



INFLUENCE OF JOB DEMAND AND STRESS ON INTEREST AND JOB SATISFACTION OF PROFESSIONAL SECRETARIES IN TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS IN BAUCHI STATE

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Abstract

This study investigated the Influence of job demand and stress on interest and job satisfaction of professional secretaries in tertiary institutions in Bauchi State. The study had four objectives and four null hypotheses. Survey design was adopted for the study. The population was 156 professional secretaries from ten tertiary institutions in Bauchi State and the entire population was used for the study. Instrument for data collection was adopted questionnaire validated by experts and pilot tested at Gombe State. A reliability coefficient of 0.71 was obtained. Data for the study was collected with the help of four research assistants and subjected to Linear Regression at $P < 0.05$ level of significance. The result revealed that the job demands and stress have significant influence on interest and job satisfaction of professional secretaries in tertiary institutions in Bauchi State, Nigeria. It was therefore concluded that the job satisfaction of secretaries which is considered as very critical to achieving the goals of our tertiary institutions could only be achieved in the presence of a favorable demands, effective job resources and management of stress. It was recommended that tertiary institutions where secretaries work should employ more secretaries to avoid the major sources of high job demands and stress affecting interest and job satisfaction of the secretaries. The seminars and workshops should also be conducted to secretarial staff on continuous basis to enable them update their digital skills and computer word processing skills.

Keywords: Job Demand, Stress, Interest, Job Satisfaction, Secretaries

Introduction

Secretaries in organization are people responsible for coordinating personnel of various arms, channeling each of the correspondence to the appropriate office for action. Secretaries are pivots on which management revolves and they are the life wire of an organization with high work demand. Amoor and Magaji (2015) defined secretary as a person, whose work consists of supporting management, including executives, using a variety of project management, communication and organizational skills. According to Buseni (2013) secretary is an individual involved in organization of information flow from the source to eventual storage. Wikipedia (2018) defines secretary as a person employed to write orders, letters, dispatch public or private papers, records and the like, an official scribe, one who attends to correspondence and transacts other business for an association, a public body, or an individual. This means that secretaries are the communication link in an organization. Thus this mean those secretaries are considered as engine on all organizations

including tertiary institutions. Based on these, secretaries in tertiary institutions are beset with a lot of stress in the course of discharging their duties or responsibilities, which may arise from both the job environment and from their duties. Secretaries are in a vulnerable position to varying degrees of stress while at work due to the very nature of their job; numerous job demands may be present and have impact upon them.

The jobs of secretaries are demanding and require long-term physical, emotional or cognitive effort and therefore are associated with physiological and psychological costs (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). According to the author, job demands (irregular work hours, time pressure, attending to many visitors at the same time) are not necessarily negative, but they turn into work stressors if they require excessive effort. Job demand also refers to those physical, psychological, social, or organizational aspects of the job that require sustained effort, and as such incur certain costs as a result (Wanjohi & Iravo, 2018). Examples are a high work pressure, an unfavorable physical environment, and emotionally demanding interactions with clients. The authors maintained that job demands are not necessarily negative, they may turn into job stressors when meeting those demands requires high effort from which the secretaries has not adequately recovered. Thus job demands within the public sector including tertiary institutions are the perceived unmanageable paperwork that cause stress on secretaries.

Stress is a frequent problem across occupations and it impacts on job performance. Stress is defined as physiological responses that occur when an organism fails to respond appropriately to emotional or physical threats. Odu and Vito (2017) opined that stress is a condition of strain that has a direct bearing on emotions, thought process and physical conditions of a person. The authors maintained that stress is a chronic complex emotional state with uneasiness characterized by various nervous and mental disorders. According to World Health Organisation (2016) also define occupational stress as the perception of a discrepancy between environmental demands (stressors) and individual capacities to fill these demands. The organization added 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. These therefore suggested that work-related stress was once thought of as occurring only in those who work in senior positions; hence, stress is much more common in employees at lower levels of workplace hierarchies, where they have less control over their work situation.

Secretarial occupation has always been an enviable profession. This is because it is recognized to the extent that no office or establishment can function without the services of secretaries. Stressors affect employee performance and decrease their efficiency. High levels of work demands are congruent with fatigue and stress, which may result in burnout and stress (Kavitha, 2009). In all organizations including tertiary institutions, factors that are burden to secretaries and inadvertently develops to stress according to Amoor and Magaji (2015) includes meeting deadlines, tackling unapproachable bosses, overtime, working hours, workload, inadequate monetary rewards, communication barriers, pressures of avoiding errors at job or to complete tasks in a given limited time. According to the authors, these may affect the job aspiration of individual. Job aspiration is an employee interest, which refers to the topic of a person's engagement (an interest in secretarial work) and is described as a characteristic of a person.

