**Occupational Stress and Employee Performance among Employees in Kawempe Division, Kampala District**

**Semuyaba Yunusu**
**19/U/0742**

**A research dissertation submitted to the School of Psychology in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of the Degree of Industrial and Organizational Psychology of Makerere University, Kampala**
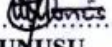
**November 2022**

# DECLARATION

I hereby declare that this dissertation is my very own and the content of this document has never been submitted to any institution.

It should however be noted that citations and references to other people's work or sources of information has been duly made.

Therefore any illegal publications and photocopying without authorization will lead to penalties or legal action.

SIGNATURE: ............................................    DATE: 09/11/2022

SEMUYABA YUNUSU

# APPROVAL

This work has been under my supervision since the researcher began his research from the Proposal to completion of the full research report and I approve that it is ready to be submitted to the School of Psychology, Makerere University

SIGNATURE: ................................

Date 09|u| 2022

DR. WANDERA ROBERTS OTYOLA

## DEDICATION

I dedicate this report to my beloved parents; Mr. Ssebuufu Ibrahim and Mrs. Nakanwagi Aminah for their tremendous efforts, work and selfless services towards my academic journey.

Their financial support, guidance, encouragement and devotion towards my endeavors have seen me through and thereby striving to greater heights.

May the Almighty bless them abundantly

# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

First and foremost, I acknowledge the mighty hand of God that has not only seen me through this research but also my entire course, academic journey and entire life.

I extend thanks to Makerere University, College of Humanities and Social Sciences and the Mighty School of Psychology for the opportunity rendered to me throughout my research in addition to the theoretical knowledge given in lecture rooms.

Special heartfelt appreciations go to my supervisor for his commitment, dedication, academic guidance and supervision throughout my proposal writing.

Lastly I thank my colleagues with whom we have carried out this research and my friends e.g. Clark Neithan, Ian L Joel, Remmy Ryan, Wasswa Jon and Mayanja Jonah who aided me to the successful accomplishment of this proposal. I feel greatly indebted

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

# LIST OF FIGURES

## ABSTRACT

The study set out to assess occupational stress and employee performance among employees in Kawempe division, Kampala district. It was guided by a total of three objectives which were; to find out the causes of occupational stress in Shalowil holdings ltd, to investigate the relationship between stress and performance and to establish the measures to curb stress. A sample of six respondents was used

The study was carried out using an interview guide and the results were analyzed using thematic analysis approach. The study concluded that there are a number of factors leading to occupational stress in Shalowil Holdings Ltd. Role overload was found out to be the major cause of occupational stress in Shalowil while absenteeism was the major impact of occupational stress in Shalowil and lastly involving employees in decision making was the most effective measure of reducing stress at Shalowil holdings limited. The results from the study show that the negative factors that stressed employees had a negative effect on their performance.

The researcher recommends management to make sure that work assigned to employees is split such that it suits personal strengths, and this can be done by clearly indicating and defining each worker's responsibilities while at the job so as occupational stress can be reduced

# CHAPTER ONE
# INTRODUCTION

**Background of the study**

In the world today, it is impossible to live without stress at work places. The nature of work has undergone drastic changes with stress appearing almost automatic. It is a worldwide phenomenon that occurs in various forms in every workplace, this is partially because employees are required to work for over long periods of time as their responsibilities keep rising.

According to (Konapske and Matteson, 2006) stress is scientifically described as the response of an individual to the outcomes of the external environmental conditions that place excessive psychological, behavioral and physiological pressures on that individual. It involves how an individual responds to external pressure.

World Health Organization (WHO) defines occupational stress as the response people may have when presented with work demands and pressures that are not matched to their knowledge and abilities and which challenge their ability to cope. On the other hand, Job performance can be reviewed as an activity in which an individual is able to accomplish successfully the task or goal assigned to him/ her subject to the normal constraints of the reasonable utilization of available resources. Many researchers aver that stress at work has an impact to the Job performance in one way or another. According to (Elovainio, Kivimaki and Vahtera, 2002) job stress makes organizational performance go down.

It's an established fact that many situations at work place are stressful though the range of stress differs to every person. However too much stress at times makes employees fail to cope to it and may fail to accomplish their tasks (Manshor, A. T., (2003), The theme of occupational stress and how it affects organizational commitment has attracted a lot of attention from various scholars and the stress experienced by different occupational types and job roles has been discussed in many papers with a number of different occupations described as experiencing stress for example teachers (traverse & cooper, 2003)

Stress is one of the burning issues that organizations have to deal with so that employees can comfortably produce quality work. Stress causes an imbalance in one's life because it leads to depression and thus damages health, attitude and work behavior. Causes of stress are called stressors which can be workplace conflict, role conflict, role ambiguity and work load.

Research has been reported on stress management and employees performance among employees in the United States (U.S) statistically it has been found that around 73% of the total population of united State experience psychological symptoms of stresses. It should be noted that around 30% people are facing negative impact of stress in their personal and professional life; it has been found that every 7 out of 10 American people experience physical or non-physical symptoms of stress.

