WORK STRESS AND INTERNAL CUSTOMER SERVICE SATISFACTION OF EMPLOYEES IN BENSON IDAHOSA UNIVERSITY, BENIN-CITY, EDO STATE

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ABSTRACT

In today's contemporary business environment, the issue of work stress has become a matter of debate and general interest amongst researchers. This is because work stress connotes harmful physical and emotional responses that occur when job requirements do not match worker's capabilities and resources with adverse effect on service delivery if not properly handled. Hence, this study examined the impact of work stress on internal customer service satisfaction in Benson Idohosa University, Benin-city, Edo State. The specific aspects of job stress examined are work overload, role ambiguity and role conflict. A descriptive survey was adopted as the foci of the research design. The population of this study comprised 153 employees of three faculties in Benson Idahosa University, while a sample size of One Hundred and Eleven (111) was systematically selected using Yamane (2002). Based on this, a structured questionnaire was designed and administered to elicit information from the respondents. Out of One Hundred and Eleven (111) copies of questionnaire administered, 109 were retrieved and found useable for final data analysis. Multiple regression analysis was employed to confirm the significant impact of work stress on internal customer service satisfaction among employees of Benson Idahosa University. The results revealed that work overload and role conflict have no significant influence on the quality of internal customer services satisfaction received, but role ambiguity has a significant effect on the quality of internal customer services satisfaction received. The findings underscored the importance of reducing and managing work overload, role ambiguity and role conflict. This study, therefore, recommended that Benson Idahosa University should make use of proactive management support, partnership process and improving internal communications so as to enhance quality internal customer service satisfaction.

Keywords: Internal customer service, role ambiguity, role conflict, work overload, work stress

INTRODUCTION

In today's contemporary and dynamic business world, customer service quality has received so much research attention in marketing and management literature owing to its positive impact on customer satisfaction, loyalty and above all, profitability (Bouranta, Chitiris, & Paravantis, 2009; Spreng & Mckoy, 2006). In most business fora, conferences and seminars, customer service quality is one vital topic that is always emphasized across all professions because one of the aims of organizations is the provision of excellent customer service. Unfortunately, many companies fail to realize that the primary path to exceptional customer service lies on the effectiveness and quality of internal customer service delivery.

Internal customers are employees within the organization (Berry, 1981) while those services provided to fellow employees and other departments within the organization to get needed task or job done are called internal customer service (Marshall, Baker, & Finn, 2008). Internal customer service is considered as services carried out when a colleague ask for some information needed to perform and complete given task or duties (Bouranta et al, 2009). In this regard, organization consists of individuals and functional units, linked together with the objective of satisfying the needs of their internal and external customers (Finn, Baker, Marshall, & Anderson, 1996; Mills & Ungson, 2011).

To be pragmatic, the department of Accounting, Benson Idahosa University could be seen as internal customer to the department of Business administration when it comes to taking some of the courses such as entrepreneurship, management and many more. Likewise, Business Administration department will expect that their students also offer courses from cognate department, get their results and score sheets processed and forwarded as at when due. These departments should become increasingly aware that they can only be effective in relation to external customers if the needs of the perceived internal customers are met with similar standards of service. Cases of missing results, absenteeism to lecture, and poor course advising can affect the quality of service rendered to both internal and external customers. In a nutshell, front-line employee dealing with external customers (students) will be greatly limited in their effectiveness without necessary internal support (Riordan & Humphreys, 2013).

Employees in most cases feel that rendering internal support to internal customers is an interruption that takes them away from their core jobs, while some employees consider it as a source of work stress, this result to poor quality service. Many organizations still believe that customer service skills are only needed by staff members who deal directly with external customers. Job stress is an unpleasant emotional situation that an individual experiences when requirements of a job are not counter balanced with ability to cope with the situation. It is a well-known phenomenon that expresses itself differently in different work situations and affects workers differently (Malek, 2010). Stress exists in every organization either big or small with significant effects on employees' job performance (Anderson, 2003). Work stress disrupts the level of responsiveness, communication, teamwork, morale and quality of services to be offered to other internal customers which also affect services rendered to external customers and distort organizational performance (Harrison, 2009).

