

## Impact of Job Stress on the Job Performance of Nigeria Security And Civil Defence Corps Members.

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### ABSTRACT

This study assessed the impact of job stress on job performance among workers of Nigeria Security and Civil Defense Corps (NSCDC). Job stress was measured by the Job-Related Tension Index (JTI) developed by Kahn, Wolfe, Quinn, Snoek and Rosenthal (1964) and job performance was measured by the Role Based Performance Scale (RBPS) developed by Welbourne, Johnson and Erez (1998). The sample for the study consisted of 300 participants, comprising of 185 males and 115 females. Participants were selected using the convenience sampling method from the population of NSCDC workers. And results of the analyses of data collected indicated that job stress positively influenced job performance. Additionally, it was found that age, gender and years of experience neither independently nor interactively influenced job performance. Discussion of results was in line with previous literature and it was recommended that organizations should foster functional stress to trigger moderate anxiety for higher performance while simultaneously avoiding over stressing workers to guide against redundancy and lower job performance.

**Keywords:** Job stress, job performance, NSCDC workers, Ekiti State, Nigeria.

The most discussed phenomenon in the media and political scene in Nigeria currently is the issue of insecurity. Boko haram insurgency, in particular, and the issues of vandalization of pipelines and other government infrastructures and projects occupies the front burner of discussions in Nigeria and has made security challenges quite daunting in Nigeria. The last decade witnessed an upsurge in the rate and severity of threat posed by this insurgency. The government, in a bid to curtail this menace, made efforts to establish security agencies to facilitate intelligence gathering and increase manpower for the fight against the insurgency in Nigeria. It is against this backdrop that the Nigeria Security and Civil Defense Corp (NSCDC) were established to provide manpower to curb the menace of insecurity in Nigeria. The NSCDC is often said to have a long past but a short history as its creation is rumoured to date back to May, 1967 during the Nigeria civil war; with operations within the then federal capital territory of Lagos. However, the security agency became statutorily established by law (Act No. 2) in 2003 and the amended Act 6 of 4th June 2007 further empowered the NSCDC. This law (Act 6 of 2007) empowers the corps to “maintain twenty four hours surveillance over infrastructures, sites and projects for the Federal, State and local Government”. The corps is also charged with the responsibility of assisting in the maintenance of peace and order and in the protection and rescuing of the civil population during periods of emergency. The corps also recommends to the minister, the registration of private guard companies, from time to time, inspect the premises of private guard companies, their training facilities and approve same if it is up to standard. They supervise and monitor the activities of all private guard companies and keep a register for that purpose, periodically organize workshop and training courses for private guard companies; and seal up any private guard company which operates without a valid license; maintain twenty-four hour surveillance over infrastructures; sites and projects for the Federal, State and Local Government. Other functions of the corps includes: enter and search any premises and seize any material suspected to have been used in vandalization or suspected process of vandalization, enter and search premises of any suspected illegal dealer in petroleum products or material used by power holding of Nigeria, postal services, Nigeria Telecommunication or for any other public utility or infrastructure. They also have power to arrest with or without a warrant, detain, investigate and institute legal proceedings by or in the name of the Attorney-general of the Federal Republic of Nigeria against any person who is reasonably suspected to have committed an offence under the 2007 Act 6 as amended for Nigeria Security and Civil Defense Corps.

Additionally, the corps monitor, investigate and take steps to forestall any act of terrorism and report same to appropriate federal security agency; provide necessary warning for the civilian population from danger areas; provide and manage shelters for the civilian during periods of emergency; assist in the decontamination and in the taking of precautionary measures during any period of emergency; carry out rescue operations and control volatile situations; assist in the provision of emergency medical services including first aid, during any period of emergency; detect and demarcate any danger area; assist the federal and state fire service in fire-fighting operations; assist in the distribution of emergency supplies; provide assistance to resolve and maintain order in distressed areas in any period of emergency; assist in repairing indispensable public utilities during any period of emergency; provide intelligence information to the military on any matter relating to crime control generally,

riot, disorder, revolt, strike or religious unrest; subversive activity by members of the public aimed at frustrating any government programme or policy; industrial action and strike aimed at paralyzing government activities, any other matter as may be directed by the minister and have power to arrange and mediate in the settlement of disputes among willing members of the public among others. These aforementioned duties of the NSCDC are many and time demanding. They may, in turn, threaten the abilities of members to cope with their job demand and thus, impinge their performance.

