

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

**THE EFFECT OF WORKPLACE STRESS ON EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE:
A CASE STUDY OF THE JUDICIAL SERVICE OF GHANA IN THE ASHANTI
REGION**



OSEI KWABENA NTANSAH

2018

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**A thesis in the Department of Management Studies Education, Faculty of Business
Education, submitted to the School of Graduate Studies, in partial fulfilment of the
requirements for the award of the degree of Master of Business Administration
(Organizational Behaviour and Human Resource Management) in the University of
Education, Winneba**

OCTOBER, 2018

DECLARATION

STUDENT'S DECLARATION

I, OSEI KWABENA NTANSAH, declare that this thesis, with the exception of quotations and references contained in published works which have all been identified and duly acknowledged, is entirely my own original work, and it has not been submitted, either in part or whole, for another degree elsewhere.

SIGNATURE.....

DATE.....

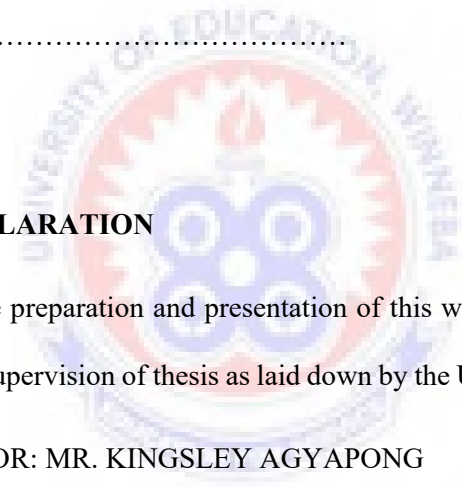
SUPERVISOR'S DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this work was supervised in accordance with the guidelines for supervision of thesis as laid down by the University of Education, Winneba.

NAME OF SUPERVISOR: MR. KINGSLEY AGYAPONG

SIGNATURE.....

DATE.....



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My special thanks go to my supervisor Mr. Kingsley Agyapong who supervised me successfully to come out with this project work. I also thank my wife, Juliet Azumah and my children Yaw Boakye, Osei Kwabena, Yaa Kessewaa, Kojo Ampomah-Ntansah who supported me with their prayers throughout this course.

Again, my sincere thanks go to my Boss Jacob Soung (Judicial Training Institution) for his guidance and support given me throughout this course of study. Finally, to my friends and well wishers of MBA, Organisational Behaviour and Human Resource Management, I say thank you all.



DEDICATION

To my wife Juliet Azumah and my children, Yaw, Kwabena, Yaa and Kojo.



TABLE OF CONTENTS

CONTENT	PAGE
DECLARATION	ii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iii
DEDICATION	iv
TABLE OF CONTENTS	v
LIST OF TABLES	ix
LIST OF FIGURES	x
ABSTRACT	xi
CHAPTER ONE : INTRODUCTION	
1.1 Background to the Study	1
1.2 Statement of the Problem	3
1.3 Purpose of the Study	5
1.4 Objectives of the Study	5
1.5 Significance of Study	5
1.6 Delimitations of the Study	6
1.7 Limitations of the Study	6
1.8 Organization of the Study	7
CHAPTER TWO : LITERATURE REVIEW	
2.1 The Concept of Stress	8
2.1.1 The nature of stress	9
2.2 Workplace Stress	10

2.1.1 Stressors in the Workplace	11
2.3 The impact of stress on productivity or performance.	14
2.4 Coping strategies for Stress among Employees	16
2.4.1 Individual Level	17
2.4.2 Organization Level	20
2.5 Theoretical Review	21
2.5.1 Selye's Theory	21
2.5.2 The Job Demands-Control Theory (JD-C)	22
2.5.3 The Role Theory	23
2.6 Empirical Review	24
2.6.1 Level of Workplace Stress	24
2.6.2 Effects of Workplace Stress on Employee Performance	25
2.7 Conceptual Framework of the Study	29
2.7.1 Individual Level Stress and Employee Performance	30
2.7.2 Organisational Level Stress and Employee Performance	31
 CHAPTER THREE : METHODOLOGY	
3.1 Research Design	33
3.2 Population of the Study	34
3.3 Sample size and Sampling Techniques	34
3.4 Sources of Data Collection	35
3.4.1 Primary Data	35
3.5 Data Collection Instrument	36

3.6 Validity and Reliability of the Instrument.	36
3.7 Data Collection Procedure	38
3.8 Data Analysis	39
3.9 Ethical Consideration	39

CHAPTER FOUR : RESULTS OF THE STUDY

4.1 Demographic Data of the Study	40
4.2 Presentation of Results on Research Questions	42
4.2.1 The effect of organizational level stress on the performance of the employees in the Kumasi Judicial Service?)	43
4.2.2 The effects of individual level stress on the performance of the employees in the Judicial Service.	44
4.3 Discussion of the Results	48
4.3.1 Effect of organizational level stress on the performance of the employees in the Kumasi Judicial Service	48
4.3.2 The effect of individual level stress on the performance of the employees in the Kumasi Judicial Service	50
4.3.3 What are the coping strategies adopted by employees in the Judicial Service to reducing their stress levels?	51

CHAPTER FIVE : SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.0 Introduction	53
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5.1 Summary of Findings	53
5.2 Conclusions of the Study	54
5.3 Recommendations and Implications of the Study	55
5.4 Suggestions for Further Research	56
REFERENCES	57
APPENDIX	69



LIST OF TABLES

TABLE	PAGE
Table 1: Cronbach's Alpha of the respective variable items	37
Table 2: Demographic Data of the Study	41
Table 3: Correlation of organizational level stress and the performance of employees	43
Table 4: Correlation between individual level stress and employee performance	44
Coping strategies adopted by employees in the Judicial Service to reducing their stress levels	44
Table 5: Coping strategies used by employees in the Judicial Service	45



LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE	PAGE
Figure 1: Conceptual framework of the study (Researchers conceptualization, 2018)	30
Figure 3: Summary of results on coping strategies used in the Judicial Service	47



ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to assess the effects of workplace stress on employee performance. The study however concentrated on employees in the Judicial Service of Ghana in Kumasi, Ashanti Region. The study was divided into three objectives that is; identify the effect of organisational level stress on the performance of employees, identify the effect of individual level stress on the performance of the employees, to identify perceived coping strategies adopted by employees in the Judicial Service in reducing their stress levels. The study was quantitative in nature and was a descriptive survey. Data was collected with the help of a structured questionnaire and a simple random sampling technique was used to sample seventy (70) respondents for the purpose of the study. The results of the study showed that, organizational level stressors had a positive non-significant influence on the performance of employees and individual level stressors had a positive non-significant effect on the performance of employees in the Judicial Service. Also, it was found that stress is present in the Judicial Service as such employees use coping strategies such as physical exercise and attending of social activities to cope with the stress. It was recommended that; the management of the Judicial Service consider the results of the study in providing education on the effects of stress on the performance of the employees and also, proper and healthy working conditions should be provided along with all required resources and information. Further studies can consider studying how other variables such as training and development affects employee performance.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

The main aim of this study is to assess the effects of workplace stress on employee performance. This first chapter shows the introduction of the study. This chapter contains the background to the study, statement of the problem, purpose of the study, objectives of the study, research questions, significance of the study, limitations of the study, delimitations of the study and finally the organisation of the study.

1.1 Background to the Study

In recent years the rise in stress is seen across all spheres of life, particularly in the workplace (Dar et al., 2011). Stress in the workplace is a wide-spread phenomenon with far-reaching practical and economic consequences. Testa et al., (2015) reported high level of stress with extreme fatigue among 64 percent of employees, manageable stress level among 31 percent of employees and low level of stress among only 5 percent of employees. Hence, stress has become one of the common issue in modern life as majority of us spend most of our time at the workplace. In the workplace, an appreciable level of stress is perceived essential for employees to stimulate the accomplishment of task as well as prevent them from getting hurt (Farler & Broady-Preston, 2012; Khuong et al., 2016).

Nonetheless, excessive amounts of stress could be harmful or lead to unusual behaviours for instance employee turnover, absenteeism, decreased productivity and resentment (Jalagat, 2017). Thus, ability to handle events normally without undue anxiety and emotional instability in the workplace determines individual's resistance to destructive

stress (Kotteeswari & Sharief, 2014). Stress is a biological term which refers to the consequences of the failure of a human or animal body to respond appropriately to emotional or physical threats to the organism, whether actual or imagined (Kotteeswari & Sharief, 2014; Sikuku, Wamalwa & Katiba, 2017). Job stress is also perceived as a situation wherein job-related factors interact with a worker to change (i.e., disrupt or enhance) his or her psychological and/or physiological condition such that the person (i.e., mind-body) is forced to deviate from normal functioning (Yozgat, Yurtkoru & Bilginoglu, 2013).

Job stress can be external and related to the environment, but may also be created by internal perceptions that cause employees to have anxiety, causing feelings of dissatisfaction, and irritability (Aronson, Wilson & Akert, 2013). Lack of motivation, work overload, lack of appropriate working tools or resources for work, lack of clear lines of command, and lack of proper channels of communication can also cause stress in organizations (organizational stress) and can have negative affect on employee performance (Bickford, 2011). The world over, close to 3 billion employees are undergoing massive job stress at their workplace and it is effecting their overall job performances on daily basis (Bickford, 2005; Khuong et al., 2016).

