influence on job stress. Table 3 shows the result of the summary of the overall frequency distribution of the level of stress.

Table 3: Summary of the Overall Frequency Distribution of the Level of Stress

Overall Stress Level	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Alarming	9	45
Resistance	5	25
Exhaustive	6	30
Total	**20**	**100**

Source: Field survey, Ackon (2019).

The research also determined the general level of stress of the academic staff. Result from Table 3 depicts that most of the academic staff 9(45%) experienced the alarming level of overall stress. The rest of the academic staff 5(25%) and 6(30%) experienced resistance and the exhaustive level of overall stress respectively. Moreover, Table 4 shows the association between the level of overall stress and gender.

Table 4: Cross Tabulation for Level of Overall Stress and Gender

Gender		Level of overall Stress			**Total**
		Alarming	Resistance	Exhaustive	
	No.	9	4	2	**15**
Male	%	60	27	3	**100**
	No.	-	1	4	**5**
Female	%	-	20	80	**100**
	No.	**9**	**5**	**6**	**20**
Total	**%**	**45**	**25**	**30**	**100**

Source: Field survey, Ackon (2019).

As presented in Table 4, the result revealed that the majority of the male participants 9(60%) out of 15 were found to experience an alarming rate of stress, 4(27%) of the male participants also experienced the resistance level of stress while 2(13%) of the male participants experienced the exhaustive level of stress. Regarding the female, 4(80%) of the female participants were found to be at the exhaustive level of overall stress while 1(20%) of the female participant was at the resistance level of stress. The frequency distribution of male and female overall level of stress indicated that the male participants were prone more to the alarming level and the resistance level than the females.

However, the females seemed more prone to the exhaustive level of stress than their male counterpart. To corroborate this finding, data from the interview conducted revealed that per gender relation, the females were more stressed than the males. For instance, some of the participants intimated that;

> *"Women have to undertake household chores during the weekends but still have to find themselves in the lecture room to teach" (Ama).*

> *"Females especially the mother really undergoes stressful moment during the weekend lecture sessions" (Kwame).*

Gauging from the responses from the participants, it was explicitly clear that both the male and female academic staff of CoDE acknowledge that the females undergo more stress. This was ascertained from the household responsibilities and the motherly role the female academic staff need to perform during the weekends yet have to finish these responsibilities and find her way to the lecture room to lecture. Reddy and Ramamurthy (1991) and Mayes (1996) posit that female shows higher rate of stress because women experience greater amount of work change than men do.

To test whether the association between the level of stress and gender was statistically significant, a chi-square test for independence was computed. The chi-square test indicated that there was no statistical significance difference in the level of stress score between male and female academic staff at the College of Distance Education (CoDE) of the University of Cape Coast X^2 (2, N=20) = 4.01, p = 0.13.

Table 5: Cross Tabulation for Level of Overall Stress and Age Distribution

Age distribution		Level of overall Stress			
		Alarming	Resistance	Exhaustive	Total
	No.	2	3	__	**5**
31 – 40	%	40	60	__	**100**
	No.	3	2	4	**9**
41 – 50	%	33	22	45	**100**
	No.	__	2	2	**4**
51 – 60	%	__	50	50	**100**
	No.	__	1	1	**2**
60+	%	__	50	50	**100**
	No.	**5**	**8**	**7**	**20**
Total	**%**	**25**	**40**	**35**	**100**

Source: Field survey, Ackon (2019).

Result from Table 5 reveals that for the age range of 31–40 years, 3(60%) of the respondents were found at the resistance level of stress while 2(40%) of the respondents experienced an alarming level of stress. For the age range 41 – 50 years, 4(45%) of the respondents were found experiencing the exhaustive level of stress, 2(22%) of the respondents experiencing the resistance level of stress with 3(33%) of the respondents at the alarming level of stress. Also, for the age range of 51 – 60 years, 2(50%) of the respondents experience the resistance and the exhaustive level of stress respectively. The frequency distribution of the age range to the overall level of stress indicates that the age range of 41 – 50 and above were prone more to the exhaustive level. To consolidate the findings, the participants expressed that academic staff who are

within the age range of 40 - 50 years' experience more stress than the other age ranges. The participants' said;

> *"Old age is stressful coupled with its extra work-related during weekends" (Kofi)*
>
> *"Most of the academic staff of 45 years and above sometimes give their classes periods to their graduate assistants or national service personnel to engage the students" (Esi)*

A chi-square test was determined to check whether the academic staff level of stress significantly differ across the respective age ranges. The chi-square test result revealed no statistically significance difference in the level of stress across the age range of respondents $X2$ (4, N = 20) = 4.70, p = 0.31. the findings of this study confirm the findings of Reddy and Ramamurthy (1991). The findings of their study posit the influence of age on stress experience in respect to the age group of workers. Specifically, the age group of 41-50 experienced more stress than the age group of 51-60 years. Also, Beena and Poduval (1992) attest that when age increases, experienced stress also increased due to the increase in the responsibility of the executives. The findings of this study affirm Virk et al. (2001) findings that age and job level can have strong influence on job stress.

Research Question 1: What are the Main Causes of Occupational Stress Among Academic Staff of CoDE in University of Cape Coast?

The Asset model of stress by Cartwright and Cooper (2002) was adopted to investigate the main causes of stress among the academic staff or CoDE in the University of Cape Coast. The modified aspect will include the coping strategies (problem focused and emotion focused). The key variables of the ASSET model of stress were assessed; the results of the findings are presented in Table 6.

