



Job Stress and Employee Mental Health During Economic Recession: Evidence from Nigeria's Oil and Gas Sector

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Abstract: The study was carried out using the economic recession as the propelling factor to determine the job stress level and employee mental health status and examine their relationship using the Oil and Gas industries in the Central Senatorial District of Lagos as the unit of analysis. The study made use of multi-stage sampling techniques to select the sample, sample size, and the administration of the questionnaire to capture and preserve the characteristics of the respondents. From the analysis of data collected, it was found that the level of job stress was very high based on the variable indices such as qualification, co-workers' relationship and human relations, poor administrative and technical support, terms and conditions of employment, workload and time pressure, adequacy of compensation packages, family and work life relations, and superior-subordinate relationship, as well as the organizational policies and these indices, independently and significantly influenced employee mental health negatively at 0.05 level of Sig. it was concluded that economic recession as experienced by the sector was responsible for the high level of stress among the employees which invariably affect the mental health of employees to

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be poor/low. It was recommended that the management of these organizations should endeavour to improve the existing organizational policies to reduce friction and improve mental health.

Keywords: mental health; physiological; psychological stress; human relations; organizational policies

JEL Classification: M12; M59

1. Introduction

Over the ages, change is the only phenomenon that is constant in this world which often comes with innovations to improve quality of life and standard of living, however, when applied to work organizations, it stems from anxiety. Why? the aftermath of the change, what might be the consequences - positive or negative? Employees nurse secretly the idea that the change will bring a shift in their positions, skills, and relevance (Oginni & Famolu, 2020) and posited further that changes in the work process, schedules, culture, structure, system, and leadership as well as the strategy could not be said to be inimical to the overall interest of the stakeholders, especially the employees but becomes a problem when conceptualizing and implementing how to situate and make employees adapt to the changes. When the necessary technical adjustments required from the employees could not be made, a new world of uncertainty evolved in the workplace that heralded anxiety, tension, anger, frustration, or depression which invariably led to stress arising from job demands and job resources.

Many scholars have projected changes in the organizations' modus operandi as a major factor in employees' job stress and personal life and this has made research in this area a never-ending phase. The job stress experienced in the workplace from time to time on account of the technological advancement and complexity in the business environment encompasses both physiological and psychological stress with both exerting effects on the mental and physical health of employees. This has become a serious threat to human well-being because of the severe adverse effects on the mental and physical health of employees although the degree of tolerance level because of individual differences made employee reaction to the effects of stress on the mental and physical health of employees (Adejumo, 2021). This position was in support of the earlier work of Mahiri and Orwa (2016) who posited that stress is a function of internal factors which explains the rationale behind the variation in reactions from one individual to another while Animasahun (2021) believed that an individual with a low threshold reaction is affected by the slightest change in job demands or job resources and such a change might not bring any significant change in the reaction of an individual with a high threshold.

The Oil and Gas industries which have been the second largest employment based after the government public sector had not been exempted from the adverse effect of the recession experience and just like the Nigerian economy that has passed through

boom and prosperity in the economic cycle so also is the industries and as of today, experiencing recession which has imposed a lot of demands on the employees in the workplace as a result of the employers' drive to reposition the workplace and respond appropriately to the dictate of the economic recession faced by these employers. The repositioning and the quest to respond appropriately had compelled employers to adopt different strategies to cope without recourse to employees' well-being such as downsizing, rightsizing, restructuring, reorganization, cancellation, or reduction of organizational benefit, thus, increasing tension and anxiety in the work atmosphere and environment to induce job insecurity, absenteeism, presenteeism, strained work relationship, and change in work process leading to role ambiguity, role conflict, work overload, time pressure, and high job demands. Overall, stress has a toll on the physical, mental, and social health of employees and it is on this premise regarding the economic recession that research was carried out to examine the job stress level and mental health status of the employee in the Oil and Gas industries. At the same time, investigate the relationship between job stress and mental health during the present economic crisis.

