

Influence of Job Stress and Work Environment on Teachers' Work-Family Conflict in Ijebu North Public Secondary Schools, Ogun State, Nigeria

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Abstract

Work-family conflicts have become increasingly important for organizations to consider. Its challenges in the world of work and family in recent decades have stimulated much research on the subject matter. Also, there are a number of factors that can lead to increased work-family conflict. Therefore, this study investigated the influence of job stress and work environment on teachers' work-family conflict in Ijebu North public secondary schools, Ogun State, Nigeria. Two hypotheses were formulated and tested to guide this study. A descriptive survey research design was employed in this study. The population for the study consisted of all teachers in public secondary schools in Ijebu North local government of Ogun State, Nigeria. A sample of one hundred and twenty (120) respondents was selected for this study using multi-stage sampling procedure and simple random sampling technique. Four (4) research instruments were used for the study. The instruments are Demographic Data Form (DDF), Teacher Stress Inventory (TSI), Work-Family Conflict Scale (WFCS) and Work Environment Questionnaire (WEQ). Findings of the study revealed that there was a significant composite and relative contribution of job stress and work environment on teachers' work-family conflict in Ijebu-North Public Secondary Schools, Ogun State, Nigeria ($R=.320$; $R^2 =.103$; $F(2, 117) = 6.691$; $P<.05$). Work environment is the most potent predictor of teachers' work-family conflict in Ijebu-North Local Government ($B = .280$; $t = 2.803$, $P > 0.01$) followed by job stress ($B = 0.71$; $t = .705$, $P > 0.01$). Based on these findings, it was recommended among others that the school as an organisation should assist teachers to better coordinate workplace and family roles by offering family-friendly benefits. It was also suggested that the school should create a good atmosphere for teachers so as to be able to relax and have fun during leisure hours.

Keywords: job stress, work environment, work-family conflict, teacher profession.

1. Introduction

Work and family represent two of the most important aspects of adult life. Each of these factors contributes uniquely to our understanding of human behaviour. Though, the two variables are related; the relationship between them can result into conflict. That is, the interface between the workplace and family is intricate and can vary from positive to negative and vice versa. According to Nahneen, Ayesha and Abu (2014), profound challenges in the world of work and family in recent decades have stimulated much research on Work-Family Conflict (WFC). On the same note, Isa and Indrayati (2023) revealed that work-family conflict experienced by employees is a stressor that leads to a decrease in employee welfare and affects employee performance and ultimately organisational performance. As such the present study will focus on work-family conflict as an overall construct, as

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researchers have suggested that despite the unique findings for each of the two facets, work-family conflict as an overall construct has a greater aggregated impact than each of the individual facets (Frone, 2003).

WFC occurs when work pressures are incompatible with family responsibilities. It is denoted as an inter-role conflict which arises due to the incompatibility or absence of fit, in terms of roles at work and family. It is yet defined as "a form of inter-role conflict in which the role pressures from the work and family domains are mutually incompatible in some respect" (Greenhaus & Beautell, 1985). Aslam, Shumaila, Azhar and Sadaqat (2011) stated that work-family conflicts occur when the contribution in work role creates problems in contribution of family role. Furthermore, work-family conflicts are borne out of situations of tough time demands and stress, which can be traced back in a particular role that spilled-over to other role, which results in the disturbance of the quality of life, and behaviours that were suitable in one domain (such as work) but are seen as inappropriate in other domain (such as in the home) when "demands from family and work were equally mismatched and meeting demands of one field created difficulties in meeting demands of other field, it led to work-family conflict" (Aslam et al, 2011).

Work-family conflict has been discovered to have an important effect on both the quality of work and family life (Greenhaus & Powell, 2006). In addition, research in this area explicitly recognized that the relationship between work and family are bi-directional. That is, work can interfere with family and family can interfere with work as well. They also reported that work interfering with family was negatively related to depression and health complaints among health workers.

