

Workplace Stress and Employee Performance: A Study of Ethiopie East and Ukwuani Local Government Areas of Delta State

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Abstract: The success and failure of every organisation either governmental or private establishment depends on the performance of every employees. Workplace stress has become one of the most controversial issues affecting employee performance in discharging their duties efficiently and effectively. This study examined the effect of workplace stress on employee performance: a study of Ethiopie East and Ukwuani Local Government Areas of Delta State. The specific objectives were to determine the effects of workplace stress on employee performance, examine coping mechanisms employees adopt to manage stress, assess the role of organizational support on the relationship between stress and performance and recommend strategies for reducing workplace stress and improving employee performance. The study was guided by four research hypotheses. A descriptive survey research design was adopted, and data were collected using a structured questionnaire. The data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics (mean and standard deviation), Pearson Product Moment Correlation, and multiple regression analysis at a 0.05 level of significance. The findings revealed a significant negative relationship between workplace stress and employee performance, indicating that increased stress reduces performance levels. The study also found a significant positive relationship between workplace stress and coping mechanisms, showing that employees adopt various strategies to manage stress. Furthermore, the results showed that organizational support significantly moderates the relationship between workplace stress and employee performance, reducing the negative impact of stress on performance. In addition, workplace stress and organizational support jointly had a significant effect on employee performance. The study also established that organizational stress-management strategies significantly enhance employee performance. The study concludes that workplace stress is a critical factor influencing employee performance, while organizational support and effective stress-management strategies serve as important buffers that improve employee productivity. It is recommended that organizations implement strong support systems, promote effective stress-management programs, and create a conducive work environment to enhance employee performance and well-being.

Keywords: Workplace stress, employee performance, coping mechanism, stress management, job satisfaction.

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Introduction

Workplace stress has emerged as the most controversial issue in modern organizations globally. In a time of rapid technological advancements, economic turbulence, and increased job expectations, employees are exposed to numerous pressures that hinder their mental well-being and work performance. For any organisation to either be successful or fails, it depends largely on the performance of the employees.

Workplace stress is often driven by excessive workloads, role ambiguity, emotional exhaustion, and balancing personal and professional life. These stressors can significantly affect employee productivity, leading to reduced efficiency, errors, and compromised service delivery, especially in critical sectors like primary healthcare. Stress arises from various workplace demands and conditions, which can negatively impact employee productivity, health, and overall organizational efficiency (Thian, Kannusamy, He, & Klainin-Yobas, 2015).

Stress in occupation is a recurring issue globally, with adverse impacts on workers' health, performance, and work productivity.

In Delta State, work stress has been identified as an emerging issue both in government and private institutions. Okonkwo and Olannye (2025) in a study among Asaba healthcare workers indicated that time pressure, low staffing, and job description ambiguity were predominant sources of stress that reduced job performance and satisfaction.

At the local level, in Ethiopie East and Ukwuani Local Government Areas, there are anecdotal reports and interviews with workers (teachers, health officers, and council workers) of rising complaint against work pressure, low pay, political interference, poor conditions, and lack of promotion or career progression opportunities. The majority of the workers struggle to meet targets, feel undervalued, and typically work in jurisdictions where they

have minimal administrative support. The effect is felt in declining efficiency, absenteeism, and falling morale among employees.

Therefore, the present study seeks to fill this gap by providing empirical data on how employee productivity is influenced by workplace stress in the two Local Government Areas. These associations are essential for policymakers and organizational managers to establish stress management programs, improve work conditions, and foster employee welfare and performance in Delta State.

Statement of the Problem

Workers in these Local Government Areas are exposed to certain contextual issues that may exacerbate stress levels. The majority of the local government workers in these offices work under under-resourced offices with poor infrastructure, irregular payment of salaries, poor management, and outdated equipment. Teachers and health personnel in the area often carry excessive workloads, unclear roles, and few opportunities for career growth. Staff unions have documented long-term problems of overwork, inordinate delays in benefits, poor welfare packages, and demotivation. These are the conditions that dominate as implications that stress could be reducing productivity, job satisfaction, and service delivery at the ground level — but such a connection has not been studied systematically (Adewumi and Onifade, 2023). To understand whether stress manifests differently in these settings would help local government administrations develop targeted strategies targeting the causes rather than symptoms of work-related stress.

