Effect of Work Related Stress on Employee's s Performance among Construction Professionals in Julius Berger PLC, Abuja, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT
The study examinined the relationship between work related stress and employees performance among construction professionals in Julius berger plc, Abuja, Nigeria. . The main objectives is: to examinine the influence of socio-demographic and work characteristics on work related stress; and to examinine the influence of socio-demographic and work characteristics on employees' performance. The study involved the administration of a questionnaire to 83 construction professionals randomly selected from Julius Berger plc, Abuja, Nigeria.. Data collected from the study were analysed using descriptive statistics. SPSS 20 was used to analyze the data. The study reveaked that the total work related stress reduces performance among all the construction professionals in a medium effect (r = +0.356). The various components of the work related stress were also found to reduce 'performance among all the construction professionals in a small to medium effects. (Deand

Factors r = +0.306; Control Factors r = +0.249; Support Factors r = +0.200; Relationship Factors r = +0.315; Role Factors r = +0.259; Change Factors r = +0.273). Therefore recommended among other things that taking responsibility for work which one has adequate capacity to handle, establishing realistic budgets and time frames for project delivery, provision of spatially adequate, visually and thermally comfortable site offices, adoption of appropriate job design practices and education of professionals in stress management, Ensuring staffs participate in the decision making process involving organizational change will reduce the incidence of stress among professionals in the construction industry in Nigeria.

Keywords: Work, stress, employee, performance, construction and professionals,

1.0 INTRODUCTION

While today is the era of high technology and modern achievement, a high performance is expected to be the norm. Many organizations demand for a high level of quality, service and overall business success, therefore, the pressure is felt on individuals at all levels of organization. Performance targets are becoming tougher to meet with each succeeding year and the construction professionals is experiencing difficulty in fulfilling the challenge. Anyone who has been ever involved in a construction confirms that the environments in general are challenging and stressful at the same time. This is mostly because of the nature of project work, which is a temporary activity, limited to a specific time and budget. . Furthermore, stress is sometimes caused by several kinds of conflict in the project environment. Although general management is a high stress occupation, the level of stress experienced by Construction professionals is known to be even higher due to the conflicting demands of completing a project on time, under budget, with a

high quality to satisfy the stakeholders (Haynes and Love, 2004).

The construction industry (CI) makes a significant contribution to the economy of many countries (Powl and Skitmore, 2005). For example in the year 2000, the Nigerian construction industry is responsible for an average of 5-7% improvement of the GDP growth and over 42% of the fixed capital transformation over the last four decades(Olatunji, et al, 2007). The traditions, characteristics and output of this industry have, however, also earned it a less favourable reputation (Kazaz, et al, 2008). In fact, the effective performance of the construction professionals is said to be the single most critical factor affecting successful project outcomes (Peter and Andrew, 1999). Construction projects rarely run smoothly. Their complex and dynamic nature, together with the often confrontational attitude of its participants, results in the occurrence of frequent major problems or difficulties(Ng, et al, 2005). In such conditions, events can be objectively harmful physically or mentally to the individuals involved. In the extreme case, when these are seen to be a negative influence, stress will be experienced. That is, untypical individual responses occur due to the physical and mental effort needed to recover from being diverted from the normal situation (Ng, ta al, 2005).

The significance of the effects of occupational stress in general has prompted several studies aimed at identifying the causes of stress in various disciplines (Health and Safety Executive, 2009). These indicate that stress can be related to;

(i) Physical condition (Braham, 1994);

(ii) Organizational culture (Haupt, 2001)

(iii) Interpersonal conflict (Grzywacz, et al, 2007);

(iv) Personal characteristics (Ng, et al 2005) and

(v) Job nature (Institute of Directors, 2008).