Work is often argued to serve certain functions for workers which can be very rewarding and self-satisfying. However, work can also be a tremendous burden, with deadlines to meet, work overload and difficult bosses placing considerable pressure and strain on workers. Therefore, job and the work environment commonly produce stressors, which, if not properly handled, could result in negative and dysfunctional behavior at work (Riggio, 2003).

Stress has nowadays become a prevalent state in everyday human life especially among different employees at various levels of jobs (Arbabisarjou, Ajdari and Omeidi, 2013). Workers are increasingly exposed to stressful work environments as a result of changing work expectations, including unrealistic deadlines and individual workload (Bond, Galinsky & Swanberg, 1998; Vezina, Bourbonnais, Brisson & Trudel, 2004). Occupational stress produces negative consequences for workers, such as high health care costs (Goetzel, Anderson, Whitmer, Ozminowski, Dunn, Wasserman & The Health Enhancement Research Organization, 1998) and increased risk for depression and anxiety (Corpley, Steptoe, & Joeke, 1999).

The outcomes of job stress impacts productivity and quality of employees' performance just as its psychological influence could stretch beyond the work environment and invert into a bad lifestyle habits like substance abuse which could lead to debilitating health conditions (Owolabi, Owolabi, Olaolorun & Olofin, 2012). More worrisome is the far reaching amplifying effect that the presence of chronic work stress could have on psychological disorders and quality of family life (Dewa, Lin, Kooehoorn & Goldner, 2007).

Job stress is a growing problem for employees in Western industrialized societies, and increasing job stress has led to greater health costs, a higher percentage of absenteeism and turnover, more accidents, and inefficient performance (Siu, 2003).

Job stress or work-related stress is a psychological state perceived by individuals when faced with demands, constraints, and opportunities that have important but uncertain outcomes (Sager, 1991). Job stress is very much an individual reaction, and differs from general stress as it is also organization and job-related (Chen & Silverthorne, 2008). Thus, job stress refers to work-related psychological stress, as well as an individual's ability to handle a particular situation or work environment (Jamal, 1999). Parker and Decotiis (1983) indicated that individuals experience stress in various forms, which can pertain to psychological states (e.g., anxiety, tension). In sum, job stress is the outcome of a lack of person-work fit; it is also a subjective cognition that can lead to work-induced emotions such as anger, fear, anxiety, sadness, or disgust (Lazarus, 1990). This definition has been corroborated by that offered by Irene (2005) who defined job stress as a pattern of reactions that occurs when workers are presented with work demands that are not matched with their knowledge, skills or ability and hence, challenge their ability to cope. All of the definitions of job stress offered so far viewed occupational stress as a cognitive construct. Lazarus (1986) described job stress as that experienced when the demands of the work environment exceed the workers' ability to cope with (or control) them".

Job performance has been a very much researched area in industrial and organizational psychology due to its importance to an organization. An organization's success very much depends on the performance of its employees. Thus, good job performance is something organizations try to foster.

If one wants to measure, predict, explain, and change job performance, a common understanding of this construct is essential (Campbell, McCloy, Oppler, & Sager, 1993). The measurement and definition of this construct has posed difficulty historically, thus leading it to be known as the criterion problem (see Austin & Villanova, 1992 for a review). The last decade of the twentieth century however, witnessed a resurgence of research and new conceptualizations of job performance allowing generalizable definitions and taxonomies to emerge (Borman & Motowidlo, 1997; Campbell, 1990; Viswesvaran & Ones, 2000).

