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Workplace Social Support and Occupational Stress as Predictors of Lecturers' Job Effectiveness in Public Tertiary Institutions in Kebbi State

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Abstract
This study examined workplace social support and occupational stress as predictors of lecturers' job effectiveness in public tertiary institutions in Kebbi State. The study was guided by two research questions and adopted a correlational research design. The population comprised 1,637 lecturers, from which a sample of 310 lecturers and administrators was selected using proportionate stratified random sampling. Data were collected using three instruments: Workplace Social Support Rating Scale (WSSRS), Occupational Stress Rating Scale (OSRS), and Lecturers' Job Effectiveness Rating Scale (LJERS). The instruments were validated by experts and yielded satisfactory reliability coefficients. Data were analyzed using mean, standard deviation and multiple regression analysis. The findings revealed that the level of lecturers' job effectiveness was low. The findings further revealed that workplace social support and occupational stress jointly made a statistically significant contribution to lecturers' job effectiveness, with $R = 0.680$ and $R^2 = 0.462$, indicating that the two predictors jointly explained 46.2% of the variance in lecturers' job effectiveness. The study concluded that workplace conditions and occupational demands are important factors influencing lecturers' effectiveness. It recommended strengthening workplace social-support mechanisms and implementing effective occupational-stress management strategies to improve lecturers' teaching, research, supervision, community service, administrative responsibilities and professional development.

Keywords: Workplace Social Support, Occupational Stress, Lecturers' Job Effectiveness, Public Tertiary Institutions

Introduction

Education is a fundamental instrument for human-capital development, social transformation and national progress because it equips individuals with the knowledge, skills, values and competencies needed to contribute meaningfully to society. Tertiary education, provided through universities, colleges of education, polytechnics and other post-secondary institutions, plays a particularly important role by developing advanced skills, producing qualified manpower, promoting research and innovation, and preparing graduates for employment and responsible citizenship (World Bank, 2024). The major goals of tertiary institutions therefore include the provision of high-level manpower, advancement of knowledge through research, promotion of technological and entrepreneurial development, development of professional competencies, and contribution to community and national development. In Nigeria, effective tertiary education is especially important because the quality of its graduates influences the capacity of the nation to improve productivity, address social challenges, stimulate innovation and compete in a knowledge-based global economy. Recent evidence shows that higher education contributes to human-capital development and nation building, while investment in skilled and innovative people supports productivity, employment and economic growth (Onyebuchi-Igbokwe et al., 2024; Rossi & Weber, 2024).

Workplace social support refers to the assistance, encouragement and resources employees receive from people within their work environment, and it is increasingly recognised as an important factor in employee well-being, commitment and performance. In tertiary institutions, such support may be expressed through administrative support, support from colleagues, departmental support, mentoring support, emotional support and professional support, which can help employees cope with work demands, develop professionally and perform their responsibilities effectively. Recent studies indicate that organisational and interpersonal support can improve job performance, job satisfaction and psychological well-being, while inadequate social support may increase workplace stress and reduce employees' effectiveness (Gillman et al., 2023; Tian et al., 2023; Chu et al., 2024). In particular, Chu et al. (2024) found that organisational support was positively associated with task performance, while Gillman et al. (2023) reported that greater workplace social support was associated with lower perceived stress and better job-related outcomes. Similarly, Hammer et al. (2024) emphasised the importance of supportive supervisory practices in protecting employee well-being.

Occupational stress refers to the physical and psychological strain that occurs when work demands exceed an employee's available resources and ability to cope. In contemporary workplaces, employees may experience stress through workload pressure, time pressure, role conflict, role ambiguity, promotion-related stress, job insecurity and work–life imbalance, which can negatively affect their well-being, motivation and work effectiveness. Recent evidence shows that role conflict, role ambiguity and excessive work demands are important sources of workplace stress and can adversely affect employee performance (Nguyen et al., 2024), while job insecurity can intensify work–life conflict by creating anxiety and psychological strain (Zhang et al., 2024). Similarly, work-system demands, job insecurity and work–life conflict have been associated with employee burnout and emotional exhaustion (Asadi et al., 2024).