This study seeks to add to the body of knowledge by examining the

influence of socio demographic and work characteristics on work related stress (ii) examine the influence of socio-demographic and work characteristics on employees' performance

1.1 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Through recent decades, work-related stress worry has grown in many areas around the world. Workplace stress is being a big problem for organizations, which results represented in making the worker absent from his/her job, also increase illnesses. As well as, it has a serious impact on the economy of the organization and the country. Most organizations with the aim of attaining higher productivity end up saddling employees with overload of work in order to meet deadline, and this might have psychological and physical effects on the employees. This may result in something contrary to what these organizations want to achieve (Mark, 2012) .According to (CIOB, 2017) approximately 15 million days of working have been missing annually because of the impact work stress, and depression and anxiety are the outcomes of stress. In one of the most developed countries in Europe as the UK, almost about half a million people are suffering from the issue of work stress. The globalization and high level of competition have a potential influence on the quality of work and workforce structure which causes to raise in the level of stress in the work. This sort of impact could be represented in the unsettled market of labor, new rules in the job contract reflected in unsafe job and rowdyism in the place of work (CIOB, 2017).

Late in the 1990s, the issue of work-related stress became the most substantial issue in the European Union. In 2004 the European made an agreement to monitor and control the level of stress inside the organization's work-place. Where in France, all companies and organizations with more than 1,000 workers have been responsible to

reduce the level of stress at work (Chandola, 2010). The Health and Safety Executive (HSE) in UK to face this escalating problem has created National Management Standards for work stress, the target from this was represented in directing and educate the engineers about the good practices in the workplace at the same time improving the management of stress through these instructions. That achievement its result will be in reducing work-related stress. The Management Standards"designed to guide the employers of the companies and organizations how to deal and control the sources of work-related stress risk. Based on the review, construction work is considered a risky job and more exposed to a stressful environment. For this lately, the researchers about job-related stress has increased. To ameliorate the job performance and construction sites administration some theoretical models on the stress of work are upgraded. Offia Ibem et al. (2011) found that the professional engineers in construction facing high pressure due to several factors such as lack of rest, no enough space of privacy, lack of adequate instructions. As well as a lack of health and safety conditions, and a lot of variations and changes in the project scope. In short definition, job stress is when you do not give a good working environment which cannot control and monitor your job. Premkumar & Rajkumar (2015) clarified that working for long hours, lacking concentration due to tiredness and high workload. In addition to injuries/accidents, low wages and repetitive work are the most significant reasons for work stress. For that, uniform evaluation for the procedures of managing the stress and for the stress level should be conducted. Which can help construction professionals to get ready with suitable coping skills to manage stress.

Empirically, the relationship between stress and employee productivity have not been resolved. Alam, Gouhar and Shafiqur (2015) and Usman and Muhammad (2010) studies revealed that there

issignificant negative relationship between job stress and employee performance in the banking sector. Sun and Chiou (2011), Ayodele (2014), Syed, Muhammad, AftabQadir and Shabana (2013), Indhu and Thirumakkal (2015), found that stress affects employee productivity negatively. A study conducted by Bewell, Yakubu, Owotunse and Ojih (2014) concluded that the concept of work-induced stress and workers' effectiveness and productivity are relatively inseparable, while Aasia, Hadia and Sabita (2014) findings revealed that job stress does not impact employee job performance. Also Musyoka, Ogutu and Awino (2012) empirical results found that stress had positive influence on corporate performance. Qadoos, Ayesha, Tayyab, Toqeer and Hafiz (2015) study found that there is positive moderate relationship between job stress and employee performance.

These empirical findings show that the effect of stress on employee productivity is not yet resolved. Also, not much has been done on the effect of stress on employee productivity and that limited studies tried to concentrate on or highlight the stress and stressors within professional in the construction industry in growing country such as Nigeria. Hence the need for this study to examine the relationship between work characteristics and socio demographic characteristics to work related stress and performance of construction professionals in Julius berger plc, Abuja, Nigeria.

