

Work Organization and Stress Management among Male and Female Employees in IMO State University, Owerri.

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ABSTRACT

The study examined the work organization and stress management among male and female employees in Imo State University, Owerri. The study seeks to find out the stress management strategies in IMSU and its impact on the attitude and behavior of male and female staff of IMSU. It also investigated the impact of the gender roles of male and female staff on work load, among employees. Relevant literatures and theories were reviewed and the study anchored its analysis on conservation of Resources (COR) Theory by Hobfoll. This is because this theory effectively explains gender issues that increase work load and effects stress management strategy in IMSU. The study adopted survey research design in which five schools were deliberately selected to represent the eight schools in the institution due to their homogeneity. Respondents from the various departments in the selected schools were randomly selected. However, a sample size of 527 were used to derive data for this study. Non-participant observation, questionnaire and key persons interview (KPI), text books, Journals and internet materials were used to derive data from secondary source while primary data collected were presented and analyzed using tables, simple percentages and Chi-square. The chi square statistical tool was used to test the four research hypotheses that were formulated by the researcher. Findings from this study revealed that male staff engage in recreational activities during vacation more than their female counter part. It also found out that, unlike their male counterpart, women are more burdened with domestic and family responsibilities and try to make up for their absence in the home during vacation. This act reflects on their attitudes and behavior to work as female staff suffers from fatigue more than their male counterpart. The study therefore recommended that IMSU should incorporate time management and social support scheme into its stress management strategies. Also, physiological therapies should be incorporated by management into the stress management scheme

Keywords: Work Organization, Stress, Stress Management, Employees

INTRODUCTION

Stress is an individual's reaction to an event with regards to emotional feelings or physical tension. In most cases it comes from any event or thought that makes one feel frustrated, angry, or nervous. The stress response of the body is meant to protect and support the individual. To maintain stability or homeostasis, the body is constantly adjusting to its surroundings. When a physical or mental event threatens this equilibrium, we react to it. This process is often referred to as the 'fight or flight response.' We prepare for physical action in order to confront or flee from a threat. It is a change that causes physical, emotional, or psychological strain (Nwokorie, 2023).

In the view of Ugwulebo and Ukpabi (2016), stress is unarguably one of the most dangerous but silent killers in the world. The working environment in which the Nigerian workers find themselves as well as their outer society is very stressful. They argued that some factors, such as family background, poor income and high expenditure, job content and supervision, pressure and volume of work, disciplinary action, overcrowded environment, among others, are some of the major stressors Nigerian workers have to contend with.

According to Mental Health Foundation (2021) “stress” is the feeling of being overwhelmed or unable to cope with mental or emotional pressure as well as one’s body response to pressure. It can be seen as the effect of anything that seriously threatens one’s 50“stressor” and the response to the stressor is called the “stress response.” Although stress responses evolved as adaptive processes, According to Selye, severe, prolonged stress responses might lead to tissue damage and disease

In the same vein, Stavroula, Amananda & Tom (2004) stated that work stressors are reactions employees have when they are faced with work demands and pressures that are not matched with their knowledge and ability and, which also challenges their ability to cope with work. They may as well include; workload, work hours, working environment, work pace, job roles etc. Gender roles are socially constructed roles, behavior and attributes which a society considers appropriate for men and women. It differs from the biological role, behaviour and attitude of men and women as members of a society and places social expectations that would ensure men and women perform different functions within the family system and also, in work organizations. These roles may differ from one social structure to another. In patriarchal societies like Nigeria, the discrepancy in these roles tend to be more pronounced as there seem to be a significant difference in the social expectations for males and females.

There is no doubt that stress is inevitable irrespective of social class or gender and could be emotionally or physically induced. While men and women may be prone to stress and its consequences, women may suffer worst consequences which are likely to result to absenteeism, poor job performance, poor interpersonal relationship, low morale at work and at home due to their dual responsibility. This could as well affect their behavior and attitude as workers as they may become aggressive, forgetful, lose concentration, and develop fatigue; all of which do not give room for effectiveness in the workplace.

Nwokorie (2022) asserts that stress is a feeling which occurs when an individual’s working or living condition makes demands beyond what the individual’s capacity can handle, physically or emotionally. Smruti (2016) further stated that people experience stress in different ways and for different reasons but the reaction is based on ones perception of the event or situation.

Stress management technique has become a critical issue in contemporary times. This has given room to the introduction of more stress management strategies like shift, off, vacation etc. in organizations. However, these strategies may not have had significant impact on female employees especially when compared to their male counterpart. Gender role issues that affect the effectiveness of these stress management strategies seem not to have been given cognizance. Employers of labour seem to have treated stress in male and female employees in like manner; giving no consideration to the fact that, male employees are more likely to take maximum advantage to these stress management strategies and return to work stress free unlike their female counterpart. Thus, it has become imperative to assess the stress management strategies in Imo State University.

The Challenging Problems of the Study

Strategies for coping and managing stress are enormous. However, most of the stress management strategies seem not to have taken into cognizance the nature of the stressors in male and female employees as they may vary. Stress management strategies may not have effectively reduced the workload caused by stressors possibly affected by the rate at which organizational stress is reduced in Imo State University. While male employees are likely to engage in stress-free activities like going for a fun trip, hanging out with friends and family members etc., when they are on vacation, off or on shift, female employees may be too busy with domestic and family responsibility which induce stress and possibly prevent them from taking advantage of the stress management strategies like vacation, off, and shift that have been put in place by the organization.

