

**THE EFFECT OF WORK STRESS ON EMPLOYEE PRODUCTIVITY: CASE  
STUDY OF UGANDA CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY**

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**UGANDA CHRISTIAN  
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## DECLARATION

I **ACWEE PHIONAH RUTH**, declare that this research is entirely my own work and its has not been presented for any academic award.

Signed.......... Date 5<sup>th</sup> - May - 2026.....

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# APPROVAL

This is to certify that this research has been done under my supervision and guidance.

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Date: 5/03/2020

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## **ABBREVIATION**

AI	Artificial Intelligence
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease 2019
HR	Human Resource
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
JD-R	Job Demands-Resources
KII	Key Informant Interview
Likert	Likert Scale of Measurement
PLS-SEM	Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Sciences
UCU	Uganda Christian University

## Table of Contents

DECLARATION .....	ii
APPROVAL .....	iii
ABBREVIATION .....	v
ABSTRACT .....	viii
CHAPTER ONE .....	1
1.0 Introduction .....	1
1.2 Problem Statement .....	4
1.3 Purpose of the Study .....	4
1.4 Objectives of the Study .....	5
1.5 Research Questions .....	5
1.6 Scope of the Study .....	5
1.7 Significance of the Study .....	5
1.8 Conceptual Framework .....	6
CHAPTER TWO: .....	8
LITERATURE REVIEW .....	8
2.0 Introduction .....	8
2.1 Theoretical Review .....	8
2.2 Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Model. ....	9
2.3 Concept of Workplace Stress .....	10
2.4 Concept of Employee Productivity .....	10
2.5 Productivity and Stress Relationship .....	12
2.6 Workplace Stress Coping Mechanisms. ....	12
2.7 Empirical Review .....	13
2.8 Research Gap .....	13
CHAPTER THREE: .....	14
METHODOLOGY .....	14
3.0 Introduction .....	14
3.1 Research Design .....	14
3.2 Study Population .....	14

3.3 Sample Size Determination .....	15
3.4 Sampling Techniques.....	16
3.5 Sampling Procedure .....	16
3.6 Data Collection Methods.....	16
3.7 Data Collection Instruments.....	17
3.8 Validity and Reliability .....	17
3.9 Data Analysis .....	18
3.10 Ethical Considerations.....	18
CHAPTER FOUR .....	19
PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS.....	19
4.0 Introduction.....	19
4.1 Response Rate .....	19
4.2 Background Characteristics of Respondents.....	19
4.3 Major Sources of Work-Related Stress among Employees at UCU .....	21
4.4 The level of employee productivity at UCU. ....	22
4.5 Potential Solutions to work-related stress at UCU. ....	23
4.6 Discussion of the Findings. ....	24
CHAPTER FIVE .....	25
SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS .....	25
5.1 Introduction.....	25
5.2 Summary of the Findings.....	25
5.3 Conclusions.....	27
5.4 Recommendations .....	28
5.5 Areas for Further Research .....	29
5.6 Limitations of the Study .....	29
REFERENCES .....	30
APPENDICES .....	32
Appendix I: Sample Questionnaire (Academic and Non-Academic Staff) .....	32
Section B: Independent Variable — Work-Related Stress .....	33
Section C: Dependent Variable — Employee Productivity .....	33

## **ABSTRACT**

Due to the negative implications on the wellbeing of the employees and the performance of an organization, the issue of work-related stress has gained prominence in the contemporary organizations. Major changes in the workplace of institutions of higher learning have escalated the levels of stress among employees due to the growing workloads, role multiplicity, and stress on performance. This paper discussed the impact of job stress on the productivity of employees in Uganda Christian University (UCU).

The study relied on the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Model and the Transactional Theory of Stress, which is why the selected research design is a cross-sectional survey design with a mixed-method approach. Structured questionnaires were used to obtain the data of 23 academic and administrative staff. A form of descriptive statistics, frequency and percentage, was used to analyse quantitative data.

The results showed that workload, multi-tasking, lack of supervisory support, and worklife imbalance were the biggest contributors to the work-related stress in employees who worked in UCU. Even with the stress, employees have indicated that they had high productivity in terms of meeting deadlines, quality work, and were motivated. Nonetheless, the findings showed that stress decreases employee productivity and concentration, which is a threat to the long-term productivity in case it is not adequately addressed.

The research arrived at the conclusion that work stress adversely affects the productivity of employees at UCU especially in decreasing efficiency and work effectiveness. The research suggests that additional personnel should be hired to lessen the workload, improve the supervisory aspect, foster work-life balance, and introduce stress management programmes to improve employee wellbeing and maintain productivity in tertiary education institutions.

## CHAPTER ONE

### 1.0 Introduction

Stress can be described as an adaptive reaction to a circumstance that seems difficult or as a threat to the physical or even psychological health of an individual. Stress is a certain part of contemporary life and can be observed in nearly all spheres of human activity, and at work is one of them. Scholars have over the years defined stress in the workplace differently.

Stress at the workplace has been defined as a negative experience that arises when the employees are faced with workplace demands and pressures that cannot be accommodated by their knowledge level, skills and abilities. According to McGrath, stress was described as a experience, which is caused by a serious imbalance in the work requirement and the capacity of the individual to respond to them, the resources needed to respond, and the reward of satisfying the demand. On the same note, the stress at work is defined as the physical and emotional responses which manifest in case the demands of the job surpass the capacity of an employee to respond effectively to the organizational requirements.

In the modern society, stress at the workplace has been generally accepted as a world phenomenon, which is experienced differently in different organizations. Employees may have to work longer hours because of the upsurge in performance demands, the number of tasks they have to handle, and the rivalry enhanced by information and communication technology, such as artificial intelligence, thereby leading to high levels of stress.

