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Influence of Work Overload on Academic Staff Job Performance in Universities in Rivers State: Implications for Counselling

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Abstract

This study examined the influence of work overload on the job performance of academic staff in universities in Rivers State. A correlational research design was adopted to guide the study. Three research questions and three hypotheses were formulated to achieve the study's objectives. The population consisted of 5,681 lecturers from three universities in Rivers State: the University of Port Harcourt, Rivers State University, and Ignatius Ajuru University of Education. A sample of 380 lecturers was selected using the proportionate stratified random sampling technique. Data were collected using a researcher-developed questionnaire titled Work Overload and Job Performance Questionnaire (WOJPQ). The instrument was divided into four sections, A, B, C, and D. Section A contained demographic information, including institution, gender, and academic qualification, while Sections B to D contained 15 items each designed to measure work overload (WO) and job performance (JP). The instrument was validated, and its reliability was established using the test–retest method. The reliability coefficients were 0.82 for the Academic Measure Index (AMI) and 0.90 for the Job Performance Index (JPI). Simple linear regression was used to answer Research Questions 1 to 3 and test the corresponding null hypotheses at the 0.05 level of significance. The findings revealed that work overload significantly contributed to the job performance of academic staff in universities in Rivers State. However, work overload had a negative contribution to the job performance of both male and female academic staff. Based on these findings, the study recommended that university management in Rivers State should recruit additional academic staff to reduce existing workloads and improve staff performance.

Keywords: *Academic Staff, Gender, Influence, Job Performance, Work Overload.*

Introduction

Job performance is any behaviour which is directed toward task or goal accomplishment. Job performance refers mainly to actions and inactions of an individual while carrying out a particular task. Academic staff job performance therefore is the attribute, way, attitude and pattern a lecturer uses to transfer knowledge and skills to the students in ensuring the attainment of national educational goals. This assertion makes the job of every university lecturer an important and indispensable one. It is therefore important that lecturers are motivated in order to give efficient and optimum performance (Abd et al., 2016; Maclean, 2026). Every lecturer wants to grow in the ranks and files in his/her profession. Climbing the ladder is not an easy task but every lecturer is motivated to achieve this desire (Maclean & Oruwari, 2026).

The universities bear a great responsibility for imparting the knowledge and skills to their students so that they can further the cause of scholarship, develop human resources and respond to the requirements of the labour market. Academic staff members, therefore, have to undertake various roles, such as those with respect to teaching regular undergraduate, part-time undergraduate, sandwich,

postgraduate, pre-degree and open and distance learning programmes. They may also be expected to go between campuses, deal with big classes, have to supervise research projects, organize examinations, and grade students' scripts, and more. This many work loads makes lecturers highly vulnerable to having too much work to do.

According to Opemi (2013), work is a human activity that is carried out with a purpose using the human ability and faculties to create goods and services in order to achieve a certain goal. Provides a way to meet personal and community needs. Therefore, work plays a vital role in human life and has impact on daily activities, social, intellectual development etc. A job is, therefore, more than a formal job, it is anything productive that can bring value to individuals and society (Adeolu & Arinze, 2018; Maclean & Omuso, 2024). Another point of interest highlighted by Maclean et al. (2023) was how workplace attitudes can have a negative or positive effect on job performance, especially if there is poor motivation in the workplace.

Abdul (2020) opined that job performance has to do with result measurement and he described performance measures as those ratings used in evaluating lecturers. For instance, to identify the strength and weakness of teachers/Academic staff, it is necessary to plan appropriate professional development activities and to provide a base for administrative decision involving hiring and firing, promotion and tenure, assessment and salary. The job of the lecturers is highly demanding. Overpopulation of students with few lecturers in a school leads to overload task. When the lecturers are overloaded with job tasks, it triggers stress, anxiety and can lead to depression. A depressed lecturer may suffer lack of achievement motivation as workers begins to demonstrate absenteeism, lateness to work place and poor job performance (Omuso & Maclean, 2023).

Performance is the act or process of execution or action. It is an act of achievement, accomplishment, representation by action. Shtaukat and Trojanowski (2018) asserted that job performance can come in two different ways; Extrinsic performance which emanates from the realization of outward materials such as pay, status, etc. in disparity to extrinsic performance. Intrinsic performance exists whenever a behaviour or action is aimed for its' owns satisfaction rather than from social reinforcement. The concept of intrinsic performance is a critical tackle to behaviourism and it has roots in proficiency or effective performance (Osaat & Ekechukwu, 2017; Egwurugwu & Maclean, 2025).

