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Abstract

Academic job is filled up with burnout enablers (stressors) which many people could not comprehend at a glance. So, the purpose of this review paper is to offer a synoptic stance or view of academic job stressors among teaching staff of tertiary institutions across the globe and to make suggestions for future studies in the higher education setting. During this appraisal, thirty-eight online journals and reports on the subject matter were reviewed. Among all papers reviewed or evaluated, it is an only insignificant number of them; 8 papers representing 21.05%, whose findings revealed that academic job is juicy filled with privileges and there was no stressor among teaching-staff, while the majority, pooling 30 reviewed papers representing 78.95% opposed the claims thereby, revealing that there were significant stressors among teaching-staff of tertiary institutions across the globe incubating by the academic job. In this paper, the stressors are diverse but were classified into the interpersonal relationship, research, teaching/lecturing, career development/salaries/wages and facilities/equipment. In this context, direction for future studies is suggested among others; future studies are required to examine or bring out the root causes of the regular disagreement between the management of tertiary institutions and their teaching staff to ease and tame tensions in the higher education settings.

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Introduction

Academic job is not as juicy as said or held. It is a professional occupation done in the schools, colleges, polytechnics and universities whose job description hinges either on teaching or research or the combination of the two depending on the terms of the employment. It is a wider profession that involves teaching, research, administrative tasks and even extracurricular activities such as community services unlike other professions (The University of Edinburgh, 2016; Collins, 2020). Peoples' perception of the academic job is that it is filled with incredible motivations and it is less burnout and juicy. For example, prompt promotions, encouraging allowances-and-salary structure, good working time and holidays are attached to the job (European Commission, 2019). It further illustrated that the lecturers whom Glossary of Statistics Term (2003) and Collins (2020), described as those members of staff in schools; colleges, polytechnics or universities who teach, using all advanced designs or methods of teaching and instruction, work five days, eight hours a day or only forty hours a week and enjoy the privilege of 30-minutes lunch break includes in the working hours and even 17 students per 1 teacher as of 2014/2015 academic session.

In collaboration, lecturer-students ratio, according to, the Benchmark Minimum Academic Standards in Science use to be 1:20, Engineering 1:15, Medicine 1:10, Veterinary Medicine 1:10, Pharmacy 1:10, Management Science 1:30, Agricultural Science 1:15, Environmental Science 1:15, Social Science 1:30, Law 1:30, Art 1:30, 1:25 in Postgraduate Diploma In Education (PGDE), Education 1:30 and Administration 1:30 (National Universities Commission [NUC] of Nigeria, 2007; Arubayi, 2009; Teacher Registration Council of Nigeria, 2010; National Commission for Colleges of Education [NCCE], 2012).

Academics Anonymous Universities (2018), reported that an academic job is employment in which people do what they love and want; academia has a plentiful supply of flexible labour with no worry. Besides the annual leave of the academic staff, they equally enjoy an additional paid leave following illness, care of a family member, preparation for and sitting the teaching certification examination, a wedding, the birthday of a child, death in the family and a host of others (European Commission, 2019). Also, Akinfolarin and Gabriel (2014), affirmed through their recommendations that the university managers should continue to provide adequate chances for professional growth and research development availability of institutional facilities, a good relationship with the academic staff and the prompt payment of lecturers' salaries which are observed to ease stress and further advance their performance.

However, it is presumptuous to appreciate and realize that an academic job does not reflect how it ostensibly sounds to many people. Blaskova and Blasko (2014), disclaimed all those privileges and claims people linked with the academic job that academic staff seemed to be enjoying by asserting that the motivation of academic staff is not as strong and smooth as it may seem at first glance. Also, a testimony is given in a report which states that "now I am inside the university system teaching, I can see clearly how exploitive it is unlike when I was not part of the system" (Academic Anonymous Universities, 2018). These statements usher in the findings of lots of studies across the globe that purposefully investigated the above claims linked to the teaching staff of tertiary institutions. In the review, the findings of those

verifying studies rejected the claims and privileges, hence they revealed that there were a lot of stressors than motivations associated with the academic job which the teaching-staff of tertiary institutions are passing through leading them to burnout and death by inches.