Despite the fact that stress may also be a positive experience, it is mostly destructive when applied in excess or over a long period. Stress has been linked to low employee performance, high levels of errors, poor quality of work, high absenteeism and the turnover of employees. Employee performance is said to be high when the set targets were met or surpassed. But in cases where the employees are overwhelmed by demands that they are unable to control or manage, they become stressed and this is likely to cause reduced performance.

Some causes of stress at workplace have been cited and they include poor time management, ambiguity in job description, inadequacy and insecurity, lack of effective communication, bad relations, and difficulty of the tasks assigned.

This research paper aims at studying the correlation between work stress and employee output at Uganda Christian University (UCU). The study would contribute to the understanding of potential solutions that can be applied by the university management, policymakers and other relevant stakeholders to come up with effective ways of managing stress at work and enhancing employee productivity.

### **1.1 Background of the Study**

Organizational stress has been emerging as a critical issue in present-day organizations with rising job demands, performance requirements and scarcer institutional resources. There are also strict deadlines, plenty of work, role changes and high-performance expectations that employees often have to meet. When such job demands go beyond the ability of an individual to handle them effectively, work related stress sets in which, in its turn, may have adverse impacts on the wellbeing of employees and job performance (Lazarus and Folkman, 1984).

The issue of work stress is becoming eminent in institutions of higher learning. Universities have been found to be functioning in a very competitive environment with the increasing numbers of students, accountability, accreditation and pressure to enhance the rankings of the institutions. Consequently, academic and administrative employees may find themselves in a situation where they have to do various things at the same time and therefore their level of stress increases (Winefield, Gillespie, Stough, Dua, and Hapuarachchi, 2003).

In this research, work-related stress is theorized using workload, time pressure, role conflict, role ambiguity, a lack of supervisory support, and work-life balance. Cooper, Dewe, and O'Driscoll (2001) emphasize that these are some of the most prevalent causes of job stress and they are closely linked to poor job performance and low customer satisfaction by employees. Such stressors faced by employees continuously increase their chances of being impacted emotionally, lack concentration and lose motivation (Maslach, Schaufeli, and Leiter, 2001).

The employee productivity can be defined as the level at which the employees are able to use their skills, time, and efforts in a manner that is effective in meeting the organizational goals. It

consists of the amount and quality of work done, productivity in performing the tasks, creativity and service delivery (Mathis and Jackson, 2011). In the university, employees are productive in terms of successful teaching, punctual evaluation, research, administrative efficiency, and sensitivity to students and other parties.

Multiple empirical studies reveal that there is a close correlation between work stress and productivity of the employees. The effects of excessive stress have been identified to be negative, such as cognitive impairment, job engagement, higher chances of errors and absenteeism (Quick and Henderson, 2016). Even though performance may be stimulated at moderate levels of pressure, long-term or uncontrolled stress is found to affect productivity and organizational performance negatively (Yerkes and Dodson, 1908).

Work related stress in academic institutions can occur in the form of diminished teaching performance, procrastinated marking, low research performance, inferior service delivery as well as poor interpersonal relationships. Kinman and Wray (2014) maintain that long-term occupational stress among university employees leads to burnout, impersonation, and deteriorating performance within the institution. Not only employees are affected by these consequences, but the education quality and satisfaction levels of students are also harmed.

Uganda Christian University (UCU) is a privately owned faith-based institution of higher learning that is competing in a competitive environment that is limited in resources. The university is experiencing the growing number of student enrollments, demands of the regulatory bodies on the national level, and pressures of quality assurance and performance enhancement. Academic employees must engage in teaching, research, supervision, and community activities at the same time, and administrative employees have to care about service provision and reporting needs, as well as coordination of institutions.

These working conditions can also subject the employees at UCU to a significant amount of work-related stress. Research has been done in tertiary institutions in developing nations and implies that, scarcity of resources, excessive workload and job insecurity are some of the main factors that cause occupational stress and lower productivity (Ongori and Agolla, 2008). Not properly handled stress can lead to poor employee morale, productivity as well as institutional performance.

Though there have been human resource practices that include performance appraisal system, employee development programs and employee welfare schemes, issues concerning employee welfare and productivity can still be seen in most private universities. This generates a necessity to empirically study how work stress affects the productivity of employees in the context of the particular institutional setting of the Uganda Christian University.

Thus, this research aims at looking at the correlation between work-related stress and employee productivity at the Uganda Christian University where the independent variable will be work-related stress and the dependent variable will be employee productivity. This relationship is necessary in the creation of effective stress management strategies, performance of employees and organizational sustainability.

## **1.2 Problem Statement**

Despite the critical role of employees in achieving institutional goals, anecdotal evidence at Uganda Christian University indicates increasing complaints related to excessive workload, role overload, unclear job expectations, and difficulties in balancing work and personal life. Such stressors have been associated with absenteeism, reduced morale, and declining job performance in some departments.

Empirical studies have established a negative relationship between work stress and employee productivity in various organizational contexts (Ganster and Rosen, 2023; Bakker and Demerouti, 2022). However, there is limited empirical evidence focusing on private universities in Uganda. This lack of context-specific data limits management's ability to design effective stress management and productivity enhancement strategies.

This study seeks to address this gap by examining the effect of work stress on employee productivity at Uganda Christian University.

## **1.3 Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to examine the effect of work-related stress on employee productivity at Uganda Christian University.

