

**ENSIGN COLLEGE OF PUBLIC HEALTH KPONG
EASTERN REGION, GHANA**

**THE EFFECTS OF WORK RELATED STRESS ON JOB
PERFORMANCE OF HEALTH WORKERS AT THE VOLTA
REGIONAL HOSPITAL, HO**

BY

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**A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT OF COMMUNITY
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DECLARATION AND CERTIFICATION

I, Vivien Eunice Gedzie, declare that this thesis is my own work towards the MPH degree and that to the best of my knowledge, it contains no material previously published by another person nor material which has been accepted for the award of any other degree, apart from specific references which have been duly acknowledged.

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DEDICATION

This research work is dedicated to the Lord God Almighty, and Mr Newell Yao Soglo for his priceless love, support and encouragement which enabled me to pursue this programme to a successful end, and most especially to my daughter Maame Effie Nyameatse Afful, I say thank you.

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ABSTRACT

In today's global environment, employee productivity is an essential element of a company's success. One of the factors that affect organizational performance is job stress. Workers' efficiency can be significantly hindered by high levels of stress experienced in the work environment. Consequently, employers today are critically analyzing stress management issues that contribute to lower job performance of employees. The purpose of this study is to examine the effect of occupational stress on job performance. The study was conducted among staff of Volta Regional Hospital in the Ho Municipality of Volta Region, Ghana.

A cross-sectional survey was adopted as the research design, and stratified random sampling technique was used in selecting a sample size of two hundred and seventy-four (274) out of a staff population of eight hundred and seventy (870). Data were collected using a structured questionnaire and interview. Data were analyzed using Stata programme (Stata version 14).

Results were presented in tables. From the results, it was discovered that heavy workload and role ambiguity were the major causes of occupational stress among staff of Volta Regional Hospital, and were likely to cause unruly effect on job performance.

Based on the findings, it was concluded that stress related to work has the potential of harming the fortunes of an organization. As can be seen from this research work, there are low points in respect of how stress is managed. The study recommends that the management of Volta Regional Hospital should develop a policy on stress management to guide the employees in their day to day duties.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The human resource is the most vital component that influences the productivity in an organization. In this era of dynamic changes and details, employees are rightly the sources of attaining and sustaining competitive edge of any organization. However, they suffer from numerous problems in their workplace and job environment which has serious implications for employee performance. Also, the outcome of stressful and dissatisfied employees cannot match the quality of work and performance of those employees with less stress and high satisfaction.

The harmful and costly consequences of stress demonstrate the need for strategies to limit stressors within organizations. This chapter discusses the background to the study, statement of the problem, justification of the study as well as the research questions. The chapter also takes a look at the significance of the study, scope of the study, limitation identified, and finally the organization of the study.

Stress has become a universal element that employees around the globe are experiencing as a result of routine work. Stress is the most lethal and deadly silent killer for an employee especially in times of depression. Stress can come from any situation that makes you feel frustrated, angry, or anxious. Over the past few decades stress is emerging as an increasing problem in organizations (Schafer, 2000). Stress can be seen as the feeling that is created when we react to particular events. It can make you feel threatened or upset. It is a combination of psychological, physiological and behavioural

reactions that people have in response to events that threaten or challenge them. Above and beyond, stress is defined as an undesirable response people have to tremendous pressures or other types of demands placed upon them. Pressure is seen as positive and something that actually helps improve our performance, providing people with the extra energy or alertness they need (Agolla, 2009).

We all need a certain amount of pressure to perform well. However, the problems arise when the sources of pressure become too frequent without time to recover, or when just one source of pressure is too great for one to cope with. Stress however can be understood more comprehensively as a condition which happens when one realizes the pressures on them, or the requirements of a situation, are wider than that they can handle. If these requirements are huge and continue for a longer period of time without any interval, mental, physical or behavioural problems may occur. Stress has a positive effect on employees of any organization but up to a certain extent to which an employee can cope with, but mostly it exceeds the bearable limits and has a negative result on employees (Brotheridge, 2001).

In recent years, there has been considerable academic and practitioner interest in the relationship between stress and corporate performance. This has arisen out of the realization that stress is a threat to the wellbeing of individuals and that of the organization (Bloona, 2007). Whereas numerous studies have focused on stress and individual performance, researchers have gone further to propose a link between stress and corporate performance measures such as increased customer satisfaction, employee turnover, productivity, efficient use of resources and quality objectives (Ivancevich, Konapske and Matteson, 2006).

According to Sayeed (2001), stress also continues to jeopardize the health of organizations. Many organizations in the world are witnessing an alarming increase of the negative effects of stress on employee's productivity. Typical examples are organizations in America, the United Kingdom, the Caribbean, East and Central Africa, West Africa and in other parts of the world. The American Academy of family Physicians reported that, about two-thirds of the visits to family physicians are the results of stress-related symptoms (Henry and Evans 2008).

Unhealthy organizational climates reduce employee involvement and negatively affect performance at the individual and corporate level. Research conducted by Segerstrom and Miller (2004) reveals that employees are reporting increased levels of stress which has led to poor health and consequently performance. Occupational stress has been of great concern to employees and other stakeholders of organizations. Researchers agree that stress is a serious problem in many organizations (Cooper and Cartwright, 2012; Manshor, Rodrigue and Chong (2003); Ornelas and Kleiner 2003).

Matthews (2001) emphasises that stress can be experienced from four basic sources (environment stressors, social stressors, physiological stressors and thoughts).The environment can bombard you with intense and competing demands to adjust. Examples of environmental stressors include weather, noise, crowding, pollution, traffic, unsafe environment and crime. We also experience multiple stressors arising from the demands of the different social roles we occupy, such as parents, spouses, caregivers and employees. Some examples of social stressors include deadlines, financial problems, job interviews, presentations, disagreements, demand for time and

attention, loss of a loved one, divorce and co-parenting. Further, situations and circumstances affecting our body can be experienced as physiological stressors. Examples of physiological stressors include rapid growth of adolescence, menopause, illness, ageing, giving birth, accidents, lack of exercise, poor nutrition and sleep disturbances. Finally, our brain interprets and perceives situations as stressful, difficult, painful, or pleasant. Some situations in life are stress provoking, but it is our thought that determines whether they are a problem for us.

Situations that are considered stress provoking are known as stressors. Stress is not always a bad thing. Stress is simply the body's response to changes that create taxing demands. Many professionals suggest there is a difference between what we perceive as positive stress and distress, which refers to negative stress. In daily life, we often use the term 'stress' to describe negative situations. This leads a person to believe that all stress is bad for you, which is not true (Ornelas & Kleiner, 2003).

Positive stress has the following characteristics: it motivates, is short-term, is perceived as within our coping abilities, feels exciting, and improves performance. In contrast, negative stress has the following characteristics; causes anxiety or concern, can be short or long-term, and is perceived as outside of our coping abilities, feels unpleasant, decreases performance, can lead to mental and physical problems (Ornelas & Kleiner, 2003).

It is hard to categorize stressors into objective lists of those that cause positive stress and those that cause negative stress, because different people will have perceptions and

reactions to particular situations. Everyone sees situations differently and has different coping skills. For this reason, no two people will respond exactly the same way to a given situation. However, by generalizing, we can compile a list of stressors that are typically experienced as negative or positive to most people, most of the time.

Examples of negative personal stressors can include: conflict in interpersonal relationships, money problems, sleep problems, legal problems, inadequate or substandard housing, excessive job demands, job insecurity, conflicts with colleagues and supervisors, lack of training necessary to do a job, making presentations in front of colleagues or clients, unproductive and time consuming meetings, commuting and travel schedules (Ornelas & Kleiner, 2003).

Examples of positive personal stressors might include: receiving a promotion at work, starting a new job, marriage or commitment ceremony, buying a home, having a child, transfers, taking or planning a vacation, holiday season, retiring, taking educational classes or learning a new hobby (Ornelas & Kleiner, 2003).

Stress is a normal part of life. In small quantities, stress is good; it can motivate you and help you become more productive. However, too much stress, or a strong response to stress can be harmful. How we perceive a stress provoking event and how we react to it determines its impact on our health. We may be motivated and revitalized by the events in our lives, or we may see some as stressful and respond in a manner that may have a negative effect on our physical, mental, and social well-being.

Stressors are not always limited situations where some external situation is creating a problem. Internal events such as feeling, thoughts, and habitual behaviours can also cause negative stress (Ornelas and Kleiner, 2003). Common internal sources of distress include: fears (for example fear of flying), repetitive thought patterns, and worrying about future events (for example waiting for medical test result).

Christo and Pienaar (2006) for example, argued that the causes of occupational stress include perceived loss of job, and security, sitting for long periods of time or heavy lifting, lack of safety, complexity of repetitiveness and lack of autonomy in the job. In addition, occupational stress is caused by lack of resources and equipment; work schedules (such as working late or overtime) and organizational climate are considered as contributors to employees stress. Occupational stress often shows high dissatisfaction among the employees, job mobility, burnout, poor work performance and less effective interpersonal relations at work (Manshor, Rodrigue, and Chong, 2003).

Occupational stress occurs in a wide range of work circumstances but is often made worse when employees feel they have little support from supervisors and colleagues and where they have little control over work or how they can cope with its demands and pressures. Workers who are stressed are also most likely to be unhealthy, poorly motivated, less productive and inefficient at work and their organizations are less likely to be successful in a competitive market. To buttress this point, Nnuro (2012) in his studies point to the fact that there is a negative relationship between job stress and job performance.

According to him, those workers who had high levels of job stress had low job performance. What is more, stress can be brought about by pressures at home and at work. Organizations cannot usually protect their workers from stress arising outside of work, but they can protect them from stress that arises through work.

Occupational stress can be a real problem to the organization as far as its workers are concerned. Good management and good work organizations are the best forms of stress prevention. If employees are already stressed, their managers should be aware of it and know how to help in order to get the best out of their employees. Excessive and otherwise unmanageable demands and pressures can be caused by poor work design, poor management and unsatisfactory working conditions.

