

Occupational Stress, Causes and Management among University Senior Administrative Staff – Implications for Counselling

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Abstract

This research explored the causes and management of occupational stress among university senior administrative staff in Ghana. A sample of 154 senior administrative staff, conveniently sampled from a public university in Ghana were involved in a descriptive survey. The stress levels of the respondents were assessed with the Perceived Stress Scale, while symptoms of stress were assessed with the stress symptoms checklist. The data was analysed using frequencies, percentages, means and standard deviations. Result showed that most senior administrative staff were moderately stressed, with the perceived source of stress being mainly, financial. Only a few attributed the source of stress to academic or moral demands. Various symptoms of stress were also reported, including fatigue, anger and hostility, restless or sleepless, boredom and depression, difficulty falling asleep, anxiety, fears or frightfulness, easily angered, and tensed muscles. Based on the findings, we recommend that The Directorate of Humana Resource in the public universities should organize seminars on financial and stress management strategies for their senior administrative staff. University management should also collaborate with the counselling centres in the universities to design behavioural adjustment interventions for senior administrative staff, at least, once a semester to help members with financial and life style adjustments.

Keywords: Financial stress, Stress management strategies, Senior administrative staff, Public universities, Symptoms of stress

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1. Background/ Introduction

Stress, a natural phenomenon that usually follows the most mundane of tasks can be a silently affect an individual's health (Coleman 2006; Melgosa 2006; Willis 2007). This type of stressor lingers on and breaks down the individual's ability to function to the best of their ability. Adversely, this affects the wholesome approach to complete one's work (Hahn et al. 2005; Gelabert 2008). Stress is said to be generally high among university workers (Winfield 2000). Studies conducted in some universities testify to this assertion that university staff become emotionally, physically, and psychologically drained due to their work environment (Obese 2010; Ofosuhene 2018; Siakwa 2013).

The predisposition of such stressors negatively impacts the individual and the productivity of the institution (Melgosa 2006; Roberts 2010; Willis 2007). The work of the Senior administrative Staff includes providing a wide range of technical, administrative, public health and accounting responsibilities. Duties of the senior administrative staff over the years have increased, in meeting the ever-progressive academic standards (Adjei 2009). It is evident that the task of the senior administrative staff increases depending on the academic calendar. Due to such unforeseen workloads, writers like Arnold et al. (2005) and Willis (2007) suggest that workers must safeguard their mental and physical fitness to permit them carry out their duties in good health. This is a clear indication that when the senior administrative staff get stressed, some institutional duties entrusted them might suffer maladministration due to ill health.

Several studies have been conducted and provide evidence that the senior administrative staff are facing some amount of stress related issues (Agbemaflle 2010; Ntrel 2022; Obese 2010; Ofosuhene 2018; Siakwa 2013). In order to maintain and promote good health as well as maintain and increase productivity, attention ought to be given to help control stress of this group of workers.

2. Research questions

To achieve the objective of this study, the purpose was clarified through the following questions:

1. What is the stress level of the senior administrative staff?
2. What are the symptoms of stress experienced by the senior administrative staff?
3. What are the perceived causes of stress among senior administrative staff?
4. What activities do the senior administrative staff use as stress management strategies?

3. Literature review

3.1. *Levels of stress of administrative staff*

Stress is experienced differently by each individual due to many factors. Stress levels of different categories of workers can be appreciated differently with reference to the common task performed by each profession's demands. Administrative staff are a group of personnels who deal with the documentation and protection of information that guide policies, infrastructure and daily routines of any institution.

Studies conducted on administrative staff in Ghanaian universities prove that such workers mostly sit long hours to perform administrative and other related task (Agbemafle 2010; Obese 2010) this only result in physical exhaustion (stress symptom) which affects their work load (Adjei 2009; Agbemafle 2010; Ofosuhene 2018). Findings from these study points to the fact that respondents reported high levels of stress on interpersonal and environmental stressors. Greenberg (2005) explains that role-related stress also tends to have a toll on workers. Such stressors could include role ambiguity, role conflict, workload and task characteristics. According to the writer, the greater the evidence of these characteristics in the duty assigned to the worker, the higher the level of stress that task produces on the employee.

