UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

EFFECTS OF OCCUPATIONAL STRESS ON THE MARRIAGE AND HEALTH OF FEMALE LECTURERS OF TECHNICAL UNIVERSITIES IN GHANA

BENEDICTA ABA MENDS

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BY

BENEDICTA ABA MENDS

Thesis submitted to the Department of Guidance and Counselling of the Faculty of Educational Foundations, College of Education Studies, University of Cape Coast, in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the award of Master of Philosophy degree in Guidance and Counselling.

JULY 2023

DECLARATION

Candidate's Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own original research and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this university or elsewhere

Candidate's Signature:---------- Date: ----------

Name:----------

Supervisors' Declaration

We hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of the thesis were supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of thesis laid down by the University of Cape Coast.

Supervisor's Signature: ---------- Date:----------

Name: ----------

ABSTRACT

University academic work environment is more compelling since the individual worker especially females are required to perform several duties within and outside the university. This study sought to explore the effects of occupational stress on the marriage and health of female lecturers. The study employed a descriptive cross-section survey design. Both married and single female lecturers at Cape Coast Technical University (CCTU) and Takoradi Technical University (TTU) were purposively sampled. The census method was used for the selection. A questionnaire was used to collect data. Mean and standard deviation, and linear regression were used to analyse data. The study found that female lecturers experience stress. Secondly, it was found that workload and job demand, the work environment and workstation, salary and compensation were the causes of stress. However, leadership issues and job specifications did not cause stress for female lecturers. Further, the study revealed that stress affects marriage and health of female lecturers. The Technical Universities should set up more comprehensive stress management programmes (such as "stress sensitization week," "counsellor week," etc.) to deal with the surging issue of stress among the female lecturers.

KEYWORDS

Occupational stress

Coping Strategies

Work performance

Well-being

Burnout

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DEDICATION

To my children

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Human capital has recently been seen as the backbone of organisational success. Their commitment and input of workers determines the rate at which the organisation expands to a greater extent (Davenport & Hall, 2011; Lewin, 2009). The academic work environment is more compelling since the individual worker is required to perform several duties within and outside the university. Undeniably, women form a critical part of the academic working enterprise (Franco-Santos & Doherty, 2017). Women who are very active at home and are expected to achieve the same results at work as men are more likely to experience unusual stress. It is on this note that the study sought to explore the effects of occupational stress on the marriage and health of female lecturers.

Background to the Study

Working in higher educational institutions is becoming more stressful for both male and female faculty members who have a lot to do to meet the demands of 21st century universities (Kusi, Cudjoe & Bampo, 2018). Occupational stress arises from work demands and pressures that go beyond the capabilities of an employee (Yazdi & Jafari, 2010). Stress is a psychological factor produced by a change in an environment that is perceived as challenging, threatening, or damaging to a person's wellbeing (Quick & Cooper, 2003). It can lead to a variety of psychological responses, the most common of which is anxiety. The term "occupational stress" is commonly used to describe feelings of tension or exhaustion usually associated with work overload or overly demanding work (Varcarolis, 2006). Occupational stress is reported to be one of the ten leading causes of death in the world (Quick & Cooper, 2003). It can

lead to the development of several physical and psychological problems. For instance, chronic stress in the workplace is believed to affect the immune system by disrupting healthy immune responses, and it can also lead to depressive disorder. Again, occupational stress affects both the employee and the organisation as a whole, as workers experiencing undue stress are prone to absenteeism, reduced job performance, and poor communication (Quick & Henderson, 2016).

According to Kshirsagar and Waghale (2014), organisations primarily expect their employees to perform at their maximum best to help attain organisational goals. However, the competitive and dynamic nature of modern working environments has exposed employees to various issues, which could negatively impact on their individual and organisational performances (Elmadağ & Ellinger, 2018). Notable among these issues include occupational stress as an outcome of role ambiguities, excessive job demands, work-life imbalance, and role conflicts (Kshirsagar & Waghale, 2014). In all countries, economic development requires the integration of male and female labour forces. That is, men and women both have to contribute to the development process of the country as the labour of women contributes to economic growth and poverty reduction.

Traditionally, the major responsibility of women has been perceived to be the maintenance of the family, including home and childcare, while breadwinning was the main responsibility of men. However, with more and more women entering the workforce and pursuing careers, these clearly defined gender roles have changed (Sevim, 2006). Most women do not have responsibilities only in one domain anymore; they have to balance the

competing demands of both work and family domains (Biçaksiz, 2009). This situation will almost certainly cause occupational stress among this working population. Studies have said that occupational stress appears to be higher among working women than among men (Herrero, Saldaña, Rodriguez, Ritzel, 2012; Blaug, Kenyon, Lekhi, 2007). The reason may be a combination of house chores with office duties. Moreover, psychosocial work factors such as quantitative demands, intellectually demanding work, attention level, and tight deadlines have a more negative influence on women than on men (Herrero et al., 2012).

In developed countries, for instance, occupational stress has been recognised as inevitable in most educational institutions (Davenport & Hall, 2011; Prasanna, 2016). Employees (particularly female lecturers) of these institutions clearly spend more time at work than at home (Najera, Landoll, Pollock, Berman, Ellis, Knies, & Bowles, 2017). Most employees often become more exhausted after long hours of work due to huge workloads and expectations (Najera et al., 2017). Stress is considered a normal part of any academic institution regardless of one's position and salary level (Metzger, 2018). The World Health Organisation (2016) revealed that most people in the developed economies, including the USA, England, Germany, and France, have devised stress management strategies and are becoming more aware of the effects of work-related stress. But the story has always been different in most developing economies in Africa (Harris & Fleming, 2017).

In Ghana, education plays a significant role in the social and economic development of the country since it supplies the economy with human capital that is capable of transforming other resources into high output in an effective

and efficient manner (Ahmad, Iqbal, Javel & Hamad, 2014). In any formal educational setting, there are two major parties (employees and students) who ensure that the goals of education are achieved (Amfo-Otu & Agyemang, 2017). Within the employee category, teaching staff play a key role in transferring knowledge while developing the capabilities of students, exposing the latter to job stress of various degrees on a daily basis (Franco-Santos & Doherty, 2017). The work lives of academic staff, especially females, in the Ghanaian public universities are not easy. Aside from family issues, this situation is arising from diverse factors, including the pressure for improved graduate output and the pressure to generate knowledge through research. The foregoing duties are anticipated to give the nation a competitive advantage in the global market; increased workload emanating from teaching and administrative responsibilities; a not-so-suitable work environment; family expectations; and the pressure to grow on the job.

According to Beh and Loo (2012), moderate amounts of stress serve as a stimulus to perform. However, overpowering stress causes one to respond in a negative physiological or psychological manner (Decker, Sullivan & Harrison, 2011). Stress becomes a problem when it is overwhelming and affects ones physical or mental functioning. Depending on the level of stress in academic institutions, it can severely affect one's life where he/she begins to spend several long hours and thus have less time for other things (Beh & Loo, 2012). Although policymakers in Ghana's tertiary education sector have implemented various policies and strategies in a bid to improve employee performance, the issues of stress still remain unresolved (Agyapong, Asiamah

& Cudjoe, 2019). It is against this backdrop that the study was conducted to examine occupational stress among both single and married female lecturers in selected Technical Universities in Ghana.

Statement of the Problem

Occupational stress among women has received a lot of attention due to the fact that women play a more significant role in family affairs and any psychological stressors at their workplace can affect their physical and mental health as well as their families and the community (Molaie et al., 2011). In this regard, a lot of empirical investigations into stress-related issues among women have been conducted. For instance, the nature of job characteristics that are stress-induced and their resultant health consequences among Ghanaian women in both lower and middle management positions in some organisations in Ghana has inevitably become critical (Sackey & Sanda, 2009).

The majority of stress-related studies done in Ghana were focused on other employee categories other than female employees within the specific organisations that were used in the study. Mensah, Fosu and Oteng-Abayie (2017) investigated occupational stress among non-teaching staff of Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology and reported that ambiguities related to work scheduling, work methods, workload and performance criteria were the main job stressors. Azila-Gbettor et al. (2017) also examined the occupational stress and work performance of academic staff of Ho Technical University. The study revealed that faculty members experienced high levels of stress, to wit; teaching and examination loads formed the major stressors. On the same issue of occupational stress, Kusi, Mensah and Gyaki (2014) had explored and discovered that excessive workload of teaching and supervision of

students' research work were the reasons for high stress among lecturers at the University of Education, Winneba. Undoubtedly, there is, therefore, empirical evidence to indicate that researchers have largely reported that academics are highly stressed about their duties. To ascertain whether the stressful work situation actually affects work performance, Bartels (2020), investigated the effect of occupational stress on academic professionals' work performance. Academic work output was found to be adversely affected, which provided grounds for concern.

Even though working women are noted to play a balanced role between family and work life (Biçaksiz, 2009), which may be considered stressful, not much investigative attention has been dedicated to the phenomenon. Extant studies conducted in Ghana on the stress levels of women academics are few for any sound generalization. For purposes of emphasis, Addison and Yankyera (2015) explored how female basic school teachers manage work-related stress as well as the job-related activities that stress them. Findings revealed that the stress levels of the female teachers were high, and they were caused mostly by work overload and interpersonal relationship problems with colleagues and school managers. Responding to the need to also know the major stressors for university female lecturers, Kusi, Codjoe and Bampo (2018) examined occupational stress among female lecturers at the University of Education, Winneba, and reported that female academics in the university experienced a lot of stress that affected their health condition. The available studies on women academics, as stated above, have shown the occupational stress status of female instructors in elementary school and traditional universities, albeit insufficiently.

Tertiary institutions in sub-Saharan African (SSA) countries have struggled primarily because their governments and educational authorities have failed to clearly solve the occupational stress issues facing their academic staff (Abugre, 2018). Similarly, in Ghana, the educational system is declining basically due to inconsistent and poor measures implemented to address performances of academic professionals (Kwapong, Opoku & Donyina, 2015). The nature and working conditions of most tertiary institutions in Ghana have exposed their professionals to various stress-related issues. For instance, Nnuro (2012) revealed that, the physical and psychological demands of academic professionals make them vulnerable to high levels of stress.

The two Technical Universities (CCTU and TTU) were focused on in the study because they were among the premier polytechnics that gained accreditation to assume university status to become Technical Universities in Ghana (Obeng, 2022). The assumption was that, with the acquisition of university status, the two institutions may have a lot of new academic programmes and responsibilities that are likely to pose a lot of stress on all academic staff, including female lecturers. Female employees are also known to play important roles in family business operations. The stress from home activities adds up to the one experienced at work and makes female lecturers the most stressed, relative to their male counterparts. Hence, the interest in this group of individuals (i.e., female lecturers).

Essentially, there also appears to be a paucity of information on the status of occupational stress among female lecturers in technical universities in Ghana. The information on the foregoing issue is at this point even more critical since the majority of the technical universities have just assumed their university

status, which is to say that there are even more responsibilities for female lecturers such as taking care of the home during marriage or handling personal tasks outside the job space when single. Moreover, methodologically, the available study that focused on female academics at the tertiary level made use of a mixed-method study and involved public univerisites without focusing solely on technical universities unlike the present study (e.g., Nnuro, 2012). Such available literature undoubtedly creates a gap in studies on female lecturers at technical universities. This current study therefore sought to investigate how female lecturers' occupational stress affects their marriage and health in selected technical universities in Ghana.

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of the study was to investigate how female lecturers' occupational stress affects their marriage and health in the selected technical universities. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Examine the stress level of female lecturers in the selected technical universities.
2. Explore the causes of stress among female lecturers in the selected technical universities.
3. Investigate the effect of stress on the marriage of the female lecturers in the selected technical universities.
4. Find out the effect of stress on the health of the female lecturers in the selected technical universities.
5. Examine the stress coping strategies of female lecturers in the selected technical universities.

Research Questions

The following research questions were posed to guide the study:

1. What is the level of stress of female lecturers in the selected technical universities?
2. What are the causes of occupational stress among female lecturers in the selected technical universities?
3. What is the effect of occupational stress on the marriage of female lecturers?
4. What is the effect of occupational stress on the health of the female lecturers?
5. What are the occupational stress coping mechanisms used by the female lecturers?

Significance of the Study

The study's findings would be relevant for policy framework and implementation in Ghana's Technical Universities. In this direction, the study findings would provide documentary empirical evidence for management of Technical Universities that would be used in the country to adopt policies regarding allocation of workloads that would assist female lecturers to overcome work stress.

Moreover, the study findings would also be resourceful to female lecturers in Technical Universities on the stress coping mechanisms that would serve their best interest and health issues. On this same point, management of the Technical Universities may also, by the content of this study (that would be shared with the scientific community through publications), find the need to organise workshops on stress management to assist female academics.

Finally, the study would also contribute to knowledge on the issue of occupational stress and stress management (especially for women) for academic literature. As expected, future researchers may find this study as a good background for them to explore the same issue among women in different jurisdictions.

Delimitations

The study focused on concepts such as occupational stress, marriage, health, both single and married female lecturers at technical universities only. Geographically, the study focused on only Cape Coast Technical University and Takoradi Technical University.

Limitations

This study was hampered by the constraints of the questionnaire used as the data-gathering tool. A study of this nature revealed some challenges which might affect the validity of the responses. The self-report nature of the questionnaire predisposes the results to some biases as the validity and reliability of the results obtained are dependent on the accuracy of the responses provided by the respondents. Thus, respondents who provided false information cannot be easily traced and removed from the analysis. Also, not all expected respondents filled and completed their questionnaires and returned them which reduced the response rate.

Definition of Terms

Occupational Stress: Is any form of feeling in which the body responds to overwhelming experiences and demands from one's work that affect the body.

Burnout: Depersonalization, reduced personal accomplishment, and emotional exhaustion experienced by individuals in service-oriented positions

Coping strategies: They are the behavioural and psychological efforts made to adapt to or tolerate demands and conflicts that exceed a person's normal effort.

Female Lecturers: Married/Single female academic staff who have additional family responsibilities outside of their job.

Health: A state of complete physical, mental and social well-being and not merely the absence of disease and infirmity.

Marriage: Legally or formally recognized union of two people as partners in a personal relationship, usually between a man and a woman.

Technical Universities: A university specializing mainly in the study of science, engineering, and technology.

Organization of the Study

This study comprised five chapters. Chapter One comprised the background to the study, statement of the problem, the purpose of the study, research questions, significance of the study, delimitation of the study, limitation of the study, definition of terms and the organization of the study.

Chapter Two reviewed related literature on the concept of occupational stress, burnout, causes of occupational, Person-environment Fit Theory, Job Demand-support Control Model and Transactional Model of stress. Among other reviews were perceived stress level of lecturers, strategies that lecturers use in coping with stress, perceived effect of stress on the marriage and health female lecturers.

Chapter Three comprised the research methods for the study. This included the research design, study area, population, sampling procedure, data collection instruments, validation of instrument, data collection procedures and data processing and analysis. Chapter Four was made up of the results and

discussions while Chapter Five dealt with the summary, conclusions, recommendations and suggestions for further research.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

The purpose of the study was to investigate how female lecturers occupational stress affects their marriage and health in selected Technical Universities. This chapter reviewed literature related to the study. Among the sections presented are the theoretical framework, conceptual framework, and empirical review of the study. The areas reviewed include the following:

1. Theoretical framework.

   The theoretical framework covered the following subtopics:

   i. Person-environment fit theory
   ii. Job demand-support control model
   iii. Transactional model of stress

2. Conceptual Framework.

   The conceptual framework covered the following subtopics:

   i. The concept of occupational stress
   ii. Causes of occupational stress
   iii. The concept of burnout
   iv. The concept of employee work performance

3. Empirical Framework.

   The empirical review covered the following subtopics:

   i. The stress level of academics
   ii. Causes of stress among academics.
   iii. The effect of stress on the marriage of academics
   iv. The effect of stress on the health of academics

v. Stress coping strategies of academics

Theoretical Framework

Person-Environment Fit Theories

Person-Environment (P-E) Fit theory was an early forerunner of dynamic systemic theories. Caplan (1987) used P-E fit theory as a method for understanding the process of adjustment between employees and their work environment. According to this framework, occupational stress is defined in terms of work characteristics that create distress for the individual due to a lack of fit between the individual's abilities and attributes and the demands of the workplace. Caplan (1987) suggested that recollections of past, present, and anticipated P-E fit might influence wellbeing as well as performance.

Interventions are directed at measuring fit prior to vocational placement or measuring discrepancy in the identification of occupational stress aetiology. Interactions between people (e.g., personality traits, vocational orientation, and experience) and environmental variables have been found to be better predictors of strain than either person or environmental variables considered separately (Antonovsky, 1987; Caplan, Cobb, & French, 1975). However, the characteristics of jobs and the characteristics of workers may influence each other in dynamic reciprocal ways. Most P-E fit theories are static and fail to address the ongoing, reciprocal influences of the environment and the person (Kulik, Oldham, & Hackman, 1987).

The implication of this theory for the current study is based on the fact that stress is a result of the interaction between the responsibilities emanating from one's workplace and the abilities or characteristics of the individual. If there is a perfect fit between these two dimensions, minimal stress is

experienced, but if there is a mismatch, then the individual experiences a high amount of stress that might affect their health and marriage relationship. This current study sought to argue the need for academic institutions to strive for a balance between responsibilities and peculiar features of female lecturers due to their overarching roles as wives and parents at home.

