



**ST. MARY'S UNIVERSITY
SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES**

**THE EFFECT OF JOB STRESS ON EMPLOYEE
PERFORMANCE, THE CASE OF EQUATORIAL BUSINESS
GROUP PLC**

**BY
NATNAEL TESFAYE**

**MAY, 2022
ADDIS ABABA, ETHIOPIA**

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DECLARATION

I, the undersigned, declare that this thesis is my original work, prepared under the guidance of Dr. Abraraw Chane. All sources of materials used for the thesis have been duly acknowledged. I further confirm that the thesis has not been submitted either in part or in full to any other higher learning institution for the purpose of earning any degree.

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ENDORSEMENT

This thesis has been submitted to St. Mary's University, School of Graduate Studies for examination with my approval as a university advisor.

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May, 2022

Table of Contents

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	iii
LIST OF ACRONYMS	iv
LIST OF TABLES	v
LIST OF FIGURES	vi
ABSTRACT.....	vii
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	1
1.1. Background of the Study.....	1
1.2. Statement of the Problem.....	3
1.3. Research Questions	5
1.4. Research Objectives.....	5
1.4.1. General Objective	5
1.4.2. Specific Objectives	5
1.5. Significance of the Study	5
1.6. Delimitation of the Study.....	6
1.7. Limitation of the Study	6
1.8. Organization of the Paper	6
1.9. Conceptual Definition of Terms	7
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW	8
2.1. Theoretical Framework.....	8
2.1.1. Definitions of Stress and Occupational Stress	8
2.1.2. Types of Stress	9
2.1.3. Sources of Stress and Occupational Stress.....	10
2.1.4. Theories and Models of Occupational Stress.....	12
2.1.4.1. Transactional Theory of Work Stress	12
2.1.4.2. Interactional Theories of Stress.....	13
2.1.4.3. The Vitamin Model.....	17
2.1.5. The Concept of Employee Performance	18
2.1.6. Dimensions of Employee Performance.....	19
2.2. Empirical Review.....	20
2.2.1. Effect of Work Stress on Employee Performance	20
2.2.1.1. Job Monotony and Employee Performance	21
2.2.1.2. Work overload and Employee Performance	22

2.2.1.3: Role Ambiguity and Employee Performance	23
2.2.1.4. Time Pressure and Employee Performance	24
2.3. Conceptual Framework	25
CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY.....	26
3.1. Research Design.....	26
3.2. Research Approach	26
3.3. Population and Sampling Techniques.....	26
3.4. Source and Tools of Data Collection	27
3.5. Procedures of Data Collection	28
3.6. Method of Data Analysis	28
3.7. Validity and Reliability	28
3.8. Model Specification	29
3.9. Ethical Considerations	30
CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION	31
4.1. Introduction.....	31
4.2. Background Information of Respondents	31
4.3. Descriptive Statistics.....	33
4.4. Inferential Statistics	35
4.4.1. Bivariate Correlation Analysis.....	35
4.4.2. Regression Analysis.....	39
4.4.2.1. Normality Test	39
4.4.2.2. Linearity and Homoscedasticity Test.....	40
4.4.2.3. Multicollinearity Test.....	41
4.4.2.4. Independence of Residuals.....	42
CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS	46
5.1. Conclusions.....	46
5.2. Recommendations.....	47
5.3. Areas of Future Research.....	48
References.....	49
Appendix 1.....	59
Survey Questionnaire.....	59
Appendix 2.....	64
Time Schedule	64

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

CCOHS.....	Canadian Center for Occupational Health and Safety
EBG.....	Equatorial Business Group
ERI.....	Effort Reward Imbalance
EVB.....	Equatorial Volvo Business
HR.....	Human Resource
JDC.....	Job Demand Control
P-E.....	Person Environment
PS.....	Procurement and Supply
SMUC.....	St. Mary's University
SPSS.....	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
UK.....	United Kingdom
VM.....	Vitamin Model

LIST OF TABLES

Table 3.1: Strata Division and Sample Size Based on Business Units.....	27
Table 3.2: Reliability Statistics.....	29
Table 4.1: Background Information of the Respondents.....	31
Table 4.2: Descriptive Statistics.....	33
Table 4.3: Decision Rule for Mean Value of Five Point Likert Scale.....	34
Table 4.4: Strength of Pearson Correlation.....	36
Table 4.5: Correlations.....	37
Table 4.6: Normality Test.....	40
Table 4.7: Multicollinearity Test.....	42
Table 4.8: Model Summary ^b	42
Table 4.9: ANOVA ^a	43
Table 4.10: Coefficients ^a	44

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2.1: Job Demand Control Model.....	15
Figure 2.2: Siegrist's Effort Reward Imbalance Model.....	16
Figure 2.3: The Vitamin Model.....	17
Figure 2.4: The Triarchy Model of Employee Performance.....	20
Figure 2.5: Conceptual Framework.....	25
Figure 4.1: Gender Frequency.....	32
Figure 4.2: Scatter Plot for Linearity and Homoscedasticity Test.....	41

ABSTRACT

Most organizations attain high performance by saddling employees with overload of work in order to meet deadline and this has psychological and physical effects on the employees which sometimes results to something contrary to what these organizations want to achieve. Work stress has been a topic of increasing public and professional concern. Employees constant exposure to stress, if not handled effectively, can be destructive both for them in terms of the quality of their work and their physical and mental state and for the organization where they work. The purpose of this study was to find out the effect of work stress on employee performance in the case of Equatorial Business Group PLC. The study focused on four dimensions of stress; job monotony, work overload, role ambiguity, and time pressure. This study was explanatory in design with a quantitative research approach encompassing target population of 445, specifically focusing on 211 sample respondents. For this purpose, the study used primary data which was collected through a five point likert scale questionnaire. The correlation result showed that role ambiguity has significant and weak negative relation with job performance ($r = -.225, n = 162, p < .05$). Similarly work overload has significant and moderate negative relation with performance ($r = -.440, n = 162, p < .05$). Role ambiguity also showed a statistically significant and weak negative relation with performance ($r = -.218, n = 162, p < .05$). Lastly time pressure resulted in significant and moderate negative relation with performance ($r = -.210, n = 162, p < .05$). The result from multiple regression indicated that the beta value for job monotony is ($\beta = -.249, p > .05$), for work overload ($\beta = -.949, p < .05$), for role ambiguity ($\beta = -.188, p < .05$), and for time pressure ($\beta = -.067, p < .05$). Among the four independent variables, the regression analysis showed that work overload, role ambiguity and time pressure had statistically significant relation with job performance. The regression analysis also indicated that the adjusted R^2 value is .443 which indicated that 44.3% of variance in job performance is explained by job monotony, work overload, role ambiguity, and time pressure. This study recommended basic points such as; EBG should authorize employees to work on their own speed and ways; EBG should also start to implement job rotation to lessen monotonous tasks; EBG should also hire additional staffs specifically on front counter and workshop are to reduce work overload. Lastly EBG should also set logical and achievable deadlines to reduce time pressure.

Key words: *work stress, employee performance, job monotony, work overload, role ambiguity, time pressure*

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

This chapter addressed background of the study, background of the organization, statement of the problem, research questions, research objectives, conceptual definition of terms, significance of the study, delimitation of the study, limitation of the study, and organization of the paper.

1.1. Background of the Study

Workplace stress is a major issue for both employees and organization. It is a common term used in our life with most people having different understanding about its meaning (Ismail et al., 2015). According to National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (2008), occupational stress is defined as the harmful physical and emotional responses that occur when the requirements of the job do not match the capabilities, resources, or needs of the worker. Stress is dynamic state in which a person is confronted with an opportunity, demand related to what the individual wishes and for which the conclusion is perceived to be both unclear and essential. (Dar et al., 2011).

Premkumar and Rajkumar, (2015) stated that job stress is “a physical and emotional phenomenon experienced in various working situations, when workers are at risk, when they have a conflict with their boss or colleagues, when they feel emotional affliction arising out of a discrepancy between their aptitude and their job, when their ability is not recognized or they feel they lack ability, or when they are in charge of an important or extremely difficult job.” Leung et al. (2012) further clarified that stress is a psychological state of mind resulting from demands put on a person’s body. From the medical point of view, stress has often been proven to be detrimental to health (Kozusznik et al., 2012).

Damilare et al. (2020) established that stress is a major problem which challenges for the administrations in managing work stress in order to reduce health-care costs and improve performance in the organization. Ratnawat and Jha (2014) also complement that the stress has become a challenge for the employer organizations as it results in low productivity, increased absenteeism and collection of other employee problems. Stress has become a common phenomenon of routine life and an unavoidable consequence of the ways in which the society is changing.

The changes which occur in terms of technology, modernization, urbanization, population growth and increasing level of unemployment causes stress at workplace in different forms (Gharib, 2016). Although different researches on stress carries a negative connotation, stress is multifaceted and at times brings out goodness (Farler and Broady-Preston, 2012).

According to Kozusznik et al. (2012), the word stress in Chinese encompasses two characters which represent “crisis” and “opportunity”. Stress has similarly been seen as having two implications; eustress and distress conditions (Yu-Fei et al., 2012). Eustress refers to the positive feeling which arises from a stressful condition while distress relates to threats and harmful effects (Kozusznik et al., 2012). Code and Langan-Fox (2001) argued that eustress may occur when individuals are able to handle external demands placed on their physique which may lead to decreased physiological and psychological stress (e.g. pleasant life, able to control feelings of anxiety and being proactive). Distress on the contrary may exist when individuals cannot cope with external demands placed on their bodies and end up with increased physiological and psychological stress (e.g. sickness, unpleasant life, unable to control feelings of anxiety, and passive).

It is now becoming the global issue which is affecting all the countries and all categories of employees (Haider & Supriya, 2007). It is recognized worldwide as a major challenge to individual mental and physical health, and organizational health. Stressed workers are also more likely to be unhealthy, poorly motivated, less productive and less safe at work. Stress in the USA has resulted in absenteeism and turnover with the monetary cost surpassing a billion US Dollar per year (Kouvonen & Coyne, 2012). Stress in the workplace would therefore affect employees significantly and ultimately the performance of the entire organization would also be at stake (Ahmad et al., 2012). Stress is caused by an existing stress-causing factor or “stressor” (Kitole et al., 2019).

Sources of stress at workplace include inherent factors of job, role in organization, relationship at work and career development (Greenberg, 2005). Work becomes burden in a situation when a person has a lot of work to do at same time. Work overload is one of the most considerable causes of stress (Mullins, 2002). Jacobs and Winslow (2004) found that work overload negatively affects their research productivity. Srivastav and Pareek (2008) stated that role ambiguity and role conflict creates stress. Matilyn and Cary (2003) described management ineffectiveness as a main cause of workplace stress. Moreover, if the management of an organization treats its employees as tool not as companion, the outcome is poor performance of employees. According to Leka et al. (2004), the two stress-related hazards are work content and work context. Work content includes factors like monotonous and aversive tasks, working under time pressure, too much or a little to do, strict and inflexible working schedules, long and unpredictable working hours, badly designed shift systems, and also lack of

participation and control in decision making. On the other hand work context encompasses role ambiguity, job insecurity, poor relationship with coworkers, poor communication, and poor leadership.

Most of the previous studies have shown that occupational stress had a great impact on the operations of an organization. Besides that, work stress can also cause problems to the organizational productivity, the workers themselves and their families as well as the surrounding communities. The occupational stress is always given attention due to its powerful effect on the workers and work behavior, and mostly on the employee's health.

Despite the fact that there are many research findings regarding work stress and its effect on employee performance on different business sectors like banking, teaching and the likes, the researcher believes it is less discussed or there is contextual and issue gap regarding work stress on the automotive sector in Ethiopia. Hence this research tried to identify major sources of occupational stress and their effect on employee performance regarding the automotive industry, specifically focusing on Equatorial Business Group PLC.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

Stress is an issue that is linked with the work one does. Some amount of stress is ideal as it makes an individual perform well. However, too much of it leads to negative effects on the individual, which can be damaging to the capacities of the person (Babarinde and Ohikhena, 2019). Most organizations attain high performance by saddling employees with overload of work in order to meet deadline and this has psychological and physical effects on the employees which sometimes results to something contrary to what these organizations want to achieve (Daniel, 2019). The study also stated even though organizations are paying more attention now to employees compared to the past, the consequences of the trauma their employees go through cannot be over emphasized because they still place extraordinary demands on them to deliver.