In Nigeria, some factors have been identified to influence employees' job performance in various organizations. These include family background, cultural influences, quality of work environment, job perception, ability, effort, competence, motivation, employee attitudes and job satisfaction. A positive work culture is crucial especially for attracting and keeping qualified and valuable staff (Lima & Allida, 2023).

The positive attitude of teachers/lecturers helps to create a learning environment that is inclusive where all students have equal access to learning opportunities. Positive attitude teachers do not only look for the students' errors, but also try to cultivate their talent, consolidate their ability and strengthen their skills. They also motivate students to have self-confidence and self-esteem (Chuktu et al., 2023). Teachers who had positive attitude are creative and motivated which is able to stimulate students' creativity and motivate them to participate actively in teaching and learning. (Okolocha et al., 2021) Uses a variety of teaching methods to provide students with multiple learning opportunities. Besides, if the teacher plans lessons according to students' interests, abilities and developmental needs, then students are more motivated and engaged.

According to Opunne and Fekarurhobo (2021), the term "workload" refers to the responsibilities and tasks required to a worker for his work. It may also be interpreted as the administrative duties and responsibilities held by academics that are expected to be finished over a certain span of time. Work overload in the University context is the excessive academic and administrative burden that the lecturers carry out while carrying out their duties in tertiary institutions. It is the situation when the requirements of a job are beyond what an individual can do efficiently in the time and resources available. Work overload thus can be defined as the experience of having more work or work duties than one can handle within the time limits.

Work overload can have detrimental effects on individuals and organizations. It can lead to increased levels of stress, fatigue, and burnout among employees. As a result job performance and job satisfaction may decline, and there can be an increase in absenteeism and turnover rates. Additionally, work overload may also negatively impact the quality of work and decision-making abilities. Organizations can mitigating work overload by implementing strategies such as workload management, task prioritization, and resource allocation. Providing employees with the necessary support, resources, and training can also help them better cope with work demands and reduce the negative effects of workload. It is worth nothing that achievement motivation and work overload theories are distinct but can intersect in certain situations. For example, individuals with a high need for achievement may be more prone to experiencing work overload if they take on excessive responsibilities or set unrealistically high goals for themselves (Maclean & Oruwari, 2026).

Work overload is the level at which work demands and performance expectations are too high for the person who is expected to meet them (Verburgh et al., 2017). It also has been identified as a significant factor in work-related stress. Lecturers are responsible for a lot of work in their job (Usoro & Etuk, 2016; Verburgh et al., 2017). Lecturers must teach, supervise research work of students, attend conferences and publish scholarly articles in order to fulfill professional and personal expectations. Such poly-functional roles can lead to an impression of being overworked and to lecturers' loss of control over their tasks, which can lead to psychological distress. Heavy workloads can also lead to a situation where the level of effort an employee thinks they are putting in doesn't align with the work they think they are being rewarded for. If employees feel their efforts are not sufficient, or that there is an imbalance between effort and job requirements, they can suffer from stress. The deadline rush can exacerbate this situation even more. Uzoeshi (2017) noted the possible repercussions of heavy workloads as job dissatisfaction, tension at work, low self-esteem, threat and embarrassment, high cholesterol, high heart rate and abuse of substance. For instance, a PhD holder, who is qualified to perform reception duties in the Head of Department's office, instead of an office clerk, may be an inappropriate allocation of professional responsibilities (Jackson & Maclean, 2024).

The researchers Opunne and Fekarurhobo (2021) studied the perceived impact of work overload on job performance of academic staff in Universities in Rivers State. Their results showed that a high number of courses in any one semester and a high number of undergraduate projects and postgraduate theses under the supervision of academic staff had a significant impact on their performance. Adesola and Ekundayo (2022) in their study also used descriptive research design on institutional factors influencing job performance of academic staff in public universities in South-West Nigeria. They concluded that academic staff job performance was high while staff status, workload and physical facilities were significant in determining academic achievement motivation and job performance of academic staff. Ugwu and Ekechukwu (2019) studied achievement motivation, workload, and emotional intelligence, and concluded that achievement motivation played a significant role in predicting resilience in managing workload. The present research is an extension of related studies which focused on the perceived influence of achievement motivation and work overload on academic staff job performance in universities in Rivers State. St-Amand (2017) examined workplace stress and workplace factors related to job performance. The results showed that there was a positive correlation between stress in the workplace and job performance of the lecturers, and that gender was a significant factor as well. The study also found that female lecturers had a more negative attitude to their work than male lecturers. Nassir et al. (2017) on the other hand, investigated the relationship of academic motivation, organizational commitment, lecturer competence, and job performance. The results showed that there was no statistically significant correlation between academic staff motivation and job performance. But organizational commitment of the Lecturer was indirectly connected to Job performance and job overload.

