

Sources and Management of Stress among Secondary School Teachers in Rivers State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

The study was spurred by the excessive stress among teachers and its attendant negative consequences and as such investigated the sources of stress and its management modalities among teachers in secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria. The study answered three research questions and tested three corresponding null hypotheses. The analytic descriptive survey was the design for the study. The population of the study comprised all the 7,142 (3,681 males and 3,461 females) teachers in the 274 public secondary schools in Rivers State. The sample size of the study was 714 (368 males and 346 females) teachers chosen through proportionate random sampling technique. Stress and Management Modalities Scale (SMMS) was used for data collection. Face and content validities were determined by experts in the areas of Educational Psychology and Test and Measurement. The internal consistency through Cronbach alpha gave the reliability coefficient of SMMS to be 0.83. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions while z-test was used to test the hypotheses. It was found that the sources of stress are distance to schools, overtime, hostile environment, excessive workload and pressure of work, family challenges, paltry salary and poor emotional state. The types of stress experienced by teachers are acute stress, fear-based stress, work - load stress, job adjustment stress, time management stress, and physiological stress. It was recommended that teachers in public secondary schools should device a coping strategy for any problem that they cannot immediately solve in order to avoid unnecessary pressure. The teachers should endeavour to know when they are stressed to take a recreation where necessary.

Keywords

Stress, Stressors, Stress Management.

Introduction

Stress is a normal phenomenon faced by every individual in the course of life. Beyond a certain point, stress and its response cease to be helpful and could cause major damages to one's health, mood, productivity, relationships and quality of life [1]. This condition can make the work of the teacher who occupies a central position in students' learning and academic achievement to be physically and mentally challenging. According to Whawo [2] as cited in Worlu [3] teachers are described as direct agents in the process and task of training the young ones. Apart from this, those

of them who teach in the secondary schools are also accountable to fellow teachers, the principal and parents of these students. This task can be highly demanding on the teacher as he is often faced with the problems of these individuals from different backgrounds with varying needs, aptitude and capabilities. This situation could be very stressful. It goes contrary to the view of Shuckla (2008) as cited in Egu [4] which emphasized that teachers should have sound mental and physical health to be able to effect changes in the curriculum. When these teachers' effectiveness are seen to be constrained by the problems posed by the process of teaching, such as adolescents' problems, overcrowded classrooms, changing textbooks and demanding syllabus with inadequate teaching facilities and other life challenges, their job becomes demanding due to excessive stress.

The word 'stress' is from the Middle English word 'destresse'. Stress is defined by Omoniyi [5] as an organism's total response to environmental demands and pressure. It is also referred to as that strain or tension that comes from adverse or demanding situations. This shows stress could be seen as that element which commonly put pressure on individual's body to adjust or adapt to a particular way of life in order to cope with the situation of life before one. According to Ekechukwu [6] as cited in Ekechukwu and Isiguzo [7] stress is a psychological reaction caused by the perception of aversive situation which can be hazardous to one's health. Saqib and Rehman [8] further noted that when stress becomes severe or prolonged, distress occurs. These definitions show that stress is generally viewed from the negative angle to connote a condition that has a terrible effect on the mental and physical state of an individual. This only creates an ugly picture in the minds of people who experience stress. Human beings naturally strive to maintain some level of balance and stability (homeostatic) but external and internal environmental factors may disturb the steady optimal functioning for the organism (homeostasis). Indeed the general perception of stress is negative as there is little knowledge about stress being positive as well as negative in some cases. Stress could be positive or negative. It is said to be positive when it motivates one to execute actions. Stress is positive and needful when it helps the students to prepare and pass examinations, helps the workers to go extra mile in order to accomplish a task and motivate the teachers to be focused during lesson preparation for effective lesson delivery. On the other hand, stress is negative when it inflicts mental, physical, emotional and physiological injuries. This could be regarded as being abnormal. It is dangerous and can lead one to burnout if not identified and managed on time. Therefore, no matter how ugly as the explanation on the negativity of stress may look or sound, stress can help an individual to accomplish a task in record time. Studies confirmed that stressful conditions can make an athlete to win in a race or a worker to complete an important task on time [9].