Duxbury and Higgins (2001) assert that work and family conflicts are both an issue for the employer and the employee and that the inability to have this resolved will lead to outcomes of marital problems, reduced family and life satisfaction, and as such will affect the general health and wellbeing of the employees due to stress, burnout, and depression. As a result, all stakeholders must work towards work and family balance. Different factors can result in work-family conflicts and scholars have identified variables like income, job stress, marital problems, work environment among other factors. In the context of this study, job stressed and work environment have been selected based on their strategic roles in family-work relationship. Osuji, Amie-Ogan and Umunnakwe (2022) opined that improved work environment brings about job satisfaction by reducing the stress on teachers. In addition, Osemwenkhae, Iduseri and Meka (2019) stated that in Nigeria, a teacher often works in a constant socially isolated environment surrounded by hostile views and sometimes threat of physical abuse, and at the same time under a constant fear and threat of accountability for each and every action of both own self and that of the pupil and this alone can be a sufficient cause for stress for the teacher.

Job stress is considered to be one of the leading work-related health problems in the works of life, especially in developing countries where job stress had become the single greatest source of stress and strain among workers (Izuegbu, 2023).

In examining potentially stressful working conditions, it has been suggested that these conditions may have implications beyond an individual worker's well-being and that their effects can spill over into one's life at home by contributing to work-family conflict (Westman, 2001). This implies that work stress is a growing concern for organizations today. It remains one of the major causes of premature death world-over.

Stress can be defined as a lively circumstance in which people face constraints, opportunities, or loss of something they desire and for which the consequence is both unpredictable as well as crucial. Stress is the response of people to the unreasonable/excessive pressure or demands placed on them. It can also be said to be an involuntary response to a dangerous situation or events that frighten, irritate, confuse, endanger or excite us and place demands on the body (Kaufman, 2008). Hans (2011) described stress as the interaction of the organism with the environment. He explained further that it is an adaptive response mediated by individual characteristics and/or psychological processes; that is, a consequence of any external action, situation or event that places special physical and/or psychological demands upon a person. Thus, it is a person's response to a disturbance.

Holzemer (2010) considered stress as the “wear and tear” our bodies experience as we adjust to our continually changing environment, which has physical and emotional effects on us and can create positive or negative feelings. Adenugba (2004) is of the opinion that stress is the adverse reaction in which people have to excessive pressure or other types of demand placed on them. As a positive influence, stress can compel someone to action; it can result in a new awareness and an exciting perspective while as a negative influence, it can result in feelings of distrust, rejection, anger, and depression, which in turn can lead to health problems such as headaches, stomach upset, rashes, insomnia, ulcer, high blood pressure, heart diseases, and stroke.

The experience of stress in the education system can no longer be ignored. This is because teaching has been identified as one of the most stressful professions today. According to Uka (2009), this is as a result of shortage of teachers and increases in student enrolment. Foster (2006) was of the opinion that frequent re-organisation of the syllabus, workload, staff-room conflicts and students’ behaviour are sources of stress to teachers. Ola (2010) argued that the increasing societal demands on education have produced adverse stressful classroom situations, Which in turn; increased emotional and physical disabilities among teachers. Therefore, it is important to raise awareness of the issue so that both the internal factors and external circumstances that contribute towards the experience of stress by teachers can be addressed by teachers and by the schools they work. Teacher’s stress affects teachers across various school types, gender and teaching experience. Similar study by Hans (2011) found that teacher’s stress affects teachers across various school types, gender, teaching experience and work environment. Moreover, Job stress is a condition of physical and psychological pressure due to demands within oneself and the environment (Maqhfirah, & Tasya, 2023).

Therefore, environment within which the teachers operate cannot be totally free of challenges. Some of these challenges include over population of students; ill- equipped and inadequate teachers to cope with the workload; students with poor academic backgrounds; poor funding that affects management; students’ negative attitude towards learning; parental ambivalence towards the educational well – being of their children; low motivation; low performance; personal challenges including role conflict; societal challenges and pressures; financial challenges; domestic worries; and a lot more.

Harris and Lowery (2002) posited that school environment is a set of properties of the work environment perceived by individuals who work there that serve as a major force in influencing their job behaviour. School environment is a relatively enduring character of a school that is experienced by its participants, that affects their actions, and that is based on the collective perceptions of behaviour in the school (Edem, 2004). It has been defined by Halpin and Croft (2003) in terms of educators’ perceptions of leadership behaviour of the principal and interactions among teachers. They posited that there is an open and closed school environment. An open school environment is one in which teacher and principal behaviour is supportive, genuine, and engaged, whereas a closed environment is characterized by lack of authenticity, game playing and disengaged behaviour.