This study is anchored on the Job Demands-Resources Model (JD-R) by Blakker and Demerouti (2006). The theory stated that when job demands are high and job resources are low, it will lead to stressful conditions and burnout. After years of research, the relation of employees' welfare, job strain work engagement and burnout with job characteristics, is known. Job demands including high work pressure, role conflict etc. lead to sleeping problems, fatigue, whereas, autonomy, interpersonal support and performance feedback can lead to motivation, learning, work engagement and commitment. Demands-Resources Model (Bakker & Demerouti, 2006) relies on the fact that each occupation no matter how different it is from each other can still comply with the same job demands and job resources. Job demands are physical, psychological, social or organizational aspects of the job that require physical and psychological effort at a cost" (Bakker and Demerouti, 2007). This theory is related to workload because work demand can be a serious workload when the resources to meet work demands are limited. This can lead to frustration, stress and burnout. When work becomes a burden, workers usually experience psychological distresses such as anxiety, burnout syndrome, lateness to work, tiredness, stress, voluntary retirement, etc.

Statement of the Problem

Education is a key factor of any nation's development and development of society. The role of lecturers is very important in achieving education objectives and goals because the existence of academic institutions is built on academic lecturers who create, update and disseminate knowledge. But these duties can add up to heavy workloads that can have a negative impact on lecturers' job performance. Low salaries, not having enough opportunities to advance, poor leadership practices, overworked and overloaded workloads, problems with discipline within the school, as well as non-cooperation from fellow employees and poor working conditions. Without proper work conditions and appropriate motivational systems, lecturers' achievement motivation and job performance may be lowered, which eventually could affect the learning results of students.

Academic staff members who aren't satisfied with their job can also affect their effectiveness and productivity. Job

dissatisfaction can occur due to poor management, low motivation and lack of management and employee commitment. Besides, the Nigerian education system has its own problems to contend with that include the lack of adequate classroom infrastructure to host the growing population of students, inadequate funding, low level of teaching resources, overcrowding, etc. This means that many pupils may be forced to attend classes with too many pupils in class, at times without adequate seating. All these have made the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) to continue to raise their concern on equitable access to quality education in Nigeria. There is also a shortage of properly equipped laboratories, well-tooled libraries, electronic books, and modern research facilities in some universities. This can restrict students' ability to develop knowledge and technological competence that could prepare them for success in an increasingly technologically advanced economy. Academic staff members who are working in high workloads, have limited opportunities for promotion and are not well rewarded for their work are more likely to experience stress and psychological distress. The problems can then be compounded by negative work practices, such as absenteeism, lateness, decreased commitment and productivity.

The consequences of not addressing the challenges facing the university academic staff by stakeholders in the educational sector will pose a serious problem to quality education. Low academic achievement-motivation for both lecturers and students could account for the high absenteeism, poor teaching skills (evaluation and poor communication of the subject matter), poor academic performance of students and teachers' resignation. It is against this backdrop that the study sought to investigate perceived influence of achievement motivation and work overload on academic staff job performance in Rivers State.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The aim of this study was to investigate the perceived influence of work overload on academic staff' job performance in universities in Rivers State. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Examine the extent to which work overload of academic staff contributes to their job performance in universities in Rivers State.
2. Determine the extent to which male academic staff work overload contributes to their job performance in universities in Rivers State.
3. Find out the extent to which female academic staff work overload contributes to their job performance in universities in Rivers State.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study;

1. To what extent does work overload of academic staff contributes to their job performance in universities in Rivers State?
2. To what extent does male academic staff work overload contributes to their job performance in universities in Rivers State?
3. To what extent to does female academic staff work overload contributes to their job performance in universities in Rivers State?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses guided the study.