Similarly, these things can result in employees not receiving sufficient support from others or not having enough control over their work and its pressures. In the most accurate meaning, stress management is not about learning how to avoid or escape the pressures and turbulence of modern living; it is about learning to appreciate how the body reacts to these pressures, and about learning how to develop skills which enhance the body's adjustment. To learn stress management is to learn about the mind-body connection and the degree to which we can control our health in a positive sense.

Work stress could affect workers of any organization and in this case Volta Regional Hospital staff by increasing inefficiency, absenteeism, decreasing commitment to work, increasing staff turn-over, poor performance and low productivity, which may damage the good image of the institution. The experience of work stress is a challenge to the

health and safety of workers and to the healthiness of their organizations. Work stress can be effectively managed by applying a risk management approach as is successfully done with other major health and safety problems.

A risk management approach assesses the possible risks in the work environment that may cause particular existing hazards which could affect the performance of workers. This has become necessary since organizations that do not adopt strategies to alleviate stress may find their employees looking elsewhere for better opportunities.

Johnson (2001) in his studies argued that interventions such as identifying or determining the signs of stress, identifying the possible causes for the signs and developing possible solutions for each sign is required. Occupational stress is a real challenge for workers and their employing organizations and their working environment, so do the kinds of stress problems that employees may face.

To this end, it is important that the workplace is continuously monitored for stress related problems. Further, it is not only important to identify stress problems with regards to job performance and to deal with them, but to promote healthy work and reduce harmful aspects of work. Successful employers and managers provide leadership in dealing with the challenge of work stress.

This is the basis of the research study which has not yet been conducted in Volta Regional Hospital. This research therefore, tried to find out the effects of occupational stress on job performance at Volta Regional Hospital and interventions that can be applied by Management and employees to manage stress effectively within the same

institution. To acquire a deeper understanding of the variable (occupational stress), the researcher considered the broader topic of stress in general and then focussed on the variable within the context of Volta Regional Hospital.

1.2 Statement of the problem

Most organizations with the aim of attaining higher productivity end up burdening employees with overload of work in order to meet deadlines and this might have psychological and physical effects on the employees which may result in something contrary to what these organizations want to achieve. Although organizations are now paying more attention than in the past to the consequences of the distress their employees go through when they place extra demands on them, there is still more room for improvement.

The current unstable environment in which some workers conduct their work requires that every organization examine their practice. For any organization, job stress of its workers means a workforce that is not motivated and indifferent to high quality performance. Working at a hospital level is an inherently stressful profession with long working hours, heavy workloads, difficult clients and conflicting demands. The effects of stress are evidenced as increased errors in performance, lateness to work, low productivity and increased sick leaves.

Despite the extremely negative effects of occupational stress on the human body and work performance, many organizations, with Volta Regional Hospital not being an exception have not put in any concrete measures to address these stress-related

conditions that negatively affect productivity. This has brought a lot of pressure on the employees, who are expected to deliver a world class service without the corresponding resources and training, yet those who fail to deliver are threatened with dismissal and other forms of punishment. With jobs very difficult to come by these days in Ghana, many employees are crumbling under this pressure. Cases of employee stress are therefore on the ascendancy. It is in this view that this study is being conducted to identify the effects stress has on job performance of employees of Volta Regional Hospital.

1.3 Rationale of the Study

Several researchers have delved into this study area and a thorough search indicated some of the researchers who undertook studies in this area (Leslie, 2001 and Nnuro 2012). The above authors in their work stated that stress-induced illnesses are prevalent in the workplace today, and stress is the problem of the sufferer and the employer. Stress causes absenteeism and can lead to other problems such as drug addiction, alcoholism, depression and poor job performance.

Leslie (2001), a stress-management consultant, stated that stress causes problems in the workplace which negatively affects employee health and organizational productivity. Stress can lead to problems such as job dissatisfaction, alcoholism, absenteeism, physical ailments and poor job performance. Nnuro (2012) in his work also points to the fact that there is a negative relationship between job stress and job performance. According to him, those workers who had high levels of job stress had low job performance.

The above studies could have been a perfect point of call for a solution on the effects of occupational stress on job performance. However, most of these research work were conducted in specific areas other than the geographic area which is the focus of this study: the Ho Municipality. The fact that the geographical area this research focuses on is different culturally, socially and economically from those which were the foci of other researchers is enough justification to carry out this research.

If managers know how to prevent and cope with stress, productivity can be increased. Many companies instituted stress-management programmes that lead to a decline in absenteeism, a decrease in sickness and accident costs, and an increase in job performance. Stress inventory available from stress-management programmes can assist executives and managers in assessing employee stress.

The inventory can identify the sources of stress, which may include physical elements as well as other factors. Once these sources have been assessed, management can provide the necessary skills for coping with the problems, and employees can also learn that there are alternative ways of reacting to stress. From the above indication, it can be deduced that the results of the above researchers study cannot be applied to the situation at hand; this is why the study was undertaken to investigate occupational stress and its effects on job performance on staff of Volta Regional Hospital.

1.4 Hypothesis

The study was guided by the following:

H₀ – The effect of job related stress has no bearing on employees' performance

H₁ – The effect of job related stress has bearing on employee performance.

1.5 Research Questions

Based on the objectives of the study, the specific research questions to which answers were sought were:

1. Is there significant relationship between work related stress and employee performance?
2. What are the causes of job related stress on employee's performance?
3. How does job related stress affect employee performance?
4. How can the problem be addressed by employers?

1.6 General Objectives

The general objective of the study was to investigate the effects of work related stress on job performance of health workers at the Volta Regional Hospital, Ho.

1.7 The specific objectives were:

- i. To evaluate the causes of job-related stress on employees of the hospital
- ii. To ascertain the effects of employees stress on productivity at the hospital
- iii. To examine the coping strategies adopted by staff in the hospital
- iv. To establish the impact of stress on employees health

- v. To assess the measures being taken by the hospital to address employee stress

1.9 Profile of Study Area

The Volta Regional Hospital is a two hundred and forty (240) bed capacity ultra-modern hospital constructed by the government of Ghana to serve as a regional referral hospital for the Volta Region. It has the following services, OPD Services, In-patient Services, Surgical services including Orthopedics, Obstetrics and Gynecology, Internal Medicine, Child Health, Dental Care, Ear, Nose and Throat, Eye Care, Mental Health, Accident and Emergency, Diet-Therapy, Herbal Medicine, Pharmacy, Radiology and Imaging, Physiotherapy Services, Public Health Services, Laboratory Services, Blood Bank and Transfusion Services, Administration, Catering and Cafeteria Services, Laundry Services, Social Welfare, Environmental Health, Stores and Supplies, Health Information (Medical Records) and Mortuary.

The Volta Regional Hospital is a government owned ultra-modern and state of the art regional referral hospital located in the capital town of the Volta Region, Ho. It was constructed by Kaevener Constructional International of the United Kingdom and handed over to the Government of Ghana in November, 1998.

Bed state: The hospital has a bed capacity of two hundred and forty (240) but currently, one hundred and seventy-two (172) beds are in use. This is due to the inadequate number of critical health personnel especially, Nurses and Doctors at post at the hospital.

Management team: The hospital has a seven (7) member Core Management Team headed by the Medical Director. Other members are the Heads of Clinical Services, Administration, Finance, Pharmacy, Deputy Director of Nursing Services and the Internal Auditor.

Staff Strength: The total staff strength of the Volta Regional Hospital as at 31st December 2018 was eight hundred and seventy (870)

Type of facilities and Services available at the Volta Regional Hospital

- Out Patient Department
- In-patient Services
- Surgical Services including Orthopedic
- Obstetrics and Gynecology
- Internal Medicine
- Child Health
- Dental Care
- Ear, Nose and Throat
- Eye Care
- Mental Health
- Accident and Emergency
- Diet-therapy Services
- Herbal Medicine
- Pharmacy
- Radiology and Imaging

- Physiotherapy Services
- Public Health Services
- Laboratory Services
- Blood Bank and Transfusion Services
- Administration
- Catering and Cafeteria Services
- Laundry Services
- Social Welfare
- Environmental Health
- Stores and Supplies
- Health information (Medical Records)
- Mortuary
- Finance

In all, there are twenty six units at the Volta Regional Hospital

1.8 Scope of the Study

The research was conducted in the Ho Municipality with concentration on the Volta Regional Hospital and how occupational stress has an effect on job performance. The study examined the effects of occupational stress on job performance of the institution selected.

The institution used for the research was Volta Regional Hospital in the Ho Municipality. The focus of the study was occupational stress and its impact on the health workers at the hospital.

1.9 Organization of thesis

This study sought to explore stress and its impact on job performance among health workers at the Volta Regional Hospital, Ho. This section gives a brief synopsis of the chapters constituting this research work.

Chapter one focused on the introduction and a background to the study in terms of a general overview of stress and its effects on employees. It also states the rationale for the study, the hypothesis, research questions, and objectives among others. The second chapter covered the review of relevant literature on stress and its impact on an organisation. This included the theoretical framework of occupational stress, causes of stress, effects of stress and managing stress.

The third chapter entailed the methodology used in carrying out this research. It involved a statement of various forms of sampling and details of interviews, questionnaires, data acquisition techniques, data analysis, pre - testing and ethical considerations of the research process. The fourth chapter focused on presentation of results based on the variables and objectives outlined.

The fifth chapter illustrated the discussion arrived at from the interviews and the questionnaires. Here, the results of the study was compared with works in the literature review and other theoretical frameworks. It also included a critical review of whether the research questions and the hypothesis have been answered, a critical appraisal of the research design used and implications of the research as well as the conclusion.

Finally, a sixth chapter constituted a summary that included conclusions drawn through logical arguments developed and recommendations

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter of the study provides in-depth insight into the nature of stress and the impact thereof on productivity. Opinions from different authors are shared or described to provide a better theoretical understanding of the types of stress, the nature of stress, its causes, and the impact it has on productivity.