The Judicial Service that represents a critical component of the Ghanaian Justice System have thousands of employees who are required to contribute their quota to the delivery of justice for injured parties through the cases that are heard in the various courts in Ghana. The role of the Judicial Service workers in spearheading fairness and justice is not always easy as the process exposes the workers to several forms of stressors that are injuries to

their psychological and physical state, and hence negative consequences for both the individuals and the legal system as a whole (Flores et al., 2015). The working environment of the Judicial Sector is physically and psychologically demanding, leading to occupational stress which can in turn adversely affect their health and general wellbeing. For instance, the immense weight of responsibility associated with passing a lasting, and possibly life-changing, judgment may induce psychological stress from judge. The trial of some cases requires graphical evidence of crimes and personal injuries that affects the psychological state of all audience in the courtroom. Judges and key Judicial Service workers are captive audiences and have no choice about viewing photographs and hearing testimony concerning such violent crimes as murder, abuse, and rape. More so, the safety of judges and key Judicial Service workers can sometimes be compromised during trial. This study therefore seeks to investigate the effect of workplace stress on the performance of Judicial Service workers in the Ashanti Region of Ghana.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

Job Stress is regarded as a serious problem for employees since it affects and influence employees' mental, physical and well-being (Murali, Basit & Hassan, 2017). Several studies in different sectors of the economy and industry emphasized that employees could suffer significantly from health-related problems when subjected to long period of stress (Imtiaz, Khan & Shakir, 2015). Thus, many companies perceived stress as strong predictor to employee performance. Workplace stress is a significant and costly problem, and that the challenge for the organizations is to manage work stress in order to reduce health-care costs and improve productivity (Murphy et al., 1995). The associated health problems from

stress often result in higher rate of absenteeism and turn over, more accidents; other employee problems like alcoholism, drug abuse, hypertension and host of cardiovascular problems (Meneze, 2006), which results in low productivity and poor job performance. Negative stress causes mental restlessness, mental disturbance and loss of self-balance which is harmful to the individual and, as a result, drives a change in an individual's behavior. Change in negative behavior of an individual at workplace effect on their productivity as well as to the organization's performance.

The Judicial Service , the third arm of Government is expected provide service to the nation with minimal level of errors. Existing research suggests that staff of the Judicial Sector such as judges experience stress from safety concerns, secondary traumatic stress, and occupational burnout. A 2012 survey of the law profession by LawCare revealed that more than 50 percent of the profession felt stressed and that 19 percent were suffering from clinical depression (Chang et al., 2016). That is one fifth of the profession suffering from (mostly) avoidable and preventable mental ill health. In 2013, the Law Society shockingly reported extreme or severe stress among more than 95 percent of solicitors (ibid). Although judges and many other Judicial Staff are burdened with high workplace stress, less attention has been granted the sector by researchers. Researchers have largely concentrated on workplace stress and performance of employees in the military (Afridi & Yousufi, 2014; De Silva & Thilakasiri, 2014), banking sector (Bashir & Ramay, 2010; Ahmed & Ramzan, 2013; Karunanithy & Ponnampalam, 2013), health sector (Mhechela, 2015; Khan & Khurshid, 2017), higher educational institution (Ling & Bhatti, 2014; Olusegun, Oluwasayo & Olawoyim, 2014), hospitality industry (Olaniyi, 2013; Ondieki & Kung'u,

2013; Wireko-Gyebi & Akyeampong, 2014; Nyangahu & Bula, 2015), telecommunication industry (Elahi & Altangerel, 2015; Imtiaz, Khan & Shakir, 2015) and Police Service (Iqbal & Waseem, (2012). Thus, this study sought to provide empirical knowledge in the field of workplace stress and its impact on employee performance in the Judicial Service industry which within the Ashanti Region of Ghana.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to assess the effects of workplace stress on employee performance. The study however concentrated on employees in the Judicial Service of Ghana in Kumasi, Ashanti Region.

1.4 Objectives of the Study

The study was guided by the following objectives

1. Identify the effect of organisational level stress on the performance of employees in the Kumasi Judicial Service.
2. Identify the effect of individual level stress on the performance of the employees in the Kumasi Judicial Service.
3. To identify perceived coping strategies adopted by employees in the Judicial Service in reducing their stress levels.

1.5 Significance of Study

The study can be significant particularly for four sets of stakeholders namely the employers, employees, the government and fellow researchers. Employers can depend on

the findings of this study to find out the occupational stress inducers (OSI), and use them in the adoption of appropriate strategies to reduce the occupational stress thereby enhancing the employees' job performance. Employees, especially those in the Judicial Service can use the findings of this study to take appropriate steps in reducing their levels of stress thus saving themselves from variety of health issues and also help management to implement the stress management strategies. With respects to policy also, the study would also inform policy makers to institute the appropriate motivational structures, policies and strategies to reduce the level of stress in the Judicial Service of Ghana. This is essential as reduction in the stress level of staff would enhance the Judicial System of Ghana. The study would also be of immense significance to academicians and the research world especially, as it would bridge the knowledge gap on the subject of stress and its association with employee performance.

1.6 Delimitations of the Study

Conceptually, the study considers three major categories of stressors at the workplace. The stressors categories considered are job-related factors, organizational factors and the individual factors. Geographically, the study focuses on the staff of the Judicial Service of Ghana in the Ashanti region.

1.7 Limitations of the Study

The study was limited in terms of the collection of data. Since the study was based on the Judicial Service of the country, a very sensitive part of the country, getting data was quite difficult and also employees in the Judicial Service were very busy in their dealings thus

most of them were unwilling to help in the success of the study. A further limitation of the study was that the methodology used could not gauge all the factors influencing the responses, such as the coping strategies of stress and how stress affects the productivity of the employees. Given the sample size and lack of homogeneity among the population and the selection bias, there is a need for caution in making generalization based on its findings.

1.8 Organization of the Study

The study was in five chapters. The first chapter introduced the study through the background to the study, the statement of the problem, research objectives, research questions, significance of the study, delimitation or scope of the study and the limitations of the study. The second chapter reviewed literatures related to concepts of stress, workplace stress and employee performance. The chapter further elaborated on the stressors in the workplace, the level of stress in the workplace, empirical studies on the relationship between workplace stress and employee performance. The third chapter of the study stipulated the methodologies employed in the study. The areas captured by the chapter included the research design, the research population, sample and sampling method, data collection instruments, pilot survey, method of data analysis, validity and reliability and ethical consideration. Chapter four presents the data, analyses and discusses the result and finally the fifth chapter summarizes the study findings, concludes and recommends policy and managerial measures for higher level of employee performance.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

The purpose of the study was to assess the effects of workplace stress on employee performance. The study however concentrated on employees in the Judicial Service of Ghana in Kumasi, Ashanti Region. The chapter concentrated on some concepts such as the concept of stress and workplace stress in general, types of stress and so on. The chapter also has sections dedicated to empirical reviews, conceptual framework, industry review and finally a section on theoretical reviews.

2.1 The Concept of Stress

Early definitions of stress defined it in terms of a stimulus, response, or the interaction between the two. Without doubt, these definitions have provided much needed information and a considerable body of knowledge now exists as to the nature and characteristics of these different components and their interaction (Dewe, O'Driscoll, & Cooper, 2010). According to the Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety (2000) stress is what we feel when we have to respond to a demand on our energy or our ability. Stress is a natural phenomenon which is part of life, and may occur each time there are significant changes in our lives, whether positive or negative. According to Robbins (2004), 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.

As individuals we may perceive stress in different ways thus human beings may have different stressors and may cope differently with stressful situations. However, the Canadian Mental Health Association (2000) has identified the following as the most predominant stressors in everyday life, these include financial worries, work overload, unemployment, relationships, parenting, balancing work and family, caregiving, health problems, losses, Christmas, competitiveness, peer pressure, exams, and not having enough time. Building on Regus (2014) study, which found that 48% of respondents globally felt their stress levels had risen in the past year, the latest of this study found that almost one third (30%) of Ghana workers are actually stressed mainly because of work. The survey, which covers the opinions of over 20,000 senior executives and business owners across 95 countries, also found that in West Africa stress is causing a worrying increase in absenteeism (60%) damaging business productivity as well as worker well-being.

2.1.1 The nature of stress

According to Bowing and Harvey (2001) stress is a complex phenomenon mainly due to the fact that it is not tangible so it cannot be overtly touched but can be felt. Stress normally occurs with the interaction between an individual and his or her environment, which produces emotional strain affecting a person's physical and mental condition. Stress is generally activated by stressors. Stressors are events that create a state of disequilibrium within an individual. Many employees may suffer from anxiety disorders or stress-related illnesses. In terms of days lost on the job, it is estimated that each affected employee loses about 16 working days a year because of stress, anxiety or depression.

Canadian Centre for Occupational Health and Safety (2000) goes on to posit that stress is a normal, adaptive response to stressors in our environment. Our bodies are designed with a set of automatic responses to deal with stress. The problem is that physiologically; our bodies have the same reaction to all types of stressors. This reaction is called the Generalized Stress Response and may trigger the following physiological responses:

- increased blood pressure
- increased metabolism (e.g., faster heartbeat, faster respiration)
- decrease in protein synthesis, intestinal movement (digestion), immune and allergic response systems
- increased cholesterol and fatty acids in blood for energy production systems
- localized inflammation (redness, swelling, heat and pain)
- faster blood clotting
- increased production of blood sugar for energy
- increased stomach acids

2.2 Workplace Stress

Stress is mostly defined by Health and Safety executives (HSE) as an ‘adverse reaction people have to excessive pressures or other types of demand placed on them’. Workplace stress is thus defined as an occurrence where there is a mismatch between the demands of the job and the resources and capabilities of the individual worker to meet those demands (Le Blanc, de Jonge & Schaufeli, 2000). The definition pointed out above especially points out the relationship between individuals and their working environment, and shows why a

situation that may seem to be a stimulating challenge for one person may cause another to experience a damaging degree of stress.

Experiences of a degree of stress is not only dependent on the organisation but on an individual experience is, to an extent, dependent upon his/her own appraisal of the demands of their work. Thus, workplace stress may be affected by some socio-economic factors which actually may not be work related. For example, gender, race and age all play a part, as do geographic location, housing, health, number of children, family arrangements and community networks. In addition, more specific psychological factors must be considered, including past experiences and personality traits. Workplace stress may also be measured or considered based on what a person interprets as threatening or challenging, and whether that individual believes him or herself able to cope with it. All of these social and psychological variables may profoundly affect individual experiences of stress, so much so that stress appears, ultimately, to be 'in the eye of the beholder'. For this reason, it is arguable that subjective and self-reported evaluations of stress are just as valid as objective data such as statistics on accidents or absenteeism.

2.1.1 Stressors in the Workplace

- **Job demand:**

In many organisations it is possible to have the majority of the workers unhappy with the current culture where they are required to work extended hours and cope with large workloads while simultaneously meeting production targets and deadlines (Altaf, 2011).

Most of the literature examining reduced hour (or workload) arrangements, which involve a reduction in workload or hours with a commensurate pay reduction, focus on employer interest in retaining human capital, in particular top talent (Kidman, et al., 2014). Even if, or when, there is no effect on employees work life balance, flextime is often associated with improved organizational performance.

