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Coping Skills and Stress Management Strategies as Relative Predictors of Job Effectiveness among Business Education Lecturers in Colleges of Education, South West Nigeria

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Abstract

This study examined the association between coping skills and stress management techniques as relative determinants of job performance among business education instructors at South West Nigerian Colleges of Education. The study used a descriptive survey research design and was based on the transactional model of stress and coping (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). A comprehensive enumeration sample technique produced 152 properly filled and useable questionnaires from the population, which consisted of all 159 business education instructors from eight public colleges of education in the six states of the South West geopolitical zone. The Stress Management Strategies and Coping Skills as Determinants of Job Effectiveness Questionnaire (SMSCSDJEQ), a test-retest procedure that yielded a stability coefficient of 0.77 and Cronbach's alpha coefficients ranging from 0.77 to 0.83, was used to gather data. The study topic was addressed by analysing the data using frequency counts, percentages, means, and standard deviations. The null hypothesis was tested at the 0.05 level of significance using multiple regression analysis with ANOVA and Pearson Product Moment Correlation. The results showed that professors had an overall acceptable level of coping abilities (grand mean = 2.75), with avoidance coping (mean = 2.57) being assessed as less acceptable than problem-solving coping (mean = 2.93). Nevertheless, neither coping skills (β =.085, p =.299) nor stress management techniques (β = -.089, p =.278) contributed statistically significantly to job performance. The study recommended that colleges strengthen problem-solving coping thru focused staff development programs, concluding that factors other than stress management and coping abilities alone affect work effectiveness among business education instructors.

Keywords: Coping Skills, Stress Management, Job Effectiveness, Business Education, Lecturers, Colleges of Education

Introduction

Education continues to be the cornerstone of national growth, and the calibre of graduates from any postsecondary institution is largely determined by the efficacy of the instructors who provide it. Business education lecturers hold a unique position among the various categories of academic staff in Nigerian Colleges of Education because their field integrates theoretical instruction with hands-on, skill-based training in subjects like accounting, office technology, and marketing, as well as ongoing assessment responsibilities like exams, tests, classroom exercises and assignments, and the supervision of students' industrial attachment and teaching practice (Ademiluyi & Akinlabi, 2022). Business education professors are under a great deal of professional strain due to this dual theory-practice requirement as well as the traditional responsibilities of teaching, research, assessment, and community involvement.The degree to which a lecturer successfully carries out these various duties in ways that result in high-quality instruction, fruitful scholarship, and quantifiable results is referred to as job effectiveness.

Organisational culture, work ethics, and spousal relationships have been found to influence job effectiveness among academic staff in South West Nigerian colleges of education; a large-scale survey of married academic staff found these factors to be significant predictors of effectiveness (Alabi & Durojaiye, 2023). While work self-efficacy and cognitive, emotional, and physical engagement have been identified as dimensions pertinent to vocational business education lecturers specifically (Edokpolor et al., 2022), performance-management practices, particularly career- and culture-based mechanisms, have been linked to generally encouraging levels of lecturer effectiveness among college staff in Nigeria (Oyeniran et al., 2024). On the other hand, poor working conditions, unreliable electricity, inadequate facilities, and limited research funding have been reported to impair lecturer performance in South West Nigeria more generally (Adesa & Oladejo, 2022), and an excessive workload and unequal distribution of teaching duties have been linked to weakened teaching effectiveness in business education departments (Yahya, 2025). These results imply that a variety of institutional, psychological, and personal factors influence business education instructors' job efficacy; the current study is particularly interested in occupational stress and how it is handled.

According to Lazarus and Folkman's (1984) transactional model, stress is a relational process that occurs when environmental demands are perceived by the individual as surpassing available resources. Selye (1956) first defined stress as the body's non-specific reaction to any demand placed upon it. Excessive work demands, long hours, achievement pressure, and self-induced stress have been reported among management staff in Nigerian colleges of education (Tayo, 2021). More generally, occupational stress has been found to significantly affect academic staff job performance in Nigerian universities, with compensation emerging as a significant predictor of performance while workload and institutional amenities were non-significant in at least one such study (Akah et al., 2022). These findings collectively imply that occupational stress is a recurring aspect of academic work in Nigerian tertiary institutions, and that how lecturers manage and cope with it may have implications for their effectiveness, even tho there is still a dearth of evidence specific to lecturers working in business education at South West Colleges of Education.