Research Questions

The following research questions were put forward to guide the study and they were:

- How does workplace stress affect employee performance?
- What coping mechanisms do employees use to manage workplace stress?

Objectives of the Study

The main objective of this study was to examine the effect of workplace stress on employee performance in Ethiope East and Ukwuani Local Government Areas of Delta State. The specific objectives were to:

- determine the effects of workplace stress on employee performance
- examine coping mechanisms employees adopt to manage stress.

Literature Review

Conceptual Framework

This section clarifies the meaning of core concepts as deployed in this study, drawing from

Workplace Stress

Workplace stress has become one of the most critical issues affecting employees' psychological and physical health within modern organizations. Stress is defined as a set of emotions and physiological reactions when job demands are beyond a person's capabilities or resources to handle (Obiora, Iyke-Ofoedu, & Uzochukwu, 2023). In organizational contexts, workplace stress

occurs when an employee perceives an imbalance between pressures from his or her job and his or her resources for handling these pressures effectively.

Stress at work is a global occupational health problem and one of the key factors in low productivity, absenteeism, and workplace accidents, according to WHO (2024). It is manifested by symptoms like irritability, anxiety, tiredness, loss of concentration, and physical ailments such as headaches or high blood pressure, which may become more serious psychological and physiological disorders if not treated.

Workplace stress is the physical, emotional, and psychological strain occurring when the job requirements do not correspond to the capabilities, resources, or needs of the worker. It occurs when employees perceive that the pressures coming from their work environment are beyond their ability to cope effectively. Stress is not necessarily negative in itself; a moderate level can heighten motivation and performance-eustress-while excessive levels result in burnout, reduced efficiency, and adverse health effects-distress.

According to Obiora et al. (2023), workplace stress arises when employees perceive that they cannot cope with the demands of their roles due to inadequate resources or support. In healthcare settings, stressors such as excessive workload, role ambiguity, poor work-life balance, and emotional exhaustion are prevalent and significantly impact employees' performance (Shanafelt et al., 2015).

Nowadays, workplace stress has taken the leading position among issues related to employees and organizations all over the world. Employees in today's dynamic work environment are continuously exposed to various pressures due to increased workloads, changing technologies, unfriendly working conditions, and strong performance expectations (Orhero et al. 2023). Workplace stress does not only affect employees' psychological and physical health but also impacts organizations' overall productivity and effectiveness

The Nigerian workplace has a peculiar stress dynamic with infrastructural decay, unstable electricity supply, political interference, and job insecurity. In the context of local government administration in Delta State, bureaucratic delay, inadequate remuneration, and lack of career growth are all contributing factors to workplace stress. High workload pressure, administrative bottlenecks, and pressure to meet unrealistic deadlines are common problems faced by employees in Ethiope East and Ukwuani LGAs, leading to chronic stress and burnout.

Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction has been perceived in various ways by different researchers, reporters and practitioners. Generally, Job satisfaction is referred as degree of likeness of the job employees' work for. Various studies have been specifically dedicated to measure job satisfaction and related it to commitment with organization. Satisfaction has been studied under various education, demographics, age, race, gender, and capability at work. Generally, job satisfaction research designs work on a fit paradigm for environment-person. Job satisfaction is an essential research area. Job satisfaction is a multidimensional psychological response from employees towards their job, which are having cognitive means evaluation, affective means emotional and the behavioral aspects (Hulin and Judge, 2003).

The measurement of job satisfaction differs in scope which evaluate effective personal feelings about job, these are emotions reflecting job characteristics (Umeano-Enemuoh, Nwankwo, & Ezegbe, 2015). Therefore, job satisfaction reflects on one's level of happiness and pleasure at their job. Moreover, flexible, and shared work environment creates positive outcome which increases the value in shareholders' equity. Some studies propose there is a correlation between financial achievement and employee satisfaction. Job satisfaction mainly is a mental attribute. It depends on the employees and varies from person to person. Basically, it represents the emotional consequences that enable employees to perform at the organizations. In other words, job satisfaction is the attributed compactness of physiological, psychological, and environmental states to perform the designated role. It is considered that, if employees are not satisfied with the rights, working environment, behaviors of coworkers, and supervisors in decision making then they detached from the organizations. But the situations will prevail as the working condition is not up to the mark. Therefore, the organizations need to make sure about the environment of performance for the employees to get better output for them by setting the proper standard of their rights, working environment, and behavior of coworkers and supervisors (Chandrasekar, 2011).