- **Time Pressure:**

The importance of work cannot be underestimated in an individual's life, especially in these modern times. After all, a salaried job pays the bills and enables us to survive. Work, whether paid or unpaid, also helps us to shape our identity, gives a purpose to our existence, allows us – or forces us – to structure our time, gives us a useful way to spend our days, contributes to our social status, and finally, brings us into contact with others (Siegrist, 2010). To be very comfortable in any job environment there is need to be in sync with time. When an employee is unable to meet the demands of work (within the time available), a work pressure problem arises that can lead to work stress. Work stress can eventually cause the employee to feel excessively tired, exhausted and depressed, as well as to suffer physical ailments. The employee can become overstrained or, if the situation persists for a lengthy period of time, start to suffer from burn-out.

- **Salary:**

The combination of high effort and low reward at work has been found to be a risk factor for cardiovascular health, sickness absence as well as self-reported symptoms (Tsutsumi & Kawakami, 2004). Rewards are distributed to employees in three different ways: money that is adequate salary, esteem that is respect and support and security that is Job security, promotions and status consistency.

Money is an extrinsic reward and it can be used to influence employees' behaviors (Darmon, 2004). Extrinsic rewards are granted by another individual, and can include salary, fringe benefits, and so on (Kreitner, 2005). Organizations that reward their members in accordance with performance typically experience fewer problems than organizations that do not. (Muczyk, 2004). Bonuses, as extrinsic rewards, can be a good tool to motivate workers for better performance. When management ties their performance in with their bonuses, they take it as a challenge to generate greater performance for receiving bigger financial reward. Money is important, but it is not the ultimate tool for performance. For a lot of people, the feeling of being recognized and valued appears more important than money.

- **Job security:**

Job security is said to be the assurance (or lack of it) that an employee has about the continuity of gainful employment for his or her work life. Thus, employees need to feel confident about their organization's future and they want stability and steady work so they can meet their financial obligations. An employee's sense of job security is related to whether or not they trust the leaders in the organization. To engender trust, leaders need to show consideration for the morale, welfare and well-being of their team. Leadership behavior is extremely important because there is a direct link between the perceptions that employees have of their leaders and the performance of the organization. Job security is defined as employees' desire to be retained in their current job till their retirement. Human dignity is directly related to job security as it affected the ability of employees to satisfy the basic physiological and security needs. Psychologists have recognized job insecurity as an imperative cause of stress which involved anxiety and panic (Salami, 2010).

Lack of job security and job changes are source of pressures due to fear of skill redundancy and future job change. Undoubtedly uncertain job security and the fear of layoff is also an important source of psychological stress for some, especially during times of economic contraction (Bridges, 1995).

- **Performance:**

One of the most important aspects of any employee's obligation in an organisation is the actual performance. Though these employees may work for the best or for the worst, performance of an employee at his/her workplace is a point of concern for all the organizations irrespective of all the factors and conditions. Consequently, the employees are considered to be very important asset for their organizations. (Qureshi & Ramay, 2006)

A good performance of the employees of an organization leads towards a good organizational performance thus ultimately making an organization more successful and effective and the vice versa (Armstrong, 2009). The problems arise for the organizations when they start perceiving that their organizations are already performing at their level best and with great efficiency furthermore, there is no need for further improvement in their organizations (Summers & Hyman, 2005).

2.3 The impact of stress on productivity or performance.

Steers (1991) is of the opinion that it is useful from a managerial standpoint to consider several forms of counterproductive behaviour that are known to result from prolonged stress. Mathis and Jackson (2000) suggested that to measure an individual's output or performance one has to consider the expected outcome or goal. Mathis and Jackson continued that an individual performance depends on three factors which are; ability to do

the work, level of effort and support given to that person. These constructs are actually related and widely acknowledged in management literature as; Performance (P) is the result of Ability (A) times Effort (E) times Support (S), that is: $(P=A \times E \times S)$. Meaning the extent of performance is reduced if any of these factors are not present or not in the right proportion. By doing so the quality of productivity is not underestimated due to the fact that quality of production must also be considered as part of productivity because one alternative might be to produce more but a lower quality.

Simply put by Chase and Aquilano (1995), productivity is measured in terms of outputs per labour hour. However, this measurement does not ensure that the firm will make money (for example when extra output is not sold but accumulates as inventory). To test whether productivity has increased, the following questions should be asked: 'has the action taken increased output or has it decreased inventory?' 'Has the action taken decreased operational expense?' This would then lead to a new definition which is: Productivity is all the actions that bring a company closer to its goals.

Thompson and McHugh (1995) are of the opinion that when specifically, regarding stress in the workplace, contemporary accounts of the stress 'process' often follow the notion of stress as resulting from a misfit between an individual and their particular environment, where internal or external factors push the individual's adaptive capacities beyond his or her limit. It is however difficult to find two people who react to the same situation of stress in the very same way, because personal factors also influence stress. Type A personalities referring to people who are workaholics and who feel driven to be always on time and meet deadlines, for example, normally place themselves under greater stress than do others

(Dessler, 2000). It is also hard to dispute that people cannot completely separate their work and personal lives, the way people react and handle stress at work or in other places is a complex issue (Bowin and Harvey, 2001).

Blumenthal (2003) brought about an inverted U-type curve which showed the effects of stress on performance. He posits that as stress increases, the performance of an individual increases for a while but if stress continues to increase beyond an optimal point, performance will reach its highest or peak and start to decline. This shows that stress is necessary to enhance performance but once it reaches a level of acute discomfort, it is harmful and counterproductive. It is also from the statement above that excess stress is harmful, destructive and detrimental to human well-being and productivity. Stress can therefore have an impact on an individual's wellbeing by causing dysfunction or disruption in multiple areas. This dysfunction extends into the organizational world and leads to decreased productivity or performance in other industries. It is evident that corporations have become acutely aware of the problems caused by stress. Stress causes illnesses which also carry added avoidable cost to heal them, and they can make a valuable worker become dispensable. When stress is not handled well, absenteeism, turnover, and medical compensation increase and productivity decreases (Garrison and Bly, 1997).

2.4 Coping strategies for Stress among Employees

Experiences make it hard to deny that stress as an epidemic exists and also it is one of the key problems that faces women and humans as a whole in their workplaces. Because of the pervasiveness of stress in the workplace, there is a need to define coping mechanisms so

that the long-term negative effects of persistent stress can be avoided. Stress is very pervasive and is almost a part of life thus there are certain ways to cope or manage stress. There are two different approaches to coping with stress. One approach is to locate the origins of work stress in the structure and organization of the modern workplace and to see the solution in terms of job redesign and another approach is to locate work stress in the responses of the individual and see the solution in terms of therapeutic intervention (Wainwright & Calnan, 2002). It is very important that individuals have personal coping strategies at their disposal because stress can inevitably occur at very unpredictable moments (Cahill, Landsbergis & Schnall, 1995).

2.4.1 Individual Level

Stress can be dealt with on individual basis that is, when individuals recognize signs of stress and tune their bodies through some strategies to handle them. It is becoming increasingly important that individuals learn to recognize the signs of being stressed out and to develop personal coping strategies to utilize when they are feeling overwhelmed by stress. The Canadian Mental Health Association (n.d.) lists a number of methods for individuals to use in coping with stress.

- **Relaxation techniques**

Relaxation techniques can be one of the most effective ways of dealing with stress. The body when responding to stress will speed up the body's reactions and make the muscles very tense, but when one relaxes the opposite is achieved, by deepening breathing, slowing the pulse and heart rate, and relaxing the muscles.

One of the tools for personal relaxation in times of stress is *deep breathing*. This a tool that can be accessed almost all the time no matter where you are, it is easy to take a few minutes to practice deep breathing. This is done by exhaling slowly until your abdomen is flat, then filling up your lungs, diaphragm and abdomen with air as you inhale. Doing this several times a day will help to calm your body and your mind. Another means of relaxation is *Progressive relaxation*. This strategy broadly deals with the process of training your body to relax completely by tensing and releasing each set of muscles in turn. Normally a means of going through this process is by the use of books or cassette tapes that can help to guide through the process of relaxation. Massage therapy and hot baths are other methods of relaxing tense muscles that will help release stress.

- **Relaxation of the mind**

Stress can be promoted when individuals beat themselves up with some painful memories therefore it helps if such people have ways to focus their minds and let go of troublesome or painful thoughts. One of the most used means of doing this is the ancient practice of *meditation*. The process of meditation is proven way to work with the chaos of our thoughts and channel them in to a sense of peace. Because meditation is a widely used practice there are many books on meditation and many different techniques, as well as a number of groups that can provide an introduction to the practice. One can also spend regular time on a hobby or loved ones as a way of helping restore energy and a sense of well-being. Absorbing yourself in something you really enjoy is a great way to give yourself a break from the hassles and stresses of everyday life.

Having supportive friends in general can help when we are experiencing stress. Normally in times of stress there is a need for a friend or someone to share all our worries with or someone that can help us get all what we want to say off our chest, a friend who will appreciate you for who you are and not be straightway judgmental of the issue. Laughing is another simple, effective and inexpensive way of relaxing the mind. A Good, hearty laugh causes the release of endorphins, which are the body's natural "feel good" chemical. It is therefore important for one too notice the things that makes him or her laugh and collect such things. They could be in the form of cartoons, books, movies and look at them when you feel over-stressed.

- **Daily habits.**

Unhealthy daily habits can contribute to stress in an individual because these habits may interfere with the body's sense of well-being. Some factors such as individual's diet, amount of sleep, caffeine consumption, and level of activity are all important in one's general health. Maintaining your health by practicing healthy habits can be important in fighting off the negative effects of stress.

As the saying goes we are what we eat thus it is important to maintain a balanced diet to ensure that we are keeping our bodies healthy. We are what we eat, and we need a balanced intake of healthy food. Consuming too much fatty or in other words comfort foods, adds weight and depletes energy. The trend of life nowadays suggests that important to get enough fresh fruit and vegetables, and drink plenty of water to eat healthy. Adequate sleep is imperative to restore energy that or bodies lose when attending to various tasks in a day. Many people these days are sleep- deprived without realizing it. Things that keep many

people awake and deprive them of their sleep are artificial lights and late night television. It helps the body feel much better when we go to bed early after a hot bath, or listen to a relaxation tape to help to fall asleep. It is advisable to cut caffeine consumption down. Caffeine is a stimulant that simulates the stress response and can make us edgy and "hyper". Keeping your consumption down to three cups of coffee daily or cutting it out completely is recommended.