2.0 REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The concept of stress has a long tradition in organizational and social literature (Somerfield and McCrae, 2000). However, evidence in contemporary literature shows that stress has been defined and viewed from diverse perspectives. Aitken and Crawford (2007) noted that the

exploration of the concept of stress began with the work of Hans Selye in 1936. Selye in his work defined stress as the force, pressure, or strain exerted upon an object or a person that resists these forces and attempts to maintain its original state. He conceived of stress as a pathological human response to psychological, social, occupational and/or environmental pressures; and therefore concluded that stress is neither a simple nervous tension resulting from damage nor necessarily something to be avoided (Selye, 1978). Drawing from Selye's submissions, Pulat (1997) and Martino and Musri (2001) opined that some amount of stress is necessary to generate enthusiasm and creativity for optimal productivity. They however cautioned that intense or too much stress in work environment poses great risk to workers' safety, health and emotional stability. The foregoing submissions tend to suggest that stress isan unavoidable consequence of modern living and is not necessarily a negative phenomenon as long as it is within a tolerable level that can engender enthusiasm, creativity and productivity.

Melia and Becerril (2007) on the other hand indicated that stress is an experience expressed in one's feeling of being strained while the Health and Safety Executive (HSE, 2007) defined stress as the adverse reaction people have due to excessive pressure or other types of demand placed on them. Put differently, Lath (2010) was of the view that every person including a child, an adult, employed or unemployed faces stress in his/her everyday life. He defined stress as any challenge that exceeds the coping abilities of the individual. From the occupational perspective, stress has also been defined as the physical and emotional responses that occur when workers perceive an imbalance between their work demands and their capability to meet such demands. In other words, stress is a harmful physical and emotional response that can occur when there is

conflict between job demands on a worker and his/her capacity to meet such demands (Brown, 2001; Lath, 2010). The general inference that can be drawn from the foregoing definitions is that stress can be considered as an inevitable and unavoidable component of life. It can also be inferred that occupational or work stress is the type of stress experienced as a direct consequence of a person's occupation. Therefore, in this study, work stress is viewed as a human perception of conditions that scare, excite, annoy, threaten or strain individuals as a result of their occupation.

In view of evidence in the literature on the negative consequences of stress among modern day work forces, a number of theoretical models on work stress have been developed. One such theory is the Person-Environment fit theory first proposed by French, Robert and Van Harrison in 1982. According to this theory, stress occurs as a result of an incongruity between the individual and the ambient environment (Melia and Becerril, 2007). The key elements of this model comprise objective and subjective variables that could be found in the environment or the person. Cox and Mackay (1979) were of the opinion that stress is a highly individual phenomenon which exists as a result of a person's appraisal of his/her involvement in the environment. They pointed out that stress arises as a result of an imbalance between the person's perception of the demand placed on him/her and his/her perception of ability to cope.

Occupational stress may also be seen as comprising a three-dimensional syndrome of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and reduced personal accomplishment (Maslach et al.,
1996). Stress in this context is seen as a state of physical, emotional and mental exhaustion due to long-term involvement in situations that are emotionally testing (Melia and Becerril,
2007). Maslach et al (2001) noted that individuals experiencing long

periods of chronic job stress are likely to encounter physical and health problems, reduced productivity or effectiveness, lower levels of satisfaction and organizational commitment. This concept of stress suggests that long exposure to physically, mentally and emotionally testing activities could result in exhaustion which can lead to reduction in one's level of productivity and accomplishment.

The Demand-Control-Support Model developed by Karasek in 1979 is the most common approach to understanding stress and its effect on psychological and physical health. It focuses on the interaction between job demands and workers' potential control over their work schedule. In line with this theory, Anderson (1976) noted that work stress is a consequence of man's exposure to conflict with his fellow workers, disintegration of work process into isolated routines, shift work arrangement, automation, rapid technological change and urbanization. In essence, this model proposes that a combination of psychological job demands, decision making capacity, and social support in the work environment can help explain the various consequences of stress (Karasek and Theorell, 1990). This suggests that a combination of high job demand, low decision making capacity and social support, mechanization of work processes as well as routine jobs can be sources of occupational stress, which is detrimental to people's health and productivity at work.