Job Demand-Support Control Model

The Job Demand-Support Control Model will be applied to this study. Karasek and Theorell's (1990) Job Demand Control Model is considered by many to be the most dominant Occupational Stress Theory. The theory states that there are two fundamentals involved in the process of occupational stress, namely, an employee's level of control over their work duties and the demands of their job (Rehman, Khan, Jadoon & Khan, 2010). According to Tsutsumi, Kayaba, Theorell and Siegrist (2001), the Job-Demand-Control Model posits that when there are high demands in relation to work done and low control, it is likely that health problems will result. Interestingly, workers employed in "highstrain jobs" characterised by high demands but low control are likely to experience unpleasant psychological strain, including fatigue, uneasiness, and depression (Sanne, Mykletun, Dahl, Moen & Tell, 2005).

Another element was subsequently added to the model, and this was termed the "social support dimension." This dimension gave birth to the Job Demand-Control-Support model (Sanne et al., 2005). The JDCS model operates on three distinctive components, namely, "(psychological) demands, control (or decision latitude), and (social) support" (Sanne et al., 2005, p. 463). Proponents of the model argue that when working, employees are faced with various circumstances and events that are often not given attention, and some of these

events are considered to be threats to a person's physical or psychological wellbeing (Rehman, Khan, Jadoon & Khan, 2010). Rehman et al. further indicated that, occupational stressors lead to unpleasant emotional behaviours such as anger, nervousness, and dissatisfaction. Individual control and social support are considered to play a mediating role between employees and occupational stress arising thereafter. Many employees use behavioural control tactics in order to cope with job demands, for example, finding ways of dealing with their own deficiencies or lack of work resources (Rehman et al., 2010).

The current study makes deductions from this theory based on the fact that female lecturers in Technical Universities are assigned equal roles and responsibilities as their male counterparts. In this respect, they are expected to teach, do a lot of research, and perform other community service as well to advance in their career. Aside from the job-related duties, female lecturers, especially the married ones, are also burdened with house chores. The female lecturer may experience stress as a result of the two demands from work and home. By using this model, the researcher sought to explore the level of job control that female lecturers have in performing the above-mentioned activities as well as whether the control they have over their work assists them in coping with stress. These factors were explored alongside the level of support they receive from their superiors or peers when doing their work and how this support impacts on their health and marriage.

Transactional Model of Stress

Besides Seyle's model, one prominent model in stress research is the Transactional Model, developed by Richard Lazarus. Lazarus and Folkman

(1984) proposed a model (cognitive appraisal) that underscores the transactional nature of stress. The model states that environments can influence people and that people can influence environments. Hence, stress is a two-way process. By this, the environment produces stressors and the individual finds ways to deal with them. The model is in two parts, namely primary and secondary appraisal. During the primary appraisal stage, a person will be seeking answers to questions regarding their well-being. A secondary appraisal is the individual's attempt to define what coping options are available for dealing with the harm, threat, or challenge. If demands are greater than the resources to meet them, stress occurs (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984).

Lazarus (1993) argued that four concepts must be elaborated upon when describing the stress process. These include the stressor (or causal agent); the evaluation of the stressor, differentiating between the stressful and non-stressful components; the process by which the person copes with these stressful demands; and the effects or stress reactions of the individual. The stress models developed by various theorists provide us with many valuable tools for understanding the nature of stress.

The application of this model to current work is that the work environment in which female lecturers find themselves has the potential to negatively impact their health and marriage due to the demands of work that they are required to do. The transactional relationship between female lecturers and their work situations calls for more concern and empirical investigation. The main interest of this study hinges on the fact that the transactional effect, if investigated, may lead to recommendations of coping mechanisms and policies

that may lessen the effects of stress on health and marital relationships of female lecturers.

In summary, all three theories namely the Person-Environment Fit theories, Job Demand-Support Control Model and Transactional Model of Stress combine to support the study as they are all centered around an individual as well as their job. Hence, any transaction between people and their jobs can lead to deteriorated health and marriage through uncontrollable stress. As such, any tension or discrepancy that arise from an imbalance between employees (female lecturers) and their job (lecturing) based on heavy workloads, role ambiguity or tasks uncertainties may result in stress among these employees and the stress can consequently affect the health of single female lecturers as well as the health and marriage of married female lecturers at the Technical Universities.

Conceptual Review

The Concept of Occupational Stress

Stress in the workplace is often referred to as occupational stress. The basic rationale underpinning the concept is that the work situation has certain demands, and that effort in meeting these demands can lead to illness or psychological distress (Stacciarini & Troccoli, 2003). The workplace stands out as a potentially important source of stress purely because of the amount of time that is spent in this setting. However, the stress-inducing features of the workplace go beyond simply the time involved. The financial security and opportunities for advancement of individuals are dependent upon their performance. The pressure to perform often makes the work situation potentially very stressful (Stacciarini & Troccoli, 2003).

Occupational stress can be conceptualised as a disruption of the emotional stability of the individual that induces a state of disorganisation in personality and behaviour (Nwadiani, 2006). Stress can be described as functional or dysfunctional. Functional stress, also referred to as eustress, improves performance by motivating people to achieve their set objectives. However, excessive stress can result in a variety of negative emotional and/or physical reactions, resulting in becoming dysfunctional (Lussier, 2009). Stress, according to Uzonwanne (2014), is an adverse reaction where people have excessive pressure or other types of undesirable mental, physical, emotional, social, or environmental demands placed on them. Stress is an inevitable and unavoidable component of life due to the complexities and competitiveness of living standards (Sindhu, 2014). Sindhu was of the opinion that in modern times, stress in general and job stress in particular have become part of life and have received considerable attention in recent years.

Greenberg and Baron (2000) see stress as the complex pattern of emotional states, physiological reactions, and related thoughts in response to external demands referred to as stressors, and strain as the accumulated effect of stress, which results primarily in deviations from the normal states or performance and exposure to stressful events. Stressors are factors that cause people to feel overwhelmed by anxiety, tension, and/or pressure (Lussier, 2009, p. 299). Further situating stress within the work environment, Luthans (2006) defines stress as a response to a certain situation or condition that is determined by individual difference and psychological process, as a consequence of the action of the environment, situation, or event that puts too much demand on one's psychological and physical domain. Occupational stress arises due to the

demands of the environment and the different responses each individual has to facing the demands.

Stress in the workplace has been considered as important as work performance of a firm. Stress is directly linked to seven of the ten leading causes of death in the world, with cardiovascular disease being the leading cause for both men and women (Quick & Cooper, 2003). Hence, occupational stress is a key cardiovascular risk factor (Schnall, Dobson & Landsbergis, 2005). To call occupational stress a risk factor requires consideration of the life history of the problem. Occupational stress is not an acute or toxic condition that can be cured through treatment. Rather, it is a chronic condition that requires an understanding of the epidemiology or life history of the problem prior to exploring protection, prevention, and intervention alternatives. The epidemiology of occupational stress may be considered in three stages. That is, the first stage includes the causes of stress, which are known to be risk factors.

The second stage is about the stress response, a normal and naturally occurring reaction to environmental demands or internal pressures. Finally, the third stage is concerned with the consequences of one's life history, which can take the form of distress (medical, psychological, or behavioural) or eustress (healthy stress). In addition to the above-listed consequences of occupational stress, the stress response can manifest differently in the lives of individuals. These different characteristics may either serve as protection factors for the individual or make the individual vulnerable to health hazards.

Classification of Stress

Relative to the view advanced by Lazarus (1991) that occupational stress is a process involving a transaction between an individual and his or her work

environment. Stress can, however, be categorised into three; that is, acute, posttraumatic, or chronic.

Acute stress

As a term, acute stress means a sudden event. Stress of this nature usually involves a rapid response to an abrupt, single, easily identified cause that will often respond positively to some form of intervention (Santos & Cox, 2000). In an acute stress response situation, a person's arousal state (anxiety) will rise sharply and then start to decline. A person may experience acute stress in response to a negative situation such as an unexpected bereavement, abuse at the workplace, conflict at the workplace (i.e., engaging in a dispute with a coworker or a superior), beginning a new task or position, the commencement of new work strategies, or waiting for one's contract to be renewed. In this acute phase, there is an increased feeling of arousal that can lead to certain physiological responses such as diarrhea, a dry mouth, heart palpitations, or cognitive imbalance (Alonzo, 2000). For most people that experience an acute stress response, they return to their usual life within the shortest time.

Post-traumatic stress

As events in the workplace become life-threatening (i.e., as in the case of female lecturers who are overburdened with academic-related tasks coupled with household chores), a frequent and progressive form of stress response can develop. This is what therapists refer to as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) (Anshel, 2000). The disorder develops as a deferred and/or delayed response to an acute stressful situation, that is, either short-lived or long-lasting. Posttraumatic stress disorder usually has a catastrophic or threatening nature with a high possibility of bringing about pervasive distress in almost any person who finds himself or herself in that situation (WHO, 1992). This stress response

is usually incessant. Depression and anxiety are often connected with PTSD, and suicidal ideation also appears to be frequent. Other commonly cited comorbidity conditions arising from PTSD include anti-social personality disorder, panic disorder, agoraphobia, and substance abuse (WHO, 1992).

Chronic stress

Chronic stress is a reaction to the accumulation of pressures over a long period of time. Chronic stress tends to begin gradually and proceed gradually as well. This kind of stress is well explained as an ongoing internal reaction to external occurrences when the power to cope with those occurrences is hindered (Alonzo, 2000). Unlike acute stress, where a return to normalcy happens within the shortest possible time, the condition of chronic stress usually shows itself in diverse ongoing psychological and/or physical symptoms such as sleep disturbances, coronary heart disease, hypertension, stroke, withdrawal, poor concentration, and depression (Anshel, 2000). Moreover, chronic stress over a period of time may lead to a weakening of the immune system. To be certain, it is not unusual for someone to experience prolonged symptoms of sickness but may not know that chronic stress is the cause (Anshel, 2000; WHO, 1992).

Contrary to the case of Lazarus, where stress was classified into three, Albrecht categorised stress into four, which is, anticipatory stress, time stress, situational stress, and encounter stress (Albrecht, as cited in Antonova, 2016). Anticipatory stress, also sometimes generally referred to as a "worry" or fear of the future, is a state of anxiety about some independent occasion with little or no reason underlining it. This type of stress is experienced by almost everyone at least once to a certain extent and can be explained as a common worry that something will go wrong (Albrecht, 1979). Time-stress is an anxious response

to the concept of time, for instance, a strong feeling of the need to do something within a certain time period. People experiencing time stress can feel "desperate, trapped, miserable, and often rather helpless," Albrecht (as cited by Antonova, 2016). Situational stress is a state of anxiety due to a situation in which one feels threatened, has little or no control over the situation, and is afraid to "lose face" in the eyes of others or to be physically injured. Encounter stress is a fear of having to deal with a person or group of people who one does not like or would not be willing to deal with at a certain moment. Encounter stress can also be a result of getting tired of interacting with too many people (Albrecht, 1979).

Sources/Causes of Occupational Stress

Work-related stress occurs under various circumstances. The term "stressor" itself was introduced by the father of the stress concept, that is, Selye (1956), to suggest "the external force or influence acting on the individual" Selye as cited by (Le Fevre, Matheny, & Kolt, 2003). However, even though this is the most common terminology, different scholars have been using different terms. For instance, an author, like Edwards (1998), used the term "stress" to represent these external forces and "strain" for the resulting action (Le Fevre et al., 2003). So, generally speaking, stressors are the sources of stress that can be both internal and external. Similarly, with stress itself, there are various classifications of stressors offered by different researchers. They can differ in terms of their origin, clarity, duration, choice, level of induced stress, and if the stressor arises alone or together with other ones (Weber, 2011a). Scholars have provided a logical division of stressors into four categories: environmental, organizational, group, and individual stressors (Anbazhagan et al., 2013; Reddy, 2004).

Environmental stressors include several social and technical influencing factors, such as technological change, family demands and obligations, economic and financial conditions, race, caste, class, ethnic identity, relocation and transfers (Anbazhagan et al., 2013). More generally, environmental stressors have been divided into four categories: cataclysmic events; stressful life events; daily hassles; and ambient stressors. Cataclysmic events include the ones that usually affect the whole community, such as catastrophes, natural and technological disasters, and wars, but also imprisonment (Reddy, 2004). Stressful life events, such as marital status, social or economic condition changes, are usually the ones that necessitate some kind of personal or social adaptation. Daily annoyances, on the other hand, are situations that everyone encounters on a daily basis and that typically cause short-term stress. These daily hassles include problems at work or in the family, or environmental conditions such as noise, crowding, or weather. Ambient stressors is the term developed by Campbell (1983) to describe the stressors that are often represented as background permanent conditions that have negative impacts and can be physically perceptible and hardly manageable. Living in an area with heavy air pollution (Reddy, 2004).

Policies, strategies, structure and design, processes, organization, and working conditions are all examples of organisational stressors (Anbazhagan et al., 2013). The organisational policies provide guidelines for action, where vague or disadvantageous policies may lead to stress amongst employees. Stressors include unrealistic job descriptions, inflexible rules, and inequality of incentives, among others. The organisational structure provides formal relationships among the individuals in an organisation. Any defects in an

organisational structure work as stressors due to inadequate relationships between individuals and groups. Stressors include lack of opportunity for advancement, participation in decision-making and line and staff conflict. Insufficient organisational processes, such as poor communication or inadequate information flow, cause stress among the employees in an organisation (Anbazhagan et al., 2013). Physical conditions have an impact on work performance. Poor physical conditions, including excessive noise, lack of privacy or an indoor temperature that is either too hot or too cold, cause stress on individuals (Reddy, 2004). Cooper and Marshall (1976) have introduced five main categories of work stressors. They are as follows: intrinsic job stress, organisational role stress, career development stress, relationship at work stress, organisational structure and climate related stress.

Group stressors are the ones that occur within the formal and informal groups to which one belongs. Examples of such stressors are: lack of group cohesiveness, lack of social support, interpersonal and intergroup conflict. Individual stressors are considered to be the internal ones, for instance, role conflict and ambiguity, personality traits, and life and career changes (Anbazhagan et al., 2013). Lastly, internal stressors largely refer to stressors emanating from the individual. In other words, internal stressors originate within a person and represent stress-inducing thoughts or behaviours, personal perceptions, and expectations. Common internal stressors are pessimism, putting pressure on oneself to be perfect, negative self-talk, perfectionism, unrealistic expectations, and lack of assertiveness (Greene, 2013).

In conclusion, it is obvious that within the stress literature, organizational, environmental, and group-related stress are all external sources

of stress, whereas an individual's self-induced stress is an internal type of stress. In all, it is argued that for some people, coping with external stressors is more challenging as they are usually out of an individual's control (Weber, 2011b).

Consequences of occupational stress

The higher stress levels amongst professionals have had negative impacts on both organisations and the individuals themselves (Tennant, 2001). Stress can be transitory at times, but it can also be chronic. Chronic stress can play a major role in an individual's life and can lead to a wide variety of physical problems, such as headaches and upset stomachs (Robbins, 2007). The consequences are both physiological and psychological.

Physiological problems

Researchers have several opinions on the impact of stress on physical health. Some researchers opine that there is a relationship between a high level of stress and high blood pressure as well as heart disease (Ahmad, Gilkar & Darzi, 2008). Besides these issues, severe stress is also related to breathing difficulties, panic attacks, and excessive sweating (Hellriegel & Slocum, 2010).

Leka et al. (2003) point out that stress may also affect people's immune systems by impairing their ability to fight infections. Further physiological issues mentioned by Leka et al. include "musculoskeletal pain, poor self-rated health, and sleep problems. Stress is one factor that may aggravate the symptoms of musculoskeletal injury as well as prolong the time for recovery. Cooper and Quick (2017) claim that there are many risk factors in an individual's workplace that can aggravate the connection between musculoskeletal injuries and stress. The authors mentioned burnout as a result of chronic occupational stress. Due to the fact that burnout increases muscle

tension, which also triggers other reactions in the body and, in many cases, promotes other stress-related disorders. These disorders might be tension-type headaches and chronic migraine, which are associated with muscle tension in the area of the shoulders, neck, and head (Cooper & Quick, 2017).

Psychological problems

Work-related stress can cause dissatisfaction with the work itself. Besides the problem with job dissatisfaction, job stress can cause employees to experience other psychological states, such as anger, anxiety, depression, irritability, tension, and boredom (Ahmad & Darzi, 2008). Burnout is another issue of concern that happens to people as a result of stress. Lingard and Francis (2009) claim that the building of an organisation has a great deal to lose if they fail to address it, as it is likely to impair productivity and reduce the affected individual's work ability (Cooper & Quick, 2017).

Behavioural problems

Behavioural effects of job stress include changes in productivity, absence, and turnover. It may also involve increased smoking, alcohol abuse, sleeplessness, impulsive behaviour or changes in food consumption (Ahmad & Darzi, 2008). Overeating and unhealthier eating may result in being overweight. Evidence exists to show that there is an association between stress and eating disturbances, which includes anorexia, bulimia, and binge eating (Cooper & Quick, 2017; Walker, 2015). The behavioural problems, when prolonged, tend to lead the individual to cardiovascular problems. Eating disorders bring about an increase in body fat. Some researchers opine that excess fat around the waistline can increase the risk of Type 2 diabetes, heart disease, and high blood pressure (Walker, 2015).