In Europe according to EU-OSHAS latest pan European opinion poll 51% of workers find work related stress to be common in their work place and 4 in 10 workers think that is not handle well in their organization. In Asia, according to the inaugural Asia specific edition, stress is the number one life style risk factor ranking above physical activity. In India almost 1 in 3 Indians employers has constituted stress management program in 2013

From the 1960 to now, there has been a drastic change in employment, due to the shift from domestic centered work to commercial work. As a result of many people seeking profession work in organizations and industries even workplace stress has increased. The International Labor Organization (ILO) asserts that all countries, professions and all categories of workers, families and societies are affected by occupational stress. From the 2005-2014 survey, 40% of all American workers perceive their jobs as being extremely stressful (International Labor Organization Report, 2015).

Similar findings are noted in the United Kingdom and Canada is where occupational stress is estimated to be the largest occupational health problem (Donat, 2010). Similarly in Africa, occupational stress has become a major concern of employees. It has been demonstrated that as workload and work-associated stress increase, turnover rates of workers are also noted to increase. Thus, occupational stress results inconsiderable costs to organizations in terms of absenteeism, loss of productivity, and psychological tortures, (Peterson, 2002).

It is however important to ensure that existing work stressors across various work environments are either mitigated or eradicated for the purpose of improving employee well-being as well organizational performance.

**Problem statement**

Despite several efforts made to reduce occupational stress, Organizational commitment has persistently continued to decline hence affecting the organizational performance. Besides stress that could be caused by family or personal problems stress at work has become even a greater problem because of job restructure, globalization and more demand on the task at hand. This might lead to higher job insecurity which would make employees feel stressed and depressed.

Therefore the increase in stress among employees motivated me to become interested and curious regarding the importance of the subject. If the problem is not well addressed, it may lead to a spontaneous decline in performance

**Purpose of the study**

The purpose of the study was to investigate the relationship between occupational stress and Employee performance.

**Objectives of the study**

   i.   To find out the causes of occupational stress
   ii.  To investigate the relationship between stress on employee performance
   iii. To establish the measures to reduce stress

**Research Questions**

   i.   What are the causes of occupational stress?
   ii.  What are the effects of occupational stress on job performance?
   iii. What are the measures of reducing stress in Shalowil Holdings Limited?

**Scope of the study**

Geographical Scope: The area of study was Kawempe division, Kampala district

Contextual scope: The study focused on the occupational stress and Employee performance

Time scope: The research was done in September 2022

**Significance of the study**

With the study on the correlation between occupational stress and Job performance of employees, the researcher hopes the study will form a basis material to the following beneficiaries;

Managers are expected to benefit through recommendations of the study that will address challenges among employees for example stress. It will also help Human Resource

practitioners understand the concept of occupational stress and how it affects organizational performance.

The workers will be able to benefit from improved work conditions when the organization adopts suggested solutions by the study.

The Academicians will also use the findings of the study to embark on a related study. In other words the study findings will provoke more thought and further research.

The researcher will also acquire necessary skills of data collection, interpretation, analysis and discussion. This will as well help in carrying out similar research in future
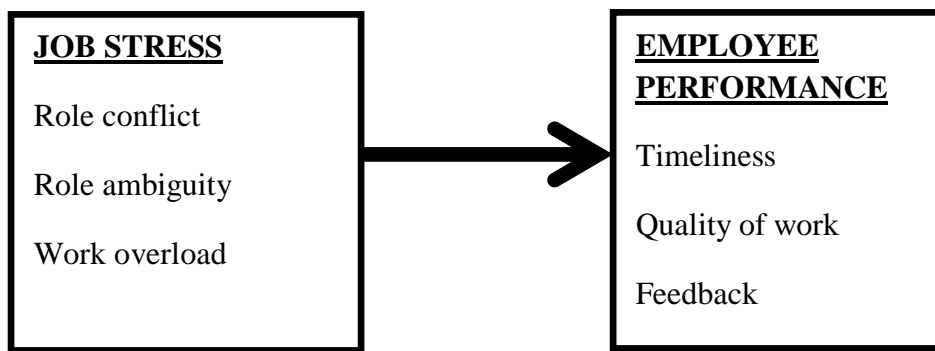
**Conceptual framework**

| **JOB STRESS** | **EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE** |
|---|---|
| Role conflict | Timeliness |
| Role ambiguity | Quality of work |
| Work overload | Feedback |

**Figure 1: Conceptual framework showing the relationship between occupational stress and job performance**

The independent variable of this study is job stress and will be measured using role conflict, role ambiguity and work overload while the dependent variable which is employee performance will be measured using Timeliness, quality of work and feedback.

The relationship between job stress and employee performance is that role conflict which is defined as incompatible role expectation affects employee performance in terms of quality of work. This is because if the employee's original role was bookkeeping, then he/she is transferred to security department, the quality of this work will be very poor. On the other hand, role ambiguity which is defined as unclear plans and goals, a lack of clarity of one's duties, and uncertainty about the amount of authority granted to perform tasks can also affect the quality of one's work. Thirdly, work overload which is defined as giving someone to work beyond the working hours or beyond their capability, can affect the quality of the employee's work and can create fear in the employee hence he/she will start to absent herself/himself and might as well start to come late for work because of lack of moral.

# CHAPTER TWO
# LITERATURE REVIEW

**Introduction**

This chapter of study will provide an in depth insight into the nature of workplace stress and its effects on job performance. Findings and opinions from different researchers are to be utilized to provide a better theoretical understanding of the topic

**Theoretical review**

Several studies conducted have shown that occupational stress negatively affects performance considering the various factors involved especially employee satisfaction. This has been confirmed by recent studies (Ahmed and Ramzan 2013), these show that there exists a negative correlation between job stress and employee performance. A similar study was conducted which reveals that factors such as workload, role conflict and inadequate monetary reward are prime sources of stress that eventually decrease performance.