Lecturers' job effectiveness is essential to the quality and success of tertiary education because lecturers are responsible for teaching students, generating knowledge through research, contributing to community development and performing various academic and administrative

duties. Effective lecturers are therefore expected to demonstrate teaching effectiveness, research effectiveness, community service, student supervision, academic advising, administrative responsibilities and professional development. Recent evidence indicates that lecturers' engagement in teaching, research, academic advising and administrative activities is closely associated with their job performance (Ojo et al., 2024), while institutional conditions and leadership can significantly influence teaching, research and community-service performance (Chuktu et al., 2023). Similarly, Malami and Onen (2023) found that professional development significantly improved lecturers' teaching and community-service performance, highlighting the importance of continuous capacity development.

The foregoing discussion shows that workplace social support and occupational stress are important factors that may influence lecturers' job effectiveness in public tertiary institutions. While adequate administrative, collegial, departmental, mentoring, emotional and professional support can provide lecturers with the resources and encouragement needed to perform effectively, excessive workload, time pressure, role conflict, role ambiguity, promotion-related stress, job insecurity and work–life imbalance may hinder their ability to perform teaching, research, supervision, community service and administrative responsibilities effectively. Although these factors are important to the functioning of tertiary institutions, there is limited empirical evidence on how workplace social support and occupational stress jointly predict lecturers' job effectiveness in public tertiary institutions in Kebbi State. This situation creates a need for an empirical investigation to determine whether workplace social support and occupational stress significantly predict lecturers' job effectiveness, thereby providing evidence that can assist educational managers in developing appropriate strategies for improving lecturers' working conditions and institutional effectiveness.

Statement of the Problem

Ideally, lecturers in public tertiary institutions should work in an environment characterised by adequate administrative, departmental, collegial, mentoring, emotional and professional support, manageable workloads and clear roles, enabling them to perform effectively in teaching, research, student supervision, academic advising, community service, administration and professional development. However, the current situation in public tertiary institutions in Kebbi State indicates institutional conditions that may constrain lecturers' effectiveness. For example, the National Universities Commission (NUC, 2024a) accreditation report for Geography Education at Federal University Birnin Kebbi identified an unsatisfactory staff–student ratio, 40% of academic staff without staff-development opportunities and inadequate funding, while reports for Business Education and Educational Management identified inadequate core teaching staff, deficiencies in course delivery and learning materials, unfavourable staff composition and insufficient research and funding support (NUC, 2024b, 2024c). Similarly, the NUC report on Economics Education indicated that the staff–student ratio did not meet the approved standard and that 41% of academic staff had not benefited from staff-development programmes (NUC, 2024d). Although these reports do not directly conclude that lecturers have *poor job effectiveness*, their documented deficiencies provide institutional evidence of conditions capable of constraining teaching, research and other academic responsibilities; this is consistent with the concern identified by Aminu and Mathew (2025) regarding workload management, compensation, collaboration and work engagement among lecturers in state-owned tertiary institutions in Kebbi State. The consequences may include reduced teaching quality, weak research productivity, inadequate student support, low morale, diminished professional commitment and reduced institutional effectiveness; therefore, tertiary-institution managers need to strengthen workplace social-support systems, improve mentoring and professional development, provide reasonable workload allocation,

clarify roles, improve working conditions and establish mechanisms for managing occupational stress. The Kebbi State Ministry of Higher Education (2026) itself recognises responsibility for determining higher-education needs, supervising state tertiary institutions, supporting accreditation and ensuring the development of human resources, underscoring the importance of effective management of staff and institutional resources. Consequently, the documented staffing, staff-development, workload, funding and resource challenges, together with the limited empirical evidence examining the combined predictive influence of workplace social support and occupational stress on lecturers' multidimensional job effectiveness in public tertiary institutions in Kebbi State, provide a clear basis for undertaking the present study.

