COMMUNICATING STRESS MANAGEMENT TO THE ACADEMIC STAFF OF AHMADU BELLO UNIVERSITY, ZARIA, FOR HEALTHY LIVING AND HIGHER PRODUCTIVITY

BY

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P13ART8056

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A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES, AHMADU BELLO UNIVERSITY ZARIA, IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR THE AWARD OF MASTER OF ARTS IN DEVELOPMENT COMMUNICATION

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DECLARATION

I, ABDULLAHI Zainab Musa hereby declare that this dissertation entitledCommunicating Stress Management to the Academic Staff of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, for healthy living and higher productivity, was written by me and is a product of my own research. It has not been presented in any previous application for a higher degree. All quotations are clearly indicated and sources of information have been acknowledged by means of reference.

_____ _____

ABDULLAHI Zainab Musa **Date**

CERTIFICATION

This dissertation entitled Communicating Stress Management to the Academic Staff of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, for Healthy Living and Higher Productivity by **ABDULLAHI Musa Zainab** (P13ART8056) meets the regulations governing the award of the degree of Master in Development Communication of the Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria and it is approved for its contribution to Knowledge and literary presentation.

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DEDICATION

This research work is dedicated to Allah Almighty, the Omnipotent, the Magnificent and the most Beneficent, the Lord of the world who has everything and everything belongs to Him, who in His infinite mercy made it possible for me to take on this research work. Secondly, I want to thank my beloved parents, Alhaji Abdullahi Musa and Hajiya Amina Musa for being the best support in my life.

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ABSTRACT

Stress and its fatal consequences on health negatively affect the job performance and productivity of academic staff in our educational institutions. Against this backdrop, this research was carried out to assess the communication of stress management for healthy living and higher productivity among the academic staff of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. The theory of Health Belief Model, the Diffusion of innovation theory and Victor Vroom's Motivation theory were used as the theoretical framework for this research. Triangulation method using the quantitative and qualitative instruments were employed on a study population of Six Hundred and Nineteen (619) reduced to a sample size of Two Hundred and Thirty-eight (238) based on Raosoft (2016) sample size calculation. Findings from the quantitative data analysis show that, 63.1% of the respondents were not comfortable and feel overwhelmed with their work schedules, which constitute a stressor to them; 87.1% of the respondents were not informed by the University Management about stress management and its strategies. On the effectiveness of communication channels adopted by the University Management in conveying health awareness messages and campaigns to academic staff, especially on stress management, 96% of the respondents indicate they are ineffective, thus the University need to for re-strategize and adopt more effective media strategies. Results from Qualitative data corroborated the Quantitative findings stated above. In line with that, the research concludes that, effective communication is key to preventing health risks and its resultant consequences. Hence, the choice of channels of communication also goes a long way in ensuring that the messages are not only received but fully comprehended and utilized accordingly. Therefore, the study recommended that there is the need to increase the frequency and regularity of available communication channels and also adopt other modern channels like the use of Bulk Short Messaging Services (SMS), emails and the social media to communicate stress related health messages to the staff in order to reduce its consequences on staff overall health and enhance their job performance and academic productivity in the University.

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CHAPTER ONE

GENERAL INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background to the study

Stress is the opposite of rest. Stress has become a phenomenon that is attracting public attention in developing countries. Stress has been conceptualized as the change in one's physical or mental state in response to situations (stressors) that pose challenge or threat to one's state of health (Krantz et al., 1985; Zimbardo et al., 2003). The United States National Institute of Health (2002) sees stress as 'the brain's response to any demand. Though stress can help people achieve their goals and propel them through challenging situations, it can also become burdensome causing one to experience significant emotional distress and physical illness. It is a situation or circumstance that requires behavioural adjustment. It is a catalytic agent to other chronic diseases(Colligan &Higgi, 2005).