The National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH) for example, designed a model that shows job stress and health relationships. In this model, the listed causes of stress are: physical environment, role conflict, role ambiguity, interpersonal conflict, job future ambiguity, job control, employment opportunities, quantitative work load, and variance in work load, responsibility for people, underutilization of abilities, cognitive demands and shift work. Key findings show that there is a direct link between performance and customer satisfaction. A satisfied employee is an engaged employee. Engagement occurs where there is supportive positive interaction between employees and managers including goal setting which leads to good performance (Cole, 2002). Christo and Pienaar (2006) argued that the causes of occupational stress include perceived loss of job, and security, sitting for long periods of time or heavy lifting, lack of safety, complexity of repetitiveness and lack of autonomy in the job. In addition, occupational stress is caused by lack of resources and equipment; work schedules (such as working late shifts or overtime) and organizational climate are considered as contributors to employees stress. Occupational stress often shows high dissatisfaction among the employees, job mobility, burnout, poor work performance and less effective interpersonal relations at work. Selye (1987) classified stress as eustress and distress, eustress being good stress and bad stress as distress. (Source: Randolfi, E. A. (1997), Developing a Stress Management and Relaxation Centre for the Worksite, Ones business success)

**Causes of stress**

Kirkcaldy, Trimpoo and Williams (2002) argued that the causes of stress include inadequate guidance and support from superiors, lack of Journal of Management Research consultation and communication, lack of encouragement from superiors, feelings of isolation, discrimination and favoritism and inadequate or poor quality training/management development. In addition other factors which are contributing to stress are keeping up with new technologies, ideas, technology or innovations in organizations, attending meetings, lack of social support by people at work and simply being visible or available. All these stressors are related to factor management. Other causes of stress include role ambiguity, conflicting performance expectation, political climate of the organizations and poor relationship with co-workers (Manshor, et al., 2003).

Stress is also caused by environment demand factors and these include job content such as work load; employment conditions, such as flexible employment contracts; working conditions such as physically demanding work, and social relations at work such as mobbing expenses (Otto and Schmidt, 2007). Factors like individual and family factors, socio-economic and financial status, mental and physical health factors contribute greatly to occupational stress (Manshor et al., 2003).

Harvey and Brown (2006) argue that the major stressors in the workplace include changes in technology, downsizing, sudden reorganization and unexpected changes in the work schedules, competition for promotional opportunities, lack of participation in the decision making, and lack of employee empowerment. Others are conflicts with other employees at the work place, inadequate time to accomplish tasks, and violence in the workplace. The issue of acts of violence in the work place committed by both employees and customers contributes a lot to the employees. Stress level. Occupational stress can have grave consequences as the American Institute of Stress (AIS) indicates.

Tehrani (2002) argued that stress is caused by unsympathetic organizational culture, poor communication between managers and employees, lack of involvement in decision making, bullying and harassment, continual or sudden change, insufficient resources, conflicting priorities, and lack of challenges. Communication channels in the organization should be open to employees and employee should be allowed to participate in the decision-making

process of the organization. Lack of involvement of employees by the management will make employees feel stressed.

Bland (1999) reports that stressors that seemed to be popular with employees in the workplace include too much work, inadequate time to do the work, stressful environment, relationship problems with partners, boss or colleague and financial insecurities. Conflicts between home and work, and the impact on personal relationships are also contributing factors to stress (Fair brother and Warn, 2003).

**Occupational Stress and Job performance**

Stress whether work or non-work related can have profound effect on the organization. When it reaches a level where the individual struggles to cope, both mental and physical changes might occur. Some of the outcomes of stress on the organization include employee turnover, absenteeism, reduced performance and lack of productivity and efficiency. Views expressed by some employees reveal that the duration of absences resulting from stress outnumber those that result from other causes. They further reveal that when they are faced with unbearable work stress, they often absent from work and return weeks later. The negative impact of this on the organization is far reaching.

According to (Yahaya, 2011) stress is a dynamic condition in which an individual is confronted with opportunity constraint or demand related to what he desires and for which the outcome is perceived to be both uncertain and important. From this definition one can say that stress is not necessarily bad, it also has a positive value when it offers potential gain. These factors may result from the nature of job, work load, time pressure or exposure to toxic features of the physical environment.

Performance has been defined by (Fawzi, 2004), as a multi- dimensional construct, the measurement of which varies depending on variety of factors. He also states that it is important to determine whether the measurement objective is to assess performance outcomes or behaviors. It can be regarded as simply the record of outcomes achieved on individual basis; it is a record of the person's accomplishments. Murphy (2007) argues that performance is something that the person leaves behind and that exists apart from the purpose. Examples that indicate low performance include; uncharacteristic errors, loss of control over work, loss of motivation or commitment, lapses in memory, making poor

decisions, and increased time at work among others. Claude and Cole (1992) suggested that in order to manage work stress effectively, management should consider doing the following: Provide work which allows some personal choice in the way it is carried out and the sequence in which it is carried out. Organizations should encourage employee participation in decisions which affect them. Furthermore, clear goals and targets should be set and adequate feedback provided on performance. New recruits require thorough induction and training should be provided as an on-going updating process. Employers can also provide consistent rewards for effective output and review performance gaps at the time of occurrence.