2. Job Stress

Stress was first introduced by Selye in 1950 which was derived from the Latin word '*stringere*' to imply draw tight to describe hardship or affliction and had since been used in many ways to mean a non-specific response to demands (Mansour & Elmorsey, 2016). This was considered vague, ambiguous and an umbrella under which different concepts could evolve which explains why stress has been defined in many ways by different scholars although these definitions have many things in common there is no universally accepted definition. When stress is applied to work, it becomes work stress, job stress, or occupational stress, whichever is adopted, it conveys the same meaning within the work environment. Despite the compendium of definitions of stress, the study adopts that of Lazarus and Folkman (1984) that 'stress is a relationship between the person and the environment that is appraised by the person as taxing or exceeding his or her resources and endangering his or her well-being'. The definition is all-encompassing to show all the dimensions of stress, especially the four pillars of stress i.e.

1. stress as a stimulus;
2. stress as a psychological and physiological response;
3. stress as an interactional phenomenon (process);
4. stress as a cognitive appraisal mechanism.

It is believed that job stress is the summary of what an individual feels when such an individual lost control of events or activities in the workplace because of job demands

and resources available (Oginni & Famolu, 2020) i.e. an expression of discrepancy feelings between the demand of one's job and the ability to respond effectively. This corroborated the earlier work of Adejorin (2018) why it was concluded that stress is a permanent feature in any work environment and could not be avoided but could be reduced or controlled and sometimes, it is needed as an impetus for performance. In the contribution of Gharib, Jamil, Ahmad, and Ghouse (2016) job stress can manifest under two dimensions in the workplace i.e. namely physiological stress which is a body's reaction to various stressful triggers at the workplace such as headache, migraine, abdominal pain, lethargic, backache, chest pain, fatigue, heart palpitation, sleep disturbance, and muscle ache and psychological stress is emotional reaction experienced by individuals as a result of stimulants at the workplace such as anxiety, burnout, depression, alienation, hostility, tension, anger, nervousness, irritability, and frustration. These dimensions were further classified by Adejorin (2018) into three categories namely physical health (fatigue, disorder eating, cardiovascular diseases, musculoskeletal disorder), mental health (sleep disorder, lack of concentration, emotional exhaustion, depression, anxiety, intolerance), and social health (interpersonal conflict). Since stress is an expression of discrepancy feelings between the demand of one's job and the ability to respond effectively, it follows that this expression of discrepancy feelings can be eustress or distress i.e. when employees' knowledge, attitudes, abilities, and skills can match or cope with their work demands and pressure in the organizations, it is said to be eustress and considered to be beneficial and good stress. Also, when employees' knowledge, attitudes, abilities, and skills cannot match or cope with their work demands and pressure in the organizations, it is said to be distress which connotes negativity. (Animasahun, 2021; Narban, Narban, & Singh, 2016). In all, job stress has been identified as a major challenge to employees' mental health and organizational healthiness (Adeosun & Olanipekun, 2022; Miner & Cooper, 2021).

2.1. Employee Mental Health

This centred around employees' psychological, emotional, and social well-being within a shared work environment with implications on the individual's capacity to cope with both internal and external needs (Chopra, 2009). It is about the wellness of employees in the workplace and work environment to imply that every employee has the right to work in a safe and healthy working environment. It is a state of mental well-being that enables people to cope with the stresses of life, realize their abilities, learn well and work well, and contribute to their communities. The work and work environment should encompass the basic elements of decent work such as equity, fair wage rates, job security, safe work environment, and human dignity to sustain employee's sanity and sound mental health otherwise affects the mental health conditions of individual employee and productivity of the organization in several ways

considered to be inimical or adverse to the attainment of stakeholders' objectives because a healthy mentality among individuals and the work community leads to a friendly, supportive, and vibrant work community and organizational culture. Also, contributes to employee engagement, retention, loyalty, productivity, and satisfaction although, mental health conditions occur irrespective of whether work has causally contributed because of other environmental factors. The position of Chopra (2009) suggested otherwise for developing countries on account of economic recession experience, inadequate policies for employee's well-being, and provision of decent work and thus, the work environment is characterized with poor working conditions, excessive workload, low job control, job insecurity, discrimination, and inequality. Also, Mansour and Elmorsey (2016) posited that the determinants of mental health and mental disorders include not only individual attributes such as the ability to manage one's thoughts, emotions, behaviours, and interactions with others, but also social, cultural, economic, political, and environmental factors such as national policies, social protection, living standards, working conditions, and community social supports. On this premise, the study hypothesis was formulated.