1. Work Overload of academic staff do not significantly contribute to their job performance in universities in Rivers State.
2. Work Overload of male academic staff do not significantly contribute to their job performance in universities in Rivers State.
3. Work overload of female academic staff do not significantly contribute to their job performance in universities in Rivers State.

Methodology

This study adopted a correlational research design to examine the perceived influence of achievement motivation and work overload on academic staff job performance in universities in Rivers State. According to Nwankwo (2013), a correlational research design is appropriate when a researcher seeks to determine whether a relationship exists between two or more variables and the data obtained are suitable for correlation analysis. This design focuses on identifying the direction and strength of relationships among variables. It was therefore considered appropriate for the present study because it sought to investigate the relationships among achievement motivation, work overload, and academic staff job performance, while also considering gender as a moderating variable.

The population of the study comprised all lecturers at Ignatius Ajuru University of Education, Rivers State University, and the University of Port Harcourt. According to information obtained from the Office of the Registrar (2024), Ignatius Ajuru University of Education had 396 lecturers, while Rivers State University had 1,594 lecturers. The University of Port Harcourt had 2,962 lecturers, according to the Staff Directory of Universities published by the Federal Ministry of Education. These figures produced a total study population of 4,952 lecturers across the three institutions.

The sample consisted 380 lecturers selected using proportionate stratified random sampling technique. The Taro Yamane formula was applied on the population of the study which gave 374 as the minimum value. This value was however increased to 380 by the researcher so as to improve in the generality of the finding. Thus, the sample of 380 academic staff will be used for the study. They will be drawn from the different faculties in the three higher institutions in Rivers State.

The instrument titled "Work Overload and Job Performance Questionnaire" (WOJPQ) was used to obtain data. The instrument consisted of three parts, A, B, and C. Part A is concerned with information on demographic variables, such as name of institution, gender, age, level of education and marital-status, while Section B was used to generate responses on "Work Overload Questionnaire" (WOQ), and part C was used to generate responses on Job Performance" (JP). Each section contained 15 items. Items on the instruments were presented as statement to which respondents were requested to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement on a 4-point rating scale of Very High Extent (VHE), High Extent (HE), Low Extent (LE) and Very Low Extent (VLE). Weighted 4, 3, 2 and 1 point respectively. The instrument was tested for reliability through test-retest method, where 30 copies of the instruments were administered to 30 lecturers in Niger Delta University (NDU), Amasoma who are not part of the sample. And after two weeks (14 days) the questionnaire was re-administered. The scores where correlated, with a reliability coefficient indices are as follows; WOQ (r = 0.76) and JPI (r=0.90).

Copies of the questionnaire were administered to and retrieved from the respondents in the selected universities used for the study within two weeks. Four hundred copies of the questionnaire were administered, while 380 copies well filled were collected and used for the study. Simple linear regression analysis was applied in answering research questions 1 - 3 and testing the null hypotheses 1 - 3. The alpha level for testing the hypotheses was set at 0.05.

Results

Research Question 1: To what extent does work overload of academic staff contributes to their job performance in universities in Rivers State?

Hypothesis 2: Work Overload of academic staff does not significantly contribute to their job performance in universities in Rivers State.

Table 1: Regression Analysis of the Relationship between Work Overload of Academic Staff and Job Performance

Table 1A: Model Summary[b]

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	-.401[a]	.161	.161	.37452052051278	.139

a. Predictors: (Constant), Work Overload

b. Dependent Variable: Job Performance

The model in table 1A, with work overload as the predictor, shows a negative contribution with job performance (r = -.401), suggesting that as work overload increases, job performance tends to decrease. However, only 16.1% of the variability in job performance can be explained by the predictor, indicating that other factors not included in the model may also influence job performance.

Table 1B: ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	227.606	1	227.606	1622.677	.000[b]
	Residual	53.020	378	.140		
	Total	280.626	379			

a. Dependent Variable: Job Performance

b. Predictors: (Constant), Work Overload

The ANOVA results in table 1B, the linear regression model was applied to determine the extent to which work overload predicts job performance of academic staff in Universities in Rivers State. The linear regression result in Table 1b indicated a significant model ($F(1. 378) = 1622.677$, $p = .000$), with an R^2 of .161. The R2 of .161 in the regression model suggests that work overload accounts for 16.1% of the variance in job performance of academic staff in Universities in Rivers State.