Exercise is a great way not only to release tension but to relax our minds and bodies. Many people believe routines of exercise to be quite formal but on the contrary apart from going to the gym to have some formal routines exercises can be in the form of swimming and biking are excellent, walking the dog, working in the garden, even cleaning the house or joining a dance or yoga class and get the benefit of meeting people along with the exercise!

2.4.2 Organization Level

It is important to understand that points out that while individual level stress management interventions may be of very helpful in helping workers cope with unavoidable pressures, they deal with only part of the problem, and need to act as a supplement to organizational change programs that deal with the root causes of stress in unhealthy work environments (Grimshaw, 1999). Organizations may have different reasons for wanting to implement stress management initiatives. One reason may be the need to reduce the costs to the organization of stress related illness, absenteeism and staff turnover. It may be a humanitarian desire to improve working conditions. There may be regulations in place regarding the listing and assessing of workplace hazards, including hazards to mental health such as psychological stress, and to provide a safe working environment.

An organization might wish to be seen as caring and as looking after their employees in order to raise morale or improve the company image. A final reason for wanting to make these changes may simply be to follow current trends, where other such organizations are introducing stress management interventions (Grimshaw, 1999). Whatever the reason, the issue of workplace stress can no longer be ignored, and it is necessary for changes to be made where unhealthy work environments exist.

2.5 Theoretical Review

In this section the researcher reviews a few theories that are related to the concept of corporate governance. The researcher reviewed theories such as Selye's theory, the Job Demands-Control Theory (JD-C) and the role theory.

2.5.1 Selye's Theory

The popularity of the stress concept in science and mass media stems largely from the work of the endocrinologist Hans Selye. In a series of animal studies, he observes that variety of stimulus events (e.g., heat, cold, toxic agents) applied intensely and long enough are capable of producing common effects, meaning not specific to either stimulus events. According to Selye, these nonspecifically caused changes constitute the stereotypical i.e. specific response pattern of systemic stress. Selye (1980) defines stress as a nonspecific response of the body to any demand, whether it is caused by or results in, pleasant or unpleasant conditions. Selye identifies three stages of adaptation which a person goes through in his General Adaptation Syndrome 1936. They are Alarm, Resistance, and Exhaustion. These stages are associated with particular biological markers such as changes

in hormone patterns and the production of more “stress hormones” and the gradual depletion of the body’s energy resources.

In the Alarm stage the body recognizes a challenge or threat and goes into a “fight or flight” was actually first coined by Walter Cannon another important pioneer in modern stress theory. In resistant stage the body attempts to adopt to a challenging situation which is persisting. The coping or adaptation required physiological resources, which may eventually get depleted. If the Exhaustion stage occurs, the stressful challenge has persisted too long. The immune system is impaired, long term damage and illness result.

2.5.2 The Job Demands-Control Theory (JD-C)

The Demands-Control model (Karasek, 1979) is currently perhaps the most influential model of stress in the workplace (Kompier, 2003) and the original model focuses on the two (2) psychosocial job characteristics of job demands and job control. According to this theory, work stress occurs when job demands are high and job decision control is low (Hsieh, et al. 2014). The Job Demand-Control (JD-C) model (Karasek, 1979) is based on the proposition that the interaction between job demands and job control is the key to explaining performance outcomes. According to Karasek, the demand-control theory can effectively anticipate job performance. The theory proposed that when a person is under high work-demand and low work-control, some biological and psychological problems will occur and can lead to low job performance levels. When a person is under high work-demand and high work-control, he/she display more positive job performance levels. The concept of control has been recognised as an important component of the stress process.

From the JD-C model it is clear that job demands and job control interact in such a way that it creates different psychological work experiences for a person, depending on the respective amount of job demands and job control (Karasek, 1979). This theory is criticized on the basis that it only defines the basis of work load and not any other demand (Cox et al., 2000) and it assumes that the high control is always a desired state that can be argued. Some may not see that control in job is not always desired and some may even find low sense of self-effectiveness by seeing control of the stressor is just within (Mark and Smith, 2008). Nonetheless, the theory has been used in various studies on effects of job stress on employees' job performance, for example, Shikieri, et al. (2013) and Ahmed, 2013).

2.5.3 The Role Theory

Role Theory was developed in the 1960s and provides insight into the processes that distress the physical and emotional state of employees which in turn affects their workplace behaviour (Kahn, et al. 1964). As employee behaviour is directly connected to their work performance, understanding the determinants of employee's behaviour in the workplace can allow organizations to maximize employee performance (Ahmed & Ramzan, 2013). In order to fulfill expected service outcomes "over the last decade human service agencies in most western economies have undergone major organizational restructuring and redefinitions of professional roles" (Layn et. al., 2014). One of the basic buildings the role theory is that various occupational roles that a person engages in which may be stressful in spite of their actual occupation, suggesting that stress originates in a variety of work roles and may affect all workers. Layne (2001) described six roles that felt were stressful in spite of an individual's actual occupational choice. These six roles include: (i) role

ambiguity; (ii) role insufficiency; (iii) role overload; (iv) role boundary; (v) responsibility; and (vi) physical environment. However, it may also be important to note that the theory was developed in the 1960s in an organizational context that is markedly different and perhaps less complex than that experienced today. This theory has been adopted in such studies as Layne et al., (2014). However, Ahmed (2013) argues that while there is an agreement among researchers on the stress related terminologies adopted, it has been difficult for the scholars to develop a coherent theory on work stress.

2.6 Empirical Review

In this section of the study the researcher reviews some studies on the effects of workplace stress on the performance of employees. Along the years there have been quite a few studies on the area of workplace stress and how it affects the performance of employees and how it ultimately affects organizational performance. Below are a few studies showing this.

2.6.1 Level of Workplace Stress

Studies have also examined the level of stress in various occupations or working settings. In the banking industry, Karunanithy and Ponnampalam (2013) studied Commercial bank PLC employees in the Eastern Province of Sri Lanka and reported high level of stress among the employees. Karunanithy and Ponnampalam (2013) reported that the level of stress emanating from organizational factors was relatively higher than the level of stress resulting from job related and individual factors. Bano and Jha (2012) explored job-related stress and reported moderate levels of stress in both public and private sector employees. Malik (2011) also reported high occupational stress among 100 employees from public

banks and 100 from private banks. Kumari, Bajwa and Priya (2016) studied 300 respondents, 75 each from the entry level and middle level officers employed in the public sector and private sector banks of Uttarakhand region and revealed that the private bank officers had high stress as compared to public bank officers.

2.6.2 Effects of Workplace Stress on Employee Performance

Considering the enormous consequence of workplace stress on employee and organizational performance, scholars have attended to investigate the implications of workplace stress on employee performance. The empirical studies on the subject of workplace stress linkage with employee performance have produced inconsistent result. The generally reported linkage between workplace stress and employee performance is negative (e.g., Dar, Akmal, Naseem, and Khan, 2011; Yozgat, Yurtkoru & Bilginoglu, 2013; Khuong & Yen, 2016; Khan & Khurshid, 2017; Murali, Basit & Hassan, 2017.). Nonetheless, a limited number of researchers have also reported positive relationship between stressors and employee performance (De Silva & Thilakasiri, 2014).

Dar, Akmal, Naseem, and Khan (2011) studied the impact of workplace stress on employee performance through the survey of 143 employees of different multinational companies, universities and banks and showed that job stress brings about subjective effects such as feeling undervalued and workplace victimization/bullying, unclear role/errands, work-home interface, fear of joblessness, exposure the traumatic incidents at work and economic instability. Dar, Akmal, Naseem, and Khan (2011) further reported workplace stress to result in poor concentration, mental block and poor decision-making skills. Dar, Akmal,

Naseem, and Khan (2011) therefore reported negative relationship between Job stress and employees' job performance. Yozgat, Yurtkoru and Bilginoglu (2013) also studied 424 public sector employees to examine the relationship between job stress and job performance and reported negative relationship between workplace stress and employee performance. Sikuku, Wamalwa and Katiba (2017) studied the influence of organizational stress on the performance of the employees of the Kenya Forestry Research Institute (KEFRI) through descriptive survey of 191 employees reported that workplace was a key hindrance to employee performance. Workplace stress was reported to adversely affect productivity.

Jalagat (2017) studied 65 employees of Petroleum Development Oman (PDO) in Al-Bahja Center in order to examine the relationship between workplace stress and employee performance and reported that there is significant relationship between job stress and employee performance. The stressors reported to influence employee performance were underutilization of skills, work overload and role ambiguity. Murali, Basit and Hassan (2017) surveyed 136 employees from various sectors in the Malaysian economy and reported negative relationship between workplace stress and employee performance. Murali, Basit and Hassan (2017) reported that time pressure and role ambiguity have adverse effect on employee performance. Khuong and Yen (2016) studied the effects of job stress on employee job performance at Dong Xuyen Industrial Zone in Vietnam and reported that working factors had significant and positive influence on job stress and in contrast, job stress had negative influence on employee job performance.

In the health sector, Khan and Khurshid (2017) surveyed employees working at staff level in health care centers and hospitals in UAE and reported that workplace stress has negative impact on employee well-being. The high level of stress in the health sector is largely attributed to the demand nature of the industry. Ostraw (2011) reported that working for more than 11 hours can result into heart ailments thus negatively affecting employee's health and productivity levels. Shagvaliyeva and Yazdanifard (2014) stated that employee well-being, mental & physical and personal well-being, affects employee productivity and performance.