In today's workplace, many departments, units and organizations at large are slow to fully embrace the concept of internal customer service as reference tends to be brief and unspecific. There is a lack of recognition of the full implications of the internal customer principle, which involves not only the need to consult employees in relation to delivery of external services, but also encompasses internal communication, co-operation and participation (Riordan & Humphreys, 2003). Most often, people find it difficult to regard fellow employees and other department as their customers especially when going through work stress. It is particularly difficult for employees to identify their customers when those customers are internal to the company. Employees see responsibility to colleagues in other department as a source of stress and interruption when carrying out their core job description. They develop an attitude which is not positive, while their approach toward co-worker and other departments becomes that of complaints, slow response, procrastination, unwillingness to solve colleagues' problems.

Several studies have attempted to examine the issue of work stress but majority of these studies focused mainly on job stress and employees' performance, and also conducted outside the country(Nigeria) which makes their findings difficult to replicate in Nigeria (Ali, 2016; Farah & Siti, 2017; Jamil, 2018). In other to establish a nuance, this current study on

work stress and internal customer service satisfaction will help to address some of the ineptitude in previous researches and equally contribute to dearth of literature on job stress and internal customer service satisfaction in Nigeria higher institution of learning which unarguably calls for a rousing attention.

The broad objective of this study is to examine the impact of work stress on internal customer service satisfaction among employees of Benson Idahosa University using variables of work overload, role ambiguity and role conflict. Work overload is a stressor that keeps an individual constantly feeling impatient, constantly hurrying to complete a job. Work overload occurs when an individual has too many tasks to do and insufficient time to do the job (Bakker, Demerouti, & Verbeke, 2016; Iskhan, Commez & Danis, 2016). When work overload exist, additional effort must be exerted to achieve the work goals and to prevent decreasing quality of service rendered. This additional effort usually comes with physical cost such as fatigue and irritability (Adegoke, 2016). Role conflict occurs when two aspects of a job are incompatible with each other. Role conflict result when the combination of expectations of one task mitigates the achievement of the other demand made by the organization result contraveiling forces (Faraji, Valiee, Moridi, Ramazzani, & Rezaei-Farimani, 2014).

Role ambiguity occurs when subordinate lack clarity of what is expected from their superior. It occurs when there is poor feedback or subordinate are not provided with clear information concerning their role performance in the organization (Bakker, 2018). Role ambiguity tends to increase role conflict (Baker, Demerouti, & Verbeke, 2016). In addition to the abstract and introduction, this paper is structured as follows: literature review, methodology, data analysis, discussion of findings, conclusion and recommendations respectively.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Theoretical Underpinning

The Job Demand-Control (JCD) theory developed by Karasek (1981) postulates that job demands lead to job strain (and in some extreme cases to burnout), when autonomy and job control is lacking. It posits that stress increases when job demands measured with work overload and time pressure but reduces when employees have job control measured with skill discretion and decision attitude even in face of high demand. This means that job autonomy or job control can help mitigate the effects of job demand on stress (Bakker, Demerouti, & Verbeke, 2016). The strength of Job Demand-Control (JCD) model lies in its simplicity but this may also be a weakness as there are complex of variables beside those constituted in the model. According to Bakker (2018), poor physical and mental health and psychological strain associated with stress can result when there are lack of social support from colleagues and supervisor (which also means poor internal customer services), lack of rewards and poor performance feedback even when the employees have high job control over high job demands. The Job Demands-Resource Model believes that job demand turn into stressor because of high effort employees exert to perform them from which the employee has not adequately recovered.

According to this model, demanding aspects of work include work overload, high work pressure, time pressure, and emotionally demanding interactions with clients lead to constant overtaxing and, in the long run, exhaustion (Bakker, Demerouti & Euwema, 2005). Work environment that offers many resources foster the willingness to dedicate one's efforts and abilities to the work task. In that case, it is likely that the task will be completed successfully and that the work goal will be attained. For instance, supportive colleague and proper

feedback from one's superior increase the likelihood of being successful in achieving one's work goals. In either case, be it through the satisfaction of employee needs or through the achievement of work goal, the presence of job resources leads to better internal services.