Therefore, while male employees may return to work stress-free and fit to engage in organizational duties,

female employees may not return to work stress-free, having spent their vacation, off, or shift carrying out domestic and family responsibilities. Thus, the level of productivity and job performance of male and female employees who are exposed to stress management strategies may differ especially as female employees tend to continue in their struggle to balance their family life with their work life.

This dual responsibility carried out by women seems to have given room to a deliberate effort by women to equate and balance the responsibilities in the workplace and the home so as to perform well at work and at home. In view of this, women are faced with the struggle against time as well as other limited resources and unfavorable conditions that militate against them at work and at home. As this struggle continues, role conflict may emanate and perhaps, intensify and possibly become more difficult to manage and then, develop into stress.

There is no gainsaying that the nature of women's work contributes to the invisibility of stress however, the risks that women face at work tend to be less dramatic than men's even though they can be just as harmful to them. In many countries data on work-related accidents and diseases are not disaggregated by sex, making it difficult to assess priority areas of concern for women and men. Even as this may have been the case, working women continue to be mainly responsible for domestic, unpaid work such as cooking, cleaning and caring for children. They are also largely responsible for unpaid work as health care takers of their elderly, disabled and ill relatives.

Objectives of the Study

The broad objective of this study sought to examine the impact of gender roles on stress management techniques in Imo State University. The specific objectives of this study included:

1. To investigate how best the social obligation of male and female employees can be managed so as to improve the effectiveness of stress management strategies in IMSU.
2. To investigate the extent to which the social obligations of male and female employees have influenced the workload in IMSU.

Research Hypotheses

The following research hypotheses were formulated:

1. There is a significant relationship between the gender roles of employees in IMSU and the effectiveness of stress management strategies.
2. There is a significant relationship between the gender roles of employees and the level of workload among employees in IMSU

Overriding Significance of the study

a) Academic significance: The findings from this study will add to existing literature on gender and stress management in tertiary institutions. It also, will create an opportunity for students, researchers and other writers who are interested or are involved in further researches on gender and stress management in tertiary institutions. This study expected to serve as a referencing material for students who are into researches on issues relating to gender and stress management in tertiary institutions.

b) Practical significance: The findings of this research will bring to general knowledge issues on gender and stress management. It will inform, educate and enlighten policy makers, employers and the general public on issues of stress management as it relates to gender. The recommendations made in this study will also enable them make necessary decisions that will reduce stress among employees irrespective of their gender.

SOME CONTENDING LITERATURE AND THEORETICAL ISSUES ON WORK ORGANIZATION AND STRESS MANAGEMENT AMONG MALE AND FEMALE EMPLOYEES

The concept of Stress and Stressors

Stress refers to the stimulating state of the mind and body, a physiological and psychological reaction to demands (Bamba 2016, McEwen 2007, Topper, 2007 & Smruti, 2016 cited in Umar, 2019). It is a chronic complex emotional state with apprehension and is characteristic of various nervous and mental disorders (Olagunju, 2010). In essence, stress is a manifest response to an individual to defiling basic needs of life in an environment of competing needs and thus occurs where demands made on individuals do not match the resources available or meet the individual's needs and motivation (Umar, 2019).

It can as well be as a result of workload and time available to carry out a particular task. According to Luthans (2002) cited in Ekienabor (2016) besides the potential stressors that occurred outside the organization, there were also those that were associated with the organization. DCS gaumail (2003) is of the opinion that at the organizational level, work-related stresses may be responsible for organizational outcomes such as decline in performance, dissatisfaction, lack of motivation and commitment, and an increase in absenteeism and turnover.

In view of this, Hicks & Caroline (2007) defined work stress as the response of employees to job demands and pressures that are not in line with their knowledge, interest, skills and abilities and also, according to Fried (2008) cited in Omotayo, Odunayo, Hezekiah & Adebukola, (2016) affects the capacity of employees to cope. Jayashree (2010) however stressed that work-related stress is a pattern of physiological, emotional, cognitive and behavioural reactions to some extreme taxing aspects of work content, work organization and work environment. He further stated that work-related stress is a condition of strain that has a direct bearing on emotions, thought process and physical conditions of a person. It is understood to occur when there is a mismatch between the demands of the job and the resources and capabilities of the individual worker to meet those demands.

Dessler (2000) cited in Ekienabor (2016) alluded that there were two main sources of job stress; environmental and personal. According to him, a variety of external environmental factors could lead to job stress. These included work schedules, place of work, job security, route to and from work and the number and nature of clients. Dessler (2000) further noted that individuals reacted differently even if they were at the same job, because personal factors also influenced stress. He added that stress is not necessarily dysfunctional; some people work well only when they are under a little stress and find they are more productive when a deadline approaches.

In addition, Smith & Perez (2018) affirmed that situations that are likely to cause stress are those that are unpredictable or uncontrollable, uncertain, ambiguous or unfamiliar, or involving conflict, loss or performance expectations. Stress may be caused by time limited events, such as the pressures of examinations or work deadlines, or by ongoing situations, such as family demands, job insecurity, or long commuting journeys. Those that are intrinsic to the job include long hours, work overload, time pressure, difficult or complex tasks, lack of breaks, lack of variety, and poor physical work conditions (for example, space, temperature, light) (Smith & Perez, 2018).