Past studies provide evidence to show that work stress has been a topic of increasing public and professional concern. Several studies have been done to assess the effects of employee stress on worker's performance. Some of the existing works include a work by Cooper and Michael, (2014) who found that work stress had an impact on individuals' performance and organization efficiency. This is similar to the findings generated by International Labor Organization (ILO) (2016) which reported that 58000 workers in 200 organizations in the world showed that stress at work was linked to poor work performance. Darvishpour and Hamidi (2015) also conducted a research in Iran by

examining the impact of mental stress on employee job performance. Also similar studies were done in Ghana by Sampson and Akyeampon, (2014) on work-related stress among frontline hotel employees. Ratnawat and Jha (2014) also performed a research on job stress and its effects on employee performance in India.

Despite the fact that there are plenty of literatures that explored the sources of job stress and its impact on job performance in various sectors of the economy, similar studies among automotive professionals in the automotive industry, specifically in Ethiopia, are insufficient in the literature. It is quite crucial for automotive industries to know the major sources of work stress and their adverse effect on employee performance and overall organizational productivity so that it will be easy for them to combat against the ill effects of stress. Hence, this research tried to fill the issue gap by identifying the effect of stress on employee performance in the automotive sector, specifically focusing on four sources or dimensions of work stress which are job monotony, work overload, role ambiguity, and time pressure.

Another research gap is that there are contradicting theories about the relationship between work stress dimensions and performance. For instance, a study conducted by Kitole et al. (2019) on the effect of work Stress on employee performance in the public Sector in Kenya among 304 respondents indicated that employees who had heavy workloads were emotionally exhausted and display poor performance in the service delivery process. On the contrary, the result of a study conducted by Johari et al. (2018) on autonomy, workload, work-life balance and job performance among teachers encompassing total respondents of 302 showed that workload had no significant impact on job performance. Hence there is contradicting idea. Thus this research addressed this issue in the case of EBG.

Similarly the researcher found that there are contradicting study results by different researchers regarding the effect of time pressure on performance. For instance a research carried out by Garrido et al. (2016, as cited by Noor, 2020) found that the employees who can adapt to working hours and duration can perform their job better. In other words, time pressure had a positive effect on job performance when they can manage the time allocated. Yet another study result by Damilare et al. (2020) about occupational Stress on Employees' performance among National Union of Road Transportation workers in Ilorin Metropolis, Nigeria encompassing 171 respondents indicated that time pressure has a significant adverse influence on employee performance

The third contradicting result was the idea that time pressure has no effect on employee performance. For instance, a study result conducted by Tjahjadi and Cahyadi (2020) on the influence of time pressure, role ambiguity, workload and lack of motivation on employee performance in PT XYX company in Indonesia encompassing 76 respondents showed that time pressure has no effect on employee performance. Hence, there is a controversy or contradicting research findings and this research addressed this issue and the issue in the case of EBG was discussed.

1.3. Research Questions

As per the discussion on the background of the study and statement of the problem, this research addressed the below listed research questions;

1. What is the effect of job monotony on employee performance?
2. What is the effect of work overload on employee performance?
3. What is the effect of role ambiguity on employee performance?
4. What is the effect of time pressure on employee performance?

1.4. Research Objectives

1.4.1. General Objective

The general objective of this research was to study the effect of occupational stress on employee's performance at Equatorial Business Group PLC.

1.4.2. Specific Objectives

The specific objectives of this research were;

1. To assess the effect of job monotony on employee performance.
2. To determine the effect of work overload on employee performance.
3. To find out the effect of role ambiguity on employee performance.
4. To find out the effect of time pressure on employee performance.

1.5. Significance of the Study

Organizations without outstanding performance of their employees are nothing. Stress as discussed in the background can result in poor employee performance and organizational productivity. Hence, besides fulfilling the academic requirement, this research will have great significance for stakeholders like managers, employees, and even organizations themselves. The researcher noticed stressed and frustrated employees at EBG; hence employees of EBG and in general employees in the automotive

industry can benefit from this research by identifying major sources of stress and draft their own strategies so that their performance will be enhanced.

In addition to employees, organizations in general can benefit from this research. Specifically top management of EBG and managers in the automotive industry can learn from this research and draft corresponding stress management strategies and policies so that employee stress will lessen and workers' and organizational performance will be enhanced. Last but not least, the researcher believes that this study will be a valuable input as a resource for further future studies regarding similar issues.

1.6. Delimitation of the Study

This research tried to address the effect of occupational stress on employee performance in the case of EBG, head office which is located at Addis Ababa around Saris Abo next to Horizon New Tire; hence it focuses on the automotive sector only. Due to time constraint and current political insecurity, the researcher ignores the four branches located around Bahirdar, Hawassa, Diredawa, and Jimma and focuses only on the head office. The research addressed all levels of employee and management staff as a target population starting from fresh recruits to experienced ones. The researcher included fresh employee owing to the fact that stress also exists at that level as the researcher experienced that too.

Additionally, from dimensions of stress point of view, the research is limited to only four dimensions or sources of stress which are job monotony, work overload, role ambiguity, and time pressure.

1.7. Limitation of the Study

This research addressed the effect of occupational stress on employee performance in the automotive industry, specifically in EBG. Thus, it is limited to automotive sector only. Another limitation is that as stated in the scope, it focuses merely in the head office, hence; it disregards the ideas and challenges or stress faced by the employees at the four branches located around Bahirdar, Hawassa, Diredawa, and Jimma.

1.8. Organization of the Paper

This research was divided into five chapters. The first chapter was introduction phase. It encompassed background of the study, background of the organization, statement of the problem, research questions, research objectives, significance of the study, delimitation of the study, and limitation of the study. Chapter two was review of related literatures. Different empirical researches with their theories and results were discussed and summarized in this chapter. Conceptual framework was also developed in this chapter. The third chapter was about research design and methodology. Research approach and

design, population and sampling technique, sources and types of data, and data collection method were discussed under this chapter. Chapter four consisted of results and discussions. The main findings of this research were presented and interpreted in detail with respect to previous findings. Lastly, Chapter five addressed conclusions and recommendations. Major findings of this research were briefly summarized in this chapter. Basic and constructive recommendations were also stated under this chapter.

1.9. Conceptual Definition of Terms

Stress: is a dynamic condition in which an individual is confronted with opportunity, constraint or demand related to what he desires and for which the outcome is perceived to be both uncertain and important (Robbins, 2004).

Occupational Stress: According to Premkumar and Rajkumar (2015), occupational stress is a physical and emotional phenomenon experienced in various working situations, when workers are at risk, when they have a conflict with their boss or colleagues, when they feel emotional affliction arising out of a discrepancy between their aptitude and their job, when their ability is not recognized or they feel they lack ability, or when they are in charge of an important or extremely difficult job.

Employee Performance: employees' performance is the accumulated result of the skills, efforts and abilities of all the employees contributed in organizational improved productivity leading towards its goal achievement (Dahkoul, 2018).

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

This chapter discussed different literatures with their corresponding theories and results regarding the effect of work stress on employee performance. Empirical review of various literatures regarding similar issue was also reviewed and finally a conceptual framework or model was developed by relating the four independent variables the dependent variable.

2.1. Theoretical Framework

2.1.1. Definitions of Stress and Occupational Stress

Hans Seyle known as “father of modern stress” coined the term stress. The word stress has come from the Latin word “stringere” which means to "draw tight” (Bezaye, 2020). Seyle, (1978) defined stress as “a pathological human response to psychological, social, occupational and environmental pressures”. Stress can also be defined as an unpleasant response that people incident when outsider demands go beyond their internal abilities (Waters & Ussery, 2007). According to Robbins (2004), stress is a dynamic condition in which an individual is confronted with opportunity, constraint or demand related to what he desires and for which the outcome is perceived to be both uncertain and important. From this definition one can say that stress is not necessarily bad, it also has a positive value when it offers potential gain. Moorhead et al., (1998) also defined stress as a person’s adaptive response to a stimulus that places physical and psychological demands on a person.

In addition, Taylor (1995) describes stress as a negative emotional experience accompanied by predictable biochemical, physiological, cognitive and behavioral changes that are directed either toward altering the events or accommodating its effects. Again, Bennett (1994) defines stress as a wide collection of physical and psychological symptoms that results from difficulties experienced by an individual while attempting to adapt to an environment. This means the potential for stress exists when an environmental situation presents a demand threatening to exceed a person’s capabilities and resources.

From the above definitions and descriptions stress can best be seen as excessive demands that affect a person physically and psychologically. Thus the mental or physical condition that results from perceived threat or danger and the pressure to remove it.

Work place stress has received a great deal of attention in social psychological research (Cooper et al., 2001). Comish and Swindle, (1994) describe occupational stress as being unable to manage demands of work as a result of the demands being beyond the person’s capability. According to Sun (2010,

cited by Premkumar and Rajkumar, 2015) job stress is “a physical and emotional phenomenon experienced in various working situations, when workers are at risk, when they have a conflict with their boss or colleagues, when they feel emotional affliction arising out of a discrepancy between their aptitude and their job, when their ability is not recognized or they feel they lack ability, or when they are in charge of an important or extremely difficult job.”

Significant research findings have documented that prolonged stress has negative effects on individual health as well as on employees’ attitudes towards the organization (Cropanzano et al. 2003). Gershon (2000) concur that working under continuously stressful conditions leads to the dissatisfaction and exhaustion of police officers. The stressful conditions that law enforcement officers are exposed can affect both their work-related and their physiological wellbeing. Recognizing the factors contributing to stress is highly relevant. The outcomes of job stress exceeds productivity and quality of employees performance, its' psychological influence inverts into a bad lifestyle habits like smoking, over eating, drinking alcohol and lead to serious chronic diseases like hypertension and heart diseases (Owolabi et al. 2012). Employees constant exposure to stress, if not handled effectively, can be destructive both for them in terms of the quality of their work and their physical and mental state and for the organization where they work.

2.1.2. Types of Stress

Taylor (1995, cited by Daniel, 2019) stated that, there are five major types of stress which she explains them as follows;

➤ Work stress

From the Second World War, stress has become an interesting topic for researchers. Organizations finally recognized the fact that because of job stress, lots of human potentials are being disappeared. Almost the employees say that they are under high stress at workplace. Hence, work stress is one of biggest problem in the global world. Even with executives and managers, stress is an experience in the work life of every employee. Work stress greatly reduces organizational productivity. Additionally, it will significantly affect the health status of employees leading to poor employee performance and health conditions.

➤ Chronic stress

She describes this type of stress as unrelenting demands and pressures for seemingly interminable periods of time. Chronic stress is the type that wears the individual down day after day and year after year with no visible escape. It grinds away at both emotional and health of the individual leading to breakdown and even death.

➤ **Acute stress**

This type of stress is the most common and most recognizable form of stress. It is the kind of stress which the individual knows exactly why he is stressed. For example if the person was in car accident. It can also be something scary and thrilling, such as a parachute jump. This type of stress is quite short term and does not have a severe or permanent damage to the body. Hence, the body rests when these stressful events cease and life gets back to normal.

➤ **Traumatic stress**

It is a severe stress reaction that results from a catastrophic event or intense experience such as a natural disaster, sexual assault, life-threatening accident, or participation in a combat. Here, after the initial shock and emotional fallout, many trauma victims gradually begin to recover. But for some people, the psychological and physical symptoms triggered by the trauma do not go away, the body does not return to equilibrium, and life does not return to normal. This condition is known as post trauma stress disorder. Common symptoms of this type of stress are flashbacks or nightmares about the trauma, avoidance of places and things associated with the trauma, hyper vigilance for signs of danger and irritability and tension.

➤ **Episodic acute stress**

Taylor went further and discussed fifth type of stress named episodic acute stress. According to her, person experiencing this type of stress has very chaotic life, is out of control, and they always seem to be facing multiple stressful situation. They are always in a rush, always late, always taking on too many projects, and handling too many demands. If an individual is prone to episodic acute stress, he may not know it or admit it. He may be devoted to a life style that promotes stress. Unfortunately, people with episodic acute stress may find it so habitual that they resist changing their lifestyles until they experience severe physical symptoms.