H₁: there is a positive relationship between job stress dimensions and mental health during the economic recession in the Oil and Gas industries.

2.2. Relationship between Job Stress and Mental Health

The significance of job stress and the mental health of employees in the workplace has made this area of study receive greater attention in the last two decades from different scholars in the behavioural sciences, especially human resource management research. In the work of Rasi, Suhana, Mardhiah, Zuraidah, Norhasniza, and Nooririnah (2014) on the impact of job stress on the job satisfaction of Engineers, it was found that prolonged or intense job stress results in both physical and mental ill-health and the negative effect of job stress is not on the part of employees alone, organizations also shared from the unfavourable outcome leading to boost in medical bills, higher rate of absenteeism, and turnover, more accidents and poor performances. This was supported by the findings of Narban, Narban, and Singh (2016) on the conceptual study of occupational stress and its impact. It was found that the major source of stress is the discrepancy between the demands of one's job and the ability to respond effectively and it was concluded that such affects the physical and mental health of employees and the survival of the organization as employees under that conditions cannot give their organizations their best performances.

Hamed and Yakassi's (2017) work on the impact of the economic crisis on occupational stress and deviant behaviour corroborated the work of Chraif and Anitei (2011) on the economic crisis, occupational stress, and counterproductive behaviour in a food and beverage restaurant chain in Romania. It was found that an economic crisis has a positive impact on counterproductive behaviour at the workplace, reducing

absenteeism but has a negative and harmful impact on the physical and psychological health of employees due to work overload and perceived high-risk beliefs held by the employees. The work of Akpan and Anibaba (2019) on Industrial harmony with a focus on occupational stress and deviant behaviour in the workplace supported this outcome and argued further that where there are no alternative jobs for employees, job stress does not lead to deviant behaviour but rather impaired employees' mental health due to economic uncertainty and effects of presenteeism at work. This supported the position of Miner and Cooper (2021) on the relationship between occupational stress and mental health which was found to be a non-direct relationship. The findings and conclusion of Adejumo (2021) on occupational stress and deviant behaviour among nurses in the healthcare sector, showed that there exists a strong correlation between job stress and deviant behaviour, especially during an economic crisis. However, posited that the degree of stress experienced by the nurses at work was positively and significantly correlated with their mental health status and the same for anxiety, and depression towards job stress.

Animasahun (2021) whose work was on the nexus between personality and job stress in the beverages industries in Lagos, Nigeria found that the personality of employees determines the degree/level of their reaction to job stress and concluded that stress is not always negative on physical and mental health rather it is beneficial by providing necessary energy, impulse, and impetus to meet responsibilities and attainment of individual goals (Adejoorin, 2018; Gharib et al, 2016). The conclusion corroborated the earlier work of Alkubaisi (2015) where it was posited that the results on account of the mismatch between the demands and pressure on the person, on one hand, and their knowledge and abilities, on the other hand, challenges their ability to cope. The difference may not result in distress if the person loves exploring new opportunities as against tension and anxiety if the person is a stress averter. Similar to this was the work of Lazarus and Smith (2022) on occupational stress and coping strategies in the manufacturing industries. It was posited that job stress was a function of poor compatibility between job expectations and employees' personalities. It was believed that high compatibility represents eustress which has a positive correlation with employees' physical and mental health while low compatibility represents distress with adverse effects on employees' physical and mental health.