The major sources of stress have been identified by researchers as stressors. Stressors have been described by Orulwene [10] as those stimuli that place high demands, pressure and forces on a person. This involves anything that causes stress through the release of those hormones that induce stress into the body system. A stressor according to Muchinsky [11] is a stimuli or event that has negative consequences both physically and psychologically for significant proportions of people who face it. It is also defined as anything in the environment which predisposes an individual to stress [12]. This can emanate from the task carried out by the individual or the environment where the individual carries out that particular task. Several researchers have associated stress to the types of work an individual does, the environment one resides and the mind disposition of a person. This corroborates with the view of Ijenwa [13] which related the sources of stress to environmental, emotional and physical, psychological and factors that have the tendency to ensure strain, tension and pressure as well as emotional instability. These factors are peculiar to individuals just as coping strategies are personal. Amadi [14] simply observed that stress emanate from what is surrounding an individual.

In addition, teachers may be faced with a lot of stressors ranging from house rent problems, house feeding issues, school fees demand, medical care and other miscellaneous expenses [15,16]. The introduction of new subjects, curriculum change, and crowded timetable among others create stress for teachers and limit their effectiveness [4]. She further noted that the biggest source of stress for teachers is teacher workload as teachers are made to teach too many students and are faced with many scripts to mark at a stipulated time. These teachers combine their job with private businesses as they are faced with the inability to provide simple luxuries of life due to poor remuneration, negligence and procrastination as regards their jobs, family problems and anxiety by school inspectors. Stress can also come from job insecurity, new job and health crises. Therefore the sources of stress could be said to be those personal and social uncomfortable feelings and emotions of an individual which originates from ones activities and the environment individuals find themselves. In the same vein, Ihua-Jonathan [17] posited that sense of isolation, poor interpersonal relationship, feeling of responsibility without power, role conflict, life challenges, lack of time, school policies and practices and public criticism of educators and schools largely cause stress on teachers. With this, all those factors that upset the body ability to maintain some level of balance are collectively referred to as stressors. Therefore, it is important to note that stressors may not necessarily lead to stress when the victim is emotionally matured to adjust from a particular stressor, but the presence of a stressor is associated with attendant stress if there is no strong management modality.

There are different dimensions of stress. It can be seen in the area of Eutress stress, acute stress, Episodic Acute stress and Chronic stress. Eutress stress is the type that leads to positive outcomes. It is associated with great fun and happiness. This made Colman [18] to describe it as that which is beneficial with a feeling of fulfillment and achievement instead of anxiety. It is essentially the positive stress in the sense that it quickens one to work towards the achievement of tasks, and most of the times to meet deadlines for a given task. Acute stress is a common and most recognizable type of stress. It is very short-lived and can be positive or negative on the body of a victim. Achilike [19] mentioned that for this type of stress, the victim knows why he/she is stressed as the body relaxes and comes back to normal when the stressful event ceases. Therefore, this stress at one time may seem to be rewarding and at the other time it may be frustrating. It does not cause severe or permanent damage to the body. Episodic acute stress is a type of acute stress that is milder but runs in one's life causing harm and damages to the bodily organs and wellbeing of such individual. According to Achilike [19] this type of stress is very chaotic, out of control and involves multiple stressful situations faced by the individual. The victims do not know or admit it easily and so it becomes habitual as the victims resist changing their lifestyle until they experience the severe physical symptoms. Finally, the chronic stress comes with unrelenting demands and pressure that grinds away both the emotional and health system [19]. This stress is the most adverse form that seems to be unending and tends to remain based on the situation that has prompted it. Some of the situations

that cause chronic stress are bad marriages, overwork and traumatic life experiences which could lead to death. Furthermore, John [20] study revealed that eustress, episodic, chronic and emotional stress are the most common stress among Nigerian workers. These dimensions of stress considered above manifest in physical, emotional or spiritual posture of the victim [21].