Priya and Soni (2017) studied 108 employees of the PNB Banks of Kangra District Himachal Pradesh in India and reported negative relationship between workplace stress and employee performance. Work overloads and time pressures were reported by Priya and Soni (2017) as the main stressors of the bankers. In the banking industry, Karunanithy and Ponnampalam (2013) also studied Commercial bank PLC employees in the Eastern Province of Sri Lanka and found that there is a negative relationship between stress and performance. Lopes and Kachalia (2016) also studied 80 employees in the banking industry in India and reported negative relationship between workplace stress and employee performance. Lopes and Kachalia (2016) also reported workoverload and time pressure as the key stressors in the banking industry in India. Shasheen et al. (2013) also found that stress is responsible for decreasing the performance of bank employees. Zafar, Ali, Hameed, Ilyas and Younas (2015) also studied 200 workers in the telecommunication industry in Pakistan and reported negative relationship between workplace stress and employee performance. Shahid, Khalid, Sohail and Ashraf (2011) surveyed 150 employees

in the banking sector of the District of Faisalabad in Pakistan and reported that all the components of stress such as Problematic Customer relations, co-worker relationship, riskiness of job and family-work relations cause great stress in bankers and then decrease their performance.

Munir and Rahman (2016) studied the relationship between work stressors and job performance and reported that role conflict and role ambiguity were positive stressors against the common notion while workload pressure, home-work interface, performance pressure and relationship with co-workers were negative stressors adversely affecting employee performance. Usman Ali et al. (2014) found that workload, role conflict, and inadequate monetary reward are the prime reasons of causing stress in employees that leads to reduced employee efficiency. Ahmed and Ramzan (2013) too found a negative correlation between stress and job performance. Ling and Bhatti (2014) investigated the relationship between workplace stress and employee performance through the survey of 215 administration staff in University Utara in Malaysia and reported negative relationship between workplace stress and employee performance. Goksel, Caz, Yazici and Ikizler (2017) surveyed 96 staff, including 36 women and 60 men of the Provincial Directorate of Youth and Sports of the Uskudar district in Istanbul in Turkey and reported negative relationship between workplace stress and employee performance. Ali and Abid (2015) studied the impact of stress antecedents on work stress and employee's performance through the survey of 180 managers and officers of public sector banks and showed that stress antecedents have a positive influence on work stress, and work stress has a negative impact on employee performance. Altangerel, Ruimei, Elahi and Dash (2015) in the study

of the effect of workplace stress on employee performance reported negative relationship between workplace stress and employee performance.

Nonetheless, De Silva and Thilakasiri (2014) studied the stress level of 67 Air Force officers and its consequence on performance and reported that there is a low positive relationship between stress and productivity. The result further indicated that over workload, excessive responsibility, poor relationship, meet deadline, and harassment are statically significant factors in predicting the level of stress in Air Force officers. Educational level and civil status are most significant demographic factors affecting the level of stress. Ullah and Khan (2017) also confirmed the negative relationship between workplace stress and employee performance through a survey of 227 faculty members of the universities of Malakand Division, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa in Pakistan. However, based on the reviewed empirical literatures, it is evident that the larger volume of researchers reports negative linkage between workplace stress and employees

2.7 Conceptual Framework of the Study

The conceptual framework of the study shows the various relationships in the study pictorially. Below the framework presents the independent variables which is basically stress that is divided into two forms namely the stress that comes from the individual or the stress emanating from the organizational level. Dependent variable in the framework was employee performance. Showing that stress experienced in the individual level and stress that is experienced in the organizational level has an impact on the performance of employees.

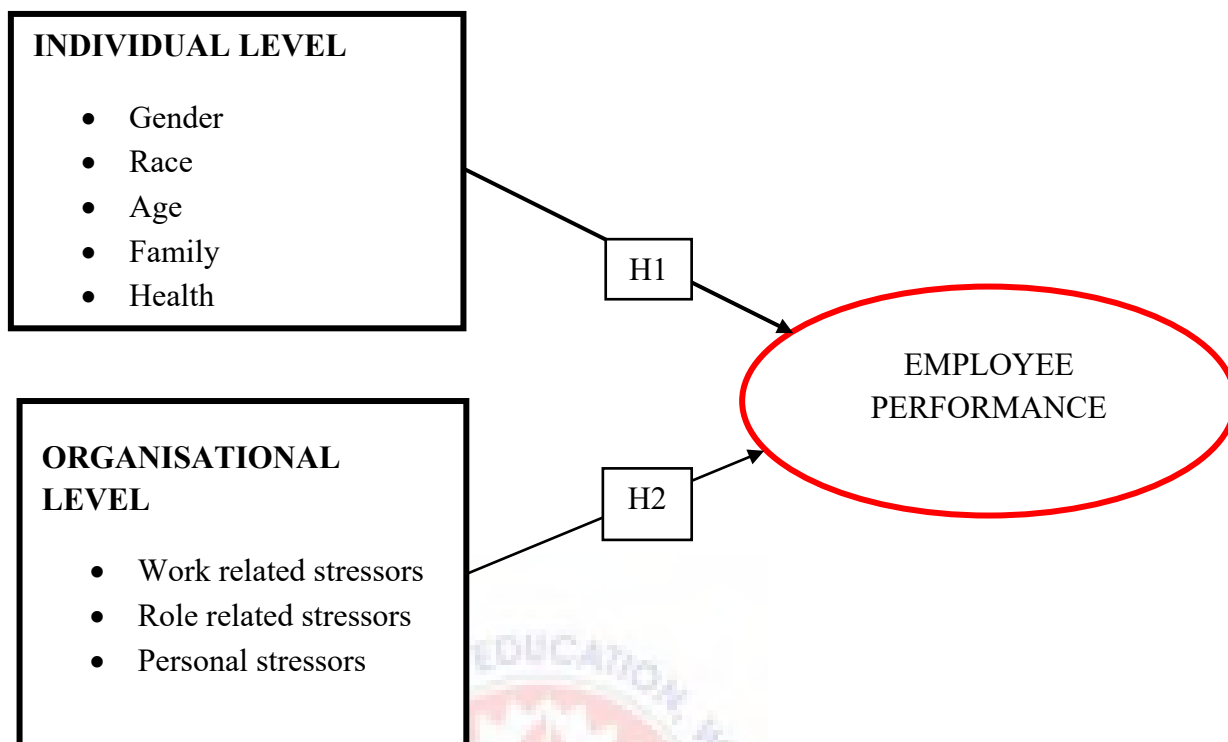


Figure 1: Conceptual framework of the study (Researchers conceptualization, 2018)

2.7.1 Individual Level Stress and Employee Performance

Anxiety is the most common stress condition by which memory researchers have examined memory performance (Eysenck, 1997). The negative effects of this stressor on working memory are well established (Ashcraft & Kirk, 2001; Eysenck, 1997). Ashcraft and Kirk (2001) also reported that individuals high in anxiety tend to be slower and more deliberate in their processing of various aspects of mathematical functions.

Age and developmental stage impact how individuals cope with stress. Most studies show that older adults differ in terms of approaches to coping with stress as compared with younger adults. Elderly adults are perceived to have less control over their environment than adults, which may adversely affect their coping (Aldwin, 1991). Looking specifically

at age differences in life satisfaction, perceived stress and coping resources among younger adults (18–40 years), middle-aged adults (41–65 years) and older adults (66 years and over), Hamarat et al. (2001) found that perceived stress decreased with age and that middle-aged and older adults reported more effective coping resources than younger adults. Also, for the two older adult groups, efficiency of coping resources was the best predictor of life satisfaction, while perceived stress was the best indicator for the younger adult group (Hamarat et al., 2001).

H1: Individual stress will affect the performance of employees in the organisation positively

2.7.2 Organisational Level Stress and Employee Performance

Time pressure has been found to degrade performance across a variety of cognitive domains. The range of performance domain that have been found to suffer under time pressure include: Judgment and decision making (Rothstein & Markowitz, 1982), visual search behavior, vigilance and attention processes (Wickens, Stokes, Barnett, & Hyman, 1991), Memory recall strategies (Campbell & Austin, 2002), concession making and integrative agreements (Rubin & Brown, 1975; Walton & McKersie, 1965), and subject's self-rating of performance (Greenwood-Ericksen & Ganey, 2002).

According to adverse working conditions and management practices as common causes of work stress. Stress-inducing management practices included unrealistic demands, lack of support, unfair treatment, low decision latitude, lack of appreciation, effort–reward imbalance, conflicting roles, lack of transparency and poor communication. Organisational

interventions were perceived as effective if they improved management styles, and included physical exercise, taking breaks and ensuring adequate time for planning work tasks. Personal interventions used outside of work were important to prevent and remedy stress.

Cercarelli and Ryan (1996) indicated that, fatigue involves a diminished capacity for work and possibly decrements in attention, perceptions, decision making, and skill performance. perhaps must simply put, fatigue may refer to feeling tired, sleepy, or exhausted (NASA, 1996). Wager, Feldman, Hussy (2003) found that employees who worked under two differently perceived supervisors in the same workplace has significant health effects. Some studies has identified links between problematic characteristic of work and an increased risk of cardiovascular disease effect with bullying and harsh supervision, and lower the blood pressure working with a favourably perceived supervisor

H2: Organisational stress will affect the performance of employees positively

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

The purpose of the study was to assess the effects of workplace stress on employee performance. The study however concentrated on employees in the Judicial Service of Ghana in Kumasi, Ashanti Region. This section of the study, is the methodology section which concentrates on the means that were used in the presentation of results and also talks about the various reasons that these methods were used. This section begins with the research design and continuous with sections such as population of the study, sample technique and sample size, method of data collection and method of data analysis.

3.1 Research Design

A research design is must contain items such as the purpose of the research, philosophy of the study, approach the study took, design of the study as well as the horizon of time (Saunders et al., 2000). In terms of the research purpose this study is primarily designed to be descriptive as well as explanatory (Cooper and Schindler, 2006). The study is explanatory due to the fact that the study seeks to discover as well as establish the relationships that may exist between the variables to be studied. The study was descriptive also because it sought to enquire into the various stressors that affect employees both individually and on an organizational level (Malhotra & Birks, 2007).

The study employed some theories to better explain the direction of the study. Thus, this study can be said to be more positivist than phenomenological in terms of its philosophy. The study is also a survey because it takes the opinions of the populace that was chosen

and also uses more quantitative means of analysis rather than qualitative. The study is also more of a cross sectional study than a longitudinal one, this is because the data for the study was collected from the respondents at one time and not at different time periods. The researcher also used a deductive approach to research instead of an inductive approach due to the theoretical backing of the subject in question. The study used the deductive approach rather than the inductive approach because the study has a theoretical backing and a hypothesis and a strategy is also developed to test or for verification (Malhotra & Birks 2007).