Workload Stress

The term "workload" refers to the amount of work assigned to an individual or a team within a specific timeframe. While workload is often quantified in terms of tasks or projects, its impact on employees is multifaceted, affecting stress levels, job satisfaction, and overall well-being. Excessive workload can also create an imbalance between work and personal life, contributing to burnout and decreased productivity (Orhero, et al., 2023). It is, therefore, essential for organizations to manage workloads effectively, ensuring that employees are neither underutilized nor overwhelmed. Proper workload management not only enhances employee satisfaction and well-being but also optimizes productivity and operational efficiency. Thus, organizations should aim for a balanced workload, taking into consideration both the quantitative and qualitative aspects of work, to foster a healthy and productive work environment.

Workplace stress is a widespread concern that has far-reaching implications for both individual employees and the organizations for which they work. Various factors contribute to workplace stress, including but not limited to, excessive workloads, looming deadlines, and conflicts with colleagues or supervisors.. These stressful conditions not only impact an employee's mental and physical health but also have organizational repercussions, such as decreased productivity, increased absenteeism, and higher turnover rates (Orhero et. al., 2023).

Job Role Ambiguity

Job role ambiguity refers to a lack of clarity about job responsibilities and expectations. Ezenwaji, Eseadi and Nwosu, (2019) note that ambiguity in roles creates confusion and stress, which can negatively affect job performance. A role is a set of expectations that govern the behavior of an occupant of a specific position within a social structure. Common roles include being a worker, a wife, or a father. Role ambiguity occurs when behavioral expectations associated with a role are vague, imprecise, or unclear to a role occupant. For example, a worker may not understand how to accomplish a task for an employer, a wife may not know how to

balance the household accounts, and a father may not know how to change a baby's diaper. In each of these situations, the ambiguity of how to perform the role is a potential source of stress. If role expectations remain ambiguous for an actor in a social position, there may be negative consequences that affect both the role occupant and others around them (Doherty and Hoyer 2011).

Role ambiguity is a distinct process and should not be confused with role conflict (which represents situations in which multiple role expectations conflict with one another, e.g., a person has difficulty being both a boss and a friend to a subordinate) or with role strain (when the expectations for a specific role are difficult or impossible to meet). Role ambiguity, rather, represents the uncertainty one has for behaving in accordance with role expectations. Role ambiguity most often occurs in the workplace or other formal organizations, but can occur in any situation where an individual is unclear about what a role entails and how it should be performed, such as within the family setting (Akinwale, & George, 2020).

Role ambiguity in organizations has been linked to the quality of leadership within the organization. Research has shown that role ambiguity is greatly reduced when organizations have effective leaders who work to maintain clear pathways of communication between superiors and subordinates. Similarly, less structured organizations (those with more informal workplace environments and cultures) may give rise to greater role ambiguity among employees. Without formal job descriptions and/or clear boundaries between different positions within the organization, employees may have a difficult time ascertaining their specific role within the organization, especially in relation to the roles of coworkers. This type of role ambiguity may potentially cause strain between employees as a result of the inability to clearly separate individual responsibilities. Providing proper feedback and employing formal orientation procedures may help to reduce role ambiguity by creating a more structured socialization process for incoming employees (Oruh, and, Dibia, 2020)

Theoretical Review

The Job Demand-Control Model was developed by the researchers Robert Karasek and Töres Theorell in 1979 provides the theoretical anchor for this study. The theory posits how job demands and a certain level of control or decision latitude of the employees affect stress levels and job satisfaction. The Job Demand-Control Model proposes that work-related stress results from an interaction between job demands and the control employees have over their work. High job demands-for example, an excessive workload or time pressure-in conjunction with low control-for instance, a lack of autonomy-create higher stress levels that have adverse effects on productivity (Karasek, 1973). Job demands may include factors such as: Workload, Emotional demands, high expectations to perform well, time pressure, and the need for multitasking. These demands may vary in different occupations and industries. For instance, the high demands a surgeon faces in performing complex surgeries under time pressure can be contrasted with the high demands put on customer service representatives in terms of managing irate customers and complaints (Karasek, 1973). High demands within a job can influence the employee's well-being. When employees face high job demands without resources or control, they can experience increased levels of stress, burnout, and reduced job satisfaction. High workload and time pressure may make one feel overwhelmed