From the above theories, it can be inferred that the concept of work stress is viewed as a behavioural attribute that varies from one individual and context to another. It can also be inferred that work stress is a result of the gap between demands of the work environment and the capacity to cope with the challenges thereof (Brown, 2001; Lath, 2010).

Wukari International Studies Journal, Vol.6, No.2, 2022

Also as a common attribute of working life, stress can become a negative phenomenon if workers are unable to cope and lack social support. This can ultimately lead to a state of physical, emotional and mental exhaustion resulting in low productivity at work. Viewed from a different perspective, several authors have also argued that stress can occur whenever there is a change in the equilibrium in man-machine - environment interaction, which may result in the distribution of generated stress among the components of a production system. Since man is known to be the weakest component of the work-environment system, most common signs of stress are manifested in some notable human responses such as crying, smoking, excessive eating, drinking alcohol, fast talking, fear, anxiety, guilt, anger, grief, depression and disgust (Lazarus, 1966; Leung et al, 2005; Yip et al., 2005; Wahab, 2010). In Hong Kong for instance, high levels of job burnout have been identified among construction professionals. This has threatened their well-being and reduced industrial efficiency and long-term competitiveness of construction professionals in that country (Yip et al., 2005). Similarly, Stress has also been identified as one of the root causes of low productivity of construction site workers (Dainty et al., 1999; Lingard and Francis, 2004; Wahab, 2010). Moreover, recent studies show that construction workers experienced much more stress at their work place than at home, and this had negative effects on their health and productivity at work (Wahab, 2010; Halkos and Bousinakis, 2010).

With regards to stress factors in the construction industry, Kenneth (2005) noted that construction project stress is the manifestation of factors that negatively erode values from the project, and thus make desired goal unattainable. Work overloads, working long hours and role ambiguity are known to be leading causes of stress amongst professionals

in construction projects (Sutherland and Davidson, 1989). Statt (1994) asserted that multilevel subcontracting, time pressure; constant worker rotation and unstable work due to temporary contracts can contribute to psychosocial stress among workers. From a gender perspective, Loosemore and Waters (2004) found that male professionals in the construction industry suffer more stress in relation to risk taking, disciplinary matters and implications of mistakes, redundancy and career progression than their female counterparts while female professionals suffer stress due to opportunities for personal development, rate of pay, keeping with new ideas, business travel and accumulative effect of minor tasks. Previous studies shows that the general sources of stress among construction sector workers are quantitative work load, tight time schedule for work, lack of career guidance, poor communication among participants and bureaucracy. Others are inadequate room for innovation, unsatisfactory remuneration, and ambiguity of job requirement, inadequate knowledge of project objectives, long working hours, tight schedules and unfavorable working conditions (Leiter, 1991; Ng et al., 2005).

Also Lin and Chan (2009) found that temperatures above 30°C and relative humidity above 74% posed health threats to construction workers in Taiwan. They noted that physically overloaded construction workers were among the most vulnerable to the negative impact of temperature on their health and productivity. Most recently, it was found that noise, cold, conflict with one another, unintended and unforeseen phenomena, search for optimal solutions consistent with client's budget and time frame, reaching comprises, moving and rearranging work schedules and other potentially intolerable conditions constitute stressors to workers in the construction industry in Nigeria (Wahab, 2010).

Wukari International Studies Journal, Vol.6, No.2, 2022

The Management Standards (2010) has developed a model that explains the main drivers or causes of stress in an organization which must be managed. There are six and are categorized as demand, control, support, relationships, change, and role conditions in the organizations. Each of the areas mentioned above have significant impact on the extent to which an organization will be successful in its endeavor (Management Standards, 2010) The Management Standards (2010) defines work demand as all factors relating to the employees' workload, work design patterns and the environment where they are working since these can have significant effect on their mental and physical wellbeing. The control environment includes the extent to which employee have some say or are recognized in the organization also affects the way they do their work. According to the Management Standards (2010), the meaning of support as a factor in decision making is the extent to which there is constant encouragement from both management and staff as opposed to rancor, animosity, sponsorship to develop themselves within and outside the organization. It also deals with the availability of resources including wages and salaries that are equitable and commensurate with employee's effort (Tracy, 2000) (Zhang & Zhu, 2008).