Griffin (2005) asserts that the level of stress workers experience is as a result of factors including performing unstructured tasks, constantly monitoring materials and devices, repeat exchanging information with other and decision making. With these characteristics present, it is clear that workers undergoing such conditions, as for the administrative staff in universities, will experience higher level of stress.

In a study conducted on university staff, it was found that a high level of psychological stress was identified among university staff (Winfield & Jarrett 2001). The study proved that over 40% participants were said to have shown this by stating two or more symptoms from the binary scores measured by the General Health Questionnaire (GHQ-12). The study further explained participants stress were attributed to internal factors rather than factors from their environment.

Unlike most studies that point to high levels of stress, Tricas Moreno et al. (2010) on the other hand found lower levels of stress among administrative staff as compared to most findings. This according to the writer could have resulted from the sample size (24 participants) used. In another study conducted by Gillespie et al. (2010) on academic and general staff – administrative and technical – it was evident that even though the general staff had a wide range of stress levels, their overall stress was quite lower than academic staff.

3.2. *Symptoms of stress*

The onset of stress is experienced by individuals in diverse ways. The differences in the extent and varied warning sign mostly depends on the individuals' age, gender, upbringing, level of resistance, experiences and personality (Stangor & Walinga 2014). These symptoms according to Segal et al. (2025a) and Scott (2010) can be exhibited in all facets of an individual's wellbeing; biologically, physically, behaviourally, emotionally and cognitively. This assertion then indicates that the presence of stress in the body tends to have a remarkable impact on the whole-body system.

Mental Health Foundation (2018) provides us with a more disturbing list of symptoms people experience as a result of stress. From the 2018 report published, it was clear that depressive symptoms and the onset of major depression, self-harm and suicidal thoughts were likely effects that individuals face due to intense stress.

Some indicators of stress according to Segal et al. (2025a) includes experiences such as social withdrawal, using alcohol and drug, irritability, apathy, loss of interest, sleep problems, fatigue, muscle tension, loss of sex drive and stomach problems.

Scott (2010) and Segal et al. (2025a) in classifying stress symptoms under their respective facets of life, provided the following: physical, emotional, cognitive and behavioural components for consideration.

Physical symptoms include sleep disorders, headaches, neck and back pain, cardiovascular problems (chest pain, palpitations, shortness of breath), nausea, dizziness, gastrointestinal problems (constipation, diarrhoea, heartburn), dizziness, chronic fatigue, memory problems, frequent colds or flu and loss of sex drive. Whiles emotional symptoms include issues like anxiety, irritability, impulsiveness, anger or hostility, loss of control, moodiness, periods of confusion, depression, loneliness, inability to concentrate, impatience, frustration, inability to feel appropriate extremes of joy or sadness, fatigue and other mental or emotional health problems.

We can consider constant worrying, poor judgements, memory problems seeing only the negative, anxiety or racing thought and instability as cognitive symptoms, and for behavioural symptoms, increased smoking, increased use of prescription drugs, increased intake of alcohol or nonprescription drugs, binge eating, sleeping too much or too little, compulsive dieting chronic procrastination and nervous habits (e.g. nail biting, pacing) could be evident traces faced by stressed individuals.

3.3. *Causes of stress*

Any event, action or thing that places high demands on an individual can be classified as stressful (Segal et al. 2025a). Stress, is generally caused by what is termed stressors. Thus, stressors are referred to any event or response that threatens humans and provokes behaviour and physiological responses (Logan & Barksdale 2008; Owusu & Tawiah 2014). Stressors determine the complexities and consequences of stress on the individual (Mark & Smith 2018). They include both internal and external factors. Internal stressors include the individual ideologies/perceptions and self-generated thoughts 'that may or may not happen, or have irrational, pessimistic thoughts about life', whiles external stressors involve event or activity that are beyond the individuals' control (Owusu & Tawiah 2014; Segal et al. 2025a).