The Centre for the Studies of Human Stress (2017) has defined stressors as any stimuli that cause the release of stress hormones in the human body. Their work further divides stressors into physiological and psychological categories, which the Mayo Clinic divides into external exasperations such as environmental factors, social issues, workplace occurrences, and major life changes (Mayo Clinic, 2018 cited in Smith &

Perez, 2018).

However, consequences included reductions in the quantity and quality of job performance, increased absenteeism and turnover, increased grievances and health care costs. In affirmation, Levin-Epstein (2002) stated that stress on the job took its toll on nonprofits: lost time from work, deflated productivity, low staff morale, turnover and higher health care costs. According to her, stress-related problems should be talked at three levels: individual, organizational and social.

On the individual level she noted that employees can become more responsible for their own well-being by recognizing unhealthy emotional and work patterns before they reach crisis proportions. At an organizational level, employees need to be aware of the workplace structures that may contribute to burn out and take a creative approach to instituting changes that can prevent and relieve stress.

Beheshtifar & Nazarian (2013) stated that the social environment within which employees operate often contributes to the problem. This is much more common in employees at lower levels of workplace hierarchies, where they have less control over their work situation and are targeted on various professions, such as nurses, doctors, police officers, teachers and academics (Plattner & Mberengwa, 2010).

An overview of gender roles

Gender roles are based on the different expectations that individuals, groups, and societies have of individuals based on their sex and based on each society's values and beliefs about gender. Gender roles are the product of the interactions between individuals and their environments, and they give individuals cues about what sort of behavior is believed to be appropriate for what sex (Omadjohwoefe, 2011).

Understanding the term "gender roles" requires an understanding of the concept "gender". Gender" is a social term that is often confused with the term "sex." Sex and gender are different concepts. Sex is a biological concept, determined on the basis of individuals' primary sex characteristics. Gender, on the other hand, refers to the meanings, values, and characteristics that people ascribe to different sexes.

Blackstone (2003) was one the first social scientists to distinguish the concept of gender from the concept of sex. According to Oakley, gender parallels the biological division of sex into male and female, but it involves the division and social valuation of masculinity and femininity. In other words, gender is a concept that humans create socially, through their interactions with one another and their environments, yet it relies heavily upon biological differences between males and females. Humans create the concept of gender socially; gender is referred to as a social construction. The social construction of gender is demonstrated by the fact that individuals, groups, and societies ascribe particular traits, statuses, or values to individuals purely because of their sex, yet these ascriptions differ across societies and cultures, and over time within the same society. Ogwu (1992) cited in Anyalebechi (2016) further asserted that gender roles are created and sustained by society through tradition, customs, conventions, norms and regulations.

Traditionally, many Western societies have believed that women are more nurturing than men. Therefore, the traditional view of the feminine gender role prescribes that women should behave in ways that are nurturing. One way that a woman might engage in the traditional feminine gender role would be to nurture her family by working full-time within the home rather than taking employment outside of the home. Men, on the other hand, are presumed by traditional views of gender roles to be leaders. The traditional view of the masculine gender role, therefore, suggests that men should be the heads of their households by providing financially for the family and making important family decisions. While these views remain dominant in many spheres of society, alternative perspectives on traditional beliefs about gender roles have gained increasing support in the twenty-first century (Blackstone, 2003).

Changing gender role in the society

Recent decades have witnessed tremendous changes in how women and men behave and express their views regarding work and family life. These changes includes an increase in egalitarian gender role and attitudes, and the degree to which individuals support an equal division of labour between women and men as have been documented in a number of countries; including Britain since the 1970s, particularly among women (Braun and Scott 2009; Cotter, Hermsen, and Vanneman, 2011; cited in Vidal & Lersch, 2019).

Both women and men perform multiple roles in their lives which includes activities related to production and income-generating activities –and in the reproductive domain – which includes tasks and activities relating to the creation and sustaining of the family and the household (Vidal & Lersch, 2019).

Nevertheless, in most societies, men's roles in the productive domain is prominent, whereas their reproductive – or domestic – role is just subsidiary. Men's productive work, usually takes place outside the home, allowing them to perform their roles sequentially rather than simultaneously. Men's contribution to domestic activities is often limited to tasks that involve some financial decision, like children's education, house purchases etc. Consistently, men were trained not to partake in most domestic chores such as cooking, sweeping, fetching water and firewood, which are exclusively left for women (Anyalebechi, 2016)

Gender role and stress

Gender relations and related values and attitudes have become more fluid; changing dynamically over the life course in the context of blurring boundaries of family and work life (Livia, Rudolf and Irena, 2014). Livia, Rudolf and Irena, (2014) stated that the new family trends and patterns have been paralleled by changes in gender roles, especially an expansion of the female role to include economic provision for a family, and lately also transformation of the male role with more intense involvement in family responsibilities, especially care for children.

Work and family lives increasingly influence each other as both women and men engage in earning as well as caring activities; often reinforced by employment instability and precariousness (Livia, Rudolf and Irena, 2014). Williams (1995) cited in Blackstone (2003) also stated that gender roles can be linked to expectations of males and females in realms outside of the family as well as work.

According to Nwokorie , in Anyaoha (2019), men and women are often expected to perform different tasks and occupy different roles in the workplace based on their sex. Even in the early twenty-first century, many corporations operate from a perspective that favors traditional beliefs about gender roles by, for example, offering parental leave benefits only to mothers and denying such benefits to fathers. Because the traditional perspective toward gender roles remains predominant in many corporations, the positions that women and men hold within corporations are often segregated by sex. While women are more likely to be expected to work as secretaries, and men are more likely to be expected to work as managers and executives, men are also, presumed to be more ambitious and task-oriented in their work, while women are presumed to be more interested in and concerned about their relationships with others at work.