Overview of internal customer service satisfaction

The modern marketing management movement brought the concept of internal and external customer service. Traditionally, the focus was on external customers with little emphasis given to how internal customer interrelated. It is worthy of note that improving relationships with internal customers will assists in delivery of better services to external customers, through reduced lead-times, increased quality and better communication. From a corporate perspective, the development of an effective internal customer service can fundamentally transform the cultural values of an organization and the quality of working life for its employee, with a consequent positive impact on productivity and the quality of service delivery. Internal customer service satisfaction is an increasing popular philosophy that organisations should treat staff members the same way they treat their customers and clients. Staff members are increasingly being recognized as internal customers and there are numerous benefits that are believed to result from ensuring that they have good interactions with one another, such benefit includes better external customer satisfaction. When good services is not rendered internally, employees' best interest may not be served and individuals may not be able to get their job done. Problems that interfere with these exchanges may become obvious externally and thereby diminish overall customer satisfaction. Internal service quality is characterized by the attitudes that people have toward one another and the way people serve each other inside the organization (Marshall, 1998). Internal customer services are those services provided by the distinctive organizational units, as well as the people working in other unit or department within the same organisation (Stauss, 1995). Internal customer services help businesses to run well like oiled machines.

Primary and Secondary Customers

According to Elwood (2013), the term primary customers refer to the standard traditional definition of customer – a person who buys things. Secondary customers are those whom the primary customers are dependent on find a real and tangible value in the product. They are of the categories; The first group of secondary customer is co-workers who deal directly with the customer and has influence on the buying behavior of the primary customer. The second group of secondary customers is defined as the internal staff members of the providers' company, they have indirect influence on the buying decision of the primary customer, how they perform their jobs, how main product and services are delivered to the primary customers. Their influence is indirect, but continuous and pervasive. When these in-house customers are focused, effective and thoroughly dedicated to providing good internal customer service to one another, then external customer service will be delivered in a quality manner. Internal customer satisfaction is measured in terms of communication which is the ability to communicate and listen effectively. Also, in terms of productivity which is the ability to maintain high levels of efficiency, reliability and quality (Robinowitz, 2006).

Internal Service Quality

Internal service quality can be viewed as the quality of work life. It is a visible expression of an organization's culture. It is the extent to which employees know who their customers are. Most time, it is particularly difficult for employees to identify their customers when those customers are internal to the company, and where these employees often do not

know what impact their work has on other department. Identifying internal customer requires mapping, communicating characteristics of work flow, organizing periodic cross-departmental meeting between customers, and recognizing good internal service performance (Harvard Business Review, 1994). Factors that positively affect the quality of internal service includes: employee satisfaction, technological support on the job, and leadership style while factors that negatively affect the quality of internal service are work stress, employee dissatisfaction, little background knowledge of the job (Harvard Business Review, 1994).

Primary (external) customer satisfaction is measured by interviews with customers conducted biannually and include question about satisfaction with employee friendliness and hustle. In this same light, internal customer satisfaction is measured according to the Internal Customer Satisfaction Questionnaire (ICSQ) developed by Rabinowitz (2006), while customers impressions and expectation can be measured using the following questions below: Keep me appropriately informed, handle my requests efficiently, operate smoothly and efficiently, listen effectively to my needs, handle problems skillfully, answer my questions efficiently, make it easy to work with them, communicate effectively, respond to problems quickly, be well organized, respond promptly to my requests, find out what I need, treat me as a valued customer, build cooperation, show consideration and respect, provide a valuable service, follow through well on their commitments, meet my expectation, being courteous, look for ways to improve their service, handle details well, and maintain high standards.

Work Stress

Work stress is defined as the harmful physical and emotional responses that occur when job requirements do not match the worker's capabilities, resources, and needs (National Institute of Occupational Safety and Health, 1999). It is recognized world-wide as a major challenge to individual mental and physical health, and organizational health (ILO, 1986). Stress has a negative effect on employees of an organization, mostly if it exceeds the bearable limit (Bashir, 2010). Work stress manifest in conflicts, headaches, depression, hypertension and other conditions (Garg, 2009; Kang & Sandhu, 2011). Onwuzuligbo (2015) asserts that stress produces numerous physical and mental symptoms which vary according to each individual's situational factors. The costs of stress in terms of human suffering, social and occupational impairment are enormous.