Table 6: Main Causes of Occupational Stress Among Academic Staff of CoDE in University of Cape Coast

Which of the following variables causes stress at CoDE	SD		D		U		A		SA		Total	
	(f)	(%)	(f)	(%)	(f)	(%)	(f)	(%)	(f)	(%)	(f)	(%)
The job scope and responsibilities are too demanding	2	10	_	_	2	10	4	20	12	60	**20**	**100**
Inadequate working equipment	_	_	_	_	1	5	5	25	14	70	**20**	**100**
Salary and allowance do not correspond to the duties and responsibilities of employees	_	_	_	_	_	_	8	40	12	60	**20**	**100**
Workload is too heavy for which I cannot complete during my ordinary working hours	_	_	_	_	_	_	4	20	16	80	**20**	**100**
Job insecurity remains a potential source of stress	4	20	_	_	1	5	5	25	10	50	**20**	**100**
Feelings about the working situation and family life at the present time at CoDE	1	5	_	_	1	5	7	35	11	55	**20**	**100**
Your job making full use of your skills and abilities	_	_	_	_	_	_	3	15	17	85	**20**	**100**

Table 3 Continues

Poor interpersonal relationship with colleagues at CoDE	1	5	1	5			3	15	15	75	**20**	**100**
Unclear and confused career path of progression of academic staff at CoDE	_	_	_	_	2	10	6	30	12	60	**20**	**100**
Work has the potential of spill over and interfere with one's personal life	1	5	1	5	_	_	5	25	13	65	**20**	**100**
Confusion between the personality of the individual and the expectations of their role	8	40	2	10	1	5	4	20	5	25	**20**	**100**

Source: Field survey, Ackon (2019)

It can be found from Table 6 that 12(60%) of the respondents strongly agreed that their job scope and responsibilities are too demanding and that causes their stress and their salary and allowance do not correspond to their duties and responsibilities respectively. Sixteen (80%) of the respondents also strongly agreed that their work load was too heavy for which they cannot complete during the ordinary working hours and 17(85%) of the respondents further strongly agreed that their job makes full use of their skills and abilities which causes stress to them. Also, 17(85%) of the respondents strongly agreed that the poor interpersonal relationship among colleagues at CoDE create some stressful moment to employees. Furthermore, 13(65%) of the respondents strongly agreed that their work has the potential of spillover and interfering with their personal life. On the other hand, 4(20%) of the respondents strongly disagreed that job insecurity remains a potential sources of stress to them as workers of CoDE and also 8(40%) of the respondents strongly agreed that confusion between their personality as individual and the expectations of their roles serve as a source of stress to them.

The findings of the study confirm the findings of Cartwright and Cooper (2002) that demands of work have the potential to spill over and interfere with one's personal life. This can put a strain on the outside relationship and increase stress level (Confederation of British Industry, 1998), health and safety (Health and Safety Executive, 2000). The primary cause of occupational stress is balancing the differing demands of work and home (Industrial Society Survey, 2001). Finding balance between professional and personal lives was found to be one of the most important stressors in faculty deans (Gmelch et al, 1999; Gmelch & Burns, 1994). In addition, Tytherleigh et al. (2005) found out that

job insecurity was the most significant source of stress in all staff categories in 14 UK universities and colleges. Universities have also been linked to cut in staffing levels (Winefield et al., 2003) and downsizing (Sarros et al., 1999). Austin, Shah, and Muncer (2005) summarize the main source of stress as work-related stressors, such as time management, student discipline, and student motivation. Other sources of teacher stress that have been documented include teaching a child with a disability (Forlin, 2001), discipline and handling difficult students (Onafowora, 2004), adapting to change (Kyriacou, 2001), lack of time (Kyriacou, 1987), inadequate resources (Chaplain, 1995), poor student behaviour (Friedman, 1995), multiple roles and responsibilities (Hockley & Hemmings, 2001), and role conflict (Pearlin, 1989) which were the exact causes of organizational stress among academic staff at CoDE, University of Cape Coast.

It can be deduced that stress causes physical discomfort such as headaches, ulcer, sleeplessness or pain of muscles and organs. Psychological stress result from our altitudes, emotions and reactions such as depression, habitual negativity, lack of concentration and low creativity whilst psychosocial stress involves the stressors that arise from interpersonal relationships and inadequate or in appropriate social interactions such as aggression. Stress occurs with the interaction between an individual and the environment, which produces emotional strain affecting a person's physical and mental condition. Stress is caused by stressors, which are events that create a state of disequilibrium within an individual (Bowing & Harvey, 2001).

Causes of Occupational Stress

The interview data gave a clear picture of the causes of occupational stress among the academic staff of CoDE. The causes of occupational stress among the academic staff of CoDE were put under three main themes. The themes were: heavy workload, poor working conditions and role conflict among academic staff.

One theme that emerged was heavy workload on academic staff. Kwesi espoused that "our job demands are very stressful; we teach more than one group of students a day". Also, Kwamina, expressed that "*we have to read extensively and prepare adequately during week days so that we will be able to teach our students during the weekend"*.

Efia expressed that:

> *"Our workload is too much for us and having worked or taught during the weekends, it poses so much stress on us to teach for long hours on weekends as well"*

This view was further strengthened by the view of other participants:

> *"We arrange our lectures in a way that do not conflict with our personal life and engagement" (Ama)*
>
> *"We are not satisfied with teaching at CoDE. We teach throughout weekend which is expected to be a resting period for academic staff" (Kofi)*

One of the factors that influence the higher learning institution are their human resources and academic staff taking multiple roles of performance. High quality of academic staff is the major factor contributing to the high quality of students' output. However, based on the responses of the

participants, any academic staff experience a medium to high incidence of stress due to their heavy workload to meet the desirable expectations of CoDE.

Furthermore, inadequate working equipment and resources makes it difficult to complete assigned work especially when they had to do with administrative tasks, in addition to the main duty as a lecturer. The following were some of the experiences expressed by academic staff in an interview session.