3.2 Population of the Study

The researcher used a population that consisted of all the employees of the high courts, Kumasi in the Central Business District of Kumasi in the Ashanti region of Ghana. Kumasi has a population of 1,468,609 and is thus the second largest city in the country behind Accra. The researcher considered different age groups as well as gender distributions to consist the population. The population consist therefore of all employees from the high courts in Kumasi and therefore may be found all around the central business district of Kumasi.

3.3 Sample size and Sampling Techniques

The total number of employees in the courts to be used as platforms for information were estimated to be ninety-eight (98) employees. However, for the sake of convenience and time constraints, the sample size of seventy (70) were chosen from the court.

In determining the sampling size, the researcher used the simple random sampling technique. Simple random sampling is the basic sampling technique where a researcher selects a group of subjects (a sample) for a study from a larger group (a population) (Cochran, 2007). Each individual is chosen by chance and each member of the population has an equal chance of being included. Here, the researcher wrote “yes” or “no” on pieces of paper that were folded, put in a container and mixed up together. One paper was picked at random. Respondents who picked a “yes” paper were included in the study whereas those who picked a “no” paper was not included. The sampling process was done without replacement. The papers were reshuffled after each draw. The researcher used the simple random sampling because he intended to select a representative without bias from the population (Saunders, Lewis & Thornhill, 2012).

3.4 Sources of Data Collection

The researcher collected data from both primary sources and secondary sources of data. In this section the researcher enumerates the details concerning the sought of primary and secondary data used in this study.

3.4.1 Primary Data

Primary sources of data consist of first-hand data sources that were collected for the main purpose of the study being done. Primary data sources may include data collected through questionnaires, interviews (structured, semi-structure and unstructured), observations, discussions, etc. (Amin, 2005). But in this case the researcher employed structured

questionnaires and in the questionnaire were only closed questions. This was done to maintain the level of consistency in the questions asked and also to reduce the level of bias.

3.5 Data Collection Instrument

According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2009), a researcher needs to develop instruments with which to use in collecting the required data. Therefore, in carrying out this study, the researcher employed questionnaire as the main research instrument. According to Creswell (2002), a questionnaire is a form used in a survey design that participants in a study complete and return to the researcher. This particular instrument was chosen because it makes it easier for the respondents to develop a sense of freedom and ease in responding to questions. The researcher used closed-ended questionnaires to gather data for the study. The questionnaire consisted of four main sections. These are: Section A Demographic data of the participants and 3 set of items for measuring the three (3) research questions. In all the questionnaire contained 23 items on a five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree to draw relevant information from the participants. The questionnaire had 9 question items under the variable organizational level stressors which were further divided into three to further measure the different components of the variable. The second and third variables also had seven items each for individual level stressors and coping strategies respectively.

3.6 Validity and Reliability of the Instrument.

The importance of a research instrument being both valid and reliable cannot be understated. According to Roberts et al., (2002), validity is the most important

consideration in developing and evaluation of measuring instruments. It is used to determine if an instrument measures what it is intended to measure. On the other hand, reliability is an extent to which any measuring procedure yields the same results on repeated trials (Marczyk, 2005). In order to ensure the validity of the questionnaire prepared for the study a draft copy was sent to the researcher's supervisor for a review in order to improve the content validity of the questionnaire. It was later piloted and after a few alterations were made from the observations of the respondents, the responses gathered showed clearly that respondents understood the questions as they were fully and well answered. Also, the questionnaire was simple and unambiguous to promote reliability. The study was further tested for reliability by using the Cronbach's Alpha. The Cronbach's Alpha is the measure of internal consistency, it shows how closely related a set of items are a group and this is the most common of all measures of reliability or internal consistency (Cronbach, 1951).

Table 1: Cronbach's Alpha of the respective variable items

Constructs	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Organizational Level Stressors	9	0.701
Individual Level Stressors	7	0.852
Coping Strategies Used	7	0.730
Composite	23	0.754

Alpha values are said to show reliability when they are above 0.70 thus it can be seen from the table above that all the items are above the required value and also the all the items combined that is the composite is 0.754.

3.7 Data Collection Procedure

The researcher obtained an introductory letter from the Department of Graduate Studies of the University of Education, Winneba which sought to introduce the researcher to the heads of the school and sought permission to carry out the administration of questionnaire. The letter indicated out the purpose of the study and ethical issues were recognized. The inclusion and exclusion criteria were established before collection of data commenced. This allowed the researcher to determine who to be included and excluded in the study.

One structured questionnaire was designed for the respondents. The questionnaires consisted of Likert scale questions which required respondents to tick to indicate their perception on performance appraisal where appropriate. The purpose of the study was explained to prospective respondents, their consent was sought and the questionnaire was self-administered to them and they were collected later within five days when they finished responding to them. This permitted participant to take time to contemplate about the questions before responding to them. Providing at least five days for respondents to think of responses has the tendency to result in reliable answers. To ensure that there was content validity with respects to the questionnaires the researcher conducted a pilot study. The researcher selected twenty (20) respondents out of the sample and tested the questionnaires on them. A few concerns were raised, the researcher corrected any typographical errors as well as other concerns raised.

3.8 Data Analysis

The completed questionnaires were sorted out for coding purpose. The codes on the questionnaire were categorized on the basis of similarities of information provided by the respondents. The organization of data was done according to research questions from which the conclusions were drawn. The information was tabulated and analyzed using descriptive statistics for the third objective and Pearson's correlation for the first and second objectives. The statistics were generated using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The information was later presented using tables for easy understanding and analysis.

3.9 Ethical Consideration

One significant constituent of field research is ethical requirement on the part of the researcher. The respondents have the right to decide whether to respond to questionnaire or not. As a result, declaration of the purpose was made, and the consent of the respondents was sought. To ensure confidentiality as well as anonymity of respondents, their names and identity were not disclosed. The researcher tried as much as possible to report every personal view of the respondents without imposing subjective biases in the interpretation of the data. The questionnaire items were simplified in tables to make them so 'friendly' to answer. This was done to ensure that respondents spent less time to respond to them.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS OF THE STUDY

The purpose of the study was to assess the effects of workplace stress on employee performance with concentration on the Judicial Service. This chapter presents the results of the study based on the data collected. The data was presented empirically under the following headings: demographic data and the presentation of data on the various research questions. The information was collected under four sections namely, sections A, B, C and D. The findings were however presented under the demographic data and then also presented under the various objectives that were stated in the first chapter. The findings were also discussed based on previous literature in the field of workplace stress.

4.1 Demographic Data of the Study

The background data concentrates on certain subjects such as the gender of the respondents, age range of respondents, educational level of the respondents, the range of employee's monthly income and finally the department that the employees work in. Below is the table that shows the results of the data collected.

Table 2: Demographic Data of the Study

Gender of respondents	Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
	Male	44	62.9
	Female	26	37.1
Age Group	Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
	Below 25 years	9	12.9
	25 to 35 years	44	62.9
	36 to 45 years	17	24.3
Academic Qualification	Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
	WASSCE/ SSSCE	18	25.7
	First Degree	43	61.4
	Master's Degree	9	12.9
Monthly Income	Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
	GhC100 to GhC500	10	14.3
	GhC501 to GhC1000	43	61.4
	GhC1001 to GhC1500	17	24.3
Department	Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
	Accounts Section	17	24.3
	Audit section	18	25.7
	Cashiers Section	8	11.4
	Regional Secretariats Section	10	14.3
	Court room Staff	17	24.3

Source: Researchers Fieldwork (2019)

Table 2 shows the demographic characteristics and shows that the study had forty-four (44) males and twenty-six (26) females representing 62.9% and 37.1% respectively. The Age group of the respondents showed that, nine (9) respondents were below the ages of 25 years representing 12.9%, forty-four (44) respondents were 25 to 35 years representing 62.9%

and finally in this category, seventeen (17) respondents were 36 to 45 years of age representing 24.3%. With respects to the academic qualification of the respondents, eighteen (18) of the respondents had WASSCE/SSSCE certificates representing 25.7%, forty-three (43) respondents had first degree representing 61.4% and finally, nine (9) respondents had a master's degree representing 12.9%. Results on the monthly income also showed that, ten (10) respondents earned an income of GhC100 to GhC500 representing 14.3%, forty-three (43) respondents earned GhC501 to GhC1000 representing 61.4% and respondents who received an income of GhC1001 to GhC1500 were seventeen (17) representing 24.3%. Finally, in this section the researcher sought to find out the departments the respondents work in and the results showed that, seventeen (17) were in the accounts section, eighteen (18) respondents were in the audit section, eight (8) were in the cashiers section, ten (10) respondents were in the regional secretariat section and seventeen (17) respondents were with the court room staff showing that they represented 24%, 25.7%, 11.4%, 14.3% and 24.3% respectively.

4.2 Presentation of Results on Research Questions

In this section of the study the researcher presents the various results of the study with respects to the research questions of the study. The study was guided by three research questions on, the effect of organizational level stress on the performance of the employees in the Kumasi Judicial Service, the effects of individual level stress on the performance of the employees in the Judicial Service, the coping strategies adopted by employees in the Judicial Service to reducing their stress levels. Each section below points out the results of one of the research questions, thus, this section further divided into three more sections.

4.2.1 The effect of organizational level stress on the performance of the employees in the Kumasi Judicial Service?)

With this research question the researcher sought to identify the effect of organizational level stress on the performance of the employees in the Kumasi Judicial Service. The items under the organizational level stressors were divided into work related stressors, role related stressors and personal stressors. The researcher used a correlation table to show the effects of organizational level stress on employee performance. Table 3 points out the results of the data collected on the first research question.

Table 3: Correlation of organizational level stress and the performance of employees

	Employee Performance
Organizational level stress factors	0.149
Sig. (2-tailed)	0.319
N	70

There is a positive non-significant correlation between organizational level stress factors and employee performance ($r = 0.149$, $p = 0.319$), suggesting that organizational level stress factors do not impact on individual employee performance. Given the magnitude of the correlation coefficients, this relationship is weak. This further points out that there is an effect of organizational level stress on employee performance but this effect is not significant enough to hinder performance.