Effect of Work Stress

According to Blumenthal (2003), the effects of stress are divided into subjective, behavioural and cognitive effect. The subjective effects of stress lead to anxiety, depression, frustration, fatigue and low self-esteem. The behavioural effect of stress leads to accident proneness, substance abuse, impaired speech, restlessness and forgetfulness. Lastly, the cognitive effect of stress affects our thought process, leading to difficulty or fear in making decisions, forgetfulness, hypersensitivity, mental blocks, and difficulty in concentrating or thinking clearly.

Causes of Work Stress

Job stress is a critical issue in modern work environment, the negative effect of job stress is not only on the part of the employee but also on the various departments and organization as a whole. There are several factors which cause work stress for employees; these factors are job timings, pay, bonus, work overload, and peer attitude (Manzoor, 2011). Work overload, technological problems, compensation and salary, outcomes of decisions, little management and peer support behavior (Badar, 2011). Eleven forces are used as an

antecedents of stress by researchers include work overload, role vagueness, role conflict, responsibility for people, participation, lack of feedback, keeping up with quick technological change, being in an innovative role, career growth, organizational structure and environment, and recent episodic events (Bashir & Ramay, 2010).

First, work overload is an excessive work or work that is outside one's capability (French & Caplan, 1972). It refers to the amount of stress experienced by individuals due to the perception that they are unable to cope or productive with the amount of work allocated to them. When people are expected to do more than the time and resources available permit them to do, they are likely to experience strain (Coetzer & Rothmann, 2007; De-Bruin & Taylor 2006). Role vagueness has been found to be one of the most serious and rapidly growing phenomenons in organizations and is a cause of health problems (Malik & Usman, 2013). Role ambiguity is the insufficient information concerning powers, authority and duties to perform one's role (French & Caplan, 1972). According to John (1996), there is substantial evidence that role ambiguity can provoke stress. Lack of direction can prove stressful, especially for people who are low in their tolerance for such ambiguity. Role ambiguity arises when individual do not have clear authority or knowledge about how to perform the assigned jobs (Rizzo, House, & Lirtzman, 1990). Role ambiguity is defined by Katz and Kahn (1978) as uncertainty about what the occupant of a particular job or position is supposed to do. It is when employees lack clarity of what is expected of them. Role ambiguity may result from lack of policies and procedures, a supervisor who has trouble communication effectively, or uncommon events for which there are no precedent (Kemery, 2006).

Likewise, role conflict has to do with supervisors or subordinates place contradictory demands on the individual (Caplan & Jones, 1975). According to Rizzo, House, and Lirtzman (1990), role conflict refers to incompatibility of expectations and demands associated with the role. The effects of role conflict are individual personality conflict and interpersonal relations conflict, responsibility for people, job security, and professional development (French & Caplan 1972; Pincherle, 1972). Participation or lack of job autonomy is the extent to which one has influence over decisions relevant to one's job (Kasl, 1973). The experience of stress is strongly linked to perceptions of decision-making authority and control. This may be due to either job constraints or workplace constraints. When there is great interdependence between the person's tasks and the tasks of others, the person is likely to experience stress (Martin 2005). Lack of feedback involves lack of information about job performance (Adams, 1980) while keeping up with rapid technological change deals with rapid changes in the information processing field (Bashir & Ramay, 2010; Lawrence & Lorsch, 1970). In addition, career development in this regard refers to the stress experienced by individuals as a result of a perceived lack of opportunity to further their career prospects within the organization for which they work (Coetzee & DeVilliers, 2010). Status dissimilarity, lack of job security, let down ambition also have great impact on stress (Brook, 1973) while work relationships involves poor or unsupportive relationships with colleagues and line managers, isolation and unfair treatment can all be a potential source of stress (Cartwright & Cooper 2002).