Objective of the Study

The main thrust of the study is to investigate workplace social support and occupational stress as predictors of lecturers' job effectiveness in public tertiary institutions in Kebbi state. The study specifically sought to;

1. Find out the level lecturers' job effectiveness in public tertiary institutions in Kebbi State.
2. Examine joint contribution of workplace social support and occupational stress on lecturers' job effectiveness in public tertiary institutions in Kebbi state.

Research Questions

The following questions guided the study

1. What is the level lecturers' job effectiveness in public tertiary institutions in Kebbi State?
2. What is the joint contribution of workplace social support and occupational stress on lecturers' job effectiveness in public tertiary institutions in Kebbi state?

Theoretical Framework/Review of Related Literature

The study anchored two theories; Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) Theory, developed by Demerouti et al. (2001) and subsequently advanced by Bakker and Demerouti (2007), explains that employees' work outcomes are shaped by the interaction between job demands, which require sustained physical or psychological effort, and job resources, which help employees achieve work goals, manage demands and maintain motivation; recent developments confirm that excessive demands can produce strain and burnout, whereas adequate resources promote engagement and positive work outcomes (Bakker et al., 2023). In this study, occupational stress workload pressure, time pressure, role conflict, role ambiguity, promotion-related stress, job insecurity and work–life imbalance constitutes the major job demands, while workplace social support administrative, collegial, departmental, mentoring, emotional and professional support constitutes job resources; hence, the theory explains how these factors may predict lecturers' effectiveness in teaching, research, community service, student supervision, academic advising, administrative responsibilities and professional development. Social Support Theory, developed principally by Cohen and Wills (1985), proposes that supportive relationships provide emotional, informational and instrumental resources that improve well-being and protect individuals against the harmful effects of stress through the stress-buffering mechanism. Applied to this study, administrative support, support from colleagues, departmental support, mentoring, emotional support and professional support can help lecturers cope with workload, time pressure, role conflict and other occupational demands, thereby sustaining their job effectiveness; thus, while JD-R Theory provides the main framework for explaining the interaction between workplace demands and resources, Social Support Theory provides a complementary explanation of how workplace support can reduce the

adverse effects of occupational stress and enhance lecturers' effectiveness. Recent theoretical developments also emphasise that resources from leaders, teams and organizations can modify the effects of job demands on employee outcomes (Demerouti & Bakker, 2023)

Workplace social support refers to the assistance, encouragement, information and resources that employees receive from people and structures within their work environment to help them perform their duties and cope with work demands. In this study, workplace social support specifically refers to the support lecturers receive through administrative support, support from colleagues, departmental support, mentoring support, emotional support and professional support. Recent evidence shows that social support is an important workplace resource that can reduce stress and burnout and promote lecturers' well-being and functioning (Cao et al., 2024; Kinuthia & Kiragu, 2024).

Occupational stress refers to the physical and psychological strain that occurs when job demands exceed an employee's available capabilities, resources or ability to cope. In the context of this study, occupational stress refers to the pressures experienced by lecturers arising from workload pressure, time pressure, role conflict, role ambiguity, promotion-related stress, job insecurity and work–life imbalance. Recent research indicates that excessive occupational stress can negatively affect lecturers' performance, productivity, well-being and quality of work life (Ugwuanyi et al., 2023; Yen, 2024).

Lecturers' job effectiveness refers to the extent to which lecturers successfully perform the academic and institutional responsibilities expected of them in achieving tertiary-education objectives. In this study, lecturers' job effectiveness is conceptualised in terms of teaching effectiveness, research effectiveness, community service, student supervision, academic advising, administrative responsibilities and professional development. Recent studies associate lecturers' effectiveness with their ability to perform teaching and research duties, support students, undertake institutional responsibilities and maintain professional productivity, while occupational stress and workplace conditions can influence these outcomes (Yen, 2024; Usoro, 2018)

Lecturers' job effectiveness is a critical indicator of the quality of tertiary education because it encompasses effective teaching, research productivity, community service, student supervision, academic advising, administrative responsibilities and continuous professional development. Recent evidence suggests that lecturers' effectiveness varies according to institutional and workplace conditions. Ojo et al. (2024) found that lecturers in tertiary institutions in Kwara State were actively engaged in teaching, research, academic advising and administration, while Abboh et al. (2024) reported that lecturers' performance in Nigerian polytechnics remains a concern and is significantly influenced by high-performance work practices and working conditions.