#### **1.4 Objectives of the Study**

The objectives of this study are to:

1. Examine the major sources of work-related stress among employees at Uganda Christian University.
2. Find out the level of employee productivity at Uganda Christian University.
3. Suggest possible solutions to stress related issues at UCU

#### **1.5 Research Questions**

The study seeks to answer the following research questions:

1. What are the major sources of work-related stress among employees at Uganda Christian University?
2. What is the level of employee productivity at Uganda Christian University?
3. What possible solutions can be adopted to address work-related stress among employees at Uganda Christian University?

#### **1.6 Scope of the Study**

The research will be conducted on academic and administrative employees of Uganda Christian University. The content scope will include work stress and employee productivity. The geographical area is confined to UCU campuses whereas the time frame is made up of data gathered in the 2026 academic year.

#### **1.7 Significance of the Study**

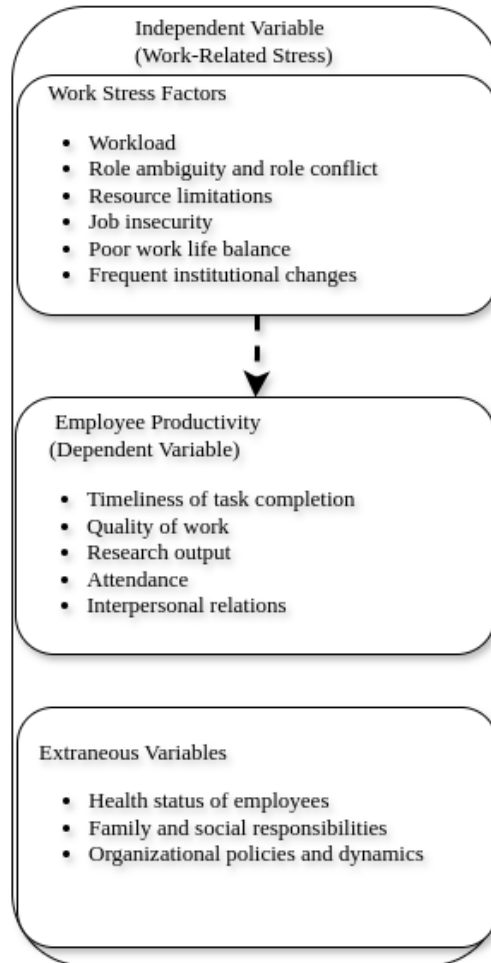
The research outcomes are useful to the university management because they will offer empirical data to enable formulation of effective stress management policies and human resource interventions. Employees can have access to better wellbeing programs, and scholars and students will have access to more empirical literature on work stress and productivity in the higher education institutions in developing nations.

## **1.8 Conceptual Framework**

The theoretical framework depicts the correlation between work stress and employee output in the Uganda Christian University (UCU). The independent variables are work-related stress factors and the dependent variable is the productivity of the employees. The framework equally acknowledges the existence of extraneous variables that could affect work stress and employee productivity.

Work related stress is the independent variable in this study, and it is manifested as workload, role ambiguity and conflict, resource limitation, job insecurity, poor work life balance, and institutional change. It is assumed that these stressors affect the physical and mental health of employees.

The dependent variable is the productivity of the employees according to the time that it takes to complete the tasks, the quality of the work, the results that the research would yield, attendance, and relations between employees in the workplace.



The framework further acknowledges the presence of extraneous variables, including employees' health status, family responsibilities, and organizational dynamics, which may influence productivity but are not the primary focus of the study. These variables will be controlled during data collection and analysis to minimize their effect on the study findings.

## **CHAPTER TWO:**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.0 Introduction**

In this chapter, the authors examine the existing academic research concerning the subject of work stress and employee productivity, especially in institutions of higher learning. The literature review is aimed at developing both theoretical and conceptual and empirical background of the study through the review of existing theories, topical concepts, and known gaps in the research. The review allows to learn better how work-related stress can impact the employees on their productivity and why this relationship should be investigated in the background of Uganda Christian University.

#### **2.1 Theoretical Review**

The theoretical background of this study is based on the three key theories, which include Role Stress Theory, Job Demands-Control Theory, and Person-Environment Fit Theory. These are theories that describe the causes of stress at work and the implications it has on the behavior and performance of employees, and are thus useful in analyzing stress and productivity in the context of Uganda Christian University.

The cause of stress elaborated in the Role Stress Theory which was initially based on the work of Robert Merton (1957) and further developed by Kahn et al. (1964) describes stress as being a consequence of role conflict, role ambiguity, and role overload in organizations. This theory suggests that workers feel stressed when the demands of the job do not fit, there are no expectations given, or the workload expected is too high. The conditions impact adversely on job satisfaction, commitment, and performance.

Most of the staff in a university environment holds more than one job like teaching, research, administration and mentoring. In a case whereby these roles are not well defined or even contradict one another, the stress levels become higher and thus the productivity is reduced. Nevertheless, critics claim that the theory is created in relatively simple organizational settings and might not represent the complexity of the contemporary institutions.

The Job Demands-Control Theory is a theory as postulated by Karasek (1979) and is concerned with the interplay between job demands and the extent to which employees can exert control over their work. The theory assumes that a high job demand and low decision-making autonomy will lead to high levels of stress with more control having the potential to decrease stress levels and improve performance.

The university conditions may cause stress due to heavy workloads, deadlines, and performance pressure when the staff does not have much control over their work. The findings of the research indicate that high job demands can be neutralized through supervisory and peer support thus positively influencing the wellbeing and productivity of employees.

According to the Person-Environment Fit Theory, an organization experiences stress when an individual has a poor fit between his or her abilities, values, or expectations and the demands or characteristics of the work environment (Edwards, 1991). The staff in institutions of higher learning is usually expected to do things that are not in their competencies or career goals, which leads to stress and poor performance.