4.2.2 The effects of individual level stress on the performance of the employees in the Judicial Service.

With this research question the researcher sought to identify the effect of individual level stress on the performance of the employees in the Judicial Service. In Table 4 a correlation of the various variables in question was done and the table shows the results.

Table 4: Correlation between individual level stress and employee performance

	Employee Performance
Individual level stress factors	0.483
Sig. (2-tailed)	0.136
N	70

There is a positive non-significant correlation between individual factors and employee performance ($r = 0.483$, $p = 0.136$), suggesting that individual level stress factors do not impact on employee performance. Given the magnitude of the correlation coefficients, this relationship is weak.

Coping strategies adopted by employees in the Judicial Service to reducing their stress levels

With this research question the researcher sought to find out the coping strategies adopted by employees in the Judicial Service to reducing their stress levels. Table 5 points out the results of the data collected on the first research question.

Table 5: Coping strategies used by employees in the Judicial Service

Coping strategies	SD (%)	D (%)	U (%)	A (%)	SA (%)	M	SDv
I attend social activities to release stress	8(11.4)	26(37.1)	17(24.3)	19 (27.1)	-	3.51	1.31
I relax myself by exercising and meditating	9(12.9)	9(12.9)	10(14.3)	25(35.7)	17(24.3)	3.37	1.41
I take drugs that help me relax during the day	26(37.1)	25(35.7)	19(27.1)	-	-	1.90	.80
I keep a time planner which helps me organise my day	9(12.9)	17(24.3)	27(38.6)	-	17(24.3)	3.61	1.23
I divide my work into levels of priority to help me concentrate on the most important ant at a time	9(12.9)	-	8(11.4)	44(62.9)	9(12.9)	3.76	.84
The organisation provides needed help to help cope in stressful situations (financial, legal advice, psychological)	8(11.4)	26(37.1)	-	9(12.9)	27(38.6)	3.30	1.56
The organisation takes care of the relationships in the organisation to create a good working environment	9(12.9)	9(12.9)	17(24.3)	26(37.1)	9(12.9)	3.24	1.22
Grand mean	9.3(12.4)	12.4(17.8)	10.9(15.5)	13.7(19.5)	8.7(12.5)	2.52	0.93s

SD – Strongly Disagree, D – Disagree, U – Uncertain, A – Agree, SA – Strongly Agree, M – Mean and SDv – Standard

deviation

Source: Researchers Fieldwork (2019) N=70

In Table 5, the results of the study showed that, with respects to how I attend social activities to release stress, eight (8) respondents strongly disagreed representing 11.4%, twenty-six (26) disagreed representing 37.1%, seventeen (17) respondents were uncertain representing 24.3%, nineteen (19) respondents agreed representing 27.1%. With regards to how I relax myself by exercising and meditating, nine (9) respondents strongly disagreed representing 12.9%, nine (9) disagreed representing 12.9%, ten (10) respondents were uncertain representing 14.3%, twenty-five (25) respondents agreed representing 35.7% and seventeen (17) respondents strongly agreed representing 24.3%. Concerning how I take drugs that help me relax during the day, twenty-six (26) respondents strongly disagreed representing 37.1%, twenty-five (25) disagreed representing 35.7%, nineteen (19) respondents were uncertain representing 27.1%. With respects to keeping a time planner which helps me organize my day, nine (9) respondents strongly disagreed representing 12.9%, seventeen (17) disagreed representing 24.3%, twenty-seven (27) respondents were uncertain representing 38.6% and seventeen (17) respondents strongly agreed representing 24.3%. With respects to how I divide my work into levels of priority to help me concentrate on the most important ant at a time, nine (9) respondents strongly disagreed representing 12.9%, eight (8) respondents were uncertain representing 11.4%, forty-four (44) respondents agreed representing 62.9% and nine (9) respondents strongly agreed representing 12.9%. With regards to The organisation providing the needed help to help cope in stressful situations (financial, legal advice, psychological) , eight (8) respondents strongly disagreed representing 11.4%, twenty-six (26) disagreed representing 37.1%, nine (9) respondents agreed representing 12.9% and twenty-seven (27) respondents strongly agreed representing 38.6%. With how the organisation takes care of the relationships in the

organisation to create a good working environment, nine (9) respondents strongly disagreed representing 12.9%, nine (9) disagreed representing 12.9%, seventeen (17) respondents were uncertain representing 24.3%, twenty-six (26) respondents agreed representing 37.1% and nine (9) respondents strongly agreed representing 12.9%.

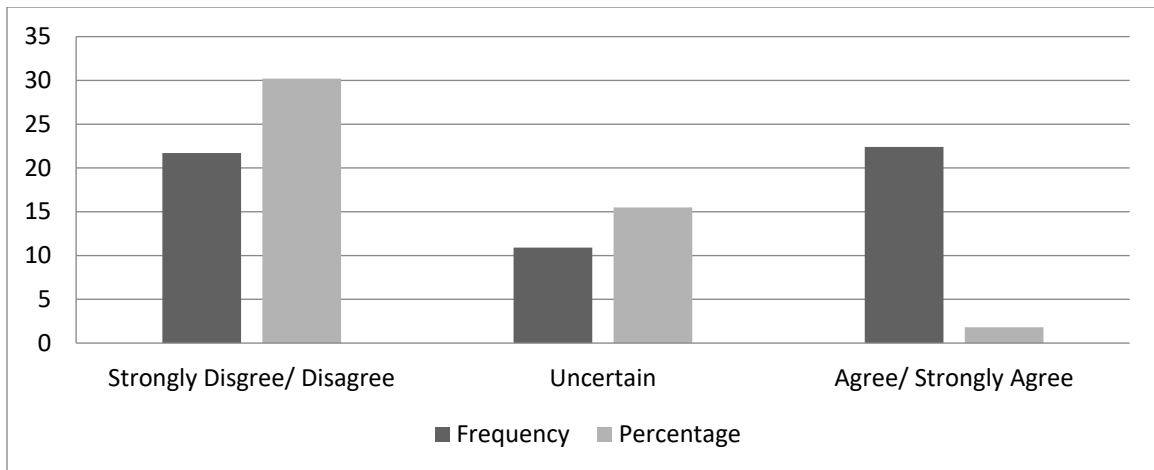


Figure 2: Summary of results on coping strategies used in the Judicial Service

The summary of results in this section with regards to coping strategies shows that the employees of the Judicial Service use some sought of coping strategies in the mitigation of stress and also proves the existence of stress. The results showed that, the number of respondents who strongly agreed and agreed were 21.7 (30.2%), the number of respondents that were neutral were 10.9 (15.5%) and the respondents that disagreed and strongly disagreed were 22.4 (32%).

4.3 Discussion of the Results

In this section of the study, the researcher sought to present a summary of the findings of the study and discuss the findings presented based on the past studies. The discussion was divided into three parts in accordance to the research questions of the study.

4.3.1 Effect of organizational level stress on the performance of the employees in the Kumasi Judicial Service

The results of the study with respects to the first research question showed a positive non-significant correlation between organizational level stress factors and employee performance ($r = 0.149$, $p = 0.319$), suggesting that organizational level stress factors do not impact on individual employee performance. Given the magnitude of the correlation coefficients, this relationship is weak. This further points out that there is an effect of organizational level stress on employee performance but this effect is not significant enough to hinder performance.

Literature in the area of workplace stress have shown mostly that organizational level stressors play a big role in the overall stress rate and ultimate performance of employees in various organisations (Bashir, U., & Ismail Ramay, 2010) but it seems that in the Judicial Service this result is rather the opposite. Kennedy (2009) points out that the Judicial Service of Ghana is quite a busy place to be in terms of the job. All legal issues that go on in the country go through the service either in full or in part. Thus, there seems to be competition in the field of career advancement, sometimes there is conflicting information delivered to employees and so on, these factors are bound to offer some stress to the employees and

also affect their ability to work at their utmost best. Rose (2003) also added to literature in this area by showing that, in every organization and at every level of management and workers an elevated average level of stress is to be found which mostly caused by organizational factors and can have an effect on employee's performance. He points out that there are four main contribution to stress which may affect employee performance these are work conflicts, resource inadequacy, work overload and work ambiguity this measure was designed. This scale evaluates psychological indications of stress, such as feeling of overburdened with work, not having the adequate resources and tools to complete given tasks or projects, and usually being incapable to handle all of the work. In many studies, the items have been used to form subscales for role uncertainty, role overload, and resources insufficiency (Shirom & Mayer, 1993). Thus, this proves the first part of the result that shows that there exists a positive correlation between organizational level stress.

Though the results of the study with respects to objective one showed a positive correlation between organizational level stress and employee performance, it also showed that the significance level was low. Which in other terms meant that even though organisational level stress has some impact on the performance level of the employees that impact is not really telling on the performance of the employees in the Judicial service. This is shown in literature by scholars such as Betts (1994) argued that the causes of work stress vary among individuals since they come from different backgrounds. These stressors may cause the employee to work and give their best even though they are stressors that affect them at work. According to some of the experts, organizational stress although present at all

organisations eventually helps to improve the performance by motivating the employees. For example, organizational level stress can eventually trigger the passion of the employees and motivate them to perform well in the job that they were supposed to do (Ibtisam, Gichinga & Anwar, 2015).

4.3.2 The effect of individual level stress on the performance of the employees in the Kumasi Judicial Service

Results of the study with respects to this research question showed that, there was a positive non-significant correlation between individual factors and employee performance ($r = 0.483, p = 0.136$), suggesting that individual level stress factors do not impact on employee performance. Given the magnitude of the correlation coefficients, this relationship is weak. Thus, disapproving the hypothesis H2 of the study.

Individual stressors have had a mixed reaction in terms of results from past studies. This is because such factors although are very disruptive to the organization some scholars point out that some of the individual level stressors are quite controllable and may be employee specific thus may have less of an effect on the performance of employees (Dwamena, 2012). Although the above result seems to be true in some proportions it can not be disputed that the spine of every organization is the people who work in it thus any stress that may affect the employees mostly will end up affecting the ability of the employees to be productive. According to the study made by Kirkcaldy & Martin (2000) employees experience stress due to various reasons. Mainly stress has been associated with important issues namely the individual level of stress in the organisation. These include factors such

as organizational climate as well as occupational consequences of job contentment, organizational loyalty and behavioral aspects of employees. For example, remarkable occupational environment of doctors and nurses in hospitals dealing with wound, death and dying in regular basis. (Fairbrother & Warn, 2003).