Job Demands-resources (JD-R) model developed by Demerouti et al. (2003) assumed that every occupation have its own specific risk factors associated with work stress, these factors can be classified in two general categories such as job demands and job resources. The job demands refer to those physical and psychological effort or skills and are therefore associated with certain psychological costs. This model believed that job demand turn into job stressor because of high effort employees exert to perform them from which the employee has not adequately recovered. Demanding aspect of work include work overload, high work pressure, and emotionally demanding interaction with customers which lead to exhaustion,

mental fatigue, and reduction of energy (resources) due to mental task execution (Baker, Demerouti, & Verbeke, 2016). Job demands-Resource (JD-R) model further indicated job resources provided to employees can either reduce or increase the impact of job demands on fatigue, burnouts and stress. The model posits that job resources reduce stress by making employees more functional in achieving work goals. Job resources can be located at the level of interpersonal and social relation (supervisor and co-worker support, team climate), at the level of task e.g skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy, performance feedback), and at the level of reward system (fringe benefits and amount of pay). Lack of resources preludes actual goal accomplishment which causes failure and frustration (Bakker, Demerouti, & Euwema, 2005). The experience of inadequate job resources may evoke cynical attitudes toward work as employees attempt to gain emotional distance from their job a way of coping with stress. Consequently, they are unwilling to go beyond actual goal accomplishment, engage in citizenship behaviour and provide quality internal customer services, which included helping one another and helping new colleagues to orient (Haines, Hurbert, & Zimmer, 2019).

Related Empirical Review

Although, there exist dearth of literature specifically on work stress and internal customer service across the globe. However, work stress and related variables such as employee performance were studied by other researchers. Some of these empirical studies are reviewed below:

Ali (2016) examined the effect of stress on job performance of employees in private sector's universities in Karachi, Pakistan using copies of questionnaires to elicit information from 133 employees and revealed that workload, role conflict, and inadequate monitory reward are the prime reasons of stress which significantly reduces employees' performance.

Babatope (2015) examined causes and effects of job related stress among Polytechnic Librarians in Delta State, Nigeria using survey methods and found that pressure from management or bosses, poor work environment, excess workload, inadequate support system, challenges in coping with new technology and lack of supervision are some of the causes of job stress among Polytechnic Librarians in Delta State, and these stressors have negative consequences such as job dissatisfaction, frustration, low productivity, depression, negative job attitude, absenteeism, illness amongst others.

Farah and Siti (2017) examined the relationship between job stress and job performance of front-liners in a shared service center, Malaysia using a total of 113 front-liners from various departments in a shared service center selected through convenience sampling technique. The study found that job stress (role ambiguity, role conflict, inadequate resources and workloads) significantly and negatively related to job performance.

Jamil (2018) examined the influence of job stress factors (workload, role conflict, role ambiguity) on job performance through 102 sampled respondents and found that level of academic staff of job stress was medium and sometimes low while the level of job performance was somewhat high but overload had a positive statistical effect on job performance, role conflict has negative statistical effect on job performance. However, role ambiguity did not significantly affect job performance.

Research Hypotheses

Most of the previous studies reviewed examine the relationship between job stress and job performance. This study finds it necessary to extend previous studies by including internal customer service satisfaction. By so doing, those job stress variable which have been previously reviewed were examined to know their influence on internal customer service

satisfactions using employees at Benson Idahosa University as the population of study. Thus, the research hypothesis are stated below in the null form:

1: Work overload will not significantly influence internal customer service satisfaction in Benson Idahosa University

2: Role ambiguity will not have a significant influence on internal customer service satisfaction in Benson Idahosa University.

3: Role conflict will not significantly influence internal customer service satisfaction in Benson Idahosa University.

METHODOLOGY

This study examined the impact of work stress on internal customer service in Benson Idahosa University, Benin City. The study adopted descriptive survey as the foci of the research design. Descriptive survey usually helps to define variable and phenomenon as they exist in the field or as the researcher observed their behaviour. The population of study comprised 153 employees presently working in Faculty of Social and Management Science, Faculty of Law, and Faculty of Basic and Science in Benson Idahosa University as March 2021. These three faculties were selected based on convenient and purposive sampling as the researchers could easily cover these faculty. Moreso, these three faculties always require each other services in the aspect of teaching borrowed courses. Benson Idahosa University was used based on the assumption that this organisation is large enough with different department that work individually and collectively to achieve predetermine goal. Using the Yamane (2002) formula for our sample size determination is given below:

$$n = \frac{N}{[1\text{-}N\,(e)^2]}$$

Where,

n = sample size

N = Population

1 = Constant

e = Acceptable margin of error

In this case we consider 5%, that is, 0.05 margin of error as a sufficient level of accuracy or significance.