2.1.3. Sources of Stress and Occupational Stress

Matthews (2001, cited by Ehsan & Ali, 2019) discussed the four basic sources of stress as follows;

- **The Environment:** the environment can bombard people with intense and competing demands to adjust. Examples of environmental stressors include weather, noise, crowding, pollution, traffic, unsafe environment, and substandard housing, and crime.
- **Social Stressors:** we can experience multiple stressors arising from the demands of the different social role we occupy, such as parent, spouse, caregiver, and employee. Some examples of social stressors include deadlines, financial problems, job interviews, presentations, disagreements, presentations, disagreements demand for your time and attention loss of a loved one, divorce and co-parenting.
- **Physiological:** Situation and circumstances affecting our body can be experienced as physiological stressors. Examples of physiological stressors include rapid growth of adolescence, menopause, illness, aging, giving birth, accidents, lack of exercise, poor nutrition, and sleep disturbances.
- **Thoughts:** The brain interprets and perceives situations as stressful, difficult, painful, or pleasant. Some situations in life are stress provoking, but it is our thought that determines whether they are a problem.

Murphy (1995) and UK Health & Safety Executive (2007) (cited by CCOHS, 2018) also briefly characterized job stressors to seven major categories as;

- **Task design:** includes work overload, work under-load, variety/pace of work, inadequate time to complete a task, autonomy, poor shift work/working hours design, skills not matching job demands, lack of technical training or preparation, lack of appreciation, and isolation at the work place.
- **Role in the organization:** includes role conflict (conflicting job demands, too many roles, multiple managers), role ambiguity (lack of clarity about responsibilities and expectations), and lack of responsibility.
- **Career development:** it encompasses under/over promotion, job insecurity (lack of tasks or what to do), lack of career development and growth opportunities, and finally overall job satisfaction.
- **Interpersonal relationship at work:** this embraces lack of support from supervisors and coworkers, threat of violence, harassment, lack of trust, lack of system in workplace available to report and deal with unacceptable behavior, and finally discrimination.

- **Organizational structure/management style:** encompasses lack of participation in decision making, poor communication pattern or information flow, little recognition for good job performance, lack of systems in workplace available to respond to concerns, not engaging employees when undergoing organizational change, lack of perceived fairness, and lack of support (such as family-friendly policies, employee assistance programs, etc.).
- **Work life balance:** comprises role/responsibility conflicts and family exposed to work-related hazards.
- **Workplace conditions:** this embraces exposure to unpleasant conditions like smells and exposure to hazards (e.g., ergonomics, chemical, noise, air quality, temperature, etc.).

Additionally CCOHS also addressed the severe effects of stress as;

- Effects on the body including headache, muscle pain, chest pain, increased heart rate and blood pressure, weakened immune system, insomnia, fatigue, stomach and digestive issues, high blood sugar, and increased cholesterol and fatty acid in the blood.
- Effects on mood or thinking like increased forgetfulness, anxiety, restlessness, irritability, defensiveness, mood swings, hypersensitivity, anger, and decreased ability to focus.

Hence, from this literature we can conclude that stress should be given much more attention as it greatly and severely affects the human body and mind which finally affects employee productivity.

2.1.4. Theories and Models of Occupational Stress

2.1.4.1. Transactional Theory of Work Stress

The transactional model of stress and coping was developed by Lazarus and Folkman in 1987. The most commonly used transactional theory suggests that stress is the direct product of a transaction between an individual and their environment which may tax their resources and thus threaten their wellbeing (Lazarus 1986, Lazarus & Folkman 1987). Yet a more recent version of this theoretical model suggests that it is the appraisal of this transaction that offers a causal pathway that may better express the nature of the underlying psychological and physiological mechanisms which underpin the overall process and experience of stress (Lazarus et al. 2001). In this sense, any aspect of the work environment can be perceived as a stressor by the appraising individual. Yet the individual appraisal of demands and capabilities can be influenced by a number of factors, including personality, situational demands, coping skills, previous experiences, time lapse, and any current stress state already experienced (Prem et al. 2017). One multidisciplinary review provides a broad consensus that stressors

really only exert their effects through how an individual perceives and evaluates them (Ganster and Rosen 2013).

As such, the experience of workplace stress according to the transactional theory, is associated with exposure to particular workplace scenarios, and a person's appraisal of a difficulty in coping. This experience is usually accompanied by attempts to cope with the underlying problem and by changes in psychological functioning, behavior and function (Aspinwall & Taylor 1997, Guppy & Weatherstone 1997). In order to recognize these external and internal elements of workplace stress, Cox (1993) outlined another modified transactional theory. This theory represented the sources of the stressor, the perceptions of those stressors in relation to his/her ability to cope, the psychological and physiological changes associated with the recognition of stress arising, including perceived ability to cope, the consequences of coping, and all general feedback that occurs during this process.

Yet, as with all transactional theories of work-related stress, it is the concept of appraisal that has been criticized for being too simplistic and for not always considering an individuals' history, future, goals and identities (Harris et al., 2004). Additionally, in his later works, Lazarus stressed that his transactional theories of stress failed to acknowledge the outcomes associated with coping in specific social contexts and during interpersonal interactions (Lazarus, 2006).

2.1.4.2. Interactional Theories of Stress

Interactional models emphasize the interaction of the environmental stimulus and the associated individual responses as a foundation of stress (Lazarus and Launier 1978). There are three basic models under interactional theory.

➤ Person Environment Fit (P-E) Theory

The Person-Environment Fit theory is one of the earliest interactional theories of work-related psychological distress, suggesting that work-related stress arises due to a lack of fit between the individual's skills, resources and abilities, and the demands of the work environment (Caplan 1987, French et al., 1982). Here, interactions may occur between objective realities and subjective perceptions and between environmental variables and individual variables. In this case, it has been argued that stress can occur when there is a lack of fit between either the degree to which an employee's attitudes and abilities meet the demands of the job or the extent to which the job environment meets the workers' needs (French et al., 1974). Majority of publications on P-E fit model

emphasize on the relationship between poor fit (either objective or subjective) and stress (Anteneh, 2021).

If job demands and pressures in the workplace exceed the skills and capabilities of an employee's goals and values, conflict with these work demands, a misfit between the characteristics of an individual and his or her work environment occurs (Wong & Tetrick, 2017, as cited by Degu, 2020). The larger gaps in the fit between the individual and the environment, the more perilous the occupational stress will be, and the probability of experiencing poor performance will be significantly high. This model is seriously criticized for theoretical and methodological problems. Edwards and Cooper (2013) criticized the P-E model for its inadequate distinction between different versions of fit, confusion of different functional forms of fit, poor measurement of fit components, and inappropriate analysis of the effects of fit. They believe these problems narrowed the range of fit dimensions included in empirical investigations, and generated statistical analyses which do not correspond to stated hypotheses; thus, clearly violating known methodological recommendations. As a result, most empirical evidence regarding the P-E fit approach to stress is extremely limited in scope.

➤ **Job Demand Control (JDC) Theory**

The Job Demand-Control theory was developed by Karasek in 1979. Perhaps it is currently the most influential model of stress in the workplace (Kompier, 2003, cited by Murali et al., 2017). The JDC theory supposes that work-related stress can result from the interaction between several psychological job demands relating to workload such as cognitive and emotional demands, interpersonal conflict, job control relating to decision authority (agency to make work-related decisions) and skill discretion (breadth of work-related skills used) (Karasek Jr 1979). The JDC model is concerned with predicting outcomes of psychological strain, and workers who experience high demands paired with low control are more likely to experience work-related psychological distress and strain (Beehr et al. 2001). According to the demand theory, demand is subdivided into workload, work hazards, physical and emotional demands and role conflict. For stress to exist, the demand from the environment (the job) versus the capability of the individual (the employee) will typically be considerably out of balance (Jovica et al., 2006)

However, the original concept of job demand and control was expanded in 1988 to become the Demand Control Support (DCS) theory, describing how social support may also act as a buffer in high demand situations (Johnson and Hall 1988). As social support as a coping mechanism can moderate

the negative impacts of job stress, another later version of the JDC theory was developed to suggest that it is those individuals who experience high demands paired with low control and poor support who are most at risk of work-related psychological distress (Van der Doef and Maes 1999). These later versions of the JDC theory were developed, as earlier versions were considered to be too simplistic and ignorant of the moderating effects of social support upon the main variables. However, the perceived job demands and decision autonomy outlined in the JDC theory have been acknowledged as being key factors in determining the effects and outcomes of work on employees' health (Cox et al., 2000).

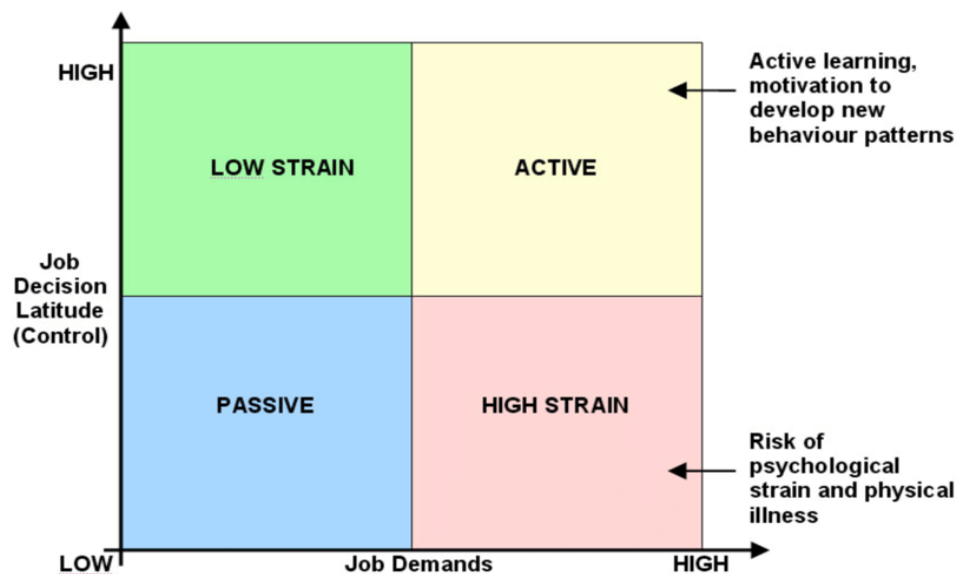


Figure 2.1: Job Demand Control Model (Adapted from Karasek, 1979)

From figure 1, one can see that high job demand and low control over the job leads to high strain. However, if an employee has high or better control over his/her job, that employee will be active and can learn actively and will be motivated to develop new behavior despite high demand job. One can also see that a person will remain passive if the job has low demand and that person has low control over that job.

According to Dr. Annette (2020), one of the strength of this model is that it provides opportunities for interventions as it allows identifying why employees are experiencing stress. There are also a variety of potential interventions. For example, employees can negotiate with management to discuss degree of control latitude if juggling many tasks. If employees feel they have little influence in their job, then they can discuss the possibility of a more active job with management. She also took the idea that the

JDC model provides opportunities for relationship as strength. Managers can also use the JDCS model to motivate and encourage their subordinates to have a healthy work balance. In fact, it is the role of the manager to speak to their subordinates if there are issues with job performance and an opportunity to formulate joint solutions. According to Ng & Sorenson (2008, as cited by Dr. Annette, 2020), management can also use the JDCS model to measure levels of employee satisfaction and motivation.

Despite its strong sides Dr. Annette (2020) also criticized this model for three basic points. First is the JDC model does not work for every employee. The model is supportive for male employees who work in high-stress environments. However, the JDCS is less useful for female employees and suggests that women have different experiences in high-strain jobs (Van Der Doef & Maes (1999, as cited by Dr. Annette, 2020). Another limitation is that this model is effective in the short term only as the research was cross sectional. Lastly, this model is effective only for workers under high workload. However, many workers do not have high workloads yet experience stress due to other factors. For example teachers might get stressed if they are dealing with students who are struggling academically which is not workload. Hence it ignores such employees.

➤ **Effort Reward Imbalance (ERI) Theory**

The Effort-Reward Imbalance (ERI) theory was developed by German medical sociologist Siegrist in 1996. The ERI model posits that effort at work is spent as part of a psychological contract, based on the norm of social reciprocity, where effort at work is remunerated with rewards and opportunities (Siegrist 1996).