2.2 Theoretical Framework of Occupational Stress

The theoretical models that have been formulated for interpreting stress are helping to identify stressors in a particular situation and predicting the possibility of an individual's adaptation to a stressful situation (Schafer, 2000). Theories help us to understand underlying processes and on that basis, choose an effective course of action. Valid theories enable us to predict what will happen under certain situations.

There are many different theories about how occupational stress arises and its effect on job performance. Though they may differ in emphasis, in many ways they overlap and complement each other. In this section however, the Fevre's Person-Environment Fit Theory, the Kenny's Demand-Control Theory, Transaction Based Models and Appraisal Theory are the selected theories since they are prevalent and central to the literature on occupational stress. After careful review of literature, the researcher developed the following conceptualization model.

Conceptual Model

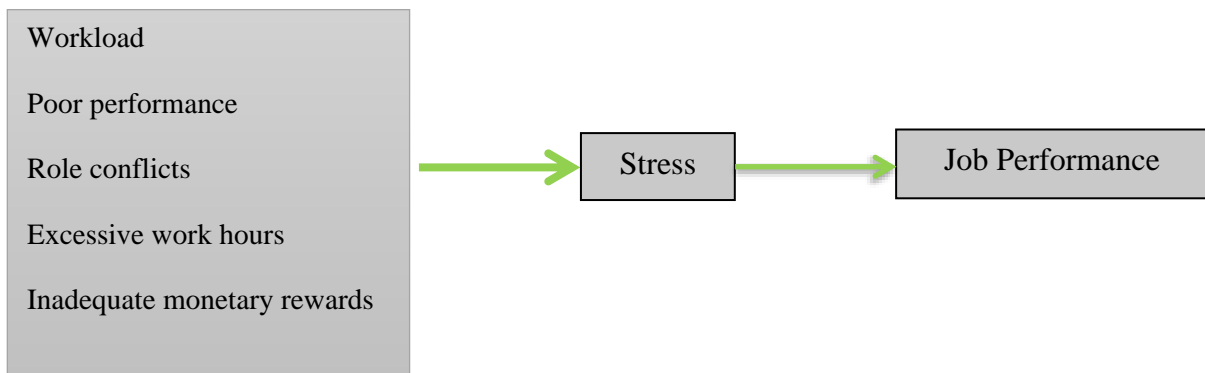


Figure 1: Conceptual Model on factors that contribute to stress on job performance
Source: Neuman, L. (2007).

From the review of literature, it was observed that various factors contribute to stress.

Key among the sources is poor management, workload, administrative-related issues, role conflicts, excessive work hours and inadequate monetary rewards. All these stressors culminate to either slow down or expedite productivity among the Volta Regional Hospital Staff.

2.3 Person-Environment (PE) Fit Theory

According to the PE fit theory, stress and stressors are not defined in terms of either the individual or the environment, but rather in terms of the degree to which there is “misfit” between the two (Fevre et al., 2003). The outcome set of PE fit theory consists of the individual's potential reactions to misfit, which can be characterized as either coping or defence (Kenny, 2000). Coping and defence are both potentially adaptive, neither being necessarily better or more effective than the other. The connection of the theory to this research has to do with the fact that stress has to take place within an environment. In other words, stress cannot take place in isolation of a number of environmental factors. Since human beings (workers) locate in workplaces they are bound to confront stressful

situations. They must therefore, develop ways of coping if faced with stressful situations. The objectives of this study can hardly be achieved without an underpinning theory such as Person- Environment Fit Theory.

2.4 The Job Demand-Control Theory

The job demand-control theory concerns the joint effects of job demands and job control on the employee wellbeing (Kenny, 2000). According to the demand theory, demand is subdivided into workload, work hazards, physical and emotional demands and role conflict (Kenny, 2000). For stress to exist, the demand from the environment (the job) versus the capability of the individual (the employee) will typically be considerably out of balance (Larson, 2004).

More so, Vance et al (2004) proposed that, although excessive job demands or pressures (both physical and psychosocial) can have an impact on stress levels (especially psychological strain), by themselves these demands are not the most important contributors to strain experiences. Rather, the amount of strain people experience in their work will be determined by whether or not they have any control over the demands they have to deal with. That is to say, there will be interactive effects of Demands over Control (or discretion) on stress levels. Put another way, control will buffer (moderate) the impact of demands (pressures) on strain. This relationship is depicted in Figure 2 below.

	Low Job Demands	High Job Demands
Low Control	Passive Job	High – Strain Job
High Control	Low – Strain Job	Active Job

Figure 2 The Job Demand – Job Control Model. Source: Kenny, 2000

This theory fits into the current study. The study’s preoccupation is job related stress among workers at the Volta Regional Hospital. These are workers, who go through all manner of job demands resulting in various strains. The study underscores how the demands on workers can be moderated to achieve a less stressful environment of work.

2.5 Transaction Based Models

Stress has traditionally been viewed as a response and most recently, as a transaction. Stress, specifically, mental stress, is defined as a transaction Agolla, (2009) when the cognitive focus is on the relationship between the person and the environment, such as thinking about events in one’s life and deciding if one has the personal resources to handle those events. As such, the transactional framework focuses on cognitions and perceptions, or appraisals that mediate the response to stressful events (Agolla, 2009).

This transactional approach also emphasizes the importance of the individuals’ analysis or subjective appraisal of the stressful events that occur within their environment. Taken together, the importance of their interpretation of the psychosocial stressor’s magnitude, the emotions that are generated, and the resulting stress response is called the cognitive primacy perspective (Agolla, 2009).

2.6 Appraisal Theory

Appraisal theory examines the process by which emotions are elicited as a result of an individual's subjective interpretation or evaluation of important events or situations; hence, it is the evaluation of events to determine one's safety in relation to his or her place in the environment. Therefore, an event, irrespective of its importance, may or may not be perceived as stressful or harmful by an individual (Regehr and Bober, 2005).

2.7 Origin, Terminology and Definition of Stress

Stress is a prevalent problem in modern life (Smith, 2000). The term stress was first employed in a biological context by the endocrinologist Hans Selye in the 1930s. This was later broadened and popularized as a concept to involve a set of physical and psychological responses to adverse conditions or influences (Fevre et al., 2003). In their usage stress refers to a condition and the stressor to the stimulus causing it.

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. Malach-Pines and Keinan, (2010) also defined stress as any adjustive demand on an individual caused by physical, emotional or mental factors that required coping behaviour.

Similarly, Michie, (2002) describes stress as a negative emotional experience accompanied by predictable biochemical, physiological, cognitive and behavioural

changes that are directed either toward altering the events or accommodating its effects. From the above definitions and descriptions stress can best be seen as excessive demands that affect a person physically and psychologically. Thus stress is the mental or physical condition that results from perceived threat or danger and the pressure to remove it.

2.8 Types of Stress

Volpe (2000) states a number of stress types as follow:

2.9 Chronic Stress

Chronic stress comes when a person never sees a way out of a miserable situation. Volpe, (2000) 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. Some chronic stresses stem from traumatic, early childhood experiences that become internalized and remain forever painful and present.

Chronic stress kills through suicide, violence, heart attack, stroke and, perhaps, even cancer. Because physical and mental resources are depleted through long-term attrition, the symptoms of chronic stress are difficult to treat and may require extended medical as well as behavioural treatment and stress management.

2.10 Acute Stress

This type of stress is the most common and most recognizable form of stress. It comes from demands and pressures of the recent past and anticipated demands and pressures of the near future. According to Volpe (2000), it is the kind of stress which the individual knows exactly why he is stressed. Acute stress usually does not cause severe or permanent damage to the body. Its symptoms are recognized by most people and because it is short term, acute stress does not have enough time to do the extensive damage associated with long-term stress.

2.11 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. Ford, et al (2015) is of the view that after the initial shock and emotional fallout, many trauma victims gradually begin to recover. However 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.

2.12 Episodic Acute Stress

Taylor (2013) went further to explain episodic acute stress as a situation where the victims get 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, handling too

many demands. 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.

It is common for people with episodic acute stress reactions to be over aroused, short-tempered, irritable, anxious and tense. Often, they describe themselves as having a lot of nervous energy. Treating episodic acute stress requires intervention on a number of levels, generally requiring professional help, which may take many months. Often, lifestyle and personality issues are so ingrained and habitual with these individuals that they see nothing wrong with the way they conduct their lives. They blame their woes on other people and external events. Frequently, they see their lifestyle, their patterns of interacting with others, and their ways of perceiving the world as part and parcel of who and what they are. Sufferers can be fiercely resistant to change (McGaugh 2015).

2.13 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.

Bloona, (2007) 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. An event could be experienced as stressful if people evaluated it as distressing. Whether an event is experienced as stressful depends on a person's psychosocial orientation with things such as 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.

Bloona (2007) distinguished different effects of stress as follows:

Physiological – hormone release triggers fight or flight response of humans. These hormones help them to either fight harder or run faster. They increase heart rate, blood pressure, and sweating. Stress has been tied to heart disease. Because of the increase in heart rate and blood pressure, prolonged stress increases the tension that is put on the arteries. It also affects the immune system which is why cold and flu illness usually show up during exams.

Behavioural – it may cause people to be jumpy, emotional, or even irritable. The effects of stress may cause some people to drink or smoke heavily, neglect exercise or proper nutrition, or overuse either the television or the computer.

Psychological – the response to stress may decrease the ability to work or interact effectively with other people, and be less able to make good decisions. Stress has also been known to play a part in anxiety and depression.

Subjective effects: stress leads to anxiety, depression, frustration, fatigue and low self-esteem.

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.

Effects on health: prolonged exposure to stress has profound and detrimental effects on health. Among possible complications stress may intensify or play a role in causing ailments such as asthma, amenorrhea, coronary heart disease, headaches, and chest pains.

2.14 Stress Reactions

According to Vance et al (2004), stress response is in three stages.