The Concept of job burnout

Freudenberger (1974) defined job burnout as a situation when an employee is worn out physically as well as psychologically due to work place situations. Freudenberger's definition referred to a state of exhaustion, which resulted from failure, fatigue, loss of energy, or unmet demands on an employee's inner resources (Arabaci, 2010). In other words, burnout is a reduction in an employee's physical and mental resources, leading to personal and professional difficulties. Maslach and Jackson (1981) defined burnout as "a syndrome of emotional exhaustion and desperation that occurs frequently among individuals who work with people" (p. 99). Maslach and Jackson (1981) maintained that the dominant causes of burnout among employees were the conditions in the work place. In simple words, burnout is a state of emotional as well as physical exhaustion that an employee encounters due to stressful work events or situations. Burnout is generally deemed to be the result of long-term exposure to stressful work situations (Alarcon, Eschleman, & Bowling, 2009;

Garland & McCarty, 2009). In Croatian studies, commonly used terms are "burnout", "job-consumed" and "burn through" (Mejovšek, 2002; Ajduković, 1996; Ljubotina & Družić, 1996). Although the explanations of burnout vary among previous researchers, Maslach (1982) has maintained that three core components are commonly used and expected in all the explanations. These include;

1. Depersonalization
2. Reduced personal accomplishments
3. Emotional exhaustion

According to Maslach (1982), depersonalization first takes place as employees become frustrated with their jobs and less concerned about their clients' interests, and finally climaxes with increasingly negative work-related attitudes. The second stage of burnout is a job-related sense of inadequacy and feelings of failure, which leads to a reduction in personal accomplishment. Emotional exhaustion is the final stage of burnout and occurs when employees feel overextended by their work (Maslach, 1982), resulting in a reduction in the level of job productivity (Pearlman & Hartman, 1982). These three factors from the Maslach Burnout Inventory; depersonalization, reduced personal accomplishments, and emotional exhaustion, are the primary focus of this study.

Depersonalisation

Maslach (1981) refers to depersonalization as treating colleagues with a lack of interest, impersonally, unsympathetically, and insensitively. Dollard (1995) highlights that some studies find that social support from colleagues reduces stress among employees, while other studies find the exact opposite. Other research argues that there is a weak level of group loyalty among employees, and a sense of solidarity is only heightened when there are threats from management (Schaufeli & Peeters, 2000).

Reduced sense of personal accomplishment

Maslach (1981) refers to a reduced sense of personal accomplishment as resulting from poor self-perceptions of being ineffective at work. Research literature has revealed that the absence of challenging career prospects serves as a contributing factor to burnout. Some authors have asserted that the main explanation for the occurrence of burnout is a result of increasing cynicism, loss of idealism, energy, and purpose (Edelwich & Brodsky, 1980).

Emotional exhaustion

Emotional exhaustion is the feeling of being exhaustive or weary and emotionally drained from your job. The emotional element is one of the most commonly experienced dimensions of burnout and has serious negative outcomes (Carlson & Thomas, 2006; Maslach, 2001; Schaufeli & Peeters, 2000). Emotional labour can be divided into two groups, namely "surface" and "deep" acting. Surface acting denotes emotions that the individual is not experiencing in real terms; thus, a type of 'fake it' emotion where the individual is putting up in conformity to the rules of the organization. Deep acting is where the individual makes an "emotive effort", attempting to feel the emotion with more genuine feelings displayed (Hochschild, 1983; Kruml & Geddes, 2000). Whereas wholehearted, deep acting may possibly lead to exhaustion, surface acting is likely to confirm self-blame, desperation, and detachment (Hochschild, 1983).

The Concept of Marriage

One of the most important relationships between a man and a woman is marriage. Marriage is a unique commitment in the lives of men and women for which they are expected to enjoy love, happiness, provision, protection, procreation, and respect in society (Okpechi & Usani, 2015). It involves emotional and legal commitment, which are very important in adult life. Moreover, selecting a partner and entering into a marital contract is considered both a maturational milestone and a personal achievement. Therefore, there is no doubt that the choice of a marital partner is one of the most important decisions one makes in his/her lifetime (Okpechi, 2012).

In Ghana, different avenues for marriage exist; that is, customary marriage, religious marriage, and marriage under the law (also called "ordinance marriage"). Customary Law Marriages in Ghana derive their legitimacy from sections in Parts 2 and 3 of the Marriages Act, 1884/5. The Act defines marriage as a union between a man's family and a woman's family, but it is also a contract between two people—a man and a woman. Therefore, marriage is purported to be a legal agreement between a man and a woman entering into a recognised relationship. The agreement has the effect of creating a certain status whereby the couples enjoy certain rights and assume certain responsibilities (Adai, Opoku-Agyeman & Amanfu, 2015).

There has been a significant movement of women into the labour force since the Second World War (Rodin, 1991). As a result, more women find themselves faced with the dual roles of being employees and wives. The increase in the percentage of working women has raised questions about the relative contributions of work and family to the psychological adjustment of women (Lukas, 1991). Furthermore, Lukas indicated that there is considerable evidence that work and family demands place special burdens on employed women. Apparently, work and family role conflict are experienced when pressures from work and family roles are incompatible, and participation in one of the roles makes it more difficult to participate in the other. For better understanding, this present study seeks to investigate how work stress affects the marriage and health of female lecturers at some Technical Universities in Ghana.

Conceptual Framework:

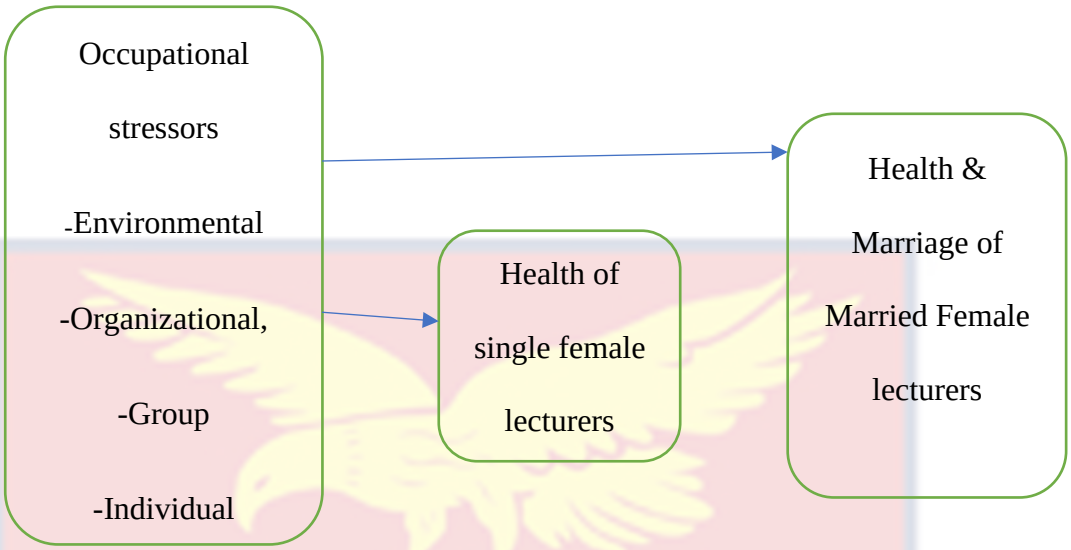

Figure 1: Flow Chart Conceptual framework

(Authors own construct, 2023).

The framework above suggests the interconnectedness of the variables of interest within the context of the present study. The study conceptually holds the idea that certain factors emanating from within (internal) and outside the individual (external) are logically categorised into four, namely, environmental, organizational, group, and individual stressors. The four named categories of stressors are the root source (cause) of stress. These stressors, depending on their frequency, lead a person to experience a certain degree of stress (i.e., high, moderate, or low), which subsequently affects the health or marriage of the individual. In the context of this study, special emphasis is laid on female academics within technical universities. The desire is to explore possible sources of stressors, their level of stress, and how those stresses affect their health and marriage if married. Further, the study would also examine the behaviours that are used as stress coping strategies for female lecturers in selected technical universities.

Empirical Review

This aspect of the review focused on previous studies that have been conducted that are relevant to this study. As part of this sub-section are evaluations of the study, critiques, and recommendations for this current study.

The Stress Levels of Academics

Academic staff members' stress levels depict the degree to which academic staff members are subjected to stressors. There are various forms of stress being experienced by these members. Some have high stress, moderate stress, while others are highly stressed. Empirical studies that report academic staff stress levels are replete.

Isa and Palpanadan (2020) investigated the level of Malaysian lecturers' stress and the sources of those stressors. In a quantitative survey, stress questionnaires were given to 609 lecturers who were randomly selected from Malaysian universities. Findings from the study showed that Malaysian lecturers reported a low level of occupational stress.

Osemwenkhae, Iduseri and Meka (2019) explored the stress factors responsible for the perceived differences in the levels of stress experienced by teachers in government tertiary, secondary and primary schools in Nigeria. Using a survey design, 90 teachers from Nigerian tertiary, secondary, and primary schools were chosen to complete a stress questionnaire. After data analysis, the study discovered that there was a significant difference in the level of stress experienced by the three categories of teachers, with tertiary school teachers rated high on the stress scale.

Tquabo et al. (2021) examined the prevalence of occupational stress and associated factors in colleges in Eritrea. A cross-sectional descriptive survey

design was chosen for the study. By using the population proportion formula, the sample size of the study was calculated to be 222. A closed-end stress questionnaire was administered to all the study participants to respond to. Analysis of the data showed that the level of stress experienced by the teachers in Eritrea was high.

Shkëmbi, Melonashi, and Fanaj (2015) explored the level of stress among basic school teachers in Hijj in Asia. The different types of stress experienced by teachers were also explored. As a quantitative descriptive study, 799 teachers were engaged as participants where they were allowed to respond to a national stress awareness day questionnaire. After a thorough descriptive and inferential analysis of the study, findings showed that the majority of the teachers were highly stressed about their jobs.

Nwimo and Onwunaka (2015) examined the stress levels of high school teachers in Ebonyi State, Nigeria. The study made use of a cross-sectional survey design. With the help of a systematic random sampling approach, 660 (401 females and 259 males) teachers were recruited to serve as respondents for the study. All the teachers serving as respondents were made to respond to the stress questionnaire. Data was managed and analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Results indicated that secondary school teachers had a high level of stress. Further, the study findings showed a significant difference in the level of stress experienced by both male and female teachers. Dandona (2014) examined the occupational stress of physicians and lecturers. Using a survey design, one hundred professionals (lecturers and physicians) were sampled to respond to the occupational stress index instrument. Data was analysed using mean and standard deviation, t-test and Pearson correlation. The study's findings

revealed that physicians' stress levels were higher than those of lecturers. Data analysis of the indicators of the occupational stress index showed that the scores of role ambiguity, role overload, low status, strenuous working conditions, and unprofitability were higher in physicians than in lecturers.

In summary, I must say that literature in the area of stress shows that stress is a phenomenom that is evident among academicians including female lectuerers due to several factors such as their job description and tasks demands. When these factors are coupled with their duties at the house whether married or single, it creates higher levels of stress amongst them.

Sources of Stress among Academics

A great number of studies describe the sources (or causes) of stress, also better referred to as stressors. Personal and situational variables are prominently cited as common stressors among female academics in particular and lecturers in general. Besides, there is an undeniable variation in social, physical, economic, and organisational conditions that act as stressors.

Kaliniene, Ustinaviciene, and Skemiene (2013) investigated occupational stress and its relationship with the sense of coherence and psychosocial work features among female public service workers. Using a quantitative descriptive survey design, 484 women were administered the Copenhagen psychosocial questionnaire to complete. Findings revealed that the prevalence rates of work-related demands were also high. However, their influence on possibilities for development and the sense of coherence were found to be extremely weak.

Krishnan (2014) examined factors that caused working women in Bangalore city. In a descriptive study, the study involved 100 female professionals. The study dwelt on both secondary and primary data for analysis.

Statistical procedures such as means and standard deviation, regression, and chisquare were used for the analysis of the data. Results of the study revealed that socio-economic, psychological, family and relationship stressors were the causers of stress among working women.

Masuku and Muchemwa (2015) explored symptoms, stress levels, and common stressors among lecturers at Solusi University, a church-related institution in Zimbabwe. A descriptive cross-sectional survey design was utilized. An adapted stress questionnaire for university lecturers was administered to 36 full-time lecturers at the institution. The data collected was analysed using descriptive statistics and ANOVA. The findings of the study indicated that most of the lecturers had high stress levels and the causes of the stress were higher workloads, the desire to meet deadlines (hit targets), as well as long working hours.

Meng and Wang (2018) examined the causes of stress among university lecturers in China. By opting for a quantitative descriptive design, 240 lecturers (131 females and 109 males) were randomly selected to participate in the study. A 24-item stress questionnaire was administered to the participants to complete. Analysis of the data was done using descriptive statistics and ANOVA procedures. The results of the study showed that occupational stress was widespread across occupational levels. The results showed that personal development activities and scientific research were the main stressors for the senior members.

In summary, I must say that from the studies reviewed, occupational stress among lecturers (i.e., including female lecturers) can result from the job itself (isolation at work, work overload etc.) or the organisational and social

contexts in which the work is performed (e.g., management style, poor communication, interpersonal conflict etc.). Personal characteristics such as the person's desire to meet deadlines and work longer hours may also cause stress.

Occupational Stress and Demographical variables (i.e., Gender, Marital Status, Age and Level of Education) of Participants

Aside from environmental and individual factors, demographic variables of respondents in previous studies have been found to have an influence on stress levels in workers. Available study findings reported in the literature have shown that women tend to suffer more than men, not only from general stress but also from work-related stress (Rosch, 2014; Michael & Crispen, 2009). For example, Burke and Bykov (2008) examined the gender difference in the level of stress experienced by industrial managers. In a survey, 154 industrial managers were administered a stress questionnaire to respond. After the inferential analysis of the data, the results showed that female managers experience more stress than their male counterparts.

In the quest to know more about gender differences in the level of stress experienced by workers, Rosch (2014) also investigated the causes of gender differences in stress among public sector workers. Quantitative data analysis of 200 medical reports of public sector workers indicated that hormonal differences were the cause of differences in stress among workers. According to Rosch, women's hormone levels are less stable than men. Interestingly, the differences in stress can also be explained by the fact that women tend to consult doctors and therapists more often than men, and thus are more likely to be diagnosed as stressed beings (Rosch, 2014).

Some previous studies have also shown that marital status influences the stress levels of individuals. Parveen (2009a) investigated the differences in occupational stress between married and unmarried women and has similarly supported the notion that married employees have experienced more stress than unmarried ones. These results might be explained by work-family pressures, obligations, and increased home stressors (Parveen, 2009b; O'Neill & Davis, 2009).

Age is another factor that has been found to influence the stress levels of individuals. Chandraiah et al. (2003) examined the difference in stress levels among non-governmental organisation employees based on age-range. After administering a stress scale to 453 employees, the study discovered that young adults (25–35 years old) and early middle-aged (36–45 years old) were experiencing more stress due to such job stressors as role overload, role ambiguity, and strenuous working conditions compared to late-middle-aged (46–60 years old) employees. These results might reflect the differences in perception of certain stressors and the coping mechanisms that people have at different ages. Thus, many stressors, such as marriage, divorce, having children, or changes at work, are more relevant for younger adults, and the everyday hassles that influence the stress level are perceived as less stressful for older people. The level of education of the employees can also influence the occupational stress experienced by them.

Doughty (2013) investigated the differences in stress experienced by teachers on the basis of their qualification. Using a descriptive survey, in 2014 teachers were asked to fill out a stress questionnaire. They were further asked to write on the questionnaire the various reasons for their workplace stress.

Results from data analysis showed that teachers with higher qualifications were more stressed at work.

Again, in a different sector, Bartholome (2007) examined the issue of stress among police service officers. In a case study, results from 34 police officers interviewed in the study showed that the results indicated that the respondents with a high school diploma had the highest stress levels, whereas employees with a master's degree were least stressed. The result is not surprising because higher qualification in the police goes with higher rank. In this respect, people of the lower rank may be engaged in more policing activities than those of the higher rank who mostly play supervisory roles.

Clearly, I conclude that the level of stress experienced by workers differ with respect to qualification, even though the results appear to be contradictory. The nature of a particular profession's job may determine whether people with higher qualifications are stressed or not.

Effect of Stress on Work Performance of Academics

As in the case of any psychological condition, occupational stress is reported to affect academic staff in various ways. Studies are replete on the issue of the effects of stress. This aspect of the review report includes some of the studies that indicate the effects of stress.

Aroosiya and Ali (2016) investigated how occupational stress impacts the performance of teaching staff in state universities in the Eastern Province of Sri Lanka. Among the specific objectives, the study looked at the impact of occupational stress on employee performance at the universities using the deductive approach. The study collected data from 133 teaching staff using questionnaires. Analysis was subsequently done using the Pearson Product

Moment Correlation technique. The result revealed that occupational stress is significantly and negatively related to the performance of the teaching staff. The study concluded that the presence of occupational stress negatively affects teaching staff performance levels at the universities studied.

Similarly, Gharib, Jamil, Ahmad, and Ghouse (2016) studied the impact of job stress factors on the job performance of academic staff at Dhofar University, Sultanate of Oman. The study used structured questionnaires to collect data from 102 academic staff and analysed the data retrieved using multiple regression analysis to find the impact of job stress on job performance. The results showed that the level of academic staff job stress was medium and sometimes low. In addition, the level of job performance was somewhat high, while workload was found to have a positive statistical effect on job performance among the academic staff of the university.