Lecturers respond to work-related stress by implementing stress management techniques, which are intentional, planned actions taken to lessen or control the effects of stressors. Workload and organisational support (Subbey, 2023), work-life balance and mental health management (Udodiugwu, 2024), and quality-

assurance mechanisms like staff development and supervision have all been linked to improved lecturer performance among university lecturers in Kwara State (Olaifa et al., 2024), according to evidence from Nigeria and the surrounding region. According to these aspects, stress management among Nigerian academic staff is influenced by both individual effort and institutional support systems. This pattern is likely to apply to business education lecturers in South West Nigerian colleges of education.

Coping skills, which Lazarus and Folkman (1984) broadly categorise into problem-focused coping efforts aimed at changing the source of stress and emotion-focused coping efforts aimed at controlling the emotional response to stress are distinct from but closely related to stress management strategies. Compared to the intentional techniques covered under stress management, coping skills are typically more situational and habitual. Distraction and avoidance behaviours have been found to be the most popular coping strategies among university academic staff, while positive reframing and acceptance have been linked to improved emotional well-being (Shen & Slater, 2021). Similarly, university teachers have been found to cope by shopping, spending time with friends and family, and avoiding stressful activities (Qadeer et al., 2023); education and science workers have reported emotional coping, behavioural coping, and categorical thinking as common reactions to occupational stress (Rusinova-Hristova et al., 2022). Particularly in the Nigerian context, it has been discovered that lecturers' sex, teaching experience, and academic rank have a significant impact on the coping strategies they use (Chukwuemeka et al., 2023); sociodemographic factors have also been linked to coping strategies for stress among lecturers in Ogun State, one of the states covered by this study, where moderate use of adaptive coping and relatively low use of maladaptive coping were reported (Bewaji & Ekeagwu, 2024); and, specifically in business education, thirteen coping with the difficulties of distance learning in Delta State (Onojetah, 2020). When taken as a whole, these studies show that Nigerian lecturers have a variety of coping mechanisms that vary depending on the situation. However, there is still little data specifically pertaining to business education instructors at South West Nigerian colleges of education.

Although conceptually separate, the two dimensions are predicted to interact in determining occupational outcomes, making the relationship between lecturers' stress management and coping strategies theoretically significant. However, the evidence that is currently available in Nigeria has tended to look at coping strategies and coping skills independently rather than in relation to one another: research on lecturers' coping has usually looked at its sociodemographic correlates (Chukwuemeka et al., 2023; Bewaji & Ekeagwu, 2024) without connecting coping to the coping strategies lecturers concurrently employ, while research on stress management has typically linked it to performance or productivity without mentioning coping skills (Olaifa et al., 2024; Akah et al., 2022). Similarly, while self-management and problem-solving abilities have been found to be essential for job performance among lecturers and students in business education, this evidence comes from South East Nigeria rather than the South West zone and does not specifically look at job effectiveness (Emeasoba & Nwatarali, 2020). The relative, combined contribution of coping skills and stress management techniques to job effectiveness among business education teachers in South West Nigerian colleges of education does not seem to have been modelled in any Nigerian study that is currently available. The current study, which is based on the transactional model of stress and coping (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984), aims to fill this vacuum in the literature.

The main establishments in charge of preparing the upcoming generation of business studies instructors for Nigeria's secondary and vocational education system are the Colleges of Education in South West Nigeria, which includes Lagos, Ogun, Osun, Oyo, Ondo, and Ekiti States. Therefore, the quality of business teacher education across the country is affected by how well these universities' business

education instructors perform. In light of this, the current study looks at coping skills and how they relate to stress management techniques as relative determinants of job performance among business education instructors at South West Nigerian Colleges of Education.