Moreover, stress is a condition that arises when an individual experiences a demand that exceeds his or her real perceived abilities to successfully cope with the demand, resulting in disturbance to his or her physiological and psychological equilibrium (Kolbell, 1995).Stress can also cause exhaustion and illness, either physical or psychological; heart attacks and accidents. The important thing to note about stress is that it has a lot of negative implications for mankind, because as the body responds to various forms of physical or psychological stress, certain predictable changes occur, which includeincreased heart rate, blood pressure, dizziness and secretions of stimulatory hormones (National Health Ministries, 2006:1).

Stress can either be acute or episodic. Acute stress occurs when new demands, pressures, and expectations are placed on an individual and these demands place their

arousal levels above their threshold of adaptability. These demands can be in the form of receiving unrealistic work schedules, unexpected meetings that thwart attempts to get work completed, and other situations that might cause frustration but generally last a short period of time (Zimbardo et al., 2003:2). Studies show that 40 percent of deaths and 70 percent of diseases in the world are related, in whole or in part, to stress. Ailments related to chronic stress include heart disease, diabetes, cancer, headaches, ulcers, low back pain, depression, accelerating ageing, heart attack, obesity, asthma and the common cold. Stress increases the rates of suicide, homicide, and domestic violence across the United States, and these are also seen as additional symptoms of a nation under stress (NIH & NIMHFact Sheet, 2002:6).

Stress manifests itself at different levels such as at home, school, workplace among otherss. Specifically, this study focuses on workplace stress. Workplace stress is a stress pattern that is associated with workplace or jobs demand. According to Cryer, McCraty, and Childre (2003), workplace stress has increased by 10 percent since 2001. There are many factors or stressors that can contribute to workplace stress. These stressors include the employee's appraisal of adaptation to a technologically changing environment. In other words, some individuals have the capacity and the resources to advance their skills while others may not.

The changing environment creates distress when that challenge is perceived as a threat to the employee and his or her well-being (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). Workplace stress has been shown to lower productivity, increase fears and absenteeism, and createpervasive patterns of dysfunction in the workplace (Anderson &Puluch, 2001; Levin-Epstein, 2002). Stress has also led to changes in work habits, changes in personality (or social behaviour), and job burnout. It is estimated that disorders related to stress

annually claim nearly 10 percent of the earnings from businesses (Dyck, 2001). Murphy (1995) describes five categories of workplace stress which include: (1) factors unique to the job, (2) role in the organization, (3) career development, (4) interpersonal work relationships, and (5) organizational structure/climate. Each of the five categories demonstrates that stress can occur specifically when there is a conflict between the employee and the job demands placed on that employee. In fact, when the employee has little control over the situation, the tolerable challenging stress becomes distress. Overall, people seem to recognize that stress can have negative impact on health, productivity and well-being, but they do not necessarily take action to prevent stress or manage it well.

Workplace stress is indeed a critical issue in academic institutions, especially among the teaching staff. Academic stress is prevalent in universities all around the world, especially in Nigeria. Nowadays, rapid development, global competition, technology and changes in the nature of jobs today could make the job more demanding than ever, and workers are more prone to injuries and illnesses. Stressors such as work relationship, work-life balance, job overload, job control, job security, attitudinal issue, poor pay and benefits, poor resources and communication, as well as other aspects of the job could also be the source of pressure in the workplace (Makhbul and Khairuddin, 2013:1). Work stress has been identified as a common phenomenon in the teaching profession especially at tertiary institution level. However, little research has been done to examine the prevalence of and factors associated with work stress among employees in University context. In a research conducted in Tanzania on stress of academic staff, results show that a

significant proportion of academic staff in public Universities reported experiencing high stress more than their counterparts in private universities (Mkumbo, 2013:1).

In Nigeria, the situation is not different as studies by Awopegba (2001), Boyd and Wylie (1994) revealed the prevalence of high stress among academic staff of universities in Nigeria. Ahsan, Abdullah, Fie and Alam (2009) identified stress inducing factors among academic staff in Nigeria to include: work overload, job performance pressure homework interface,and role ambiguity. In support of stress on academic staff, Abouserie (1996) found workload and rigorous research as factors inducing stress.