Job performance can be defined as scalable actions, behavior and outcomes that employees engage in or bring about that are linked with, and contribute to, organizational goals (Viswesvaran and Ones, 2000). A widely

endorsed and often cited definition of work performance is that offered by Campbell (1990) in which he described work performance as those behaviours or actions that are relevant to the goals of an organization. According to Koopman, Beernards, Hildebrandt, Schaufeli, de Vet and van der Beek (2011), three notions accompany this definition, which are: (1) work performance should be defined in terms of behavior rather than results/outcomes, (2) work performance includes only behaviours that are relevant to organizational goals, and (3) work performance is multidimensional. Performance is what the organization hires one to do and do well (Campbell, McCloy, Oppler, & Sager, 1993). Hence, performance is not defined by the action itself but by judgmental and evaluative process (Ilgen & Schneider, 1991; Motowidlo, Borman & Schmit, 1997).

Research has shown that one of the detrimental effects of job stress is low performance (Beehr, Jex, Stacy, & Murray, 2000; Jamal, 1984; Tubre & Collins, 2000). Scott (1966), found that individual performance increases with arousal of optimal point stress (eustress) and decreases as stress and stimulation increase beyond the optimum (distress). Jamal and Baba (1992) examined the influence of work stress on productivity based on four job stress factors (overload, conflict, ambiguity and inadequacy), which had a slightly different effect depending on the employee group examined and the measures of productivity (quality, quantity and motivation) used; they concluded that the greater the stress, the less productive the work force. Correlational studies such as those conducted by Tubre and Collins (2000) and Kakkos & Trivellas (2011) found out that work stress is negatively associated with job performance.

In gender and performance literature, Green, Jegadesh & Tang (2009) investigated the average number of stocks that analysts cover each calendar year. It was reported that women cover fewer stocks than men in each year-8.65, on average, as compared with 9.92 for men. In an opposite direction, previous studies (e.g. Igbaria & Shayo, 2007; Crawford & Nonis, 1996) reported that gender did not have a significant impact on work performance.

Recent studies have led to the belief that biographical factors such as age play a major role in work performance. The general belief is that performance decreases with age, although the older workers bring experience to the job (Tiraieyeri & Uli, 2011). Existing literature on the relationship between these constructs appear mixed. Some reviews have concluded that no relationship exists between age and work performance (Salthouse and Maurer, 1996; Warr and Pennington, 1994; McEvoy and Cascio, 1989). However, some reviews have generally concluded that the effects of age on work performance are slight (Davies et al., 1991; Warr & Pennington, 1994). Worsening the indecisive literature on these variables are research findings that have reported a relationship (e.g. Long and Swortzel, 2007; Smedley and Whitten, 2006).

Researches on the relationship between experience and job performance of employees have traditionally reported a significant relationship (e.g. Rugai and Agih, 2008; Tari and Anike, 2011) following the hypothesis that job tenure provides workers with experience that are relevant to the job. While justifying their research outcome, Tari and Anike (2011) argued that this is probably due to the belief that the more experience the employee gather as a result of long years of service, the higher the performance of the employee. This is more so because he/she has to put into practice all the experience he/she has acquired over the years. For example, Rugai and Agih (2008) found a high relationship between teachers experience and their job performance. They explained that the longer a teacher works in a school, the greater probability that his productivity will be higher.

Based on the above positions therefore, this study is poised to find out whether:

- (1) There will be a significant effect of job stress on job performance of NSCDC workers,
- (2) There will be a significant effect of gender on job performance of NSCDC workers,
- (3) There will be a significant effect of age on job performance of NSCDC workers,
- (4) There will be a significant effect of years of service on job performance of NSCDC workers, and
- (5) There will be a significant interaction effect of gender, age and years of service on job performance of NSCDC workers

## METHODS

This study adopted both factorial and independent groups' designs. It is a factorial design because the main and interaction effects of factors of the independent variables were tested on the dependent variable. It is an independent groups' design because groups with high and low scores on the independent variables were compared on the dependent variable. In addition, the mean scores of male and female participants were compared on levels of job performance.