> *"As lecturer, you become stressed up when materials and modules required for teaching are either unavailable or inadequate (Kwamina)*
>
> *When you need a projector or laptop to deliver a lecture and they are not available" (Efia)*

In addition, role conflict among academic staff creates some stressful moments. One theme that emerged was that there exists multiple role conflict experienced by academic staff. This feeling of stress was expressed by participants' Kwaku indicated that *"conflicts among colleagues and with your superior or supervisors make you feel unhappy and unaccepted".*

Furthermore, Kwofi had this to say:

> *"Some academic staff occupy double positions in addition to their lectureship responsibilities. The administrative tasks that they perform are different from their main duties as academic staff which only focuses on teaching, researching and giving consultation to students".*

As a result of academic staff conflicting roles, sometimes their administrative tasks often cause them to neglect their main duties as lecturers. Most often, these administrative tasks take academic staff out of town which makes them unable to meet their students. It was expressed that academic staff's inability to meet their class schedules consciously put them under pressure since they are mostly seen to be neglecting their classes or assigning their teaching assistants to take their classes.

The findings of the study are in consonance with Bowing and Harvey (2001) position that stress occurs when the interaction between an individual and the environment produces emotional strain affecting a person's physical and mental condition. Stress is caused by stressors, which are events that create a state of disequilibrium within an individual. These authors also stated that the cost of too much stress on individuals, organizations, and society is high. In view of Blumenthal (2003) the experience of stress involves an event that is demanding or resources as well as the subjective feeling of distress experienced in its face. An event could be experienced as stressful if people appraised (evaluated) it as distressing. Whether an event is experienced as stressful depends on a person's psychosocial orientation with things like culture, spirituality, values, beliefs and past experiences influencing the appraisal. Events that are appraised as being overwhelming, threatening, unsatisfying or conflicting are more likely to be experienced as stressful.

Again, Robbins (2004) corroborate this assertion that stress is a dynamic condition in which an individual is confronted with opportunity, constraint or demand related to what he desires and for which the outcome is perceived to be both uncertain and important. Manshor et al, (2003) reported that relationship

at work is a main source of stress among managers in all organizations to which this study found as a cause of stress among staff of CoDE. Confrontation with colleagues was also found to impact academic leaders' stress (Gmelch, 2006; Gmelch & Burns, 1994).

It should be pointed out that results from the qualitative data was consistent and in consonance with the literature and the quantitative data. Triangulating these two data collection instruments on the main causes of stress among academic staff, it was discovered that too demanding job scope and responsibilities; non-corresponding salaries and allowances to job scope and responsibilities as well as heavy workload, inadequate supply of working materials and modules, poor interpersonal relationship among academic staff and multiple roles or positions of by academic staff were the main causes of stress among academic staff of CoDE, University of Cape Coast.

Research Question 2: What are the Occupational Stress Symptoms Among Academic Staff of CoDE in University of Cape Coast?

According to Arnold, Robertson and Cooper (1993), stress response is in three stages (alarming stage, resistance stage and the exhaustive stage). Table 7 presents the finding on the symptoms of stress among the academic staff of CoDE in the University of Cape Coast.

Table 7: Symptoms of Occupational Stress Among Academic Staff of CoDE in University of Cape Coast

Which of the following is a symptom of stress at the alarming stage	SD		D		U		A		SA		Total	
	(f)	(%)	(f)	(%)	(f)	(%)	(f)	(%)	(f)	(%)	(f)	(%)
Experiencing of some shock	1	5	1	5	_	_	6	30	12	60	**20**	**100**
Pounding of heart	_	_	_	_	_	_	7	35	13	65	**20**	**100**
Breathing experience	8	40	5	15	_	_	4	20	3	15	**20**	**100**
Constant fatigue	_	_	_	_	_	_	4	20	16	80	**20**	**100**
Recurring headaches	_	_	_	_	1	5	11	55	8	40	**20**	**100**
Chronically bad breath	8	40	5	25	2	10	3	15	2	10	**20**	**100**
Sweaty hands or feet	10	50	2	10	5	25	3	15			**20**	**100**
Dizziness	8	40	7	35	_	_	4	20	1	5	**20**	**100**
Constant inner tension	_	_	_	_	_	_	4	20	16	80	**20**	**100**
Inability to sleep	3	5	2	10	_	_	14	70	1	5	**20**	**100**
Inability to concentrate	7	35	6	30	3	15	2	10	2	10	**20**	**100**
Increased aggression	6	30	7	35	2	10	4	20	1	5	**20**	**100**
Growing feeling of inadequacy	2	10	2	10	1	5	5	25	11	55	**20**	**100**
Resistance Stage												
Excessive use of alcohol	3	15	4	20	_	_	4	20	9	45	**20**	**100**
Excessive smoking	5	25	3	15	1	5	8	40	3	15	**20**	**100**
EXHAUSTION STAGE												
Exhaustiveness of an individual	_	_	_	_	_	_	4	20	16	80	**20**	**100**
Weariness of an individual	_	_	_	_	1	5	14	60	5	25	**20**	**100**
Experiencing some distress	1	5	1	5	_	_	15	75	3	5	**20**	**100**
Experiencing irritability and tension	1	5	1	5	1	5	11	55	6	30	**20**	**100**

Source: Field survey, Ackon (2019)

Result from Table 7 shows that at the alarming stage symptoms of occupational stress among academic staff of CoDE, 12(60%) of the respondents strongly agreed that they experienced some shock. 13(65%) of the respondents also strongly agreed that they experienced pounding of heart and 16(80%) of the respondents strongly agreed that they experienced constant fatique as the symptoms of occuaptional stress. Furthermore, 16(80%) of the respondents strongly agreed that they experienced constant inner tension and 11(55%) of the respondents also agreed that they experienced a growing feeling of inadequacy as the symptoms of occupational stress.