Listing the most related stressors on academic staff in the Nigerian University system, Ahmandy, Changiz, Masiello and Bromnels (2007), identified workload, conflict, demands from colleagues and supervisors, incompatible demands from different personal and organization roles, inadequate resources for appropriate performance, inadequate autonomy to make decision on different tasks and feeling of underutilization as crucial factors. Findings by Ofoegbu and Nwadiani (2006) reveal significant factors influencing stress among academic staff to include strike and school interruption, delay and irregular payment of salaries, lack of instructional facilities, preparation of examination results, invigilation of examination, high cost of living, poor office accommodation, lack of research facilities, lack of and delay in annual leave/ holiday and underfunding of education (Archibong, 2010:2).

Ahmadu Bello University (ABU) Zaria being one of the largest Universities in the countryis no stranger to all the factors influencing stress as mentioned above by Ofoegbu and Nwadiani (2006) Apart from the factors, the staff's primary assignment in the university can be stressful as they engage in numerous activities especially researches,teaching and supervision, mentoring among others which require the use of the physical, mental and intellectual capacity all the time. ABU has 13 Faculties, 105 Departments and 25 Institutes and Training Centres, with approximately about 50,000

students to be trained by just about 2700 academic staff. Therefore the academic staff are bound to work harder than usual, in terms of lecturing, handling practical work, field/educational trips, supervision of projects, dissertation and thesis (ABU 2017).

Also several administrative responsibilities like Deanship, Headship of Department, Postgraduate Programme Coordination, Registration and Examination Administration among others are assigned to the staff. In some cases, coupled with teaching and other responsibilities, the academic staff also get involved in rendering services to other universities, like going as visiting lecturers or resource persons, these tasks sometimes are more herculean than classroom lecturing (ABU, 2017).

When the staff go through all the above, they are bound to be stressed up, and if not properly managed, prolonged stress can compromise their immune system, leaving them vulnerable to infections, and if the staff of the institutions are not healthy, the productivity, development and advancement of our Universities would be adversely affected. It is natural for people to always want to be told or be reminded of the smallest gesture that would improve their health, and productivity in both their workplace and family domains, thus the need to communicate stress management to the Academic Staff of Ahmadu Bello University.

Many severe illnesses have been attributed to unmanaged stress. These include: pain of any kind, weight problem, heart disease, depression, digestive problem, auto immune diseases, sleep problems, skin condition such as eczema, emotional disturbance such as chest pain, asthma, hypertension, increased worries, anxieties, frustrations, and hostilities (National Health Ministry, 2006; Goldberg, 2016:1) A baseline study at the ABU Medical Centre reveals that, between 2012-2015, ABU has a record of not less than 15 deaths of its prominent Professors resulting from ailments caused by too much of

unmanaged stress that stemmed from lack of proper rest' (ABU University Medical Centre Emergency room record, 2015). From the same record, it was identified that, 12 of the deceased were male and 3 were Female. Also, 6 out of the 15 deceased Staff are from the Faculty of Science while 4 are from Faculty of Arts, 2 from Faculty of Law and 3 from Faculty of Social Science.

Different scholars, organizations and agencies like Ballesteros& Whitlock (2009), Darton (2012), Optum (2015), have provided vital information on stress management, especially in advanced countries; there are numerous materials on strategies for stress management but these have not been properly and adequately communicated in Nigeria, especially in tertiary institutions. Therefore, efforts towards managing stress in the country are inadequate and this has undue consequences on the nations' educational system because when the staff are stressed up they fall victims of the crises mentioned above caused by stress, which would invariable affect their productivity while the students end up being at the receiving end of not getting proper education and information they require and as a result turned out into the society half-baked devastating consequence on the society at large.