According to (Baldwin, 2004), when organizations successfully introduce a range of stress management programs, there is likelihood that they will experience a more dramatic change in employee performance. He further argued that open communication, favorable working condition, adequate resources and workers at the work place, good management system, creation of a good relationship between employees and employers and introduction of employees' supportive programs such as counseling and employee assistance programs (EAPs) highly contributes to stress management of nurses at the workplace which in return promotes their performance.

Many researchers argue that stress at workplace has an impact on performance in one way or the other. Dean (2002) view work related stress as a leading cause for low productivity in the workplace. DCS Gaumail, (2003) believes stress affects the organizational outcomes such as decrease in performance, Increase in absenteeism and dissatisfaction. In the same breadth, Desseller (2000) concurred that the consequences of organizational stress are far-reaching leading to reduction in the quality and quantity of Job performance.

**Combatting occupational stress**

Bridges (2012) recent preliminary study reported in hypertension focused on an Italian company facing downsizing, the company's workers who reported work-related stress had a higher incidence of fatigue, headaches, high blood pressure and other typical symptoms. The company later gave employees a weekly, one-hour stress management session focusing on mental relaxation techniques, cognitive restructuring exercises and coping skills to handle stress including work-related stress. The results showed that those who participated in the authentic stress management program had lower blood pressure than those who participated in the "passive" (not real) stress management program.

Brown (2013) indicated that reducing environmental stress may include refiguring the workplace to include natural lighting, improving air flow, providing quiet rooms for massage or yoga sessions and reducing noise levels. When noise levels are reduced through the use of well-designed ceilings and furniture or sound masking machines, employee focus is estimated to increase by 48 percent. Anton (2012) found out that work schedules that are compatible with demands and responsibilities outside the job and offering supportive services can help reduce stress. He added that flexing time allows workers to start or end the workday earlier or later can reduce work/life stress, especially for working parents. Flex time can also reduce the stress of commuting in rush hour traffic. Job sharing allows at least two people trained to perform each job, enabling each employee to have time off without losing productivity.

Allen (2010) indicated that working from home results in higher morale and job satisfaction and lower employee stress and turnover, according to an analysis of two-decades of studies involving nearly 13 thousand employees, conducted by researchers at Pennsylvania State University, the prime reason is that working at home provides employees more control over how they do their work, working at home also helps workers better manage work/family demands.

Golan (2011) suggests that companies evaluate the scope of stress in the workplace by looking at absenteeism, illness and turnover rates and performance problems. From there, employee surveys and/or committees can help determine specific stressors and if they are concentrated in one

# CHAPTER THREE
# METHODOLOGY

## Introduction

This chapter outlines the methods adopted in order to answer the research questions detailed in chapter one. It looks at the research design, research population, sampling techniques, data collection instruments and procedure of data collection, mode of analysis and presentation as well as ethical considerations and limitations of the study.

## Research Design

The researcher used descriptive cross sectional survey design. Cross sectional design was used because the study involves collecting opinions from different respondents at once. The study was a survey because it involved large number of respondents. The study was descriptive because it allowed the researcher to discover patterns in employees thinking and describe issues from their own point of view.

The Qualitative approaches of data collection were used. Quantitative approach was used to describe occurrences and discussions in relation to interview results and literature of different authors to arrive at the conclusion about the theme of discussion. In additional, qualitative was used to supplement the findings from the research results. Correlation design was used to establish the relationship between variables

## Population of the study

The study was carried out at Shalowil Holdings Limited in Kawempe division Kampala district and the population included six (6) respondents which were members of staff and management

## Area of the study

The researcher conducted the research in Kawempe division, Kampala district

## Sample size

In view of the nature of the study population of employees at Shalowil holdings limited, a sample of 06 respondents was taken and the Slovene's formula was used to determine and calculate the minimum sample size as follow;

$n = N/1 + N(e)^2$

Where; n= the unknown people

N= the known people

1= constant

e= the significance level in social science (0.05)

**Sampling technique**

Simple random sampling technique was used to select the respondents to be included in the sample. The population was divided into separate homogeneous sets that share similar characteristics as to ensure equitable representation of the population in the sample. Still the study employed purposive sampling technique which is defined as selecting units based on a specific purpose associated with answering a research study question; this was preferred by the researcher because it helps in actively selecting the most productive sample to answer the research questions.

**Research Instruments**

The study used guided interviews; this is because of the nature of data that was to be collected, time available as well as objectives stated.

The researcher was concerned with views, opinions, perceptions and feelings from the environment. Such information was collected through interviews because the study was conversed with variables that cannot be directly observed, the sample size was also quite large and given the time constraints questionnaires were ideal for collecting data

**Tools for data collection**

Interviews:

The researcher used the interview method to gather more data from the various respondents since it was supported by the open ended questions and also administered by the use of interview guide.