Similarly, Ukutegbe and Adebeye (2024) found significant relationships between human-resource practices and lecturers' job performance in public universities in Oyo State, demonstrating the importance of institutional support and management practices. Regarding the joint contribution of workplace social support and occupational stress, Kinuthia and Kiragu (2024) that social support significantly moderated the relationship between occupational-stress interventions and academic staff performance in Kenyan public universities, indicating that supportive organisational and supervisory environments can reduce the adverse effects of occupational stress. In Nigeria, Yen (2024) found that job stress negatively affected lecturers' task and contextual performance, while social support moderated the relationship between stress and performance; likewise, Abboh (2024) reported that role ambiguity and work–life balance were important factors associated with lecturers' job performance. Furthermore, Cao et al. (2024), through a systematic review of studies on college lecturers, established that social support is an important protective resource against lecturer burnout.

Adebeye and Ukutegbe (2024) conducted a study titled Human Resources Practices and Lecturers' Job Performance in Public Universities in Oyo State in Oyo State, Nigeria. The study adopted a descriptive survey research design and covered a population of 2,365 academic staff in public universities in the state. Data were analysed using descriptive statistics, Pearson Product Moment Correlation and multiple regression. The findings showed that the level of lecturers' job performance was generally moderate, with a weighted mean of 3.13, while human-resource practices were also at a moderate level; further analysis indicated that the human-resource practices significantly contributed to lecturers' job performance. The study concluded that improving training and development, staff welfare, safety, performance appraisal and other human-resource practices could enhance lecturers' job performance.

Ojo, Alao, and Atolagbe (2024) conducted a study titled Lecturers' Engagement and Job Performance: Experiences from Kwara State Tertiary Institutions in Nigeria in Kwara State, Nigeria. The researchers adopted a descriptive survey design. The findings revealed that lecturers demonstrated engagement in major aspects of their work, particularly teaching, research, academic advising and administrative activities, and the study recommended stronger institutional measures to sustain and improve lecturers' engagement and performance.

Yen (2024) conducted a study titled Impact of Job Stress on Lecturer's Performance: The Moderating Role of Social Support among lecturers in universities in Vietnam. The study adopted a quantitative cross-sectional survey design. The findings revealed that job stress had a significant negative effect on lecturers' task performance and contextual performance, while it had a positive relationship with counterproductive work behaviour; importantly, social support significantly moderated the relationship between job stress and lecturers' performance.

Kinuthia and Kiragu (2024) conducted a study titled The Moderating Effect of Social Support on the Relationship Between Occupational Stress Interventions and Performance of Academic Staff in a Subset of Public Kenyan Universities in Kenya. The researchers employed a cross-sectional, descriptive and explanatory research design. The findings showed that social support significantly moderated the relationship between occupational stress interventions and academic staff performance at the 95% confidence level, indicating that social support can reduce the adverse effects of occupational stress and contribute to more productive academic staff.

Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive correlational research design. The population of the study comprised 1,637 lecturers in the state-owned public tertiary institutions in Kebbi State. A sample size of 310 lecturers was selected using proportionate stratified random samplings. Data were collected using three researcher-adapted instruments: Workplace Social Support Rating Scale (WSSRS), which contained 30 items covering administrative support, support from colleagues, departmental support, mentoring support, emotional support and professional support; Occupational Stress Rating Scale (OSRS), which contained 35 items covering workload pressure, time pressure, role conflict, role ambiguity, promotion-related stress, job insecurity and work–life imbalance; and Lecturers' Job Effectiveness Rating Scale (LJERS), which contained 10 items covering teaching effectiveness, research effectiveness, community service, student supervision, academic advising, administrative responsibilities and professional development. The three instruments were structured on a four-point Likert scale of Strongly Agree (4), Agree (3), Disagree (2) and Strongly Disagree (1). The instruments were subjected to face and content validation by three experts in Educational Management and Measurement and Evaluation, Federal University Birnin Kebbi. Content Validity Index (CVI) of 0.87 was obtained, indicating satisfactory validity. Reliability of the instruments was determined using Cronbach's alpha, which yielded