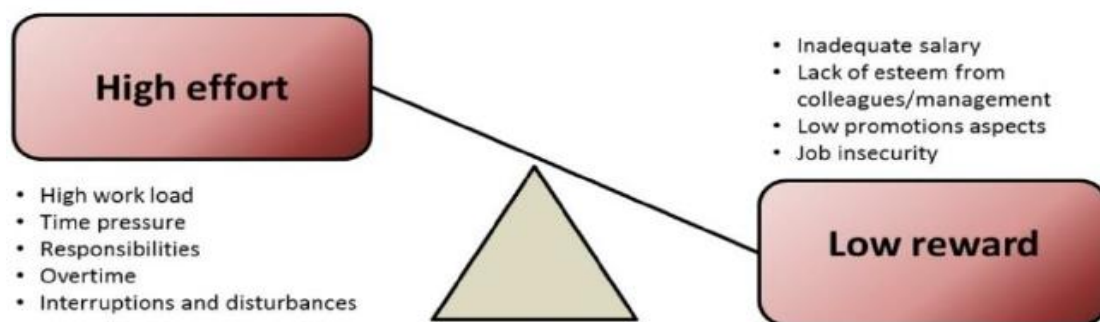


Figure 2.2: Siegrist’s Effort Reward Imbalance Model (Adapted from study result by Soderberg. M, 2014, online. https://www.researchgate.net/figure/The-effort-reward-imbalance-model-according-to-Siegrist_fig2_275016457 Copyright 2008-2022 by ResearchGate GmbH).

Here, it is the imbalance in this contract that can result in stress or distress. Yet in contrast to transactional theories of stress, this imbalance may not necessarily be subject to any appraisal, as the stressor may be an everyday constant occurrence. Siegrist’s ERI model proposes that where there is an imbalance between work effort and reward, such that the effort is greater than the reward, work stress results, which may lead to a range of adverse health outcomes (Jessica, 2017). From figure 2, one can see that high effort like high workload and time pressure leads to a stress when in cases like salary is inadequate, there are low promotion aspects, and in general when employee reward is low. Hence, effort and reward should be balanced so that stress will lessen and performance will be enhanced. According to Wigger (2011), the main limitation of this model is that it only predicts effects of job conditions on coronary heart disease (CHD). It does not explicitly hypothesize effects of job conditions on psychological functioning, motivation, activity, learning and coping patterns.

2.1.4.3. The Vitamin Model

The vitamin model was developed by the psychologist Peter Warr in 1987. Essentially, the VM holds that mental health is affected by environmental psychological features such as job characteristics in a way that is analogous to the non-linear effects that vitamins are supposed to have on our physical health (Jonge and Schaufeli, 1998). According to this model, it was hypothesized that three job characteristics (i.e. job demands, job autonomy, and workplace social support) have curvilinear relationship with three key indicators of employee well-being (i.e. job satisfaction, job-related anxiety, and emotional exhaustion). Generally, vitamin intake initially improves health and physical functioning, but beyond a particular level of intake no further improvement is observed. Continued intake of vitamins may lead to two different kinds of effects, as shown in Figure 3 below.

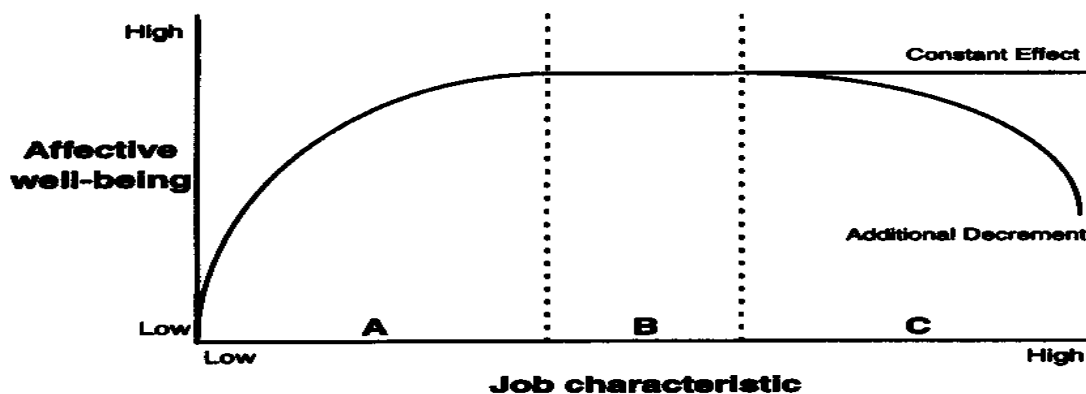


Figure 2.3: The Vitamin Model (Adapted from Jonge, 1998)

From figure 3, one can see that continuous intake of vitamin can have two effects, either constant effect or additional decrement. Constant effect means health neither improves nor noxious consequences are observed that impair the individual's physical health. According to Warr, vitamins C and E have a suchlike effect on the human body. Therefore, the label CE ('Constant Effect') is used to denote this particular relationship. Second, an overdose of vitamins leads to a toxic concentration in the body, which causes poor bodily functioning and ill-health. Among others, vitamins A and D are known to be toxic, when taken in large quantities. For that reason Warr has used the label AD ('Additional Decrement') to denote the inverted U-shaped curvilinear relationship as depicted in Figure 3. According to Warr, the presence of job characteristics initially has a beneficial effect on employee mental health, whereas their absence impairs mental health (segment A).

Beyond a certain required level, vitamin intake has no positive effect anymore: a plateau has been reached and the level of mental health remains constant (segment B). Further increase of job characteristics (segment C) may either produce a constant effect (analogously to the vitamins C and E) or may be harmful and impair mental health, analogously to the vitamins A and D. Except for the relationship between job autonomy and emotional exhaustion, the curvilinear relationships followed the predicted U-shaped or inverted U-shaped curvilinear pattern.

2.1.5. The Concept of Employee Performance

Performance is the result or level of success of a person as a whole during a certain period in carrying out tasks compared to various possibilities, such as work standards, targets or targets or predetermined criteria that have been mutually agreed upon (Al Mehrzi & Singh, 2016). According to Shmailan (2016), employee performance is an action what employees do in carrying out the work done by the company. In organizational settings, employees' performance is the accumulated result of the skills, efforts and abilities of all the employees contributed in organizational improved productivity leading towards its goal achievement (Dahkoul, 2018).

Gitongu et al. (2016) stated that employee performance is among the critical factors that contribute significantly in organizational success. Learning organizations play important role in enhancing employee performance through providing trainings and developments for their employees. Employee performance plays an important role for organizational performance. Macky and Johnson (2020) pointed that improved individual employee performance could improve organizational performance as well.

2.1.6. Dimensions of Employee Performance

According to Borman, & Motowidlo, 1993; Campbell et al., 1993; Roe, 1999, performance is a multicomponent concept and it comprises of two aspects; behavioral engagements and expected outcome. The behavior denotes the action people exhibit to accomplish a work, whereas the outcome aspect states about the consequence of individual's job behavior (Campbell, 1990). Pradhan and Jena (2016) stated that there are three major dimensions of employee performance; i.e. task performance, adaptive performance, and contextual performance. They described all the three as follows;

➤ Task Performance

Task performance comprises of job explicit behaviors which includes fundamental job responsibilities assigned as a part of job description. Task performance requires more cognitive ability and is primarily facilitated through task knowledge such as requisite technical knowledge or principles to ensure job performance and having an ability to handle multiple assignments). It also required task skill like application of technical knowledge to accomplish task successfully without much supervision. Task habit is also required which is an innate ability to respond to assigned jobs that either facilitate or impede the performance (Conway, 1999, as cited by Pradhan and Jena, 2016). Therefore, the primary antecedents of task performance are the ability to do the job and prior experience. They also broke down task performance into two segments; technical-administrative task performance and leadership task performance. Task performance which encompassing planning, organizing, and administering the day-to-day work through one's technical ability, business judgment and so on are known as technical-administrative task performance. Whereas leadership task performance is labeled through setting strategic goals, upholding the necessary performance standards, motivating and directing subordinates to accomplish the job through encouragement, recognition, and constructive criticism.

➤ Adaptive Performance

An individual's ability to acclimatize and provide necessary support to the job profile in a dynamic work situation is referred to as adaptive performance (Hesketh, & Neal, 1999, as cited by Pradhan and Jena, 2016). An effective adaptive performance necessitates employees' ability to efficiently deal with dynamic and complex working environments like technological transformations, changes in one's core job assignment, restructuring of organization and so on. According to Griffin et al. (2010), evolutions of various new occupations as an offshoot of technological innovation need employees to engage in fresh learning and get oneself adaptable with changes in an efficient manner. The employees are also

expected to adjust their interpersonal behavior in such changed circumstances to work successfully with a wide range of peers and subordinates.

➤ **Contextual Performance**

Contextual performance is a kind of prosocial behavior demonstrated by individuals in a work set-up. Such behaviors are expected of an employee but they are not overtly mentioned in one's job description. These kind of unstated expectations are called prosocial behavior or extra role behavior. Along with the task and adaptability, efforts have been carried out toward ascertaining the significance of non-job components of performance to create a better workplace (Austin & Villanova, 1992; Viswesvaran & Ones, 2000). Industrial psychologists have referred such non-job components as organizational citizenship behavior (OCB) or contextual performance that refers to voluntary actions of employees that benefit employers intangibly and significantly.

Finally Pradhan and Jena depicted the three dimensions of performance in diagram as shown below.

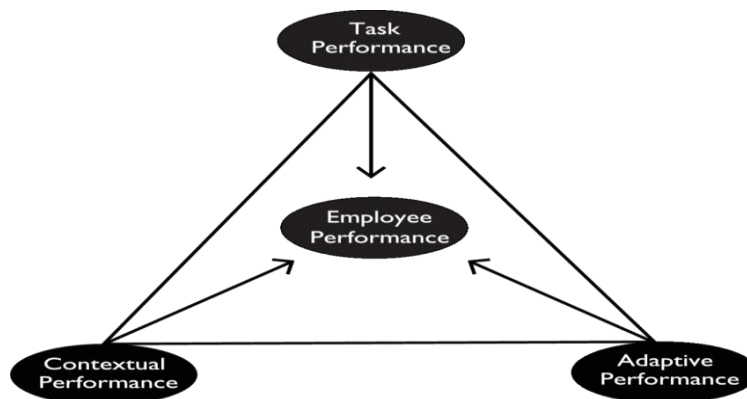


Figure 2.4: The Triarchy Model of Employee Performance (Adapted from Pradhan and Jena, 2016)

2.2. Empirical Review

2.2.1. Effect of Work Stress on Employee Performance

The most important apprehensions in the study of work stress are the adverse impact on employees' performance. Employees suffering with stress at work place, try to withdraw themselves from stressors in terms of high turnover and absenteeism from work (Daniel, 2019). Khattak et al. (2011) noted that stress puts drastic effects on employees. Employees in stress cannot meet the expectations of their organization, because of facing physical, psychological and organizational burnouts.

Ismail & Hong (2011) describe that employees in service organization are subjected to high degree of work-related stress, which is the major reason for employees' poor performance at job. Job stress affects negatively on the female employee's well-being which creates dissatisfaction and negative emotions towards work and ultimately their performance decreases.

Barbara et al. (2009, as cited by Daniel, 2019) defines that the condition of "high demand and low control" is highly associated with cardiovascular and heart problems, anxiety, demoralization and depression, use of drugs (Alcohol) and susceptibility to a wide range of infectious diseases. The condition of "high effort and low control" is also associated with high rate of cardiovascular, anxiety, depression and conflict related problems. Where both these conditions are present, high incidents of back pain and receptive strain injuries occur. Collectively both these conditions stifle the performance of employees.

Coetzee and Devilliers (2010) define role ambiguity, work relationships, job security, lack of job autonomy, work home interface, compensation and benefits, lack of management support are the key sources of creating job stress. Due to these sources of stress, employee engagement to work decreases. According to Bytyqi et al. (2010), stress has considerable importance for the organizational concern, because it has a direct effect on the employee's health and their performance.