Further (Sanders, 2013) also explains support to mean gaining all the assistive devices needed and the legitimate guidance from their immediate superiors. When it comes to the issue of relationship the Management Standards (2010) explain this as the existence or otherwise of a positive work environment. Where there is no positive work environment, the end product is conflict and encourage unacceptable behavior which history organization harmony. In terms of role, this is explained in the Management Standards (2010) as the extent to which employee have an understanding of the role in the organization and how

the organization make sure they do not have conflicting roles. Finally there is the issue about change management and in this case employee can be stress by the pace of change of the way change management so communicated and implemented (Newton & Handy, 1995). Management Standards cover six key areas of work design that, if not properly managed, are associated with poor health and well-being, lower productivity and increased sickness absence. In other words, the six Management Standards cover the primary sources of stress at work.

3.0 METHODOLOGY

This research paper examines the effect of work related stress on employee performance among construction industry professionals in Julius berger plc, Abuja, Nigeria. The target population of this study is 105, which consist of (Builders ,Building and landscape Architects ,Civil / Structural Engineers , Electrical and Mechanical Engineers, Environmental Engineers and Catographers and Surveyor) employees of Julius berger plc,Abuja, Nigeria. (Annual report 2020). From the target population, a sample size is calculated by using the Taro Yamane's formula (Yamene, 1973) = N/(1 + Ne^2)

Where n = sample size

N = population size = 105

e = error (0.05) reliability level 95%

Therefore substituting into yarmane formula.

n = 105/(1+ 105×(0.05^2))

n = 83

Hence 83 questionnaires were distributed, filled and successfully returned.

For this research, work related stress factors (demand factors, support factors, relationship factors, control factors, role factors and

change factors) are supposed to be independent variables and employee performance is taken as dependent variable. In this research paper two instruments were utilized to examine the relationships between work related stress and employees performance namely; the Health and Safety Executive's Management Standards indicator tools and a modified work performance questionnaire. The new UK Health and Safety Executive's (HSE) Management Standards (MS) indicator tool was utilized as the key measurement for work related stress. This is in response to growing concern in the extant literature that the General Health Questionnaire which has been the major device for evaluating the causes of stress in an organization is becoming outmoded. . The Management Standards cover six key areas of work design that, if not properly managed, are associated with poor health and well-being, lower productivity and increased sickness absence. In other words, the six Management Standards cover the primary

Sources of stress at work. These are:

- – this includes issues such as workload, work patterns and the work Environment.
- – how much say the person has in the way they do their work.
- – this includes the encouragement, sponsorship and resources provided by the organization, line management and colleagues.
- – this includes promoting positive working to avoid conflict and dealing with unacceptable behaviour.
- – whether people understand their role within the organization and whether the organization ensures that they do not

have conflicting roles.

- Change factors – how organizational change (large or small) is managed and communicated in the organization.