For example, Academics Anonymous Universities (2018), reported job insecurity, underpayment, teaching, overload, research and extracurricular activities are the stressors of the lecturers in higher education. It further advanced that more than half of the lecturers in the United Kingdom (UK) higher education were on precarious contracts. Furthermore, lecturers are bombarded with numerous duties and responsibilities seemed to be stressors such as timely lectures/teaching, tutorial, consultations, exams, mentoring to students writing graduate theses, updating studying programmes, preparing study materials, marking of the scripts and assessing students' practical works and lots more (European Commission, 2019).

Moreover, the stressors of the university teaching-staff include high expectations from the students, funding, countless and multiple job responsibilities (research, teaching, community services and administrative tasks) and education as a business due to the license and orientation of the private universities and colleges these days (Sabarudin & Arnifa, 2015). Zafir and Sheikh (2013a & b), reported that work-relationship, work-life balance, job overload, job control, job security, pay & benefit, resources and communication are verified to be stressors of the academic staff in any given higher institution of learning.

So, stressors could be situations seen to be experienced and perceived threats to an individual's well-being or job (Centre for Studies on Human Stress, 2019; Scott & Gans, 2020). Stressors are the sole causation of stress in all conditions in a human being. From all indications, the school, college or university; the academic environment is no longer friendly and supportive (less challenging) working atmosphere which the teaching-staff enjoyed then (Zafir & Sheikh, 2013a). In this paper, to counter and dispute the notion that academic job is a flexible and juicy job, stressors among teaching-staff of tertiary institutions are classified into and reviewed under the following headings:

Interpersonal relationship

This implies the rapport or emotional bond between or among academic staff of tertiary institutions and students, university/polytechnic/college management, Head of Department/Head of the unit, colleagues and non-teaching staff (Archibong, Basse & Effiom, 2010). According to the finding of Nnabuife, Onyeizugbe and Onwuka (2012), whose study was conducted in Nigeria on stress management and occupational performance among female lecturers, interpersonal relationship is a stressor among lecturers; often result from difficulties in developing and maintaining relationships within themselves and other people such as non-teaching colleagues, students, even subordinates in the university environment. Another study conducted in Ghana by Hinneh, Kwaku and Gyaki (2014), on stress among academic staff of the University of Education, its findings revealed that lack of cordial staff relation was one of the stressors among academic staff in the university.

Moreover, Nnabuife *et al.* (2012), found academic politics as the predictor of the poor interpersonal relationship among academicians in the tertiary institutions was a stressor among them. The University of Cambridge (2013), in its study, reported that many jobs demand regular contact with other people at work; poor or unsupportive relationships with colleagues or supervisors can be a potential source of pressure to workers such as lecturers. Its finding further revealed aggressive management style, lack of support from others, isolation, aversive behaviour; for example, bullying and harassment, lack of understanding and leadership, manage forever finding fault, others not pulling their weight, others take credit for personal achievement and direct poor relationship with colleagues as the factors predicting unfriendly relationship among teaching-staff in the colleges.

The finding of a study by Ukwai, Uko and Udida(2013), in River State, revealed that 10.66% of academic staff indicated that absenteeism was a stressor to them while doing their job. The finding of a study conducted in Otukpo Urban, Benue State, Nigeria by Arusiosi, Inedu and Yusuf (2004), revealed that 15% of the respondents indicated a lack of co-operation from administrators and colleagues precipitated stress in them. A study that investigated stress among secondary school teachers in Ekiti State, Nigeria by Ekundayo and Kolawole (2013), revealed that 83.3% of the respondents agreed that poor relation with subordinates is another source of stress. The finding of a study carried out in Malaysia by Zafirand Sheikh (2013a & b), on stress among academicians, revealed that relationship and work-life balance are the stressors among subjects. The finding of a study conducted by Tytherleigh, Webb, Cooper and Ricketts (2005), on occupational stress in the United Kingdom (UK) higher education institutions: a comparative study of all staff categories, revealed that job security was the major stressor among participants.