As an instance, academic employees can be stressed when administrative duties disrupt the teaching and research activities. This theory can be applied to the current research because it focuses on the need to ensure that the job descriptions are matched to the capabilities of the employees in order to maximize productivity.

## **2.2 Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Model.**

Jobs Demands-Resources (JD-R) Model gives a complete picture of occupational stress. Bakker and Demerouti (2022) report that workload, emotional strain, time are job demands, which need prolonged effort and can cause strain when overstated. On the other hand, job resources such as supervisory support, autonomy, training and feedback are known to encourage motivation and performance.

The hypotheses of the model suggest that work-related stress caused by high job demands and poor productivity, job resources mitigate the impact of the former. Empirical research is used to show that workers who encounter high demands and scarcity of resources have higher chances of burnout and poor performance (Ganster and Rosen, 2023). The JD-R Model thus provides a good theoretical basis in analysis of stress and productivity at Uganda Christian University.

The theory of Stress as a transactional theory.

The Transactional Theory of Stress that was created by Lazarus and Folkman (1984) views stress as a dynamic interplay between the environment and people. Stress manifests itself when people think about job demands as something beyond their ability to cope with.

Employees at the organizational level who feel that workload, deadlines or institutional demands are overwhelming to them, have higher chances of being stressed, and this can lead to lack of concentration, motivation and productivity. The theory focuses on the influence of perception and coping; therefore, it is possible that employees who are subjected to similar conditions, yet have varying levels of stress, will be explained by the theory.

### **2.3 Concept of Workplace Stress**

Workplace stress is defined as a kind of physical, emotional as well as psychological reactions that are experienced when work demands surpass the capacity of a person to handle them effectively. Some of the common stressors relate to too much work, role conflict, role ambiguity, lack of autonomy, insufficiency of resources, and poor interpersonal relationships (Cooper and Cartwright, 2021).

Stress in the workplace is usually chronic in institutions of higher learning because teachers are usually overworked, there is pressure to publish and also because of administrative duties and work-life balance. Research has shown that these stressors cause burnout, emotional exhaustion, and deteriorating job performance after a period of exposure to them (Ganster and Rosen, 2023).

### **2.4 Concept of Employee Productivity.**

Employee productivity is used to refer to the degree to which employees are efficient and effective in the use of their skills, time, and energy to reach organizational goals (Bakker and Demerouti, 2022). In learning institutions, productivity goes beyond the attendance to encompass quality teaching, research, administrative productivity, and service delivery.

In the case of academic staff, productivity manifests itself in terms of successful teaching, marking feedback, publication of research, student supervision and involvement in institutional affairs. In the case of non-academic employees, productivity covers administrative precision, responsiveness, punctuality, and organization of the institutional activities.

Empirical research data states that employee motivation and engagement, as well as conducive work environments, closely relate to high productivity (Ali et al., 2014).

Productivity can be gauged in academic staff through;

- Instructional quality; students are interested in an effective presentation of material in a timely and significant manner.

Timely marking and feedback- submission of graded exams and coursework within the allocated timelines of the university.

- Research product; quality academic publication, conference attendance and knowledge base of the University.
- Access to students; conducting consultations, project management, and departmental work.

In the case of non-academic employees, it is possible to measure productivity in terms of;

- Administrative contribution; handling student records, organization of faculty meetings, and smooth running of operations in the University.
- Respectability and punctuality; reporting and performing institutional routine duties on time.

Responseiveness To manage inside and outside communications, student requests, and other stakeholders effectively.

Lack of stress management will result in a drop in productivity. Staff can get burned out, absentee, or procrastinate, mark slowly, and become emotionally withdrawn which compromises quality of service delivery and provision of education. According to a report by Ssentamu and Katende (2020), psychological exhaustion in lecturers in central Uganda was directly related to the number of complaints raised by students and lack of coordination in departments.

## **2.5 Productivity and Stress Relationship.**

Employee productivity is the degree to which employees can use their skills, time, and efforts efficiently and effectively to attain organizational goals (Bakker and Demerouti, 2022).

Productivity in higher education institutions is not limited to the attendance in institutions but to good teaching, research, administrative efficiency and service delivery.

In the case of academic personnel, productivity would be measured in terms of effective instruction, prompt marking and feedback, research publication, student supervision and institutional involvement. In the case of non-academic staff, productivity consists of the concept of administrative accuracy, responsiveness, punctuality, and coordination of the institutions.

It has been shown thanks to empirical studies that high productivity is directly linked to employee motivation, engagement, and supportive work environments (Ali et al., 2014).

## **2.6 Workplace Stress Coping Mechanisms.**

Personal and institutional strategies are common coping mechanisms that are used by the staff in universities in dealing with stress at work. Coping at institutions such as UCU that practice faith is not only psychological but also spiritual. Faith and prayer are one of the most evident coping interventions. Numerous scholarly employees of the UCU take up personal and collective prayer, devotionals, and chapel services to attract strength, hope, and emotional focus.

Counseling services are also a major factor. Uganda Christian University has their wellness office that offers professional counseling services to the staff members who can talk privately about the challenges they are facing and get help there. A 2020 internal report by UCU indicated a 30% rise in the uptake of counseling by the staff throughout the COVID-19 recovery period, which is an indication of increased trust in mental health services. Other typical measures include peer support and mentorship. The personnel tend to create informal support groups, chatting about shared experiences and problems during the downtimes or the faculty meetings. Institutionalized such as sabbaticals and retreats provide employees with a chance to rejuvenate, reflect, or conduct some research in a non-stressful setting. These are particularly promoted to permanent employees especially those who are in line to be promoted.