A study by Mulugeta et al. (2021) on workplace stress and associated factors among vehicle repair workers in Hawassa City showed that out of the total study population of 347, 41.6% of the repairman experience work related stress. Moreover, the study indicated work-related musculoskeletal disorders were significantly associated with work-related stress. Workers who reported musculoskeletal disorders had more than three times the odds of having workplace stress than individuals who did not report musculoskeletal disorders. This study also showed that servicing large sized vehicles such as trucks and buses results in experiencing workplace stress than servicing light vehicles. It finally showed that workplace stress not only affects the worker, but it has adverse effects on family income and company performance as well.

2.2.1.1. Job Monotony and Employee Performance

Despite the business improvement of technology by use machinery and robots in some scenarios, firms have tasks which are repetitive that employees have to handle. Repetitive jobs pose a challenge to the company through the loss of revenue and a decrease in production. These tasks also have an effect on

the staff. 90% of employees get bored working on repetitive tasks. Repetitious jobs pose a risk of physical and mental health to your workers (Paula, 2014).

She also addressed that employees' feel stressed by monotonous work, which affects their morale. The repetitive jobs affect their creativity, and in the end, they become less productive. The study additionally showed that repetitive work can lead to making errors and results in unwanted cost to the company. Manual work performances get prone to human error. The inaccuracies increase in cases of repetitive jobs because due to the nature of the tasks, workers assume they understand what their work well. Employees perceive these jobs as simple work, and most of the time, they don't bother to counter check them for any inaccuracies.

A study conducted by Kitole et al. (2019) on the effect of work Stress on employee performance in the public Sector in Kenya indicated that job monotony adversely affects employee performance. Moreover, a study by Nyunza (2020) on the effects of job stress on employees' performance indicated that the major source of stress is the monotonous and non-interesting jobs being performed by employees in the organization which finally affects their productivity.

Jackson (2018) addressed in her article that eliminating repetitive work by continuing advances in technology and automation will boost productivity. Monotonous job can result in many physical ailments such as repetitive strain injury (RSI) and carpal tunnel syndrome, but there are many more risks created by repetition from the lack of focus it creates in the operative and the task at hand (4S Health and Safety Consultancy, 2018). The researcher noticed monotonous jobs in both office works and workshop area at EBG.

2.2.1.2. Work overload and Employee Performance

Rizzo (1970, as cited by Degu, 2020) defined work overload as a mismatch among the requirements, time constraints, and resources related to work existing to comply with these requirements.

It is a known fact that the issues of heavy workload and stress at job seemed to be rising day-by-day and literally, every employee seemed to be exposed to this workload issue regardless of their background or industries they belong (Shah et al., 2012). Khattak et al. (2011) stated that in Pakistan, employees experienced stress because of workload, technological problems at work, long working hours, inadequate salary, and insufficient time for family which finally affects their performance.

Work overload is one of the major contributors to job stress, which create dissatisfaction and poor performance among the employees (Shahid, 2012, as cited by Ehsan & Ali, 2019). For one to operate systematically and efficiently workload needs to be defined properly and when a workload is either too low or too high it could back fire either ways on the overall employees' performance (Dasgupta, 2013, as cited by Murali et al., 2017). It was observed that work overload is related to the sentiments of tension, obstruction, range of sick days, trouble, job burnout, losing self-esteem, concentration issues, depression, and workplace accidents (Kahn & Byosiere, 1992, as cited by Naru & Rehman, 2020).

In a positive end, workload is not always negative, but it also provides opportunities for employees' to gain experience faster and increase their productivity. However, massive work overload could also result in less productivity and incompetence (Shah et al., 2012). A study conducted by Kitole et al. (2019) on the effect of work Stress on employee performance in the public Sector in Kenya among 304 respondents indicated that employees who had heavy workloads were emotionally exhausted and display poor performance in the service delivery process.

On the contrary, the result of a study conducted by Johari et al. (2018) on autonomy, workload, work-life balance and job performance among teachers encompassing total respondents of 302 showed that workload had no significant impact on job performance. A plausible explanation to this by the researchers was that most teachers in the study have more than 16 years of experience in the teaching field. Hence, this is contradicting with other researches and therefore there is a contradiction of results. Yet another study by Tjahjadi and Cahyadi (2020) on the influence of time pressure, role ambiguity, workload and lack of motivation on employee performance showed that time pressure has no effect on employee performance. As a result, there is controversy or contradicting research findings.

2.2.1.3: Role Ambiguity and Employee Performance

Role ambiguity is conceptualized as a stressful condition due to employees' confusion concerning expectations of what their responsibilities are (Low et al., 2001). It is lack of information regarding appropriate actions in a given situation or not understanding the expectation of management (Babin & Boles, 1996, as cited by Grobelna, 2015). Also in their study, it is indicated that role ambiguity is negatively related to job performance. Role ambiguity exists when the individual manager has insufficient information to select the most effective job behaviors or when duties, authority, and responsibilities are unclear (Tubre & Collins, 2000, as cited by Amilin, 2017). Role ambiguity also arises when roles for a particular position are unclear, uncertain and poorly defined (Khattak, 2011). It

is also referred to as the incompatibility between information required to perform a task and available information (Burney & Widener, 2007). If subordinates are not clear about what they are expected to achieve and how they will be judged, they will hesitate to make decisions and they will try to meet the superior's expectations by trial and error (Rizzo et al., 1970, as cited by Grobelna, 2015). They also addressed that, in accordance with the role theory, role ambiguity, such as lack of adequate information that should be available to a given organizational position, increases the probability of dissatisfaction with the role, the experience of anxiety and the distortion of reality, ultimately leading to less effective performance. A study result in Spain encompassing 706 participants by Manas et al. (2018) indicated that the existence of elevated levels of ambiguity in work teams will reduce affective engagement among employees and extra-role performance behaviors that are carried out in the workplace.

2.2.1.4. Time Pressure and Employee Performance

According to Ordóñez et al. (2015,) "Time pressure, by contrast, is the subjective feeling of having less time than is required (or perceived to be required) to complete a task and be motivated to complete the task in the available time. It is also defined as the difference between the amount of available time and the amount of time required to resolve a decision task (Maule & Svenson, 2013). Hsu and Fan (2010) also defined time pressure as limitation of the time allotted for employees to finish their work.

Time pressure seemed to become increasingly a main issue of work in most developing countries (Moore et. al 2012, as cited by Murali et al., 2017). The researcher found that there are contradicting study results by different researchers. For instance a research carried out by Garrido et al. (2016, as cited by Noor, 2020) found that the employees who can adapt to working hours and duration can perform their job better. In other words, time pressure had a positive effect on job performance when they can manage the time allocated. Moreover, a study by Sharma and Bhatnagar (2017) was done to identify whether time pressure was the reason that the team engagement occurred. Surprisingly, each employee found that it was easier to work together to meet deadlines that were given by their employers when working in teams and thus increasing their job performance.

Yet another study result by Damilare et al. (2020) about occupational Stress on Employees' performance among National Union of Road Transportation workers in Ilorin Metropolis, Nigeria encompassing 171 respondents indicated that time pressure has a significant adverse influence on

employee performance. Moreover, a study result by Cho et al. (2018) on the combined effect of long working hours and low job control on self-rated health encompassing a total sample size of 50,032 indicated that working longer hours had a negative effect on employees since they had to work for a longer time to complete their job task. When employees work for a longer time, they became tired, thus would decrease their job performance. This scenario may harm the employees' performance and health.

The third contradicting result was the idea that time pressure has no effect on employee performance. For instance, a study result conducted by Tjahjadi and Cahyadi (2020) on the influence of time pressure, role ambiguity, workload and lack of motivation on employee performance in PT XYX company in Indonesia encompassing 76 respondents showed that time pressure has no effect on employee performance. Hence, there is a controversy or contradicting research findings.

2.3. Conceptual Framework

A conceptual framework showing the relationship among the dependent variable; employee performance, and the four independent variables; job monotony, work overload, role ambiguity, and time pressure is developed based on the discussed literatures and researches and is shown in the figure below.

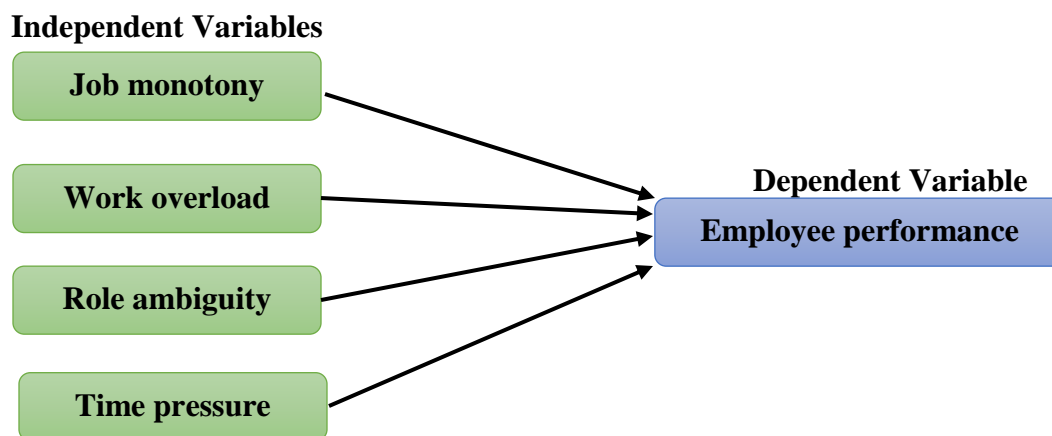


Figure 2.5: Conceptual Framework
(Source: The Researcher's Own Design)

CHAPTER THREE: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This chapter addressed the research design, research approach, population and sampling technique, type of data and tools/instruments of data collection, procedure of data collection and finally method of data analysis.

3.1. Research Design

Based on the research questions and research objectives, the researcher used an explanatory research design as this study is trying to find out the relationship between two variables; work stress and employee performance.

3.2. Research Approach

The research also used a cross sectional design with a quantitative approach, specifically; inferential research as the aim of inferential research is to make generalizations about the population by studying the sample population.

3.3. Population and Sampling Techniques

This aim of this research is to study the effect of work stress on employee performance in Equatorial Business Group, Head Office located at Addis Ababa, Saris Abo. EBG currently has 445 employees at the head office. As discussed in the literature review, every employee seemed to be exposed to workload issue regardless of their background or industries they belong. As a result, all employees of EBG including managers of every department were the target population of this study.

To calculate the sample size, the researcher used a simplified and most common formula by Yamane (1967) given as;

$$n = \frac{N}{(1 + N(e^2))}$$

Where n = Sample size

N = Total target population, and

e = Margin of error.

The researcher used a standard and convenient confidence level of 95%. Hence, the margin of error was 5% or 0.05.

As a result,

$$n = \frac{445}{(1+445(0.05^2))}$$

$$n \approx 211$$

The researcher used stratified sampling technique in which the population is divided into seven strata based on business unit. After stratifying the population, the researcher selected samples from each strata using proportional sampling technique. Respondents from each stratum are selected using simple random sampling technique. The seven business units including the samples taken are shown in the table below. In doing so, the researcher was sure to get the consent of the respondents before collecting data and that they were assured that the information they provided will remain confidential and is for research purpose only. To use proportional sampling, the formula shown below was implemented.

$$\text{Sample size} = \frac{\text{No. of people in the business unit} * \text{Total sample size}}{\text{Total population}}$$

S/N	Business Unit	No. of Employee	Proportional Sample Taken
1	Equatorial Volvo Business	126	60
2	Equatorial Pharmaceutical Business	67	32
3	Equatorial Light Vehicles Business	53	25
4	Equatorial Elevator and Telecom Business	46	22
5	Equatorial Energy Business	22	10
6	Equatorial Branches Operation and Coordination	15	7
7	Support Functions	116	55
Total		445	211

Table 3.1: Strata Division and Sample Size Based on Business Units

3.4. Source and Tools of Data Collection

The researcher used primary data type for this research. This includes a questionnaire distributed for the selected 211 samples at EBG to study in depth on the four variables; job monotony, work overload,

role ambiguity, and time pressure and their relationship with job performance. Moreover, it also helped to study the demographic characteristics of the respondents.

3.5. Procedures of Data Collection

A questionnaire is used in this research. The researcher used a five point likert scale questionnaire ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree with English language to figure out details on the four dimensions of work stress. The researcher adopted the questionnaire from a combination of different related literatures. Then finally the researcher used the responses from the questionnaire for further data analysis.