Some of the symptoms according to Strauss [22] include those of the intellectual (memory problem, difficulty in taking decisions, lack of concentration), the physical symptoms (sleep disturbances, fatigue, and high blood pressure, etc), emotional symptoms (depression, restlessness and anxiety, anger, lack of confidence, etc) and behavioral symptoms (sleeplessness, eating disorder, isolation, overreacting and neglecting responsibilities). Other numerous symptoms of stress have been stated by the Chai et al. [23] include headache, backache, stiff-neck, digestive problems and spasms, palpitation of the heart, lack of concentration, lack of sleep, constant fatigue, loss of appetite, aggression in speech, self-doubt, negative self-talk, among others, This shows that excessive stress on the teacher can cause not only behavioral changes of emotional distress, anxiety, fear and so on but has a lot of implications on the general life, health, and productivity level of the victim.

The effects of stress on teachers are of great concern. Stress has so much implication on the health of victims because it can make one feel ill. Most of the health related problems like hypertension, diabetes, gastrointestinal disorder, catarrh, alzheimer could be the aftermath of stress. With this, it is certain that every individual teacher experiences various degrees of stress but when it becomes excessive it seriously impacts on the mental disposition and well-being of the teachers. Stress is not good for teachers because when it occurs, it affects the teaching preparation, instruction and evaluation of the teaching process. Consequentially, not only does long time stress causes anxiety disorder, it also causes cardiovascular disease, high blood pressure, heart attack and stroke. This corroborates with the view of Schneiderman, Ironson and Siegal [24] which noted that those who undergo highly stressful experiences become more vulnerable to diseases.

Stress also has implication on the social life of victims. When stress occurs in the life of a victim it ravages the social life of the individual. Such victims find it difficult to laugh, play games or even belong to social organizations. It makes the victims look worn-out and haggard and socially incompetent to meet with social responsibilities. People who suffer from stress may have accelerated age more than their normal age. The possible reason for the accelerated age may result from frowning and worrying which are indications of stress. This may lead to the presence of wrinkles on the face as most of the times faces of victims appear stony. When this type of condition gets prolonged in the life of the teacher, it may cause him or her not to be able to work effectively as Casarella [25] reported that long time stress leads to low energy, headaches, nausea, chest pain, insomnia and dry mouth. Therefore, stress is not good for the teacher like other workers because it can kill the spirit of team work among teachers. With stress in the lives

of the teachers, it becomes difficult for them to collaborate with each other in discharging their duties effectively. A teacher that is suffering from stress may not have the required knowledge and skills to associate with self, people around and the environment.

Stress is strongly associated with emotional well-being. The starting point of stress is in the emotion of the victims and so, when it occurs it can devastate the emotion of a victim if not managed properly. Casarella [25] noted that emotional stress includes becoming easily agitated, frustrated and moody, feeling overwhelmed, having difficulty relaxing, low self-esteem and avoidance. In support of this view Ibokwe [26] observed that when a teacher is faced with this unhealthy condition for a long time, it may lead to other problems such as sexual dysfunction. Therefore, the need for emotional stability for teachers in the secondary schools becomes indispensable in the actualization of educational goals and objectives. A good emotional standing will go a long way to determine how effective teachers may be in the classrooms.

Stress can also affect the economy of the teacher. Teachers who suffer from stress may end up spending part of the paltry salary in trying to attend to issues of stress especially those related to health. When the economy of the teacher has adversely been affected by stress he or she may not be able to take care of carrying on with his family responsibilities. With this, there is need for stress management modalities that would help teachers who may fall victims of uncontrolled stress.