Interests reflect stable preferences for certain work activities and work environments. Research has demonstrated that congruence between interests and work environments affects some



important workplace outcomes, such as job performance and turnover (Amoor & Magaji, 2015). When a career is aligned with one's interest, the job demands on the an employee is favourable, there may have more motivation to devote effort into developing relevant knowledge and skills, set higher career-related goals, and take actions to achieve those goals. All of these behaviors can help individuals improve their performance at work and enhance their career potential. The benefits of matching careers with interests are not limited to individual employees. From an organizational perspective, choosing employees with the best fit not only contributes to higher job performance, which ultimately influences organizational effectiveness, but also helps to control turnover rates. Employees whose interests are congruent with their jobs are more likely to be satisfied with work and find intrinsic motivation to stay in the work environment longer (Houliort & colleagues, 2014). Lavigne, Forest and Crevier-Braud (2010) conducted a longitudinal and a cross-sectional study on the effects of interest in relation to stress like burnout. The results from the study showed that interest was related to higher levels of flow experiences, which appeared to protect against the experience of burnout symptoms. In a recent study by Houliort and colleagues (2014) interest was positively related to turnover intentions. The authors argued that that any job that is highly demanding have negative effective on the interest of employee. The assertions suggest that when job demands are high, they translate into stress affecting the interest of a secretary negatively. The presence of these high job demands among secretaries prompted the researcher to carry out the study using secretaries' interest as one of the variables. The interests among secretaries could be an antecedent to their job satisfaction.

Job satisfaction is a person's positive feeling about his work (Robbins & Judge 2011). Cranny, Smith and Stone (2014) defined job satisfaction as employees' emotional state regarding the job, considering what they expected and what they actually got out of it. Robbins and Judge (2011) argue that organizations that have more satisfied employees tend to be more effective when compared to organizations that have employees who are less satisfied. Smith (2012) defines job satisfaction as any combination of psychological, physiological and environmental circumstances that cause a person to say, "I am satisfied with my job". Smith (2012), remarks that the concept refers to an effective response of the worker to his job. By this, it is meant that satisfaction results from consequences of the worker's experience on the job in relation to his own values and needs. In their views, satisfaction can be taken as similar in meaning to pleasure. Lawal (2015), suggests that the determinants of satisfaction are more complicated than this. People and their job are the basic elements involved; but, it is clear that there are numerous other job demands and stressors that emanate from the job or the environment surrounding secretaries.

Job satisfaction and secretaries' performance goes hand in hand and is therefore very imperative to the well-being of any organization. The problem of job satisfaction has been a great concern to employers of labor and employees alike. Secretaries hold important positions in an organization; as a result, they are viewed as the medium by which organizational goals are realized. Without secretaries, an organization cannot function effectively and successfully. The effective performance of the secretary is dependent on the level of his satisfaction on the job (Amoor & Magaji, 2015). The author maintained that in any organizations that the secretaries are satisfied, their morale is always low and job commitment, performance and loyalty would be affected. It is based

on this background that the study specifically determined the influence of: (i) job demand on interest of professional Secretaries; (2) job demand on job satisfaction of professional Secretaries; (3) stress on interest of professional Secretaries; and (4) stress on job satisfaction of professional Secretaries in tertiary institutions in Bauchi State

Research Hypotheses

HO₁: Job demand has no significant influence on interest of professional secretaries in tertiary institutions in Bauchi State.

HO₂: Job demand has no significant influence on job satisfaction of professional secretaries in tertiary institutions in Bauchi State.

HO₃: Stress has no significant influence on interest of professional secretaries in tertiary institutions in Bauchi State.

HO₄: Stress has no significant influence on job satisfaction of professional secretaries in tertiary institutions in Bauchi State.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Design of the Study

Descriptive Survey research design was used to carry out this study. The Choice of the design was based on the fact that the study involved a population of respondents from whom information is obtained through questionnaire (Adamu & Sani, 2014). Therefore, survey method was considered suitable for the study. The population for the study consisted of 156 professional secretaries in the ten (10) tertiary institutions in Bauchi State. The entire population was used for the study.