Best practices are the creation of flexible work schedules and mental health days. As an illustration, UCU at times lets academic departments to self-regulate the total of work in periods of peak stress, such as graduation season, to prevent burnout and remain productive.

## **2.7 Empirical Review**

The literature review between 2014 and 2025 has repeatedly proven a negative correlation between the stress associated with work and the productivity of the employees. Ali et al. (2014) established that job performance of university employees was notably low due to stress. According to Haq et al. (2020), work overload had a negative impact on the efficiency and commitment of employees.

Recent findings also support the fact that chronic stress can lead to burnout, absenteeism, and even poor performance of tasks (Ganster and Rosen, 2023). According to the studies based on the JD-R Model, the negative impact can be ameliorated by job resources (Bakker and Demerouti, 2022). Nevertheless, research on charismatic leadership in most cases is centered on public universities or non-African settings.

## **2.8 Research Gap**

Despite the plethora of literature available on the topic of work-related stress and productivity of employees, the vast majority of empirical research has been conducted among corporate organization, healthcare setting or a government-operated university. There is limited research done on the private and faith-based universities in East Africa especially in Ugandan setting.

Moreover, not many studies have investigated simultaneously various aspects of work-related stress and their overall impact on the productivity of employees. This paper responds to these gaps by looking into the impact of work-related stress on the productivity of the employees at Uganda Christian University.

## **CHAPTER THREE:**

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.0 Introduction**

This chapter presents the research methodology adopted for the study on the effect of work-related stress on employee productivity at Uganda Christian University (UCU). Research methodology provides a systematic framework for collecting, measuring, and analyzing data in order to generate valid and reliable findings (Kothari, 2004). A well-structured methodology enhances the credibility of the study and ensures that the research objectives are addressed appropriately.

The chapter discusses the research design, study population, sample size determination, sampling techniques and procedures, data collection methods and instruments, data analysis procedures, validity and reliability of the research instrument, and ethical considerations. These methodological choices were guided by the nature of the study variables and the need to obtain objective, quantifiable data.

#### **3.1 Research Design**

The study adopted a cross-sectional quantitative survey research design. According to Creswell (2014), a quantitative approach is appropriate when the researcher seeks to examine relationships among variables using numerical data and statistical analysis. A cross-sectional design involves collecting data at one point in time, allowing the researcher to assess existing conditions without manipulating the variables (Bryman, 2016).

This design was considered suitable because the study aimed to measure employees' perceptions of work-related stress and productivity as they exist within the university environment. The use of a quantitative survey enhances objectivity, minimizes researcher bias, and allows findings to be analyzed using inferential statistical techniques (Sekaran and Bougie, 2019).

#### **3.2 Study Population**

The study population comprised academic and administrative staff of Uganda Christian University (UCU). A study population refers to the entire group of individuals that possess characteristics relevant to the research problem (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003).

Academic staff are responsible for teaching, supervision, research, and curriculum development, while administrative staff support institutional operations through management, coordination, and service delivery. These categories were selected because their work roles expose them to varying job demands that may influence levels of stress and productivity (Kinman and Wray, 2014).

### 3.3 Sample Size Determination

Sample size determination is essential in ensuring that study findings are statistically reliable and representative of the population (Kothari, 2004). The sample size for this study was determined using **Slovin’s formula**, which is appropriate when the population size is known and a specific margin of error is desired (Yamane, 1967).

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where;

N is the total population

n is the Sample size

e<sup>2</sup> is the 0.05 level of significance

Therefore, the sample size was calculated as follows;

$$n = \frac{97}{1 + 97(0.05)^2}$$

$$n = 78$$

Given a total population of 97 staff members, the calculated sample size was 78 respondents. This sample size was considered adequate to produce reliable estimates while minimizing sampling error.

Department	Population (N)	Sample (n)
Directorate of Human Resource and Administration	10	10
Directorate of Finance and Administration	21	18
Directorate of Quality Assurance	8	6
Directorate of University ICT Services	15	18
Directorate of Postgraduate Studies	22	13
Directorate of Medical Services	11	8
Department of Chaplaincy	10	5
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>78</b>

### **3.4 Sampling Techniques**

In the research, stratified random sampling method was used. The population under this method was categorized in homogeneous sub-groups (strata) on the basis of their departmental affiliation. The respondents were then chosen randomly by each stratum in proportion. Cochran (1977) also argues that stratified sampling enhances representativeness as it makes certain key subgroups among a population to be represented well.

The selection of stratified random sampling was due to its representativeness and the fact that all departments will be sufficiently represented in the study. The sampling bias is minimized by this method and statistical estimates are made more accurate.

The proportional allocation was a way of ensuring fairness in the selection of the sample as well as being able to compare the responses of various functional units of the university.

### **3.5 Sampling Procedure**

The sampling was done in a systematic process that adhered to the principles of probability sampling (Tongco, 2007):

1. The academic and administrative staff list was acquired in their entirety in the respective university offices.
2. The employees were divided as per departments.
3. The overall sample was proportionately distributed in departments.
4. Respondents were sampled using simple random sampling within each of the departments.
5. A group of the staff members was engaged in the process of informed consent and provided with questionnaires.

This process guaranteed transparency, equity and uniformity in selection of respondents.

### **3.6 Data Collection Methods**

The research adopted qualitative method of the questionnaire survey to gather quantitative data. Surveys are useful in gathering standardised information in a vast number of respondents in a limited duration (Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill, 2019).

The self-administered questionnaire technique was used as an option due to the anonymity, decreased interviewer bias, and promotion of honesty in responses, particularly when the researcher is examining a sensitive topic like work-related stress (Bryman, 2016).

### **3.7 Data Collection Instruments**

Data will be collected using data collection instruments.