Substituting this value into the above formula, we have;

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

$$n = \frac{153}{[1 + 153(0.05)^2]} = 110.669 \text{ approximately } 111.$$

The sample size is computed to be 111.

This sample size would be proportionately allocated to the different Faculties depending on its proportion of the entire population using the Kumar (1976) proportional allocation formula as given by:

$$NX = \frac{nNh}{p}$$

nh   =   sample size of the stratum

n   =   sample size of the study

p   =   overall population

Nx   =   proportionate allocation

According to the data collected from the study of its various faculties concerning the number of staff (both academic and non-academic) used, the proportionate allocation is as given below:

$$\text{FSMS (77 persons)} \ = \ \frac{111(77)}{153} \ = \ 55.86$$

$$\text{FBAS (59 persons)} \ = \ \frac{111(59)}{153} \ = \ 42.8$$

$$\text{F.LAW (17 persons)} \ = \ \frac{111(17)}{153} \ = \ 12.3$$

Table 1: Sample size of the study

S/N	Name	No. of staff	Calculated Sample	Approximate Estimate
1	Faculty of Social and Management Sciences	77	55.86	56
2	Faculty of Basic and Applied Sciences	59	42.8	43
3	Faculty of Law	17	12.3	12
Total		153	111	111

Source: Field Work 2019

The sample size is 111, 111 copies of structured questionnaire was distributed to respondents in each Faculty. Hill, Barley and Dougll (2013) suggested that a sample of 100 and above is sufficient for a good representation of the population or organisation or any subject investigated and also present good findings. Hence, the researcher is of the justification that the usage of a 111 individuals is sufficient enough to make substantial generalisation.

Instrument

Internal customer service satisfaction: The Internal Customer Satisfaction Questionnaire (ICSQ) developed by Rabinowitz (2006) was adopted to measure the quality of internal customer service. The ICSQ uses a 4-point: 1 2 3 4 very dissatisfied, dissatisfied, satisfied, very satisfied. ICSQ helps to show the weakness, the strength and the area of improvement of the internal customer service of a department within the organization.

Work stress: Work stress questionnaire was developed by the American Institute for Preventive Medicine (2012) to pinpoint the source of stress.

Data Analysis

Data from questionnaire were analysed using a computerized data analysis package called Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) and the statistical technique used was multiple regression.

Model Specification

The regression model used in this study is expressed below. Functionally, the model is expressed below:

$$\text{ICS} = \text{F (WO, RA, RC)}$$

The econometric form of the model is specified as follows

$$ICS = \beta_o + \beta_1 WO + \beta_2 RA + \beta_3 RC + e$$

Where

ICS = internal customer service
WO = Work overload
RA = Role ambiguity
e = error term.
RC = Role conflict

Regression analysis assists in conveying the nature of the relationship between the dependent variable and the independent variable. It also assists in testing hypothesis about cause and effect relationships. It also determines the existence of association between two variables.

Test of Reliability

The study questionnaire was subjected to a reliability test using the Chronbach Alpha (α). The table 2 shows the evaluated reliability.

Table 2: Reliability Statistics

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha	No of Items
Work Over load	0.806	7
Role Ambiguity	0.748	5
Role Conflict	0.572	5
Internal Customer Service	0.875	13

Source: Researcher's computation

The total reliability shows the alpha coefficient of for 30 items is 0.847, suggesting that the items have relatively high internal consistency, which means that there is a clear indication of a close relationship between the set of questions used to evaluate the three (3) dimensions of Work Stress and Internal customer service.