Management is a process that involves planning, organizing, coordinating and control of human activities to attain stated goals. Management is defined by Akpan [16] as a goal – achievement oriented process which involves interrelated activities of planning, organizing, leading and controlling. Stress management therefore, involves a variety of modalities or methods and treatments aimed at controlling the level of stress individuals pass through, for the purpose of improving day –to-day activities (Encyclopedia Britannica, [27] as cited in Atuwokiki [9]). For teachers to succeed in managing their stressful condition, they need to create an organizational climate whereby individuals involved in the teaching learning process or learning environment would work willingly and co-operatively towards the attainment of set organizational goals. Therefore, the process of stress management provides a number of ways to manage those teacher's stressors and stress. In addition, Mohammed [28] revealed that the use of coping strategies and the solicitation of the help and services of guidance counsellors could be used in the management of stress. This would balance the stability of teachers in the teaching-learning process to enhance maximum job performance. With so much consideration on the type of stress and the individual concerned, the following stress management modalities could be adopted to address the teacher's stressors and/or stress on the job.

Firstly, 'planning ahead' is an important modality of managing stress. When the teacher plans his activities ahead of time, it helps in managing and avoiding stressors that cause stress in the body. This would go a long way to make the teacher not to

hurry or module up so many activities together. In the view of Atuwokiki [9], planning ahead was noted as a core aspect of stress management. This is because when a teacher plans and organizes for a new day, develop weekly schedule which include time for teaching, grading, meetings and other obligations, this action plan would enable the individual to deal with the various outcomes of events that may cause one to feel stressed out. It will also reduce the frequent harassment of the teachers by the school administrators.

Secondly, ‘control of negative thought’ could also be another management modality for stress. Atuwokiki [9] described this strategy as ‘reframing’, a condition where teachers should concentrate on the positive rather than the negative. According to Ekechukwu and Onyekuru [31], negative thoughts such as self-doubt, criticism and expectation of failure can badly affect the teacher’s self-confidence, constrain performance level and induce stress. Sometime the negative thoughts may lure teachers to isolate themselves from others, become easily agitated, temperamental to the extent forcing out insulting words from the victims (verbal abuse). These loose words may serve as an insult to the receiver and at the same time lead the victim to a stressful condition. In a situation the teacher suppresses his negative thoughts by avoiding those things that upset him, trying to see the good in every situation for positive thoughts, there would be the control of any form of stress in the teacher’s life.

Thirdly, ‘getting back in control’ is another stress management modality that can reduce stress among teachers. This type of method enables individuals to get back and take control of their lives. With this, one is able to avoid ‘lack of control’ which is a major cause of stress. Teachers who feel stressed at the smallest problems are usually overwhelmed by their daily responsibilities while those who feel less stressed even with excess workload feel more in control of their lives. Ekechukwu and Onyekuru [31] were of the view that this could be achieved by the teacher organizing the workplace to control the time and work and also learning additional skills to tackle any problem at hand. In addition, Adebayo [29] opined that teachers should approach their jobs with sense of responsibility. When they learn to take independent decisions, it would increase their freedom and efficiency at work and wellbeing stability. This would go a long way not only to reduce frequent harassment on the teachers by the school administrators, but also eliminate stress for them.

Fourthly, ‘relaxation’ is another modality to control stress in the life of the teacher. In recent times, many teachers teach throughout the day. Some even at nights engage in tutorials in order to make more money. This poor time management can cause prolonged muscle tension seen in states of stress [30]. This type of tension can impede healthy condition of an individual. However, getting a teacher involved in progressive relaxation may reduce his fatigue and improve his job output. The use of break or recreation is common but could be very effective as it allows one to relax and ward off stress. During the break period, a teacher can relax by taking a walk around the school premises, listen to music, and take some physical exercises such as deep breathing among others.