ALARM → RESISTANCE → EXHAUSTION

- i. Alarm is the first stage. When the threat or stressor is identified or realized, the body's stress response is a state of alarm. During this stage adrenaline will be produced in order to bring about the "fight-or-flight response".
- ii. The Resistance stage is where the body has to decide to 'fight or flight'. The body will try to add resources to help it cope through maximum adaption and hopefully, successful return to equilibrium for the individual. If however, the defence mechanism does not work, or fails to cope, it will lead to the third stage which is Exhaustion.

- iii. Exhaustion stage is the third and final stage. 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). 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. The result can manifest itself in obvious illnesses such as ulcers, depression, diabetes or even cardiovascular problems, along with other mental illnesses.

2.15 Causes of Occupational Stress

There are stressors to virtually every occupation and business, Chapman (1995-2007) publicized that the typical causes of stress at work include bullying or harassment, feeling powerless and uninvolved in determining one own responsibilities, continuous unreasonable performance demands, lack of effective communication and conflict resolution, lack of job security, long working hours, excessive time away from home and family, office politics and conflict among staff, a feeling that one's reward is not commensurate with ones responsibilities, odd working hours and pressures disrupting life-balance (diet, exercise, sleep and rest, family time).

These conditions as described by Chapman suit the characteristics of staff of Volta Regional Hospital which could mean that they are working under stress. According to Rutter, et al, (2002), high self-expectation, securing financial support, insufficient development in the field, inadequate salary, role overload, conflicting job demands, slow progress on career advancement, frequent interruptions and long meetings are the causes

of stress among health staff. Their conclusion could be classified under the acute stress type discussed above.

Johnson (2001) maintained that work stress and burn out are related to negative effects on mental and physical health of the affected workers. Employees experiencing work stress are more likely than their non-stressed colleagues to suffer job dissatisfaction, lowered productivity, absenteeism, lowered emotional and physical health and turnover. According to Bachkirova (2005), it is desirable to reduce the negative effects occupational stress has on workers and as such he sees a need to pay more attention to the ever growing pandemic of occupational stress.

2.16 Effects of Occupational Stress on Employees' Productivity

Rubina et al. (2008) viewed job performance as the result of three factors working together: skill, effort and the nature of work conditions. Skills include knowledge, abilities and competencies of the employees; effort is the degree of motivation the employee puts forth towards completing the job; and the nature of work condition is the degree of accommodation of these conditions in facilitating the employee's performance.

The whole concern for the organization is performance of their employees irrespective of factors and conditions mentioned above. Good performance of employees leads to good organizational performance which is an indicator of their success (Armstrong and Baron, 2007). Ultimate success or failure of an organization is determined majorly by the performance of their employees, (Ahmed and Ramzan, 2013).

Job stress has now formed one of those topics which have been discussed widely around the globe because it affects the employees' mental capabilities, by which they are not able to perform and serve their organizations effectively.

Job stress has a direct effect on job performance, thus job stress is an independent variable and employees' performance is a dependent variable. However, job stress not only impacts the employees' performance, but it can be the cause of several negative outcomes such as fatigue, less encouragement towards job, employee turnover, unfaithfulness and less punctuality, (Glazer and Beehr, 2005). Stress at the workplace also minimizes the ability of decision making, because of this, employees do not have enough motivation to take initiatives and make decisions by themselves.

Coetzee and Devilliers, (2010) are of the opinion that role ambiguity, work relationships, job security, lack of job autonomy, work and home interface, compensation and benefits, lack of management support are the key sources of creating job stress. Due to these sources of stress, employee engagement to work decreases and ultimately it negatively affects the productivity of employees.

Stress has a considerable importance for the organizational concern, because it has a direct effect on the employee's health and their performance. Due to globalization and high competition among organizations, employees perform their duties beyond the routine working hours. Such changes in the nature of job increase the job stress, which affect the workers' physical and mental health. These effects of job stress are not only destructive to the individual employees, but also for the organization, Salleh (2008).

In a related development, Bashir and Ramay, (2010) emphasise that stress in employees' is becoming a serious issue in organizations. Accordingly, it affects both employees and employers alike and declines their productivity and job performance. High level stress can cause nervousness, tension, strain, anxiety, depression, cardiovascular diseases, musculoskeletal disorders and gastrointestinal disorders (Ghaleb and Thuria, 2008).

Nonetheless, Jing (2008) argued that stress can influence people both in positive and negative ways. At the initial stage, it influences positively by motivating employees, but if it is consistent for long time, it influences the people in negative way through increasing frustration, anxiety and tardiness.

In harmony with Jing (2008), Trivellas (2013) illustrated how job stress can enhance the ability of employees as well. For example, when the manager makes the deadline shorter, due to stress employees will work hard day and night to perform well and achieve their organizational goals. Some of the organizations think that putting a reasonable amount of stress on employees can enhance the employees' performance; however, these pressures can also demotivate employees and can cause dissatisfaction.

Mental state or thoughts are responsible for shaping our feelings and emotions, which can also change the physical state of the employee. This is why the stressful employees are highly exposed to all kind of situations, mostly adverse (Jing, 2008). An employee with bad mental and physical state is certainly not able to give his/her best at the workplace. In fact, an employee must have to be secured about his/her job and should be satisfied with it, as everything revolves around it (Khalatbari, Ghorbanshiroudi, and Firouzbakhsh, 2013).

All of these thoughts are causing stress and dissatisfaction in employees, which effect the employees' daily performances (Mimura & Griffiths, 2003).

These effects of stress (distress) described above affect the performance of workers and therefore, it is important to understand how it can be managed to keep workers happy and healthy for higher productivity.

2.17 Managing Stress

According to Robbins (2004), stress can be managed using two approaches; the individual and organizational.

He said the individual approach should include exercise. The employees can manage stress by walking, riding bicycles, attending aerobic classes, jogging, swimming, and playing tennis among other practices. Most runners and fitness addicts admit that, it is very hard to focus on job stress when one is trying to complete vigorous workout.

Again, he said individuals can manage stress through relaxation. This is because, when employees relax the response for stress will be reserved in the human mind-body system. Individuals can reduce tension through relaxation techniques such as meditation, hypnosis and biofeedback. The objective is to reach a state of deep relaxation in which the employee feels physically relaxed, somewhat detached from the immediate environment and detached from body sensations. Relaxation exercises reduce employees' heart rates, blood pressure and other physiological indicators of stress.

Another way to reduce stress individually is opening up. A healthy response to this moments or periods of personal crisis is to confide in others. Employees may not find it easy to discuss difficult personal traumas with others, but self-disclosure can reduce the level of stress and give them more positive outlook on life. Also, honest entries on a regular basis in a diary may accomplish the same thing.

He also went further to explain the organization approach to stress management which includes training programmes for employees, ensuring effective upward and downward communication in the organization, improvement in personnel policies such as (good welfare packages, incentives, pension schemes), good job design, improvement in the physical work environment, and also management should provide technical support to employees.

In the same view, Levin (2006) said stress can be managed in an organization through increasing employees autonomy in their job, increase or decrease personal responsibility, allow more flexible working hours – by the use of flexi – time, job rotation and transfers, provide better working conditions, including social/fitness clubs, and institute a counseling service.

Rees and Redfern (2000) suggested that in order to manage work stress effectively, management should consider doing the following:

- Provide work which allows some personal choice in the way it is carried out and the sequence in which it is carried out.
- Encourage employees' participation in decisions which affect them

- Set clear goals and targets and provide adequate feedback on performance
- Induct new recruits thoroughly
- Provide training as an on-going updating process
- Provide consistent rewards for effective output
- Review performance gaps at the time of occurrence
- Provide opportunities for employees to try new duties and different tasks.
- Design job to have even work pressures
- Encourage group working procedures and friendly work relations
- Provide secure and fair personnel practices
- Ensure work environment is free of hazards

This implies that if these approaches and measures outlined above are carefully implemented it could go a long way to minimize the level of stress on employees.

2.18 Summary

In this chapter, the researcher found the existence of work stress, its causes and effects. There was an indication that stress can be either a positive or a negative influence on employees output. For many people, low to moderate amount of stress enable them to perform their jobs better by increasing the work intensity, alertness and ability to react. However, a high level of stress, or even a moderate amount sustained over a long period, eventually takes its toll on employees and pressure tends to decrease general performance and job satisfaction.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter explains methods used in carrying out this research, how the research was designed and reasons for the choice of methodology used. The chapter comprises the study area, research design, population of study, the sample size determination, sampling technique, data collection tools and procedure and data analysis. They are presented as follows:

3.2 Research Design

The research design used was broadly non experimental. The study, therefore, adopted the descriptive approach by way of cross-sectional survey method. A survey is a systematic method of gathering information from a sample of individuals for the purposes of describing the attributes of the larger population of which the individuals are members Neuman (2007). The cross-sectional method was chosen because it studies the research problem at a point in time and not within a longer period. This method was also considered useful because the problem of study could not be directly observed. In other words, the effect of work related stress on job performance among employees of the Volta Regional Hospital could not be directly observed.

3.3 Data Collection techniques and tools

According to Neuman (2007), primary data is defined as consisting of materials that one has gathered by himself through systematic observation, the results of questionnaires and interviews and case study which one has compiled. Data are primary if they have

been gathered according to one's rationale and interpreted by one to make a point which is important to one's own argument. Primary data was collected in order to solicit responses directly from the field. The data collected: both primary and secondary (official document) constituted the basic information from which conclusions were drawn for making decisions.

A semi – structured questionnaire was developed to collect data from the sample frame. By this, open and close ended questions were designed for the respondents. To make analysis easier, the closed ended questions were provided with alternatives and clear instructions to respondents. The open-ended questions were intended to give respondents the latitude of freedom to express their views in an unconstrained manner. The questionnaire was divided into various sections to capture the critical areas spelt out in the objectives of the study.

The main sources of data for this research were both primary (questionnaire) and secondary. There was also key informants' interview administered via semi-structured means to ten (10) retired health professionals.