Elujekwute, Shir and Nnome (2021) saw work environment which is also tagged school environment as facilities that are present in the school to engender students’ performance and it includes books, audio-visual, software and hardware of educational technology as well as size of classrooms sitting position and arrangement, availability of tables, chairs, chalkboards, shelves and others.

Obineli (2013) argued that inspired workplace will result in inspired workers and draws attention to the importance for work performance, the atmosphere, quality and style of buildings and offices. The work environment embraces working. Thus, conditions such as the temperature, humidity, ventilation, lighting, noise, cleanliness of the workplace and adequate tools and equipment (such as public address system, computer, resource materials for teaching, good offices). Good working conditions provide greater physical comfort for teachers and boost their morale. While very poor conditions breed frustration and regret and consequently a high sense of dissatisfaction.

Hill (2010) stated that employees spend so much time in their work environment each week and therefore it is important for companies to try to optimize their working conditions by providing spacious work areas rather than cramped ones because adequate lighting and comfortable workstations contribute to favorable work conditions.

Choi, Cheung, and Pang (2012) identified five dimensions of the work environment which include co-worker relationships, management, ward practice, etc. However, this study intends to find out the influence of job stress and work environment on teachers' work-family conflict in Ijebu North public secondary schools, Ogun State, Nigeria.

2. Literature Review

2.1. Work-Family Conflict

Work-family conflict is a form of dual role conflict, in which role pressures in work and family are not aligned (Breyer & Bluemke, 2016). Work-family conflict is an inter-role conflict that occurs when the energy and time devoted, the tension experienced, and the expected behavior in the role at work perplex employees to fulfill their role obligations in the family (Gunaprasada & Wibowo, 2019). Amran et al. (2021) assert that there are three main forms of work-family conflict, which include the following:

1. *Time-based conflict*. This is a conflict because the time spent in one role interferes with the time that should be allocated in another role. For example, the night shift will force a person not to attend family events at night.
2. *Strain-based conflict*. This is a conflict due to the tension experienced by the individual in carrying out one role which affects other roles negatively. For instance, a person who has just received a strong reprimand or complaint from a customer at work will feel depressed or tense, so once a person reaches home it will be difficult for him or her to act casually with the spouse or children.
3. *Behaviour-based conflict*. This is a conflict because of differences in behavioral demands between roles in work and family. For example, a police officer who faces a crime must behave firmly and even ruthlessly, which may trigger conflict when this behavior is brought into the family context.

2.2. Job Stress

Job stress, one of the most expensive occupational health problems currently facing organizations in the twenty-first century, is now becoming a global problem that affects all nations, all employee categories, families, and society, its psychological aspect being related to one's job, especially in chronic conditions.

According to Murtaza (2015), job stress sources include factors intrinsic to the job itself, role in the organization/position held, relationships at work, organizational structure, institutional determinants (poor interpersonal relations, unfair management practices), climate and extra-organizational source of stress, workplace/its environment, and type of occupation.

Some complications of job stress could be grouped into three namely: health effects, disease burden and death, and economic loss and physical injuries. When creating workplace treatments, the conceptualization of job stress is of utmost relevance. In an organization, both employees and employers/managers feel stressed. Stress weakens professional efficacy, compromises decision-making abilities, and hinders a provider's ability to build trusting relationships with patients (Binta, 2020).

Stress at work has a detrimental effect on employees' attitudes and behaviours, which can be expensive for the business. According to Sutherland and Cooper (2019), such effects as attitudes changes being costly, shrinking workforce/absenteeism, high work force turnover, production reduction, lack of team work, and safety issues are often observed.

2.3. Work Environment

It has been observed that a work environment is an essential element of job performance. It affects the course of action of the workers. The workplace environment ameliorates productivity, aids in retaining talent, as well as is crucial for the overall mental health of the organization it positively affects job satisfaction and employee performance, with job satisfaction having a positive involvement on the employee's performance (Aggarwal, Sharma, Vohra, Sharma, & Sharma, 2023).