Nnuro (2012) did a study in Ghana to examine the effect of occupational stress on staff performance at Koforidua Polytechnic. A cross-sectional survey design was employed based on the purpose of the study. Using the systematic sampling technique, the study selected 150 participants for the study. Based on the correlational results obtained during data analysis, the study found that workload was the major cause of occupational stress among staff of Koforidua Polytechnic. The study concluded that job stress has a negative significant effect on staff performance.

Within an academic setting, Mxenge et al. (2014) did a quantitative study on organisational stress and employee intention to quit among administrative personnel at the University of Fort Hare, South Africa. The study focused on the effect of organisational stress on employees' performance among

administrative personnel at the University of Fort Hare. The study employed a survey design with a population of 638 employees, of which 225 were randomly sampled. The study analysed data using Pearson Product Moment Correlation and linear regression analysis. The study found a negative relationship between perceived organisational stress and staff performance. They concluded that perceived occupational stress has a strong negative effect on the employees' performance.

Chinenye, Chukwuemeka, and Amobi (2017) conducted a descriptive study to investigate the effect of occupational stress on non-teaching staff performance in Southeastern Nigerian universities. The study collected primary data comprising face-to-face interviews, focus group discussions, observations, and questionnaires. Findings in the study revealed that occupational stress has a negative effect on non-teaching staff performance. The study concluded that occupational stress is a major determinant of the performance of nonteaching staff in the South Eastern Universities in Nigeria.

Archibong, Bassey and Effion (2014) investigated how occupational stress affects non-teaching staff performance at the University of Technology and University of Uyo in Cross River State. The study focused on a sample size of 279, comprising 168 males and 111 females. A self-administered questionnaire was used to collect data from the staff and analysed using regression analysis. The study found occupational stress to negatively affect non-teaching staff performance in the universities studied. It was, therefore, concluded that occupational stress needs to be urgently addressed in order to overcome its negative consequences and invariably improve the performance levels of non-teaching staff.

In summary, I must say that literature in the area of how workplace stress affects academicians especially female lectures shows that stress is a prevalent at the various educational institutions and it has an adverse or negative effect on the output of workers. Thus, the higher the levels of occupational stress experienced, the worser the performance of staff as they feel incapable.

Effect of Stress on the Marriage of Women

While much research has been conducted on the effects of occupational stress on men, little research has examined the occupational stress of working mothers and the effect of these stresses on their families. Beneath are some of the empirical studies on the issue.

Owolabi and Osekita (2016) explored the influence of job stress and job attitude on marital satisfaction. Data was obtained from four hundred and twenty-three respondents who were civil servants from the Ministries of Agriculture, Health, and Education in Ondo State. The respondents consisted of 189 males and 234 females. The job attitude and stress scale helped in the collection of data from the respondents. Findings of the study showed that employees who experienced lower job stress and a positive job attitude experienced a higher level of marital satisfaction. By implication, job stress had a great effect on employees' marriages.

Abiodun et al. (2016) investigated the effect of occupational stress on marriage and marriage duration among church ministers in Osun and Ogun Provinces, Nigeria. Utilizing the descriptive survey, 222 ministers were purposively drawn from churches within the provinces to respond to three psychological instruments, namely, the Job Stress Questionnaire, the General

Health Questionnaire, and the Marital Stress Inventory. Analysis of the data using regression analysis showed that occupational stress affected the marital relationships of church ministers. Furthermore, the study showed that older ministers manifested a significantly higher level of occupational stress than younger ministers.

Okpechi and Usani (2015) examined the influence of marital stressors on the role performance of female lecturers in tertiary institutions in Cross River State, Nigeria. A survey research design was adopted for the study where a total of 421 female lecturers were drawn from four universities to respond to the Marital Stressors on Role Performance Questionnaire (MSRQ). After a thorough data analysis, results showed that the influence of marital stressors on the role performance of female lecturers was significant. As Okpechi and Usani's (2015) study made use of marital stress as an antecedent variable, this present study would instead explore whether occupational stress would also have an effect on female lecturers' health and marriage in some selected Technical Universities in Ghana.

Parveen (2009a) in a stress exploratory analysis, she was interested in exploring the effect of stress on married and unmarried women employees. Using a quantitative approach, 90 women who were married and 90 women who were not married were asked to fill out an occupational stress scale. T-test statistical analysis of the data revealed that overall work-related stress among married women was greater and it had a greater effect on them as well.

Amponsah (2011) investigated the bi-directional impact of work stress and marital relations. As a descriptive study, a sample of 50 dual-earner people was engaged to respond to a mail questionnaire on the substantive issue of the

study. A linear regression analysis was employed to test the various hypotheses. Findings indicate that the hypothesis that work stress would negatively impact on marital relations was supported. Also, the hypothesis that there would be a significant connection between one's coping strategy and the quality of family relations was not confirmed.

Zarra-Nezhad, Moazami-Goodarzi, Hasannejad, and Roushani (2010) explore the connection between occupational stress and family difficulties for working women. Employing a descriptive cross-sectional design, a sample of 250 married working women having 2 or more children constituted the respondents of the study. The family adaptability and cohesion evaluation scales-II and sources of work stress inventory were used in the data collection. Regression and correlation results indicated that there was a significant positive connection between levels of occupational stress and family difficulties in working women.

Fang (2009) investigated work-family conflict and its stressors in 121 Chinese professional women. The result showed that professional women's work stress really affected their marital or family roles. Further, domesticity satisfaction, family activity, spouse stress, work devotion, and work load are stressors of professional women's work-family conflict.

Neff and Karney (2004) explored the impact of external stress related to work on the marriages of working women. Analyses confirmed that stressful experiences were associated with the trajectory of marital quality over time. A total of 82 couples in Florida were used as the study participants. Furthermore, both the content and the organisation of spouses' specific relationship cognitions mediated this effect. That is, stress negatively influenced the nature

of spouses' marital perceptions as well as the way spouses interpreted and processed those perceptions.

In summary, I must say that literature in the area of how workplace stress affects the marriage of married academicians especially female lectures shows that stress is a prevalent at the various educational institutions and it has an adverse or negative effect on the marriage of these female staff. Hence, employees who experienced lower job stress and a positive job attitude experienced a higher level of marital satisfaction.

Effect of Stress on the Health of Female Lecturers

The main objective of this part of the review is to document the effect of occupational stress on female lecturers' health. While the present study acknowledges that a lot of studies exist on the subject, the majority of the studies were done on other professions other than female lecturers. Nonetheless, the studies are useful since the general theme of the effect of occupational stress on health is addressed.

Kusi, Codjoe and Bampo (2018) explored the effect of occupational stress on female lecturers' health using the University of Education, Winneba as the study setting. The study utilised a sequential explanatory mixed methods model, which allowed the researchers to blend both quantitative and qualitative data for a better explanation of the study variables. Using a census sampling framework, 51 female lecturers were selected to respond to the survey instruments. Analysis of the data revealed that female lecturers experience health-related problems such as headaches, backaches, and sleepless nights owing to the stress they experience at work.

Similar to the earlier study, Eggley, Upoalkpajor, and Anovunga (2021) investigated the effects of occupational stress on female lecturers at the University of Education, Winneba. The study made use of a triangulatory mixed methods approach for the purpose of getting the full picture of how stress affects female lecturers. Seventy-five (75) female lecturers were purposively selected to provide data on how stress affected them. The Stress questionnaire and a semi-structured interview guide were the instruments that were used for data collection. After descriptive analysis of the data, findings showed that female lecturers experience headaches, back pains, high blood pressure, tiredness, nervousness, and sexual weakness as a result of occupational stress.

Mosadeghrad (2014) examined the effect of occupational stress on the health of hospital employees in Iran. A descriptive cross-sectional survey design was employed where 40 employees were randomly sampled to respond to the survey questionnaire. Descriptive statistics, specifically mean and standard deviation, were used to analyse the data. High levels of occupational stress were found to be associated with an increased risk of physical injuries, cardiovascular disease, high blood pressure, depression, and an increase in negative personal behaviours such as anger, anxiety, and irritability.

Mark and Smith (2012) explored the health consequences of stress on university employees at Cardiff University in the United Kingdom. The study used a descriptive survey design, with 200 university workers randomly selected to fill out a questionnaire about their stress. After subjecting the data to regression analysis, the findings of the study showed that forty percent (40%) of university staff reported that occupational stress was related to one or more past or current health complaints, compared to 25.8% of the general population.

Of all the health-related problems reported, stress-related mental health was the most common complaint among university staff.

Mensah (2021) investigated the effect of occupational stress on the mental well-being of workers in Europe. The study made use of secondary data. That is, a cross-sectional data set from the 2015 6th European Working Conditions Survey on 14,603 men and 15,486 women from 35 countries in Europe was collated and analysed. This study provided evidence that occupational stress has a negative impact on the mental well-being of the working adult population in Europe.

Conclusively, the empirical studies in the stress literature are indicative of the fact that occupational stress has a negative impact on the health of workers, including female lecturers. The literature also shows that studies on the issue, particularly stress among female lecturers, are very limited, which calls for a lot more empirical investigation for a better understanding of the issue.

Coping Strategies for stress among Academics

Studies report a great number of coping strategies for dealing with stress among academic staff members. The strategies reported in the literature include visiting a therapist, clinging to religious practices or performing personal favourite activities that ease stress.

Coping strategies are behaviours that people use consciously to tolerate stressors within their boundaries. Kusi, Codjoe, and Bampo (2018), where female lecturers' stress and coping strategies were explored at the University of Education, Winneba, Ghana. The study utilised a mixed method design where 51 female lecturers were engaged as the study respondents. After a thorough

quantitative and qualitative data analysis, the study reported that female lecturers utilised a number of coping strategies that included visiting counsellors, taking leave from work, watching television, and listening to music.

Addison and Yankyera (2015) investigated female basic school teachers' ways of managing occupational stress in the West Akim Municipality, Ghana. A cross-sectional survey design was used. Purposively, twenty-five (25) female teachers were selected to respond to a set of questionnaire items on how they manage stress. After the descriptive data analysis, the results of the study showed that recreational strategies (such as taking days off work, setting time for enjoyment), and social support activities (such as being around friends and consulting others for counsel) were the ways in which the female teachers managed stress.

Schroeder, Akotia, and Apekey (2001) explored the types of stressors that teachers in basic schools in Ghana encounter and the strategies that they adopt to manage those stressors. As a descriptive study, the study selected three hundred and fifty-five (355) teachers to respond to the occupational stress questionnaire. Findings of the study revealed that the absence of accommodation facilities, low salaries for teachers, and a lack of education packages for teachers' children were the stressful events experienced on the job. Deliberating about the problem among themselves, having a continuous attitude of praying to God for a better future and having hope for the future were the coping mechanisms used by the teachers.

In summary, I must say that literature in the area of the coping mechanisms or strategies for stress shows that stress is a phenomenom that is

evident among academicians but there are measures taken by these professionals to cope with the stress experienced. These include being with friends and family, taking leave or partaking in enjoyment filled events, patronizing mass media such as television, etc.

Summary of Literature reviewed

Occupational stress as part of the focus of this study, was conceptualised as a disruption of the emotional stability of the individual that induces a state of disorganisation in personality and behaviour. Review of the studies also indicates three major categories of stress experienced by workers: acute, posttraumatic, and chronic stress. Generally, stress is counted among psychological conditions that have diverse effects on both the physiological and emotional state of the individual. In order to put the study into its rightful theoretical perspective, Person-Environment Fit theory, Job Demand-Support Control model, and Transactional Model of Stress were reviewed. All the theories tend to support the idea that the environment, the person, and the job variables pay a critical role in causing stress and its related effects.

In the empirical review, generally, studies reported that academic staff of universities do experience high levels of stress, with women academics at the worse end of the scale (Rosch, 2014; Michael & Crispen, 2009). For sources (or causers) of stress among university lecturers, studies have shown that occupational stress can result from job-related variables, job environment related variables, and employee (or person)-related variables (Duze, 2012; Masuku & Muchemwa, 2015; Meng & Wang, 2018).

As shown in the review, a few studies (Kusi, Codjoe, & Bampo, 2018; Addison & Yankyera, 2015) have investigated the issue of occupational stress,

in particular among women academics in Ghana. For a better understanding of stressors among women academics and for sound generalizability of sources of stress and coping strategies unique to female academics (i.e., lecturers), there is a need for more empirical investigation into the phenomenon of stress among female lecturers. The study therefore intends to contribute to the stress literature in such a direction.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODS

Introduction

The main purpose of the study was to investigate how occupational stress among female lecturers affect their marriage and health in the selected technical universities. This chapter described the research methods adopted for the study. This included the research design, study area, population, sampling procedure, data collection instrument, data collection procedure, and data processing and analysis.

Research Paradigm

In a scientific investigation, a paradigm is a way of looking at or exploring incidents; it is also a world view, an insight into what constitutes recognised or scientifically valid knowledge or a technique of functioning; it is an established approach or trend (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017), a collaborative system of belief or principles that guide, the identification of a scientific world, a procedure of discovering the truth, general agreement on what significant problems to investigate and how to thoroughly investigate the issues (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017). By offering a point of view, a school of thought, or a collection of shared concepts, this worldview impacts the meaning or understanding of study results (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017). This study adopted the positivist paradigm. The current study aimed to investigate how female lecturers' occupational stress affected their marriage and health in the selected Technical Universities. Questionnaires were utilised to gather and obtain quantitative data from researchers, and statistical techniques were employed to analyse this data. As a result, the Positivist viewpoint is justified.

Research Approach

Quantitative data analysis is an effective research technique based on the positivist worldview (Creswell, 2014). It is linked to large-scale investigations, but it may also be used to smaller-scale ones including case studies, correlational investigations, action research, and trials. Precision assessments and analytical, mathematical, or numeric interpretation of the information collected through polls and questionnaires as well as by computer aided data modification of pre-existing statistical data are the focus of quantitative research. It is associated in acquiring quantitative data and evaluating it across sections of the population or in comprehending a single occurrence. Examining the relationships between and among data, for example, is crucial for conducting surveys and tests to answer questions and test hypotheses (Creswell, 2014). This research is based on the quantitative approach because quantitative research involves the process of collecting and analyzing numerical data as based on the direction of this research.

Research Design

The study was a descriptive cross-sectional survey. The design was used because I sought to sample respondents' views on occupational stress and how it affected their marriage and health as female lecturers in the selected technical universities. Again, I collected information on respondents' stress coping strategies and examined the effect of stress on respondents' marriage and health. The descriptive cross-sectional survey design was used because it aims to gather data in order to answer research questions that concern the existing status of a phenomenon. This type of survey provides an accurate and objective description

of a picture of an on-going situation or real-life situation (Quartey & Awoyemi, 2002).

Koul (2012) indicated that survey studies are conducted to collect detailed descriptions of stress levels with the intent of employing data to justify current conditions and practices or make more intelligent plans for improving them. Koul further explained that, in addition to analysing, interpreting and reporting on the status of an issue, descriptive surveys can be used to determine the adequacy of an activity by comparing results to established standards. It also has the advantage of producing a good number of responses from a wide range of respondents. This design is ideal because this study will provide a report on female lecturers' stress levels and how they affect their marriage and health.

This does not mean that the descriptive survey design is not without weaknesses. Marczyk, DeMatteon, and Festinger (2005) observed that survey designs, like all non-experimental designs, no matter how convincing the data may be, cannot rule out extraneous variables as the cause of what is being observed. This is because descriptive survey designs do not have control over the variables and the environment that they study. This means that findings from surveys are most often influenced by factors other than those attributed by the researcher. Seifert and Hoffgung (1991) also identify problems with survey designs, including the possibility of producing untrustworthy results because they may delve into people's private matters. Again, since descriptive survey designs most often make use of questionnaires, it becomes limited to respondents who are literate. However, attempts were made to minimise the limitations of survey design in this study. These include avoiding issues which respondents considered sensitive and personal. Also, all members of the target

group were literate, and I used very simple language to make the items easy to understand and answer. Finally, this design is ideal because it is much easier to compensate for the aforementioned flaws.

Study Area

Cape Coast Technical University (CCTU) and Takoradi Technical University (TTU) formed the area for the study. Cape Coast Technical University (CCTU), formerly Cape Coast Polytechnic, was established in 1984 as a second-cycle institution. In 1986, it operated under the Ghana Education Service (GES) to offer intermediary courses leading to the award of non-tertiary certificates. Following the enactment of the Polytechnic Law (PNDCL 321) in 1992, the University was upgraded to a tertiary level to run programmes in various disciplines, leading to the award of Higher National Diplomas (HND) in Engineering, Business and Applied Sciences, and Arts by the National Board for Professional and Technician Examination (NABPTEX). Currently, as a technical university, and per the Technical Universities Act, 2016 (Act 922), as amended in the 2018 Act (Act 974), Cape Coast Technical University is mandated to provide higher education in Engineering, Applied Sciences and Arts, Technical and Vocational Education and Training, and other related disciplines. The aim is to train students to be academically and technically balanced in order to meet the challenges of the new century.