### Participants for the Study:

The sample for the study consisted of 300 participants comprising of 185 males and 115 females. Participants were selected using the purposive sampling method from the population of workers of Nigerian Security and Civil Defence Corps, Ekiti State Command. Educational attainments of participants showed that 108 were SSCE holders, OND holders (102), HND holders (71) and B.Sc graduates (19). Based on length of service, 114 workers have spent 1-3 years, 91 workers (4-6 years) and 95 workers (7-10 years).

### Measures:

A questionnaire consisting of four sections was used for this study. The first section contains questions designed by the researchers to collect demographic data of participants such as sex, age, marital status, years of experience on the job, educational qualification etc.

Section 'B' contained the Job-related Tension Index (JTI) which was used to assess the job stress of respondents. It was developed by Kahn, Wolfe, Quinn, Snock and Rosenthal (1964). The JTI was designed to measure employee perceptions of job stress. The scale comprised of 15 items asking about the frequency of stressful events and the extent of role overload. Responses were obtained on a summated rating scale format ranging from "never" to "always". Internal consistency reliability using Cronbach alpha values for the instrument was .85 (Mohd Bokti and Abu Talib, 2009) and higher scores indicated higher perceived job stress. All items of the scale follow the direct scoring format.

In Section 'C', respondents' job performance was measured by the Role-Based Performance Scale (RBPS) developed by Welbourne, Johnson and Erez (1998). It is a 20-item scale designed to measure performance. Responses were obtained on a summated rating scale format ranging from "Needs more improvement" to "Excellent". The coefficient alpha of the scale is 0.85 (Welbourne, Johnson and Erez, 1998). Higher scores denote greater job performance. All items of the scale follow the direct scoring format.

### Procedure for Data Collection:

The researchers sought permission and were granted them to administer instruments from authority of Ekiti State Command of the Nigerian Security and Civil Defence Corps. Instruments were administered after building enough rapport with workers of the corps and obtaining their consent. Administration of instruments to workers was carried out after explaining each item of the instrument. It took about four weeks to collect the data.

## RESULTS

The results of this study are presented below.

**Table 1: Mean and standard deviation scores of study variables**

Variable	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Job Stress	300	2.97	0.71
Job Performance	300	62.02	15.20
Years in Service	300	4.90	2.62

**Table 2: Independent t-test Summary Table showing the Effect of Job Stress on Job Performance**

Variables	Level	N	mean	S.D	df	t	Sig.
Job stress	Low	42	54.07	19.12	87	-5.03	P<0.05
	High	47	71.17	12.61			

$t(87) = -5.03, P < 0.05$

Results from the table above showed that there is a significant difference in the job performance mean scores of employees with high (71.17) and low (54.07) job stress [ $t(87) = 5.03, P < 0.05$ ]. It therefore means that job stress significantly influences job performance.

**Table 3: 2x4x3 Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) Summary Table Showing the interaction Effects of Gender, Age and Years of Experience on Job Performance.**

**Tests of Between-Subjects effects**

Dependent variable: job performance

Source	Type III sum of squares	df	Mean square	F	Sig.
Sex	345.833	1	345.833	1.525	P>.05
Age	1672.029	3	557.343	2.458	P>.05
Length of service	1011.750	2	505.875	2.231	P>.05
Sex*Age	250.361	3	83.454	.368	P>.05
Sex*LS	1028.139	2	514.070	2.267	P>.05
Age*LS	1805.230	6	300.872	1.327	P>.05
Sex*Age*LS	1115.067	6	185.844	.820	P>.05
Error	62586.474	276	226.763		
Total	1222853.000	300			
Corrected total	69032.917	299			

R squared= .093 (adjusted R squared= .018)

The above table shows that there is no significant effect of gender on the job performance of employees of NSCDC [ $F(1,299) = 1.53, P > 0.05$ ]. Therefore, hypothesis two is not supported.

Also the table above showed that there is no significant effect of age on the job performance NSCDC workers [ $F(3,296) = 2.46, P > 0.05$ ]. This means that age differences of employees do not determine levels of job performance. Therefore, hypothesis 3 is not supported.