At one point in Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria, the University Management through the Public Affairs Directorate in collaboration with the University Health Service made efforts in 2013 to ensure that her staff adequately manage their stress and control blood pressure through training and physical exercises at the University gymnasium every Tuesday and Friday of the week. The programme initially witnessed a large turnout but at some point in time, the programme suffered a sustainability problem.

Although, the essence of the exercise was to enable the staff reduce stress through physical endeavours that would warrant them to take rest in order to improve their

wellbeing, increase their rate of productivity and contribution to knowledge, it was also assumed that it had not been properly sustained and thereby witnessing a huge setback (ABU, 2013:45). This setback could be traceable to lukewarm attitude on the part of the University administration and poor communication strategy deployed to create awareness and mobilisation within the University community. However, the burden of stress and lack of good rest on the academic staff of ABU cannot be ameliorated without effective and well-intended communication approaches.

In view of the above, Communication now becomes central to this entire work, as communication is crucial to the success of any human endeavour. Communication is very essential in everyday life as it plays a major role in development and continuing existence of an institution, organization and society at large. Poor communication is substantially responsible for several woes that have been recorded in numerous development projects. It is a spinal cord that links thought with realization which means in whatever idea we plan to put in place for development, communication is what helps us facilitate and prompt its success. Successful development interventions especially in the health sector had been premised upon good caregiver-patient communication.

Despite the existence of the stress management mechanisms, poor communication can render the practice unsuccessful. If stress management is properly linked with communication for the achievement of healthy living, it will greatly enhance high productivity among the academic staff and that would contribute greatly to the development of the country at large. Communication as an art or acquired skill needs to be adequate in passing across important information or messages on certain phenomenon. To be able to communicate a message properly, there is the need for effective communication

strategies, especially when good results are expected after that information or message is passed across to its target audience.

The place of communication in achieving positive health outcome cannot be underestimated. Studies have shown that effective stress management at workplace (University system), will make the system find significant improvement in productivity and an improved workplace dynamic. Meanwhile, to achieve this, effective communication is inevitable as it has been proven to enhance good health far beyond the use of medication (Colligan&Higgi, 2005:10). Effective communication has the capacity to foster growth and development; it engenders participation and enhances the adoption of positive healthy behaviours and practices.

But the nature of communication in Ahmadu Bello University as the researcher observed through notice boards, circulars, memos, special bulletins, is mostly task oriented. It is a top-bottom mode of communication that is mostly directing or requesting from its staff work results or submission of one work outcome or the other, nothing much is passed across to the staff relating to health management or welfare related matters as an effort by the University Management to help its staff manage their stress and take proper rest. The fact is that stress management cannot yield any good result towards improving the health and productivity level of the academic staff of Ahmadu Bello University if it is not effectively communicated to them through reliable channels. Therefore, this study is borne out of the necessity to find out the nature of institutional communication obtainable in ABU, Zaria and the need to deploy effective communication strategies to address academic staff welfare, most especially on how to manage stress. The study is designed to establish a relationship between effective institutional communication, and managing

stress in order to enhance healthy living and strengthen productivity especially among the academic staff of Ahmadu Bello University and other institutions in Nigeria.

1.2 Statement of the Research Problem

Communicating stress management is something that is pivotal to the growth and development of mankind especially in educational institutions where stress is endemic in the system. It is obvious that in educational institutions, stress level is very high because nothing is more tasking and daunting than the use of one's brain to survive a situation. But unfortunately, Communication of stress management is something that is not so common in our tertiary institutions, or rather scarce and not effective. Though, most Universities have regulatory frameworks and strategies on leave or break from work, ranging from annual leave, casual leave, sick leave, and maternity leave but, this does not constitute a proper stress management and rest communication approach that can adequately enhance staff healthy living and foster effective performance and better job delivery.