Cape Coast Technical University offers four-year Bachelor's Degrees, Bachelor of Technology (Top-Ups), Higher National Diploma, Professional Diploma, and other Diploma Programmes. The School of Engineering, School of Applied Arts, School of Applied Sciences and Technology, School of Built and Natural Environment, and School of Business and Management Studies are

the University's five (5) schools. The schools are each headed by a dean and sub-divided into eighteen (18) academic departments. There are plans to obtain the requisite accreditation for the running of Master of Technology and Doctor of Technology programmes in the near future. The institution has a long history of good standing in academic-related issues; hence, the possibility that academic staff (including female lecturers) may be experiencing work-related stress is worth investigating (Obeng, 2022).

In April 1954, Takoradi Polytechnic was built to operate as a government technical institute under the Ghana Education Service of the Ministry of Education. Takoradi Polytechnic became Takoradi Technical University in September 2016 as a result of the government's policy of converting Takoradi Polytechnic, along with five other polytechnics, to the status of a technical university. The institution was mandated to award degrees, diplomas, certificates and other qualifications as may be agreed upon by the Council of the Takoradi Technical University as established under Section 4 of the Technical Universities Act and approved by the national body responsible for accreditation. Currently, Takoradi Technical University has three (3) campuses: Butumagyebu (Sekondi), Effia Kuma (Takoradi), and Akatakyi (Agona-Nkwanta). The multiple satellite campuses and increased number of departments and courses may be an indication that academic staff (including female lecturers) may be experiencing some amount of work-related stress (Korsah, 2013). It is therefore imperative for the issue of stress to be of concern to educational researchers and therapists.

Population

A population refers to all individuals of interest to the researcher (Marczyk, DeMatteon & Festinger, 2005). Marczyk et al. further defines a population as a group of individuals (objects, subjects, or events) who share observable characteristics that a researcher is interested in. The target population of the study was 475 which was made up of all female lecturers (both single and married) in the technical universities in Ghana. However, female lecturers (both single and married) at Cape Coast technical university and Takoradi Technical University constituted the accessible population.

There were 28 female lecturers at Cape Coast Technical University (CCTU) and 87 female lecturers at Takoradi Technical University (TTU). In all, the population that was accessed was 115 female lecturers (CCTU and TTU Human Resource Statistics as cited by Obeng, 2022).

Sampling Procedure

The sampling procedure was a multiphase one. This implied that the sampling strategies was done at various phases in the selection of respondents. The first phase was the selection of the two public technical universities in Ghana among the ten public technical universities based on a criterion. A purposive sampling technique was used in the selection of the two technical universities (i.e., CCTU and TTU) for the study. The two technical universities were purposively selected because of their leading role in attaining university status. The institutions were among the topmost institutions to be certified with "good institutional standing," "academic staff requirement" and "strong collaboration with industry", which were the criteria for institutional transition from polytechnic status to technical university status.

The second phase was the selection of the female lecturers (both single and married) from the two technical universities whether single or married. The total population of the female lecturers in the schools that were selected was 115. Since the total population of female lecturers was just 115 the census selection was used to involve all the single and married female lecturers for the study. This decision was taken because I was interested in arriving at a precise conclusion or prediction of the relevant variables to the criterion variable. For this reason, a census was appropriate (Gay, Mills & Airasian, 2009). However, 95 out of these 115 people fully participated in the study by completing and returning the questionnaires representing an 82.6 % response rate.

Data Collection Instruments

A questionnaire was used in the collection of data for this study. The questionnaire was adapted from several scales developed by some researchers (Cohen & Williamson, 1988; Isa & Palpanadan, 2020; Broadbent, Petrie, Main & Weinman, 2006; Quansah, Ankomah, Hagan, Srem-Sai & Frimpong, 2022). The questionnaire was made up of five sections labelled "A, B, C, D, E and F".

Section A consisted of questions that solicited information on respondents' demographic characteristics. The demographic variables included age, marital status, and the number of years of teaching.

Section B was made up of 10 items that solicited information about the stress level of respondents. This part of the questionnaire was adapted from Cohen and Williamson (1988). The reliability index calculated with the Cronbach Alpha coefficient was reported to be.78.

Section C was made up of 15 items across five dimensions. The section was adapted from Isah and Palpanadan's (2020) scale for measuring causes and

sources of occupational stress among lecturers. The first dimension, that is, the workload and job activities dimension, has a total of three (3) items and a Cronbach Alpha index of.64. The second dimension also focused on "work environment and work station". It has three (3) items with an Alpha index of .71. The salary and compensation dimension, which is the third dimension, has three items and a Cronbach Alpha reliability of .67. Leadership, is the fourth dimension, which has three items with a Cronbach Alpha reliability index of .70. Finally, the fifth dimension, which is about job specifications, has three (3) items and a Cronbach Alpha of .66. In all, the reliability index for the subsection was provided as 0.91.

Section D was made up of nine items that reflect the marital relationship happenings of respondents. This subsection is a unidimensional one, with four of the items being reversed score items. The scale was adapted from Abiodun's (2016) marital stress inventory. The reliability index of the subsection was reported to be .80.

Section E measured the respondents' perception of their health. This subsection was adopted from the Illness Perception Questionnaire by Broadbent et al. (2006). This subsection was made up of eight (8) items. All the items in the subsection were crafted in likert scale form. The subsection was unidimensional with a reliability coefficient of .90 measured with Cronbach alpha.

The section F measured the stress coping mechanisms of the respondents. The subsection items were adapted from Quansah et al. (2022). The subsection was a multidimensional one with 16 items across the four (4) hypothetical dimensions. The first dimension, which is captioned as "Active

Coping," reflects respondents' actions toward stressors they encounter. This subdimension has four items with internal consistency reliability measured with an omega coefficient of.82. The second subdimension also captioned as "Religious Coping," reflects the religious activities that enable respondents to manage stress. The dimension has four items with an omega coefficient of 0.81. The third dimension, Behaviour Disengagement Coping, emphasises the fact that respondents remain trying without quitting in their effort to deal with stressful situation. The subdimension has four items with an omega reliability coefficient of 0.87. The final subsection of the coping scale will concern "Emotional Support," which emphasises respondents' willingness to share what they are going through in life with others. The subsection has four items with an omega reliability coefficient of 0.83. All the items in the subsection are positively worded items. In all, the entire questionnaire, made up of four adopted scales, will sum up to 54 items. The final reliability of the questionnaire was determined after the pilot-testing exercise and the subsequent refinement of the instrument.

Pilot testing of the Instrument

The instruments were pilot-tested using 30 female lecturers comprising (both singles and married) at Koforidua Technical University. This was based on the assertion by Browne (1995) who suggested at least 30 people as a representative sample for a pilot test. This institution was used because its female lecturers are likely to have the relevant characteristics of interest anticipated in the main study sample. I administered the questionnaires myself and allowed the respondents to write comments they found necessary on the instruments for purposes of modifying the items on the instruments. Apart from

the fact that the pilot testing exercise was used to fine-tune the instrument (Amedahe, 2002), the exercise also tested the practicality of the main data collection exercise. The reliability estimates of the scales are presented (See Appendix C).

Validity and Reliability

To ascertain the face and content validity of the instrument, the items were meticulously vetted by my supervisor and other experts in the field of Measurement and Evaluation due to their expertise in tool validation. Further, the main data was used to explore the reliability of the questionnaire. In this exercise, the questionnaire items were refined, that is, removing all ambiguity for the purpose of accurate measurement of the variables of interest. The Cronbach's Alpha for each of the scale for the various sections is presented in Table 1.

Table 1: *Reliability Estimates of Scales*

Instrument	Cronbach's Alpha	Number of items
Stress Level	0.76	10
Causes and Sources of Occupational Stress	0.83	15
Marital Stress Inventory	0.75	9
Illness Perception Questionnaire	0.78	8
Stress Coping Mechanisms	0.81	16

Source: Field Survey (2022).

Ethical Considerations

An ethical clearance certificate was taken from the Institutional Review Board of the University of Cape Coast before the main data collection exercise. An introductory letter was also taken from the Department of Guidance and Counselling to allow me to gain the cooperation of all relevant gatekeepers of the two technical universities. I made sure that respondents signed an informed consent form to register their willing participation before including them in the study. Finally, confidentiality and anonymity were assured in order for respondents of the study to have the confidence to partake in the study. Respondents were given the right to opt out of the study if they so desired.

Data Collection Procedure

A letter of introduction was taken from the Department of Guidance and Counselling, UCC, Cape Coast, to the heads of departments of the two selected technical universities. That enabled me to get the needed attention, support, and cooperation from the female lecturers. The questionnaires were administered by myself and three other research assistants during the main data collection exercise. This was done to ensure high accessibility and a high response rate. The administration of the questionnaires and their collection were done in eight weeks. In all, 115 questionnaires were administered. However, 95 of these questionnaires were completed and returned representing an 82.6 % response rate.

Data Processing and Analysis

The completed questionnaires were serially numbered for easy identification and were coded. Items on the four-point Likert scale were scored

as 4, 3, 2, and 1, with the responses "strongly agree," "agree," "disagree, and "strongly disagree," respectively. Items in the negative were reverse-coded.

The mean and standard deviation were used to analyse data on Research Questions one, two, and five. This statistical procedure was used because the idea was to describe the state of affairs regarding the construct of interest as measured to answer the two research questions.

Simple linear regression was used to analyse data on Research Questions three and four. The reason was due to the fact that the two research questions explored the effect of independent variables on the dependent variables. Furthermore, the data on each variable of interest were measured on a continuum, which aligned with parametric statistical analysis.

Chapter Summary

The chapter discussed the research methods employed to achieve the study's purpose. The chapter discussed key elements of research methods in relation to research design, population, sampling procedure, data collection instrument, validity and reliability, data collection procedure, ethical considerations, and data processing and analysis. The quantitative-descriptive cross-sectional survey design was adopted. Both descriptive and inferential statistical tools such as percentages, frequencies, means, standard deviations, and linear regression were used to analyse the data from questionnaires in order to answer the research questions of the study.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Introduction

The purpose of the study was to investigate how both single and married female lecturers' occupational stress affects their marriage and health in selected technical universities. A descriptive cross-sectional survey design was employed for the study. A total of 115 female lectures (i.e., 28 female lectures from Cape Coast Technical University and 87 female lectures from Takoradi Technical University) constituted the population for the study. However, 95 respondents out of the 115 completed and returned their questionnaires making a response rate of 82.6%. This chapter presents the details of the results of the data collected. The chapter was organised into two parts. The first part presented information on the results, whereas the second part presented the discussion.

Background information of Respondents

This section presents the results of the study. The first part of the section presents the results on the demographic characteristics of respondents, while the second part presents the main results in the order of the research questions. Table 2 presents the demographic data of respondents.

Table 2: *Demographic Characteristics of Respondents*

Demographic Variable	Frequency	Percentage %
Age		
31- 35	19	20.0
36 – 40	22	23.2
41- 45	21	22.1
46- 50	17	17.9
Above 50	16	16.8
Marital Status		
Single	19	20.0
Married	76	80.0
Years of teaching		
1- 3	36	37.9
4- 6	13	13.7
7- 9	8	8.4
10 years and above	38	40.0

Source: Field survey (2022)

As shown in Table 2, majority of the respondents (n = 22, 23.2%) were between the ages of 36 and 40 years, followed by those between the ages of 41 and 45 years (n = 21, 22.1%), and ages between 31 and 35 years (n = 19, 20%). Ages between 45 and 50 had 17 respondents (17.9%) and ages above 50 years had respondents of 16 (16.8%). The majority of the respondents (n = 76, 80%) were married, and the remaining respondents (n = 19, 20%) were single. Also, most of the respondents (n = 38, 40%) have been teaching for more than 10 years, followed by those who have been teaching for 1 to 3 years (n = 36, 37.9%), and those who have been teaching for 4 to 6 years (n = 13, 13.7%). Eight (8) of the respondents, representing 8.4%, have also spent 7 to 9 years in the teaching service.

Research Question 1

What is the level of stress of female lecturers in the selected Technical Universities?

The purpose of this research question was to examine the stress level of female lecturers in the selected Technical Universities. Respondents, therefore, answered questions to various statements relating to the stress level experienced. Means and standard deviations were used to analyse data to answer this research question. The responses followed a five-point Likert scale type of measurement as 1 = never, 2 = almost never, 3 = sometimes, 4 = fairly often, and 5 = very often. For the analysis, the average mean score of all respondents is 3.0. Hence, a mean score above 3.0 suggests female lecturers experience stress. In contrast, a mean score below 3.0 suggests that female lecturers do not experience stress levels. Table 3 presents the analysis of the responses.

Table 3: *Stress level of Female Lecturers*

Stressors	M	SD
In the last month, how have you been upset because of something that happened unexpectedly?	3.17	0.75
In the last month, how often have you felt that you were unable to control the important things in your life?	2.86	1.12
In the last month, how often have you felt nervous and stress?	3.06	1.15
In the last month, how often have you felt confident about your ability to handle your personal problems?	3.92	1.12
In the last month, how often have you felt that things were not going your way?	3.62	1.06
In the last month, how often have you felt that you could not cope with all the things that you had to do?	2.95	0.82
In the last month, how often have you not been able to control irritations in your life?	4.06	0.65
In the last month, how often have you felt that you were not on top of things?	3.71	0.87
In the last month, how often have you been angered because of things that were outside of your control?	2.95	0.96
In the last month, how often have you felt difficulties were piling up so that you could not overcome them?	2.89	1.04
Mean of means	**3.68**	**0.94**

Source: Field survey (2022)

As shown in Table 3, the means of the means scores of the responses showed that the stress level of female lecturers was very high. This is so because the mean score (M = 3.68) was found to be higher than the standard average mean score of 3.0 for a five-point Likert type of scale. The average standard deviation score of 0.94 also shows that the respondents' responses were homogenous in nature. In the survey, it was clear from the responses that the respondents were stressed. For example, the majority of respondents (M = 4.06,

SD = 0.65) stated that they have frequently been unable to control irritations in their lives. This was followed by the response that in the last month, they have had a lack of confidence in their ability to handle their problems (M = 3.92, SD = 1.12). Again, it was observed that the respondent had the feeling that, in the last month, they were not been able to be on top of things (M = 3.71, SD = 0.87). Respondents also reported that things are not going as well as they would have expected (M = 3.62, SD = 1.06). Further, respondents admitted that, in the last month, they were often felt nervous and stressed (M = 3.06, SD = 1.15). Clearly, all the responses portray that the respondents are going through an overwhelming stressful situation, which has implications for the quality of their marriage and health.

Research Question 2

What are the causes of occupational stress among female lecturers in the selected Technical Universities?

This research question explored the causes of stress among female lecturers in selected Technical Universities. Respondents therefore answered questions to various statements relating to the causes of stress they have experienced. The responses followed a four-point Likert scale type of measurement as 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = agree, and 4 = strongly agree. Data to answer this particular research question was analysed using means and standard deviations. For the analysis, the average mean score of all respondents is 2.5. Hence, a mean score above 2.5 suggests female lecturers agree to cause stress. In contrast, a mean score below 2.5 suggests that female lectures do not agree to the causes of stress. Table 4 presents the details of the responses.

Table 4: *Causes of stress among Female Lecturers*

Causes of Stress	M	SD
Workload and Job Activities		
Job specification makes my emotion easily distracted	1.92	0.69
Too much ad- hoc task given to me	2.77	0.97
Too much university Key Performance Indicators need to accomplished the cause my career planning to interrupted	2.67	0.98
Mean of means	2.50	0.88
Work Environment and Work Station		
My work station space has no adequate facilities	2.65	0.90
My work station is tedious	2.67	0.74
I always had to borrow work equipment from other partners	2.38	0.91
Mean of means	2.57	0.85
Salary and Compensation		
The salary received is not enough for the living	3.07	0.75
I disagree with the salary increment system	2.66	1.11
The compensation package provided is not comprehensive	2.99	1.12
Mean of means	2.910	0.99
Leadership		
My leader is autocratic	1.56	0.74
Head of department have no stand in decision making	1.55	0.62
Head of department frequently use roughly speaking with subordinate	1.74	0.94
Mean of means	1.62	0.77
Job Specification		
Marking an assignment of the student is the last part of my priority list	1.62	0.79
I am feeling depressed when asked for research opportunities with the stakeholders	1.97	0.97
I prefer in community service activities instead of writing a book	2.02	0.86
Mean of means	**1.87**	**0.87**

Source: Field survey (2022)

From Table 4, values were interpreted based on the standard average mean score of 2.5 for a four-point Likert type of scale. Hence, mean scores above 2.5 showed agreement whiles mean scores below 2.5 showed disagreement. Respondents agreed to workload and job activities (M = 2.50, SD = 0.88) as a cause of stress. For instance, they agreed that too many ad-hock tasks were given to them (M = 2.77, SD = 0.97), and also agreed that too many university performance indicators needed to be accomplished that caused their career planning to be interrupted (M = 2.67, SD = 0.98). In contrast, respondents did not agree to job specifications, making their emotions easily distracted (M = 1.92, SD = 0.96). It is evident from Table 3 that respondents generally agreed with the work environment and work station (M = 2.57, SD = 0.85) as one of the causes of stress. To further confirm this, respondents agreed that their work station was tedious (M = 2.67, SD = 0.74), and that their work space had no adequate facilities (M = 2.67, SD = 0.90). Respondents did not agree to always borrow work equipment from other partners (M = 2.38, SD = 0.85). Respondents also indicated that salary and compensation (M = 2.91, SD = 0.99) were part of the causes of stress. For instance, respondents agreed that the salaries they received was not enough for living (M = 3.07, SD = 0.75) and the compensation package provided was not comprehensive (M = 2.99, SD = 1.12).