A study by Beehr, Jex, Stacy & Murray (2000) found the relationship between occupational stressors and the performance of employees of an organization as well as it can affect the employees psychologically. They pointed an association between job stress and job performance between managers and blue-collar employees. Stress on job was stated as the outcome of an individual due to the working environment from which he feels unsecured. Fonkeng (2018) also points out that working with different people in a working environment requires lots of dealings and interaction with them as they work as a team. An employee may face difficulty in understanding other people in the team and this may strain the working relationship and subsequently result in increase in the stress level thus causing lower levels of performance.

4.3.3 What are the coping strategies adopted by employees in the Judicial Service to reducing their stress levels?

Results on the third research question which concentrated on the coping strategies used showed that respondents strongly agreed to help from the organization to cope (38.6%) as a coping strategy. Also, the respondents agreed to items such as attending of social activities (27.1%), the use of exercise and meditation (35.7%), division of work in terms of priority (62.9%) and the organization taking care of relationships so as to create a good

working condition (37.1%). The respondents however disagreed to the taking of legal drugs such as anti-depressants or sleeping pills as a coping strategy used (35.7%). Thus, showing an existence of the use of coping strategies in the Judicial Service.

Many studies have stated categorically that there is an existence of stress in every organization no matter the industry that the business is in or the type of business conducted there (Lazarus, 1995; Hobfoll & Shirom, 2001). If the statement above is to be considered then there is the need to consider that employees use some strategies to cope in the midst of these stressful situations. Literature has pointed out that these coping strategies could be conducted by the organization or by the individual without the organisations help (Mikkelsen & Burke, 2004). Department of Health and Human Services (2008) points out that the use of physical activity as a good coping strategy. Examples of such activities are (walking, cycling to work, doing household, gardening etc.), active recreational activities (walking or cycling for recreation, dancing etc.) or sport (exercise and fitness training at a gym, competitive sports such as football, tennis etc.). A study by Topper (2007) also pointed out that the employee normally copes in stressful instances by the use of activities such as physical exercise, relaxation through meditation, attending of social activities and the prioritization of work. They point out that they use of drugs is only for extreme cases thus not common.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

5.0 Introduction

The purpose of the study was to assess the effects of workplace stress on employee performance. The study however concentrated on employees in the Judicial Service of Ghana in Kumasi, Ashanti Region. This section of the study presents the summary of the study which includes the summary of the study and the summary of the results, the study also presented a conclusion based on the findings and the researcher presented a few recommendations and implications of the study.

5.1 Summary of Findings

The results of the study were divided based on the research questions of the study which were What is the effect of organizational level stress on the performance of the employees in the Kumasi Judicial Service , what are the effects of individual level stress on the performance of the employees in the Judicial Service , what are the coping strategies adopted by employees in the Judicial Service to reducing their stress levels? The results were as follows

- The results of the study with regards to the first research question showed that, a positive non-significant correlation exists between organizational level stress factors and employee performance ($r = 0.149$, $p = 0.319$), suggesting that organizational level stress factors do not impact on individual employee

performance. Given the magnitude of the correlation coefficients, this relationship was shown to be weak.

- Results with respects to the second research question showed that, there is a positive non-significant correlation between individual factors and employee performance ($r = 0.483$, $p = 0.136$), suggesting that individual level stress factors do not impact on employee performance. Given the magnitude of the correlation coefficients, this relationship is weak.
- The final research question revealed that, that respondents strongly agreed to help from the organization to cope (38.6%) as a coping strategy. Also, the respondents agreed to items such as attending of social activities (27.1%), the use of exercise and meditation (35.7%), division of work in terms of priority (62.9%) and the organization taking care of relationships so as to create a good working condition (37.1%). The respondents however disagreed to the taking of legal drugs such as anti-depressants or sleeping pills as a coping strategy used (35.7%). Thus, showing an existence of the use of coping strategies in the Judicial Service.

5.2 Conclusions of the Study

The findings of the study showed that, stress exist in organizational level and the individual level as well. It was shown that organizational level stress has a positive non-significant effect on the performance of employees in the organization and also individual level stress has a positive non-significant effect on employee performance. The findings also revealed that employees in the Judicial Service have some levels of stress and thus use some coping strategies to assist in the management. This study thus concludes that stress has an effect

on the performance of employees in the Judicial Service in Kumasi however the employees in the judicial service seem to be masking the stress. This could be possible due to the fact that not all the factors were researched thus, and can will be a good reference for researchers in the field of stress.

5.3 Recommendations and Implications of the Study

A few recommendations and implications were pointed out as follows

- It is recommended that the management of the Judicial Service consider the results of the study in providing education on the effects of stress on the performance of the employees thus the education should be tailored towards the promotion of stress management in the organizational level as well as at the individual level and also the promotion or education of the various leaders on the use of coping strategies in the organization.
- Further recommendations are made to the policy makers of the industry and the country as a whole. On the basis of the results of the study presented, policy makers can use this to bring out policies on work such as hours of work, breaktime, recreational breaks, leave days and so on.
- It is also recommended that, proper and healthy working conditions to be provided along with all required resources and information. Further, task and duties to be assigned only on the basis of their competencies and interest.
- Although there seem to be some interventions in the alleviation of stress by management, Organizations can also use few more interventions for stress

management namely regular counseling sessions, time management and behavioural training, employee wellness program and sessions like art of living etc.

- Finally, it is recommended that, strong career planning and development for all the employees to make them satisfied and motivated at work and also before assigning any role to employees, they should be first coached on how to accomplish the task so as to promote clarity.

5.4 Suggestions for Further Research

Since the research was done within Judicial Service workers in Ghana emphasizing the effects of stress on their performance at the workplace, further studies could perhaps in future the research on other industries (oil and gas or banking) that has massive expectations on employee performance, would be recommended. Future researchers could also explore other independent variables that affect employee performance in the workplace such as (conditions of work, training and development, motivation and so on). The study concentrated on the individual level stressors and the organizational level stressors but these factors may not fully encapsulate stress in the organisation thus other variables of could be researched. Finally, a comparative study could be done by researchers in the field using organisations in different industries or in different geographic areas.

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APPENDIX

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA – KUMASI CAMPUS (UEW-K)

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR EMPLOYEES

Dear Sir/Madam,

I am an MBA student of the University of Education, Winneba – Kumasi Campus. I wish to seek your assistance in the completion of this questionnaire on your perception towards the **EFFECT OF WORKPLACE STRESS ON EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE**. This study is for academic purposes only and the data you provide will help to determine the effect of workplace stress on employee performance in the Judicial Service of Ghana. You are not under obligation to complete this survey, participation is highly appreciated and responses will be kept confidential. Please your identity and responses will not be disclosed. It will take about 10 to 15 minutes to fill this questionnaire. Thank you for your assistance.

DEFINITION OF TERMS: *In this study, WORKPLACE SSTRESS refers to the harmful physical and emotional responses that can happen when there is a conflict between job demands on the employee and the amount of control an employee has over meeting these demands.*

Please tick [] the appropriate box for your responses to the questions

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

1. Please indicate your gender. [] male [] female

2. Please indicate your age group? below 25 yrs 25 – 35 yrs
36 – 45yrs 46 – 55yrs 56 +
3. What is your highest academic qualification? WASSCE/ SSCE
Technical Certificate Diploma/HND First degree
Master’s degree Doctorate (PhD / Dr.)
4. Please indicate the range of your monthly income. less than GhC100
 GhC100 - 500 GhC501 – GhC1000 GhC1001 - 1500
GhC1501 and above
5. Please indicate the department you work in.
 Accounts section Audit section Cashiers section
Regional secretarial section Judicial Training section
Court room Staff

Use this scale: 1 – Strongly Disagree, 2 – Disagree, 3 – Neutral, 4 – Agree, 5 – Strongly Agree

SECTION B: EFFECT OF ORGANISATIONAL LEVEL STRESS ON THE PERFORMANCE OF EMPLOYEES.

To what extent do the following organizational level stressors affect your performance

	Work Related stressors	Tick only one for each				
1.	Nature of work	1	2	3	4	5
2.	Lack of career prospects in the organisation	1	2	3	4	5
3.	Insufficient information to work with	1	2	3	4	5
4.	Poor working conditions	1	2	3	4	5

Role related stressors						
5.	Over expectations from supervisor and management	1	2	3	4	5
6.	Role ambiguity	1	2	3	4	5
7.	Role overload	1	2	3	4	5
Personal stressors						
8.	Conflicts within the organisation or within the department	1	2	3	4	5
9.	Ineffective communications with colleagues and superiors	1	2	3	4	5

SECTION C: EFFECT OF INDIVIDUAL LEVEL STRESS ON THE PERFORMANCE OF EMPLOYEES.

To what extent do the following Individual level stressors affect your performance

Individual level stressors		Tick only one for each				
1	Personal time management	1	2	3	4	5
2	Coping ability with respects to job and family demands	1	2	3	4	5
3	Confidence level in ability to work	1	2	3	4	5
4	Personal conflicts and relationship issues inside and outside the organisation	1	2	3	4	5
5	Personal crises or problems	1	2	3	4	5
6	Age limitations in terms of my exclusion from some events and benefits due to my age	1	2	3	4	5
7	Health issues affecting my ability to work	1	2	3	4	5

SECTION D: COPING STRATEGIES ADOPTED BY EMPLOYEES IN THE JUDICIAL SERVICE.

To what extent does the use of these coping strategies help reduce stress

	Coping strategies	Tick only one for each				
1	I attend social activities to release stress	1	2	3	4	5
2	I relax myself by exercising and meditating	1	2	3	4	5
3	I take drugs that help me relax during the day	1	2	3	4	5
4	I keep a time planner which helps me organise my day	1	2	3	4	5
5	I divide my work into levels of priority to help me concentrate on the most important ant at a time	1	2	3	4	5
6	The organisation provides needed help to help cope in stressful situations (financial, legal advice, psychological)	1	2	3	4	5
7	The organisation takes care of the relationships in the organisation to create a good working environment	1	2	3	4	5