Organizational stress & employees' behavior and attitude to work

Stress arises in wide ranging work situations but becomes worse when employees sense they have little or no control over work processes. This can be caused by poor work design (Wagner & Harter, 2006), lack of recognition, rigid bureaucratic structure (Hicks & Caroline, 2007), office ergonomics (Moran, 2010), poor management style (Nelson, 2005), role ambiguity, role uncertainty (Parker, 1975), unfavourable working conditions (Parker, 1975; AlAnzi, 2009), pay inequality (Stecher & Rosse, 2007), role conflict, amongst other factors. It can as well arise because of transitions made in our personal lives. These personal issues

that contribute to stress are those such as domestic problems in the house like losing loved ones, financial problems and divorce and could be categorized as individual causes that lead to stress.

These organizational factors that can be considered as stressors mostly depend on the types of job and specification of works. These play important role regarding the issues related to stress, for instance if the job is high-stress or not. High stress jobs are the kind of jobs that require plenty of time and put the employees under the pressure of work. It is also notable that often the employees suffer from poor working situation, if the work is performed in an unpleasant environment (Bloisi, Cook & Hunsaker, 2007).

In affirmation, Kirkcaldy & Martin (2000) associated stress with environmental and economic factors. The environmental factors are included in organizational climate as well as occupational consequences of job contentment, organizational loyalty and behavioral aspects of employees (Fairbrother & Warn, 2003).

According to Bloisi, Cook, & Hunsaker, (2007) external factors beyond the control of both the employees and the organizations are based on political factors and economic factors. Economic uncertainties such as redundancy and downsizings are some of the economic consequences for a firm which affects the employees. Bloisi et al (2007) added that the advancement in technology is also another external factor that has contributed to productivity to a large extent but, it caused a remarkable decline in the demand for labor in the market which tends to affect the employee's job security.

Stress management techniques in organizations

The Nigerian business environment is characterized by stress. The socioeconomic structure of the external environment and the demands of the workplace make it pertinent for employees to possess effective coping strategies, without which performance could be hampered (Oyewunmi et al., 2015). Hence, to enhance corporate image and achieve competitive advantage, stress management and coping strategies has become imperative (Monat & Lazarus, 2001; Adeniji & Osibanjo, 2012; Liu et al., 2013; Manjunath & Rajesh, 2012). This implies that, organizations must have the capability to identify the symptoms of stress and intensify efforts to reduce stress in the workplace.

MacArthur (2014) cited in Umar (2019) categorized stress management strategies into active and avoidant coping strategies. He stated that active coping strategies are either behavioral or psychological responses designed to change the nature of the stressor itself, while avoidant coping strategies lead employees into activities that keep them from directly addressing stressful events (Samson-Akpan, John, Edet & Uka, 2017; Onoyase, 2015).

In line with this, Omotayo et al (2016) affirms that, it is evident that active coping strategies, whether behavioral or emotional, are thought to be better ways to deal with stressful events, and avoidant coping strategies appear to be a psychological risk factor or marker for adverse responses to stressful life event. They further stated that the stress experienced by employees can be influenced by the coping strategies they choose to employ and may involve the identification of the stressor, and understanding the process and effects of stress.

Jaroslav & Miroslav (2015) examined stress from another perspective. According to them, the problems of stress management in the workplace are actually human as well as the economic and the structure of coping includes coping processes, coping skills, coping patterns – strategies and styles, and coping resources.

1. The coping processes are person environment transactions in stressful situations with different time duration, which emerge from perception of danger, proceed at one or more reaction levels at once or one by one, and result in elimination or adaptation to the stressors.
2. The coping skills represent all personal prerequisites in terms of dispositions and traits that influence

coping with external and internal stressors at the behavioral, cognitive and experience level.

3. The coping patterns are addictive, trans-situational, relatively consistent patterns of coping at behavioral, cognitive and experience level that person uses when dealing with the internal or external stressors.
4. The coping resources needs to be distinguished from the coping skills. They work like preconditions for efficient coping processes, in a sense of stressors elimination or adaptation to these stressors in the workplace. They are divided into internal coping resources and external coping resources. The internal coping resources are related to the individual. They include biological variables (e.g. genetic makeup, age, gender, overcome diseases) and personality traits (psychological resistance, stress tolerance, qualification for certain job, healthy lifestyle, etc.).

Empirical review

Glanakos (2000) carried out a study on gender roles and coping with work stress. The paper examined the influence of gender roles on coping with workplace stressors among 176 adult undergraduate students (130 females, 46 males) who were concurrently employed while attending college. The majority of participants (91.5%) were White and from working-class backgrounds. As expected, androgynous persons were significantly more likely to report using help-seeking, direct action, and positive-thinking coping mechanisms than were individuals with undifferentiated gender roles. Both feminine and masculine persons reported significantly greater use of positive-thinking coping styles than did undifferentiated persons, and feminine persons were also significantly more likely than undifferentiated persons to use direct action. No gender-role differences were found among individuals' reported use of escape-related coping mechanisms. Regression analyses revealed that femininity and masculinity scores were significant predictors of control-related coping styles, whereas biological gender was a significant predictor of direct action coping.