At the resistance stage, 9(45%) of the respondents strongly agreed that they excessively took in alcohol to resist stress and 8(40%) of the respondents agreed that they excessivley smoked to resist the symptoms of stress. In additon to these sympotoms at the alarming stage and the resistance stage of the stress model, 16(80%) of the respondents strongly agreed that they experienced ehaustiveness of an individual, 14(60%) of the respondents agreed that they experienced weariness as an individual and 15(75%) of the respondents agreed that they experience some upset as a symptom of exhaustive stage of occupational stress. On the other hand, 10(50%) of the respondents strongly disagreed that sweaty hands or feet are the symptoms of occupational stress, 8(40%) of the respondents strongly disagreed that chronic bad breath is a symptom of occuaptional stress and 8(40%) of the respondents strongly disagreed that they experienced breathing challenges as are symptoms of occupational stress.

The various stages of the symptoms of experienced by the academic staff at CoDE confirms the comprehensive list of the symptoms of stress posited by

Fako (2010), Fisher (2003) and Gillespie, Walsh, Winefield, Dua & Stough (2001). To these researchers, the symptoms were: constant fatigue, low energy level, recurring headaches, gastrointestinal disorders, chronically bad breath, sweaty hands or feet, dizziness, as well as high blood pressure, pounding heart, constant inner tension, inability to sleep, as well as temper outbursts, hyperventilation, moodiness, inability to concentrate, and increased aggression, are the alarming stage symptoms of occupational stress. In addition, Fako (2010), Fisher (2003), Gillespie, et., al (2001) further confirm the resistance stage symptoms as he posits that the resistance stage stress is accompanied with increase in defensiveness, dependence on tranquilizers, excessive use of alcohol, and excessive smoking. Furthermore, compulsive eating, chronic worrying, anxiety or apprehensiveness, irritability and restlessness inability to relax, growing feelings of inadequacy corroborate the exhaustive stage of occupational stress of the academic staff (Fako, 2010; Fisher, 2003; Gillespie, et., al, 2001).

Vermeulen (2001) attests that physical stress is a stress a human body can feel. It causes physical discomfort such as headaches, ulcer, sleeplessness or pain of muscles and organs. Psychological stress result from our attitudes, emotions and reactions such as depression, habitual negativity, lack of concentration and low creativity whilst psychosocial stress involves the stressors that arise from interpersonal relationships and inadequate or in appropriate social interactions such as aggression.

Symptoms of Occupational Stress Among Academic Staff

The interview data emphasized the main symptoms of occuaptional stress among academic staff of CoDE. The views and opinions of the

participants were put into four main thematic responses: emotional response, behavioural responses, and cognitive response.

On the emotional response, when academic staff experience a stressful working situation, they later show increase emotional distress such as anger, frustration and disappointment. This phenomenal experience was expressed by Kwamina as *"we even shout on top of our voice in stressful mood"*. Kwesi also revealed that *"all of stressful workload makes me distress, anxious and sometimes feel uncomfortable with my structured job".*

Furthermore, Ama added that:

> *"When we are under stress, our body system becomes restless and appears to be under some form of tension. You find it difficult to sleep since the mind is unstable and in turn, results in the inability of the individual to concentrate".*

Moreover, Kwa stated that:

> *"When one is under stress, that individual exhibits some level of aggression and feelings of inadequacy. The individual mounts up tension and becomes apprehensive resulting in growing feelings of inadequacy"*

This emotional phase can be likened to the alarming stage where the symptoms of the stresful events are manifesting and taking deep roots in the worker. At the constant fatique, constant inner tension, increased aggression as well as growing a sense of feeling of inadequacy stirs up emotional feeelings and responses.

The next theme is the behavioural phase of the symptoms of stress. Some participants expressed that they sometimes experience and show behaviour symptoms tied to a stressful work situation such as smoking, drinking or going

out during office hours to have fresh air. These facts were indicated by the following expressions of the participants:

> *"I cannot concentrate on core responsibilities because of a load stressor I faced. I have to leave office to relax and regain myself by talking to other colleagues or friends" (Ama)*
>
> *"I mostly take some drinks [acoholic] at the Senior Club House after a stressful day to relax my nerves and go home to sleep" (Kwamina).*

Efia also stated that "*if I am stressed, I prefer being quiet, not happy as usual*". Kofi and *Kaa* further expressed that:

> *"When I experience stress my appetite is often affected but I get a strong desire for sexual satisfaction to calm my stressful nerves down".*
>
> *"When I experience stress, I chat over the situation with my colleagues, friends and family as a way of reduing stress".*

Gauging from the expressions of the participants of their behavioural response symptoms of stress, it presupposes that the behavioural symptoms tend to enable the participants resist or overcome stressful feeling. Actions and behaviour taken are meant to help the individual overcome the experienced stress. It can be deduced that the behavioural response and the resistance stage of the response to the symptoms of stress share similar traits. These traits behave towards the resistance of stress turns to enable the employee regain job satisfaction and job motivation on order to meet deadlines and complete an assigned task. Through these defence mechanisms the individuals tend to cope

by concealing stress and adopting rationalization as alternative to actual management of problem.

Lastly, there is a cognitive response of the symptoms of stress among academic staff of CoDE. The state of academic work of CoDE does not only affect the emotional and the behavioural aspects but also can reduce the person's cognitive functioning level. Kofi expressed that "the stress which I feel now has distracted my concentration" whiles Kaa, "I feel worn out with a feeling of irritation. In addition, Kwamina espoused that:

> *Because of additional structured job, I am unable to concentrate fully on my main duties as an academic staff"*

Participants expressed negative cognitive responses that is induced by a stressful work situation. These symptoms (forgetfulness, confusion, lack of concentration and feel of exhaustiveness) confirms the exhaustive stage of the response to the symptoms of stress.