The instrument for data collection was four scale structured questionnaire. The questionnaire on stress was adapted from Aniedi, Offiong and Effiom (2014) on their work Occupational stress sources among university academic and administrative staff. The instrument of job demand was adopted from the work of Janse, Rensburg, Rothmann and Diedericks (2018) on their work titled Job demands and resources: Flourishing and job performance in South African universities of technology settings. The questionnaire items consisted of 40 items divided into four sections with each section having 10 items and measured on 4-point scales. All the items were in four rating scale (4=strongly agree, 3=agree, 2=disagree, 1=strongly disagree). The dependent variables were used to determine the respondents' opinions based on the construct while the independent variables and dependent variables were used to test the null hypotheses.

The instrument was validated by Three (3) experts. Their suggestions were used to improve the quality of the instrument. A pilot study was conducted with twenty-seven (27) secretaries from Federal University Kashere, Gombe State. The data collected were entered into Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS), 25 to determine the reliability of the instrument using Cronbach alpha. A reliability coefficient of 0.71 was obtained. The instrument was reliable for the study. The data for

the study were collected by the researchers assisted by four research assistants. The researchers used face to face approach and the exercise lasted for nine weeks. The data collected were analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS), 25 to run linear regression analysis at the 0.05 level of significance. In the test of null hypotheses, when the p-value is less than 0.05, the null hypothesis was rejected and if the p-value is greater than 0.05 the null hypothesis was retained.

Results of Study

The results of the study were presented in Tables 1 to 4.4.2.1

Research Hypothesis One

Job demand has no significant influence on interest of professional secretaries in tertiary institutions in Bauchi State.

Table 1: Linear Regression Analysis on the Influence of Job Demand on Interest of professional secretaries in tertiary institutions in Bauchi State.

Variable	Standardized Coefficients Beta	T	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	p-value
Job Demand	.851	20.081	.851 ^a	.724	.722	.000

- a. Predictors: (Constant), Job demand
- b. Dependent variable; interest

The outcome of regression analysis used to test null hypothesis one disclosed the Standardized Coefficients Beta value of .851 with $t=20.081$ with R-value of .851. The R-square obtained was .724 which indicated that job demand has 72.4% influence on the interest of professional secretaries in tertiary institution in Bauchi state. The p-value of $0.00 < 0.05$, this suggest that the influence of the independent variable (Job demand) on dependent variable (interest) was significant. The null hypothesis was therefore not retained.

Research Hypothesis Two

Job demand has no significant influence on job satisfaction of professional secretaries in tertiary institutions in Bauchi State.

Table 2: Linear Regression Analysis on the Influence of Job Demand on Job Satisfaction of Professional Secretaries in Tertiary Institutions in Bauchi State

Variable	Standardized Coefficients Beta	T	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	p-value
Job Demand	.173	2.182	.173 ^a	.030	.024	.031

- a. Predictors: (Constant), Job demand
b. Dependent variable; job satisfaction

The regression analysis in Table 2 revealed the Standardized Coefficients Beta value of .173 with $t=2.182$ and R-value was .173. The R-square value of .030 suggests that job demand has 3% influence on job satisfaction of professional secretaries in tertiary institutions in Bauchi State. The p-value was less than the alpha value ($.031 < 0.05$), the result indicated that the influence of job demand on job satisfaction of professional secretaries in tertiary institutions in Bauchi state was significant. The hypothesis was therefore not retained.

Research Hypothesis Three

Stress has no significant influence on interest of professional secretaries in tertiary institutions in Bauchi State.

Table 3: Linear Regression Analysis on the Influence of Stress on Interest of Professional Secretaries in Tertiary Institutions in Bauchi State

Variable	Standardized Coefficients Beta	T	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	p-value
Job Stress	.903	26.122	.903 ^a	.816	.815	.000

- a. Predictors: (Constant), Job Stress
b. Dependent variable; interest

The regression analysis on the test of hypothesis three in Table 9 disclosed the Standardized Coefficients Beta coefficient of .903 with $t=26.122$ and R-value was .903. The R-square of .816 obtained suggests that stress has 81.6% influence on interest of professional Secretaries in tertiary institutions in Bauchi State. The $p=.000$ was less than 0.05 level of significance. The obtained p-value indicated that stress significantly influenced the interest of professional Secretaries in Tertiary Institutions in Bauchi State

Research Hypothesis Four

Stress has no significant influence on job satisfaction of professional secretaries in tertiary institutions in Bauchi State

Table 4: Linear Regression Analysis on the Influence of Stress on Job Satisfaction of Professional Secretaries in Tertiary Institutions in Bauchi State

Variable	Standardized Coefficients Beta	T	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	p-value
Job Stress	.856	20.565	.856 ^a	.733	.731	.000

- a. Predictors: (Constant), Job Stress
- b. Dependent variable; job satisfaction

The regression analysis for the test of null hypothesis four in Table 4 revealed the Standardized Coefficients Beta of .856 which was found to be the same with the R-value. The $t=20.565$ with R-square of .733. The obtained R-square value suggests that the independent variable has 73.3% influence on the dependent variable. The p-value obtained was less than the alpha value ($.000 < 0.05$), the result indicated that the influence of stress on job satisfaction of professional Secretaries in tertiary institutions in Bauchi State was significant.