The main data collection tool was a structured questionnaire. Structured questionnaires provide uniformity of the response and make it possible to analyze quantitative data (Mugenda and Mugenda, 2003).

The questionnaire was in form of closed-ended questions that have a five-point Likert scale with Strongly Disagree (1) and Strongly Agree (5). Likert-scale items are commonly applied in the organizational research because of their reliability and fit in statistical analysis (Likert, 1932).

### **3.8 Validity and Reliability**

Validity is a concept that describes the extent to which an instrument is capable of measuring the desired variables (Creswell, 2014). The validity of the content was ensured through the formulation of the questionnaire items according to the study objectives and accessible literature on occupational stress and productivity.

The supervisor and research experts of the research reviewed the instrument to determine its clarity, relevance and adequacy. Their comments were also taken into consideration so that the quality and accuracy of the questionnaire items could be enhanced.

### **3.9 Data Analysis**

Reliability is a quality that can be defined as the presence of similarity in measurements when they are conducted repeatedly (Sekaran and Bougie, 2019). A pilot test was carried out on the staff of another institution that was not a part of the main study.

Cronbach Alpha coefficient was applied to test internal consistency of the instrument and a value of 0.70 and above was deemed to be good (Nunnally and Bernstein, 1994). This also made the items of the questionnaire to be reliable in the measurement of the study variables.

### **3.10 Ethical Considerations.**

Research integrity and protecting the participants are crucial elements that require ethical considerations (Saunders et al., 2019). Relevant university authorities were consulted to give permission to conduct the study. All the respondents were informed that they were going to participate before giving their consent.

The questionnaires did not include names and personal identifiers, which ensured confidentiality and anonymity. The involvement was voluntary, and the respondents did not face any penalties in case they decided to quit. The data obtained had been obtained on purely academic purposes.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

#### 4.0 Introduction

This chapter presents, analyses and interprets the findings on the effect of work-related stress on employee productivity at Uganda Christian University. The analysis is based on 78 valid responses obtained from the respondents. The results are presented according to the study objectives. Frequencies and percentages were used in the analysis and the findings are discussed in relation to existing literature.

#### 4.1 Response Rate

The study targeted 78 respondents and all the questionnaires administered were returned, representing a response rate of 100 percent. This response rate was considered adequate for analysis and provided a reliable basis for generalization of the findings.

Table 4.1: Gender of Respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	40	51.3
Female	38	48.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>100</b>

As shown in **Table 4.1**, male respondents constituted the majority of the participants, accounting for 51.3 percent of the total respondents, while females represented 48.7 percent. This indicates that the study captured views from both male and female employees, thereby providing balanced perspectives regarding work-related stress and productivity at UCU.

#### 4.2 Background Characteristics of Respondents

The study analysed the background characteristics of respondents in terms of gender, age and length of service because these were considered important in influencing employees' perceptions

of work-related stress and productivity.

Table 4.2: Age Group of Respondents

Age Group	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Below 30 years	15	19.2
31 – 40 years	33	42.3
41 – 50 years	18	23.1
Above 50 years	12	15.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>100</b>

The findings presented in **Table 4.2** show that the majority of respondents (42.3 percent) were between 31–40 years of age. This indicates that most employees fall within the active and productive age group, which suggests that they are capable of providing reliable information regarding workplace stress and productivity.

Table 4.3: Length of Service at UCU

Length of Service	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Below 2 years	8	10.3
2 – 5 years	36	46.2
6 – 10 years	21	26.9
Above 10 years	13	16.6
<b>Total</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>100</b>

As indicated in **Table 4.3**, the majority of respondents (46.2 percent) had worked at Uganda Christian University for a period between two and five years. This implies that most respondents had adequate experience and were familiar with the working environment and organisational practices within the university.

### 4.3 Major Sources of Work-Related Stress among Employees at UCU

The first objective sought to examine the major sources of work-related stress among employees at UCU. Analysis of the findings indicates that work-related stress is prevalent among staff, as a considerable proportion of respondents acknowledged experiencing stress in the course of their duties.

Table 4.4: Employees Experience High Levels of Work-Related Stress

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	16	20.5
Agree	30	38.5
Neutral	10	12.8
Disagree	17	21.8
Strongly Disagree	5	6.4
<b>Total</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>100</b>

As presented in **Table 4.4**, a majority of respondents (59 percent) agreed that they experience high levels of work-related stress at UCU. This confirms that occupational stress is a notable issue among employees within the institution. Overworking was one of the most prevalent stressors among employees. Several of the respondents responded that they have to complete many tasks in short periods of time. This pressure of work imposes time limits and performance anxiety, which eventually leads to high levels of stress. This finding is in line with the available literature that occupational stress is largely predicted by workload.

The phenomenon of role overload was also present with some of the respondents reporting to have carried out duties that were not included in their job descriptions. Existence of various and at times undefined roles is an indication of weak job boundaries, which heightens pressure and predisposes role conflict and ambiguity.

Issues were also raised concerning supervisory assistance. Other respondents were not satisfied with the amount of guidance, feedback and recognition by their supervisors. The lack of managerial support may also increase the stress level of employees: the feelings of frustration and isolation. This insight aligns with the social exchange theory that implies that the low perceived organizational support leads to negative employee attitudes and wellbeing.

Stress among employees was also caused by work-life imbalance. Most of the respondents expressed the challenge of managing work life and family and professional lives. Working hours that go beyond the usual working hours place an emotional pressure on the employees that impacts the personal wellbeing as well as performance in the workplace.

In spite of these problems, most of the respondents found that there are sufficient physical facilities to carry out their duties. It implies that organisational and managerial practices are the key factors that contribute to work related stress at UCU as opposed to inadequate work facilities.