Table 1C: Coefficients[a]						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.284	.063		4.526	.000
	Work Overload	-.968	.024	-.901	40.282	.000
a. Dependent Variable: Job Performance						

For hypothesis testing, result from Table 1c shows that the contribution of work overload to job performance of academic staff in universities in Rivers State is significant (t = 40.28, p = .001). Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. This means that work overload of academic staff significantly contribute to their job performance in universities in Rivers State.

Research Question 2: To what extent does work overload of male academic staff contributes to their job performance in universities in Rivers State?

Hypothesis 2: Work overload of male academic staff does not significantly contribute to their job performance in universities in Rivers State.

Table 2: Regression Analysis of the Relationship between Work Overload of Male Academic Staff and Job Performance

Table 2A: Model Summary[b]					
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	-.407[a]	.166	.166	.36656404819	.124
a. Predictors: (Constant), Male Work Overload					
b. Dependent Variable: Male Job Performance					

The model in Table 2A suggests a negative relationship between male work overload and job performance (r = -0.407), explaining about 16.6% of the variance in job performance. However, the low Durbin-Watson value (.124) indicates potential issues with autocorrelation, suggesting caution in interpreting the results.

Table 2B: ANOVA[a]						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	67.554	1	67.554	502.750	.000[b]
	Residual	36.280	270	.134		
	Total	103.834	271			
a. Dependent Variable: Male Job Performance						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Male Work Overload						

The analysis of variance (ANOVA) in Table 2B indicates a highly significant relationship between male work overload and male job performance, with the predictor explaining a substantial portion of the variance (67.554 out of 103.834) in job performance among males. The F-statistic of 502.750 and its associated p-value of .000 suggest a robust model fit, reinforcing the significance of the relationship. Since P < .05, the null hypothesis five was also rejected.

The ANOVA results in Table 2B, the linear regression model was applied to determine the extent to which work overload of male academic staff predicts job performance of academic staff in Universities in Rivers State. The linear regression result in Table 2b indicated a significant model (F(1. 270) = 502.750, p = .000), with an R^2 of .166. The R2 of .166 in the regression model suggests that work overload of male academic staff accounts for 16.6% of the variance in job performance of academic staff in Universities in Rivers State.

Table 2C: Coefficients[a]						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.902	.100		8.981	.000
	Male Work Overload	-.771	.034	-.807	22.422	.000
a. Dependent Variable: Male Job Performance						

Table 2C indicates a significant negative contribution of male work overload and job performance, as indicated by the standardized coefficient of -.807 ($p < .001$), suggesting that increased work overload among males is associated with decreased job performance. The constant term (.902, $p < .001$) suggests a positive baseline level of job performance regardless of work overload.

For hypothesis testing, result from Table 2c shows that the contribution of work overload of male academic staff to job performance of academic staff in universities in Rivers State is significant ($t = 22.42$, $p = .001$). Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. This means that work overload of male academic staff significantly contribute to their job performance in universities in Rivers State.

Research Question 3: To what extent does work overload of female academic staff contributes to their job performance in universities in Rivers State?

Hypothesis 3: Work overload of female academic staff does not significantly contribute to their job performance in universities in Rivers State.

Table 3: Regression Analysis of the Relationship between Work Overload of Female Academic Staff and Job Performance

Table 3A: Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	-.362[a]	.131	.127	.2363450908	.338

a. Predictors: (Constant), Female Work Overload

b. Dependent Variable: Female Job Performance

The model in Table 3A suggests a negative contribution of female work overload and job performance, indicating that as work overload increases, job performance tends to decrease slightly. However, only about 13% of the variation in job performance can be explained by the predictors included in the model, suggesting that other factors not considered may also influence female job performance.

Table 3B: ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	8.189	1	8.189	146.594	.000[b]
	Residual	5.921	106	.056		
	Total	14.110	107			

a. Dependent Variable: Female Job Performance

b. Predictors: (Constant), Female Work Overload

The ANOVA results in Table 3B indicate that the regression model, including the predictor "female work overload," significantly explains the variance in female job performance ($F(1, 106) = 146.594$, $p < .001$), suggesting that female work overload is a strong predictor of job performance among females. Since $p < .05$, the null hypothesis six was again rejected.