Williams and Stephen (2022) concluded in their studies on the psychological effects of organizational restructuring on the work behaviour of Nurses that organizational changes do not affect the employees suddenly rather, it was a gradual process and continuous, thus, affecting employees over time. This corroborated the earlier work of Oginni and Famolu (2020) that organizational restructuring has negative effects on employees' level of job security, organizational commitment, perceptions of time pressure, and psychological well-being which over time lead to job dissatisfaction, ill physical health, and role ambiguity while the work of Adeosun and Olanipekun (2022) on the effects of the economic crisis on employee mental health, supported these two

positions, and argued further that management's decision to embark on cost control coping strategies such as downsizing, suspension of organizational benefits, reorganization affects employees mental health negatively as evident in the job insecurity, loss of concentration, anxiety, absenteeism, strained work relationship between employees and management.

2.3. The Underpinning Theory

There had been many theories postulated in support of job stress and employee mental health such as person-environment fit theory, demand-control theory, cognitive arousal theory, self-efficacy, cybernetic, and systems theory. Out of these numerous theories available, the self-efficacy theory was adopted as the underpinning theory due to its uniqueness and relevance to this study. This theory was propounded by Bandura in 1977 to be an offshoot of social cognitive theory. The self-efficacy theory of Bandura domiciled in the individual, especially the individual's perception of a phenomenon in a given situation, and thus, emphasized individuals to be the chief determinant of behavioural outcomes although acknowledged that environmental factors have profound effects on outcomes i.e. individual's motivational process is a key factor in self-efficacy theory because this is affected by both personal and environmental variables which invariably determines the outcomes in respect of the degree of efforts to be dissipated, choices to follow, persistence, and tolerance as well as survival and achievement. Therefore, the degree could be somewhat high or low depending on one's cognitive self-evaluations wherein the outcome of these evaluations will reflect the degree of confidence in the ability to exert control over one's motivation, behaviour, and the social environment i.e., if the evaluation of an individual has a high degree of self-efficacy, such individual will not invoke negative cognitive thoughts and vice-versa. The application of this theory to the study shows that an individual with high self-efficacy believed to exert control over his emotional processes and this will effectively decrease job stressors, improves psychological and physiological stress with positive physical, mental, and social health and vice-versa such as fatigue, disorder eating, cardiovascular diseases, musculoskeletal disorder, sleep disorder, lack of concentration, emotional exhaustion, depression, anxiety, intolerance, and social health interpersonal conflict.

3. Methodology

A descriptive survey research method was adopted for the study and the primary source of data collection was used to elicit information from the respondents chosen from the Oil and Gas sector with a focus on the downstream industries spread across one of the three Senatorial Districts in Lagos i.e. Central Senatorial District. The downstream industries in the Central Senatorial District of Lagos consist of 64

companies and the sample selected for the study was based on the year of existence (10 years as the based year), rating in the Stock Exchange Market (top 10 over 5 years rating being the period of economic recession as the benchmark), and registration with the Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC) totalling 25 companies with a population of 1336 employees. However, the sample size was obtained through Yamane's sample method which was 308 respondents representing 23% of the population. The study made use of a multi-sampling technique due to the nature of the study and characteristics of the respondents wherein purposive sampling was used for the selection of the 25 companies in line with the selection criteria, a proportional technique adopted to ensure even distribution of the sample size number within the selected companies, and random technique was for distribution of the questionnaires to avoid biases.

The research questionnaire for the study was adopted from Steinmetz, Kaplan, and Miller's (1982) work on job stress with 6 measurement items of 22 questions while Sterling's (2011) General Health Questionnaire-28 (GHQ-28) was used to assess employee's mental health status in respect of anxiety, depression, physical signs, social function disorder. The questionnaire was structured along the Likert 5-point rating scales ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree and very high to very low with three sections labelled A, B, C. Section A focused on the demographic characteristics of the respondents, section B on the independent variable (job stress), and section C on the dependent variable (mental health). A total of 360 questionnaires were distributed and 320 copies were returned representing 89% response rate which is good by all standards, however, 308 copies of the questionnaire were used without any prejudice to the characteristics of the population and the sample. Data collected by the questionnaire were analysed using descriptive (frequency distribution table showing simple percentages, mean, and standard deviation) and inferential (correlation and linear regression) statistics without any violation of the heteroscedasticity assumption, multicollinearity assumption, and distribution error was normal.