**Data collection**

The researcher sought assistance from the supervisor and the school of psychology administration to obtain an introductory letter that was presented to organizations to help assist the researcher to obtain interviews from the respondents. The researcher then introduced himself to the respondents as he clearly explains the importance of the study given

**Ethical issues and considerations**

Before the actual data collection, permission was sought and obtained from the respective respondents and the community in the area of study. The purpose of the study was first clearly be explained

The researcher ensured a free will and consent from participants before data was collected. The names or identifications of respondents were anonymous and information collected from them was treated with utmost confidentiality

# CHAPTER FOUR
# PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

**Introduction**

This chapter deals with data presentation, interpretation and analysis. It analyses data collected from the field based on the research questions set in chapter one. This is done objective by objective

**The causes of occupational stress**

The respondents were interviewed and asked questions on objective one and responses are hereby presented below;

Excessive workload

Most of the employees interviewed reported experiencing stress related to having too much to do in too little time and that their regular work hours were insufficient to adequately perform job tasks .The Perception of excessive workload forced some employees to schedule some work assignments later in the evenings and weekends.

*"You cannot finish all assignments during day, so at times am forced to leave office late and do work related assignments on weekends which intrudes on our personal relationships and responsibilities"*

*"The work here is a lot."*

*"My workload is always heavy; there are too many things to do"*

Limited resources

One of the prominent sources of stress that emerged from the sample was lack of resources. First the employees highlighted that lack of access to basic supplies and equipment like pens, notebooks and calculators was a significant source of stress .Second, lack of access to basic supplies created frustration among employees as one felt forced to spend their own money.

*"At times you find when office lacks pens; you walk into the lavatory and find no tissue paper. It may seem like such a small thing but when you're in urgent need, it becomes huge…. Spending several personal amounts of money"*

Role overload.

Some employees described feeling burdened by fulfilling multiple roles at the workplace. Role overload created personal stress because those responsibilities were perceived as unreasonable for example entering data due to lack of a data entrant.

*".. For example I work as a field officer, data entrant, messenger…..I mean we are everything. It's really too much"*

Work-family conflict/Work-Home interference

The researcher identified quite a good number of data relating to this category. Work-family conflict and work spilling over to family as a result of work overload.

Work-family conflict occurs when work demands interfere with family time and vice versa as well as incompatibility between work and family roles.

*"Of course that's the implication; the work invades my personal life"*

*"I take my work home most of the times; it is difficult to account for the number of hours I work because often times I work even during off work periods"*

Difficult customers

Several respondents identified that some clients are difficult and hard to deal with which causes intense stress on the side of the employees.

Some of the customers are arrogant, some fail to meet the agreed deadlines and others tend to be bad debtors which is stressful

*"At times you make an appointment with a client, reach the agreed venue, wait for more than an hour and then sometimes they done show up"* one of the respondents noted

*"You may politely approach a client, calmly present yourself but usually the response turns out to be arrogant which is indeed stressful"*

Deadlines

Whereas it appears normal and small an issue, several respondents experienced stress (occasionally) resulting from deadlines set by supervisors or management.

Respondent X noted that whenever he's working on set and fixed deadline, he finds himself stressed, working under excessive pressure and often creates unnecessary panic and unease. Respondent Y however deferred when he stated that she was fine with working on deadlines as it acts as a motivator for her but claimed that an issue arises when deadlines meet, this calls her to accomplish different work tasks with in the same period simultaneously.

*"You may find yourself hitting several deadlines at the same time, you have to present a weekly report, present detailed clients' information. This calls fir divided attention in order to accomplish all assignments within the set deadlines/timelines. That's where stress comes from"*

Sudden changes at work [continual changes]

Respondents reported that changes especially made or that occur suddenly at the workplace greatly affect their mental health and causes stress to them

They pointed out factors like changes in technology; this creates stress as a result of the need to cope up with the advancement in technological skills some of which may not be equipped with

*"...for example they day they started implementing online data entry, it was hectic for me for I had limited computer knowledge since we were used to manual entry in books"*

Another change pointed out was sudden reorganization and unexpected changes in the work schedules. Here management could present policies that needed immediate implementation by employees without prior knowledge there by causing panic and stress

**The impact of occupational stress**

The respondents were asked questions about objective 2 and the responses hereby noted as follows;

Absenteeism

Several employees revealed that when faced with unbearable work stress they often absent themselves from work and return weeks later. As though this may seem minor especially on the workers' side, the negative impact of this on the organization is far reaching.

Employee C stated that the duration of absences resulting from stress outcomes out numbers those that result from the other causes.

*"The major signal of occupational stress here is the constant absenteeism by some employees"* the supervisor noted

*"Usually when faced with stress at work, the first thought is to take a break off the workstation and then return when I feel better"*

Work life imbalance

Basing on findings, stress caused an imbalance in workers' lives as it leads to depression and this damages health, attitude and work behavior.

The branch supervisor further noted that it is critical to avoid and prevent stress from interfering directly with workers' health as this can significantly affect quality of work in the organization.

*"It's really impossible for a worker to produce highly quality work when his or her health or attitude is negative, that's why as the organization we often study and monitor their behavior and attitudes"*

*"Once a worker is depressed or I'll and is faced with an imbalance in life that's the starting point for poor performance, that's why as the Human Resource we take keen interest in this"*

Increased employee turnover

*"In a period of one year, we have permanently lost a total of three field officers who pointed out stress factors like difficult clients as the supreme cause of their leave"* The branch supervisor noted

Several field employees also revealed an intention to quit the organization in case some of the stressors ate not mitigated by the end of the year. However the Human Resource acknowledged the rampant workers' leave but noted that they are working hard to tackle the stressors within the organization and also equip workers with tactics on how to deal with personal and outside work stress so that they retain workers

**Measures to curb occupational stress**

The respondents were interviewed about objective 3 and the responses are stated below;

Autonomy

The human resource manager revealed that in a bid to reduce the level of occupational stress amongst their employees they often provide work tasks which allow some personal choice in the way they are carried out and sequence in which they are executed.