and not able to live up to expectations. Emotional demands, such as dealing with demanding customers or handling sensitive situations, also lead to emotional exhaustion and strain. In situations where there is a mismatch between the job demands and perceived capabilities, employees may perceive that the demands exceed their abilities or resources. This perceived imbalance contributes to stress and negative health outcomes. This framework therefore necessitates, in the case of Ethiopia East and Ukwuani LGAs, an analysis of how work demands (e.g., workload, deadlines, administrative pressure) might interact with, for example, decision-making latitude and perceived organizational support to influence stress levels. These would be useful in the formulation of management strategies that are appropriate to the local context.

Empirical Review of Related Literature

This section reviews empirical studies on Stress Management and Employee Productivity and Analysis of Workplace Stress Levels on Employee Productivity drawing from the uploaded document

Stress Management and Employee Productivity: An Examination of the Nigerian Work Environment

Barinem, Amah, and Okocha (2022) evaluated on Stress Management and Employee Productivity: An Examination of the Nigerian Work Environment. , this study theoretically examined the relationship between stress management and employee productivity in Nigeria work organization context. The study adopted stress management as predictor variable with role ambiguity stress, role overload stress and role conflict stress as its measure while employee productivity was utilized as the criterion variable with its measures covering task performance and contextual performance. Findings from the study revealed that stress is natural to man. But when it becomes too much, it creates harmful effect on the body and leads poor productivity performance. However, we also found that due to the dangers of excessive stress, effective stress management will not only help organizations achieve sustained productivity but also will help the organization reduce voluntary turnover intentions induced by stressful work arrangement. Thus, the study concludes that stress management is a powerful recipe for sustainable employee productivity growth in the face of changing work demands. Therefore it recommended that managers of work organizations in Nigeria should ensure that employees are provided the much needed instructions, guidelines and policies that clearly defines their work role with no contradictions and confusion to warrant ambiguity in job execution

Analysis of Workplace Stress Levels on Employee Productivity among Non-Teaching Staff at the National Open University of Nigeria

The study, titled "Analysis of Workplace Stress Levels on Employee Productivity among Non-Teaching Staff at the National Open University of Nigeria, carried out by Madu Ibeme Abdulrasheed, Oyetimein and Madu in 2024. The study employs a

descriptive survey design, supplemented by documentary analysis, to investigate the relationship between workplace stress and employee productivity. The findings of the study revealed significant correlations between key stress factors and employee productivity. This finding highlights the noticeable impact of student complaints on staff performance, with increased complaints correlating with a decline in productivity. The pressure to resolve these issues appears to drive a measurable reduction in employee efficiency. The analysis showed that poor work-life balance is strongly associated with decreased performance, reinforcing the notion that the more strained the balance between personal and professional life, the greater the negative impact on productivity. The study concludes that although strategies to mitigate these stressors can improve performance, their overall impact is not highly significant. The study recommends implementing flexible work schedules to improve work-life balance and alleviate the negative effects of workplace stress.

Research Gap and Justification

This gap necessitates a systematic investigation into how stress manifests in these LGAs, what factors contribute most strongly to it, and how it influences employee productivity. The findings from this research will provide evidence-based recommendations to policymakers and administrators for improving worker well-being and productivity in the region.

Research Method

Research Design

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. The use of descriptive survey design is based on the fact that the researcher used questionnaire to obtain information on the variables under study from the sample that was drawn from the population. This design enabled the researcher collect detailed information from respondents.

Population of the Study/ Sample Size/ Sampling Technique

The population comprised employees working in selected public and private organizations within Ethiopia East Local Government Area and Ukwuani Local Government Area. This includes workers in local government offices, educational institutions, health facilities, financial/administrative offices, and selected private businesses. Using the Taro Yamane (1967) formula, a sample size of 400 respondents was determined. A multi-stage sampling technique was adopted

Method of Data Collection/ Analysis

Primary data were collected using structured questionnaires. A total of 400 questionnaires were administered to employees in selected organizations, and 360 were correctly completed and returned, representing a 90% response rate.

Data Presentation

This section presents findings triangulated from quantitative surveys organised by the two objectives.