Table 3 further showed that there is no significant effect of length of service on job performance [ $F(2,297) = 2.23, P > 0.05$ ]. This means that difference in years of experience do not determine levels of job performance. Therefore, hypothesis four is not supported.

Lastly, table 3 above showed that there is no significant interaction effect of sex, age and length of service on job performance at [ $F(6,299) = 0.82, P > 0.05$ ]. Therefore, hypothesis five is not supported.

**DISCUSSION OF RESULTS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS.**

**Discussion**

The primary aim of this research is to assess whether job stress will impact job performance among workers of Nigeria Security and Civil Defense Corps (NSCDC), Ekiti State Command. Additionally, the effects of some biographic factors were evaluated on job performance. To achieve this, five hypotheses were tested making use of two statistical techniques; independent t-test and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) test.

Hypothesis one stated that there will be a significant effect of job stress on job performance. Indeed, result showed that job stress impacted job performance of NSCDC employees in Nigeria. But what is striking is that, job stress seems to lead to higher job performance among NSCDC workers. From table two, it can be observed that workers with high scores on job stress tend to have significantly higher mean score than workers who have low scores on job stress. This result seems not to fit into theoretical framework of this study which states that highly stressed workers would show less performance than workers with low stress. Some past studies have also shown that negative relationship exist between job stress and job performance (e.g. Jamal and Baba, 1992; Tubre and Collins, 2000). Their contention is that, the greater the stress, the less productive the workforce.

But it should be noted that in the psychological stress theory proposed by Lazarus (1993), the negative effect of stress may be felt at two levels in the encounter of the person with his environment. These levels are cognitive appraisal and coping resources. Some workers of NSCDC may evaluate the nature of their work as being stressful (e.g. doing rigorous training, working as night guards, daily confrontations with offenders, shift duties etc.) which is the cognitive appraisal and at the same time may possess an adequate coping resource to combat the negative effects of the stress. In other words, the ability to cope with stress via perceived organizational and social supports (Schwarzer and Leppin, 1991) may have moderated the negative effect of job stress on the worker, even though these two variables were not assessed in this study. To further justify the result of this hypothesis, it may be said that workers who have higher job stress are the ones giving more input, commitment or doing the core of the work than workers with low job stress thereby leading to higher job performance. Their (workers with high job stress) greater commitments at doing the core of the job may have exposed them to some varied daily challenges which eventually resulted to stressful feelings. These stressful feelings did not result to lower job performance probably because of the use of adequate coping resources.

As suggested by Allen, Hitt, and Greer (1982), stress may be functional or dysfunctional. While dysfunctional stress may result to low job performance, functional stress may invigorate greater job performance. That is, the challenges experienced on the job may be sources of motivation to overcome a present problem in order to achieve desired result. From this perspective, it may be concluded that the productive workers in NSCDC perceive their stress to be functional instead of being dysfunctional.

It was stated in hypothesis two that there will be a significant effect of gender (sex) on job performance. From table 3, it can be seen that gender difference does not predict performance among NSCDC workers. Ordinarily, one would have expected female workers to show less job performance than their male counterparts because of the differences in their gender roles and biological make. Seeing from the morphological perspective, body composition of males are believed to be muscular (athletic) compared to the weak (asthenic) nature of female and by so doing, male folks would have been expected to significantly surpass females on job performances. Because men are believed to be naturally stronger and can easily absorb stress, they are expected to outperform their female counterparts especially on task defined by physical strength. This should be the case of an organization like NSCDC where physical agility may be the main ingredient to having higher performance. This was confirmed in the work of Green, Jegadeesh, and Tang (2009). They compared analysts on number of stocks covered each year and opined that women cover fewer stocks than do men. Despite this traditionally expected result, Bengtson, Vedin, Grimby and Tibblin (1978) have found women to show better work performance compared to their male counterparts.