It is clear that both positive as well as negative events all tend to ignite the sense of stress in individuals. Research uncovered by Mental Health Foundation (2018) provides a list of stressors from both spectrums. Positive stressors like getting married retirement and having a baby whiles negative stress such as death of a relation, loss of a job, fear of the unknown future, long-term health conditions, divorce or separation and financial misfortune were all said to play on the individuals mental health.

Some internal cause of stress as numerated by Segal et al. (2025a) include pessimism, inability to accept uncertainty, all-or-nothing attitude, rigid thinking, lack of flexibility, negative self-talk and unrealistic expectations / perfectionism. The writers indicate further some external causes of stress as major life changes, children and family, work or school, financial problems, being too busy, and relationship difficulties. With reference to the *Holmes and Rahe Stress Scale*, a widely validated stress scale used worldwide, the top-ten stressors leading to illness in adults were as follows marriage, marriage separation, divorce, marriage reconciliation, death of a spouse, death of a close family member, imprisonment, injury or illness, job loss and retirement (Stangor & Walinga 2014).

According to Gillespie et al. (2010) stress for university workers could be attributed to a wide range of factors. Their study proved that causes of university staff stress include: work overload, time constraints, lack of promotion opportunities, inadequate recognition, inadequate salary, changing job role, inadequate management and/or participation in management, inadequate resources and funding, and student interaction, high personal/self-expectations, job insecurity, lack of community and poor interactions with colleagues, inequality in the system, worries over amalgamations, and lack of regular performance feedback have been highlighted in only a few studies. Respondents from the study also indicated that stress tends to impede on their organizational skills, strain on relationships and interpersonal conflicts in the workplace and prevented them from offering support to coworkers. Thompson (2001), also provides a long list of 'major life stressor' or events that tend to have toll on an individual's stress levels which include but are not limited to; retirement, health (personal or family member), change in recreation, change in business or job readjustment/responsibility, outstanding personal achievement, change in financial state, and change in living conditions.

All the above causes of stress could negatively impact on the institution, the individual and productivity. Thus, stress could lead to chronic fatigue, hypertension, psychological exhaustion, withdrawal from work in the form of absenteeism, leave due to stress, reduced working hours (e.g. dropping to a part-time load), exploring job opportunities outside the university, and resignation (Gillespie et al. 2010; Larkin 2005).

3.4. *Stress management strategies*

An imbalance in work input and output (rewards and salary) can be a worry to workers who make efforts to perform their tasks with all diligence yet reap little from their efforts. Writers like Gillespie et al. (2010), Mental Health Foundation (2018), Ofosuhene (2018), Willis (2007), and Winfield (2000) all provide literature which speaks of the stress that individual face due to unsatisfied working conditions. When stress is not given the best of attention,

it can be very detrimental to an individual's overall functioning. Thus, physical, behavioural, emotional and cognitive measures should be formulated to help lessen the impact of stress on mankind (Owusu & Tawiah 2014).

Larkin (2005) in discussing the treatment and prevention of stress and hypertension by examining the relation between psychological stress and high blood pressure, points to the fact that "psychological intervention efforts have added cognitive behavioural stress management components to the more commonly used relaxation strategies to optimize stress-reducing components of these psychological interventions" (p. 288). The writer engaged readers in a wide range of psychological interventions that aid in reducing stress related hypertension; Biological/lifestyle interventions include; weight reduction, sodium, caffeine and alcohol restriction, omega-3 fatty acids, potassium, calcium, and magnesium supplementation, dietary programs, and increased physical activity (exercise), while psychological considerations involved; meditation strategies, muscle relaxation strategies, biofeedback of cardiovascular parameters, thermal feedback, combination stress management programs, anger management training among others.