Demographic Data of Respondents**Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents**

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Age	26–31	80	22.2
	32–37	95	26.4
	38–43	70	19.4
	44–49	60	16.7
	50–55	40	11.1
	56 and above	15	4.2
Gender	Male	198	55.0
	Female	162	45.0
Educational Qualification	Secondary	70	19.4
	OND/NCE	110	30.6
	HND/B.Sc.	140	38.9
	Postgraduate	40	11.1

Source: Fieldwork 2026.

The majority of respondents were within the economically active 32–37 years age bracket, with a fairly balanced gender distribution (55.0% male, 45.0% female). High educational attainment (56.71% held tertiary qualifications) suggests respondents were capable of providing informed opinions.

Effects of workplace stress on employee performance

Table 2: Effects of Workplace Stress on Employee Performance (N = 360)

S/N	Statement	SA (%)	A (%)	N (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	Mean	Std. D	Decision
1	It affects my capacity to concentrate on activities	180 (50.0)	120 (33.3)	25 (6.9)	20 (5.6)	15 (4.2)	4.20	0.95	Accept
2	Stress negatively impacts my work efficiency	200 (55.6)	110 (30.6)	20 (5.6)	20 (5.6)	10 (2.8)	4.30	0.91	Accept
3	I have problems completing tasks on time due to stress	170 (47.2)	130 (36.1)	25 (6.9)	20 (5.6)	15 (4.2)	4.17	0.97	Accept
4	Stress decreases the standard of the work that I produce	165 (45.8)	135 (37.5)	25 (6.9)	20 (5.6)	15 (4.2)	4.15	0.96	Accept
5	Stress makes me less motivated to work well	175 (48.6)	125 (34.7)	30 (8.3)	15 (4.2)	15 (4.2)	4.19	0.94	Accept
6	Stress increases my intention to quit my job	160 (44.4)	120 (33.3)	40 (11.1)	25 (6.9)	15 (4.2)	4.07	1.00	Accept
	Grand mean						4.18	0.955	Accept

Source: Fieldwork 2026.

The results presented in Table 4.9 show that workplace stress has a strong negative effect on employee performance. All the statements recorded mean values above 4.0, indicating strong agreement among respondents. The highest-rated effect is that stress negatively impacts work efficiency (mean = 4.30). This suggests that employees strongly perceive stress as a major barrier to productivity. This is followed by stress affecting concentration (mean = 4.20) and reducing motivation (mean = 4.19), indicating that stress significantly disrupts both cognitive focus and work drive.

Respondents also agreed that stress leads to difficulty completing tasks on time with a mean value of 4.17, reduced quality of work output with a mean value of 4.15 and increased intention to quit with a mean value of 4.07. Although intention to

quit has the lowest mean, it still indicates agreement that stress contributes to turnover intention. Based on the analysis of responses, it was found that workplace stress negatively affects employee performance in several ways. These include reduced concentration, lower efficiency, decreased motivation, poor quality of work output, delays in task completion, and increased intention to quit.

The findings clearly show that workplace stress has a strong negative effect on employee performance. It affects both the psychological and behavioral aspects of employees, leading to reduced productivity, poor performance quality, and increased turnover intention. Organizations must therefore implement effective stress management strategies to improve employee well-being and performance.

Coping mechanisms employees use to manage workplace stress?

Table 3: Coping Mechanisms for Managing Workplace Stress

S/N	Statement	SA (%)	A (%)	N (%)	D (%)	SD (%)	Mean	Std. Dev	Decision
7	I practice time management to deal with stress	180 (50.0)	120 (33.3)	25 (6.9)	20 (5.6)	15 (4.2)	4.20	0.95	Accept
8	Physical exercise aids me in alleviating stress at work	150 (41.7)	130 (36.1)	35 (9.7)	30 (8.3)	15 (4.2)	4.03	0.98	Accept
9	Discussing with workmates or friends aids in stress management	190 (52.8)	120 (33.3)	20 (5.6)	20 (5.6)	10 (2.8)	4.28	0.90	Accept
10	Relaxation methods (e.g., meditation and breathing exercises) help in stress management	160 (44.4)	130 (36.1)	30 (8.3)	25 (6.9)	15 (4.2)	4.10	0.94	Accept
11	Professional help such as counseling has been effective in my stress management	120 (33.3)	110 (30.6)	60 (16.7)	45 (12.5)	25 (6.9)	3.68	1.12	Accept
12	I maintain a balance between work and personal life	200 (55.6)	110 (30.6)	25 (6.9)	15 (4.2)	10 (2.8)	4.32	0.89	Accept
Grand mean							4.10	0.936	Accept

Source: Fieldwork 2026.