3.6. Method of Data Analysis

After successfully collecting data from respondents through the designed questionnaire, the researcher used that data as an input for data analysis. The researcher made the data ready for analysis by summarizing, editing, handling missing data, coding, classify, and tabulating the data. The researcher used SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Science) version 20 for further inferential statistics specifically bivariate correlation and multiple linear regression to identify the relationship between the dependent and independent variables.

3.7. Validity and Reliability

Validity refers to whether an instrument measures what it is supposed to measure, given the context in which it is applied (Babbie and Mouton, 2013). A careful effort was made for the validity of the instruments. A questionnaire containing 30 items without the demographic related questions was designed carefully. The items were adopted from standard literature related to the study. Moreover, the instrument was given to the advisor for further critical comments. Accordingly, following the researcher's advisor's approval, the questionnaires were distributed to the respondents.

Reliability is all about the internal consistency of the scales. One common way to compute the internal consistency of a scale is Cronbach's alpha (α), which computes the correlation between responses to all of the items in a scale. For a scale to be considered internally consistent, an alpha of .70 or higher is desired, although slightly below that is usually considered acceptable (Adams and Lawrence, 2019 as cited by Ermias, 2020). The questionnaire was pre-tested using a pilot test on selected 35 respondents to make sure that everything on the questionnaire including the language and flow is clear for all the respondents and correct any feedbacks from the selected respondents. Accordingly, the Cronbach's alpha values of the variables are shown in the table below

S/N	Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	N of items
1	Job monotony	0.797	6
2	Work overload	0.842	7
3	Role ambiguity	0.794	7
4	Time pressure	0.81	6
5	Job performance	0.832	4
	All items	0.827	30

Table 3.2: Reliability Statistics (Cronbach's Alpha) (Source: Own Survey)

As we can see from table 3.2 above, Cronbach's alpha values for all variables are above the acceptable value, .7. Moreover, the overall Cronbach's alpha value for all the 30 items is also very good. So we can say the items used in this research are reliable. Finally the researcher distributed the pre-tested questionnaire with both open and close ended questions to all respondents after making sure the alpha values are acceptable for further data analysis.

3.8. Model Specification

To show the variation in job performance accounted by each of the four independent variables; job monotony, work overload, role ambiguity, and time pressure, a regression model is used as shown below.

The general formula representing the model is given as;

$$Y = \alpha + \sum_{n=1}^4 \beta_n X_n + e, \text{ or}$$

$$Y = \alpha + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + e, \text{ where}$$

Y = Job performance

α = Constant term

β_1 = Coefficient of job monotony

β_2 = Coefficient of work overload

β_3 = Coefficient of role ambiguity

β_1 = Coefficient of time pressure

X1 = job monotony

X2 = work overload

X3 = role ambiguity

X4 = time pressure

e = error

The beta coefficients are computed and discussed from the multiple regression analysis result in chapter four.

3.9. Ethical Considerations

Ethical issues were taken under consideration while conducting this research. Data collection started after receiving thesis notification letter from SMUC students support and giving to HR department of EBG to distribute questionnaire and also ask the department details of business units. The researcher also explained the purpose of the research to the participants to get their willingness to participate in the study. The participants were notified that their identities would be kept anonymous and the information they provide is confidential used for academic purposes only.

CHAPTER FOUR: RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Introduction

The main objective of this paper was to examine the effect of work stress on employee performance in EBG. In this chapter, the data obtained in the study were analyzed, presented, interpreted and discussed. This chapter started by providing the demographic data of the respondents followed by the descriptive and inferential statistics of respondent's data in EBG with respect to previous research findings and literature.

The results of the study are obtained using data gathered from questionnaires; from a total of 176 questionnaires distributed 162 questionnaires were returned complete representing a net response rate of 92% for further analysis. This response rate was considered to be representative of the population that is being investigated.

4.2. Background Information of Respondents

No	Item	Classification	Frequency	Percent	Cumulative Percent
1	Gender	Male	89	54.9	54.9
		Female	73	45.1	100.0
2	Age	Below 25	5	3.1	3.1
		26-35	61	37.7	40.7
		36-45	61	37.7	78.4
		46-55	26	16.0	94.4
		>55	9	5.6	100.0
3	Educational Level	Vocational school	5	3.1	3.1
		Diploma	32	19.8	22.8
		BA/BSC	102	63.0	85.8
		MA/MSc and above	23	14.2	100.0
4	Work Experience	1-5 years	33	20.4	20.4
		6-10 years	67	41.4	61.7
		11-15 years	38	23.5	85.2
		16-20 years	14	8.6	93.8
		>20 years	10	6.2	100.0
		Total	162	100.0	

Table 4.1: Background Information of the Respondents (Source: Own Survey)

From table 4.1 presented above, we can see that out of 162 respondents, 89 or 55% are male and 73 or 45% are female.

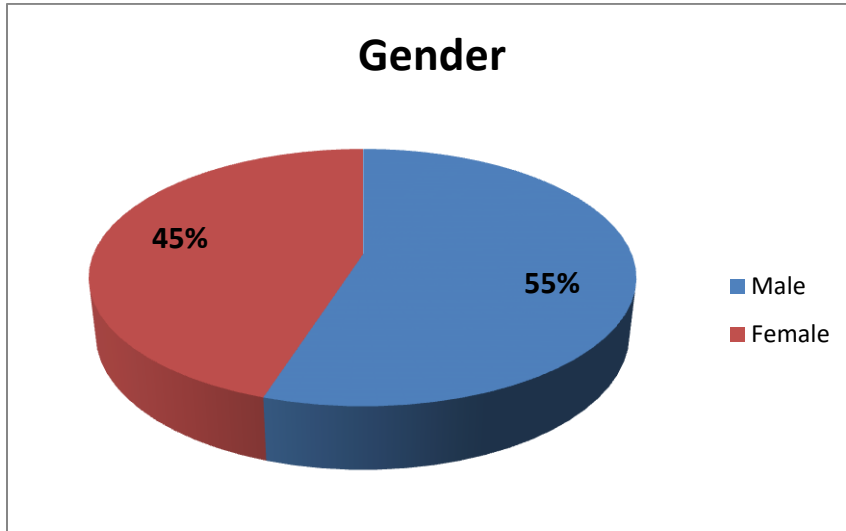


Figure 4.1: Gender Frequency

From this we can say that there is fairly balanced gender distribution in EBG. Of course 55% of the respondents are male which shows the majorities that are exposed to work stress are male.

In relation to age of the respondents, 5 or 3.1% are below 25, 61 or 37.7% are from 26-35, 61 or 37.7% are from 36-45, 26 or 16% are from 46-55, and 9 or 5.6% are above the age of 55. We can see that in cumulative frequency of 78.4% are below the age of 45 which shows that majority of the respondents are in their productive age which is a good thing for self-performance and overall organizational productivity of EBG. Of course 5.6% of the respondents are above 55 which bring great real life experience for EBG.

Regarding educational level of the respondents, 5 or 3.1% completed vocational school, 32 or 19.8% have diploma, 102 or 63% have either BA or BSC and 23 or 14.2% have MA/MSc and above. We can see that 63% of the respondents have BA or BSC which shows majority of them are literate and it brings lots of knowledge and experiences to the organization. Of course 14.2% of MA or MSc is also considerable figure which helps EBG in such a way that they can manage work stress properly.

In relation to work experience of the respondents, 33 or 20.4% have 1-5 years of experience, 67 or 41.4% have 6-10 years of experience, 38 or 23.5% have 11-15 years of experience, 14 or 8.6% have 16-20 years of experience, and 10 or 6.2% have more than 20 years of experience. In this manner the majority or 41.4% represent respondents with experience of 6-10 years which shows that majority of the respondents are well experienced in the area and they can also understand and manage stress properly as they stayed in the area well. It is also noticeable that 38.3% have more than 10 years of experience which is fruitful for both the employees and the organization in many ways.

4.3. Descriptive Statistics

This section discusses the measure of central tendency and measure of dispersion for the independent and dependent variables; i.e. job monotony, work overload, role ambiguity, time pressure, and job performance.

S/N	Variable	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Evaluation of Mean Score
1	Job Monotony	162	3.5242	.27516	Moderate
2	Work Overload	162	3.4702	.31386	Moderate
3	Role Ambiguity	162	3.7026	.42206	Moderate
4	Time Pressure	162	3.5536	.46192	Moderate
5	Job Performance	162	3.9414	.77145	High
	Valid N (list wise)	162			

Table 4.2: Descriptive Statistics (Source: Own Survey)

According to Zaidatol and Bagheri (2009, as cited by Blen, 2018), the mean score below 3.39 is considered as low while the mean score from 3.40 to 3.79 is considered as moderate and mean score above 3.8 is considered as high as shown in the table below.

S/N	Mean Value	Description
1	< 3.39	Low
2	3.4 – 3.79	Moderate
3	> 3.8	High

Table 4.3: Decision Rule for Mean Value of Five Point Likert Scale

We can see from Table 4.2 that; out of the four independent variables time pressure has the mean value of 3.55 and standard deviation of .46. This indicates that majority of the respondents experienced a moderate level of stress related to time pressure. From observation and personal experience at EBG, this can arise from many reasons. One is a very high demand of requests on the front customer counter. EBG has many customers that have fleets on both truck and construction machineries; hence there are lots of customers visiting EBG daily for after sales service like parts, maintenance, and even warranty cases which induces pressure on counter staffs. Other factor the researcher noticed is that the finance department is very busy. They got lost of paper one on the other waiting some tasks to be done regarding payments for field visiting technicians, payroll preparation, and many financial activities which generates a time pressure on the finance department employees. Moreover, in our department we are very busy. We participate in many spare part tenders which are floating daily. So we are time pressurized as we must prepare the documents before the bid closing date. Lastly there are a bunch of trucks and machineries waiting in line to be repaired. As the customers want quick turnaround time, the technicians get pressurized as they have to repair, overhaul and replace components and return the machines to the customers. Owing to these practical reasons the mean value for time pressure is the highest.

From Table 4.2 again, role ambiguity is the second variable with the moderate mean value of 3.7 and standard deviation of .422. This shows that majority of the respondents encounter moderate level of stress related to role ambiguity as $3.7 > 3.4$. This can happen due to unclear duties and responsibilities or lack of well-defined job description. The researcher is a very good proof for this. The researcher experienced a stress caused by role ambiguity. The case is that the job title written in the job description and annual performance evaluation form is different; the earlier says Junior Parts Engineer and the later says Junior Sales Engineer. Two of the positions are technically quite different and this leads to receiving tasks from different departments and also reporting to more than one person which eventually lasts in stress. The researcher also observed lack of role clarity in store and workshop areas.

Job monotony is the third independent variable with moderate mean value of 3.52 and standard deviation of .275. This indicates that most of the respondents feel moderate level of stress induced by monotonous job since $3.52 > 3.4$. This can happen as a result of easy and repetitive tasks. Tasks that do not require creativity and critical thinking also cause job monotony. The researcher observed great level of repetitive tasks in most of the departments. For instance, the technicians do similar and repetitive tasks over and over while servicing trucks or machines. This becomes routine and daily life of the technicians which ultimately results in job stress. This greatly needs the attentions of the top level management of EBG.

The last independent variable with relative lowest mean value of 3.47 and standard deviation of .313 is work overload. This shows that most of the respondents experienced nearly moderate level of stress caused by work overload since $3.47 > 3.4$ which is the cut-off value. This is caused by large amount of work to do for the employee expected by managers and customers. The researcher again observed high level of physically demanding tasks in the workshop area which is one factor of work overload causing job stress and even health complications on technicians to happen.

Last but not least, the dependent variable; job performance showed a high level mean value of 3.94 and standard deviation of .771. This indicates that majority of the respondents highly agreed that they are top performers, they have better knowledge about the services given at EBG, they know what their customers expect better than others and that they get along with customers better than others.

4.4. Inferential Statistics

This part illustrates the results of inferential statistics computed in this research. To assess the objectives of the study, Pearson's product moment correlation coefficient was computed and also multiple linear regression analysis was conducted with the help of SPSS. Conclusions are also drawn with regard to the results.

4.4.1. Bivariate Correlation Analysis

Correlation analysis is statistical method that is used to discover if there is a relationship between two variables and how strong that relationship may be. According to Kothari (2004), positive values of "r" indicates positive correlation between the two variables (i.e., changes in both variables take place in the stated direction), whereas negative values of "r" indicates negative correlation i.e., changes in the two variables taking place in the opposite directions. A zero value of "r" indicates that there is no

association between the two variables. When $r = +1$, it indicates perfect positive correlation and when $r = -1$, it indicates perfect negative correlation.