Nominal and Likert scales were used in the questionnaire. Nominal scale shows the demographic profile and work characteristics of respondents This was because personal characteristics have been reported to have an influence on the perception of stress, job satisfaction and job performance (Chinweuba, 2007; Ernst, et al., 2004).while the likert scale measures the effect of work related stress on employee‟s performance in Julius berger plc, Abuja, Nigeria Respondents are asked to rate their potential stressors on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1= no pressure to 5= extreme pressure. The HSE MS indicator tool is self-reported and the respondents read and tick the selected score from 1 = never, 2 = rarely, 3 = sometimes, 4 = often, and 5 = always for each item. A modified work performance questionnaire devised by Asfaw et,al 2015 was utilized as key measurement for employee performance. It is also an ordinal Likert scale with the least 1 and the highest 5 score. It is also self-reported and the respondents read and tick the selected score from 1 = never, 2 = rarely, 3 = sometimes, 4 = often, and 5 = always for each item. An Acceptable levels of reliability and validity of the work performance questionnaire was established by the investigators with overall Cronbach's alpha of 0.819 (Asfaw et,al 2015). The data gathered from the questionnaires were entered into SPSS where Descriptive statistics and Correlation analysis has been applied to explore the relation between the effects of work related stress on employee performance in the construction industry using Julius berger plc, Abuja as case study Limitations to this study includes 1. Instrument for work related stress measurement utilized in this study will be based on UK populations and

may not have been culturally appropriate for the Nigerian health care professionals. 2. Time and financial constraints to comduct large scale research 3. Work related stress measurement was based on self-report rather than by physiological biochemical analyses of blood or by physical and mental status assessments. 4. The participants were volunteers; therefore the results may be biased.

DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS

Table 1: Socio- Demographic Characteristics

Characteristics	Frequency	Percent
Age		
Less or equal 28	20	24.1
29-31	16	19.3
32-35	14	16.9
36-40	17	20.5
41+	16	19.3
Gender		
Male	53	63.9
Female	30	36.1
Ethnic groups		
Hausa	50	60.2
Yoruba	11	13.3
Igbo	6	7.2
Others	16	19.3
Religion		
Islam	63	75.9
Chritianity	30	24.1
Marital status		
Single	31	37.3
Married	52	62.7

AM = 34.25; SD = +-7.237 (Source : SPSS Data output, 2022)

Table 2: Work Characteristics

Characteristics	**Frequency**	**Percent**
Construction professionals		
Builders	23	27.7
Building and landscape Architects	7	8.4
Civil / Structural Engineers	32	38.6
Electrical and Mechanical Engineers	12	14.5
Environmental Engineers	6	7.2
Catographers and Surveyor	3	3.6
Years of experience (a)		
Less or equal to 3	28	33.7
4-10	29	34.9
11+	26	31.3
Duration of work (b)		
Less or equal to 7	28	33.7
7-8	47	56.6
9+	8	9.6

a M= 7.9; SD +-6.658 ; b M =7.73 ; SD = +- 1. 639 (Source : SPSS Data output , 2022)

Table 3: Characteristics of instruments Sub-scales

Sub- Scale	**Range of possible scores**	**Mean**	SD
Demand	8-40	24.33	4.418
Control	6-30	18.08	4.223
Support	7-35	17.54	5.216
Relationships	6-30	14.78	3.492
Role	5-25	8.65	3.148
Change	3-15	8.65	2.587
Total stress scores	35-175	91.69	16.996
Total performance scores	16-80	50.87	12.832

(Source : SPSS Data output, 2022)

The age range was 18 to 53 years with a mean age of 34.25 years (SD = ±7.237). A majority of the participants were males (63.9%), 62.7% were married while 37.3% were single. About three fourth (75.9%) were Muslims while 24.1% were Christian. Majority of the ethnic group for the participants were Hausa (60.2%) as shown in table 1.

Majority of the construction professionals in the study were Civil/Structural Engineers (38.6%) followed by Builders (27.7%). The mean years of experience was 7.90 (SD =±6.658) while the mean

duration of work was 7.73 hours (SD =±1.639) as shown in table 2. The observed means for the various components of the Work Stress sub-scales ranged from 8.65 for the Role and Change Subscales to 24.33 for the Demand Subscale. The overall mean score for Work Stress Score was 91.69 (SD =±16.996) while the overall mean score Employee Performance Score was 50.87 (SD =±12.832) as shown in table 3.