The use of a "stress diary" to help monitor personalized stress experiences, according to Scott (2010) is a simple way to help monitor stress symptoms, triggers and preceding activities. As one tends to chart down these periodic stress episodes, it is believed that stress patterns would easily be visible in relation to the period of its occurrence as well as the event contributing to its occurrence would be easily detected. The benefit of the stress diary is to assist individuals to identify stress symptoms and their triggers, the time and event that causes stress as well as aid the individual to navigate life activities to ultimately help avoid all form of stressors.

If workload is reduced, supervision and management is well implemented such that vacations are strictly implemented, better remuneration and other benefits are provided, then, stress among workers would significantly be managed. It is clear that social support also promotes cooperation, responsibility, innovation and provides positive opportunities for people who work in such supportive environments (Owusu & Tawiah 2014). The writers continue to emphasise that, the role of management should primarily focus on maintaining an appropriate level of stress of workers by providing an optimal environment, performance planning, role analysis, work redesign/job enrichment, continuing feedback, ecological considerations, and interpersonal skills training.

4. Methods

The study employed the descriptive survey method to help investigate into the causes and management among university senior administrative staff. This method was found as the most suitable since it was the best method to help find out and describe the true nature of affairs of the senior administrative staff.

According to Best and Kahn (2006) and Fraenkel et al. (2012) a descriptive study helps to basically 'describe and interpret what is', and seeks to find out the existing relationship, views, procedures, obvious effects, and or developing trends pertaining in among a group of people. Thus, this method 'describes a given state of affairs as fully and carefully as possible'.

The method helped to summarize the true characteristics of the chosen population, bringing to light the true nature of occupational stress on the senior administrative staff and also describe the causes and management strategies they employ in reducing stress. This endorses the explanation given by Fraenkel and Wallen (2009) that descriptive studies carefully describes a given state of affairs as fully as possible.

The researchers being focused on understanding the simple relationships between nonmanipulated variables, – stress and management strategies – confirmed to the rudiments of descriptive survey to arrive at a clear conclusion on how occupational stress affected the senior administrative staff of the university. According to Best and Kahn (2006) this method is 'concerned with the present, although it often considers past events and influences as they relate to current conditions' (p. 118). This study like all other surveys had a primary aim of finding out and understanding the current trends relating to occupational stress and stress management based on experiences of the university senior administrative staff.

4.1. Design

To sample out a workable number for the study, out of 1,513 senior administrative staff a fair representation of 156 was used for the research. The 156-sample size was selected using the convenient sampling procedure. Thus, during the period of collecting information, only 156 senior administrative staff were readily available and will to participate in the study.

The convenient or convenience sampling procedure is a non-random sampling process that makes use of available participants for a given study. Fraenkel et al. (2012) explain a convenience sample as 'any group of individuals

that is conveniently available to be studied, (p.107). Marczyk et al. (2005) similarly defines a convenient sample as ‘a potential source of research participants that is easily accessible to the researcher’ (p. 84). Thus, such participants are potential source of necessary information who are easily and readily available for a study.

4.2. Sample

Distribution of the gender of sampled participants is presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1. Gender distribution of senior administrative staff.

Gender		Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Valid	Male	72	46.2	46.2	46.2
	Female	84	53.8	53.8	100.0
	Total	156	100.0	100.0	

Out of a sample of 156, senior administrative staff, it is clear from the above table that 46.2% (72) were males and 53.8% (84) were females. Their ages ranged from 23 to 56 with an average age of 37.21 (SD = 6.48) years.

4.3. Data collection instrument

A set of questionnaires were used to collect data for the study. This comprised biodata, a stress symptom checklist, and the perceived stress scale.

