THE INFLUENCE OF STRESS ON HEALTH AS PERCEIVED BY PEOPLE OF ILORIN WEST LGA, KWARA STATE, NIGERIA

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ABSTRACT

The primary factors in the environment which affect human health and causes illness or death today more than anything else is stress which an individual encounters in everyday life. The study examined influence of stress on health as perceived by people of Ilorin west local government area of Kwara state.

The research design used for this study was a descriptive survey type. The population for this study comprised of all adult people both men and women that resides in Ilorin west local government area of Kwara state. Multistage sampling technique was used to select the sample of two hundred and twenty respondents both men and women that participated in this study. The research instrument used to collect data for this study was a self developed questionnaire that had been validated by three experts in related field. Reliability of the instrument was established and result of 0.75r was obtained which indicates a strong consistency and this was good enough for this study.

Data collected for this study were analyzed through the use of frequency counts and percentage for personal information while Pearson Product Moment Correlation (PPMC) was used to analyze the result of stated hypotheses at 0.05 alpha levels. The three hypotheses formulated for this study were rejected which means that all the variables considered for this study had positive relationship on health of people in Ilorin west local government area of Kwara state. In view of this findings, the researcher recommends among others that the government should find means to solve unemployment problem and find measure to control the incidence of kidnapping, political crises and bomb blast by some groups in some part of this country so as to have peace of mind in our country.

INTRODUCTION

Manifestation of illness or disease is not only attributed to pathogenic infection but to other factor of which stress takes it cue. Stress has been shown to be a precipitating factor in dozen of illness and may be a causal factor in all diseases. Many people think that stress only affects wealthy people or people who

hold positions of great responsibility such as corporate executives, lawyer, judges and politicians. Civil servants, students, housewives and even children experience the effects of stress (Ologele, 2006). Dada, Ajayi and Agbana (2011) explained that, stress is an unpleasant state of physiological arousal that people experience in situations that they perceive as dangerous or threatening to their homeostasis (well-being). It may be in form of physical trauma, strenuous exercise, work pressure, metabolic disturbance and anxiety, which challenges the body's homeostasis. Stress is a state of disequilibrium (physical, physiological, psycho-emotional states of mind etc) in humans which results as the organism's or individual's inability to handle the demands (physical, mental, psycho-social, work and academic) of life.

It has been observed that, more often people complain of stress and suffer from stress related illness and this has become one of the most serious physiological and health issues of the 21st century. We are all living ... planet-being shaken by the largest cri... tory and we need to learn, not how ...ess, but how to eliminate its ...ho do not learn to control ...ealth and peace of ...arn how to iden... ...ess can en... ... when ...n-

...s is

to control it and to channel it in a constructive way (Ologele, 2006).

Stress is one of the common problems that plague human beings in our contemporary society, no one is free from stress, it has become part of life right from childhood and as an essential part of living. Too much stress cause illness, too little stress makes life dull, as a matter of fact, nobody wants every day to be exactly the same with no challenges or risks.

The primary factors in the environment which affect human health and causes illness or death today more than anything else is stress, which an individual encounters in everyday life. The way an individual attempts to either avoid or solve their psychological problems determines the possibility of resolving the stress of life. A certain amount of stress occurs every second of one's life. There is no life without stress. However crisis occurs when stress is not manageable. Examples are students or workers unrest, lecturer with load of teaching, marking and research work to be carried out. A spectator expecting a positive result from his favourite soccer team that failed (Oniyangi, 2006). Oyerinde (2004) explained that, when an individual respond to a stressor in a way that produces positive results, he has coped well and experienced feeling of success, he said to have experienced positive stress response to a stressor which is a healthful response. Inability of a person to cope with stress may lead to distress which is a harmful response to a stressor.

Sutherland and Cooper (2011) opined that, a moderate amount of tension is vital and

certain levels of stress are actually healthy. Stress helps on attain higher goals and solve difficult problems. This stress serves as a stimulus to help reach an adequate level of accomplishment and success. However, if this level of stress is greater than we are able to support, we become stressed, our output decreases and the situation if not altered, can become explosive.

If the impact of stressor is not properly managed or minimized the effect on human body is exhaustion. This exhaustion produces emotional and physical breakdown may depending on the strength of stress and resistances of the person body, this breakdown may occur quickly or after many years (Melgosal 2007). Dada et. al (2011) submitted that, an individual who perceived that event is stressful must view the situation as being threatened and unable to cope effectively with it. Stress can be described as a state of discomfort. In response to a stress, the body undergoes many changes, these changes may include a number of changes that heighten physiological and emotional arousal, a wide variety of health problems, a decreased immune system response on both mental and physical health. If stress is not taken care of, it can have detrimental effect on the individual's health and wellbeing. Stress can lead to increased blood pressure, increased heart rate, increased fatigue, depressed mood and decreased mental/physical performance.