Misigo (2015) carried out a study on the topic; gender difference in the perceived level of stress and coping strategies among university students in Kenya: a case of public universities. The study investigated gender influence on perceived stress level and coping strategies of under graduate university students in Kenya. The sample comprised (97 male and 90 female) students drawn from three public universities in the western part of Kenya. Stratified and random sampling techniques were used to select the respondents.

This study adopted a cross-sectional survey research design. A biographical form and a perceived stress scale questionnaire were used to collect data. Both descriptive and inferential (t-test) statistics were used to analyse data with alpha level set at .05. Findings revealed that female participations reported positive stress coping skills such as seeking help from counselors and friends. Whereas male participants reported negative coping strategies such as taking alcohol and drug use.

Theoretical framework

This study was anchored on Conservation of Resources (COR) theory by Hobfoll. This is because this theory was able to give insight on home and work issues that lead to increase in workload and affects stress management strategies in iMSU. This theory asserts that stress comes up when an employee loses or is scared of losing what they value-their job and home.

This theory asserts that individuals strive to protect what they have even as they pursue new ones. In this context, staff in IMSU strive to carry out their social obligations so as to fit properly into the social structure. However, they have continued in their job and have continued to take advantage of other opportunities that may have be attached to such opportunities. There is no gainsaying that these opportunities comes with certain responsibilities which every staff is expected to carry out along with their domestic or social obligations.

Thus, this theory explains that these social and work obligations could cause strain as employees try to

manage and balance the time and energy they put into their work and home; all in an effort to maximize positive outcome at the expense of none. The fear of relegating one for the other or losing their home or work drives them further to intensify their effort at home and at work and encourages them to put in more effort in the discharge of these duties.

This tends to take a negative toll on these employees as they tend to suffer some negative consequences of stress that affects their attitude and behavior to work and at work. This study may not have accessed the stress management strategies that are available to employees, but it effectively explained gender role and how it affects stress. This theory relates gender role to workload thereby, indirectly stating that a reduction in workload is an effective way of reducing stress in IMSU.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Scope of the study

This study focused on the gender roles of employees and stress management strategies in tertiary institutions. It examined the impact of gender roles on the effectiveness of stress management strategies as well as its implication for the behavior and attitude of employees in Imo State University, Owerri.

Population/Sample

Table 3.1: Sample population

Gender	Teaching Staff	Non-Teaching Staff	Total	Number of Questionnaire Distributed
Male	538	682	1220	244
Female	511	1121	1632	326
Total	1049	1803	2852	570

Source: Field study

Sampling Technique

The researcher adopted a non-probability sampling technique in choosing five (5) faculties out of 9 faculties in Imo State University. Including: Social Sciences, Humanities, Education, Health Science and Faculty of Agriculture. The departments that were adapted for this study were randomly selected however; simple random sampling technique was adopted in choosing respondents for the study.

Thus, 570 copies of questionnaire; 57 to male and female employees, were distributed to both academic and non-academic staff of the institution who has worked in the institution for a period of 5 years and more so as to enable the researcher derive data needed for the study.

Methods of data collection

The researcher made use of both the primary and secondary sources of data collection.

a) Primary source of data: These included; participant observation, Key Person Interview (KPI), and a research structured questionnaire. The structured questionnaire was divided into two sections. Section A was designed to elicit personal data about the respondents while section B was designed to elicit answers for the study. Responses comprised of close-ended options with various alternatives which would enable the researcher get the appropriate data for the study.

Key Persons Interviewees (KPI) was also used to gather data for this study. These key persons include, the Deans of the various schools in the institution. These persons are expected to give a management based view on the issue under study based on their administrative position and experience.

b) Secondary source of data: These included; textbooks, journals and internet materials.

Method of data analysis

Tables were used to present data for this study while simple percentages were used to analyze the research data to ensure a better understanding of the research data. Chi-square statistical test was also be used to test the relationship between the research variables in the research hypothesis.

Faculty	Number of questionnaire distributed		Number of questionnaire returned			
			Percentage			
	Male	Female	Male	(%)	Female	(%)
Social Science	57	57	53	10.10%	52	9.9
Humanities	57	57	49	9.30%	51	9.7
Education	57	57	56	10.60%	54	10.2
Health Science	57	57	54	10.20%	53	10.1
Agriculture	57	57	50	9.50%	55	10.4
Total	285	285	262	49.7	265	50.3
Grand total	285+ 285 = 570		262 + 265 = 527		49.7 + 50.3 = 100%	

Source: Field study

The table above shows that the sample size for this study is 527. The number of questionnaire retrieved from male and female staff shows that both male and female employees are accessible. However, staff in Humanities may not have been as patient in filling the research questionnaire as the other staff in the other four sampled schools.

Distribution of the respondents by sex

Sex	Population	Percentage (%)
Male	262	49.7%
Female	265	50.3%
Total	527	100

The table above shows that, the responses from male and female respondents were approximately the same. This means that, gender bias in the responses was at minimal in this study.

Distribution of questionnaire based on age

Age	Respondents	Percentage (%)
21 – 26	58	11%
27 – 32	64	12.1%
33 – 38	96	18.2%
39 – 44	119	22.6%
45 – 50	99	18.8%

51 – 56	84	15.9%
56 and above	7	1.3%
Total	527	100%

Source: Field study

The table above shows that most of the staff in IMSU is between the ages of 37 to 54. This shows that the staff strength in IMSU is made up of young people who are capable of driving the institution’s goal.

Gender roles of employees in IMSU and the effectiveness of stress management strategies.