4.3.1. Biodata

The biodata aspect gathered information on respondents’ personal information, including their biological sex, age, marital status

4.3.2. Stress symptoms checklist

The symptoms checklist provided information of indications pertaining to stress. This presents a list of 12 possible symptoms and respondents were asked to indicate how frequently they experienced the indicated symptoms. To help ascertain the extent to which the individual is stressed, the frequency of these possible reactions or ailments are rated on a 6-point Likert scale form, 1 (never) to 6 (everyday). Administering this checklist takes 3-7 minutes to complete.

4.3.3. Perceived stress

The 10-item self-report perceived stress scale (PSS) was the main instrument used to measure the stress levels of the senior administrative staff. The scale is used to assess the ‘cognitively mediated emotional response’ an individual has in relation to a given activity, and it is the most used instrument in measuring stress levels of individuals (Maroufizadeh et al. 2018). The scale in its enquiry is targeted to find out how affected individual experience stress as they go through life’s activities (Mind Garden Inc. 2019).

The perceived stress scale is seen as possessing a universal acceptance due to its easy administration and takes 5-10 minutes to fill. The scale is presented as a 5-point Likert scale rating system, from 0 (never) to 4 (very often). Six of the items are stated in the negative (items 1, 2, 3, 6, 9, 10) and four (4) items are positively stated (items 4, 5, 7 & 8). The PSS is coded 0, 1, 2, 3, 4, but when analysing, the researcher ought to apply the reversal rule (e.g., 4 = 0, 3 = 1, 2 = 2, 1 = 3 and 0 = 4), to the four (4) positively captured items (items 4, 5, 7, and 8). Score between 0 – 7 represent very low health concern; 8 – 11, low health concern; 12 – 15, average health concerns; 16 – 20, high health concern; and 21 and above, very high health concern (Cohen et al. 1983). Thus, the higher the score, the higher the respondents’ level of stress. The PSS has a reliability of .78 alpha.

4.4. Data collection procedure

With an introduction letter and the clearance letter from the in Institutions Review Board, the researcher gained full access in the various departments for easy collection of data. The prime objective of the study was shared with available and interested senior administrative staff before handing them the biodata questionnaire, PSS and stress symptoms checklist.

4.5. Ethical consideration

In principle with research practices, ethical clearance was sought from the institutional review board before any form of investigation was conducted. Thus, all necessary materials for evaluation were submitted for approval before collecting and analysing from the targeted population. All through the study, participants were informed of

the nature of the study and were assured of anonymity and confidentiality.

5. Results

The study sought to investigate the level of stress among senior administrative staff of public universities in Ghana, and data was obtained from staff of one public university. The data collected were analysed with descriptive statistics of frequencies and percentages, means and standard deviations, and the results are presented based on research questions.

5.1. What is the stress level of the senior administrative staff?

Research question 1 sought to assess the level of stress among the senior administrative staff. The information gathered through the perceived stress and stress symptoms checklist were used to answer this research question. The summary descriptive statistics are presented in Table 2. The mean score on the PSS is approximately 16, which is an indication of high level of stress among the senior administrative staff. The stress symptom checklist scores also suggest a moderate level of stress reported by the administrative staff.

Table 3. Descriptive statistics of instruments

	Mean	Std. deviation	Skewness		Kurtosis	
Perceived Stress	15.94	5.96	.432	.194	.500	.386
Stress Symptoms	27.50	11.67	.860	.195	.455	.387

5.2. What are the symptoms of stress experienced by the senior administrative staff?

We also assessed the extent of stress symptoms reported by the administrative staff. Given that the responses were rated on a 6-point scale, a cut-off score of 3.5 was used, and scores below this cut scores denote low level of reported symptom. The results in Table 4 indicated that the means on all the symptoms were below the cut-off score, with fatigue being the highest reported symptom.