*"At times we offer our employees multiple tasks from which they can choose which ones to do and those they don't"*

*"....then other times a worker is free to do tasks sin their own favorite order like choosing what to do first, what follows and what comes last"*

This enables workers to have freedom at work, feel free and in control which further reduces stress and thus increased productivity

Job security

The supervisor of Kaleerwe branch reported that their employees are trained and equipped with multiple skills so that they are able to handle a diversity of roles. As a result a specific role can be handled it shared by two or more workers thereby allowing job sharing at the workplaces which enables each employee to have time off without losing productivity

*"....this is done in such a way that an employee can get time off work without losing productivity as there's always a replacement of a person who can do the same job"*

Working from home

The researcher noted that working from home results in high morale, job satisfaction and lowers employee stress. According to the Human Resource Officer, remote working provides employees with more control over how they do their work this further helps the workers better manage work//family conflicts

Eliminating interruptions

It has been noted that workers are encouraged to limit interruptions that in most cases causes a mix of personal stress into work.

This is mostly through the use of personal telephones through which friends or family or relatives can send or convey de motivating messaged to workers, some of which may be emotional there by causing stress. Respondent Y revealed that at times when chatting with family members or close friends, they end up receiving saddening or unfortunate information usually from home as they are still in the course of work. This is the main distress as it reduces morale for continuing with work effectively. Therefore management suggested that workers should keep off personal chats while at work

Employee involvement

Management revealed a move to directly involve employees in participation and making of decisions that affect them. HRM identified that the employees were recently stressed due to several decisions to and instructions issued by the tip management which made the workers feel less control over their work.

Respondent X stated that they hold several meetings with the top management on Tuesdays and Saturdays through which views are exchanged, employee listened to, present the way they would love to be administered and consensus finally reached.

This limits occupational stress as workers feel in control and psychologically involved in the decision making which makes implantation of policies easy this reducing stress

# CHAPTER FIVE
## DISCUSSION, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

**Introduction**

This study focuses on discussion of research findings presented in chapter 4, conclusion, recommendations basing on conclusion of this study, limitations and suggested areas of further research following the study objectives

**Discussion of findings**

The study aimed at establishing the relationship between occupational stress and performance among employees in Kawempe division, Kampala district.

Three specific objectives guided this study and these were;

- To find out the causes of occupational stress
- To investigate the effects of occupational stress on performance
- To establish the measures to curb occupational stress

**The causes of occupational stress**

The findings of this study reflect on various factors related to work stress as perceived by employees working in Shalowil Holdings Ltd in Kawempe division. The findings suggest that major work stressors as perceived by respondents of my sample are related to project management issues, deadlines of assigned tasks, scheduling of various activities and work allocation to team members, too many responsibilities on employee shoulders, expectations of bosses, top management, colleagues, subordinates and lack of expected support.

Majority of the participants rated working hours and work load as major stressors as they are required to work for longer hours with much workload. This causes a lot of stress to them as they begin work at 8:00am and the doors are shut at 6:30pm and an extra 30 minutes is spent to round up the paper work or make the report of the day. This working routine is followed for six days of the week. It is important to note that, this working hour extends right up to 7pm especially on days when customer are many

Majority of the participants indicated that their current work responsibilities were beyond the available resources provided to execute their tasks. These findings also corroborate the findings by Akinmayowa and Kadiri, (2014). In their study of academic employees in a selected Federal owned university in Nigeria as well as the findings of a study conducted by

Akinyele et al., (2014) within a Private owned university in Nigeria. A study also conducted by (Pignata and Winefield, 2015) in an Australian university also found workload to be a major source of stress amongst academic employees. Hence, work overload is a major source of stress amongst employees within Shalowil employees

**The effects of occupational stress**

Regarding impact of work stress, respondents identified work-family interference and poor social relations as major concerns for them. Their responses suggest that they are managing their professional life somehow satisfactorily but they couldn't be able to spend enough time with their family members, pay enough attention to family matters and get very less time for maintaining social relations which leads to them towards loneliness.

The researcher asked questions to assess the response of the participants regarding the impact of stress on their performance. From the sample, all of the 6 participants have their performance negatively affected by stress. According to them, they have lots of difficulty performing well under stressful conditions. When employees are stressed, they tend to make a lot of mistakes and the overall productivity is slowed down. However, they struggle their way to put in the best they can.

**The measures to curb occupational stress**

Regarding employees' expectations about their organization's role in stress management interventions, majority of my respondents agreed that organizations can definitely play a major role in managing work stress of employees at individual, team and organizational levels by adopting various organizational processes and mechanisms. Some of these processes/mechanisms are well-organized workplace, proper allocation of work among employees, sports/recreational facilities at workplace, stress management training, open communication between management & employees, employee involvement in management decisions, employee-friendly policy, family work culture, management's support to employees, team-building activities and stress-free, supportive /positive work environment.

When asked about the move to institute a stress management program, most(4) respondents welcomed such initiative as it will go a long way to boast their productivity as well as that of the institution. They narrate that Management has not instituted an effective stress management scheme, so it will be a plausible move for one to be created and fully implemented. While one of them was lukewarm as to the effect a stress management scheme will help or have in their performance. According to him they can still perform within

stressful conditions. One respondent stated they are used to it already and so the scheme will have little or no meaningful impact on their job performance.