Statement of the Problem

Even though business education lecturers are crucial in preparing Nigeria's future business studies instructors, informal observations and published research indicate that many lecturers in South West Nigerian colleges of education face challenges such as heavy teaching loads, delayed promotions, insufficient funding for research, and the discipline-specific dual burden of theoretical instruction and practical skills supervision. These circumstances are significant causes of occupational stress, which is frequently linked to deteriorating instructional quality, inadequate oversight of students' teaching practices, low research productivity, and overall job ineffectiveness when it is not well managed. Although lecturers typically use a variety of coping mechanisms to deal with these demands, there is still a dearth of Nigerian research on the coping mechanisms that business education lecturers in particular find most acceptable. Additionally, studies that have been conducted on lecturers' coping mechanisms have tended to concentrate on academic staff in other disciplines or other geopolitical zones rather than business education lecturers in South West Nigerian colleges of education. Additionally, it is unknown how coping skills and stress management techniques relate to one another, and no research has been done to determine how these two factors work together to improve academic staff members' job efficacy. The current study looked into these shortcomings.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate coping skills and its relationship with stress management strategies as relative predictors of job effectiveness among business education lecturers in Colleges of Education, South West Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to:

i. determine the coping skills most acceptable among business education lecturers in Colleges of Education, South West Nigeria; and

Research Questions

The following research questions were raised to guide the study:

1. What coping skills are most acceptable among business education lecturers in Colleges of Education, South West Nigeria?

Hypothesis

The null hypothesis was formulated and tested at the 0.05 level of significance:

$H_0$1: There is no significant relative influence of stress management strategies and coping skills on job effectiveness among business education lecturers in Colleges of Education, South West Nigeria.

Scope of the Study

This study focused on coping skills and their relationship with stress management strategies as relevant predictors of job effectiveness among business education lecturers in public Colleges of Education in South West Nigeria. It encompassed the eight public Colleges of Education that provide business education programs throughout the six states of the South West geopolitical zone, specifically Lagos, Ogun, Osun, Ondo, Oyo, and Ekiti. The study focused on three specific variables: job effectiveness,

stress management strategies, and coping skills. It did not encompass other occupational or psychological factors that could also impact lecturers' work outcomes.

Methodology

This study utilised a descriptive survey research design, which is suitable for outlining current conditions within a specific population without any variable manipulation. The population included all 159 business education lecturers from eight public Colleges of Education in the six states of South West Nigeria. Due to the manageable size of this population, a total enumeration sampling technique was utilised, resulting in 152 completed and usable questionnaires. Data were collected using a specially designed instrument, the Stress Management Strategies and Coping Skills as Determinants of Job Effectiveness Questionnaire (SMSCSDJEQ). This instrument includes a background information section and three sections, each containing 20 items that assess job effectiveness, stress management strategies, and coping skills. Responses are rated on a four-point scale, ranging from Very Often (4) to Never (1). The content validity of the instrument was established thru an expert review conducted by the supervisor and four specialists in the Department of Arts and Social Science Education at Lead City University, Ibadan. Its reliability was confirmed thru a test-retest procedure, which yielded a stability coefficient of 0.77, along with Cronbach's alpha coefficients ranging from 0.77 to 0.83 across the sub-scales and the overall instrument. The data collected were analysed using descriptive statistics, including frequency counts, percentages, means, and standard deviations, to address the research questions. Additionally, inferential statistics, specifically Pearson Product Moment Correlation and multiple regression analysis with ANOVA, were employed to test the null hypothesis at the 0.05 level of significance, utilising the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), version 25.0.

Results

Research Question 1: What coping skills are most acceptable among business education lecturers in Colleges of Education in South West Nigeria?