Ricardianto (2018) explained that work life is interrelated with the work environment. Jauhar, Brahmasari, and Ratih (2022) described the work environment as having a positive and significant effect on employee work life. Similarly, research by Aifha and Suwarsi (2018) revealed that the work environment has an effect on work life.

3. Methodology

3.1. Statement of the Problem

Researchers have observed that work-family conflict has a great effect on both the quality of work and family life. Moreover, a work-family conflict that workers experience is a stressor that leads to a decrease in workers' welfare and also has a negative impact on their performance. This problem has stimulated much research in recent decades. Some of these effects include depression, emotional instability, health complaints, and so on. Thus, this study investigates the influence of job stress and work environment on teachers' work-family conflict in Ijebu North public secondary schools, Ogun State, Nigeria.

Hypotheses of the study is formulated as follows:

Ho1: There is no significant combined contribution of job stress and work environment on teachers' work-family conflict in Ijebu North public secondary schools, Ogun State, Nigeria.

Ho2: There is no significant relative contribution of job stress and work environment on teachers' work-family conflict in Ijebu North public secondary schools, Ogun State, Nigeria.

3.2. Population and the Sample

The population of this study consisted of all teachers in public secondary schools in Ijebu-North local government of Ogun State, Nigeria. A sample of one hundred and twenty (120) respondents was selected for this study. A multi-stage sampling procedure was employed to select the sample. Firstly, ten (10) public secondary schools were randomly selected from the thirty-five (35) public secondary schools. Secondly, twelve (12) teachers were randomly selected from each of the ten (10) public secondary schools to make a total of one hundred and twenty (120) participants.

3.3. Research Instrument

Four (4) research instruments were used for the study. The instruments are the Demographic Data Form (DDF), Teacher Stress Inventory (TSI), Work-Family Conflict Scale (WFCS), and Work Environment Questionnaire (WEQ).

Demographic Data Form (DDF)

The biographic data of participants was taken using the demographic data form. Items in the form include the name of the school, gender, and marital status.

Work-Family Conflict Scale (WFCS)

Work family conflict was measured using 12 items scale that was adopted from Carlson, Kacmar and Williams (1999). Each item used a 5-point frequency-based Likert scale ranging from Strongly Agree (5) to Strongly Disagree (1). The reliability (Cronbach's alpha coefficients) for the scale was 0.85.

Teacher Stress Inventory (TSI)

The Teacher Stress Inventory by Schutz and Long (1988) was adapted to measure teachers' job stress. It is a thirty-six (36) item scale rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from never (1) to always (5). Schutz and Long (1988) reported that the Cronbach's alpha was high in their sample, with only 3 of 36 items with item-total correlations under .50.

Work Environment Questionnaire (WEQ)

Work Environment Questionnaire is a self-developed instrument consisting of ten (10) items. It measures the conditions under which the teachers work or perform their duties. The item scale was rated on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from Strongly Disagree (1) to Strongly Agree (5).

4. Results

Hypothesis one: There is no significant combined contribution of job stress and work environment on teachers' work-family conflict in Ijebu-North Public Secondary Schools, Ogun State, Nigeria.

Table 1. Summary of the multiple regression analysis of the combined contribution of job stress and work environment on teachers' work-family conflict in Ijebu-North Public Secondary Schools

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	f	sig	Remark	R = 0.320 Adjusted R square = 0.87 R square = 0.103 Standard Error = 7.48
Regression	749.489	2	374.744	6.691	.002 ^a	Significant P < 0.05	
Residual	6553.011	117	56.009				
Total	7302.500	119					

a. Predictors: (Constant), Work Environment, Job Stress Inventory

b. Dependent Variable: Work - Family Conflict

The data in Table 1 shows that job stress and work environment jointly contribute to the teachers' work-family conflict (R=.320; R² =.103; F (2,117) = 6.691; P<.05). The result also revealed that job stress and work environment account for 87% of the variance in teachers' work-family conflict. The remaining 13% might be due to other variables not covered in the study. By implication, this means that job stress and work environment jointly contribute to teachers' work-family conflict in Ijebu-North Public Secondary Schools, Ogun State, Nigeria. The significance level of 0.002 also indicates that job stress and work environment significantly predict teachers' work-family conflict in Ijebu-North Public Secondary Schools.