Pearson r is commonly used in the social and behavioral sciences unless some other correlation is specified, the term correlation is usually assumed to stand for the Pearson r . Pearson correlation coefficients (r) can take on only values from -1 to $+1$.

The following table provides a framework for describing the strength of the measure of association:

Measure of Association	Descriptive Adjective
> 0.00 to 0.20 ; < 0.00 to -0.20	Very weak or very low
> 0.20 to 0.40 ; < -0.20 to -0.40	Weak or low
> 0.40 to 0.60 ; < -0.40 to -0.60	Moderate
> 0.60 to 0.80 ; < -0.60 to -0.80	Strong or high
> 0.80 to 1.0 ; < -0.80 to -1.0	Very high or very strong

Table 4.4: Strength of Pearson Correlation

Source (MacEachron, Basic Statistics in the Human Services: an Applied Approach, page 132)

For the purpose of this study, the researcher computed Pearson correlation coefficients to figure out the relationship between the four independent variables (job monotony, work overload, role ambiguity, and time pressure) and the dependent variable (job performance) and is summarized in the table shown below.

Table 4.5: Correlations (Source: Own Survey)

		Job Monotony	Work Overload	Role Ambiguity	Time Pressure	Job Performance
Job Monotony	Pearson Correlation	1				
	Sig. (2-tailed)					
	N	162				
Work Overload	Pearson Correlation	.239**	1			
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.002				
	N	162	162			
Role Ambiguity	Pearson Correlation	.264**	.212**	1		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.007			
	N	162	162	162		
Time Pressure	Pearson Correlation	.419**	.277**	.256**	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.001		
	N	162	162	162	162	
Job Performance	Pearson Correlation	-.225**	-.440**	-.218**	-.210**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.004	.000	.005	.007	
	N	162	162	162	162	162

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

* . Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

We can see from table 4.5 that the Pearson correlation coefficient between job monotony and job performance is $r = -.225$, $n = 162$, $p < .05$. This indicates that there is a weak negative relationship between job monotony and job performance; which means that as job monotony increases or as tasks become monotonous, repetitive and simple, performance will decrease. This finding is consistent with the research finding by Nyunza (2020) on the effect of job stress on employee performance on 60 respondents. Nyunza stated in the finding that a major source of stress is the monotonous and

disinteresting jobs being performed by employees in the organization which resulted in poor employee performance.

Similarly the Pearson correlation coefficient between work overload and job performance from table 4.5 is $r = -.440$, $n = 162$, $p < .05$. This indicates that there is a moderate negative relationship between work overload and job performance which implies that as work overload increases employee performance decreases. This finding is consistent with research finding of Nyunza (2020) where there exists a moderate and negative correlation between work overload and performance; $r = -.505$, $n = 60$, $p < .05$. Another research finding by Kitole et.al (2019) on the effect of work stress on employee performance in the public sector in Kenya also supports this finding. This research finding showed that work overload is negatively correlated to the employee performance; $p = -.429$, $n = 234$, $p < .05$.

The Pearson correlation coefficient between role ambiguity and job performance from table 4.5 is $r = -.218$, $n = 162$, $p < .05$ which indicates a weak negative relationship exists between role ambiguity and job performance. This infers that as role ambiguity increases or as there exists lack of clearly stated duties and responsibilities, employee performance will decrease. This finding corroborate with the findings of Murali et.al (2017) that discusses about the impact of job stress on employee performance. Their findings showed that work ambiguity had significant and negative influence on employee performance; $r = -.496$, $n = 136$, $p < .05$. They stated that work ambiguity led to lack of motivation which had a significant influence on employee performance. The study results concluded that work ambiguity would reduce employee performance in all aspects. Moreover, a study result conducted by Tjahjadi and Cahyadi (2020) on the influence of time pressure, role ambiguity, workload and lack of motivation on employee performance in PT XYX Company in Indonesia encompassing 76 respondents also supports this result. Their study result showed that role ambiguity has a significant negative effect on employee performance.

Lastly the Pearson correlation coefficient between time pressure and job performance from table 4.5 is $r = -.210$, $n = 162$, $p < .05$ which shows that there exist a moderate and negative relationship between time pressure and job performance. This infers that as time pressure increases or as deadlines get tighter, employee performance will decrease.

This is supported by a study result by Damilare et al. (2020) about occupational Stress on Employees' performance among National Union of Road Transportation workers in Ilorin Metropolis, Nigeria

encompassing 171 respondents indicated that time pressure has a significant adverse influence on employee performance. Moreover, a study result by Cho et al. (2018) on the combined effect of long working hours and low job control on self-rated health encompassing a total sample size of 50,032 indicated that working longer hours had a negative effect on employees since they had to work for a longer time to complete their job task. When employees work for a longer time, they became tired, thus would decrease their job performance. This scenario may harm the employees' performance and health.

However, this finding is contradicting with a research carried out by Garrido et.al. (2016) who found that the employees who can adapt to working hours and duration can perform their job better. In other words, time pressure had a positive effect on job performance when they can manage the time allocated. Moreover, a study by Sharma and Bhatnagar (2017) was done to identify whether time pressure was the reason that the team engagement occurred. Surprisingly, each employee found that it was easier to work together to meet deadlines that were given by their employers when working in teams and thus increasing their job performance.

4.4.2. Regression Analysis

Regression analysis is a widely used and very flexible computer analysis technique. It is used to measure the relative strength of independent variable on dependent variable. Thus, in order to determine the effect of the four independent variables on the dependent variable, multiple regression analysis was used. As defined by kothari (2004), "multiple regression analysis is used when the researcher has one dependent variable, which is presumed to be a function of two or more independent variables." Besides, it is a more sophisticated extension of correlation and is used to explore the predictive ability of a set of independent variables on one continuous dependent measure. The objective of this analysis is to test the predictive power of a set of variables and to assess the relative contribution of each individual variable. Before running to regression analysis, five assumptions; normality, linearity, homoscedasticity, independent of residuals, and multicollinearity test should be checked and met. Each assumption are discussed and tested as follows.

4.4.2.1. Normality Test

Multiple linear regression requires that the interval level variables in the analysis should be normally distributed. The normal range for skewness and kurtosis to be is between -1 and +1.

Table 4.6: Normality Test (Source: Own Survey)

Variables	N	Skewness		Kurtosis	
	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic	Std. Error
Job Monotony	162	.464	.191	-.087	.379
Work Overload	162	.019	.191	1.218	.379
Role Ambiguity	162	.838	.191	.458	.379
Time Pressure	162	.634	.191	-.021	.379
Job Performance	162	-.104	.191	-1.107	.379
Valid N (list wise)	162				

From table 4.6, we can see that all values for skewness are in the acceptable range. However the kurtosis statistic for work overload and job performance are slightly out of range. But, according to Ganti (2022), Central Limit Theorem (CLT) states that the distribution of sample means approximates a normal distribution as the sample size gets larger, regardless of the population's distribution. Sample sizes equal to or greater than 30 are often considered sufficient for the CLT to hold. As a result this data is considered as normally distributed since the sample size (162) is way more than 30. Hence, normality assumption is met in this regard.

4.4.2.2. Linearity and Homoscedasticity Test

The multiple linear regression assumes that the relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable is linear. The assumption is usually evaluated by visual inspection of the scatterplot. Violation of the linearity assumption may result in an understatement of the strength of the relationship between the variables. Multiple regression also assumes the range of variance for the dependent variable is uniform for all values of the independent variables which is called homoscedasticity or homogeneity assumption. Thus, both are tested using scatter plot as shown below.

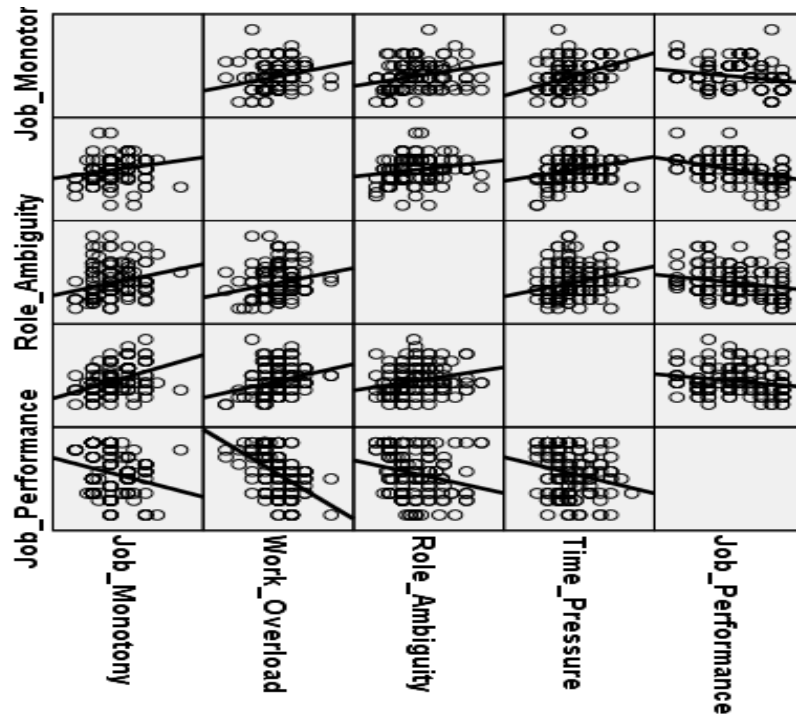


Figure 4.2: Scatter Plot for Linearity and Homoscedasticity Test

From figure 4.2, the four plots from the fifth column show the scatter plot for the dependent variable with each of the four independent variables. Visual inspection of the plots and the line drawn suggests that the relationship between the four independent variables and job performance is linear.

Despite it is somehow hard to assess visual inspection of homoscedasticity from the plots, inspection of the plots shows good variability in the plots and we will proceed with the analysis assuming homoscedasticity is not a major problem. Hence, linearity and homoscedasticity assumptions are not violated.

4.4.2.3. Multicollinearity Test

In regression multicollinearity occurs when the independent variables in the regression model are more highly correlated with each other than with the dependent variable. When the independent variables in our model are highly correlated with one another, they are basically measuring the same thing. In other words, when two variables are highly correlated, they both convey essentially the same information. We can check existence of multicollinearity in two ways. One is by running bivariate correlation analysis. Pearson correlation coefficient between the independent variables should not be more than 0.9. Referring back to table 4.5, we can see none of the r values are more than 0.9. So multicollinearity assumption is not validated.

Other option is by running multicollinearity test in the regression model. In this regard, multicollinearity exists when tolerance value (TV) is less than 0.1 and variance inflation factor (VIF) is greater than 2.5. So let us check it.

Table 4.7: Multicollinearity Test (Source: Own Survey)

Model		Collinearity Statistics	
		Tolerance	VIF
1	(Constant)		
	Job Monotony	.888	1.126
	Work Overload	.864	1.158
	Role Ambiguity	.889	1.124
	Time Pressure	.776	1.288

a. Dependent Variable: Job Performance

As we can see from table 4.7, tolerance values for all the independent variables are greater than 0.1 and VIF values are all less than 2.5. Hence, Multicollinearity assumption is not violated.

4.4.2.4. Independence of Residuals

Multiple regression assumes that the residual are independent. Residuals are the prediction errors or differences between the actual score for a case and the score estimated by the regression equation. No serial correlation implies that the size of the residual for one case has no impact on the size of the residual for the next case. The Durbin-Watson statistic is used to test for the presence of serial correlation among the residuals. The value of the Durbin-Watson statistic ranges from 0 to 4. As a general rule, the residuals are not correlated if the Durbin-Watson statistic is approximately 2, and an acceptable range is 1.50 - 2.50. So let us check it.

Table 4.8: Model Summary^b (Source: Own Survey)

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.704 ^a	.466	.443	.68956	.700

a. Predictors: (Constant), Time Pressure, Role Ambiguity, Job Monotony, Work Overload

b. Dependent Variable: Job Performance

From table 4.8, we can see that the Durbin-Watson value is computed as .700 which is in the natural range of 0 – 4 but is not in the acceptable range. Hence we can say the assumption independence of residuals is not fully met but is in the natural range. So the researcher wants to give the reader of this research caution note and alert on this result. To decide on the overall fit of the model, let us use the ANOVA table given below to decide whether or not there is a significant relationship between the independent variables and the dependent variable.