Fako (2010), Fisher (2003) and Gillespie, et., al (2001) attest that the symptoms of stress were: constant fatigue, low energy level, recurring headaches, as well as inner tension, inability to sleep, temper outbursts, moodiness, inability to concentrate, and increased aggression symptoms of occupational stress. In addition, Fako (2010), Fisher (2003), Gillespie et al. (2001) further confirm that increase in defensiveness, dependence on tranquilizers, excessive use of alcohol, and excessive smoking aid in the controlling of stressful experience. Vermeulen (2001) attests that physical stress is a stress a human body can feel. It causes physical discomfort such as headaches, ulcer, sleeplessness or pain of muscles and organs. Psychological stress result from our attitudes, emotions and reactions such as depression,

habitual negativity, lack of concentration and low creativity whilst psychosocial stress involves the stressors that arise from interpersonal relationships and inadequate or in appropriate social interactions such as aggression.

Research Question 3: What are the Effects Associated with Occupational Stress Among Academic Staff of CoDE in the University of Cape Coast?

Blumenthal (2003) viewed stress as anything that upsets people's ability to maintain critical variables (which can be social, psychological, spiritual or biological in nature) within acceptable limits. The experience of stress involves an event that is demanding or resources as well as the subjective feeling of distress experienced in its face. An event could be experienced as stressful if people appraised (evaluated) it as distressing. He further placed the effects under subjective effects, cognitive effects, behavioural effects, physiological responses and effects on employee's health. Table 8 shows the respondents responses to the effects of occupational stress among academic staff of CoDE in the University of Cape Coast.

Table 8: Effects of Occupational Stress Among Academic Staff of CoDE in University of Cape Coast

Psychological Effects	SD		D		U		A		SA		Total	
	(f)	(%)	(f)	(%)	(f)	(%)	(f)	(%)	(f)	(%)	(f)	(%)
I experience anxiety	2	10			2	10	5	25	11	55	**20**	**100**
I experience depression	_	_	_	_	_	_	6	30	14	70	**20**	**100**
I experience nervousness	_	_	_	_	_	_	13	65	7	35	**20**	**100**
I experience headaches	_	_	_	_	1	5	16	80	3	15	**20**	**100**
I experience migraines	_	_	_	_	_	_	8	40	12	60	**20**	**100**
Social/Behaviour Effects												
I feel helplessness	2	10	4	20	1	5	5	25	8	40	**20**	**100**
I easily get angry	3	15	1	5	_	_	9	45	7	35	**20**	**100**
I feel irritable about simple issue	6	30	2	10	2	10	5	25	5	25	**20**	**100**
I easily feel aggressive when communicating with others	4	20	7	35	1	5	5	25	3	15	**20**	**100**
Physiological Effects												
I experience severe body pains	3	15	2	10	1	5	12	60	2	10	**20**	**100**
I regularly experience colds and flu	3	15	2	10	1	5	11	55	3	15	**20**	**100**
I regularly experience chest pains	2	10	3	15	_	_	9	45	6	30	**20**	**100**
I experience obesity	7	35	6	30	2	10	4	20	3	15	**20**	**100**

Source: Field survey, Ackon (2019)

Result from Table 8 shows that 14(70%) of the respondents strongly agreed that they experienced depression as psychological effect of occupational stress, 12(60%) of the respondents also strongly agreed that they experienced migraines as psychological effects of their occupational stress, and 11(55%) of the respondents strongly agreed that they experienced anxiety as their psychological effect of occupational stress among staff of CoDE. Moreover, 8(40%) of the respondents strongly agreed that they experienced helplessness as a social/behavioural effect of their occupational stress and 9(45%) of the respondents agreed that they easily got angry as their social/behavioural effects of occupational stress. On the physiological effects, 12(60%) of the respondent agreed that they experience severe body pains, 11(55%) of the respondents agreed that they regularly experience colds and flu and 9(45%) of the respondents agreed that they experience regular chest pains. On the other hand, 6(30%) of the respondents strongly disagreed that feeling irritable about simple issue is not a social effect of occupational stress and 7(35%) of the respondent strongly disagreed that they experience obesity and diabetes as a philological effect of occupational stress at CoDE.

The findings of the study attest that occupational stress can lead to various negative consequences for the individual and the workplace as posited by Oginska-Bulik (2006). The effects of the occupational stress identified are in consonance with the Fairbrother and Warn (2003) who states that the effects of stress at the workplace include robbing people of their spirit and passion for the job, resulting in impaired individual functioning. On the effect of low motivation, the findings of the study correspond with findings of Vakola and Nikolaou (2005); for decreased morale, the findings confirm Faragher et al.,

(2004) and Salmond and Ropis (2005) research findings. Moreover, the findings on the effect of occupational stress of this study affirms the findings of these researchers; dampened initiative, reduced interest in working (Fairbrother & Warn,2003), high absenteeism rates (Ho, 1997), decreased capacity to perform (Michie, 2002), poor job performance (Jepson & Forrest, 2006), reduced efficiency (Shain, 1999), poor quality control, decline in productivity (Faragher et al, 2004;) and low quality products and services (Vakola & Nikolaou, 2005) as highlighted by Fako (2010).

In addition, the findings confirm the findings of Reedy and Poornima (2012) who posits that occupational stress contributes to organizational inefficiency, high staff turnover, absenteeism due to sickness, decreased quality, and quantity of practice, increased costs of health care, and decreased job performance. Also, the findings of this study revealed a relationship between occupational stress and job performance. To this end, the findings found in this study consolidate the findings of Standing (2010), Nortje (2007) and Bowing and Harvey (2001) that there exists a strong correlation between stress and job performance of university staff which may result in emotional discomfort which inevitably affects the physical and mental condition of the person. This tends to affect the university staff and consequently his or her job performance.