The results in Table 4.10 show that employees use a variety of coping mechanisms to manage workplace stress. All items recorded mean scores above 3.5, indicating general agreement that these strategies are used by employees. The most commonly used coping mechanism is work-life balance (mean = 4.32), followed by discussing stress with colleagues or friends (mean = 4.28). This suggests that employees prefer informal and lifestyle-based coping strategies. Time management also recorded a high mean score of 4.20, indicating that employees actively plan and organize their tasks to reduce stress. Relaxation techniques such as meditation and breathing exercises (mean = 4.10) and physical exercise (mean = 4.03) were also commonly used. However, professional counseling services recorded the lowest mean (3.68), although still within the agreement range. This suggests that employees are less likely to seek formal psychological or professional help for stress management. Based on findings, employees use several coping

strategies, including maintaining work-life balance, seeking social support from colleagues, practicing time management, engaging in physical exercise, and using relaxation techniques. However, fewer employees rely on professional counseling services. The findings indicate that employees adopt multiple coping mechanisms to manage workplace stress, with stronger preference for informal and self-managed strategies. Organizations should strengthen formal stress management interventions such as counseling services, employee assistance programs, and wellness initiatives to complement these coping strategies and improve employee well-being.

Testing of Hypotheses

- **Hypothesis 1 (H₀₁):** There is no significant relationship between workplace stress and employee performance.

Table 4: Linear Regression Analysis Showing the Relationship between Workplace Stress and Employee Performance

Variables	Coefficient (β)	Std. Error	t-value	p-value	Decision
Constant	12.417	1.863	6.67	0.000	Significant
Workplace Stress	-0.638	0.074	-8.62	0.000	Significant

Model Summary	
Statistics	Value
R	0.638
R ²	0.407
Adjusted R ²	0.403
F-value	74.304
Sig. F	0.000
Sample Size (N)	360

The result of the linear regression analysis revealed that workplace stress has a significant negative relationship with employee performance among employees in Ethiopia East Local Government Area and Ukwuani Local Government Area. The regression coefficient ($\beta = -0.638$) indicates that workplace stress negatively affects employee performance. This implies that an increase in workplace stress leads to a decrease in employee productivity, morale, efficiency, and commitment to organizational goals. The coefficient of determination ($R^2 = 0.407$) shows that approximately 40.7% of the variation in employee performance is explained by workplace stress. The F-value of 74.304 with a significance value of 0.000 indicates that the regression model is

statistically significant and suitable for explaining the relationship between the variables.

The findings suggest that factors such as excessive workload, poor working conditions, role conflict, job pressure, inadequate organizational support, and long working hours contribute significantly to reduced employee performance in the study area.

- **Hypothesis Two (H_{02}):** There is no significant relationship between workplace stress and the coping mechanisms adopted by employees.

Table 5: Multiple Regression Analysis Showing the Relationship Between Workplace Stress and Employees' Coping Mechanisms

Variables	Coefficient (β)	Std. Error	t-value	p-value	Decision
Constant	7.612	1.483	5.13	0.000	Significant
Time Management	-0.382	0.069	5.54	0.000	Significant
Social Support	-0.294	0.064	4.59	0.000	Significant
Counseling Services	-0.337	0.071	4.75	0.000	Significant
Relaxation Techniques	-0.281	0.066	4.26	0.001	Significant

Model Summary

Statistics	Value
R	0.703
R^2	0.494
Adjusted R^2	0.487
F-value	61.258
Sig. F	0.000
Sample Size (N)	360