Research

Research is an aspect of the academic job that supposes to attract unsolicited sponsorships, however, the finding of Archibong *et al.* (2010), whose study was on occupational stress sources among university academic staff, sourcing for research grants, conceptualizing research problems, linkage to other professionals in one's research discipline, the publication of finished articles or access to relevant literature is pressure on its own to academic staff for a good job to be done. Archibong *et al.* (2010), further found that career development with a mean of 13.14 as first job stressor in the ranking, research with mean of 12.28 takes second position, interpersonal- relations with a mean value of 11.92 comes third, while teaching has 11.63 as the fourth position.

In a related study conducted in Nigeria by Nwakpa (2015), it was found that inadequate funding of research projects and difficulty in accessing the research grants are major miseries (stressors) among academicians in Nigeria. Nwakpa (2015), in his study further found that research infrastructure in tertiary institutions in Nigeria is grossly inadequate and generally out of date otherwise obsolete, work-shops, librarians and laboratories are ill-equipped and obsolete educational equipment and facilities are research-stressors among academic staff of tertiary institutions in Nigeria. His findings further revealed that there was a significant shortage of skilled manpower to manage Information Communication Technology (ICT) equipment or facilities effectively in the nation's higher institutions to gear up and aid research among

researchers and the introduction innovation (the use of electronic statistical packages, using a computer) combined to be a stressor among lecturers.

It is revealed that the academic staff viewed research as a whole as one of their major stressors hence such single exercise takes a lot of their resources to be completed and upon these rigorous exercises, this region of the world neither care nor regard the research findings for the national development(Nwakpa, 2015). This nonchalant and dispassionate attitude towards research brings the morale of academic staff of tertiary institutions down and such is a stressor to them. The finding of Ekundayo and Kolawole (2013), equally revealed 81.1% of the respondents agreed that late payment of teachers' salary is a source of stress to teachers that affects their effort in research activity. According to Omoniyi (2013), in her study which was conducted among university lecturers in Southwest, Nigeria, her finding revealed that poor research incentives and students' project supervision representing 87.35% and 77.52% respectively were the stressors among university lecturers. Researches go with motivation. The finding of a study by Blaskova and Blasko (2014), on the motivation process of university teachers, revealed a low level of motivation among teachers in all manner of treatments.

Teaching

Teaching which supposes to be done with joy hence, it is a call, has turned to be a stressor among teachers. The finding of Archibong *et al.* (2010), revealed that teaching or lecturing as an act involves collation of results, marking of exam scripts, developing of course contents, examination setting, and deciding on the appropriate method for lesson/lecture presentations are stressors among teaching-staff of higher education of learning. Following the finding of Braimoh (2009), whose work was carried out in Nigeria, teaching is a stressor among teachers hence the occupation is flexible and dynamic thereby tolerating constant changes that destabilize the normal order and organization of the body system of the teaching-staff. In this light, a study put it that despite the change in the educational system all over the world, some Nigerian lecturers still prefer to hold on to their crude and traditional methods of teaching or doing things to avoid destabilization in their body system (Nwakpa, 2015).

Also, the findings of Egu, Ogbonna, Obike and Obiuto (2014), who worked on managing stress among lecturers in polytechnics of Southeast, Nigeria, revealed among others that poor teaching and laboratory tools are real stressors among teaching-staff in the university, hence lack of teaching facilities recorded mean of 3.10, poorly equipped laboratory/technical workshop had mean of 2.90, overstretched class enrolment had mean of 2.90 and the need to meet-up with departmental deadline pooled mean of 3.50, while poor office accommodation generated a mean of 3.50. Stuffy lecture rooms with poor seating arrangement for students scored the mean of 3.40.