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics on Coping Skills (N = 152)

Item	VO	O	R	N	Mean	SD
Problem-Solving Coping						
1. I identify the source of stress before deciding action.	37(24.3%)	81(53.3%)	23(15.1%)	11(7.2%)	2.95	0.83
2. I face work problems directly rather than avoiding them.	43(28.3%)	67(44.1%)	30(19.7%)	12(7.9%)	2.93	0.89
3. I develop alternative solutions when challenged.	44(28.9%)	79(52%)	16(10.5%)	13(8.6%)	3.01	0.86
4. I seek advice from colleagues/mentors.	49(32.2%)	65(42.8%)	15(9.9%)	23(15.1%)	2.92	1.01
5. I address conflicts immediately to prevent escalation.	30(19.7%)	80(52.6%)	31(20.4%)	11(7.2%)	2.85	0.82
Sub-Mean					**2.93**	**0.88**
Avoidance Coping						
6. I ignore stressful situations rather than deal with them.	38(25.0%)	42(27.6%)	39(25.7%)	33(21.7%)	2.56	1.09
7. I delay stressful tasks until emotionally ready.	26(17.1%)	75(49.3%)	36(23.7%)	15(9.9%)	2.74	0.86

Item	VO	O	R	N	Mean	SD
8. I withdraw from others when under pressure.	23(15.1%)	46(30.3%)	53(34.9%)	30(19.7%)	2.41	0.97
9. I avoid thinking about issues that cause stress.	33(21.7%)	61(40.1%)	44(29%)	14(9.2%)	2.74	0.90
10. I postpone decision-making in difficult situations.	30(19.7%)	46(30.3%)	32(21.1%)	44(29%)	2.41	1.11
Sub-Mean					**2.57**	**0.99**
Grand Mean (Coping Skills)					**2.75**	**0.93**

Key: VO = Very Often, O = Often, R = Rarely, N = Never; Decision rule: Mean ≥ 2.50 = High; Mean < 2.50 = Low

Source: Field work 2026

The grand mean for coping skills was 2.75 (SD = 0.93), indicating an acceptable level of coping skills overall. Problem-solving coping (Mean = 2.93) was rated higher and is therefore the more acceptable coping approach compared to avoidance coping (Mean = 2.57). The item "I develop alternative solutions when challenged" had the highest mean (3.01), while withdrawal from others under pressure and postponing decision-making both recorded the lowest means (2.41). These findings confirm that problem-solving coping is the dominant and most preferred coping approach among the lecturers.

$H_0$2: There will be no significant relative influence of stress management strategies and coping skills on job effectiveness among business education lecturers in Colleges of Education, South West Nigeria**.**

Table 4.6: Regression Coefficients Showing Relative Influence of Stress Management Strategies and Coping Skills on Job Effectiveness (N = 152)

Predictor	B	Std. Error	Beta (β)	t	p-value	Decision
(Constant)	3.485	0.306	—	11.391	<.001	—
Stress Management Strategies	-0.079	0.073	-0.089	-1.090	.278	Accept H_0
Coping Skills	0.076	0.073	0.085	1.041	.299	Accept H_0

Dependent Variable: Job Effectiveness; significant at p < .05

Source: Field work 2026

The regression coefficients showed that neither stress management strategies (B = -0.079, β = -.089, t = -1.090, p = .278) nor coping skills (B = 0.076, β = .085, t = 1.041, p = .299) individually made a statistically significant contribution to the prediction of job effectiveness at p < .05. The null hypothesis is therefore accepted for both predictors. These results indicate that the relative contribution of each variable to job effectiveness is not statistically significant among the lecturers studied.

Discussion of Findings

The initial discovery of this study indicated that business education lecturers in Colleges of Education in South West Nigeria exhibited an overall acceptable level of coping skills (grand mean = 2.75). Notably, problem-solving coping (mean = 2.93) was assessed as more acceptable compared to avoidance coping (mean = 2.57). The item "I develop alternative solutions when challenged" achieved the highest mean, whereas withdrawal from others under pressure and postponement of decision-making received the lowest scores. This finding aligns with the work of Bewaji and Ekeagwu (2024), who noted a moderate application of adaptive coping strategies and a relatively low application of