Stress is a normal psychological and physical reaction to the demands of life. When the brain perceives a threat, the body releases hormones to fuel your fight-or-fight response, when the threat disappeared, the body returns to normal and blood flows to all parts of the body. When a person's body unable to stop the activity of stress, this will lead to breakdown of body resistance and such person may experiences health problems (Shuaib, 2010).

There is no one without stress, the peace of our lives makes stress management a necessary skill for everyone. Learning to identify your problems and implement solutions is the key to successful stress management. The moment a stressful situation is identified, one can start thinking about strategies to make it less problematic. Sometimes, one may seek help and support from health care professional, family and friends in order to learn how to reduce stressful situation and increase ability to cope with challenges of life.

Beahr and Newman (2008), defined stress in work environment as" a situation where in job-related factors interact with a worker to change (i.e disrupt or enhance) his or her psychological condition such that the person (i.e mind or body) is forced to deviate from normal functioning. This definition also serves to define what we mean by "employee health", namely a person's mental and physical condition". We are referring to health in its broadest sense as the complete continuum from superb mental and physical health, including beneficial effects of stress on health all the way to death.

Various types of health problems are now surfacing and their consequences hinder normal, emotional, economic and social progress. Ill-health, therefore, is a significant factor that leads to diseases and sudden death. Some of the world's health problems are worthy of concern so that barriers such

as ill-health which often disallows the majority from being efficient and effective can be checked. Among such word problem is stress. The role of stress as contributor to a lot of diseases and ailments is now a well established fact. Stress is linked to a host of other diseases and bring abnormal symptoms like ulcer, mental illness, headache, asthma, hypertension, rheumatoid arthritis, muscular tension and many others (Shuaib, 2010).

Atkinson and Hilgand (2012) stated that, a number of different types of illness such as asthma, ulcers, migraine headache, high blood pressure are related to emotional stress. He pointed out that, emotional stress could lower resistance to disease. Melgosa (2007) reported that, manifestation of chronic mental and emotional stress had long since replaced epidemics of infective disease as leading medical problems in developed countries. Odeleye (2010) reported that, an average family in Nigeria today is indeed undergoing stress mainly as a result of economic depression in the country. She further said that, the devaluation of the naira which had rendered its value less today had resulted in extreme inflation and this makes it difficult for an average Nigerian to meet his/her needs.

Work occupies a major part of our lives in terms of time spent and importance, it contains the potential for many forms of gratification, challenge and harm. Ornbstein and Sobel (2009) agreed that, stress has been demonstrated to be positively correlated with arthritis which is the chief cause of physical disability among Americans. Arthritis affects approximately 50 million peoples and about 17 million of these causes are served enough to require ongoing medical attention. Apparently, a breakdown in the immunological system occurs and this breakdown might be caused by stress. Also, this finding is in support of finding of Shuaib (2010) who reported that, day-to-day activities produces stress for everyone and more than forty percent of people say that, their job is the primary cause of stress in their lives. Job stress can affect personal relationship, livelihood, professional and health. Some of the health problems that may emanate from occupational stress includes headache, stomach upset, backache, chest pain, anxiety, insomnia and arthritis.

Statement of the Problem

Ill-health is a significant factor that leads to diseases and sudden death. Some of the world's health problems are worthy of concern so that barriers such as ill-health which often disallows the majority from being efficient and effective can be checked. Among such world problem is stress. The role of stress as contributor to a lot of diseases and ailments is now a well established fact. Stress is linked to a host of other diseases and brings abnormal symptoms like ulcer, mental illness, headache, asthma, hypertension; rheumatoid arthritis, muscular tension and many others. Modernization has put more stress on human race, the hazards of which are unbearable to health. Stress likes emotional, economic and occupation stress have become important barriers to positive health; hence diseases and illness are rampant. People of Ilorin West local government area of Kwara State are not aware that some of their health problems could be as a result of stress and consequences of these stress, may hinder nor

mal, natural, economic and social progress.

Research Questions

The research questions raised to guide this study were as follows:

1. Does emotional stress has influence on health of people in Ilorin west local government area of Kwara State?
2. Does economic stress has influence on health of people in Ilorin west local government area of Kwara State?
3. Does occupational stress has influence on health people in Ilorin west local government area of Kwara State?

Research Hypotheses

The research hypotheses formulated for this study were as follows:

1. There is no significant influence of emotional stress on health of people in Ilorin west local government area of Kwara state.
2. There is no significant influence of economic stress on health of people in Ilorin west local government area of Kwara State.
3. There is no significant influence of occupational stress on health of people in Ilorin west local government area of Kwara State.