Specifically, statistics gathered from the ABU Medical Centre records office revealed that, in 2015, there were about 2,046 severe high blood pressure cases resulting from stress among its academic staff. Also, between 2014 and 2016, the ABU emergency room recorded 138 deaths among its academic staff with cases of 25 collapses from severe High Blood Pressure; 12Stroke cases; 37 Collapses and Deaths before Arrival; 29 Stress induced collapses and 35 exhaustion collapses (University Health Service Records, 2016). These statistics leave one in a worrying state as there are significant differences between formulating a welfare policy and evolving strategies to effectively communicate such a policy. Could it be that these strategies are not effective, or have not been properly

communicated? What could have been the factors responsible for the prevalence of stress among the ABU academic staff? In what way can effective communication bridge this gap? What are the communication forms needed? These and many other questions are what this research seeks to answer.

1.3 Aim and Objectives of the Study

1.3.1 Aim

This study seeks to strengthen the relevance of stress management strategies in educational institutions through deployment of effective communication capable of promoting proper rest, healthy living and higher productivity among academic staff of the Ahmadu Bello University and beyond.

1.3.2 Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this study include:

1. To identify factors influencing stress among the academic staff of ABU Zaria.
2. To investigate the extent of awareness, knowledge and practice of stress management strategy of the academic staff of ABU.
3. To find out ABU's policy on Staff leave and work environment
4. To examine the nature of structures channels or strategies for stress management in ABU Zaria.
5. To identify ways through which communication can be effectively deployed to promote proactive stress management among the academic staff of Ahmadu Bello University and other tertiary institutions in Nigeria.

1.4 Research Questions

1. What are the factors inducing stress and their implications for the academic staff of ABU Zaria?
2. What is the level of knowledge and practice of stress management by academic staff of ABU Zaria?
3. Does Ahmadu Bello University encourage staff leave and provide enabling working environment for them as a matter of institutional policy?
4. Are the structures, channels and strategies available in the University used for communicating proper stress management among the academic staff effective?
5. In what ways can communication be made more effective in handling and enhancing productivity among the academic staff of Ahmadu Bello University?

1.5 Significance of the Study

Stress is indeed a major precursor of other illnesses especially when it is not properly managed. It constitutes about 60% of severe illness leading to mental disorder, low immune system and death. The prevalence of high and undue stress among academic staff in tertiary institutions in Nigeria is huge especially with astronomical increase in undergraduate and postgraduate population. Effective communication on stress management among academic staff is scarce and often not properly deployed where such is available.

This study becomes significant because it looks at the magnitude and dangers of stress among academic staff in Nigerian tertiary institutions, using ABU asa case study. The study also looks at how the University system communicates stress management to its staff, and suggests appropriate and well-intended communication strategies for

communicatingstress management in order to achieve a healthier productive workforce, conducive working environments and higher academic productivity.

Upon conclusion, the study no doubt adds up to relevant literatures in the aspect of stress management, stress communication and health communication in general with more emphasis on mental health. It serves as basis for other researchers who may be willing to conduct studies in health, development communication and University administration and management.The study is significant in that it helps identify the lapses in the existing policy and strategies for stress management and it will expose management to the importance of proper and effective management of stress.

1.6 Scope of the Study

This study is restricted to Ahmadu Bello University Main campus, Samaru, Zaria with 13 faculties and 105 departments. Following the records of deaths earlier mentioned as provided by the University Health Service records, the research has selected Three Faculties namely Arts, Social Sciences, and Sciences. The choice of these faculties is also based on the huge population of both undergraduate and postgraduate students and the perceived workload of their academic staff. There are different categories of staff in ABU Zaria but this study is only concerned about the academic staff within the specific faculties and departments in the selected faculties. The study period is between 2013-2017.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW AND THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction

Stress related diseases are commonplace in today's workplace. They affect the effectiveness of human resources in institutions and organizations striving for efficient service delivery. In a University like Ahmadu Bello University, it is commonplace to state that there is high tendency for staff to be under so much stress. Stress could result from being saddled with the responsibility of lecturing large number of students in a single class than they can handle. It could be due to the concurrent and simultaneous nature of the University's Academic Calendar that is the running of both the Undergraduate and Post Graduate sessions. All this is bound to take a toll on the mental health of some of the staff which sometimes may result in fatal consequence.