4. Results

Table 1. Respondents' Demographic Characteristics (N=308)

Variables	Frequency Distribution	Percentage
Gender		
Male	206	67%
Female	102	33%
Total	308	100%
Marital Status		
Single	73	24%
Married	198	64%
Divorced	17	6%
Widow	20	6%
Total	308	100%
Educational Qualifications		
ND/NCE	40	13%
B.Sc/BA/B.ED/HND	166	54%
M.Sc./MBA	41	13%
Professional Membership	61	20%
Total	308	100%
Length of Service		
Less than 5 years	39	13%
6yrs - 10yrs	38	12%
11yrs - 15yrs	155	50%
15yrs and above	76	25%
Total	308	100%
Age Bracket		
Less than 25 years	14	5%
25yrs – 35yrs	60	19%
36yrs – 45yrs	110	36%
46yrs – 55yrs	80	26%
56yrs & above	44	14%
Total	308	100%

Source: Survey 2021

From Table 1, out of 308 respondents selected for the study, 206 (67%) were male and 102 (33%) were female implying that the oil and gas companies were dominated by the male gender. Most of the respondents were married (198; 64%), and the result also showed that the respondents were literate none of the respondents stopped at the secondary school level as the minimum level of education was National Diploma (ND). On the length of service, 231 respondents representing 75% have been in these companies for a minimum of 11 years which is good for the study, and age result showed that it was evenly distributed to imply a mixture of the relatively young and old workforce as 36years – 55years represented 190 (62%) since retirement age was

set at 60years. Overall, the characteristics of the respondents were good and adequate for the study.

Objective 1. To examine the job stress level and mental health status of the employee in the Oil and Gas industries.

Table 2. Congruence between Educational Qualification and Your Job

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	174	56.5	56.5	56.5
Strongly Agree	120	39.0	39.0	95.5
Agree	-	-	-	-
Agree	14	4.5	4.5	100.0
Somehow	-	-	-	-
Agree	308	100	100	
Disagree				
Strongly				
Disagree				
Total				

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Table 2 showed that 56.7% strongly agreed and 39% agreed that there is congruence between educational qualification and their job while 4,5% believed that their educational qualification does not suit the job they do which was responsible for their stress level.

Table 3. Co-Workers Relationship and Human Relations

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly	85	27.6	27.6	27.6
Agree	120	39.0	39.0	66.6
Agree	70	22.7	22.7	89.3
Somehow	19	6.2	6.2	95.5
Agree	14	4.5	4.5	100.0
Disagree	308	100	100	
Strongly				
Disagree				
Total				

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Table 3 showed that co-workers' relationships caused stress to employees in the Oil and Gas industries as 89.3% believed that poor social support, empathy, and interpersonal relations as well as human relations caused stress at work and make them feel inconvenient and moody at work hence, their alienation at the workplace while only 10.7% disagree with it.

Table 4. Poor Administrative and Technical Support

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly	80	26.0	26.0	26.0
Agree	116	37.7	37.7	63.7
Agree	88	28.6	28.6	92.3
Somehow Agree	14	4.5	4.5	96.8
Disagree	10	3.2	3.2	100.0
Strongly Disagree	308	100	100	
Total				

Source: Field Survey, 2022

It was crystal clear from Table 4 that poor administrative and technical support caused stress which is responsible for the decrease in the mental health of the respondents as 92.3% were in support of poor administrative and technical support which invariably caused the decrease in their mental health at the workplace and 7.7% disagreed that poor administrative and technical support caused their stress at workplace.

Table 5. Terms and Conditions of Employment (Physical and Psychological Contract)

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly	93	30.2	30.2	30.2
Agree	145	47.1	47.1	77.3
Agree	60	19.5	19.5	96.8
Somehow Agree	10	3.2	3.2	100.0
Disagree	-	-	-	
Strongly Disagree	308	100	100	
Total				

Source: Field Survey, 2022

From Table 5, the terms and conditions of employment with a focus on the work environment, conditions, and psychological contract induces stress going by belief of 96.8% of the respondents who felt that and 3.2% believed otherwise i.e. the terms and conditions of employment with a focus on the work environment, conditions, and the psychological contract does not induce stress.