Table 4. Responses from the Stress Symptoms Checklist

Symptoms	Mean	Std. deviation
Headaches	2.24	1.28
Tense Muscles, Sore Neck and Back Pains	2.37	1.39
Fatigue	3.04	1.56
Anxiety, Worry, Fears/Frightfulness	2.44	1.65
Difficulty Falling Asleep	2.45	1.77
Easily Angered	2.46	1.79
Sleeplessness/Restlessness	2.33	1.59
Periodic Moments of Anger/ Hostility	2.11	1.34
Boredom, Depression	2.19	1.64
Eating Too Much or Too Little	2.20	1.55
Diarrhoea, Gas Concentration (Stomach), Constipation	1.67	.88
Restlessness	2.03	1.38
Valid N (Listwise)		MM= 2.29

Components of stress symptoms experienced by the senior administrative staff are shown in the above table. Fatigue had the highest score ($M= 3.04$, $SD= 1.55$), followed by three items which had close mean scores easily angered ($M= 2.46$, $SD= 1.70$), difficulty falling asleep ($M= 2.45$, $SD= 1.77$), anxiety, worry, fears/frightfulness ($M= 2.44$, $SD= 1.65$). Also, tense muscles, sore neck and back pains ($M= 2.37$, $SD= 1.39$) and sleeplessness/restlessness ($M= 2.33$, $SD= 1.58$) had the least scores respectively. Diarrhoea, gas concentration (Stomach), or constipation ($M= 2.03$, $SD= .38$) had a mean which was too low in relation to the mean of means 2.29.

5.3. What are the perceived causes of stress among senior administrative staff?

The third research question also sought to find out what the senior administrative staff perceived to be the cause or source of their work stress.

Table 5. Senior administrative staff perceived causes of stress

Perceived causes more stress		Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Valid	Moral	4	2.6	2.6	2.6
	Financial	82	52.6	53.2	55.8
	Religious	5	3.2	3.2	59.1
	Domestics	29	18.6	18.8	77.9
	Personal	21	13.5	13.6	91.6
	Social	11	7.1	7.1	98.7
	Academic	2	1.3	1.3	100.0
	Total	154	98.7	100.0	
Missing	System	2	1.3		
Total		156	100.0		

The results indicated that most of them perceived financial sources to be the sources or causes of their stress. Aspects of life that tend to have impact on the Senior administrative staff. Academics 2 (1.3%), morals 4 (2.6%) and religious activities 5(3.2%) had the least effect on the workers, while financial matters 82 (52.6%), domestic activities 29 (18.6%) and personal lifestyle 21 (13.5%) had great influence on their stress levels.

5.4. What activities do the senior administrative staff use as stress management strategies?

We also asked the senior administrative staff about how they manage their stress, and it was observed that most of them (31.4%) use medications, followed by creative outcomes (28.20%), and then 19.20%, with just 2.6% as means of relaxation and stress management strategy.

Table 6. Stress management strategies of senior administrative staff

Stress management strategies	Frequency	Percent
Exercise	23	14.7
Medication	49	31.4
Have Fun with Friends	30	19.2
Journaling/ Reading	4	2.6
Creative Outcome	44	28.2
Others	6	3.8
Total	156	100.0

6. Discussion of findings

The objective of the study was to find out how stress the senior administrative staff were and enquire on the stress management techniques they used in reducing their stress levels. It was evident that the senior administrative staff had reasonable stress levels affecting them, as seen in similar studies like Adjei (2009), Ablanado-Rosas et al. (2011) and Mark and Smith (2018). As with findings from our study, it was also evident in these studies that due to the wide range of tasks assigned such workers in academic institutions, these senior administrative staff were faced with workplace pressures and demand from management, academic staff as well as students all in order to meet deadlines. Conversely a similar study conducted by Gillespie et al. (2010) on academic and general staff, and Tricas Moreno et al. (2010) on services and administration staff, indicated lower levels of stress among administrative staff. It was evident in the former study that even though the general staff had a wide range of stress levels, their overall stress was quite lower than academic staff, while the latter also reported lower levels of stress among administrative staff as compared to most findings – this was attributed to the smaller sample size used.