Sutherland and Cooper (1996) suggested stress management interventions focused on Organizational structure and climate, management communication, work-family interference and individuals' personal development through counseling, relaxation training and cognitive appraisal training could be very effective for employees.

Cartwright and Cooper (2005) argued that primary level interventions focus on job redesign, structural changes in the organization, communication and organizational processes and policies; whereas secondary and tertiary level interventions are oriented towards the individual. As secondary level interventions, stress management programs target at personal resources of individuals for better coping with stress. Tertiary level interventions (i.e. counseling, employee assistance programs) are concerned with treatment and rehabilitation of individuals affected by acute and chronic health problems because of work stress.

The findings suggest that managers of employees should focus more on primary interventions through work processes redesign, work systems improvements, management communication between employer and employees, improving organizational culture and strengthening teambuilding processes. The organizations should also conduct stress management training workshops for their employees, provide healthcare facilities and focus on employee well-being as secondary intervention strategies for effective workplace stress management.

## Limitations

As no research is free from limitations, in my study too i faced several limitations and hurdles to collect appropriate sample for my research. To get participants for the study, I approached several companies and organizations in Kawempe division and sought support from their HR Departments. I could therefore get respondents from only those companies which allowed their employees to be accessed.

As HR departments of participant companies didn't allow any Audio/video recording within their company offices/work sites, I had to record responses of participant employees on structured interview sheets. The qualitative data for this study are extracted from those recorded responses. There could be chances of human errors in recording verbatim responses of participants during personal interviews (e.g. interviewer may miss some crucial response to note down while the respondent was narrating his stories/experiences).

## Conclusions

Employees are the most valuable resource of every institution. Without competent employees, no institution can succeed to outrun its competitors. The success of the institution depends on the Employees. The aim of this research was to study the effect of work stress on employees' performance in employees of Kawempe division. It is clear from the vast number of factors identified, reported and through the literature review, that the goal of this study was achieved. The results from the study show that the negative factors that stressed employees had a negative effect on their performance. So, for an organization to be more successful, it is necessary for the employees to be stress-free for them to perform well.

Work stress has always been an important concern for both employers and employees in any industry or organization. Increasing awareness about serious impact of high work stress on employees' personal, professional, social and family life has also alerted employers to think seriously on improving their work systems and work culture for keeping work stress within manageable limits

The findings of this study may provide many insights to HRD managers in designing workplace stress management interventions for creating a positive, proactive work culture which induce positive stress for better performance and achieving excellence. Although this study is based on limited sample of Shalowil Holdings Ltd, These findings may also be considered in designing stress management interventions for other Occupational groups or industries.

## Recommendations

Basing on the research objectives of the study the researcher made the following recommendations;

Shalowil Holdings Ltd should make interventions like identifying or determining the signs of stress, identifying the possible causes for the signs and developing possible proposed Solutions for each signs. These measures allow individuals to build coping skills and develop strategies to develop individualized stress management plans that include eliminating the sources of stress

The researcher recommends Shalowil Holdings Ltd Management to make sure that work given to employees should be split such that it suits their personal strengths, and this can be done by indicating each worker's responsibilities while at the job

The researcher further recommends Shalowil Holdings Ltd not to subject the workers to pressure to do numerous work tasks in a short period of time, but rather to accord them just enough time to execute their duties

**Areas of Further Study**

The researcher recommends that further study should be emphasized on the following topics;

Advantages and disadvantages of occupational stress in an organization

What types of occupational stress that employee's face in an organization?

The influence of occupational stress on organizations and its effects on organizational development.

# REFERENCES

Ahmed A. & Ramzan, M. 2013. *Effects of Job Stress on Employees Job Performance: A Study on Banking Sector of Pakistan,* IOSR Journal of Business and Management, Vol. 11, Issue 6 pp 61-68.

Ali, Y. Rizwan A. (2014). *Impact of Stress on Job Performance: An Empirical study of the Employees Of Private Sector Universities of Karachi, Pakistan.* Research Journal of Management Sciences. Vol. 3(7) pp. 14-17

Andrea Russo, R. M. (2008). *Harassment in Workplace among School Teachers: Development of Survey.* Croatian Medical Journal, 545 -550.

Baldwin, N. G. (2004). *Social work, critical reflection and the learning organization*. Rout ledge.

Campbell, J. C., Messing, J. T., Kub, J., Agnew, J., Fitzgerald, S., Fowler, B., Sheridan, D., Lindauer, C., Deaton, J., & Bolyard, R. (2011). *Workplace Violence: Prevalence and Risk Factors in the Safe at Work Study.* Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine, 53(1), 82–89.

Clarke, S., & Cooper, C. (2003). *Managing the Risk of Workplace Stress: Health and Safety Hazards* (1st ed.). Routledge.

Claudio Longobardi, L. B.-R. (2019). *Prevalence of student violence against teachers*: A meta-analysis. Psychology of violence, 596.

Connor Swanson, Amy Armstrong-Heimsoth, Sara Stephenson. (2021) *Stress and Coping Strategies among Arizona School-Based Therapists Impacted by COVID-19.* Journal of Occupational Therapy, Schools, & Early Intervention 0:0

Fawzi, A. R. (2004). *Job Stress, Job Performance and social support among Hospital Nurses.* Journal of Nursing Scholarship, 73-78.