First, a letter was sent to the Volta Regional Hospital Medical Director for permission to be granted in order to administer questionnaire on the premises. Then, the questionnaires were administered personally. Questionnaires were distributed to the respondents and after a week the researcher went back and collected the completed questionnaires.

Follow-up was conducted to remind and retrieve additional questionnaires. Regarding the secondary sources of data, journal articles, books and other publications were used to inform the structure of the questionnaire.

3.4 Study Population

The population of this study comprised employees of Volta Regional Hospital in Ho Municipality. The population was heterogeneous as the hospital had staff with different educational backgrounds, social status as well as duration of service. The hospital has a population of eight hundred and seventy (870) staff. However, the target population for this study was two hundred and seventy-four (274) staff.

3.5 Study Variables

The study examined a number of variables on stress and job performance and was as outlined in the literature review of this work.

3.6 Sampling

In this research, probability sampling method was employed. Thus, stratified sampling technique was used to select staff from the hospital. Stratified random sampling was used because the population was heterogeneous. In this method, the entire population was divided into a number of homogeneous groups, each of these groups was homogeneous within itself, and then the units were sampled at random from each of these levels. The sampling frame was divided into three groups. Each branch represented one group.

In statistics, a simple random sample is a subset of individuals (a sample) chosen from a larger set (a population). Each individual is chosen randomly and entirely by chance, such that each individual has the same probability of being chosen at any stage during the sampling process. The principle of simple random sampling is that every object has the same probability of being chosen. Conceptually, simple random sampling is the simplest of the probability sampling techniques. It requires a complete sampling frame, which may not be available or feasible to construct for large populations. There are many methods to proceed with simple random sampling. The most primitive and mechanical would be the lottery method. Each member of the population is assigned a unique number. Each number is placed in a bowl or a hat and mixed thoroughly.

The blind-folded researcher then picks numbered tags from the hat. All the individuals bearing the numbers picked by the researcher are the subjects for the study. Another way would be to let a computer do a random selection from your population. For populations with a small number of members, it is advisable to use the first method but if the population has many members, a computer-aided random selection is preferred. This latter method was used to arrive at the population of the study.

3.7 Pre-testing

A semi – structured questionnaire was developed to collect data from the sample frame. By this, open and close ended questions were designed for the respondents. To make analysis easier, the closed ended questions were provided with alternatives and clear instructions to respondents. The open-ended questions were intended to give respondents the latitude of freedom to express their views in an unconstrained manner.

3.8 Validity and reliability

The questionnaire was divided into various sections to capture the critical areas spelt out in the objectives of the study. For the purpose of this study, both the face and content validity were ensured. To ensure validity of the instruments, the initial drafts of the instruments were scrutinized by three experts in questionnaire and content construction who were required to check for all flaws in the instruments. The content validity of the instruments was also enhanced by the suggestions from the experts. Based on the suggestions and comments, the necessary corrections were made and this enhanced a thorough validation in order to ensure that the instruments actually measured what it was intended to measure in relation to the research questions.

The final version of the instruments was trial tested on a sample of twenty staff members who were not part of the study sample, precisely from Municipal Hospital, Ho. The twenty staff members used were the ones permitted by management to engage in the exercise. The issue of reliability was also addressed by the researcher, first of all ensuring that the wording of the questions was not ambiguous; ensured that the questions were administered from the same setting; ensured that all respondents were asked if they were ready and willing to answer the questions.

3.9 Data handling

The research questionnaire for this study was administered to the respective respondents numbering, 274. These questionnaires were recorded after numbering them and stored on the researcher's personal computer. After a week, a follow-up visit was made to the respondents using the recorded numbering as stored. All collected questionnaires were

crossed out in the computer. All collected responses were safely kept in a locker in the office that the researcher alone has access to. After four weeks of collection, data analysis began. The responses were put back in the locker after the analysis for use in future.

3.10 Data Analysis

The data from the questionnaires and interviews were coded for easy entry into the Stata 14 software. Frequency distribution tables were used to depict results obtained from the respondents on the factors that contribute to job stress peculiar to health workers at the hospital, the extent to which job stress affects productivity of employees, stress management strategies employed in the management of job stress and the extent to which job stress affects the health of staff. Inferences and calculations were made from the measures and compared with the existing literature to arrive at the conclusion for the study.

3.11 Ethical Considerations

As with all research projects, this study observed all protocols regarding ethical considerations. Every effort was made in ensuring that the work goes through all academic rigors deserving of scholarship. In this direction, the highest levels of honesty, privacy, confidentiality, secrecy and disclosure was employed to protect respondents and also in the entire work. For instance a letter was obtained from Ensign meant for the Volta Regional Hospital, Ho. Within two weeks, a response of approval was given to the researcher to commence work. The Ensign College of Public Health's rigid requirements

of ethics in research were adhered to and therefore informed the way respondents consent was sought for this work.

3.12 Limitations of Study

Mugenda and Mugenda (2003) explain that limitations are aspects of a research that may influence the results of the study but over which the researcher has no control. This study was necessarily limited in scope due to series of resource limitations as well as practical research limitations. Notable among them was financial. More so, by virtue of the geographic location of the study and the institution of learning coupled with limitations of time to explore more into other dimensions of the subject matter of stress, the results of the study may not be used to make generalizations to other populations.

This is because occupational stress, causes and its effects on job performance among staff of Volta Regional Hospital may not represent the occupational stress causes and its effects on job performance among employees of other organizations.

Finally, the research could not cover all issues of Volta Regional Hospital and this was a limiting factor. This was due to cost implications as alluded to earlier in research throughout the health institutions in Ghana.

3.11 Assumptions

This study has a number of assumptions to enhance its success as stated: the assumptions that all the respondents have a considerable level of education which promoted their understanding of the content of the instruments administered.

It was also assumed that the subject matter of stress is quite familiar to the health workers who were at the centre of this research. Finally, another assumption relates to the fact that there are available secondary sources for a topic on stress.

3.12 Sample Size Determination

The sample size for the study was two hundred and seventy-four (274) employees of Volta Regional Hospital, Ho.

The sample size of two hundred and seventy-four (274) was arrived at taking into consideration the extent of variability in the population, time constraints and framework within which the study was to be completed and submitted and also the confidence in the inference made.

In determining the sample size where the population is known, the following formula developed by Yamane (1967) was used.

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e^2)}$$

Where:

n = the sample size

N = population size

e = margin of error

95% confidence level

$$n = \frac{870}{1+870 (0.0025)}$$

$$n = \frac{870}{871 (0.0025)}$$

$$n = \frac{870}{1 + (2.1775)}$$

$$n = \frac{870}{3.1775}$$

$$n = 274$$

Therefore, the approximated sample size was two hundred and seventy-four (274).

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents results on the analysis of the study. It also contains the description of data obtained from the various instruments and their discussion as well as tables and charts of how data obtained from the various instruments were used. The analysis also involved inferential analysis where research hypothesis were tested.

Questionnaires were solicited from two hundred and seventy-four (274) employees of Volta Regional Hospital. Employees were told that their participation would help provide a better understanding of stress on job performance on health service delivery. They were also told that their responses would be completely anonymous.

They completed the sixteen (16) question instrument and submitted their responses. Of the two hundred and seventy-four (274) employees, two hundred and fifty-five (255) completed the questionnaire with nineteen (19) failing to answer at least one question. The final numbers of questionnaires used in the analysis were two hundred and fifty-five (255) which represent about 93% which is positive response. There were also key informants' interview and summarised versions of the open ended questions in the questionnaire.

4.2 Demographic characteristics

Field data analysis depicts 174(68.2%) of respondents were males and 81(31.8%) were females; about 61(23.9%) were under the age of 30. About 92(36.1%) were between the

ages of 31-40 years. 48(18.8%) were between 41-50 years and 54(21.2%) were over 50 years. From the analysis, the respondents had varied duration of service.

Thus 76(29.8%) has worked for Volta Regional Hospital for less than a year. 58(22.7%) has worked between 1-5 years. 49(19.2%) has worked between 6-10 years and 72(28.2%) has worked for over 10 years.

4.3 Causes or source of stress

The first specific objective of the study was to identify factors that contribute to job stress peculiar to the Volta Regional Hospital in Ho. Seven key factors were examined namely: inadequate monetary rewards, role conflicts, excessive work hours, heavy workload, poor management, inadequate ventilation in offices and administrative related issues.

Question four (4) to five (5) in the questionnaire were related to the various factors that contribute to stress which correspond with the first objective of the study.

Below shows the results from respondents on the subject:

Table 4.1: Relationship between factors, causes and stress level on employees' job productivity

Factors	Stress Level		P-value	
	Agree	Disagree		
Heavy workload	207(81.2%)	48(18.8%)	0.049	Significant
Excessive work hours	143(56.1%)	112(43.9%)	0.343	Not significant
Administrative related issues	182(71.4%)	73(28.6%)	0.410	Not significant
Inadequate ventilated office	84(32.9%)	171(67.1%)	0.012	Significant
Inadequate monetary rewards	159(62.4%)	96(37.6%)	0.415	Not significant
Role conflict	128(50.2%)	127(49.8%)	0.286	Not significant
Poor management	133(52.2%)	122(47.8%)	0.209	Not significant

Source: Field Survey, February 2019

Pearson Chi2

Data are given in table 4.1 as number (percentage) of persons. Percentages are based on totals within each category which add up to 100 percent. Groups were compared using Pearson Chi2. P-values generated from the Pearson Chi2 between corresponding variables and stress on job performance.

Table 4.2: Association between age and heavy workload in frequency and percentage

Age	Heavy Workload		Total
	Agreed	Disagreed	
<30yrs	54(26.1%)	7(14.6%)	61(23.9%)
31-40yrs	45(21.7%)	9(18.8%)	54(21.2%)
41-50yrs	38(18.4%)	10(20.8%)	48(18.8%)
>50yrs	70(33.8%)	22(45.8%)	92(36.1%)
Total	207	48	255

Source: Field Survey, March 2019, Pearson $\chi^2(3) = 4.0064$ P-value = 0.261

Demographic Factors analysis in table 4.2 was conducted using χ^2 (Pearson) to assess the association between heavy workload and age group in percentages (23.9%) in under 30 years group and also being the age of 31-40 groups with a percentage of (21.2%). The age of 41-50 years group also had their percentages as (18.8%) while above 50 years percentage were (36.1%). The findings suggest that the group belonging to fifty (50) years and above were affected by work related stress on job performance.