Effects of Ooccupational Stress Among Academic Staff

Being an academic staff for some people is a choice of life; the stronger the individual's dream and aspiration to be academic staff, the stronger the commitment and responsibility of the individual to remain in the profession despite the numerous stressful events experience and activities. It is against this

backdrop that the effects of occupational stress were put under three themes: Psychological, Physical and Social effects.

On the psychological effects of stress, Kwaku expressed that *"when I am stressed up, I get worried, feel afraid and experience panic attacks".* Ama also attested that *"I feel worthless and always feel a sense of failure when I am stressed".*

Kofi posited that:

> *"I feel tired, less efficient and have difficulty concentrating on my work when I am stressed up".*
>
> *"When I get stressed up, I tend to lack initiative in everything I do" (Esi)*

Others also stated that:

> *"When you are under stress, your psychological or mental facility becomes unstable" (Kwamina).*
>
> *I am unable to concentrate fully on my main duties as an academic staff" (Ama)*

To confirm what other participants had said, Kwamina indicated that "I feel worn out with a feeling of irritation".

Anitha Devi (2007), Blumenthal (2003) and Pandey and Srivastava (2000) confirm the feelings and expressions of the participants that the psychological effects of occupational stress affect one's thought process, leading to a difficulty or fear of making decisions, forgetfulness, hypersensitivity, mental blocks and difficulty concentrating or thinking clearly.

Moreover, on the physiological effect of stress on the academic staff, Kwame stated that:

"The human heart is the engine of the body. Therefore, any form of attack or disorder caused to the body first attacks or affects the heart. The heart responds to both internal and external stimuli. It therefore means that if the body is under intense stress; the heart will be affected in one way or the other since it is the heart that supplies blood to the vessels and the entire body"

Kwaku further indicated that

"I experience multiple symptoms such as a headache, skin discomfort when I am stressed"

Kofi and Esi had this to say respectively *"I feel nervous and depressed when I get stressed up"* and *"I absent myself from work when I am under severe stress"*

In addition to the psychological and physical effects, the participant also experienced some social effects of stress. Kwame expressed that:

"I feel angry most of the time when I am stressed"

Other participants, Kofi, Esi and Kaa had expressed that:

"I feel helplessness when I am stressed" (Kofi)

"I forget things and lose interest in other things easily" (Esi)

"I tend to hold unrealistic standards about myself and others when I am stressed" (Kofi)

The most prominent social effects of stress as expressed by the participants were that they tend to lose aspiration and interest in everything they do. It is important to state that the findings of the study confirm the findings of Salmond and Ropis (2005), Seidu (2003) Sellers and Damas (2002) that

inability to meet target, holding on to unrealistic standards, feeling worthless and a sense of failure and loss of aspiration at workplace were some of the social effects of occupational stress.

Blumenthal (2003) summarizes the various effects of occupational stress to consolidate the findings of this study. He posits that effects of occupational stress among academic staff were anxiety, depression, frustration, fatigue and low self-esteem, accident proneness, substance abuse, impaired speech, restlessness and forgetfulness as well as fear of making decisions, forgetfulness, hypersensitivity, mental blocks and difficulty concentrating or thinking clearly.

Chapter Summary

In sum, the academic staff at CoDE at the University of Cape Coast indicated that they experienced occupational stress when they are going about their daily work activities. Most importantly, 17(85%) of the respondents strongly agreed that their job made full use of their skills and abilities as the main cause of their occupational stress. On the symptoms of stress, 16(80%) of the respondents strongly agreed that they experience constant fatigue and inability to sleep respectively at alarming stage as well 16(80%) of the respondents strongly agreed that they experienced exhaustiveness as their exhaustive stage of the symptoms of stress.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

This chapter presents summary of the findings of the research on the effects of occupational stress on the job performance of academic staff of College of Distance Education (CoDE) in the University of Cape Coast. This chapter further presents the conclusions, recommendations and suggestions for further study.

Summary of the Study

Robbins (2001) perceives stress as a dynamic condition which an individual is confronted with an opportunity, constraints or demand related to what he or she desires and for the outcomes perceived to be both uncertain and important. It is generally believed that some stress is acceptable, sometimes referred to as challenges or positive stress. A healthy pressure stimulates or energizes human beings and promotes motivation and creativity. Distress which is either too little stress that creates boredom or apathy or too much stress can result in fatigue, health problems, burn out and in the worst scenario destruction and uncontrolled rage (Vinassa, 2003). This shows that, the academic environment no longer provides the low-stress working environment that the academician once enjoyed. Rapid development, global competition, technology and changes in the nature of jobs today could make the job more demanding than ever, and academic staff are more prone to health related psychological, mental and physical unfitness owing to this situation.

Generally, the study aimed at investigating the effects of occupational stress on the job performance of academic staff of CoDE at the University of

Cape Coast in the Cape Coast Metropolis in the Central Region of Ghana. Specifically, the study sought to find out:

1. What are the main causes of occupational stress among academic staff of CoDE in University of Cape Coast?
2. What are the occupational stress symptoms among academic staff of CoDE in University of Cape Coast?
3. What are the effects associated with occupational stress among academic staff of CoDE in the University of Cape Coast?

This study employed the sequential explanatory mixed method design. The targeted population was all staff of CoDE at the University of Cape Coast in the Cape Coast Metropolis during the 2018/2019 Academic year. A quota sampling of twenty (20) academic staff was selected for the quantitative data whiles purposive sampling was used to select ten (10) participants for the qualitative data. The researcher used questionnaires and a semi-structured interview guide as the main data collection instruments. The data collection instrument (questionnaire) was pilot tested to ensure reliability and validity of the data collection instruments. A reliability cronbach alpha value of 0.78 was obtained to determining the appropriateness of the instrument. The data were obtained through self-administered questionnaire and a semi structured interview guide. The data collected were cleaned, edited for completeness, coded and analysed with the use of descriptive statistics (frequencies and percentages) for demographic data and the research question one, two and three while thematic analysis was used to analysis the semi-structured interview data.