Lastly, the ‘identification of factors that cause individual’s stressor’ is another important modality. When one identifies his or her problems, they are almost solved. Teachers should try and find out those habits of theirs or factors that are responsible for their stressors such as lack of exercise, not sleeping well, and so on. When teachers are able to check these identified factors that cause them stressful condition, it would pave way for practical and effective stress reduction plan. In addition, Ekechukwu and Onyekuru [31] also suggested that individuals should avoid stress by taking regular holidays, doing something different such as gardening, watching films, meditating and praying, eating healthy diets, talking about your feelings among others. Therefore, the knowledge of what stress is, its sources, types and consequent effects would spur individuals as well as relevant authorities to look for how to monitor the factors of stress and plan effective modalities to manage this problem in the life of teachers in the secondary schools.

Statement of Problem

Stress has been reported by experts to be rewarding when it is not excessive. Workers mostly teachers work under different harsh work condition. Most of them experience stress on daily bases simply because of stressors that are from the immediate environment, home and from the body demand. Teachers who do not know when the work stress is undeserving may end up having physical, emotional and medical problems. The strain associated with stress could lead them to develop burnout when the stressor is not removed in order to overcome the stress. Therefore, this study investigated the sources and management of stress among teachers in public secondary schools in Rivers state.

Aim and Objectives of the Study

The study was aimed at investigating the sources and management of stress among teachers in public secondary schools in Rivers State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Determine the sources of stress among teachers in public secondary schools in Rivers State.
2. Find out the types of stress among teachers in public secondary schools in Rivers State.
3. Determine the management modalities of stress among teachers in public secondary schools in Rivers State.

Research Questions

The following research questions were answered in this study.

1. What are the sources of stress among teachers in public secondary schools in Rivers State based on gender?
2. What are the types of stress among teachers in public secondary schools in Rivers State based on gender?
3. What are the management modalities of stress among teachers in public secondary schools in Rivers State based on gender?

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance:

1. There is no significant difference between male and female teachers on the sources of stress among teachers in public secondary schools in Rivers State.

2. There is no significant difference between male and female teachers on the types of stress among teachers in public secondary schools in Rivers State.
3. There is no significant difference between male and female teachers on the management modalities of stress among teachers in public secondary schools in Rivers State.

Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive survey research design. A descriptive survey design is one that allows the researcher to describe the variables the way they are without any form of manipulation. The population of the study comprised all the 7,142 (3,681 males and 3,461 females) teachers in the 274 public secondary schools in Rivers State. The sample size of the study was 714 (368 males and 346 females) teachers. The proportionate random sampling technique was used to draw 368 male from 3681 and 346 female teachers from 3461 representing 10% of the population of teachers. The instrument that was used for data collection was a questionnaire. The instrument was titled Stress and Management Modalities Scale (SMMS). The instrument SMMS was designed after the modified Likert four point response scales of Strongly Agree (4), Agree (3), Disagree (2) and Strongly Disagree (1). The question has two sections of A and B respectively. Section A contained the demographic information of the respondents such as: sex; name; school; location, experience and status. Section B has subsections. The subsections have 5 items for Sources of Stress, 5 items on Types of Stress, 5 items on Adverse Effects of Excessive Stress and 5 items on Management Modalities respectively. The SMMS has a total of 20 items. Face and content validities were determined by experts in the Department of Educational Psychology, Guidance and Counselling, Faculty of Education, University of Port Harcourt. The internal consistency through Cronbach alpha was used to compute the reliability of the instrument. The researcher in carrying out the reliability process administered 30 copies of the instrument to 30 teachers who were not in the sample but belonged to the population of the study. The administration of the instrument was done once. The essence for the use of Cronbach Alpha was because the instrument was sectioned and has more than two response options. The reliability coefficient

for SMMS was 0.83. The reliability coefficients of the subscales of Sources of Stress, Types of Stress and Management Modalities were 0.71, 0.75 and 0.79 respectively. The various reliability coefficients were high and justified the use of the instrument for the study. Mean and standard deviation were used to answer the research questions while z-test was used to test the null hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance.

Results

Research Question 1

What are the sources of stress among teachers in public secondary schools in Rivers State based on gender?