Table 4.3: Relationship between gender and heavy workload in percentage

Gender	Heavy Workload		Total
	Agreed	Disagreed	
Male	142(68.6%)	32(66.7%)	174(68.2%)
Female	65(31.4%)	16(33.3%)	81(31.8%)
Total	207	48	255

Source: Field Survey, March 2019, Pearson chi2 (1) = 0.0671 P-value = 0.796

Demographic data analyses were conducted using Pearson chi2 table 4.3 to assess the relationship between gender and heavy workload and presented in percentages. Females were 81(31.8%) and males were 174(68.2%) which indicated that heavy workload has high impact on males than females

Table 4.4: Association between stress levels and job performance

Stress level	Job Performance				Total
	Poor	Average	Good	Very Good	
Very low	6(5.8%)	27(26.2%)	47(45.6%)	23(22.35)	103(40.4%)
Low	0(0%)	12(21.1%)	22(38.6%)	23(40.4%)	57(22.4%)
Average	2(5.6%)	13(36.1%)	7(19.4%)	14(38.9%)	36(14.1%)
High	1(2.9%)	12(35.3%)	10(29.4%)	11(32.4%)	34(13.3%)
Very high	1(4%)	1(4%)	8(32%)	15(60%)	25(9.8%)
Total	10	65	94	86	255

Source: Field Survey, March 2019 *Pearson chi2 = 27.3410* *(P-value = 0.007)*

Table 4.4 indicated that stress impacted significant, P-value of 0.007 on the job performance of the staff. Asking about their knowledge concerning the level of stress on their job performance, all the staff numbering two hundred and fifty-five (255) which was hundred percent (100%) gave an affirmative response regarding knowledge and some coping strategies.

Table 4.5: Coping strategies adopted by staff to minimize work related stress

Coping strategies	Stress levels					Total
	Very Low	Low	Average	High	Very High	
Positive Thinking	17(16.5%)	6(10.5%)	7(19.4%)	4(11.8%)	2(8%)	36(14.1%)
Goal setting	12(11.7%)	3(5.3%)	3(8.3%)	5(14.7%)	0(0%)	23(9.0%)
Relaxing after work	20(19.4%)	20(35.1%)	8(22.2%)	8(23.5%)	7(28%)	62(24.3%)
Situation Restructuring	19(18.4%)	2(3.5%)	4(11.1%)	1(2.9%)	2(8%)	28(10.9%)
Imag. & Mental Rehearsal	4(3.9%)	6(10.5%)	0(0%)	1(2.9%)	1(4%)	12(4.7%)
Deep Breathing	13(12.6%)	3 (5.3%)	6(16.7%)	5(14.7%)	1(4%)	28(10.9%)
Practicing Religion	17(16.5%)	8(14.0%)	8(22.2%)	10(29.4%)	3(12%)	46(18.0%)
Being alone	1(0.10%)	9(15.8%)	0(0%)	0(0%)	9(36%)	19(7.5%)
	103	57	36	34	25	255

Source: Field Survey, March 2019

Pearson chi(28) = 80.1987

P-value = 0.00

In table 4.5, it was revealed that there are a number of strategies adopted by workers at the hospital namely; relaxing after work 62(24.3%) being the highest, imagery and mental rehearsal 12(4.7%) as the lowest. This shows that there are available measures for staff to cope with stress.

Table 4.6: Association between the periods worked with the hospital and on job productivity level

Number of years worked	Productivity Level				Total
	Poor	Average	Good	Very Good	
<1yr	3(3.9%)	19(25%)	31(40.8%)	23(30.3%)	76(29.8%)
1-5yrs	2(3.4%)	17(29.3%)	24(41.4%)	15(25.9%)	58(22.7%)
6-10yrs	2(4.1%)	13(26.5%)	16(32.7%)	18(36.7%)	49(19.2%)
>10yrs	3(4.1%)	13(18.1%)	23(31.9%)	30(41.7%)	72(28.2%)
Total	10	65	94	86	255

Source: Field Survey, March 2019 Pearson chi2 (9) = 4.8675 (P-Value = 0.846)

Table 4.6 shows that those who have worked under one year have 76(29.8%) of stress and those who worked over 10 years at the hospital have 72(28.2%) as their stress levels in percentage terms. These indicate that the more one stays at the hospital the more the incidences of stress or the more the stress level. The newly employed staff have their stress level higher since they obviously do not have coping mechanisms yet to deal with the stress.

Table 4.7: Effects of stress on employees' health

Extent	Frequency	Percentage %
Not at all stressful	55	21.6
Mildly stressful	32	12.5
Moderately stressful	45	17.6
Very stressful	90	35.3
Extremely stressful	33	12.9
Total	255	100

Source: Field Survey, March 2019

Table 4.7 revealed that the majority of respondents 90(35.3%) perceived their work as very stressful, implying that stress is a bother to them.

Table 4.8: Relationship between stress and job performance

Performance	Not stressful	Stressful	Total
Poor	0	10	10
Average	42	23	65
Good	0	90	90
Very good	0	11	11
Excellent	47	52	79
Total	69	186	255

Source: Field Survey, March 2019

Table 4.8 indicates that there is a relationship between stress and job performance as 90(48.4%) of the respondents (which constitute the majority) agreed to that

Table 4.9: Correlation between productivity and employees' health

Response	Freq.	Percentage (%)
Yes	188	73.7
No	67	26.3
Total	255	100

Source: Field Survey, March 2019

The respondents in table 4.9 who said yes were overwhelming, 188(73.7%). This shows that a lot of the workers have health related conditions as a result of stress.

Table 4.10: Association between stress and job performance

Response	Freq.	Percentage (%)
Yes	198	77.6
No	67	22.4
	255	100

Source: Field Survey, February 2019

In table 4.10, respondents assert that stress affects their job performances. A total of 198(77.6%) agreed to this implying that the organization cannot ignore the problems of stress.

Table 4.11: To which extent stress affects employees' health

Extent	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Very low	18	7.1%
Low	52	32.1%
Average	27	10.6%
High	30	11.8%
Very high	98	38.4%
Total	255	100

Source: Field Survey, February 2019

Table 4.11 above shows the extent to which stress affects staff's health state. A total of 98(38.4%) (the highest percentage) reported that stress affects their health. This implies that stress has a toll on staff's health.

4.3 Key Informants Interview

These key informants included; a Pharmacist, a Nurse, a Traumatology and Orthopaedic Surgeon, a Radiologist, a Laboratory Technologist, a Surgeon, a Principal Health Service Administrator, a Head Orderly, a Gynaecologist and a Senior Telephonist all retired from the service.

On what key informants views were regarding their understanding of occupational stress, they described stress as any strain or pressure brought by work-related circumstances which will disorient or even make one to get sick. These work-related circumstances may include; excessive work load, unclear work goals, lack of direction from superiors and lack of needed vacation.

Regarding their opinions on some manifestations of stress among health workers, it was revealed that stress manifests in various forms; low morale, low output, failing health situation, and absence from work.

The key informants alluded to the fact that, stress can be caused by a myriad of situations and issues namely, the nature of how work is designed, unhelpful work environment as in poorly ventilated offices, lack of adequate office space, and financial predicaments.

It was stated emphatically that there is a link between occupational stress and job performance. Ordinarily, a worker who is pressurised, overloaded with tasks and having to work within challenging circumstances with poor compensation package, can hardly excel in his job. Thus, where there is high level of stress among workers, the likelihood that this will lead to low job performance is present.

In terms of effects of occupational stress on workers productivity, the informants were of the view that health workers obviously will not be able to achieve their personal, departmental or unit goals and this will translate into the organization not achieving its goals. There are also instances of reported absenteeism, sometimes resulting out of ailment or tiredness. These situations will definitely not promote productivity.

On stress and its effect on health, the informants agreed that stress can impact the health of employees. In fact it can also kill and there are a lot of instances of stress-related illnesses.

On how the informants cope with stress the following were revealed: engaging in church activities, voluntary work, and hobbies such as singing, watching movies, and gardening.

They recommended to health workers as stress relieving mechanisms, to engage in constant health screening to know their health status. Besides, they should join fun clubs or keep fit clubs as well as make sure they are able to do things that will make them think less.

They should seek professional help if they feel stressed. For example psychologists can be consulted. Health workers should use their work place unions to call for changes that will improve their conditions of service. If some of these personal and organizational interventions are followed, it can reduce their stress levels to the barest minimum.

On the role of management in controlling stress at the work place, it was stated that management has a role to play. The way work is structured, the offices, the ambience of places of work and the organizational climate should be enabling to make workers enjoy what they do.

Welfare packages should be instituted to allow workers to have the sense of belonging. Goals should be clear for workers so that they will be able to achieve them with relative ease.

4.4 A Summary of Responses on Open-Ended Questions

On the question of what else could cause stress, respondents indicated:

“Workload, working without break too much fatigue”, “Extended working hours” “long working hours”, “long period work”, and “work overload”

These responses constituting majority views are an indication of how work should be designed such that workers are not overloaded. Management ought to use this to take a further look at how work is structured at the hospital.

In addition, respondents’ views regarding the impact of stress on their health were summarized below: *“Yes, sometimes I get sick”, “Yes, it affects negatively after my delivery at work”, “Yes, workload without break affect my health”*. Some also were not affected as shown in their responses: *“No, practice positive thinking”, “No, I always focus attention”, and “No, work according to timetable”*. Overall, those who said yes were in the overwhelming majority, an indication that stress is a major health concern.