Table 6. Workload and Time Pressure

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly	148	48.1	48.1	48.1
Agree	90	29.2	29.2	77.3
Agree	56	18.2	18.2	95.5
Somehow Agree	14	4.5	4.5	100.0
Disagree	-	-	-	
Strongly Disagree	308	100	100	
Total				

Total

Source: Field Survey, 2022

It was obvious from Table 6 that most of the respondents 95.5% supported the belief that workload and time pressure are major causes of stress in their job and hence, experienced a decrease in their mental health while only 4.5% disagreed with workload and time pressure as the cause of stress in their job.

Table 7. Family and Work-Life Relations

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly Agree	112	36.4	36.4	36.4
Agree	108	35.1	35.1	71.5
Somehow Agree	60	19.5	19.5	91.0
Disagree	14	4.5	4.5	95.5
Strongly Disagree	14	4.5	4.5	100.0
Total	308	100	100	

Source: Field Survey, 2022

This is a fallout from the result in Table 6 and it was found that due to work overload on account of the activities contingent on the management decision to cope with the economic recession faced by the sector, employees have to spend extra time outside their normal working hours which has affected the time available to synchronize work and family life accordingly and this causes hostility, tension, anger, and frustration among the employees in the sector.

Table 8. Superior-Subordinate Relationship and Work Supervision

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly Agree	96	31.2	31.2	31.2
Agree	170	55.2	55.2	86.4
Somehow Agree	20	6.5	6.5	92.9
Disagree	12	3.9	3.9	96.8
Strongly Disagree	10	3.2	3.2	100.0
Total	308	100	100	

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Due to the nature of the activities in the downstream sector of the Oil and Gas industries which required a network of relationships between superior and subordinate as well as supervision, it was found that 92.9% agreed that the work relationship and supervision were below expectations and affect the mental health of employee causing anxiety and frustration while 7.1% disagree and believed that work relationship and supervision between superior and subordinates were adequate for their expectations.

Table 9. Feelings While on the Job

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Aggressive and hostile	80	26.0	26.0	26.0
Enjoy the work.	10	3.2	3.2	29.2
Motivated and creative	5	1.6	1.6	30.8
Depression & frustration	63	20.5	20.5	51.3
Always calm & handle the situation	6	1.9	1.9	53.2
Fatigue & burnout	76	24.7	24.7	77.9
Happy & decisive	5	1.6	1.6	79.5
Anxiety & anger	63	20.5	20.5	100
Total	308	100	100	

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Table 9 showed what employees feel while performing their line of duties which revealed the degree of stress as most of the respondents 91.7% feel aggressive, become hostile, anxious, depressed, frustrated, and annoyed going by what they encountered on their job daily while 8.3% were happy doing the job, remain calm and handle situation, motivated and creative as well as enjoy their work. This explains why employees in the Oil and Gas sector suffer a decline in their mental health due to their feelings while on their job.

Table 10. Adequacy of Compensation Packages

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly Agree	-	-	-	-
Agree	-	-	-	-
Somehow Agree	20	6.5	6.5	6.5
Disagree	109	58.1	58.1	64.6
Strongly Disagree	179	35.4	35.4	100.0
Total	308	100	100	

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Information from the Table 10 confirmed that the economic crisis experienced by the sector has affected remuneration and other benefits payable to the employees and considered the additional workload made to cause stress since their remuneration remains the same. 6.5% believed that the present compensation package was somehow adequate while 93.5% did not perceive the remuneration and other benefits payable to be adequate.

Table 11. Organizational Policies in Operation

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Strongly Agree	90	29.2	29.2	29.2
Agree	120	39.0	39.0	68.2
Somehow Agree	76	24.7	24.7	92.9
Disagree	10	3.2	3.2	96.1
Strongly Disagree	12	3.9	3.9	100
Total	308	100	100	

Source: Field Survey, 2022

Table 11 showed the result of the prevailing organizational policies found operational due to the management decision to reposition the organization in the wake of the economic recession being experienced in the Oil and Gas sector. About 92.9% believed that organizational policies as of today, were among numerous contributors to job stress among employees while 7.1% supported the organizational policies to be favorable to them the way they were as of today.