RESULTS

Data collected were analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics employed were Table and percentages while the inferential statistics employed was regression to test the study hypotheses at 5% significant level. Out of a total of 111 questionnaires distributed to respondents, 109 completed, returned and found usable for final statistical analysis represented response rate 98%.
A total of 59 (54.1%) were males and 50 (45.9%) were females. In this study, 1 (0.9%) were less than 21 years, while 26 (23.9%) were between 21-30 years, 50 (45.9%) were between 31-40 years, 27 (24.8%) were 41-50 years, and 5 (4.6%) were between 51-60 years. This shows that most of the respondents were between the ages of 31-40 years. A total of 75 (68.8%) are married and a total of 34 (31.2%) are single

	Frequency	Percent
Faculty of Social and Management Sciences	56	51.4
Faculty of Basic and Applied Sciences	41	37.6
Faculty of Law	12	11.0
TOTAL	109	100.0

Source: Author's computation, 2021.

From Table 3, a total of 56 (51.4%) respondents were from Faculty of Social and Management Science, 41 (37.6%) respondents from Faculty of Basic and Applied Science and 12 (11.0%) respondents were from Faculty of Law.

Relationship between the dimensions of stress and selected demographic variables.

Table 4: Distribution of Wo, Ra, Rc And Ics By Faculty, Gender, and Staff Position

Faculty	Wo Mean	Wo Std dev	Ra Mean	Ra Std	Rc Mean	Rc Std	Ics Mean	Ics Std
FSMS	3.27	0.7804	3.77	0.6506	3.01	0.7047	3.98	0.5352
FBAS	3.17	0.7951	3.81	0.7756	2.98	0.7118	3.81	0.6287
FLAW	3.22	0.7189	4.05	0.3424	3.18	0.5621	4.09	0.4435
Gender	Wo Mean	Wo Std dev	Ra Mean	Ra Std	Rc Mean	Rc Std	Ics Mean	Ics Std
Male	3.22	0.7761	3.79	0.6725	2.98	0.6372	3.90	0.4967
Female	3.25	0.7855	3.86	0.6918	3.04	0.7527	3.92	0.6445
Position(staff)	Wo Mean	Wo Std dev	Ra Mean	Ra Std	Rc Mean	Rc Std	Ics Mean	Ics Std
Academic	3.21	0.7051	3.86	0.6014	2.98	0.6627	3.88	0.5311
Non-academic	3.28	0.8458	3.74	0.7976	3.05	0.7536	3.95	0.6255

Source: Author's computation (2019)

Table 4 shows distribution of work overload, role ambiguity, role conflict, and internal customer services by faculty, gender and position of staff. For the various faculties, the table indicates that even though the respondents were undecided in their perception of work overload and perception of role conflict, FLAW is slightly higher followed by FSMS. Respondents in all the faculties agree on the existence of role ambiguity. Perception of role ambiguity is higher in FLAW followed by FBAS. Respondents agree that they do render quality services to one another but the faculty of law is of the higher opinion that they render quality service than the other faculties.

Table 4 shows that both male and female respondents are undecided with respect to work overload and role conflict, that is, they are not sure whether they suffer work overload and role conflict or not. Both male and female respondents agreed in their perception of role ambiguity but the female respondents have a higher score indicating that they suffer role ambiguity. Both males and females agree that they do render quality services to their customers but the females are of the higher opinion that they offer quality services. Both academic and non-academic staff is undecided in their perception of work overload and role conflict, that is, they are not sure whether they suffer work overload and role conflict or not. For role ambiguity, both academic and non-academic are agreed on their perception of the

existence of role ambiguity. The Respondents agree that they do render quality services to one another but the non-academic staff is of the higher opinion that they offer quality services.

The dependent variable of this research is internal customer service (ICS). To enable the proper empirical evaluation of internal customer service, the quality and satisfaction of services of respondents' forms the basis of this evaluation. The independent variable of this study is Work Stress measure through: Work Overload (WO), Role Ambiguity (RA), and Role Conflict (RC).