Table 1 revealed that items with serial numbers 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 11 & 12 have their various mean values above the criterion mean value of 2.50, and were agreed by the respondents as the sources of stress among teachers in secondary schools in Rivers State. The sources of stress among teachers in secondary schools in Rivers State as identified are that: stress is as a result of distance to schools, stress arises as a result of overtime, hostile environment is a source of stress, excessive workload constitute stress, pressure of work initiates stress, family challenges is a source of stress, paltry salary amounts to stress, poor emotional state forms stress, inspection of teaching processes by inspectors from the Ministry of Education bring about stress, stubborn students constitute stress and ineffective administrative leadership styles bring about stress.

Research Question 2

What are the types of stress among teachers in public secondary schools in Rivers State based on gender?

Table 2 revealed that items with serial numbers 13 to 18 have their various mean values above the criterion mean value of 2.50 and were agreed by the respondents as the types of stress among teachers in secondary schools in Rivers State. The finding showed that the types of stress available for teachers in Rivers State are: acute stress, eutress stress, episodic stress, chronic acute stress, time management stress and physiological stress.

Table 1: Weighted mean and standard deviation scores of male and female teachers on the sources of stress in public secondary schools in Rivers State.

S/n	Sources of stress	Male teachers = 368			Female teachers = 346		
		Mean	Std	Decision	Mean	Std	Decision
1	Stress is as a result of distance to schools	3.12	0.23	Agreed	3.00	0.78	Agreed
2	Stress arises as a result of overtime	3.01	0.33	Agreed	2.97	0.93	Agreed
3	Hostile environment is a source of stress	2.56	1.78	Agreed	2.98	0.87	Agreed
4	Excessive workload constitute stress	3.32	0.22	Agreed	2.54	1.73	Agreed
5	Pressure of work initiates stress	3.11	0.24	Agreed	2.76	1.71	Agreed
6	Family challenges is a source of stress	2.77	0.96	Agreed	3.10	0.76	Agreed
7	Paltry salary amounts to stress	2.67	1.56	Agreed	3.16	0.43	Agreed
8	Poor emotional state forms stress	2.90	0.89	Agreed	2.88	1.01	Agreed
9	Inspection of teaching processes by inspectors from the Ministry of Education bring about stress	2.88	0.98	Agreed	3.18	0.16	Agreed
10	Lesson delivery is a source of stress	2.09	1.83	Disagreed	1.98	1.99	Disagreed
11	Stubborn students constitute stress	2.91	0.83	Agreed	2.80	0.98	Agreed
12	Ineffective administrative leadership styles bring about stress	2.63	0.99	Agreed	2.81	0.98	Agreed
Grand mean and standard deviation		2.83	0.90		2.85	1.03	

Table 2: Weighted mean and standard deviation scores of male and female teachers on the types of stress in public secondary schools in Rivers State.

S/n	Types of stress	Male teachers= 368			Female teachers = 346		
		Mean	Std	decision	Mean	Std	Decision
13	Acute stress(burnout)	2.78	1.22	Agreed	3.25	0.13	Agreed
14	Eutress stress	3.01	0.81	Agreed	2.99	1.34	Agreed
15	Episodic stress	2.98	1.31	Agreed	2.75	1.33	Agreed
16	Chronic acute stress	2.88	1.34	Agreed	3.12	0.83	Agreed
17	Time management stress	2.91	1.31	Agreed	2.55	1.56	Agreed
18	Physiological stress	3.03	0.89	Agreed	2.79	1.45	Agreed
Grand mean and standard deviation		2.93	1.15		2.91	1.11	

Table 3: Weighted mean and standard deviation scores of male and female teachers on the management modalities of stress in public secondary schools in Rivers State.