The finding of a study by Uche (2007), on globalization and higher education in Southern-Nigeria, revealed that teaching was a stressor to the academic staff looking at the students' population explosion on campuses and some innovations recently introduced in the polytechnics especially in the area of Computer Science and Entrepreneurship. Following the above, the findings of Akinsanya and Akinsanya

(2015), who studied the influence of some demographic factors on job satisfaction on academic staff in tertiary institutions in Ogun State, Nigeria, revealed that 12.22% of the participants indicated that lack of annual leave was their major stressor besides 8.00% and 7.00% of them who indicated it was lack of resources and workload respectively.

In this order, the finding of a study conducted in Malaysia by Sabarudin and Arnifa (2015), revealed that high expectations from the students, financial constraints, countless job responsibilities and education as a business are the stressors associated with the teaching staff of the tertiary institution. The finding of Zafir and Sheikh (2013a), revealed that job overload and communication are stressors among academicians. Muthukalyani (2018), whose study was conducted in Tirunelveli district, India, found teaching as the major stressor among academicians; hence it involves the latest technology and day-to-day updates. The findings of a study by Sajuyigbe, Madu-Igwe and Babalola (2015), in Ibadan, Nigeria revealed that workload, overseeing the conduct of examination, time pressure, compilation of examination results and students' indiscipline are the major stressors among academic staff of University of Ibadan. Watts and Robertson (2011), whose study was conducted in the United States of America, found that the teaching staff in the university were exposed to high numbers of students to be handled or taught at the same time.

Nevertheless, the Benchmark Minimum Academic Standards as official recommendations are not so in Nigerian tertiary institutions and such perhaps could be happening in other parts of the world (Arubayi, 2009). In this light, Bala (2013), reported that the teacher-student ratio in tertiary institutions in Katsina State is estimated to be 1:500. Egu *et al.* (2014), reported that the demand for education has become high; this results in over admission in most of the Polytechnics and Colleges of Education leading to overpopulation and such is a stress leading factor to the college teachers.

Career development/salary/wages

Career development includes sourcing funds for career development, university conditions/provisions for professional development, linkage to avenues of professional development, having the required publications for promotion and obtaining the required qualifications (Archibong, *et al.*, 2010). The process of getting all these things done to achieve a purpose in an academic surrounding has become a source of stress to the academicians. The finding of Nwakpa (2015), revealed that mismanagement and fraudulent practices are the problems facing career development among teaching-staff in Nigeria setting. The finding of a study conducted in Ekiti State, Nigeriaby Ekundayo and Kolawole (2013), on stress among secondary school teachers, revealed that 46.1% of subjects agreed that their monthly salary is insignificant for them as they finish spending it before the next month's salary will be paid. Ajayi, Awosusi, Arogundade and Ekundayo (2011), whose study was carried in Southwest, Nigeria, found that the teaching profession is faced with a stressor such as an underpayment; hence it is not being given the necessary priority as expected. Tarver (2007), in his study, found that the youngest and smartest people are moving away from being lecturers due to the under-payment considered as a stressor among them.

Also, Ajayi *et al.* (2011), in their study, found that it is the consequences of a stressor such as under-payment that pushed the class instructors (lecturers) into an arbitrary award of marks, examination malpractices and a trace of abandoning their academic job for contracts and political appointments deemed to pay better. Furthermore, the finding of Zafir and Sheikh (2013b), showed that job security and pay & benefits are stressors among academicians. In collaboration, Mojeed (2020), reported the declaration of the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) president whose members are currently on strike due to the Federal Government new policy on salaries and wages. The ASUU president stated that the crisis was not yet over and that the members should be prepared for continued opposition to the deployment of the Integrated Payroll and Personnel Information System (IPPIS) for the payment of their wages. In the context of this paper, IPPIS is a stressor to the ASUU members. Besides, the work of Akinfolarin and Gabriel (2014), in Adekunle Ajasin University, Ondo State, Nigeria, the finding revealed that 60.00% of the respondents agreed that there was a lack of provision of regular payment of salary and other remuneration by the head.