S/N	Questions	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total(%)
9	Men do little of domestic chores during vacation unlike their female counterpart.	188	151	104	94	527
		35.7%	28.7%	19.7%	17.9%	(100%)
10	Women tend to manage their family responsibilities better, without stress during vacation.	155	149	111	112	527
		29.4%	28.3%	21.1%	21.3%	(100%)
11	Unlike their male counterpart, women’s responsibilities to their family conflict with the time they spend on their personal life during vacation.	159	153	81	134	527
		30.2%	29.0%	15.4%	25.4%	(100%)
12	Vacations enables women to attend to both family and personal responsibilities with ease.	179	161	89	98	527
		34%	30.6%	16.9%	18.6%	(100%)
13	Women spend most of my time making up for their absence in the home during vacation more than their male counterpart.	172	192	77	86	527
		32.6%	36.4%	14.6%	16.3%	(100%)
14	More men engage in recreational activities during vacation than women.	158	164	85	120	527
		30%	31.1%	16.1%	22.8%	(100%)
15	More men than women, take their office work home and do them at home during vacation.	139	148	117	123	527
		26.4%	28.1%	22.2%	23.3%	(100%)
16	Stress reduction strategies are centered on male and female.	46	55	204	222	527
		8.7%	10.4%	38.7	42.1%	(100%)

Source: Field study

It also shows that vacation as a stress management strategy is more effective for male employees than female employees even when male employees tend to take office work home.

This is because, while male employees engage in recreational activities and perhaps, other activities that are less stressful and do not conflict with their personal life, female employees tend to concentrate less on themselves during vacation. Rather, female employees try to bridge the gap that may have existed in the home during their absence.

In doing this, they tend to double their effort in carrying out domestic activities and other informal activities in the home. These activities tend to conflict with and reduce the time they spend specifically, on themselves

relaxing and resting thereby, nullifying the essence of their vacation.

Stress management strategies in IMSU and the behavior and attitude of male and female employees to work.

S/N	Questions	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
17	Most men do not experience fatigue after vacation unlike their female counterpart.	133	146	110	138	527
		25.2%	27.7%	20.9%	26.2%	100%
18	Men are more friendly and polite in their social interaction with staff and students after vacation than women.	154	177	109	87	527
		29.2%	33.6%	20.7%	16.5%	100%
19	Women find it difficult to relax when they think about returning to work after vacation.	183	167	95	82	527
		34.7%	31.7%	18.0%	15.6%	100%
20	Men improve on their duties when they return from vacation.	164	141	99	113	527
		31.1%	26.8%	18.8%	21.4%	100%
21	More men than women feel reenergized and happy to return to work after vacation.	187	140	105	95	527
		35.5%	26.6%	19.9%	18.0%	100%
22	Compared to their female counterpart, men rarely skip duties after vacation.	160	166	97	104	527
		30.4%	31.5%	18.4%	19.7%	100%
23	Compared to their female counterpart, men are rarely absent from work after vacation.	193	174	82	78	527
		36.6%	33.0%	15.6%	14.8%	100%

Source: Field study

From the table above, it was deduced that even after the duration of vacations the behavior and attitude of male employees improves better than their female counterparts. Female employees seem not be as ready to return to work like their male counterparts after vacation so, they develop a lukewarm attitude towards work.

Thus, while male employees carry out their duties diligently having had enough rest while on vacation, female employees suffers fatigue, becomes unease at the thought of returning to work and possibly, absent themselves from their duties due to the accumulated stress they encountered working on their social roles during vacation.

Table 4.10: The gender roles of employees in IMSU and workload

S/N	Questions/	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	Total
24	Due to domestic and work responsibilities, women tend to work for longer hours than men.	188	210	68	61	527
		35.7%	39.8%	12.9%	11.6%	100%
25	Women have needs and demands at work and at home that compete for their timemore than men.	180	179	91	77	527
		34.2%	34%	17.3%	14.6%	100%

26	Because of the responsibility at work and at home, more women suffer from work overload than their male counterpart	158	131	115	123	527
		30%	24.9%	21.8%	23.3%	100%
27	Women attend to childcare obligations before and after work more than their male counterpart.	201	222	49	55	527
		38.1%	42.1%	9.3	10.4%	100%
28	Unlike men, Women takes care of house chore before and after leaving for work.	172	214	67	74	527
		32.6%	40.6%	12.7%	14.0%	100%
29	Women are more burdened with domestic affairs than their male counterpart.	150	153	112	112	527
		28.5%	29.0%	21.3%	21.3%	100%

Deduced from this table, women think about their domestic issues at home and at work than men. They also, try to take care of these domestic issues before, during and after work. Unlike their male counterparts who concentrate more on their office work and perhaps a few domestic responsibilities, these female employees spend longer hours working in a bid to satisfy their domestic obligations.

Thus, they tend to begin their work earlier and stop later; taking care of child and husband obligations. With these responsibilities competing for their time and resources, female employees suffers from work overload as well as its negative consequences especially, as they try to balance both roles.

Findings from Key Persons Interview (KPI)

Responses from Key Persons Interview (KPI) revealed that IMSU has some other stress management strategies apart from vacation. These strategies include; leave, off, shift and break. However, non-academic staff enjoys these strategies more due to their job description. Academic staff are allowed to fix lectures base on convenience but carry out other duties in the institution that may not allow them go for leave, off, or shift. Even when academic staff are going for leave, they are not completely free from academic work as this could be a maternity leave (for female staff) or sabbatical leave (for male and female staff).