The ANOVA results in Table 3B, the linear regression model was applied to determine the extent to which work overload of female academic staff predicts job performance of academic staff in Universities in Rivers State. The linear regression result in Table 3B indicated a significant model ($F(1. 106) = 146.594$, $p = .000$), with an R^2 of .131. The R2 of .131 in the regression model suggests that work overload of female academic staff accounts for 13.1% of the variance in job performance of academic staff in Universities in Rivers State.

Table 3C: Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-2.369	.333		-7.123	.000
	Female Work Overload	-2.573	.213	-.762	12.108	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Female Job Performance

The negative coefficient for "female work overload" (-2.573) in Table 3C indicates that as the level of work overload increases, female job performance decreases, and this contribution is statistically significant ($t = 12.108$, $p < .001$).

For hypothesis testing, result from Table 3c shows that the contribution of work overload of female academic staff to job performance of academic staff in universities in Rivers State is significant ($t = 12.18$, $p = .001$). Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. This means that work overload of female academic staff significantly contribute to their job performance in universities in Rivers State.

Discussion of Findings

Work Overload of Academic Staff and Job Performance

Research question one and hypothesis one went to verify the above The results of the regression analysis in tables 1A, 1B & 1C indicated that work overload has a relationship with the job performance of the academic staff of the institutions of Rivers State. Therefore, it declined the one hypothesis (H01) that work overload does not affect job performance positively. The negative coefficient ($r = -.401$) as shown in table 1A confirmed our hypothesis that there is an inverse relationship between work overload and job performance. However, work overload explains just 16.1% of the variance in job performance, indicating that additional factors have an impact on job performance that were not gauged.

The significant findings from the ANOVA test (Table 1B) further underscore the impact of work overload on job performance. The regression model explains a substantial portion of the variance in job performance, as evidenced by the high F-value (1622.677) and the associated p-value of .000, indicating strong evidence that work overload significantly predicts job performance. Moreover, the coefficients presented in Table 1C reveal a robust negative relationship between work overload and job performance, with the standardized coefficient (Beta) of -0.901 highlighting the considerable detrimental effect of work overload. Additionally, the constant coefficient suggests that even in the absence of work overload, there exists a baseline level of job performance, albeit significantly lower compared to when work overload is present. These findings emphasize the critical importance of managing workloads effectively to enhance job performance among academic staff in universities within Rivers State.

The present finding is not surprising because workload of academic staff can result in low job performance. Workers who experience workload may demonstrate tiredness, lateness to workplace, burnout syndrome, etc. This situation will seriously affect their achievement motivation. The present finding is in agreement with the study of Again, Adesola and Ekundayo (2022), they found that status of staff, staff workload and physical facilities largely determines academic staff achievement motivation and job performance. Again, the present finding is supported by St-Amand (2017), which revealed that there was a positive relationship workplace (workload) stress and lecturers' job performance. The study found that gender was significantly correlated to lecturers' job performance. The study found that female lecturers show higher negative work attitude than their male counterpart.

Work Overload of Male Academic Staff and Job Performance

Research Question Two and Hypothesis Two were used to examine the relationship between work overload and job performance among male academic staff in universities in Rivers State. The regression analysis revealed important findings regarding this relationship. The Model Summary (Table 2A) showed a negative correlation between work overload and job performance among male academic staff (($r = -0.407$)), indicating that higher levels of work overload were associated with lower job performance. However, the Durbin–Watson statistic of 0.124 raises concerns about potential autocorrelation in the model, suggesting that the results should be interpreted with caution.

The ANOVA results presented in Table 2B indicated that the regression model was statistically significant, with an F-statistic of 502.750 and a reported p-value of .000, which should conventionally be expressed as ($p < .001$). The analysis also reported that the predictor explained approximately 65% of the variation in job performance among male academic staff. Consequently, the second null hypothesis, which stated that work overload among male academic staff does not significantly contribute to their job performance, was rejected. These findings suggest a statistically significant negative association between work overload and job performance among male academic staff in universities in Rivers State.

The Coefficients table (Table 2C) further supports these conclusions, revealing a significant negative relationship between male work overload and job performance. The standardized coefficient of -.807 ($p < .001$) suggests that increased work overload among males is strongly associated with decreased job performance. Additionally, the positive constant term (.902, $p < .001$) implies a positive baseline level of job performance regardless of work overload. These findings collectively highlight the critical impact of work overload on the job performance of male academic staff in universities in Rivers State, emphasizing the need for effective strategies to manage workload to enhance overall performance and well-being. The finding is affirming the fact that work overload psychological

distress and physiological challenges of workers. When this is not adequately checked can lead to chronic disease of workers, which will grossly affect job performance of male academic staff of universities.