#### **4.4 The level of employee productivity at UCU.**

The second goal was to examine the employee productivity at UCU. The study evidence shows that employees can to a great extent achieve their targets and meet their deadlines in an acceptable time duration. This is indicative of a relatively good performance among the staff irrespective of the existence of work-related stress.

The majority of the respondents revealed that they always achieve their work targets and deadlines. This implies that even when employees are stressed at their workplace, they will be devoted to the work they have been tasked to do.

The quality of work was also noted to be high as the employees stated that they always deliver satisfactory work. Moreover, the respondents stated that they can focus properly during the execution of their duties, which evidence their further devotion to the goals of the institution.

The level of motivation among employees was also reported to be favorable. Majority of the respondents said they would be ready to give full effort on the duties that they are supposed to undertake. It shows that there is a high degree of professional commitment and organisational goals.

Stress related absenteeism was also reported to be on the lower side implying that staff members are still reporting to work even when they are under pressure. Nevertheless, the respondents admitted that stress decreases their productivity and efficiency. This drop in efficiency indicates that performance outcomes are already being held but the quality and the speed of task execution could deteriorate with time in case the stress continues.

The results thus show that the stress has already started to affect the performance of the employees despite the fact that it has not yet much affected the productivity that can be measured.

#### **4.5 Potential Solutions to work-related stress at UCU.**

An organizational response to work stress necessitates practical responses to the stress. The most common solution that was suggested was to hire more staff because the respondents think that more staff would relieve the workload strain and allow the distribution of tasks to be more balanced.

Enhancement of supervisory support was also highlighted. Better communication, better clarity in direction and periodic feedbacks by the supervisors would boost the morale of the employees and eliminate uncertainty in the workplace. Positive leadership behaviors may thus be very important in cushioning the adverse impacts of work requirements.

The introduction of the counselling services and the stress management programmes that are structured was also advised. These efforts would equip the employees with coping mechanisms and emotional comfort that they would need to deal with occupational pressure in a better manner.

Proper scheduling of work and realistic deadlines were also found to be an essential strategy to increase the work-life balance. Stress levels might be lowered up to a great extent when it comes to ensuring that employees are given enough time to attend to personal obligations.

#### **4.6 Discussion of the Findings.**

Generally, the results have demonstrated that the major causes of work-related stress in Uganda Christian University are excessive work load, role overload, lack of supervisory support and work-life imbalance. Though the employees still attain their goals and have been delivering acceptable performance standards, stress has already started to have an impact on their performance in terms of efficiency and effectiveness.

In case these stressors are not addressed, then there is a high probability that there will be reduced productivity in the long term. Adopting organisational support systems, enhancing manpower and encouraging stress management programs would thus help to maintain the wellbeing of the employees and enhance the performance of the institution.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

The chapter introduces the summary of the key findings, conclusions and recommendations of the study. The limitations that were faced during the research process are also presented in the chapter and recommendations made on how further research can be done. The discussion is structured based on the objectives of the research that analysed the impact of work-related stress on employee productivity in Uganda Christian University.

#### **5.2 Summary of the Findings**

The research was aimed at investigating the impact of work stress among employees in the Uganda Christian University on their productivity. The conclusion of the findings is provided based on the objectives of the study.

Objective One: The Leading Causes of Work-Related Stress.

The research determined that there is work-related stress among the Uganda Christian University employees. There were a number of factors that were cited as the major causes of stress among employees. Excessive workload was found to be one of the major stressors. Most of the respondents reported that they must do a lot in a short period, therefore, putting pressure on them and making them more prone to stress.

Another evidence in the findings was that the employees carry out several roles in addition to the formal job descriptions. Role conflict and ambiguity are caused by this role overload making this job pressureful leading to employee stress. The employees are thus expected to handle multiple roles at a time thus influencing their performance effectiveness.

Moreover, another cause of stress was identified to be poor supervisory support. Other respondents showed that they lack enough guidance, recognition and feedback provided by their

supervisors. Absence of supervisor support may have a negative impact on the morale of the employees and may also contribute to job-related stress.

The paper also determined that work life imbalance is another significant cause of stress. The concern of work-personal and family life became problematic as reported by many employees. This means that the work requirements tend to exceed the working hours hence disrupting personal lives of employees leading to emotional distress.

Nonetheless, the research discovered that the employees mostly have the physical resources needed to carry out their tasks. This implies that organizational practices and management systems are the key contributors of stress at UCU and not absence of working facilities.

Goal Two: Degree of Workforce Productivity.

The second aim of the research was to establish the amount of employee productivity in the university of Uganda Christian University. The results showed that the workers tend to be highly productive even when they are subjected to stress at work.

The findings indicated that the majority of the employees can meet their working targets and deadlines in the approximate time. This implies that employees are devoted to the realization of their duties and the acceptable level of performance.

The research also indicated that the workers are able to deliver quality work and are highly committed to their work. It was shown by numerous respondents that they are still motivated and continue to carry out their tasks efficiently even in the context of work-related stress.

Moreover, there were also low levels of absenteeism attributed to stress levels. A majority of the employees said that they seldom miss work because of stress related illnesses. It indicates that the employees remain dedicated and in attendance to their lines of duty.

Nevertheless, the results also have shown that stress decreases the efficiency and effectiveness of the workers at the workplace. Where employees can be productive in terms of hitting targets, stress impacts on their concentration and pace of undertaking tasks. This is to say that in the long run, stress can result in a decrease in productivity unless proper measures are taken.

Objective Three: The Potential Solutions to Work-Related Stress.

The third study purpose was to find the potential solutions to work-related stress in Uganda Christian University. The results showed that there were a few measures that could be used to alleviate stress in employees.