However, respondents did not accept leadership (M = 1.62, SD = 0.77) as a cause of stress. For instance, respondents did not agree that the head of department uses roughly speaking on subordinates (M = 1.74, SD = 0.94), and also did not agree with the fact that their leader is autocratic (M = 1.56, SD = 0.74). Finally, respondents generally accepted that job specifications (M = 1.87, SD = 0.87) was not a cause of stress. They confirmed this statement by

indicating that they did not prefer community service activities but rather writing a book instead (M = 2.02, SD = 0.86), and the marking assignment is not the last part of my priority list (M = 1.62, SD = 0.79). Lastly, on main causes of stress, the mean score of (M = 2.91, SD = 0.99) indicates that salary and compensation cause more stress among female lecturers, followed by work environment and work station (M = 2.57, SD = 0.85), and work station and job activities (M = 2.50, SD = 0.88). Respondents established that job specification (M = 1.87, SD = 0.87), and leadership (M = 1.62, SD = 0.79) were not causes of stress among female lecturers.

Test for Normality

Prior to the analysis of research questions 3 and 4, the normality assumption, which is the fundamental of all parametric assumptions, was tested. This was tested using the normal Q-Q plot. Details of the results are presented in Figure 2 to 4.

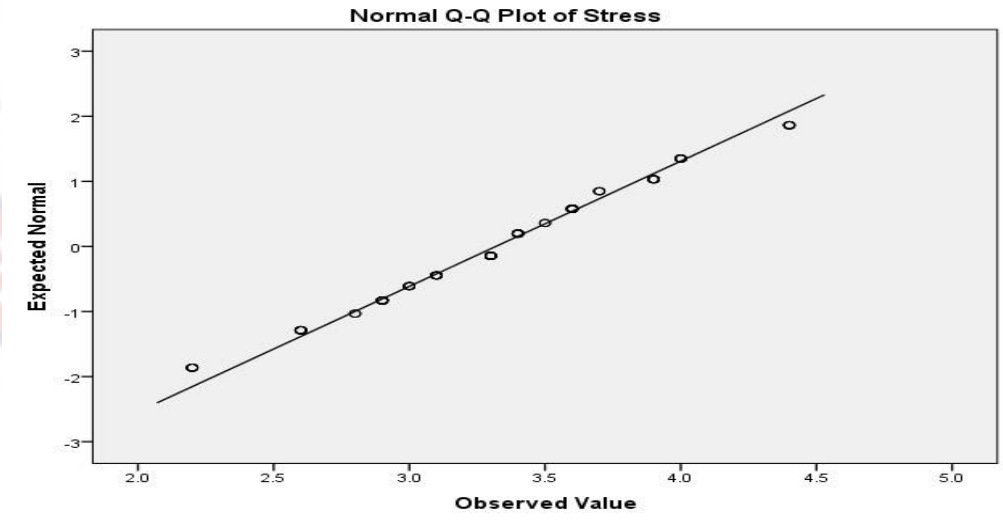

Figure 2: Normal Q-Q plot of stress

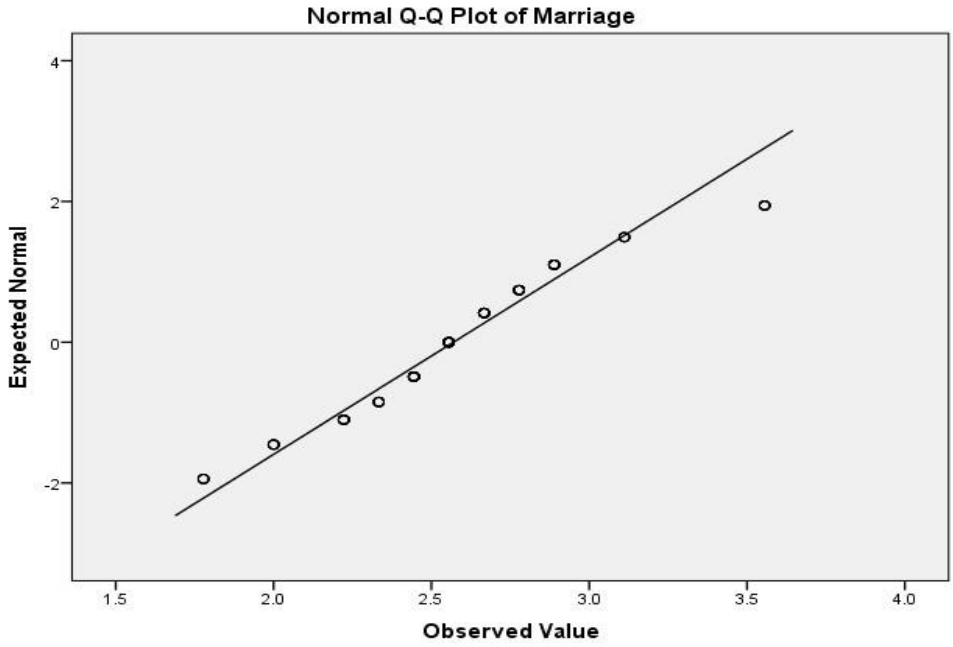

Figure 3: Normal Q-Q plot for marriage

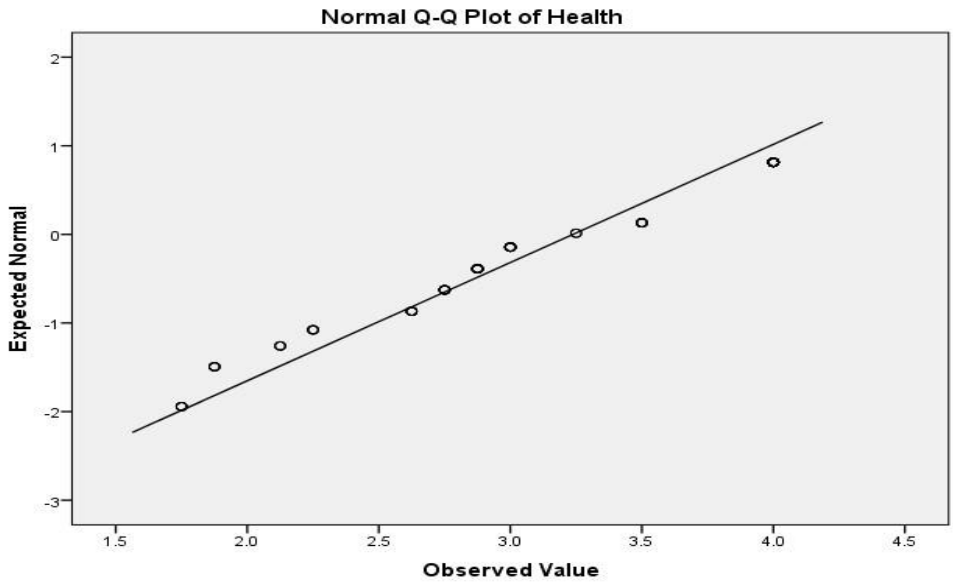

Figure 4: Normal Q-Q plot for health

From Figure 2 to 4, the normal Q-Q plots for all the variables showed that the distribution of scores were closer to the diagonal line (see Figure 2 to 4).

Research Questions 3

What is the effect of occupational stress on the marriage of female lecturer

The aim of this research question was to investigate the perceived effect of stress on marriage among female lecturers. Respondents were asked to respond to a number of items bordering on the bi-directional effect of stress on marriage of female lecturers in technical universities. Table 5 presents the data analysis.

Table 5: *Model Summary*

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	0.158	0.512	0.514	0.52083	1.876

From Table 5, the model accounted for 51.4% of the variances in marriage performance (adjusted R Square). The results of the Durbin-Watson's test (d = 1.9) showed no autocorrelation. This was because Durbin-Watson's coefficient (1.9) was greater than 1.4 but less than 2.5. Other assumptions such as linearity, homoscedasticity, and normality were adhered to (see Appendix B). Table 6 presents the regression coefficients.

Table 6: *The effect of occupational stress on marriage*

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	B	SE	β	t	Sig.
(Constant)	3.614	.390		9.270	.000
Stress	-.150	.115*	-.079	.765	.032

*Significant, $p < .05$

As indicated from table 6, stress was found to be a significant predictor of bad marriage (= -.079, t =.765, p =.032). The results imply that when female lecturers go through occupational stress, their marriage gets adversely affected. The data revealed that stress accounted for 51.4% of the variance explained in the marriage of female lecturers.

Research Question 4

What is the effect of occupational stress on the health of female lecturers?

The purpose of this research question was to find out the effect of stress on the health of female lecturers in Technical Universities. Respondents therefore answered questions to various statements relating to the effects of stress on health they have experienced. Data to answer this research question was analysed using linear regression. The responses followed a four-point Likert scale type of measurement as 1 = very severe, 2 = severe, 3 = minimally severe, and 4 = not at all severe. Table 7 presents the data analysis.

Table 7: *Model Summary*

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	0.158	0.554	0.571	0.51593	1.898

As indicated in Table 6, the model accounted for 57.1% of the variances in marriage performance (Adjusted R Square). The results of the Durbin Watson's test (d = 1.9) showed no autocorrelation. This was because Durbin-Watson's coefficient (1.9) was greater than 1.4 but less than 2.5. Other assumptions such as linearity, homoscedasticity, and normality were adhered to (see Appendix C). Table 8 presents the regression coefficients.

Table 8: The effect of occupational stress on health

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	B	SD	β	t	Sig.
(Constant)	2.965	.236		12.569	.000
Stress	.109*	.071	.158	1.539	.027

*Significant, $p < .05$

The results in Table 8 show that stress was a significant predictor of health (=-.079, t = 1.539, p =.027). The results imply that female lecturers who go through occupational stress, their health condition is negatively affected. Stress accounts for 55.4% of the variance in the health of female lecturers.

Research Question 5

What are the occupational stress coping mechanisms used by female lecturers?

The purpose of this research question was to examine the stress coping strategies among female lecturers in selected Technical Universities. Respondents therefore answered questions about various statements relating to stress coping strategies. The responses followed a four-point Likert scale type of measurement as 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = agree, and 4 = strongly agree. Data to answer the research question was analysed using linear regression. For analysis and discussion, the average mean score of all respondents is 2.5. Hence, a mean score above 2.5 suggests female lecturers agree to stress coping strategies. In contrast, a mean score below 2.5 suggests that female lectures do not agree to stress coping strategies. Table 9 has the details of the analysis.

Table 9: *Stress Coping Strategies*

Coping Strategies	M	SD
Active Coping		
I concentrate my effort on doing something about it	3.21	0.41
I take additional action to try to get rid of the problems	3.34	0.48
I take direct action to get around the stressor	3.11	0.64
I do what has to be done, one step at a time	3.42	0.50
Mean of means	3.27	0.51
Religious Coping		
I put my trust in God or object of worship	3.58	0.50
I seek help from God or object of worship	3.60	0.49
I try to find comfort in God or object of worship	3.64	0.48
I pray more than usual for my God or object of worship to guard me	3.52	0.62
Mean of means	3.59	0.52
Behaviour Disengagement Coping		
I admit to myself that I can't deal with the stressors and quit trying	1.98	0.98
I just give up trying to reach my goal because of stressor	1.51	0.73
I will give up the attempt in dealing with the stressor	1.57	0.50
I reduce the amount of effort I'm putting into solving the problem	1.75	0.81
Mean of means	1.70	0.76
Emotional Coping		
I discuss how I feel about the stressor with someone	3.11	0.61
I try to get emotional support from friends or relatives when dealing with stressor	3.14	0.61
I get sympathy and understanding from someone to reduce my fear about the problem	2.95	0.90
I learn to live with the stressor	2.99	0.91
Mean of means	**3.05**	**0.76**

Source: Field survey (2022)

From Table 9, the mean score of (M = 3.27, SD = 0.51) indicates that respondents agree to active coping strategies. Values were interpreted based on the standard average mean score of 2.5 for a four-point Likert type of scale.

Hecne, mean scores above 2.5 showed agreement whiles mean scores below 2.5 showed disagreement. For instance, they do what they are supposed to do one step at a time (M = 3.42, SD = 0.50), take additional action to try to get rid of their problems (M = 3.34, SD = 0.48), and concentrate their effort on doing something about their stressors (M = 3.21, SD = 0.41). They also agreed to religious coping (M = 3.59, SD = 0.52) as one of the stress coping strategies. To confirm this, respondents agreed to try to find comfort in God or object of worship (M = 3.64, SD = 0.52), seek help from God or object of worship (M = 3.60, SD = 0.48), and put their trust in God or object of worship (M = 3.58, 0.50).

As stated in Table 9, respondents did not agree to behaviour disengagement coping (M = 1.70, SD = 0.76) as a stress coping strategy. They did not agree, for example, to admitting that they cannot deal with stressors and quit trying (M = 1.98, SD = 0.98), reducing the amount of effort I put into solving the problem (M = 1.75, SD = 0.81), or giving up trying to deal with stressors (M = 1.57, SD = 0.50). However, respondents generally agreed to emotional coping (M = 3.05, 0.76) as a stress coping strategy. Specifically, respondents agreed to try to get emotional support from friends or relatives when dealing with stressors (M = 3.14, SD = 0.61), discuss how they feel about stressors with someone (M = 3.11, SD = 0.61), and learn to live with stressors (M = 2.99, SD = 0.91).

Finally, on coping strategies of stress, respondents indicated that a religious coping strategy (M = 3.59, SD = 0.52) was the best. They further reported that active coping (M = 3.27, SD = 0.51) and emotional coping (M =

3.05, SD = 0.76) were also used as a stress coping strategy. However, respondents did not agree to behaviour disengagement coping (M = 1.70, SD = 0.76) as a stress coping strategy.

Discussion

The first part of this chapter presented the results and their respective interpretations. This part discusses the findings with other previous studies and the inferences drawn from the present study.

Levels of stress among female lecturers

The study investigated the stress levels of female lecturers at the chosen Technical Universities. Findings revealed that female lecturers experience high levels of stress. As a consequence of the stress, respondents indicated that they often got upset, nervous, and unable to handle personal problems. This means that the female lecturers were facing difficulties managing job-related demands and other personal or home-related activities. The foregoing reflects the position of the Person-Environment Fit Theory, which suggests that stress is the result of the interaction between the responsibilities emanating from one's workplace and the abilities or characteristics of the individual. If there is a perfect fit between these two dimensions, minimal stress is experienced, but if there is a mismatch, then the individual experiences a high amount of stress. The finding is not surprising since lecturers' jobs are perceived to be stressful and take a toll on them both physically and psychologically.

The findings of this study that female lecturers experience a high level of stress are in harmony with studies in the literature (Tquabo et al., 2021; Dandona, 2014). The studies also discovered that educators in tertiary institutions undergo stress. In comparison with other educators, lecturers (including female lecturers) are perceived to be highly stressed because of their

numerous academic activities (Osemwenkhae, Iduseri, & Meka, 2019). Even though the current study's findings align with those of previous studies, there are significant differences between the two streams of research. The current study made use of female lecturers, whereas the former studies made use of both male and female lecturers. However, the finding of the current study is unique as it clearly articulates the stress level of female lecturers within the context of their having extra home-related duties (i.e., child bearing, cooking, washing, etc.), which are traditionally assigned to women.

Conclusively, female lecturers undergo a lot of stress, but the level of stress becomes even worse as married woman who has other family responsibilities. Empirical evidence suggests that married women experience more occupational stress than married or unmarried men (Herrero, Saldaa, Rodriguez & Ritzel, 2012; Blaug, Kenyon & Lekhi, 2007).

Causes of occupational stress among female lecturers

Concerning the causes of occupational stress among female lecturers in selected Technical Universities, respondents agreed that workload and job demands, the work environment and workstation, and salary and compensation were the causes of stress. It was noted that leadership issues and job specifications did not cause stress for female lecturers. On the workload and job activities, respondents stated that they had too many ad-hoc tasks given to them and too many university performance indicators that needed to be accomplished that could cause their career planning to be interrupted. They generally accepted the work environment and workstation was one of the causes of stress. This includes tedious work stations and work spaces that have no adequate facilities. The finding confirms the position of Job Demand-Support Control Model which

considers stress to emanate from job context. Workers employed in "high-strain jobs" characterised by high demands but low control are likely to experience unpleasant psychological strain and stress.

From the respondent's indications on work and salary, their salary was not enough for their living, and the compensation package provided was not comprehensive. However, they agree that leadership is a cause of stress. For instance, the head of department might speak to them roughly and exhibit autocratic leadership. They further confirm that job specifications such as preferring community service activities to book writing and making assignments their last priority were not a cause of stress. The findings of this study agree with Kaliniene, Ustinaviciene, and Skemiene (2013), who investigated occupational stress and its relationship with a sense of coherence and psychosocial work features among female public service workers. The findings revealed that the prevalence rates of work-related demands were also high. However, their influence on possibilities for development and the sense of coherence were found to be extremely weak.

The findings were similar to those of Masuku and Muchemwa (2015), who explored symptoms, stress levels, and common stressors among lecturers at Solusi University, a church-related institution in Zimbabwe. The findings of the study indicated that most of the lecturers had high stress levels, and the causes of the stress were higher workloads, the desire to meet deadlines (hit targets), as well as long working hours. Clearly, the current study's finding aligns with the views of many studies in the literature that, generally, occupational stress emanates from job characteristics and workplace characteristics.