S/n	Management modalities of stress	Male teachers= 368			Female teachers = 346		
		Mean	Std	Decision	Mean	Std	Decision
27	Teachers should approach their job with sense of responsibility	2.66	1.90	Agreed	2.54	1.78	Agreed
28	Job schedule should be based on areas of specialization of the teachers	2.76	1.88	Agreed	2.86	1.55	Agreed
29	Reduction in the frequent harassment of the teachers by the school administrators will eliminate stress	2.50	1.98	Agreed	2.90	1.23	Agreed
30	Proper observation of break period will ameliorate stress	3.01	0.31	Agreed	2.77	1.56	Agreed
31	Discouragement of intimidation from parents will reduce stress	2.71	1.89	Agreed	2.89	1.24	Agreed
32	Appropriate disciplinary actions to erring students will help curb stress	2.58	1.98	Agreed	2.67	1.66	Agreed
33	Frequent visit to counsellors and psychologists whenever there is need will help in stress management	3.00	0.35	Agreed	2.99	1.32	Agreed
Grand mean and standard deviation		2.75	1.47		2.80	1.45	

Table 4: Z-Test Calculation on the Mean Difference between Male and Female Teachers on the Sources of Stress.

Categories	N	Mean	Std	Df	z-cal.	z-crit.	Decision
Male teachers	368	2.83	0.90	712	0.29	1.96	Hypothesis is accepted
Female teachers	346	2.85	1.03				

Table 5: Z-Test Calculation on the Mean Difference between Male and Female Teachers on the Types of Stress.

Categories	N	Mean	Std	Df	z-cal.	z-crit.	Decision
Male teachers	368	2.93	1.15	712	0.25	1.96	Hypothesis is accepted
Female teachers	346	2.91	1.11				

Research Question 3

What are the management modalities of stress among teachers in public secondary schools in Rivers State based on gender?

Table 3 showed that items with serial numbers 27, 28, 29, 30, 31, 32 & 33 have their various mean values above the criterion mean value of 2.50, and were agreed by the respondents as the management modalities of stress among teachers in secondary schools in Rivers State. The management modalities of stress are that: teachers should approach their job with sense of responsibility, job schedule should be based on areas of specialization of the teachers, reduction in the frequent harassment of the teachers by the school administrators will eliminate stress, proper observation of break period will ameliorate stress, discouragement of intimidation from parents will reduce stress, appropriate disciplinary actions to erring students will help curb stress and frequent visit to the psychologists and counsellors whenever there is need will help in stress management.

Hypothesis 1

There is no significant difference between male and female teachers on the sources of stress among teachers in public secondary schools in Rivers State.

Table 4 revealed that male teachers have mean and standard deviation scores of 2.83 and 0.90 while female teachers have mean and standard deviation scores of 2.85 and 1.03 respectively. With degree of freedom of 712, the calculated z-test value of 0.29 is less than the critical z-test value of 1.96. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted. By implication, there is no significant difference between male and female teachers on the sources of stress among teachers in public secondary schools in Rivers State.

Hypothesis 2

There is no significant difference between male and female teachers on the types of stress among teachers in public secondary schools in Rivers State.

Table 5 revealed that male teachers have mean and standard deviation scores of 2.93 and 1.15 while female teachers have mean and standard deviation scores of 2.91 and 1.11 respectively. With degree of freedom of 712, the calculated z-test value of 0.25 is less than the critical z-test value of 1.96. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted. By implication, there is no significant difference between male and female teachers on the types of stress among teachers in public secondary schools in Rivers State.

Hypothesis 3

There is no significant difference between male and female teachers on the management modalities of stress among teachers in public secondary schools in Rivers State.

Table 6: Z-Test Calculation on the Mean Difference between Male and Female Teachers on the Management Modalities of Stress.

Categories	N	Mean	Std	Df	z-cal.	z-crit.	Decision
Male teachers	368	2.75	1.47	712	0.45	1.96	Hypothesis is accepted
Female teachers	346	2.80	1.45				

Table 6 revealed that male teachers have mean and standard deviation scores of 2.75 and 1.47 while female teachers have mean and standard deviation scores of 2.80 and 1.45 respectively. With degree of freedom of 712, the calculated z-test value of 0.45 is less than the critical z-test value of 1.96. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted. By implication, there is no significant difference between male and female teachers on the management modalities of stress among teachers in public secondary schools in Rivers State.