Recruitment of more personnel was one of the most proposed solutions. Respondents stated that hiring more employees would allow lessening the workload and allocating the tasks among the staff members more equally.

Another key intervention that was identified was the enhancement of supervisory support. Respondents proposed that regular feedback, guidance and recognition by supervisors should be given to the employees. Good supervisory support may enhance morale and stress levels among the employees.

It was also suggested that counselling services and stress management programmes should be introduced. Such programmes would equip the employees with professional assistance and coping mechanisms in addressing work-related stress.

Another major solution proposed by the respondents was promotion of work life balance. Adequate scheduling of the work and decent workload allocation will make the employees work efficiently and balance their work with the personal lives.

### **5.3 Conclusions**

Depending on the results of the research, it is possible to make a number of conclusions about the impact of work-related stress on the productivity of employees in Uganda Christian University.

First, the research paper arrives at a conclusion that work stress is present among the employees of Uganda Christian University. Excessive work load, role overload, lack of supervisory support and work life imbalance are the major causes of stress.

Second, the research concludes that though the employees are at present at acceptable productivity levels, the work stress has started influencing their efficiency and effectiveness. The employees still operate within the deadlines and deliver quality work but stress decreases their focus and overall efficiency in their work.

Third, the research concludes that work-related stress can have negative repercussions on the productivity of the employees in the long run unless it is managed effectively. Constant exposure to stress might cause burnout, lack of motivation and low job performance.

Lastly, the research findings conclude that organizational interventions should involve an increase in staffing, a better supervisory support and the implementation of stress management programmes in reducing work stress and maintaining an employee output.

#### **5.4 Recommendations**

The recommendations about the study are based on findings and conclusions of the study as follows.

Hiring of new Employees.

Uganda Christian University management ought to seek to engage more staff in areas where the workload has been high. This can occur by increasing the staffing levels so as to alleviate the amount of work assigned to certain employees and allow easier distribution of the tasks. This would ease the burden on the employees and enhance their productivity at work.

Ensuring of Supervisory Support.

The university ought to reinforce line supervisory arrangements at departmental level. Employees should be guided, offered a feedback and reward system by supervisors regularly. The communication between the supervisors and employees would enhance the morale of employees and lower the level of stress.

Implementation of Stress Management Programs.

Human Resource Department ought to develop stress management programmes and counseling services to employees. Such programmes would assist employees to learn coping mechanisms of dealing with stresses at the work place and ensuring their emotional health.

Work-Life Balance Promotion.

The workload should be given reasonable allocation, and it should be properly scheduled by the management to ensure work-life balance. To avoid stress, employees should have enough time to take a rest and do personal duties.

## Employee Wellness Programs

The university ought to initiate programs that promote the well-being of employees like workshops, health awareness programs and sports. Such programs can enhance the mental health of the employees and make the workplace a better place.

### **5.5 Areas for Further Research**

The future study must focus on the connection between work stress and turnover among the employees of the private universities in Uganda. These studies would give a better insight into the effect of stress on employee retention.

It can also compare the level of stress between the academic staff and administrative staff in institutions of higher learning through further studies. This would assist in determining whether various groups of workers have diverse levels of stress.

Further studies can also focus on how the stress management interventions can be effective in enhancing the wellbeing and productivity of employees in universities.

### **5.6 Limitations of the Study**

This research had a number of limitations in the course of the study.

To start with, the research was based on self-reported studies obtained using questionnaires. The respondents might have given out socially desirable answers instead of presenting their experiences.

Second, the research was carried out in a short period of time and this limited the thoroughness of data collection and analysis.

Third, the researcher was also confined to Uganda Christian University and this might not be generalized to other universities.

Nevertheless, the study offers good information regarding the connection between work stress and productivity of the employees in the institutions of higher learning.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix I: Sample Questionnaire (Academic and Non-Academic Staff)

Topic: Work-Related Stress and Employee Productivity at Uganda Christian University (UCU)

Instructions:

This questionnaire is for academic and administrative staff of Uganda Christian University. The information provided will be used strictly for academic purposes and treated with confidentiality.

Kindly tick (✓) the option that best represents your opinion.

#### Section A: Demographic Information

1. Gender:

Male    Female    Prefer not to say

2. Age Group:

Below 30 years

31-40 years

41-50 years

Above 50 years

3. Staff Category:

Academic Staff

Administrative Staff

4. Department: \_\_\_\_\_

5. Job Title: \_\_\_\_\_

6. Length of service at UCU:

Below 2 years

2-5 years

6-10 years

Above 10 years

### Section B: Independent Variable — Work-Related Stress

Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements using the scale below:

1 = Strongly Disagree   2 = Disagree   3 = Neutral   4 = Agree   5 = Strongly Agree

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
I experience high levels of work-related stress at UCU.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
My workload is excessive compared to the available time.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am required to perform multiple roles beyond my job description.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Work deadlines at UCU place me under pressure.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I often feel mentally or emotionally exhausted after work.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I receive adequate support from my supervisors.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am able to balance my work responsibilities with my personal life.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
There are sufficient resources to help me perform my job effectively.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### Section C: Dependent Variable — Employee Productivity

Using the same scale:

1 = Strongly Disagree   2 = Disagree   3 = Neutral   4 = Agree   5 = Strongly Agree

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
I consistently meet my work targets and deadlines.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I am able to concentrate effectively while performing my duties.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<b>Statement</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
My level of productivity reduces when I am stressed.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I deliver high-quality work consistently.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I feel motivated to give my best effort at work.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Stress negatively affects my efficiency at work.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
I rarely miss work due to fatigue or stress-related illness.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>