When it comes to other strategies in use by respondents to cope with stress, the following were some responses: *“When I close from work I take my dinner, bath and relax in bed”, “I go for swimming”, “stay organized, stay away from conflict”, “I sleep early but wake up late”*. These responses show that some workers are prepared to adopt various strategies that can be helpful in dealing with the menace of stress.

Regarding measures that should be put in place in the organization to reduce stress, the illustrative quotations from respondents included:

“Monetary motivation”

“Staff motivation in various forms”

“Take a break, whenever you feel stressful”

“We should manage air time”

“The organization should be organizing health walk for the staff frequently”

These quotations signified to the researcher that stress is a worrisome phenomenon for both the individual worker as well as the organization. In light of this, it is the role of both employees and employers to make sure that measures are put in place to reduce stress to the barest minimum at the workplace.

CHAPTER FIVE

DISCUSSION

5.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a critical review of findings from the research as presented in the preceding chapter and to appraise how well the research questions have been addressed. In addition, the outcome of the primary research will be linked to the literature review.

5.2 Discussions on findings

The research findings indicate that the key contributory factors to stress were heavy workload and excessive working hours. According to respondents, heavy workload and excessive working hours were the significant factors that contribute to stress. The findings here, have been supported by Chapman (2007) and Rutter et al, (2002) who all indicated long hours of work as causes of stress.

Seven key factors were examined in the form of inadequate monetary rewards, role conflicts, excessive work hours, heavy workload, poor management, inadequate ventilated office and administrative related issues. According to Rutter, et al, (2002), high self-expectation, securing financial support, insufficient development in the field, inadequate salary, role overload, conflicting job demands, slow progress on career advancement, frequent interruptions and long meetings are the causes of stress among health staff.

These findings are supported in other ways by Coetzee and Devillier, (2010) who were of the opinion that role ambiguity, work relationships, job security, lack of job autonomy, work and home interface, compensation and benefits, lack of management support are the key sources of creating job stress. Due to these sources of stress, employee engagement to work decreases and ultimately it negatively affects the productivity of employees.

The interviews and quotes also supported that stress can be caused by a myriad of situations and issues namely, the nature of how work is designed, unhelpful work environment as in unventilated offices, lack of adequate office space, and financial predicaments. The quotes summarised from respondents of the open-ended questions included the following: *“Workload, working without break too much fatigue”, “Extended working hours” “long working hours”, “long period work”, and “work overload”*

In terms of job stress and its effects on job performance it has been found that stress affected significantly, revealed by chi square on the P-value of 0.007 which indicated that work related stress on the job performance of the staff was meaningful.

Asking of their knowledge about the level of stress on their job performance, all the staff two hundred and fifty-five (255) which is hundred per cent (100%) gave an affirmative response.

On respondents view on how stressful health job was 12.5% of the respondents indicated that the health profession was mildly stressful whereas an overwhelming 35.3% asserted that the health work was very stressful. These findings corroborate these of Alkubaisi

(2005) who opined that work stress has a negative impact on employee's performance, and Karunanithy and Ponnampalam (2013) who stated that there is a negative relationship between stress and performance.

The majority 90(35.3%) of respondents perceived their profession as very stressful implying that stress is a bother to them. In a related development, Bloona (2007) emphasise that stress in employees is becoming a serious issue in organizations. Accordingly, it affects both employees and employers alike and declines their productivity and job performance. The respondents were asked whether or not stress affects their performance as health worker.

One hundred and ninety-eight (198) respondents said stress affected their performance representing 77.6% where 22.4% stated otherwise. This implies that on a large scale stress affects job performance of the respondents. This supports Alkubaisi's (2015) assertion that stress can influence the performance level in many work tasks.

Jing (2008), illustrated how job stress can enhance the ability of employees as well. For example, when the manager makes the deadline shorter, due to stress employees will work hard day and night to perform well and achieve their organizational goals. Some of the organizations think that putting a reasonable amount of stress on employees can enhance the employees' performance; however, these pressures can also demotivate employees and can cause dissatisfaction.

Job stress can lead an employee to feel unsecured and unsatisfied from his/her job, which would not let the employee meet desired performance that he/she is capable of doing.

All of these thoughts are causing stress and dissatisfaction in employees, which impact the employees' daily performances (Yusoff, 2013).

In the narrative of the interview, the summary reveals the link between occupational stress and job performance. Ordinarily, a worker who is pressurised, overloaded with tasks and having to work within challenging circumstances with poor compensation package, can hardly be on top of his job. Thus, where there is high level of stress among workers, there is likelihood that this will lead to low job performance.

In relation to coping with stress, respondents indicated they have adopted a number of strategies at the hospital namely relaxing after work 62(24.3%) being the highest, imagery and mental rehearsal 12(4.7%) as the lowest. This shows that there are available avenues for staff to cope with stress.

The interviewees' version was summarised by indicating among others that they, as much as possible prevent themselves from being stressed unnecessarily. For instance they also engage in church activities, do voluntary work, and get busy with hobbies which include singing, watching movies, and gardening. They also read story and motivational books including the bible to keep them off thinking which can lead to stress.

When it comes to other strategies in use by respondents to cope with stress, the following were some responses: “*When I close from work I take my dinner, bath and relax in bed*”, “*I go for swimming*”, “*stay organized, stay away from conflict*”, “*I sleep early but woke up late*”. These responses are showing that some workers are prepared to adopt various strategies that can be helpful in dealing with the menace of stress.

In addition, the research findings revealed the respondents who said yes in terms of stress on health were overwhelming, 188(73.7%). This shows that a lot of the workers have health related conditions as a result of stress.

This finding is supported by Ghaleb and Thuria (2008) who say high level stress can cause nervousness, tension, strain, anxiety, depression, cardiovascular diseases, musculoskeletal disorders and gastrointestinal disorders. Jing (2008) argued that stress can influence people both in positive and negative ways. At the initial stages, it influences positively by motivating employees, but if it is consistent for a long time, it influences the people in a negative way through increasing frustration, anxiety and tardiness.

Prolonged exposure to stress has profound and detrimental effects on health. Among possible complications, stress may intensify or play a role in causing ailments such as asthma, amenorrhea, coronary heart disease, headaches, and chest pains. Mental state or thoughts are responsible for shaping our feeling and emotions, which can also change the physical state of the employee; that is why the stress employees are exposed to is mostly unhealthy (Jing, 2008).

Findings from the key informants' interview show that stress can impact the health of employees. In fact it can also kill and there are a lot of instances of stress-related illnesses. The respondents were asked whether or not stress affects their health.

One hundred and eight-eight (188) respondents said stress affected their health representing 73.7% while 26.3% stated otherwise. This implies that on a large scale stress affects the health of the respondents. This supports Mimura and Griffiths (2003) assertion that stress has significant impact on health institutions and people's performance and it affects the health of employees.

Analysis indicates that the extent to which stress affects staff was high as indicated by the majority of respondents, 38.4%; this finding consistent with those of Mimura and Griffiths (2003) which indicate that stress affects the health of employees.

In addition, in terms of respondents' views regarding the impact of stress on their health, it was noted that overall, those who said yes were in the overwhelming majority, an indication that stress is a major health concern.

The research findings revealed that the employer has roles to play in curbing stress in the organization. This is confirmed by Bachkirova (2005) who said it is desirable to reduce the negative effects of occupational stress on workers and as such recommends the need to pay more attention to the ever growing pandemic of occupational stress.

According to Robbins (2004), stress can be managed in two approaches: the individual and organizational approaches. He said the individual approach includes exercise. The

employees can reportedly manage stress by walking, riding bicycles, attending aerobic classes, jogging, swimming, and playing tennis among other practices. Most runners and fitness addicts admit that, it is very hard to focus on job stress when one is trying to complete vigorous workout (Botheridge, 2001).

Again, he said individuals can manage stress through relaxation. This is because, when employees relax the response for stress will be reserved in the human mind-body system. Individuals can reduce tension through relaxation techniques such as meditation, hypnosis and biofeedback. The objective is to reach a state of deep relaxation in which the employee feels physically relaxed, somewhat detached from the immediate environment and detached from body sensations. Relaxation exercises reduce employee's heart rates, blood pressure and other physiological indicators of stress.

Another way to reduce stress individually is opening up. A healthy response to these moments or periods of personal crisis is to confide in others. Employees may not find it easy to discuss difficult personal traumas with others, but self-disclosure can reduce the level of stress and give them more positive outlook on life. Also honest entries on a regular basis in a diary may accomplish the same thing.

Volpe (2000) suggested that in order to manage work stress effectively, management should consider doing the following:

- Provide work which allows some personal choice in the way it is carried out and the sequence in which it is carried out.
- Encourage employees' participation in decisions which affect them
- Set clear goals and targets and provide adequate feedback on performance

- Induct new recruits thoroughly
- Provide training as an on-going updating process
- Provide consistent rewards for effective output
- Review performance gaps at the time of occurrence
- Provide opportunities for employees to try new duties and different tasks.
- Design job to have even work pressures
- Encourage group working procedures and friendly work relations
- Provide secure and fair personnel practices
- Ensure work environment is free from hazards

This implies that if these approaches and measures outlined above are carefully implemented it could go a long way to minimize the level of stress on employees.

Regarding measures that should be put in place in the organization to reduce stress, the illustrative quotations from respondents included:

“Monetary motivation”

“Staff motivation in various forms”

“Take a break, whenever you feel stressful”

“We should manage air time”

“The organization be organizing health walk for the staff frequently”

These quotations signified to the researcher that stress was a worrisome phenomenon for both the individual worker as well as the organization. In the light of this, it should be

the role of the employees and employers to aim at adopting measures that reduce stress to the barest minimum at the workplace.

The findings indicated that the first hypothesis: “*The effect of job related stress has no bearing on employees’ performance*”, was not supported by the results of the study. The second hypothesis: “*The effect of job related stress has bearing on employee performance*”, was upheld by the findings.

On the research questions, all four were addressed by the study as indicated in the findings of chapters four and five.