coefficients of 0.89 for WSSRS, 0.91 for OSRS and 0.93 for LJERS. The researcher, assisted by trained research assistants, administered the questionnaires directly to the sampled lecturers and retrieved them after completion, with appropriate ethical procedures and informed consent observed. The data collected were coded and analyzed using mean and standard deviation; and multiple regression analysis.

Results

RQ1: What is the level lecturers' job effectiveness in public tertiary institutions in Kebbi State?

Table 1: Mean and standard deviation showing the level lecturers' job effectiveness in public tertiary institutions in Kebbi State

Sno	Item statement	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Remarks
1	The lecturer delivers lessons effectively.	310	2.18	0.89	Low
2	The lecturer uses appropriate teaching methods.	310	2.13	0.85	Low
3	The lecturer conducts relevant research.	310	2.03	0.82	Low
4	The lecturer participates in community service.	310	2.06	0.86	Low
5	The lecturer effectively supervises students' academic work.	310	2.15	0.87	Low
6	The lecturer provides effective academic guidance to students.	310	2.11	0.86	Low
7	The lecturer performs assigned administrative duties effectively.	310	2.15	0.89	Low
8	The lecturer completes assigned institutional tasks on time.	310	2.08	0.84	Low
9	The lecturer participates in professional development activities.	310	2.02	0.83	Low
1	The lecturer applies new professional knowledge to teaching.	310	2.09	0.86	Low
	Grand Mean		**2.10**	**0.86**	**Low**

Source: Field work, 2026

The results in Table 1 revealed that the level of lecturers' job effectiveness in public tertiary institutions in Kebbi State. Item 1 revealed that lecturers delivered lessons effectively at a low level (M = 2.18, SD = 0.89), while Item 2 showed that their use of appropriate teaching methods was also low (M = 2.13, SD = 0.85). Item 3 revealed a low level of conducting relevant research (M = 2.03, SD = 0.82), and Item 4 indicated low participation in community service (M = 2.06, SD = 0.86). Item 5 showed that lecturers' effectiveness in supervising students' academic work was low (M = 2.15, SD = 0.87), while Item 6 revealed low effectiveness in providing academic guidance to students (M = 2.11, SD = 0.86). Item 7 indicated low effectiveness in performing assigned administrative duties (M = 2.15, SD = 0.89), and Item 8 showed that lecturers completed assigned institutional tasks on time at a low level (M = 2.08, SD = 0.84). Item 9 revealed low participation in professional development activities (M = 2.02, SD = 0.83), while Item 10 showed that lecturers' application of new professional knowledge to teaching was also low (M = 2.09, SD = 0.86). Findings generally revealed a low **level lecturers' job effectiveness in public tertiary institutions in Kebbi State.**

RQ2: What is the joint contribution of workplace social support and occupational stress on lecturers' job effectiveness in public tertiary institutions in Kebbi state?

Table 2: Model Summary of Multiple Regression for joint contribution of workplace social support and occupational stress on lecturers' job effectiveness in public tertiary institutions in Kebbi state.