According to the Key Person who were interviewed, staff are usually happy to take advantage of these stress coping strategies and it reflects on the general well-being of staff and the institution positively. But, these Key Persons could not say the attitude and behavior of male staff improves better than their female counterpart who are exposed to the same strategy.

They admit that the gender role of women and men takes a toll on the level of stress staff go through and can also affect the extent to which these stress management strategies are utilized however, it is difficult to say what employees do with their personal time.

When asked if the stress management strategies put in place by the institutions has reduced the level of stress in male and female employees even with their social obligation, they that the strategies are available and effective in reducing stress but will become more effective if staff of the institution utilize it.

Another Key Person suggested that men be allowed to go for maternity leave with their wives so as to reduce the burden of childcare obligations. Another suggested the introduction of compulsory leave into the institution while another stated that a good working environment eases stress and makes work more interesting. He emphasized on the need for regularly power supply to fuel the air condition, fans and power laptops as this will reduces the noise population from generators and also, reduce the discomfort from high weather temperature.

Test of hypothesis one

1. There is a significant relationship between the gender roles of employees in IMSU and the effectiveness of stress management strategies.

To test the hypothesis above, responses from questions 13 and 15 of the research questionnaire was used.

Table 4.11: Calculating table for hypothesis one.

Questions	SA	A	D	SD	Total
13	172 ^a	192 ^b	77 ^c	86 ^d	527
15	139 ^e	148 ^f	117 ^g	123 ^h	527
Total	311	340	194	209	1054

Calculating expected frequency for cell A to H

$$\text{Cell A \& E} = \frac{311 \times 527}{1054} = 155.5$$

$$\text{Cell B \& F} = \frac{340 \times 527}{1054} = 170$$

$$\text{Cell C \& G} = \frac{194 \times 527}{1054} = 97$$

$$\text{Cell D \& H} = \frac{209 \times 527}{1054} = 104.5$$

Table 4.12: Calculating table for chi-square

Cells	O	E	O-E	$\frac{\sum (O-E)^2}{E}$
A	172	155.5	16.5	1.8
B	192	170	22	2.8
C	77	97	-20	4.1
D	86	104.5	-18.5	3.3
E	139	155.5	-16.5	1.8
F	148	170	-22	2.8
G	117	97	20	4.1
H	123	104.5	18.5	3.3
Total	1054	1054	0	24

Degree of freedom (df) = (C-1) (R-1)

$$= (4-1) (2-1) = 3 \times 1 = 3$$

Table value at 0.05 = 7.815

The calculated value of chi-square – 24 is greater than the table value of 7.815. Therefore, we accept the hypothesis that there is a significant relationship between the gender roles of employees in IMSU and the effectiveness of stress management strategies.

Test of hypothesis two

2. There is a significant relationship between the gender roles of employees in IMSU and the level of workload among employees in IMSU.

Responses from question 25 and 26 was used to test the hypothesis above.

Calculating table for hypothesis three.

Questions	SA	A	D	SD	Total
25	180 ^a	179 ^b	91 ^c	77 ^d	527
26	158 ^e	131 ^f	115 ^g	123 ^h	527
Total	338	310	206	200	1054

Source: Field study

Calculating expected frequency from cell A to H

$$\text{Cell A \& E} = \frac{338 \times 527}{1054} = 169$$

$$1054$$

$$\text{Cell B \& F} = \frac{310 \times 527}{1054} = 155$$

$$1054$$

$$\text{Cell C \& G} = \frac{206 \times 527}{1054} = 103$$

$$1054$$

$$\text{Cell D \& H} = \frac{200 \times 527}{1054} = 100$$

$$1054$$

Calculating table for chi-square

Cells	O	E	O-E	$\frac{\sum (O-E)^2}{E}$
A	180	169	11	0.7
B	179	155	24	3.7
C	91	103	-12	1.4

D	77	100	-23	5.3
E	158	169	-11	0.7
F	131	155	-24	3.7
G	115	103	12	1.4
H	123	100	23	5.3
Total	1054	1054	0	22.2

Source: Field study

Degree of freedom = (df) = (C-1) (R-1)

$$= (4-1) (2-1) = 3 \times 1 = 3$$

Table value at 0.05 = 7.815

The calculated value of chi-square- 22.2 is greater than the table value of 7.815. Therefore, we accept the hypothesis that there is a significant relationship between the gender roles of employees in IMSU and the level of workload among employees in IMSU.

Research findings

1. There is a significant relationship between the gender roles of employees in IMSU and the effectiveness of stress management strategies.
2. There is a significant relationship between the gender roles of employees in IMSU and the level of workload among employees in IMSU.

DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

There is a significant relationship between the gender roles of employees in IMSU and the effectiveness of stress management strategies.

It was found out that the stress reduction strategies in IMSU do not consider the differences in the gender roles of male and female staff. It was also found out that men do little domestic chores even while on vacation thereby, leaving women with the sole responsibility of taking care of domestic issues even as women's role has gone beyond their traditional gender role to contributing socio-economically to the family and society at large.

Thus, while male staff of IMSU engage in recreational activities during vacation women spend most of their time making up for their absence in the home. Though they manage their domestic responsibilities better during vacations, the essence of the vacation is usually lost as stress is not reduced but sustained after each vacation.

In view of this, Duxbury and Higgins (2001) and Manuh (1998) asserts that the very act of balancing responsibilities for paid and unpaid work often leads to stress, depression and fatigue and particularly places women at a disadvantage compared to men in the various spheres of society. Michie (2002) further stated that women are especially likely to experience these sources of stress, since they still carry more of the burden of childcare and domestic responsibilities than men.