Table 4.9: ANOVA^a (Source: Own Survey)

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	37.415	4	9.354	24.601	.000 ^b
	Residual	59.602	157	.379		
	Total	97.017	161			

a. Dependent Variable: Job Performance

b. Predictors: (Constant), Time Pressure, Role Ambiguity, Job Monotony, Work Overload

From table 4.9, we can see that the probability of the F statistic for the regression analysis is 0.000, less than the level of significance of 0.05. Hence, we can conclude that the model used is fit and that there is a significant relationship between the independent and dependent variables.

From table 4.8, we can see that the value of ‘R’ is .704 which shows the degree of association between the combination of the four independent variables and job performance. R square (R^2) is a statistical measure that represents the proportion of the variance for a dependent variable that's explained by an independent variable or variables in a regression model. The adjusted R^2 gives similar meaning but it is standardized or unit less. In this case the adjusted R^2 value is .443 which indicates that 44.3% of variance in job performance is explained by job monotony, work overload, role ambiguity, and time pressure. The remaining 55.7% of variation in job performance is explained by other factors which are not included in this research.

The final target of this regression analysis is to find out the predictive power of each independent variable on the dependent variable. To find out this the coefficients table is shown and discussed below.

Table 4.10: Coefficients^a (Source: Own Survey)

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	9.046	.862		10.491	.000
	Job Monotony	-.249	.223	-.089	-1.119	.265
	Work Overload	-.949	1.84	-.386	-5.172	.000
	Role Ambiguity	-.188	1.37	-.103	-1.337	.002
	Time Pressure	-.067	1.34	-.040	-.498	.000

The above table 4.7 shows the significance level and predictive power of each independent variable on job performance. Looking at the unstandardized beta coefficients, work overload has the highest beta value of $-.949$, $p < .05$. This indicates that work overload has statistically significant and negative relationship with job performance. This infers that as work overload increases by one unit, job performance will decrease by $.949$ units.

Role ambiguity is the second most determining variable with beta value of $-.188$, $p < .05$. This indicates that role ambiguity has statistically significant and negative relationship with job performance. This infers that as role ambiguity increases by one unit, job performance will decrease by $.188$ units.

Time pressure is the third highest determining variable with beta value of $-.067$, $p < .05$. This indicates that time pressure has statistically significant and negative relationship with job performance. Numerically, as time pressure increases by one unit, job performance will decrease by $.067$ units.

Despite the fact that we found statistically significant correlation between job monotony and job performance, the regression analysis indicates there is no statistically significant relation between these two variables. For job monotony, $\beta = -.249$, $p > .05$ which indicates there is no statistically significant relation between job monotony and job performance.

As per the above coefficients and model summary, the following model was developed.

$$Y = \alpha + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + e$$

$$Y = \alpha + -.249X_1 + -.949X_2 + -.188X_3 + -.067X_4 + e, \text{ where}$$

Y = Job performance

α = Constant term

X1 = job monotony

X2 = work overload

X3 = role ambiguity

X4 = time pressure

e = error

Hence, after running all the five assumptions for multiple linear regression, the above model was computed which summarized the relationship between the four independent variables; job monotony, work overload, role ambiguity, and time pressure with the dependent variable; work stress.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This chapter discussed the main findings of this research, concludes the study precisely and forwarded constructive recommendations to different stakeholders.

5.1. Conclusions

Workplace stress is a major issue for both employees and organization. Every employee seemed to be exposed to this workload issue regardless of their background or industries they belong (Shah et al., 2012). The main purpose of this study was to investigate the effect of work stress on employee performance at EBG. The study focused on four dimensions of work stress; job monotony, work overload, role ambiguity, and time pressure.

Job monotony refers to performing the same tasks physically or mentally over and over again that become boring, laborious, and less interesting. A monotonous work will have a similar pattern every day, and a person may perform it repetitively without even thinking about how they are performing it. Despite the fact that the correlation analysis showed there exist a significant negative relation between job monotony and performance, the multiple regression analysis indicated that statistically significant relation between job monotony and performance does not exist. Despite the researcher observed repetitive and simple tasks performed by employees, it did not result in significant effect on their performance.

Work overload happens when job demands exceed an individual's ability to deal with them; i. e. exceed the time and resources available. Work overload represents the weight of hours, the sacrifice of time, and the sense of frustration with the inability to complete tasks in the time given. The correlation analysis showed that there exists a statistically significant negative relation between work overload and performance. This is also supported by the regression analysis. This result infers that majority of employees of EBG suffer from work overload. EBG's technicians from workshop also suffer from highly physical demanding tasks. Front counter employees also have extremely large amount of tasks in hand as there are many customers waiting in line to be served simultaneously with miscellaneous tasks like reports and the likes. All these factors contributed to work stress on employees of EBG.

Role ambiguity is a term used to describe the lack of clarity, certainty and/or predictability one might have expected with regards to behavior in a job. The bivariate correlation analysis indicated that role ambiguity negatively affects employee performance in EBG. Moreover, the multiple linear regression analysis revealed that role ambiguity has statistically significant relation with performance.

Time pressure is a type of psychological stress that occurs when a person has less time available (real or perceived) than is necessary to complete a task or obtain a result. In this research, both the correlation and regression analysis indicated that there is a statistically significant negative relationship between time pressure and job performance.

Generally, the regression analysis indicated that work overload, role ambiguity and time pressure showed statistically significant relationship with performance while job monotony did not show significant relation with employee performance. The multiple regression analysis was summarized by the model shown below.

$$Y = \alpha + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + e$$

$$Y = \alpha + -.066X_1 + -.291X_2 + -.102X_3 + .403X_4 + e$$

5.2. Recommendations

In order to improve performance of employees and the overall productivity of EBG, the researcher forwarded the following basic and constructive recommendations.

- Top level managers should grant employees of EBG a job autonomy by allowing them to perform tasks in their own speed, pace and ways so that their confidence can get boosted and their performance will increase since this can lessen monotonous task.
- EBG should start implementing job rotation with in a specific period of time by assigning employees at two or more related departments. This will help employees to gain a variety of knowledge from every department and this will in turn reduce repetitive and routine tasks performed by employees which ultimately reduce stress caused by job monotony. Moreover, this move can help EBG itself as job rotation helps employee acquire different skills which benefits EBG.
- As per the discussion, heavy workload exists specially at counter and workshop areas. Hence, the researcher recommends department managers and the human resource department to critically give attention human resource need analysis and hire additional personnel in the front counter and workshop are so that stress generated by work overload is reduced and employee performance is enhanced.
- Although insignificant, lack of clarity of duties and responsibilities exists in some areas of EBG. Therefore, the researcher recommends the human resource department to prepare and

offer clearly stated duties, responsibilities, chain of command and reporting structure for new recruits and also modify for existing ones. In this manner stress generated from role ambiguity can decrease and employee performance can be enhanced.

- The researcher observed lack of transparency at the top management level. Hence it is recommended for top level managers to develop a culture of notifying the employees what is going on regarding the organization, what changes are recorded and what future plans are considered to be done. This will greatly motivate employee as it makes employees feel they are part of the process and every changes. This motivation can lastly help them in achieving improved performances.
- Lastly, it is shown that time pressure resulted in negative effect on performance. Hence, the researcher recommends department managers to put a more practical, achievable, and logical deadlines so that work stress generated by time pressure will decrease.

5.3. Areas of Future Research

The main objective of this study was to investigate the effect of work stress on employee performance at EBG. The study focused on four dimensions of stress which are job monotony, work overload, role ambiguity, and time pressure. The research focused on the automotive sector. Hence the researcher indicates for future studies to expand this research area to other sectors too for further findings and policies.

The findings regarding the effect of work overload, role ambiguity and time pressure on performance showed a significant relationship exists among them. However, as major limitation of this study, the regression analysis indicated that there is no statistically significant relationship between job monotony and performance and. Hence, the researcher recommends for future researchers regarding similar issue to take caution and give attention in these two variables for further analysis.

Other limitation is that from the model summary, the adjusted R^2 is .443. Hence, the remaining 55.7% of variation in job performance is explained by other factors which are not included in this research. Therefore, the researcher indicates for future study to focus on other dimensions of stress such as; lack of autonomy, job insecurity, poor organizational leadership style, conflict at work, compensation and reward system, a poor relationship with coworkers, and the likes.

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Appendix 1

Survey Questionnaire

Questionnaire

St. Mary's University

School of Graduate Studies

Dear Respondents,

I am Natnael Tesfaye, an MBA student at St. Mary's University, School of Graduate Studies. As partial fulfillment of my Master's Degree, I am examining the effect of work Stress on employee Performance in the case of Equatorial Business Group PLC. Hence, this questionnaire is designed to collect primary data regarding my research. The outcome of this study is highly dependent on your response; therefore, for the success of the study, please provide trustful and genuine answer for the following questions. Your response will be kept confidential and it is only for academic purpose.

General guideline;

- There is no need to write your name on the questionnaire.
- Put a tick mark (✓) in the box that best describes your response.

For any question and comment please contact me through the following addresses;

Natnael Tesfaye

Phone number: +251-921910915

Email; natty2015man@gmail.com

I would like to thank you in advance for your cooperation and valuable time on filling the questionnaire.

Part I: Demographic Data of Respondents

Gender: Male Female

Age: Below 25 26-35 36-45 46-55 >55

Education Level: Vocational School Diploma
BA/BSc MA/MSc and above

Work Experience: Below 6 months 1-5 years
6-10 years 11-15 years
16-20 years >20 years

Part II: Research Related Questions

The following questions are presented on a five point Likert scale. If the item strongly matches with your response choose 5 (Strongly Agree), if you moderately agree on the idea choose 4(Agree), if you do not have any idea or information on the point choose 3 (Neutral), if you moderately disagree with the point choose 2 (Disagree) and if you completely disagree with the point choose 1 (Strongly Disagree).

1 = “Strongly Disagree”; 2 = “Disagree”; 3 = “Neutral”; 4 = “Agree”; 5 = “Strongly Agree”

S/N	Job Monotony	1	2	3	4	5
1	The tasks I perform are repetitive, predictable, and routine.					
2	My tasks are very easy.					
3	I can craft my job (I can customize the way I perform my tasks).					
4	I am able to perform different tasks through job rotation.					
5	My job requires creativity and critical thinking.					
6	My job requires high level of technical skill.					
	Work Overload	1	2	3	4	5
1	I have an extremely large amount of work to do.					
2	I am unable to take sufficient breaks.					
3	My job demands high physical work.					
4	I have to neglect some tasks because I have too much to do.					
5	I have more than one task on hand to be done.					
6	I feel tired by the demand placed on me.					
7	Different group demand different jobs from me that are hard to combine.					
	Role Ambiguity	1	2	3	4	5
1	There is clear job description that defines my roles and responsibilities.					
2	I am clear what is expected of me at work.					
3	I perform tasks that are not included in my job description.					
4	I am clear on what my duties and responsibilities are.					
5	I understand how my work fits into the overall aim of the organization.					
6	I usually change to a different line of work					
7	When changes are made at work, I am clear how they will work out in practice.					
	Time Pressure	1	2	3	4	5
1	I have unachievable deadlines.					
2	I usually struggle to meet deadlines.					
3	I have to work very fast.					
4	My working time can be flexible.					
5	I have to work extended hours to finish my task.					
6	I can perform tasks in my own speed.					

	Job Performance					
1	I am a top performer.					
2	I have better knowledge about our services.					
3	I know what my customers expect better than others.					
4	I get along with customers better than others.					

Source (Health and Safety Executive, 2012; Japan Ministry of Health, Labor, and Welfare; Hussain and Bavik, 2003)

Thank you once again for taking your time!

Appendix 2

Time Schedule

Time Schedule

S/N	Activities	Duration in Months (M)					
		M1	M2	M3	M4	M5	M6
1	Proposal Writing	■					
2	Review of Related Literature		■	■	■	■	
3	Data Collection			■	■		
4	Research Report Writing				■	■	
5	Submission of Draft Report					■	
6	Submission of Final Report						■