Discussion of Finding

The result of the research question one and test of corresponding null hypothesis one revealed that job demand had significant influence on interest of secretaries in tertiary institution. The result agreed with the earlier study of Ali and Farooqi (2014) who reported that high job demands (such as unpleasant work environment, excessive work pressure, work–family imbalance, and emotional demands) lead towards higher levels of exhaustion and disappointment and thereby reducing employee's interest in job, which eventually induces withdrawal from the organization. This result is also concordant with the scientific results which present a relation between the interest and job demands and this matching can correlate with work satisfaction in a positive way, and it seems to correlate in a negative way when the job demands are high (Bakker & Demeroutii, 2017). It can therefore be concluded that high level of matching between personal interest and job demands is associated with a high level of job satisfaction, both directly and indirectly (through work involvement).

The result from research question two and test of corresponding null hypothesis indicated that job demands significantly influenced the job satisfaction of professional Secretaries in tertiary institutions in Bauchi State. The result agreed with a previous finding of non-profit and public employees, when job demands are high, the job satisfaction of employees improves (Knapp, Smith, & Sprinkle, 2017). The finding in line with a previous study conducted Rai (2013) who reported that job demand like work overload is negatively correlated with job satisfaction. This suggests that respondent who felt heavy demands made upon them are also less satisfied with their job. The pressure on secretaries to do their secretarial duties and also work extra hard to carry out other duties that can be carried out by other junior non-teaching such as

photocopying, filing, handling incoming and outgoing correspondences will affect the secretaries job satisfaction in job.

The result from research question three and test of corresponding null hypothesis indicated that stress has influence on interest of professional Secretaries in tertiary institutions in Bauchi State. The result is in agreement with a previous finding of Ali, Raheem, Nawaz, and Imamuddin (2014) who noted that the stress level of workers affect their involvement in their job and this will definitely affect their interest in the job. Asekun (2015) also noted that stress has negative influence on job satisfaction, job performance and interest of employee.

The result of the research question four and test of corresponding null hypothesis four revealed that stress influenced job satisfaction of professional Secretaries in tertiary institutions in Bauchi State. The result is in agreement with the study conducted by Adeniji, Salau, Awe and Odunayo (2018) who reported that people with higher percentage of stress in their job may feel frustrated when they are having problems with colleagues or society and this may lead to the negative impact to their satisfaction in the organization. Similarly, Ahmad, Khan, Srikanth, Patel, Nagappa and Jamshed (2015) argued that if a person is stressed in his job, he will experience job dissatisfaction and will not be able to deliver 100% and the productivity will be affected.

Conclusion

The result of this study revealed that job demand and stress significantly influenced the interest and job satisfaction among professional secretaries of tertiary institutions in Bauchi State. The result also established that secretaries in tertiary institutions consider most of the work functions as causes of high job demand and stress in the workplace, and these stressors have great effect on their commitment, performance, and productivity. This implies that secretaries experience high job demand and a lot of work stress as they carry out their administrative and clerical functions in the tertiary institutions in the State. Since there is presence of unavoidable demand and stress in work life, it is obvious that in tertiary institutions, secretaries must go through a form of stress to accomplish office tasks. It is therefore concluded that the productivity of secretaries which is considered as very critical to achieving the goals of our tertiary institution could only be achieved in the presence of a favourable demands and efforts towards effective management of stress.

Recommendations

Based on the major findings and conclusions of the study, the following measures should be put in place to help secretaries of the tertiary institutions manage and reduce stress at work.

1. Government should employ more secretaries to avoid high job demand and work overload which are the major sources of stress affecting interest and job satisfaction of the secretaries.
2. Management should emphasize on favourable job demand and introduce stress management training program strategy at various units in the tertiary institutions.
3. There is the need for tertiary institutions such as universities, polytechnics and colleges to train their secretarial staff regularly to update their digital skills and computer based word processing knowledge in order to make them relevant in the modern business offices.

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