Key Findings

Some informative and objective findings have been made in this study. The key findings of the study can be summarized as follows:

1. The result of the study revealed that 17(85%) of the respondents strongly agreed that their work make full use of their skills and abilities; 16(80%) of the respondents strongly agreed that their workload is too heavy for which the employees cannot complete during their ordinary working hours; 14(70%) of the respondents strongly agreed that their physical working conditions are the main causes of occupational stress among academic staff of CoDE in the University of Cape Coast. These findings were corroborated with the interview express as our workload is too much for us and having worked or taught during the weekend, it poses so much stress on us.
2. The result of the study revealed that 16(80%) of the respondents experience constant inner tension; 16(80%) of the respondents experience constant fatigue whiles 13(65%) of the respondents strongly agreed that they experience pounding of heart; 11(55%) of the respondents strongly agreed that they experience growing feeling of inadequacy at the alarming stage as a symptom of occupational stress among staff of CoDE in the University of Cape Coast. Furthermore, 16(80%) of the respondents strongly agreed that they experience exhaustiveness; 15(75%) of the respondents agreed that they experience some distress as well as 11(55%) of the respondent's experience irritability and tension at the exhaustive stage of the symptoms of a symptom of occupational stress among staff of CoDE in the University

of Cape Coast. To further strengthen these findings the interview responses expressed that when we are under stress, our body system becomes restless and appears to be under some form of tension. You find it difficult to sleep since the mind is unstable and in turn, results in the inability of the individual to concentrate.

3. The study discovered three main effects of occupational stress among staff of CoDE in the University of Cape Coast. First of all, 14(70%) of the respondents strongly agreed that they experience depression; 12(60%) of the respondents strongly agreed that they experience migraine whiles 11(55%) of the respondents strongly agreed that they experience anxiety as their psychological effects of occupational stress. Moreover, 8(40%) of the respondents strongly agreed that they feel helplessness; 9(45%) of the respondents agreed that they easily get angry whiles 6(30%) of the respondents strongly disagreed that they feel irritable about simple issue as their social/behavioural effects of their occupational stress. Furthermore, 12(60%) of the respondents agreed that they experience severe body pains; 11(55%) of the respondents agreed that they experience regular cold and flu as 9(45%) of the respondents agreed that they experience chest pains as their physiological effects of their occupational stress.

Conclusions

Based on the findings of this study, the following are conclusions drawn

1. The key variables of the ASSET model of stress by Cartwright and Cooper (2002) showed the major causes of occupational stress

experienced by the academic staff of CoDE was that their work make full use of their skills and abilities.

2. It can be concluded that at the alarming stage, the respondents experienced constant inner tension and constant fatigue whiles at the exhaustive stage, the respondents experienced exhaustiveness and tension as the symptom of occupational stress.
3. Irrespective of the numerous effects of occupation, the study revealed three main effects (psychological, social/behavioural and physiological) of occupational stress among staff of CoDE in the University of Cape Coast. Firstly, the respondents experienced depression; migraine, and anxiety as their psychological effects of occupational stress. Secondly, respondents experienced a feeling of helplessness as their social/behavioural effects whiles their psychological effects experienced by respondents took the form of severe body pains disorder; regular cold and flu.

Recommendations

The following recommendations have been made regarding the result of the study for policy and practice. It is envisaged that these recommendations, when taken into consideration would bring about efficiency and effectiveness in curbing occupational stress among staff of CoDE at the University of Cape Coast.

1. As a way of minimising the amount of stress that academic staff at CoDE experience in relation to their job scope and responsibility, there should be a ceil to the maximum number of students that are allocated to one lecturer for a particular level and a particular course at CoDE. Academic

staff at CoDE could also be given Teaching Assistants or Research Assistants to assist them with handling tutorial sessions and research.

2. In order to curb the occurrence of occupational, it is recommended that university authorities should provide interventional polices to ensure that academic staff of CoDE are not stressed up to affect their output negatively. This interventional policy could be to ensure that academic staff of CoDE proceed on annual leave when due and not to engage them in extra part time teaching programmes to generate funds for themselves and institutions.
3. It is recommended that academic staff of CoDE should be made to undertake a compulsory medical examination at a regular interval of say every three months as it was found out that alarming stage of stress is associated with breathing and constant fatigue, low energy level, recurring headache, gastro intestinal disorder and chronical bad breath, sweaty hands and feet, dizziness and high blood pressure.
4. It is also recommended that university authorities to provide and boost recreational facilities and social support packages within the university. This will serve as co-curricular activities that will break boredom among academic staff of CoDE in the university.
5. In order to fortify the fight against occupational stress, authorities of University of Cape Coast should to establish a functional and well-equipped counselling centres for academic staff of CoDE in the institution. Here, competent counsellors could offer professional services (cognitive restructuring and behaviour modifications therapies) which may alleviate the level of perceived stress.

6. This study has found out that stress experienced by academic staff of CoDE has psychological, physiological and physical effect on the individual. Based on this finding, it is recommended that a psychiatric and physiotherapy unit could be established or created as part of CoDE so that academic staff from time to time could go for psychological and physiotherapy examination. It is also recommended that appointment of academic staff should be strictly based on physical, mental, social and emotional fitness of the individual.

Suggestion for Further Studies

This current study has identified some areas for future study. First and foremost, it is suggested that future research should investigate academic career path and stress management among academic staff of university staff.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

University of Cape Coast

Institute for Educational Planning and Administration (IEPA).

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR ACADEMIC STAFF OF CoDE IN

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

This questionnaire is intended to examine the effects of occupational stress on the job performance of the academic staff of College of Distance Education (CoDE) in the University of Cape Coast, paying attention to the causes, symptoms, effects and their interventional development strategies. Kindly respond to the questions based on your candid opinion.