Miche (2002) further stated that, long, uncertain or unsocial hours, working away from home, taking work

home, high levels of responsibility, job insecurity, and job relocation all may adversely affect family responsibilities and leisure activities. In a study carried out by Friedman & Rosenman (1974), Friedman & Rosenman identified that personalities who multi-task (women) are affected by stress because of the pressure they put on themselves.

Vaillant and Wolff (2010) added that a study of over 10, 000 employees in six French businesses between 2000 and 2007 showed that, women were almost twice as likely to report stress just like men. Therefore, stress management strategies are more effective for male employees than female employees due to the discrepancies in gender role which tend to put more pressure on female staff than male staff.

There is a significant relationship between the gender roles of employees in IMSU and the level of workload among employees in IMSU.

In recent times, gender roles has witnessed tremendous changes especially as it entails the traditional role of women. Livia, Rudolf and Irena, (2014) asserted that gender relations and related values and attitudes have become more fluid; changing dynamically over the life course in the context of blurring boundaries of family and work life as men and women perform multiple roles (Vidal & Lersch, 2019). International Labour Office (ILO) (2010) cited in World Health Organization publication (2011) and Livia, Rudolf and Irena, (2014) affirms that women are increasingly joining the paid workforce in most societies.

According to Anyalebechi (2016) in most societies, men's roles in the productive domain is prominent, whereas their reproductive – or domestic – role is just subsidiary. Men's productive work, usually takes place outside the home, allowing them to perform their roles sequentially rather than simultaneously. Men's contribution to domestic activities is often limited to tasks that involve some financial decision, like children's education, house purchases etc.

Ihimodu (1995) cited in Anyalebechi (2016) went further to state that women were relegated to the domestic sphere that were not renovated or valued. Usually, they have to juggle various tasks simultaneously, because of their tendency to perform multiple roles within the reproductive and productive spheres (this is often called 'multi-tasking'). On this note, GLOPP / ILO (2008) asserts that women have been described as often having a 'triple role': productive, reproductive and community role

It was also found out that women are more burdened with domestic affairs and try to manage both time and resources to meet the demand of both. As they carry out both responsibility they suffer from work overload. Williams (1995) cited in Blackstone (2003) also stated that gender roles can be linked to expectations of males and females in realms outside of the family as well as work.

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

Summary

This study examined the impact of gender roles on stress management strategies in FUTO. The study examined the stress management strategies in FUTO and the extent to which these strategies has influenced the attitude and behavior of male and female staff in FUTO. The study reviewed literature and theories that were related with the issue under study and adopted the Conservation of Resources (COR) theory by Hobfoll. This is because, this theory effectively explains gender issues that increases workload and affects stress management strategy in IMSU.

The study adopted a survey research design in which five schools were deliberately selected to represent the eight schools in the institution due to their homogeneity. Respondents from the various departments in the schools were randomly selected however, a sample size of 527 was used to derive data for this study. This

population was derived from 570; a 20% of the total number of staff in IMSU.

The data for this study was derived using non-participant observation, questionnaire and Key Persons Interview (KPI), textbooks, journals and internet materials. Data was presented in tables and analyzed using simple percentages. The chi-square statistical analysis was further used to test the four research hypotheses that was formulated by the researcher.

Findings from this study revealed that there is a significant relationship between gender roles and stress management strategies in IMSU. It was also discovered that there is a significant relationship between gender roles and workload as well as the stress management strategies in IMSU and the attitude and behavior of male and female staff in IMSU.

However, at the end of this study the researcher made some recommendations that will enable the stress management strategies in IMSU tackle stress irrespective of the gender role in IMSU.

Conclusion

The stressor that are attached to organizational stress are enormous. These stressors tend to vary from personal stressors to work environment and working conditions; all of which organizations like IMSU have put lots of efforts to minimize and possibly curb so as to maximize outcome. Even it is insufficient to assert that these strategies are not effective at reducing organizational stress in IMSU, the extent to which these strategies have effectively tackled stress in male and female staff seems to have varied over time.

While female staff tend to show behavioral and attitudinal signs of after their exposure to stress reduction strategies, male employees tend show no sign of stress. Obviously, this to a large extent has to do with the extent to which both male and female staff of IMSU utilizes the stress management strategies. Thus, while men are more at liberty to utilize the stress management strategies as provided to them by the institution. Women are most at times engulfed in their gender role of managing their family and domestic responsibilities and lose track of the time they are meant to enjoy their vacation. Unlike their male counterparts who have more time to cater for their personal needs and rest.

Nevertheless, there is no gainsaying that the changing social structure has necessitated the changes in traditional gender role that enables women to work in formal organizations. But, women seem to have been at the receiving end of this transformation especially as stress management strategies are gender sensitive and specific

Recommendations

Based on the finding of this study, the following recommendations were made to ensure the effectiveness of stress management strategies even as employees of IMSU carryout their gender role.

1. Social support: the management of IMSU should encourage their female staff to employ the services of helpers and nannies. Husbands, friends and relatives of these female staff should also, render selfless help to these female staff especially mothers. Female staff of IMSU should willingly accept help from those who are willing to help and appreciate such gesture when they take place.

2. Time management: management should provide courses on time management for employees. Employees should also, prioritize their social obligations instead of trying to balance or attend to all of them.

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