Judge, T. A., Thoresen, C. J., Bono, J. E., & Patton, G. K. (2001). *The job satisfaction–job performance relationship:* A qualitative and quantitative review. Psychological Bulletin, 127(3), 376–407.

Kareem, N. (2012). *Effects of Job Stress on Job Performance & Job Satisfaction.* Interdisplinary Journal of Contemporary Research in Business.

Kia Gluschkoff, M. E. (2017). *Organizational Justice protects against the negative effect of workplace violence on teachers' sleep:* A longitudinal Cohort Study. Occupational and environmental medicine journal, 511-516.

Kyellu, K. (2016). *An assessment of workplace bullying practice and its effect to teachers' performance in Tanzania*. A case study of selected secondary school at Temeke Municipality.

LeBlanc, M. M., & Kelloway, E. K. (2002). *Predictors and outcomes of workplace violence and aggression*. Journal of Applied Psychology, 87(3), 444–453.

Levin, L. T. (1998). *Community Structure and Comparison to a Pacific mudflat and a Spartina alterniflora* (Atlantic smooth Cordgrass) marsh. Estuaries.

Lin, W.-Q. (2015). *Workplace Violence and Job Performance among community Health Care Workers in China*: The mediator Role of Quality Life. International Journal of Environmental Research and Public health, 14872-14886.

Lupine, J. P. (2005). A meta-analytic text of the challenge stressor-hindrance stressor framework: An explanation for inconsistent relationships among stressors and performance. Academy of Management Journal, 764-775.

Marc Milot, Eva Borkenhagen. (2018) *Job stress in users of an Employee Assistance Program and association with presenting status.* Journal of Workplace Behavioral Health 33:3-4, pages 153-167.

McDaniel, M. A., Schmidt, F. L., & Hunter, J. E. (1988). *Job experience correlates of job performance*. Journal of Applied Psychology, 73(2), 327–330.

Namie Gary, N. R. (2009). *U.S workplace bullying: Some basic considerations and consultation interventions*. Consulting Psychology journal Practice and Research, 202-219.

Neumann,J.H.,&Baron. A.(1998). *Workplace Violence and Workplace Aggression: Evidence Concerning Specific Forms, Potential Causes, and Preferred Targets*. Journal of Management, 24(3), 391–419.

Otto, K. and Schmidt, S. (2007), *Dealing with Stress in the Work Place,* Journal of European Psychologists, 12(4): 272-282.

R, F. (1996). *Violence in the workplace*,1975-1995: A review of the Literature. Aggression & Violent Behavior. 57-68.

Randolfi, E. A. (1997), *Developing a Stress Management and Relaxation Centre for the Worksite*, Journal of Worksite Health, 4(3): 40-44

Ssali, F. (2006, September). *Employee Relations as correlates of job performance study of secondary teachers in Kawempe Division.*

Wallace, J. E. 2003. *Research on Job Stress, Depression and Work to Family Conflict*. Department of Sociology, University of Calgary, Canada.

Warraich, A. Raheem A, Nawaz A & Imamuddin, 2014. *Research on Impact of Stress on Job Performance.* An Empirical study of the Employees of Private Companies, Karachi: Research of Management Sciences.

Wright, T. A., & Compazine, R. (2000). *Psychological well-being and job satisfaction as predictors of job performance.* Journal of Occupational Health Psychology, 5(1), 84–94.

Yahaya, A. (2011). *Stress level and its influencing factors among employees in a plastic manufacturing and the implication towards work performance.* 5932-5941.

## APPENDICES

**Appendix 1: Interview Guide**

**CAUSES OF STRESS IN THE ORGANIZATION**

1. What do you understand by the term "occupational stress"?
2. Describe the nature of work you do?
3. Have you experienced occupational stress yourself? Or seen another person experiencing stress.
4. What do you think it was that made you stressed?
5. What are the causes of occupational stress in your organization?
6. Which of the causes mentioned above is the major cause of stress in your organization?
7. What aspects of your job do you consider to be the most stressful?
8. Are your role expectations compatible?
9. Are your work goals, plans and duties clear?
10. Have you worked beyond your capability?

**EFFECTS OF OCCUPATIONAL STRESS**

1. Has occupational stress affected your organization?
2. What are the major effects of stress in your organization?
3. What is the most common effect of occupational stress at your workplace?
4. How can you mitigate the continuous effect of stress towards performance?
5. Can you describe a time when your stress resulted in making errors at work?
6. Has occupational stress affected your performance at work?
7. Has occupational stress resulted into poor quality at work?
8. How has role conflict affected your performance at work?
9. How have unclear plans and goals affected employee performance at shalowil holdings limited?
10. How has work overload affected your performance at work?

**MEASURES OF REDUCING STRESS**

1. Are there any measures taken to reduce stress in your organization?
2. What are the measures taken to reduce stress in your organization?
3. What is the commonest measure employed to reduce stress in your organization?

4. How do you avoid getting into stressful situations?

5. Why do you think some people can deal with stress and others can't so well?

6. How best do you handle personal stress?

7. Does making changes in your workplace combat occupational stress?

8. Have you had an occupational stress workshop?

9. Who do you think is responsible for dealing with occupational stress?

10. Suggest ways how occupational stress can be controlled