Table 4: Correlation Coefficients for components of work related stress and employees performance

Variables	R	N	P
Demand and employee performance	+0.306	83	0.005
Control and employees performance	+0.249	83	0.023
Support and employees performance	+0.200	83	0.071
Relationships and employees performance	+0.315	83	0.004
Role and employees performance	+0.259	83	0.018
Change and employees performance	+0.273	83	0.012

(Source : SPSS Data output , 2022)

Table 5: Correlational Coefficient for Total stress scores and Employees Performance

Variables	R	N	P
Total stress scores and Employees Performance	+0.356	83	0.001

(Source : SPSS Data output,2022)

Table 6: Comparison of correlational coefficient for components of socio- Demographic Characteristics for Total stress scores and

Employees Performance.

Socio - Demographic Characteristics	R	N	P
Age			
Less or equal to 28	+0.413	20	0.070
29-31	+0.505	16	0.046
32-35	+0.081	14	0.783
36-40	+0.308	17	0.229
40+	+0.605	16	0.013
Gender			
Males	+0.219	53	0.115
Females	+0.574	30	0.001
Ethnic groups			
Hausa	+0.311	50	0.028
Yoruba	+0.535	11	0.090
Igbo	+0.334	6	0.518
Others	+0.396	16	0.129
Religion			
Islam	+0.325	63	0.009
Christianity	+0.494	20	0.027
Marital status			
Single	+0.279	31	0.129
Married	+0.405	52	0.003

(Source : SPSS Data output , 2022)

Table 7: Comparison of correlational coefficient for components of work characteristics for Total stress scores and Employees Performance

Work characteristics	**R**	**N**	**P**
Construction professionals			
Builders	+0.490	23	0.018
Building and landscape Architects	+0.328	7	0.472
Civil / Structural Engineers	+0.528	32	0.002
Electrical and Mechanical Engineers	+-0.412	12	0.184
Environmental Engineers	-0.393	6	0.440
Catographers and Surveyor	+0.273	3	0.824
Years of experience (a)			
Less or equal to 3	+0.450	28	0.016
4-10	+0.122	29	0.527
11+	+0.501	26	0.009
Duration of work (b)			
Less or equal to 7	+0.485	28	0.009
7-8	+0.311	47	0.033
9+	+0.543	8	0.164

Wukari International Studies Journal, Vol.6, No.2,2022
Wukari International Studies Journal, Vol.6, No.2,2022

13

(Source : SPSS Data output , 2022)

The relationship between Work Related Stress (as measured by the various components of the work related subscales and the employee performance (as measured by the total employee performance score) were investigated using Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient. Preliminary analyses were performed to ensure no violation of the assumptions of normality, linearity and homoscedasticity.

There were small to medium positive correlations between the two variables ranging from r = +0.200, n = 83, p 0.071, with small levels work related stress for support component associated with lower levels of employees performance to r = +0.315, n = 83, p 0.004, with medium levels of work related stress for relationship component associated with lower levels of employees performance. There was also a medium positive correlation between Total Work Stress Score and Employees performance r = +0.356, n =83, p 0.001, with medium levels of Total work related stress score associated with lower levels of employees performance as shown in table 4 and 5.

Comparison of the correlation coefficient for the various groups of the socio-demographic characteristics and Work Characteristics for Total Stress Score and Employees Performance Score shows positive correlations with highest values for each group as follows; 40+ years for Age group (r = +0.605, n =16 p 0.013); Female for Gender group (r = +0.574, n = 30 p 0.001); Yoruba for Ethnic group (r = +0.535, n = 11 p 0.090); Christianity for Religion group (r = +0.494, n = 20 p 0.027);

Married for Marital Status group (r = +0.405, n = 52 p 0.003); Builders group (r = +0.528, n = 32 p 0.002); 11+ years for Years of Experience group (r = +0.501, n = 26 p 0.009); and 9+ hours for Duration of Work group (r = +0.543, n = 8, p 0.164) as shown in table 6 and table 7.