Table 5: Multiple Regression Result

	Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	2.160	.345		6.258	.000
	WO	.032	.066	.044	.478	.634
	RA	.420	.072	.504	5.862	.000
	RC	.013	.072	.016	.183	.855

a. Dependent Variable: ICS

The model summaries reveal R^2 value of 0.267. This implies that about 26.7% of the variability in internal customer service is accounted for by all the dimensions of Work stress (WO, RA and RC). Therefore, based on the Table, the following equations for the regression line may be derived:

ICS= 2.160 + 0.032(WO) + 0.420(RA) + 0.013(RC) + e.

First, regression result in Table 5 suggest the existence of an insignificant effect of work overload on internal customer service (β = 0.044; p = 0.634). The p value is greater than the level of significance at 5%. The null hypothesis which states that there is no significant effect of work overload and internal customer service is therefore accepted. The alternative hypothesis which implied that there is a significant relationship between work overload and internal customer service is therefore rejected. We however, conclude that work overload is not significantly related to internal customer service.

Second, the regression result in table 5 also suggest the existence of a positive and significant effect of role ambiguity on internal customer service (β = 0.504; p = 0.000). The p value is line with the level of significance at 5%. The null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between Role Ambiguity and Internal Customer Service is therefore rejected. The alternative hypothesis which implied that there is a significant relationship between role ambiguity and internal customer service is therefore accepted. We however, conclude that role ambiguity is significantly related to internal customer service.

Lastly, the regression result in Table 5 also suggests the existence of an insignificant relationship between role conflict and internal customer service (β = 0.016; p = 0.855). The p value is greater than the level of significance at 5%. The null hypothesis which states that there is no significant relationship between role conflict and internal customer service is therefore accepted. The alternative hypothesis which implied that there is a significant relationship between role conflict and internal customer service is therefore rejected. We however, conclude that role conflict is not significantly related to internal customer service.

DISCUSSION

The aim of this study is to examine the impact of work stress (work overload, role ambiguity and role conflict), on internal customer service. In order to achieve the objectives of this study, three (3) hypotheses were tested using regression analysis. The study discovered that, work overload and role conflict are positive but have no significant effect on internal customer service; however role ambiguity has significant effect on internal customer service. It was also discovered in the relationship between some demographic features and dimensions of work stress that the faculties of law employees are of the higher opinion that they suffer role ambiguity, and also they render more quality services to other internal customers as the perception of various respondents agrees that they perceive and experience role ambiguity. It is convenient to note at this point that the work stress model is an appropriate model to evaluate work stress and the quality of services being rendered to internal customers. This is validated by the calculated F- value and corresponding significant p value.

In carrying out this study, it was precluded that one factor of work stress (role ambiguity) has a significant impact on the quality of services offered to internal customers; and the other two factors has no significant impact on the quality of services being rendered to internal customers. According the regression analysis carried out, for the analysis seen on role ambiguity, the presence of the positive significant relationship between role ambiguity and internal customer services shows that, a 1 unit change in work stress leads to a 42% increase in role ambiguity, showing that as the quality of internal customers services is only affected by 42% of stress (role ambiguity) out of a 100% of work stress.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the researcher recommended thus: First, Benson Idahosa University should make use of proactive management support, partnership process and improving internal communications so as to enhance quality internal customer service. Also, encouraging and acknowledging excellence in internal customer service delivery by individuals and teams. The University should intensively adopt the use of IT, they should find out software that can help fasten work activities and reduce workload. E-learning should be fully implemented in all faculties. Lecture notes and material should be uploaded for students to access online and study. Online lecture videos should be uploaded on the school portal to enable student access them. Lastly, management should constantly organize workshops, customer panels or joint training sessions with internal customers to identify, discuss and resolve problems.

CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this study, there exist a significant relationship between one of the dimensions of work stress (role ambiguity) and quality of services rendered to internal customers of a Benson Idahosa University but no significant relationship between the other two dimensions (work overload and role conflict) and the quality of internal customers services. The researcher concluded that stress moderately affects quality of services rendered to internal customers. The purpose of this study was to find out if work stress has a role to play in private institutions with regard to employees of Benson Idahosa University, Benin-city, Edo State. Finally, it is worthy of note that internal customer service is a critical part of an organisation and would provide a unifying focus to an organization's strategy and facilitate interdepartmental relationships, as each employee would be fully aware of the requirements of their internal customer.

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