maladaptive coping among lecturers in Ogun State, which is included in the current study. This suggests a wider regional trend favouring constructive coping mechanisms over avoidance-based strategies among academic staff in South West Nigeria. It also aligns with Onojetah (2020), who identified various coping strategies among business education lecturers managing the challenges of distance learning in Delta State. This reinforces the perspective that lecturers in this field often employ active, solution-focused approaches to address occupational demands instead of opting for disengagement. Nonetheless, this finding diverges from the work of Shen and Slater (2021), whose comprehensive review of university academic personnel identified distraction and avoidance as the predominant coping strategies. It also contrasts with the findings of Qadeer et al. (2023), who noted that university educators primarily managed stress thru family time, shopping, and the avoidance of stress-inducing activities. This divergence may indicate the unique occupational characteristics of business education lecturers, whose dual responsibilities in theory and practice, along with supervisory duties (Ademiluyi & Akinlabi, 2022), may render avoidance a less feasible strategy, thereby necessitating a more direct and problem-focused approach to dealing with stressors. The finding aligns with the work of Chukwuemeka et al. (2023) and Rusinova-Hristova et al. (2022), both of which identified that coping mechanisms among academic and education-sector staff are diverse and influenced by contextual and demographic factors, rather than being solely avoidance-based.

The second major finding indicated that neither stress management strategies ($\beta = -.089$, $p = .278$) nor coping skills ($\beta = .085$, $p = .299$) provided a statistically significant relative contribution to job effectiveness among the lecturers examined, resulting in the acceptance of the null hypothesis for both predictors. This result aligns with the findings of Akah et al. (2022), who observed that occupational stress had a significant impact on the job performance of academic staff in Nigerian universities. However, workload and institutional amenities were found to be non-significant predictors in that model, suggesting that not all stress-related variables lead to measurable effects on performance outcomes. It also supports the broader pattern observed in Alabi and Durojaiye (2023) and Oyeniran et al. (2024), whose findings indicate that job effectiveness among academic staff in Colleges of Education in South West Nigeria is influenced more significantly by organisational culture, work ethics, spousal relations, and performance-management practices than by stress-related variables alone. The non-significant contribution of coping skills may further be elucidated by the conceptual distinction drawn by Lazarus and Folkman (1984) between coping, which is often habitual and situational, and deliberate stress management, characterised by a more structured response. Since coping typically operates reflexively rather than as a planned performance strategy, its impact on an outcome as expansive as overall job effectiveness may be too indirect to register statistically in a sample of this size. This finding also resonates with the work of Edokpolor et al. (2022), who identified work self-efficacy and engagement as more significant predictors for vocational business education lecturers, rather than stress or coping alone. This suggests that other psychological and institutional factors, such as workload distribution (Yahya, 2025) and working conditions (Adesa & Oladejo, 2022), may play a more critical role in determining job effectiveness in this group than stress management strategies or coping skills considered in isolation.

Conclusion

This study investigated coping skills and their connection to stress management strategies as relevant predictors of job effectiveness among business education lecturers in Colleges of Education, South West Nigeria. The findings indicated that lecturers typically demonstrated a satisfactory level of coping skills,

with a preference for problem-solving strategies over avoidance tactics. This suggests a general tendency toward actively addressing occupational stressors rather than withdrawing from them. However, neither stress management strategies nor coping skills, taken individually, made a statistically significant contribution to job effectiveness. This suggests that while lecturers actively utilise coping mechanisms to navigate the pressures of their work, these mechanisms alone do not sufficiently account for variations in how effectively they fulfill their teaching, research, and supervisory responsibilities. This indicated that the effectiveness of business education lecturers is a complex outcome influenced by various factors. Institutional, organisational, and other psychological elements highlighted in existing literature may have a more significant impact than stress management and coping skills considered separately.

Recommendations

1. Based on these findings, College of Education management and staff development units should institutionalize training programmes that reinforce problem-solving coping approaches, given their demonstrated acceptability among lecturers, while discouraging avoidance-based responses to occupational pressure.
2. Future researchers should extend this line of inquiry by examining coping skills and stress management strategies alongside other institutional and psychological variables, such as work self-efficacy, organisational culture and working conditions, to better capture the combined factors that predict job effectiveness among business education lecturers.

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