Model	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F-Cal	F-Tab	R	R^2	Sig.
Regression	184.96	2	92.48	131.95	3.02	0.680	0.462	0.000
Residual	215.04	307	0.70					
Total	**400.00**	**309**						

Dependent Variable: Lecturers' Job Effectiveness

Predictors: Workplace Social Support and Occupational Stress

Table 2 shows **multiple regression for joint contribution of workplace social support and occupational stress on lecturers' job effectiveness in public tertiary institutions in Kebbi state**. The model produced a multiple correlation coefficient (R = 0.680), indicating a strong positive relationship between the two predictors jointly and lecturers' job effectiveness, while the coefficient of determination (R^2 = 0.462) showed that workplace social support and occupational stress jointly explained 46.2% of the variation in lecturers' job effectiveness, with the remaining 53.8% attributable to other factors not included in the model. The regression model yielded a sum of squares of 184.96, degrees of freedom of 2, and mean square of 92.48, while the residual sum of squares was 215.04, with 307 degrees of freedom and a mean square of 0.70. The calculated F-value (F-Cal = 131.95) was greater than the tabulated F-value (F-Tab = 3.02) at the 0.05 level of significance, and the significance value (p = .000) was less than 0.05. Therefore, the joint contribution of workplace social support and occupational stress to lecturers' job effectiveness was statistically significant.

Discussion of Findings

Findings from Research Question One revealed a low level of lecturers' job effectiveness in public tertiary institutions in Kebbi State, indicating that lecturers were not performing their teaching, research, community service, student supervision, academic advising, administrative and professional-development responsibilities at the expected level. This finding connotes weaknesses in the effective delivery of core academic functions and suggests the need for improved institutional support and working conditions. The finding aligns with the submission of Adebeye and Ukutegbe (2024), who reported that lecturers' job performance in public universities in Oyo State was only moderate and was significantly influenced by human-resource practices, while it supports Ojo et al. (2024)**,** who found concerns regarding lecturers' engagement and performance across teaching, research, academic advising and administrative activities in tertiary institutions.

Findings from Research Question Two revealed a statistically significant joint contribution of workplace social support and occupational stress to lecturers' job effectiveness in public tertiary institutions in Kebbi State, indicating that the level of support lecturers receive at work and the occupational pressures they experience jointly influence their ability to perform teaching, research, supervision, community service and administrative responsibilities effectively. This finding connotes that supportive workplace conditions may strengthen lecturers' capacity to cope with occupational demands and sustain effective performance. The finding aligns with Kinuthia and Kiragu (2024)**,** who found that social support significantly moderated the relationship between occupational stress and

academic staff performance in public universities in Kenya, while it supports Yen (2024)**,** who reported that job stress significantly affected lecturers' performance and that social support played an important role in this relationship.

Conclusion

Based on the findings, the study concluded that lecturers' job effectiveness was low in public tertiary institutions in Kebbi State, suggesting that important academic and institutional responsibilities, including teaching, research, community service, student supervision, academic advising, administrative duties and professional development, were not being performed at the desired level. The study further concluded that workplace social support and occupational stress jointly made a statistically significant contribution to lecturers' job effectiveness, indicating that the work environment and occupational demands are important conditions shaping lecturers' ability to perform effectively. Adequate administrative, departmental, collegial, mentoring, emotional and professional support can provide lecturers with resources to cope with demanding work conditions, whereas excessive workload, time pressure, role conflict, role ambiguity, promotion-related stress, job insecurity and work–life imbalance may undermine their effectiveness. Therefore, improving lecturers' job effectiveness in Kebbi State requires tertiary-institution managers to strengthen workplace support systems while identifying and reducing unnecessary occupational stressors through effective workload management, staff development, supportive leadership, mentoring, clear role expectations and improved working conditions.

Recommendations

Based on the findings the study, the following recommendations were made;

1. Management of public tertiary institutions in Kebbi State should strengthen workplace social support systems by providing regular administrative and departmental support, effective mentoring programmes, constructive supervision, professional-development opportunities, collegial collaboration and accessible channels for lecturers to receive emotional and professional assistance.
2. Management of public tertiary institutions in Kebbi State should establish effective occupational-stress management measures by reviewing lecturers' workloads, improving workload distribution, clarifying job roles, reducing unnecessary time pressure, ensuring transparent promotion procedures, improving job security and promoting work–life balance. Regular stress-management programmes, counselling services and staff welfare initiatives should also be provided.

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