In the same direction as some previous studies (e.g. Igbaria and Shayo, 2007; Crawford and Nonis, 1996) however, the present study have found out that gender did not have a significant impact on work performance. This shows that, contemporary women are now beginning to prove their significance in today's world of work and have out-lived the traditional categorization or position that they are weak and only useful for domestic affairs, including raising children and taking care of the family as a whole. Women now put an appreciable energy, involvement and professional efficacy to work as well as their male counterparts despite their seeming higher commitment to the affairs of the home. They (women) are now more settled in both their personal and professional lives.

In hypothesis three, it was stated that there will be a significant effect of age on job performance. Results of data analysis revealed that age difference among workers did not determine the level of job performance. This result indicated that being a young or old worker does not predict that one will perform poorly or excellently on the job. What may matter is the individual dedication and commitment to the job and the manner the organization rewards or compensates employees for their loyalty and commitment. This finding is not in line with the study of Long and Swartzel (2007) where they reported a positive relationship between age and job performance among agricultural extension workers. In a similar vein, Kujala, Remes, Ek, Tammelin and Laitinen (2005) emphasized that younger people are poor on work performance. In consonance to the present result however, other studies have found no relationship between age and work performance (e.g. Salthouse and Maurer, 1996; War and Pennington, 1994; Yeara 1995).

It was stated in hypothesis four that there will be a significant effect of length of service on job performance. As indicated in table three however, the number of years spent on the job by workers may not be relevant to predicting performance. It was found that, spending fewer or more years within NSCDC does not guarantee either increase or decrease in job performance. This means that other relevant factors other than job tenure may predict performance (e.g. pay, promotion, responsibility, recognition etc.). Herzberg (1974) has opined that these factors called the satisfiers have the potential of impacting job performance and satisfaction.

The result of the present study did not confirm the outcome of a previous work conducted by Rugai and Agih (2008). In this study, it was proved that experienced teachers do have better work performance due to their huge amount of knowledge on the task needed to be done. Similarly, Tari and Anike (2011) found a positive relationship between length of service and work performance using a sample drawn from among workers in the ministry of education in Bayelsa State, Nigeria.

Lastly, it was stated in hypothesis five that there will be a significant interaction effect of gender, age and length of service on job performance. This hypothesis was not, however, confirmed as gender, age and length of service did not interactively determine job performance from the result of the present study. Since each of these factors could not independently predict job performance, it may be logical to conclude that their interactive effect on job performance would not be significant. There seems to be a dearth of literature on the interactive effect of these variables on job performance. This study may therefore serve as an eye opener in this line of research and also serve as impetus for further researches.

### **Conclusion**

The following conclusions were reached based on the findings from the present study:

1. That job stress positively influenced job performance of NSCDC workers in Ekiti State command, and
2. That age, gender and years of workers' experience on service did not independently or interactively determine their job performance.

### **Recommendations**

Since this study has found that job stress may be beneficial to the organization in terms of gingering higher performance, workers who have lower level of stress and show lower performance should be saddled with more responsibilities to expose them to highly challenging jobs to trigger an optimal level of anxiety. As a result of the exposure to challenging tasks, they will develop some feelings of anxiety which may induce an appreciable stress to achieve greater achievement and performance.

Future studies should assess how variables like organizational support, social support and pay level moderate the effect of job stress on job performance especially within the study population of this study.

### **LIMITATIONS AND CONTRIBUTION TO KNOWLEDGE**

Though, this study provides useful insights into how job stress could trigger positive work outcomes, nevertheless, the results may be viewed in light of some limitations. First, data on job performance were collected only from subordinates' perspectives without obtaining their supervisors' job performance rating. This would have given the researchers opportunity to double check the truthfulness of subordinates' response on job performance. Future studies should strive to obtain data from both sources. Second, the data were cross-sectional; thus the causality can only be assumed and not confirmed. Using longitudinal data could provide support for the findings of this study. Third, data were collected through self-reports; as such, social desirability response bias may have occurred.

Despite the above limitations, the study has contributed to an understanding of how job stress could predict increase in job performance among NSCDC workers in Ekiti State. Additionally, it has shown the direction of the relationship between demographic factors and performance in the workplace of NSCDC workers in Ekiti State command.

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