The result of the multiple regression analysis revealed that there is a significant relationship between workplace stress and the coping mechanisms adopted by employees in Ethiopia East Local Government Area and Ukwuani Local Government Area. The regression coefficient for workplace stress ($\beta = 0.548$) indicates that increased workplace stress significantly influences the adoption of coping mechanisms by employees. This implies that employees experiencing stressful work conditions tend to adopt strategies such as time management, social support, counseling services, and relaxation techniques to reduce stress and maintain work effectiveness. The findings further showed that time management ($\beta = 0.382$), counseling services ($\beta = 0.337$), social support ($\beta = 0.294$), and relaxation techniques ($\beta = 0.281$) significantly contribute to employees' ability to cope with workplace stress. The coefficient of determination ($R^2 = 0.494$) indicates that approximately 49.4% of the variation in employees' coping mechanisms is explained by workplace stress and the identified coping strategies. The F-value of 61.258 and significance level of 0.000 show that the regression model is statistically significant and appropriate for explaining the relationship between the variables. The findings suggest that employees actively respond to stressful working conditions by adopting adaptive stress-management strategies that help improve emotional stability and job performance.

Discussion of Findings

Based on the analysis and testing of hypothesis, the following findings were made: There is a significant relationship between workplace stress and employee performance. To establish this point, it implies that an increase in workplace stress leads to a decline in employee performance. High levels of stress arising from excessive workload, role conflict, poor working conditions, and job pressure reduce employees' efficiency, productivity, and commitment to organizational goals. This finding agrees with the study of Ahsan et al. (2009), who found that workplace stress negatively affects employee productivity and organizational performance. Similarly, Ali and Farooqi (2014) observed that stress significantly reduces workers' effectiveness and job satisfaction. The finding is also consistent with studies conducted by Omoniyi and Ogunsanmi (2012) who reported that excessive workload, poor remuneration, and unfavorable working conditions significantly reduce employee productivity in Nigerian organizations. Similarly, Adebayo and Ogunsina (2011) found that occupational stress negatively affects workers' commitment and efficiency in public sector organizations in Nigeria. The authors explained that employees experiencing prolonged stress often exhibit low morale, absenteeism, fatigue, and reduced organizational commitment.

There is a significant relationship between workplace stress and the coping mechanisms adopted by employees. This findings established that employees respond to workplace stress by adopting various coping strategies. These may include seeking social support, improving time management, taking breaks, engaging in recreational activities, or practicing relaxation techniques. The finding supports the work of Robbins and Judge (2013), who noted that employees often develop adaptive mechanisms to manage organizational stress. In support of this finding, Okwaraji and Aguwa (2015) found that workers in Nigeria often rely on social support, religious activities, time management, and relaxation techniques to cope with occupational stress. The finding further agrees with the study of Ugoani (2020), who emphasized that coping mechanisms such as counseling services, organizational communication, and employee support programs are essential in reducing workplace stress and improving productivity in Nigerian organizations.

Conclusion

The following conclusions were drawn based on the findings of this study.

- Since there is a significant relationship between workplace stress and employee performance, it is concluded that workplace stress is a major factor affecting employee productivity and organizational effectiveness in the study area. The findings revealed that excessive workload, poor working conditions, organizational pressure, role conflict, and inadequate support systems contribute greatly to stress among employees, thereby reducing their efficiency, commitment, and overall productivity.
- The study further established that employees adopt various coping mechanisms such as time management, social support, counseling, and relaxation techniques to manage workplace stress. In addition, organizational support was found to play a significant role in reducing stress and improving employee performance. Employees who receive adequate support from management and co-workers tend to demonstrate higher morale, greater job satisfaction, and improved productivity.

Recommendations

In light of the conclusions of the study, the following recommendations were made:

- Organizations should implement effective stress-reduction measures to minimize the negative effects of workplace stress on employee performance. Management should identify major workplace stressors such as excessive workload, unrealistic deadlines, role ambiguity, and inadequate resources, and develop policies to address them. Creating a conducive work environment, ensuring equitable workload distribution, and promoting work-life balance will help reduce stress and enhance employee productivity and performance.
- Employees should be encouraged and supported to adopt positive coping mechanisms for managing workplace stress. Organizations should provide training on stress management, time management, resilience building, and emotional intelligence. Employees should also be

encouraged to engage in healthy practices such as regular exercise, relaxation techniques, seeking social support, and effective problem-solving strategies to improve their ability to cope with workplace challenges.

- Management should strengthen organizational support systems to mitigate the impact of stress on employee performance. Organizations should establish supportive structures such as counseling services, employee assistance programs, mentorship opportunities, and open communication channels. Supervisors should be trained to recognize signs of stress and provide appropriate support, as strong organizational support can buffer the adverse effects of stress and improve employee outcomes.

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