4.0 RESULTS , DISCUSSION AND FINDINGS

Work related stress, in today's world is linked to a variety of problems ranging from disease to physical and mental disability in organizations leading to low employee performance and high cost for organizations. Previous studies were conducted mainly in relation to health care professionals and in some few instances, teachers and other workers. The results from table 4 and 5 showed positive coefficient of correlation for demand, control, support, relationship, risk, role and change with employees performance as r = +0.306, +0.249, +0.200, +0.315, +0.259 and +0.273 respectively showing that an increase in various levels of stress is associated with a decrease in employee performance. (The positive correlation seen is so because the items in the employees' performance questionnaire were negatively worded). This findings is partly in keeping with a research by Arbabisarjou et al in Iran that showed a negative coefficient of correlation for demand (r = -0.44) control (r = - 0.39) role (r = -0.28) and change (r = -0.53) and a positive coefficient of correlation for support (r = 0.29) relationship (r = 0.31). The findings also showed a positive coefficient of correlation for total stress score and employees performance (r = +0.356) which is also in keeping with the same research in Iran that showed a negative coefficient of correlation for total stress score and employees performance (r = -0.42).

Table 6 revealed the effect of work related stress on employees

Wukari International Studies Journal, Vol.6, No.2, 2022

performance to be related stress on employees' performance was also found to higher among the 40+ age group.

This could be explained by the fact that employees in that age group have increased work load as they are in addition to the routine work also involved in supervision and administrative activities. The effect of work related stress on employees performance was also found to be higher among the married participant (r = +0.405) when compared to the single participants (r = +0.279). This could be due to increase in demand of child care and elderly care encountered by the married participants. This finding can hence be said to support the research conducted among female nurses that revealed work interfering with family more than family interferes with work.

The results from table 7 showed the effect of work related stress on employees performance to be higher among Civil /Structural Engineers (r = +0.528) and Builders (r = +0.490) when compared to other construction professionals. Several factors might be attributed to this ranging from heavy work load due to the intrinsic nature of the job to organisational pressure when there is

shortage of staff. Interestingly, work related stress was found to increase employees performance among Electrical and Mechanical Engineers (r = -0.412) and Environmental Engineers (r = -0.393). This can be explained by the fact that those groups of Construction professionals might have developed an effective strategies and mechanisms to cope with work related stress. The effect of work related stress on employees performance was also found to be higher among those who work for 9+ hours a day (r = +0.543). This support a finding by Lee and Wang 2002 which identified work load, shift work, overtime and covering for absent colleagues as the most common identified stressors in work place.

5.0 CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The following conclusions about the effect of work related stress on employees' performance among professionals in the construction industry with Julius berger plc, as a case study. were drawn:

1. Work related stress reduces employees' performance among all construction professionals in Julius berger plc, Abuja, Nigeria in a small to medium effect.
2. Older construction professionals in Julius berger plc, Abuja, Nigeria. encountered more effect of work related stress on employees' performance compared to the younger construction professionals
3. Female construction professionals in Julius berger Plc, encountered more effect of work related stress on employees' performance compared to their male counterparts.
4. Married construction professionals in Construction industry encountered
more effect of work related stress on employees performance compared to construction professionals who are single
5. Civil/Structural Engineers and Builders in Julius berger plc, Abuja, Nigeria encountered more effect of work related stress on employees performance compared to the other construction professionals
6. Construction professionals in Julius berger plc, Abuja, Nigeria who works for longer hours encountered more effect of work stress on employees' performance.

For future research

1. The study assessed the relationships between work related stress and employees' performance based on respondents self report; therefore,

other methods of assessment should be utilized to obtain objective data. For example, work related stress should be assessed using physiological measures and employees' performance should be assessed using a pre-determined checklist and observations.

2.More studies should be conducted on a larger scale to identify sources of work related stress and factors that enhance employees' performance for the construction professionals

3. Future research is needed to explore the various strategies employed by various construction industry professionals in coping with work related stress with a view of providing management with various options on how to reduce the work related stress encountered by its employees.

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