Table 12. Overall job stress and Mental Health

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Very High	111	36.0	36.0	36.0
High	178	57.8	57.8	93.8
Moderate	19	6.2	6.2	100.0
Low	-	-	-	
Very low	-	-	.-	
Total	308	100	100	

Source: Field Survey, 2022

It was evident that job stress in the Oil and Gas sector is high and prevalent which confirms the mental health status of the employee in that sector to be poor/low as revealed in the results contained in Tables 2 to 11 and 36% of the respondents strongly agreed that their job is somewhat stressful, 57.8% of the respondents agreed to stress in the organization to be high while 6.7% of the respondents believed that stress in their job is moderate. Overall, job stress is found to be high and employees' mental health to be poor/low, hence, objective 1 which seeks to examine the job stress level and mental health status of employees in the Oil and Gas industries is hereby achieved.

Objective 2: Investigate the relationship between employee job stress and mental health during the present economic crisis.

Table 13. Summary of Regression Results Showing the Relationship between Employee Job Stress and Mental Health.

Model	R	R-Square (R ²)	Adjusted R Square	Std. error of Estimate
1	.874	.763	.760	.298

Information in Table 13 indicated that the value of R which was 0.874 shows the degree of the relationship between the independent variables and dependent variable. It revealed that there exists a relationship between employee job stress and mental health which was high and could be used to predict/explain the influence of the independent variables on the dependent variable. The value of R² represents the explainable coefficient of the independent variables in the dependent variable and for this study, the R² value for the relationship was 0.763 to imply that independent variables have about 76.3% decisive influence on employee mental health i.e. the model explains 76.3% variance in employee mental health.

Table 14. Parameters and Coefficient Values in Regression

Explanatory Variables	B	Std. Error	T-value	P-value	Remarks
Qualification	-0.110	1.332	-4.451	0.000	S
Co-workers' relationship and human relations	-0.483	0.311	-3.013	0.000	S
Poor administrative and technical support	-0.412	0.232	-4.277	0.004	S
Terms and conditions of employment (P & PC)	-0.379	0.198	-2.651	0.000	S
Workload and time pressure	-0.436	0.118	-3.045	0.000	S
Family and work-life relations	-0.226	0.133	-2.254	0.003	S
Superior-Subordinate relationship and work supervision	-0.245	1.334	-4.411	0.011	S
Feelings while on the job	-0.331	0.210	-3.351	0.002	S
Adequacy of compensation packages	-0.561	0.126	-4.622	0.000	S
Organizational policies	-0.551	1.212	-4.441	0.001	S

Source: Field Survey, 2022; Sig. @ 0.05 level, and S = Significant

Table 14 revealed the direction of the relationship which showed that the job stress dimensions independently and jointly influenced employee mental health adversely. From the result of the regression analysis, it showed that qualification ($\beta = -0.110$, $t = -4.451$, $p < 0.05$); co-workers' relationship, and human relationship ($\beta = -0.483$, $t = -3.013$, $p < 0.05$); poor administrative and technical support ($\beta = -0.412$, $t = -4.277$, $p < 0.05$); terms and conditions (physical and psychological contract $\beta = -0.379$, $t = -2.651$, $p < 0.05$); workload and time pressure ($\beta = -0.436$, $t = -3.045$, $p < 0.05$); family and work life relations ($\beta = -0.226$, $t = -2.254$, $p < 0.05$) and superior-subordinate relationship ($\beta = -0.245$, $t = -4.411$, $p < 0.05$); organizational policies ($\beta = -0.511$, $t = -4.441$, $p < 0.05$) independent and significantly influenced employee mental health

negatively. It showed further that adequacy of compensation packages and co-workers' relationships and human relations and organizational policies have a more decisive influence on employee mental health while qualification has less influence on employee mental health. The relationship is in the opposite direction i.e. inverse relationship to imply a further increase in compensation packages, organizational policies, co-workers' relationships, and human relations will lead to a further decrease in job stress which will invariably improve employee mental health. The result also shows that all the independent variables were good predictors of job stress in the Oil and Gas industries. Therefore, objective 2 which seeks to investigate the relationship between employee job stress and mental health during the present economic crisis was hereby achieved.