Effects of occupational stress on the marriage of female lecturers

One of the purposes of this study was to describe the perceived effects of occupational stress on the marriages of lecturers at the selected Technical Universities. The results indicated that occupational stress was a significant predictor of a bad marriage. This implies that female lecturers who go through occupational stress have their marriages affected. The position of the finding reflects the idea of Transactional Model of stress that working environment in which female lecturers find themselves has the potential to negatively impact their marriage**.** The finding aligns with some previous studies (Abiodun et al., 2016; Amponsah, 2011; Okpechi & Usani, 2015).

Abiodun et al. (2016) investigated the effect of occupational stress on marriage and marriage duration among church ministers in Osun and Ogun Provinces in Nigeria. Results of the study showed that occupational stress affected the marital relationships of church ministers. Furthermore, the study showed that older ministers manifested a significantly higher level of occupational stress than younger ministers.

The result is also consistent with Amponsah (2011), who investigated the bi-directional impact of work stress and marital relations. The results indicate that the hypothesis that work stress would negatively impact marital relations was supported. Further, the current study finding also corroborates the study of Okpechi and Usani (2015), who examined the influence of marital stressors on the role performance of female lecturers in tertiary institutions in Cross River State, Nigeria. The study results showed that marital stressors significantly affected the performance of female lecturers in their marriages. It

is therefore worth concluding that occupational stress is a marital stressor that has the potential to negatively affect the marriages of female lecturers.

Effects of occupational stress on the health of female lecturers

This section discusses the findings regarding the perceived impact of occupational stress on the health of female lecturers in Technical Universities. As a result, occupational stress was found to be a significant predictor of female lecturers' health. Thus, if female lecturers go through occupational stress, their health conditions are affected. The position of the finding consummates the implied position of Transactional Model of stress, that working environment in which female lecturers find themselves has the potential to negatively impact their health**.** The study was consistent with Kusi, Codjoe, and Bampo (2018), who explored the effect of occupational stress on female lecturers' health using the University of Education, Winneba, as the study setting. The results revealed that female lecturers experience health-related problems such as headaches, back pains, and sleepless nights owing to the stress they experience at work.

In a similar vein, Eggley, Upoalkpajor, and Anovunga (2021) investigated the effects of occupational stress on female lecturers at the University of Education, Winneba, and discovered that female lecturers experience headaches, back pains, high blood pressure, tiredness, nervousness, and sexual weakness as a result of occupational stress. Further, Mensah (2021), who also investigated the effect of occupational stress on the mental well-being of workers in Europe, provided evidence that occupational stress has a negative impact on the mental well-being of the working adult population in Europe. The current study can therefore conclude that occupational stress is hazardous and has a negative impact on the health of female lecturers.

Coping mechanisms used to manage stress

The study had the objective of exploring the occupational stress coping mechanisms that the female lecturers used to manage stress. The study found that the occupational stress coping mechanisms used by female lecturers were religious coping, active coping, and emotional coping. In their own words, respondents admitted to managing stress through such methods as taking comfort in their object of worship, acknowledging stressors and avoiding them, and depending on friends and relatives for emotional support.

The finding of this current study aligns with the study of Kusi**,** Codjoe, and Bampo (2018), who explored female lecturers' coping strategies for managing stress. The study discovered that female lecturers at the University of Education, Winneba, made use of strategies that included visiting counsellors, engaging their relatives and friends for consolation, taking leave from work, watching television, listening to music, and so on.

The current study's findings also corroborated those of Addison and Yankyera (2015), who investigated female basic school teachers' ways of managing occupational stress in the West Akim Municipality, Ghana. The results showed that the teachers managed stress by taking time off their busy schedules to be with their friends and families and taking work leave to rest. In a similar vein, Schroeder, Akotia, and Apekey (2001) also investigated stress coping strategies among female teachers and discovered that praying to God, reading religious books such as the Bible, Quran, etc., and relying on the emotional support of friends and family were ways that they coped with stress.

Clearly, data appear to support the notion that stress management strategies such as relying on a work object (such as God), family, and friends,

as well as taking time away from busy schedules to rest, are prevalent and effective among female educators.

Chapter Summary

The study examined the effects of occupational stress on marriage and health among female lecturers at Technical Universities in Ghana. The study found that female lecturers at selected Technical Universities experienced stress. Secondly, it was found that salary and compensation, work environment, work activities, and leadership were the causes of stress. Also, the study revealed that stress has an adverse effect on both marriages and the health of female lecturers. Finally, the study discovered that female lecturers cope with stress by using strategies such as interacting with family and friends for emotional support, seeking comfort from God, and taking work leave.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of the study was to investigate how female lecturers' occupational stress affects their marriage and health in selected Technical Universities. In this chapter, a summary, conclusions and recommendations are presented.

Overview of the study

The study examined the effects of occupational stress on marriage and health among female lecturers at Technical Universities in Ghana. Five research questions guided the study. Literature on stress and coping strategies guided the conduct of the study. A descriptive cross-sectional survey design was employed to carry out the study. A total of 95 female lecturers from Cape Coast Technical University and Takoradi Technical University were sampled for the study. A self-developed questionnaire was used for the study. Permissions were sought from the appropriate quarters at every stage of the data collection, and the data collected from respondents were kept confidential. The data collected was analysed with descriptive statistics (i.e., means and standard deviations) and linear regression.

Key Findings

The following findings were derived from the study:

1. Female lecturers at the selected technical universities were highly stressed.
2. The study found that workload and job activities, work environment and workstation, salary, and compensation were causes of their stress.

3. The study found that occupational stress had a negative effect on the marriages of female lecturers at the selected technical universities.
4. The study also discovered that occupational stress has a negative impact on the health of female lecturers at the selected technical universities. That is, female lecturers reported health problems because of the high level of stress that they experience at work.
5. The study found occupational stress coping mechanisms used by the female lecturers to include interacting with family and friends for emotional support, seeking comfort from God, and taking work leave.

Conclusions

Based on the study's findings, it can be discerned that female lecturers in the Technical Universities are stressed. This is not surprising because they engage in multiple activities both within the home settings and as well as their workplaces.

It is also worth noting that female lecturers were stressed out by work activities, workstations, salaries and compensation issues. These are mainly the causes or root sources of their stress. As such role ambiguities and huge demands at the office which they cannot manage coupled with their household responsibilities may affect them and lead to stress.

Additionally, it can be concluded that female lecturers encounter some marital challenges due to the high level of stress that they experience at work. Hence when female lecturers are stressed, it consequently affects the rate at which female lecturers perceive that they have control over their marital affairs. This stems from inadequacy to still perform marital roles efficiently due to workplace stress.

The findings further concluded that female lecturers undergo health challenges because of work-related stress. As such, the stress they encounter affects their physiology as there is a connection or relationship between stress and health.

Lastly, workable coping strategies such as interacting with family and friends for emotional support, seeking comfort from God, and taking work leave were used by female lecturers in the Technical Universities. Thus, social support systems like friends and family as well as patronizing mass media or engaging in pleasurable activities were found as buffers to cope with stress.

Implications for Counselling

It is worth noting that getting survey feedback that suggests that female lecturers are highly stressed is an indication that female lecturers are going through a lot. This calls for increased counselling services for female lecturers.

The discovery that the work environment and activities cause stress among female lecturers imply that university administration should involve counsellors in developing work activity plans for female lecturers. This collaboration will help management get information about workloads and their related stress problems.

Moreover, the finding that work stress negatively affects female lecturers' marriage implies that counsellors within CCTU and TTU are to be resourced and engaged in guidance programmes at least once every semester to address issues pertaining to the marriages of female lecturers.

Furthermore, the discovery that work stress has a negative impact on the health of female lecturers suggests that CCTU and TTU academic staff welfare policies should include counsellors, who could play a critical role in utilising

effective psychotherapies to address health issues of lecturers and supplement the efforts of the Ghana Health Service.

Finally, the finding that coping strategies such as interacting with family and friends for emotional support, seeking comfort from God, and taking work leave worked well for female lecturers implies that counsellors in practise should highlight religious coping and socialisation during therapeutic sessions.

Recommendations

In line with the findings, the following recommendations are proposed for policy and practice:

1. The universities (i.e., CCTU and TTU) can set up comprehensive stress management programmes (such as "stress sensitization week," "counselor week," etc.) to deal with the surging issue of stress among female lecturers.
2. Policy should be implemented by the management of Cape Coast and Takoradi Technical Universities to create more flexible working conditions that are favourable to female lecturers in order to reduce the activities that cause stress. For instance, the Universities should employ the services of more teaching assistants to support the activities of female lecturers.
3. Female lecturers are encouraged to break work tasks into reasonable, manageable bits within each working semester in order to reduce the stress that accompanies a huge workload.
4. As part of work safety measures, counsellors at the two technical universities (i.e., CCTU and TTU) should organise guidance

programmes on work and marital issues in order to salvage female lecturers' marriages from problems.

5. The management of the two technical universities (i.e., CCTU and TTU) should put together, as a matter of policy, a health check programme anchored by the Ghana Health Service in collaboration with school counsellors. This initiative could help address the adverse effect of stress on female lecturers' health.
6. Management of the two Technical Universities (i.e., CCTU and TTU) should, as a matter of priority, ensure that the Counselling Centres of the institutions are adequately resourced to offer guidance services on workable coping strategies to assist female lecturers.

Suggestions for Further Research

1. Since this study was conducted using only technical universities, future studies should consider replicating this study in other traditional universities in other regions of the country to make the findings generalizable.
2. Since this study did not specifically seek to investigate into policies in place for staff but on how stress has an effect on the health and marriage of staff, future empirical investigations should consider investigating universities in Ghana's policies on stress management issues that support staff.

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APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR FEMALE LECTURERS

Dear Respondents,

This questionnaire aims to collect data that will help the researcher to explore the "occupational stress of female lecturers in Technical Universities in Ghana" which is a chosen area of study. The exercise is for academic purpose only. Whatever information you give will be kept confidential. The questionnaire measures your perception about the phenomenon under study. Instructions to fill out the questionnaire are given at the top of each section.

Thank you very much for your cooperation.

SECTION A

BACKGROUND DATA OF RESPONDENT.

Please tick (√) or provide the appropriate response.

1. Age range

   20 – 25 [ ]

   26 -30 [ ]

   31 – 35[ ]

   36 -40 [ ]

   41-45 [ ]

   46-50 [ ]

   Above 50 [ ]

2. Marital status

   Single [ ]

   Married [ ]

3. Number of years of teaching.

   Below 1year [ ]

   1-3 [ ]

   4-6 [ ]

   7-9 [ ]

   10 yrs. and above [ ]

SECTION B

STRESS OF FEMALE LECTURERS

For each of the statements, indicate by ticking (√) the extent to which you agree to them, use the following scale: Never (N), Almost Never (AN), Sometimes (S), Fairly Often (FO) and Very Often

SN	Statements	N(0)	AN(1)	S(3)	FO(4)	VO(5)
4	In the last month, how often have you been upset because of something that happened unexpectedly?					
5	In the last month, how often have you felt that you were unable to control the important things in your life?					
6	In the last month, how often have you felt nervous and "stressed"?					
7	In the last month, how often have you felt you do not have confidence					

	about your ability to handle your personal problems?					
8	In the last month, how often have you felt that things were not going your way?.					
9	In the last month, how often have you found that you could not cope with all the things that you had to do?					
10	In the last month, how often have you been able to control irritations in your life?					
11	In the last month, how often have you felt that you were not on top of things?					
12	In the last month, how often have you been angered because of things that were outside of your control?					
13	In the last month, how often have you felt difficulties were piling up so high that you could not overcome them?					

SECTION C

SOURCES OF OCCUPATIONAL STRESS AMONG FEMALE LECTURERS

For each of the statements, indicate by ticking (√) the extent to which you agree to them, use the following scale: strongly agree (SA), agree (A), disagree (D), strongly disagree (SD).

SN	Statements	SD	D	A	SA
	WORKLOAD AND JOB ACTIVITIES				
14	Job specification makes my emotion easily distracted.				
15	Too much ad-hoc task given to me				
16	Too many universities Key Performances Indicator need to be accomplished then cause my career planning to be interrupted.				
	WORK ENVIRONMENT AND WORK STATION				
17	My work station space has no adequate facilities.				
18	My work station is tedious.				
19	I always had to borrow work equipment from other partners.				
	SALARY AND COMPENSATION				
20	The salary received is not enough for the living.				
21	I disagree with the salary increment system.				
22	The compensation package provided is not comprehensive.				
	LEADERSHIP				
23	My leader is an autocratic.				
24	Head of department have no stand in decision making.				

25	Head of department frequently use roughly speaking with subordinate.				
	JOB SPECIFICATION				
26	Marking an assignment of the student is the last part on my priority list.				
27	I am feeling depressed when asked for a research opportunity with the stakeholder.				
28	I prefer in community service activities instead of writing a book.				

SECTION D

MARRIAGE SAFISFACTION SCALE

For each of the statements, indicate by ticking (√) the extent to which you agree to them, use the following scale: strongly agree (SA), agree (A), disagree (D), strongly disagree (SD).

SN	Statements	SD	D	A	SA
29	My partners and I understand each other perfectly.				
30	I am not pleased with the personality characteristics and personal habits of my partner.				
31	I am very happy with how we handle role and responsibilities in our marriage.				
32	My partner completely understands and sympathizes with my every mood.				

33	I am not happy about our communication and feel my partner does not understand me.				
34	Our relationship is a perfect success.				
35	I am very happy about how we make decisions and resolve conflict.				
36	I am unhappy about our financial position and the way we make financial decisions.				
37	I have some needs that are not being met by us relationship.				

SECTION E

HEALTH

For each of the statements, indicate by ticking (√) the extent to which you agree to them, use the following scale: Not at all Severe (NS), Minimally Severe (MS), Severe (S) and Very Severe (VS).

SN	Statements	VS	S	MS	NS
38	How much does your illness affect your life?				
39	How long do you think your illness will continue?				
40	How much control do you feel you have over your illness?				
41	How much do you think your treatment can help your illness?				
42	How much do you experience symptoms from your illness?				
43	How concerned are you about your illness?				
44	How well do you feel you understand your illness?				
45	How much does your illness affect you emotionally?				

SECTION F

COPING MECHANISMS

For each of the statements, indicate by ticking (√) the extent to which you agree to them, use the following scale: strongly agree (SA), agree (A), disagree (D), strongly disagree (SD).

NS	Statements	SD	D	A	SA
	ACTIVE COPING				
46	I concentrate my effort on doing something about it.				
47	I take additional action to try to get rid of the problem.				
48	I take direct action to get around the stressor.				
49	I do what has to be done, one step at a time.				
	RELIGIOUS COPING				
50	I put my trust in God/object of worship.				
51	I seek help from God/object of worship.				
52	I try to find comfort in God/object of worship.				
53	I pray more than usual for my God/object of worship to guard me.				
	BEHAVIOUR DISENGAGEMENT COPING				
54	I admit to myself that I can't deal with the stressor and quit trying.				
55	I just give up trying to reach my goal because of the stressor.				
56	I give up the attempt in dealing with the stressor.				

57	I reduce the amount of effort I'm putting into solving the problem.				
	EMOTIONAL SUPPORT				
58	I discuss how I feel about the stressor with someone.				
59	I try to get emotional support from friends or relatives when dealing with the stressor.				
60	I get sympathy and understanding from someone to reduce my fears about the problem.				
61	I learn to live with the stressor.				