Facilities and equipment

Facilities and equipment include electric supply, internet services, office accommodation, office seats and tables, instructional tools, convenient room, water supply and many others. When these facilities or equipment are in short supply, the situation becomes a stressor to the teaching staff in the tertiary institutions. Incessant power failure does not support meaningful research activities in higher institutions of learning especially in Nigeria (Nwakpa, 2015). The finding of a study by Ekundayo and Kolawole (2013), revealed that 23.9% of the respondents used alcoholic drinks to get relieved from school facilities/equipment challenges most often which led them to stress. The finding of Arusiosi *et al.* (2004), revealed that 17.1% of the respondents indicated that an unorganized workplace precipitated stress in them.

The finding of Ekundayo and Kolawole (2013), further revealed that 86.10% and 78.90% of the respondents agreed that poor working conditions and inadequate physical facilities in schools respectively are primary stressors among teachers in Ekiti State. This is in line with the finding of Ukwayi *et al.* (2013), which revealed that high cost of living and inadequate facilities were the major causes of stress among academic staff of tertiary institutions in the State. A finding of a study by Egu *et al.* (2014), in South-eastern, Nigeria, Ihebereme (2011) and Tarver (2007), revealed that inadequate provision of good housing facilities for staff and highly insecure with low pay that improves only slowly with the years are the major stressors among respondents. The finding of Sajuyigbe *et al.* (2015), revealed that lack of infrastructure is one of the stressors facing the academic staff of the university. According to the finding of Omoniyi (2013), 81.32% of the participants indicated the poor condition of lecturers' offices as the stressor among them. Equally, the finding of Omoniyi (2013), revealed that lack of facilities was one of the stressors challenging the participants.

In contrast to all have been reported above, the findings of a study by Ekundayo and Kolawole (2013), showed that 90.5% of the respondents agreed that they are not under stress as they organized their time effectively in the workplace; 74.4% agreed

that they maintain a cordial relationship with their colleagues; 67.8% of the respondents agreed that they had up to 7-8 hours of sleep every day; out of the respondents, 67.2% agreed that they attend to problems as when due, while 58.9% agreed that they had the time to exercise their body for their body physiological needs.

It is only these aspects of Ekundayo and Kolawole (2013), findings and other seven authors in the introduction pooling it to 8 papers representing 21.05% that agreed that the teaching-staff of tertiary institutions are not under pressure or underprivileged that they have their benefits and wages as when due, while the majority (30 [78.95%]) of the papers reviewed disclaimed the claims by revealing that there are lots of stressors associated with academic job via their findings across the globe.

Conclusion

Through this review of stressors among teaching staff of tertiary institutions, it is observed that there have been extensive and widespread researches on the subject matter that contributed to the world of knowledge. The findings of the reviewed papers uncovered the ugly parts of the academic job as the subjects are passing through a lot of stressors mutely, in an attempt to keep the job and have credible outcomes. The stressors are diverse and many but clustered into five in this paper. However, 8 papers/reports representing 21.05% out of the 38 papers reviewed, revealed that academic job is flexible and there was no stressor among teaching-staff of tertiary institutions.

Future directions

Following the reviews, the following directions for future study in academic job stressors are put forward:

Following the report of Mojeed (2020), on the disagreement between the Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) and the Federal Government of Nigeria, future research is required to examine or bring out the root causes of the regular disagreement (stressor) between the management of the tertiary institutions and their teaching -staff to ease and tame tensions in the higher education settings.

Future studies should focus on some demographic differences like age and gender difference in the perception of stressors among teaching staff for effective coping strategies.

Akinfolarin and Gabriel (2014), suggested that university managers should continue to provide adequate chances for professional growth and research development. Future research should be conducted on determinants of adequate provision as required by civil law, guiding the teaching staff of tertiary institutions.

Future studies should be conducted to investigate what made some academic staff withstand and survive the academic stressors up to the retirement age.

Based on the report of the National Universities Commission [NUC] of Nigeria (2007), on the lecturer-students ratio which was opposed by Arubayi (2009), Bala

(2013), and Egu *et al.* (2014), future studies should evaluate knowledge of the academic staff of tertiary institutions on civil law, guiding the civil servants. This will help to bring to light if the academicians know their wages and benefits as spelt out in the civil law before associating the right demands or pressures with stressors against either the school management or government and even both.

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