CHAPTER SIX

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1 Introduction

This chapter summarizes and presents conclusions derived from the research and the recommendations. This research sets out to investigate the effects of work-related stress on job performance of health workers at the Volta Regional Hospital, Ho with the following objectives:

- i. To evaluate the causes of job-related stress on employees of the hospital
- ii. To ascertain the effects of employees stress on productivity at the hospital
- iii. To examine the coping strategies adopted by staff in the hospital
- iv. To establish the impact of stress on employees health
- v. To assess the measures being taken by the hospital to address employee stress

6.2 Summary of findings

First of all, the survey identified heavy workload and excessive working hours as the significant factors that contribute to stress among the respondents. Other factors were inadequate monetary rewards, role conflicts, poor management, inadequate ventilated offices and administrative-related issues but these factors were insignificant.

Secondly, the assertion that job stress affects performance was ascertained to be true. This therefore, implies that there is a link between job stress and employee performance.

Thirdly, the study found that to a large extent, stress affected the health of the respondents. The extent to which stress affects staff's health was examined to be high as indicated by the majority of respondents.

The study identified deep breathing, relaxation after work, practising religion and positive thinking among others as the common strategies adopted in coping with stress. It could be seen that the respondents combined the strategies in coping with stress.

Finally the study established the measures being taken by the hospital to address employee stress including; motivation, taking breaks and creating the conducive environment for employees.

6.3 Conclusions

The field survey has proven useful in arriving at conclusions for this research as indicated in the summary findings in the paragraph below:

The question of whether job stress has an impact on job performance was raised. This was upheld by the research findings as it was clearly evident from this research that stress has an effect on job performance. For instance table 4.8 of chapter four indicates that there is a relationship between stress and job performance as 90 (48.4%) of the respondents (which constitutes the majority) agreed to that.

The hypothesis (H₀) that “the effect of job related stress has no bearing on employee performance” is not supported by the results of the study. The hypothesis (H₁) that “the effect of job related stress has bearing on employee performance is considered valid”.

Stress related to work has the potential of harming the fortunes of an organization. As can be seen from this research work, there are low points with respect to how stress is managed.

6.4 Recommendations

The following recommendations were therefore made for consideration and possible action to further improve the situation and also for exploration for further research:

- Volta Regional Hospital needs to reduce the amount of working hours and heavy workloads by redesigning employees’ jobs to make tasks bearable for them. In addition more employees should be engaged to reduce the work burden on the existing staff since the study revealed excessive working hours and heavy workloads as key factors that contribute to stress.
- Further research should be conducted on a larger scale by considering other health institutions in Ghana since the study was only limited to Volta Regional Hospital in Ho Municipality due to time constraints.
- There is the need to be mindful of other causes of stress mentioned by respondents, role, conflicts, poor management, inadequate ventilated office and other administrative related issues. Management of the hospital should put in

place measures that can deal with these before they become bigger stress-related situations such as the ones mentioned in the first recommendation above.

- Management should introduce staff welfare schemes, including a viable counseling and guidance unit at the facility. This will go a long way to assist staff suffering from all manner of stressful concerns. Whilst doing this, efforts should be made to create an ideal working environment and conditions under which health workers work.
- Health screening programmes should be embarked upon regularly by the hospital, specifically targeted at the staff. This staff should be made to attend this exercise compulsorily. This will then serve as early warning signs to both staff and management.
- Management should also sensitize staff on how to as much as possible lead stress free lives whilst it provides the environment that motivates staff to enjoy what they do as workers.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Questionnaire, The effects of work related stress on job performance: A Case Study of Volta Regional Hospital, Ho

I am a student of the Master of Public Health at the Ensign College of Public Health, Kpong conducting a research on the above topic. This questionnaire is designed to explore the possible causes of stress, coping strategies and the effect stress has on the performance of the Volta regional hospital staff.

This questionnaire is anonymous and confidential.

Please tick responses as honestly as possible.

In case of any clarification or return, kindly contact me on **024-4667931** or **020-2543211**.

Yours faithfully

Second year graduate student, offering Master of Public Health

Where answers are provided, please tick the appropriate box and write where necessary.

Section A: Demographics

Q1. Gender

- (a) Male
(b) Female

Q2. Age

- (a) Under 30
(b) 31-40
(c) 41-50
(d) Over

Q3. How long have you been working with the Volta Regional Hospital?

- (a) Less than 1 year
(b) 1-5 years
(c) 6-10 years
(d) Over 10 years

Section B: Factors That Contribute To Stress

Q4. As a worker, how great a source of stress are these factors to you?

Source of Stress	No stress 1	A little stress 2	Some stress 3	A lot of stress 4	Extreme stress 5
Heavy Workloads					
Administrative-related issues					
Inadequate ventilated office (Physical environment)					
Excessive working hours					
Inadequate monetary rewards					
Role conflicts					
Poor management					

Q5. Please list below anything else that has caused you stress.

.....

Section C: Effect of Stress On Employee Productivity

Q6. In general, how stressful do you find being a health worker?

- (a) Not at all stressful
- (b) Mildly stressful
- (c) Moderately stressful
- (d) Very stressful
- (e) Extremely stressful

Q7. How is your performance feedback like over the past four months?

- (a) Poor
- (b) Average
- (c) Good
- (d) Very good
- (e) Excellent

Q8. In general, do you think stress affect your work performance?

Yes No

Q9. How high or low does stress affect your work performance?

- (a) Very low
- (b) Low
- (c) Average
- (d) High
- (e) Very high

Q10. Does stress impact negatively on your job performance?

Yes No

Please provide reason(s) to support your response to question 10 above.

.....
.....

Q11. Does stress impact positively on your job performance?

Yes No

Please provide reason(s) to support your response to question 11 above.

.....
.....

Section D: Stress Coping Strategies/Handling of Stress

Q12. When you experience stress, which of these coping actions/strategies do you usually adopt? *[Please tick only one]*

- (i) Positive thinking
- (ii) Goal-setting
- (iii) Relaxing after work (Relaxation)
- (iv) Focused Attention
- (v) Situation restructuring
- (vi) Imagery and Mental Rehearsal
- (vii) Deep breathing
- (viii) Practicing religion
- (ix) Being alone

Please specify other strategies:

.....
.....

Section E: Effect of Stress on Employee’s Health

Q13. In general, do you think stress affect your health?

Yes No

Q14. Does stress impact negatively on your health?

Yes No

Please provide reason(s) to support your response to question 14 above.

.....
.....

Q15. Does stress impact positively on your health?

Yes No

Please provide reason(s) to support your response to question 16 above.

.....
.....

Q16. What measures do you think must be put in place to reduce stress in your organization?

.....
.....

Thank you very much

Appendix 2: Introduction and Informed Assent Form

Dear respondent,

My name is Vivien Eunice Gedzie, a graduate student of Ensign College of Public Health. As a public health student, my area of research interest is the impact of work related stress on job performance. I am interested in finding out the causes of stress among health workers in the Volta Regional Hospital in the Ho Municipality of Volta region, Ghana. Any evidence you provide in this questionnaire is strictly confidential. The final report aggregates all answers and cannot therefore be attributed to you individually or by name. You are further assured that no personal punishment will be apply to you as a result of your participation in this study. Moreover, you can choose not to continue with, or answer any particular question if you feel strongly about it. Your participation will however, contribute to knowledge generation about the impact of work related stress on job performance. Do I have your consent to administer the questionnaire to you now?

YES [] NO []

Date.....

Signature.....

Appendix 3: OUTCOME OF IRB REVIEW OF MY THESIS PROPOSAL

OUR REF: ENSIGN/IRB/M4
YOUR REF:
Tel: +233 245762229
Email: irb@ensign.edu.gh
Website: www.ensign.edu.gh



P. O. Box AK 136
Akosombo
Ghana

Tuesday, 13 November 2018

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD SECRETARIAT

Vivien Eunice Gedzie
Ensign College of Public Health

Dear Miss Gedzie,

OUTCOME OF IRB REVIEW OF YOUR THESIS PROPOSAL

At a meeting of the INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD (IRB) of Ensign College of Public Health held on 1st November, 2018 your proposal entitled “**The Effect of Work Related Stress on Job Performance at Volta Regional Hospital, Ho**” was considered.

Your proposal has been approved for data collection in the following settings:

1. Rephrase the title to reflect “Regional Hospital, Ho, Volta Region”
2. Recheck the questionnaire 3 and 4 which are intended for bankers to answer.
3. Provide consent forms.

We wish you all the best.

Sincerely,



Dr (Mrs) Acquaaah-Arhin
(Chairperson)

Cc. President, ECOPH
Cc: Academic Registrar, ECOPH
Cc: Head of Academic Program, ECOPH


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Appendix 4: LETTER OF INTRODUCTION FROM THE SCHOOL

ENSIGN COLLEGE OF PUBLIC HEALTH - KPONG

OUR REF: ECDPH/AR/EL/GHS/ST105/004
YOUR REF:
Tel: +233 245762229
Website: www.ensign.edu.gh



P. O. Box AK 136
Akosombo
Ghana
6th December, 2018.

The Medical Director
Volta Regional Hospital
Ghana Health Service Ho.

Dear Sir/Madam,

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION


We write to respectfully introduce to you Vivien Eunice Gedzie (Student Identification number 177100105), a second year student of the Master of Public Health (MPH) degree program of the College. As part of her graduation requirements, she is writing a thesis on: **"The Effects of Job Related Stress on Employees Performance on Health Care Delivery: A Case Study of Volta Regional Hospital, Ho"** and would like to obtain data at your facility.

She has received ethical clearance from the Institutional Review Board (IRB) and wishes to assure you that ethical considerations and confidentiality are at the fulcrum of any data collected from your outfit for this project.

We are also confident that the recommendation from the findings would equally be useful to your facility. We would, therefore, be grateful if you kindly accede her any assistance she may require in the collection of this data in your facility for the thesis.

Thank you.

Respectfully yours,



Patrick Kuma
Academic Registrar

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Appendix 5: ACADEMIC RESEARCH - VIVIEN EUNICE GEDZIE