This agrees with Nyam & William-West (2014) on lecturers' accomplishment motivation: Work overload and lecturers' job performance. The findings of the study showed a strong positive correlation of work overload and the lecturers' job performance. It was also revealed that (70%) of the professors said that they had low-level of job performance because of the workload.

Work Overload of Female Academic Staff and Job Performance

This was verified with research question and hypothesis tested three. The regression analysis presented some significant findings about work overload and job performance of female academic staff in universities in Rivers State. Our first point is the model summary (Table 3A) which tells us that there is a negative relationship between work overload and job performance (i.e. as work overload increases, job performance decreases slightly). However, for job performance, the predictors in the model explain just 13% of the female job performance. So, work stress is part of the story, but the other parts of the story evoking in the performance of a female staffer are not included in the model.

Moving to the ANOVA results presented in Table 3B, the regression model, which incorporates "female work overload" as a predictor, significantly explains the variance in female job performance, as evidenced by the high F-value and the associated p-value ($p < .001$). This implies that work overload indeed serves as a robust predictor of job performance among female academic staff. Moreover, the negative coefficient for "female work overload" (-2.573) in Table 3C reinforces this relationship, indicating that as work overload increases, female job performance tends to decrease significantly, and this relationship is statistically significant. Consequently, the null hypothesis three, which posited that work overload does not significantly contribute to female job performance, is rejected, affirming the hypothesis that work overload plays a crucial role in determining job performance among female academic staff in universities in Rivers State. The finding is affirming the fact that work overload psychological distress and physiological challenges of workers. When this is not adequately checked can lead to chronic disease of workers, which will grossly affect job performance of female academic staff of universities.

This is consistent with the findings of Nassir et al. (2017) which found that academic staff work overload is related significantly to job performance. The study also showed the existence of indirect association between work overload of lecturers, commitment of the lecturers, and their job performance among female academic personnel.

Conclusion

The study studied the effect of work overload on job performance of academic staff in universities in Rivers State. Other findings showed (a) high contribution of academic staff work overload to academic staff job performance in universities in Rivers State (b) very high contribution of male academic staff achievement motivation on academic staff job performance in universities in Rivers State (c) contribution of over achievement motivation of academic staff to academic staff job performance in universities in Rivers State (d) negative contribution of male academic staff work overload to academic staff job performance in universities in Rivers State (e) negative contribution of academic staff work overload female gender to academic staff job performance in universities in Rivers State and (f) joint contribution of academic staff achievement motivation and work overload to academic staff job performance in universities in Rivers State. That academic staff accomplishment motivation contributed positively to job performance and that academic staff work overload contributed negatively to job performance in universities in Rivers State.

This study implies that in an effort to enhance greater academic performance, growth and manpower development in Rivers State and by extension Nigeria at large, there is the need to tackle and avoid work overload in institutions in Rivers State. Work overload and low achievement motivation could confer to a large extent to the collapse and degeneration in the educational system in universities in Rivers State.

From the foregoing the study was concluded that workload is the dominant factor of more job performance and academic growth among the academic staff of the university in Rivers State while work overload will reduce the work efficiency to increase the chances of job dissatisfaction, poor academic performance of students and low manpower development.

Implications of the Study for Counselling

The following were some of the counselling implications:

1. Guidance counselling units should be established in all the universities in Rivers State to provide support and resources for individuals experiencing achievement motivation and work overload. Additionally, workshops and educational programs on effective stress management strategies should be implemented to help lecturers

to strong mental health in carrying out their job effectively.

2. University authorities should employ the services of guidance counsellors to provide counselling services to meet the needs of individuals experiencing work burnout. And for students experiencing educational, vocational and personal social problems. This is aimed at achieving a healthy university environment. This is essential because student's unrest psychologically can affect achievement motivation.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the researcher recommended as follows:

1. The female academic staff should not relent in their efforts to achieve higher achievement and promotion in their chosen career in universities in Rivers State.
2. The male academic staff should schedule their work efficiently to manage adverse effect of work overload in universities in Rivers State.
3. Female academic staff should endeavour not to procrastinate job tasks. This is because work left undone will definitely accumulate which might lead to work overload, stress and poor job performance in universities in Rivers State.

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