Hypothesis Two: There is no significant relative contribution of job stress and work environment on teachers' work-family conflict in Ijebu-North public secondary schools, Ogun State, Nigeria.

Table 2. Relative contribution of job stress and work environment on teachers' work-family conflict in Ijebu-North Public Secondary Schools

Model	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients	t	Sig
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (constant)	30.641	3.814		8.035	.000
Job Stress	.048	.068	.071	.705	.482
Work Environment	.198	.070	.280	2.803	.006

Results in Table 2 revealed that the independent variables are good predictors of teachers' work-family conflict. Work environment is the most potent predictor of teachers' work-family conflict (B = .280; t = 2.803, P > 0.01). Although job stress was the first to enter the model, but yet it has significant influence on teachers' work-family conflict in Ijebu-North Local Government (B = 0.71; t = .705, P > 0.01).

The percentage is significant, thus there is positive and significant relative contribution of job stress and work environment on teachers' work-family conflict in Ijebu-North Public Secondary Schools, Ogun State, Nigeria. The percentage contribution of Job

stress is 71% while that of work environment is 28% and by implication, in deciding what influences teachers' work-family conflict, work environment and job stress are serious factors.

4.1. Discussion

This study focuses on the influence of job stress and work environment on teachers' work-family conflict in Ijebu North public secondary schools, Ogun State, Nigeria. The results of the study are discussed based on the hypotheses tested.

Hypothesis one tested the significant combined contribution of job stress and work environment on teachers' work-family conflict in Ijebu-North Public Secondary Schools, Ogun State, Nigeria. The result reveals that there is a significant combined contribution of job stress and work environment on teachers' work-family conflict in Ijebu-North Public Secondary Schools, Ogun State, Nigeria. It is worth of mentioning that the job stressors like work overload, excessive pressure from superior officers, or high demand and the physical comfort of the school can have an implication on work-family conflict. This implies that poor working condition may breed frustration and regret which may yield a high level of dissatisfaction and further leads to an unbalanced work-family life. To corroborate the outcome of this study, Fatima (2016) that work-family conflict and stress have a significant relationship with workplace deviance and there are significant gender differences and teaching sector differences in work-family conflict, stress, and workplace deviance.

Hypothesis two tested the significant relative contribution of job stress and work environment on teachers' work-family conflict in Ijebu-North Public Secondary Schools, Ogun State, Nigeria. The result of the analysis reveals that there is a significant relative contribution of job stress and work environment on teachers' work-family conflict in Ijebu-North Public Secondary Schools, Ogun State, Nigeria. This outcome could be due to the giving of too much responsibility to teachers without adequate authority to carry it out and the inability of the management to provide adequately for staff welfare which may further lead to work-family conflict. Also, the teachers may be required to be at multiple locations at the same time, and they often felt like they were walking on a tightrope, and their different roles were competing for attention. This may eventually result to inadequate time to meet the demands of home, work, and their social life, thereby experiencing time pressures and strain from work and home. This position corroborates the finding of Kim and Ling (2001); and Netemeyer et al. (2004) that there is a positive correlation between work-family conflict and work-stress. Also, it is in line with the result of Faiz (2015) that some work and family factors (job stress, family stress and family conflict) are strongly related to both directions of WFC.

5. Conclusion

Based on the results of this study, it is clearly established that there is significant relative contribution of job stress and work environment on teachers' work-family conflict in Ijebu-North Public Secondary Schools, Ogun State, Nigeria. It is worthy of mentioning that teachers are experiencing increased challenges of balancing work and family demands. Also, the working environment and stress experienced by teachers in the teaching profession seems to worsen the situation as the external or internal force unbearably acting upon them that result in inability to affect a meaningful response to the demand placed by the stimulus.

6. Recommendations

The study recommended that

1. The school as an organization should assist teachers to better coordinate workplace and family roles by offering family-friendly benefits.
2. The school should create a good atmosphere for teachers so as to be able to relax and have fun during leisure hours and the management should provide adequately for staff welfare.

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