4.1. Discussion of Findings

The findings of the study showed that the sector was dominated by male gender, married, and literate respondents. Most of the respondents have stayed in their organizations for a minimum of 11 eleven years and comprised a mixture of the relatively young and old workforce since the retirement age was set at 60 years. Overall, the characteristics of the respondents were good and adequate for the study which was consistent with the works of Adeosun and Olanipekun, (2022); Adejumo, (2021); Akpan and Anibaba, (2019). It was clear from the result obtained for objective 1 that all measurement dimensions of job stress indicated that the level of job stress was high among the employees in the Oil and Gas industries thus, deduced that the mental health status of employees was poor/low. This was consistent with the work of Suhana et al (2014) that prolonged or intense job stress results in both physical and mental ill-health with negative effects on the employees and organizations and this result was also corroborated by the works of Lazarus and Smith (2022); Williams and Stephen (2022) that job stress was a gradual process and continuous thus, affect employee mental health over time adversely. For objective 2 which investigated the relationship between employee job stress and their mental health, The result revealed that there exists a high and positive relationship between employee job stress dimensions and job stress with mental health. This result was consistent with the earlier work of Adejumo (2021) and that of Mansour and Elmorsey (2016) but negated that of Miner and Cooper (2021) where it was established that the relationship was not a direct relationship but rather an inverse relationship. The variance result indicated that these job stress dimensions explained the extent of the influences exerted by them on employee mental health and this showed that the job stress dimensions independently and jointly influenced employee mental health adversely and the relationship of the independent and dependent variables was an inverse relationship i.e. increase in any of the job stress dimensions will lead to decrease in employee mental health. This result however satisfied that of Miner and Cooper (2021) and

Lazarus and Smith (2022) where it was asserted that job stress dimensions adversely affect employee mental health while Akpan and Anibaba, (2019) believed that job stress has an inverse relationship with mental health when there are no alternative jobs under economic uncertainty.

5. Conclusion

The study was carried out using the economic recession as the propelling factor to examine the job stress level and mental health status of employees and at the same time, investigate the relationship between employee job stress and employee mental health in the Oil and Gas industries in the Central Senatorial District of Lagos. It was found that the level of job stress in the Oil and Gas industries was very high based on the measurement variables such as qualification, co-workers' relationship and human relations, poor administrative and technical support, terms and conditions, workload and time pressure, adequacy of compensation packages, family and work life relations, and superior-subordinate relationship as well as the organizational policies that independently and significantly influenced employee mental health negatively. Thus, accounts for the rationale behind the poor /low status of employee mental health. In addition, it was found that the adequacy of compensation packages, co-workers' relationships and human relations, and organizational policies have a more decisive influence on employee mental health while qualification has less influence on employee mental health and the existing relationship between employee job stress and employee mental health was an inverse relationship. It was concluded that economic recession as experienced by the sector was responsible for the high level of stress among the employees in the sector as evident through the measurement variables which invariably affect the mental health of employees to be poor/low.

6. Recommendations

Based on the findings and the conclusion drawn, the study recommended that the management of the organizations should endeavour to improve on the existing organizational policies to reduce friction, discuss the significance of human relations to ensure effective co-workers relationship through in-house workshops and seminars, and may not necessarily improve the present compensation packages because of the economic recession in the sector however to endure that compensation packages meet the basic needs of employees following the peculiarity of the sector and engage in discussion from time to time to understand specific areas where there could be necessary intervention. The study was however, limited by many factors such as the sample selected for the study which was restricted to the Central Senatorial District of Lagos out of the three Senatorial Districts of Lagos, data was collected during the economic recession and the use of questionnaire as the instrument used to collect data

which relied on respondents' perspective (personal feelings) which may not reflect the actual state of things as at the time of collecting the data.

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