Methodology

To meet the objectives of this study, the descriptive survey was used. The study population was made of all adult both men and women who reside in Ilorin west local government area. Purposive sampling was used to select the compound of the ward head and eleven compounds were used for the study. Simple random sampling procedure was used to select twenty respondents both men and women from each ward and two hundred and twenty (220) respondents participated in the study.

The instrument used to collect data from selected samples was self developed questionnaire that have been validated by professional colleagues. Test re-test method was used to ascertain the reliability of the instrument and Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used. The result of 0.79r was obtained. The researcher with the aid of three trained research assistants administered the instrument on the respondents. Inferential statistics of chi-square was used to analyzed the results of the data collected.

Results and Discussion

The results obtained from three hypotheses used for the study were shown on the tables below:

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant influence of emotional stress on health of people in Ilorin west local government area of Kwara state.

Table 1: Shows influence emotional stress on health of people in Ilorin West LGA

Variables	N	X	SD	df	Calculated r-value	Critical r-value	Decision
Emotiona stress	220	2.63	0.60				Ho,
Health of people	220	2.52	0.52	218	0.220	0.139	rejected

$P < 0.05$

Result in table 1 indicated that the calculated r-value of 0.220 is greater than the critical r-value of 0.139 with 218 degree of

freedom and at 0.05 alpha level. The null hypothesis one was rejected and alterative hypothesis accepted that, there was significant relationship between emotional stress and health of people in Ilorin west local government area of Kwara state.

The result of this finding agreed with the finding of Atkinson and Hilgard (2012) who pointed out that emotional stress could lower resistance to disease and people experiencing the problem might develop illness such as asthma, hypertension, migraine headache and suicide. Suicide problem usually emanated from emotional stress. All suicides attempts occurred as a result of failure of an individual to control his or her emotional problem and four out of every five suicide attempts are as a result of depression which generated from frequent response to stress.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant influence of economic stress on health of people in Ilorin west local government area of Kwara state.

Table 2: Shows influence of economic stress on health of people in Ilorin west LGA

Variables	N	X	SD	df	Calculated r-value	Critical r-value	Decision
Emotiona stress	220	2.92	1.030				Ho_2
Health of people	220	2.52	0.860	218	0.314	0.139	rejected

< 0.05

t in table 2 shows that the calculated r-
314 is greater than the critical r-
with 218 degree of freedom
level. The null hypothesis
alternative hypothesis
icant relationship
between economic stress and health of people in Ilorin west local government area of Kwara state.

The result of this finding is in line with the finding of Odeleye (2010) who reported that, an average family in Nigeria was indeed undergoing stress mainly as a result of economic depression in the country. She further said that, the devaluation of the naira which had rendered its values less today has resulted in extreme inflation and this makes it difficult for an average Nigerian to meet his/her needs.

Hypothesis 3: There is no significant influence of occupational stress on health of people in Ilorin west local government area of Kwara state.

Table 3: Shows influence of occupational stress on health of people in Ilorin West LGA

Variables	N	X	SD	df	Calculated r-value	Critical r-value	Decision
Emotiona stress	220	3.64	0.421				Ho_3
Health of people	220	2.52	0.322	218	0.201	0.139	rejected

P < 0.05

Result in table 3 shows that the calculated r-value of 0.201 is greater than the critical r-value of 0.139 with 218 degree of freedom and at 0.05 alpha level. The hypothesis three was rejected and alternative hypothesis upheld that, there is significant relationship between occupational stress and health of people in Ilorin west local government area of Kwara state.

The results of this study support the finding of Shuaib (2010) who opined that, day-to-day activities produces stress for everyone

and more than forty percent of people say that their job is the primary cause of stress in their lives. Job stress could affect personal relationship, livelihood, professional and health. Some of the health problems that might emanated from occupational stress includes headache, stomach upset, back-ache, chest pain, anxiety, insomnia and arthritis.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of this study, the following conclusions were drawn:

1. Emotional stress such as kidnapping and political crisis disallows people of Ilorin West LGA from being efficient and effective.
2. Economic stress that people of Ilorin West LGA, Kwara State experienced such as increase in price of petroleum products and increase in price of goods and services had negative in fluence on health of people in the study area.
3. Occupational stress that people of Ilorin West LGA, Kwara State ex posed to in their working place had resulted to injuries, diseases and deaths among people in the study of area.

Recommendations

In view of the findings and conclusion of this study, the following recommendations were given:

1. Government should find means to solve unemployment problem and find measure to control the incidence of kidnapping, political crises and bomblast by some groups in some parts in Nigeria so as to have peace of mind in our country.
2. Various economic measures under taken by the government recently like increase in prices of petroleum products, compulsory retirement and retrenchment should be stopped henceforth.
3. Every individual should protect their time and improve on their time man agement skills in their working place so as to protect them from exposing to stressful conditions which is dan gerous to their health.

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