Please be assured that all information will be treated with the strictest confidentiality and only the aggregate data will be analyzed. Thank you.

Section A- Demographic Information

Please tick [√] or write the appropriate response to each item.

1. Indicate your gender

a) Male [ ] b) Female [ ]

2. Indicate your age group

a) Between 21 - 30 years [ ] b) Between 31- 40 years [ ]

c) Between 41 – 50 years [ ] d) Above 51 years [ ]

3. Indicate your marital status

a) Single [ ] b) Married [ ] c)Divorced [ ] d) Widowed [ ]

4. Highest level of Education

a) First Degree [ ] b) Master Degree [ ] c) Doctorate Degree [ ]

Any other,…….

5. Academic Departments/Units

Department of Quality Assurance and Enhancement [ ]

Department of Education [ ]

Teaching Practice and Project Work Unit [ ]

Department of Business [ ]

Department of Arts and Social Sciences [ ]

Examinations Units [ ]

Department of Mathematics and Science Education [ ]

Postgraduate Unit [ ]

Students Records Management Unit and Counselling Unit [ ]

6. How many years have you worked in the University?

a) Between 1 and 5 years [ ] b) Between 6 and 10 years [ ]

c) Between 11 and 15 years [ ] d) Above 16 year [ ]

6. Present Designation / rank

a) Head of Department (HD) [ ]

b) Co-ordinator (C) [ ]

c) Head of Department and Academic Staff [ ]

d) Co-ordinator and Academic Staff [ ]

7. How long have you been in your present position?

a) Between 1 and 5 years [ ] b) Between 6 and 10 years [ ]

c) Above 11 years [ ]

SECTION: B

MAIN CAUSES OF OCCUPATIONAL STRESS AMONG ACADEMIC STAFF OF CODE.

The following are some of the elements of Occupational Stress in an institution. Kindly indicate the level of your satisfaction or otherwise with each of the element listed.

1- Strongly Disagree (S.D), 2- Disagree (D), 3- Undecided (U), 4- Agree (A) and 5- Strongly Agree (S.A).

Which of the following variables causes stress at CoDE	**SD**	**D**	**U**	**A**	**SA**
The job scope and responsibilities					
The physical working condition					
Salary and allowance, considering duties and responsibilities					
Workload is too heavy for which I cannot complete during my ordinary working hours					
Job insecurity remains a potential source of stress					
Feelings about the working situation and family life at the present time at CoDE					
Your job making full use of your skills and abilities					
Interpersonal relationship with colleagues at CoDE					
Career path of workers at CoDE					

Work has the potential of spillover and interfere with one's personal life

Confusion between the personality of the individual and the expectations of their role

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SECTION C

SYMPTOMS OF OCCUPATIONAL STRESS AMONG ACADEMIC STAFF OF CODE

Kindly indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree to the statement on a scale: 1- Strongly Disagree (S.D), 2- Disagree (D), 3- Undecided (U), 4- Agree (A) and 5- Strongly Agree (S.A).

Symptoms of Occupational Stress	**Responses**				
Alarming State	**SD**	**D**	**U**	**A**	**SA**
1. Experiencing of some shock					
2. Pounding heart					
3. Slowing of digestion					
4. Shunting of blood flow					
5. Breathing experiences					
6. Constant fatigue					
7. Low energy level					
8. Recurring headaches					
9. Gastrointestinal disorders					
10. Chronically bad breath					

11. Sweaty hands or feet					
12. Dizziness					
13. High blood pressure					
14. Constant inner tension					
15. Inability to sleep					
16. Inability to concentrate					
17. Increased aggression					
18. Growing feelings of inadequacy					
19. Excessive use of alcohol					
Exhaustion Stage					
1. Exhaustiveness of an individual					
2. Weariness of an individual					
3. Anxiousness of an individual					
4. Experiencing some trauma					
5. Experiencing irritability and tension					

If others, please specify …….

SECTION D

EFFECTS ASSOCIATED WITH OCCUPATIONAL STRESS AMONG ACADEMIC STAFF

The following are some of the elements of the **Effects associated with occupational stress.** Kindly indicate the level of your satisfaction or otherwise with each of the element listed.

1- Strongly Disagree (S.D), 2- Disagree (D), 3- Undecided (U), 4- Agree (A) and 5- Strongly Agree (S.A).

Psychological effects of occupational stress	**SD**	**D**	**U**	**A**	**SA**
I experience anxiety					
I experience depression					
I experience nervousness					
I experience headaches					
I experience migraines					
Social/Behaviour effects of occupational stress					
I feel helplessness					
I easily get angry					
I feel irritable about simple issue					
I easily feel aggressive when communicating with others					
Physiological Effects					
I experience musculoskeletal disorder					
I experience cardiovascular disorder					

I regularly experience colds and flu					
I regularly experience chest pains					
I experience obesity and diabetes					

If others, please specify …….

APPENDIX B

University of Cape Coast

Institute for Educational Planning and Administration (IEPA).

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW GUIDE

This semi-structured interview guide is intended to examine the effects of occupational stress on the job performance of the academic staff of College of Distance Education (CoDE) in the University of Cape Coast, paying attention to the causes, symptoms, effects and their interventional development strategies. Kindly respond to the questions based on your candid opinion.

Please be assured that all information will be treated with the strictest confidentiality. Thank you.

SEMI-STRUCTURED INTERVIEW GUIDE

1. What is the gender of participants?
2. What is the age of participants?
3. What is the marital status of participants?
4. What is the highest level of education of participants?
5. How many years have you worked in the University?
6. How long have you been in your present position?
7. What are the main causes of occupational stress among academic staff of code?
8. Which of the gender are prone to the causes of stress?
9. If males why and if females why?
10. What are the symptoms of occupational stress among academic staff of code?

11. What are the effects associated with occupational stress among academic staff?