Due to the degree of stress faced by the senior administrative staff, we discovered that workers experienced a number of stress symptoms. Some symptoms reported include fatigue, difficulty falling asleep, anxiety, worry, fears/frightfulness, tense muscles, sore neck and back pains and sleeplessness/restlessness. This finding is consistent with studies conducted by Adjei (2009), Obese (2010), Owusu and Tawiah (2014) and Mark and Smith (2018), all of which focused on stress and its impact on staff in academic communities. Biron et al. (2008) who also investigated the sources of stress on university staff of all categories reported high-levels of psychological distress among all categories of workers. It is a well-established fact that workers in academic communities tend to be hard-pressed with increased stress Winfield (2000) and with such overloads in tasks and responsibilities of this group of workers, these stress symptoms are likely obvious indicators to such stressed atmosphere.

In relation to the aspects of life that impacts the stress levels of senior administrative staff, it was found out that this group of people have a greater predisposition to financial, domestic and personal stressors more than issues pertaining to academics, morality and religion. This could simply project the fact that their participation in the academic community with all its well-structured governance might have provided staff with a great amount of understanding and immunity to being stressed by academic related matters and issues with ethical relevance. These stressors also appear as threatening factors to workers in studies conducted by Boakyewaa (2002) and Gillespie et al. (2010). Arnold and Feldman (1996) state the great effect financial instability can have on workers input on productivity. Similarly, Thompson (2001) asserts that ‘money is a transient and external security’ which when is scares, in most cases leads to economic frustration. He continues to explain the family issues, life crises financial difficulties, conflict of personal believes with co-workers as well as conflict of organisational and family demand are sources of external job stress which place pressure on individuals. This explains the reason monetary demands, domestic requirements and personal life management placed a significant amount of stress on these senior administrative staff.

In order to control stress, it was found out that the senior administrative staff mostly used methods such as meditation, having fun with friends, creative outcome and exercises to lessen stress symptoms. Yet reading or journaling as well as other stress relief measures was found out as the least means of reducing stress among the senior administrative staff. Thus, the fact that some members were experiencing lower levels of stress could have been an indication that members had other means of releasing or dealing with stress, which was not leading to accumulation of stress. Several studies such as Winfield and Jarrett (2001), Burton (2010), Gillespie et al. (2010), Moreno et al. (2010), Owusu and Tawiah (2014), and Mark and Smith (2018), all projected the use of these methods by study respondents in helping to reduce occupational stress and promoting good health among workers. The influence of good health goes a long way to improve the general wellbeing of workings and further increases productivity.

7. Implications

From the findings of the study, we projected the following consideration for practice. To help alert workers of the negative impact of stress on their personal life and the overall work productivity, it was recommended that the counselling unit in collaboration with the Training and Development Unit of the Human Resource Directorate should periodically organize programs targeted towards stress and stress management for effective stress coping. The need for this collaboration is necessary since when individuals are asked to opt for personalized stress relief routines, it might conflict with work schedules hereby making it impossible for workers to make time for such routines. Hence a well-structured quarterly schedule from counsellors and human resource managers will make this more effective and practicable for workers to engage in such stress-relief programs.

Also, there is a need for university management bodies to put in place monitoring measures that would help check the working attitude of workers. This action is to provide a means of control to the high stress rate faced by worker during some seasons of the academic calendar, hereby limiting stress altogether.

8. Conclusion

This study sought to discover the causes of occupational stress and management strategies used by senior administrative staff in Ghana. Results from data collected proved that the senior administrative staff were moderately stressed and were facing symptoms such as fatigue, difficulty falling asleep, anxiety, worry, tense muscles, sore neck and back pains, as well as sleeplessness/restlessness. These traces of stress were linked with problems related to finances, domestic demands and personal life management issues. To help curtail the impact of stress on workers and productivity it was suggested that school management, counsellors and the human resource units of university should collaborate to put in place measures to reduce stress among workers.

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