Thank You

APPENDIX B

TEST FOR NORMALITY

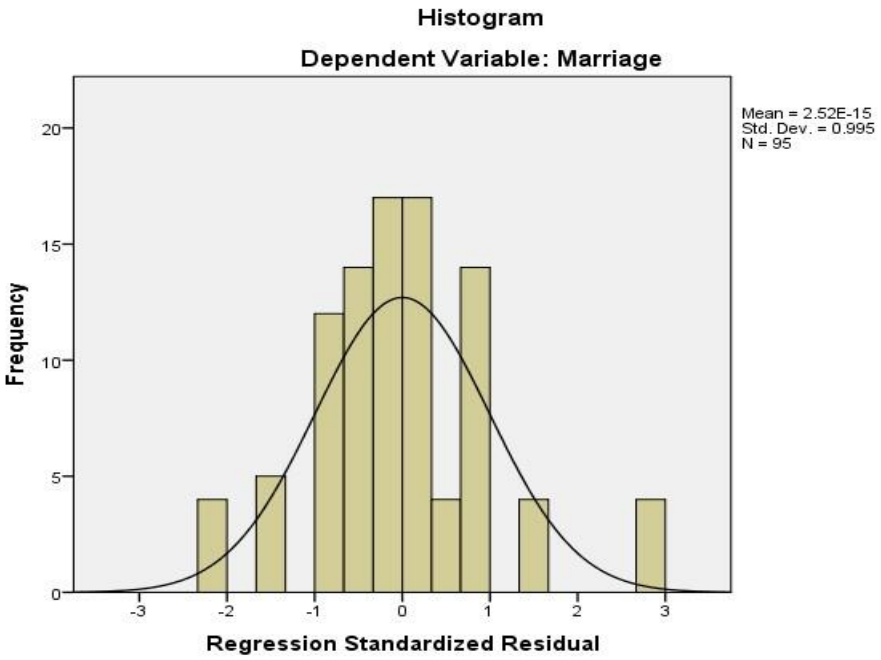


Figure 4

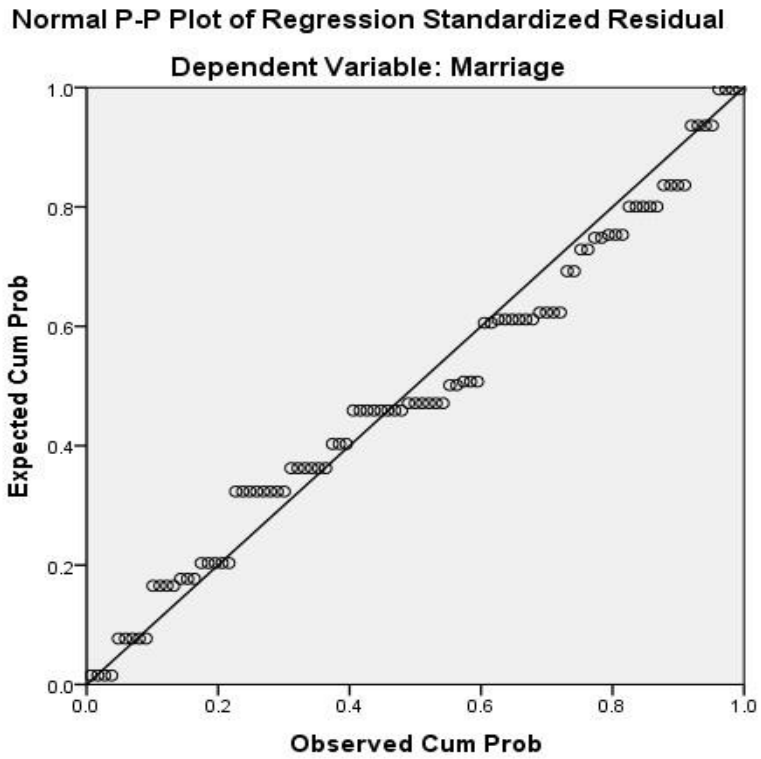
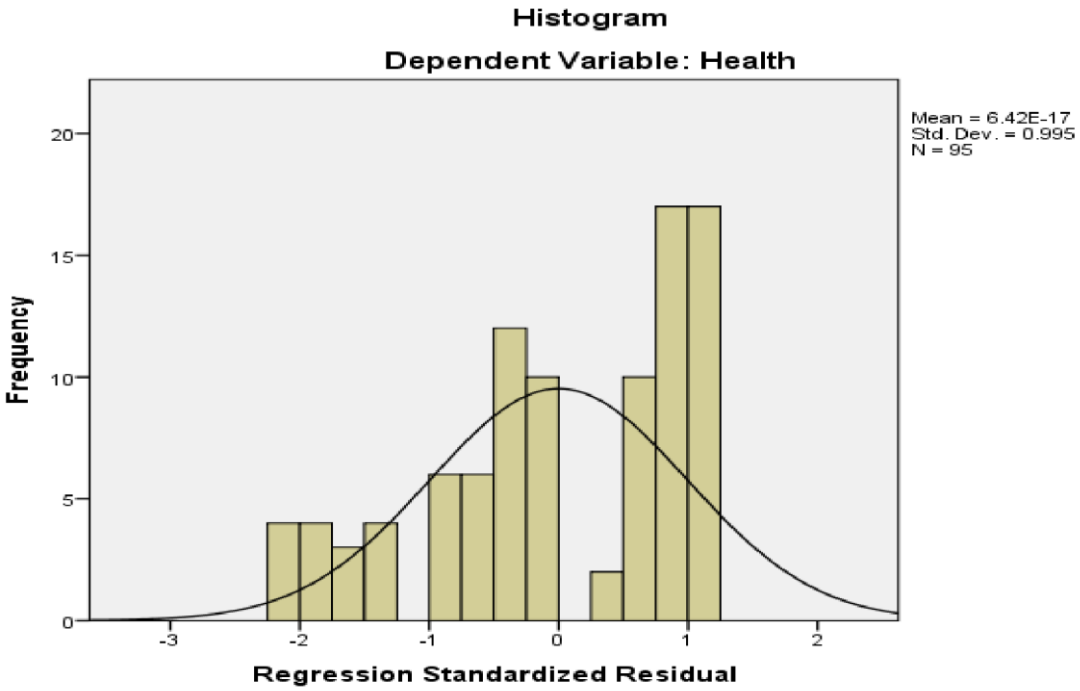


Figure 5

Figure 6



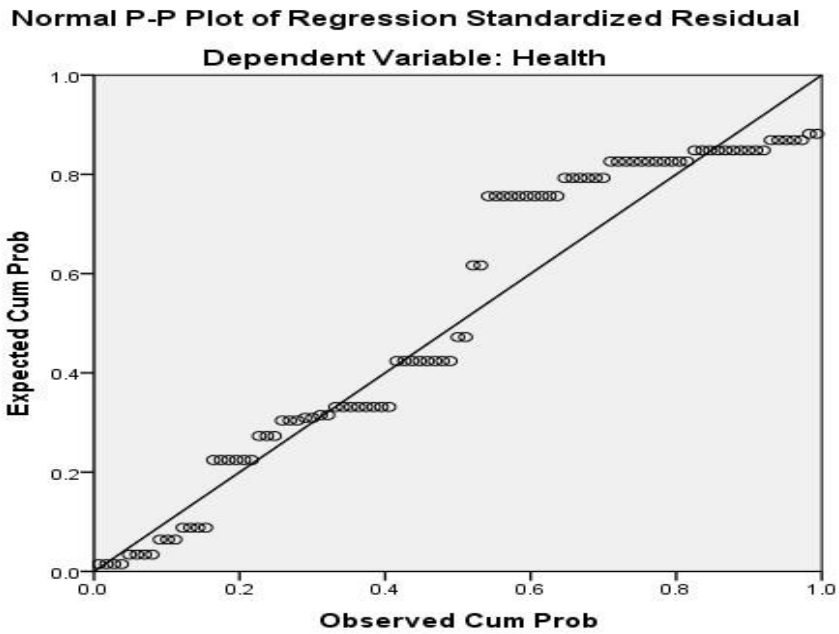


Figure 7

APPENDIX C

RELIABILITY ESTIMATES FOR THE INSTRUMENT

Stress Level Case

Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	30	100.0
	Excluded[a]	0	.0
	Total	30	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.760	10

Causes and Sources of Occupational Stress

Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	30	100.0
	Excluded[a]	0	.0
	Total	30	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.826	15

Marital Stress Inventory
Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	30	100.0
	Excluded[a]	0	.0
	Total	30	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.752	9

Illness Perception Questionnaire
Case Processing Summary

		N	%
Cases	Valid	30	100.0
	Excluded[a]	0	.0
	Total	30	100.0

a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.780	8

Stress Coping Mechanisms

Case Processing Summary

			N	%
Cases	Valid		30	100.0
	Excluded[a]		0	.0
	Total		30	100.0

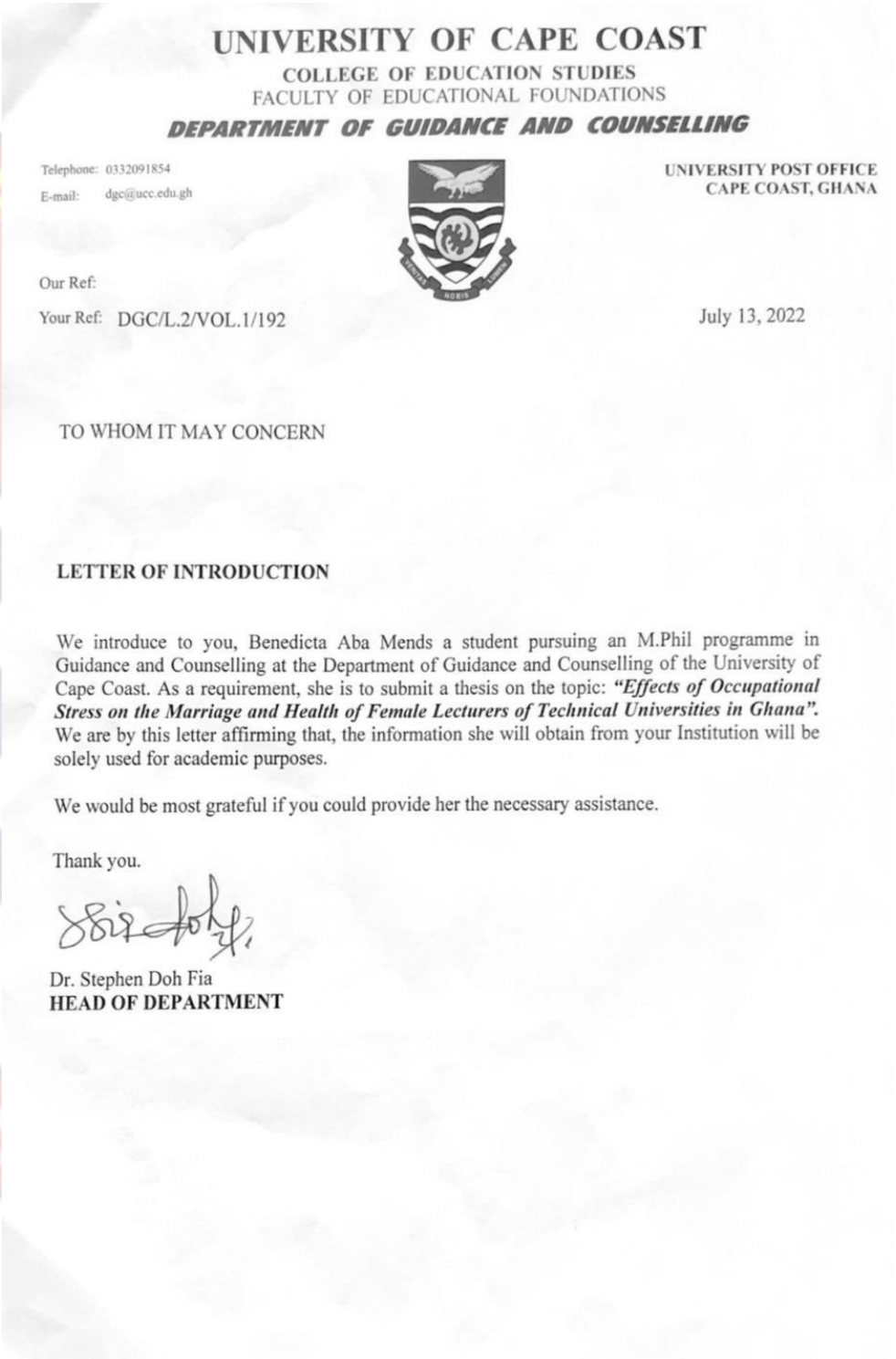
a. Listwise deletion based on all variables in the procedure.

Reliability Statistics

Cronbach's Alpha	N of Items
.814	16

APPENDIX D

INTRODUCTORY LETTER



UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION STUDIES
FACULTY OF EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATIONS
DEPARTMENT OF GUIDANCE AND COUNSELLING

Telephone: 0332091854
E-mail: dgc@ucc.edu.gh

UNIVERSITY POST OFFICE
CAPE COAST, GHANA

Our Ref:
Your Ref: DGC/L.2/VOL.1/192

July 13, 2022

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION

We introduce to you, Benedicta Aba Mends a student pursuing an M.Phil programme in Guidance and Counselling at the Department of Guidance and Counselling of the University of Cape Coast. As a requirement, she is to submit a thesis on the topic: ***"Effects of Occupational Stress on the Marriage and Health of Female Lecturers of Technical Universities in Ghana".*** We are by this letter affirming that, the information she will obtain from your Institution will be solely used for academic purposes.

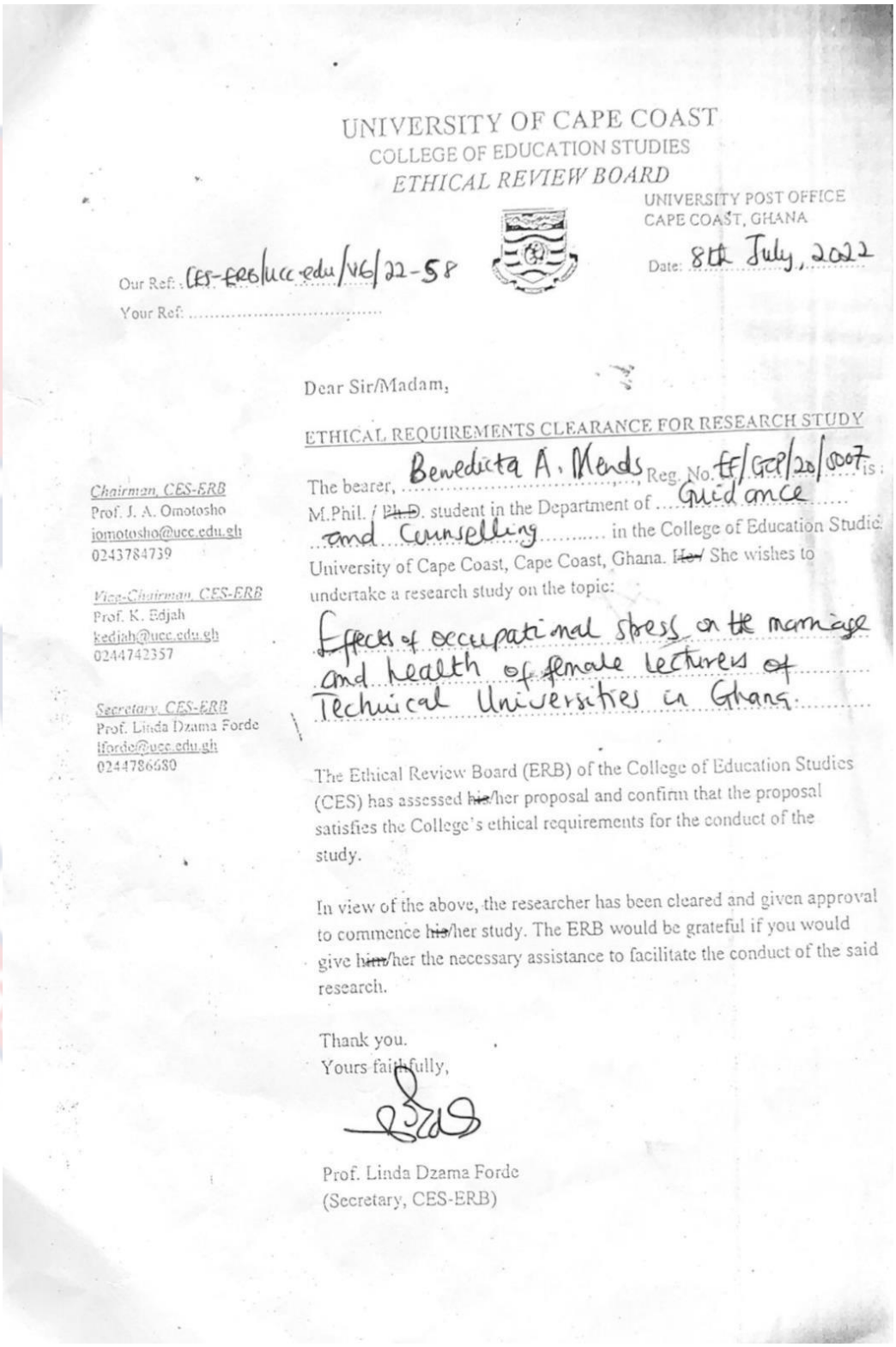
We would be most grateful if you could provide her the necessary assistance.

Thank you.

Dr. Stephen Doh Fia
HEAD OF DEPARTMENT

APPENDIX E

ETHICALCLEARANCE



UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION STUDIES
ETHICAL REVIEW BOARD

UNIVERSITY POST OFFICE
CAPE COAST, GHANA

Our Ref: CES-ERB/ucc.edu/VG/22-58

Date: 8th July, 2022

Your Ref: .....

Dear Sir/Madam,

ETHICAL REQUIREMENTS CLEARANCE FOR RESEARCH STUDY

The bearer, Benedicta A. Mends Reg. No. EF/GCP/20/0007 is a M.Phil. / ~~Ph.D~~. student in the Department of Guidance and Counselling in the College of Education Studies, University of Cape Coast, Cape Coast, Ghana. ~~He/~~She wishes to undertake a research study on the topic:

Effects of occupational stress on the marriage and health of female lecturers of Technical Universities in Ghana.

The Ethical Review Board (ERB) of the College of Education Studies (CES) has assessed ~~his~~/her proposal and confirm that the proposal satisfies the College's ethical requirements for the conduct of the study.

In view of the above, the researcher has been cleared and given approval to commence ~~his~~/her study. The ERB would be grateful if you would give ~~him~~/her the necessary assistance to facilitate the conduct of the said research.

Thank you.
Yours faithfully,

Prof. Linda Dzama Forde
(Secretary, CES-ERB)

Chairman, CES-ERB
Prof. J. A. Omotosho
jomotosho@ucc.edu.gh
0243784739

Vice-Chairman, CES-ERB
Prof. K. Edjah
kedjah@ucc.edu.gh
0244742357

Secretary, CES-ERB
Prof. Linda Dzama Forde
lforde@ucc.edu.gh
0244786480