Discussion of Findings

Sources of Stress among Teachers

The sources of stress among teachers in secondary schools in Rivers State as identified are that: stress is as a result of distance to schools, stress arises as a result of overtime, hostile environment is a source of stress, excessive workload constitute stress, pressure of work initiates stress, family challenges is a source of stress, paltry salary amounts to stress, poor emotional state forms stress, inspection of teaching processes by inspectors from the Ministry of Education bring about stress, stubborn students constitute stress and ineffective administrative leadership styles bring about stress. There is no significant difference between male and female teachers on the sources of stress among teachers in public secondary schools in Rivers State. The finding of this study is supported by Ijenwa [13] who reported that the sources of stress are environmental, emotional, psychological, climatic and physical factors. Stress has been associated to the types of work, the environment where the individual is leaving and the mind disposition of the individual. Similarly, Amadi [14] buttressed this study when he reported that stress is a result of what is surrounding the individuals. This applies to every individual. Therefore for both the male and female teachers, the factors that pre-occupied them are the work, work environment, colleagues and distance to work.

Types of Stress among Teachers

The finding showed that the types of stress available for teachers in Rivers State are: acute stress, eutress stress, episodic stress, chronic acute stress, time management stress and physiological stress and physiological stress. There is no significant difference between male and female teachers on the types of stress among teachers in public secondary schools in Rivers State. The different identified stresses in the literature review are applicable to the respondents. The study was supported by John [20] who found that the most common type of stress for Nigerian workers are eutress, episodic stress, chronic stress and emotional stress. These stresses have adverse effect on the emotional, physical, physiological and spiritual standing of the teachers. With the case of these adverse effects, the teacher's efficiency and effectiveness may be dwindled.

Stress Management Modalities

The finding showed that: teachers should approach their job with sense of responsibility, job schedule should be based on areas of specialization of the teachers, reduction in the frequent harassment of the teachers by the school administrators will eliminate stress, proper observation of break period will ameliorate stress, discouragement of intimidation from parents will reduce stress, appropriate disciplinary actions to erring students will help curb stress and frequent visit to psychologists and counsellors whenever there is need will help in stress management. There is no significant difference between male and female teachers on the management modalities of stress among teachers in public secondary schools in Rivers State. The study concurred with that of Mohammed [28] who found that the management strategies for stress are through the use of coping strategies and the solicitation of the help and services of guidance counsellors. This shows that the management of stress starts from the clients. This implies that the client has the justification to bring himself out of the causes of the stress and strain in order to reduce the imminent pressure. It is a truism that teachers can only salvage themselves from the problems of stress when they assume their work with a sense of responsibility, overlook certain issues that are posing problems in their various families and develop management and coping skills in order to have effective relationship with their colleagues. Interestingly, Adebayo [29] reported that the adoption of friendly and workable leadership and administrative patterns can reduce the level of stress among the teachers.

Conclusion

Contemporary human society is full of stressful experiences for the individual. With this, the teacher's work like other human activities also goes with stress. Based on the findings of this study, it was concluded that teachers in public secondary schools suffer from one type of stress to the other due to the school environmental condition, home environment as well as those factors that serve as stressors which can be managed through some identified stress management modalities and concerted effort in the direction of counselling, interpersonal, intrapersonal relationship and positive job attitude.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made:

1. There should be provision of stress management training for secondary school teachers as part of their orientation programme to equip them for effective management of stress.
2. School administrators should be quick to identify teachers who are stressed as well as provide them the opportunity, time and resources to enhance their coping abilities.
3. Sources of stress should be identified and managed when it is possible in order to maintain stable emotional state among secondary school teachers.

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