Thus this chapter tends to look at related and relevant literatures with contentious concepts such as Stress, Stress Management, Communication Health communication and the theoretical framework adapted to undergird the study.

2.2 Understanding Stress

Understanding and defining the term Stress is not a simple process. According to Cox (1985), the term stress is elusive because it is poorly conceptualized. There is no single agreed definition in existence; it is a concept which is common to both layman and professional alike; it is understood by all when used in general context but by very few when a more precise account is required and this seems to be the central problem (Global Organization for Stress, 2016). There is a difference between stress and pressure. We all experience pressure on a daily basis, and need it to motivate us and enable us to perform at our best. It is when we experience too much pressure without the opportunity to recover

that we start to experience stress (Alphonzo, 2004). For the purpose of this work, it would not be out of place to refer to the Encarta World Dictionary 2009, which finds stress to be strain felt by somebody: mental, emotional, or physical strain caused e.g. by anxiety or overwork which may cause such symptoms as raised blood pressure or depression

Encyclopaedia of Mental disorders (2003), on the other hand states that stress is a term that refers to the sum of physical, mental and emotional strains or tensions on a person. Feelings of stress in human results from interactions between persons and their environment that are perceived as straining or exceeding their adaptive capacities and threatening their well-being (Global Organization for Stress, 2016). This is why Jahanain (2012:70) asserts that:

> Stress is a fact in our daily life. Today, with progress in all respects, humans are always facing new challenges in many different fields as if progress in turn creates new problems. Over a century, the nature of working has been changed widely, and still these changes are in progress. Following these changes, number of illnesses has been increased, morality and human aspects are faded and new problems occurred every day, so we are constantly facing job stress which is called illness of the century

In a Newsletter issued by MedicineNet.com 2016, stress was highlighted to be a physical, mental or emotional factor that causes bodily or mental tension which can be external (from environment, psychosslogical or social situations) or internal (illness, or from a medical procedure). Stress can cause or influence the course of many medical conditions including psychological conditions such as depression and anxiety, and other medical problems can include poor healing, irritable bowel syndrome, high blood pressure, poorly controlled diabetes and many other conditions.

Butler (2016), opined that there are at least two ways of defining stress, ‘a stimulus based definition’, and a ‘response-based definition’ which contributes something to the current understanding of the concept. For Stimulus based definition, Butler (2016),

suggests that stress results from pressure, the greater the pressure the more likely that the recipient whether a person or a load-bearing beam will succumb. When the (external) stimulus becomes too great, (internal) collapse becomes inevitable, this definition focuses on external sources of stress and encapsulates its cumulative nature. As for the response based definition, Butler (2016), focuses on stress as a response to noxious or aversive stimuli. This is the aspect of stress emphasized by Seyle (1956). Seyle measured stress in terms of psychological responses, first the body is alerted and responds with an alarm reaction, next automatic activity is triggered as the body prepares to deal with the stress, and this is the stage of resistance. Finally if the stress continues beyond the capacity of the body to respond, the system is damaged and may collapse, this is the stage of exhaustion,

This definition above has contributed greatly to the thinking about stress, Stress takes many forms as well as leading to anxiety and depression, it can have a significant impact on an employee's physical health as many researchers have linked stress to heart disease, back pain, headaches, gastrointestinal disturbances and alcohol and drug dependency. It is commonly assumed that psychological responses to stress follow a similar course, although the processes may have an insidious as well as an alarm-based onset, but the duration of the stage of resistance when the person is adapting to, or coping with the stress depends on specific characteristics of the person suffering the stress, but the assumption is that at some point, if the stress persists, exhaustion or collapse becomes inevitable (Gillian, 2016)

Ojiako (2001) viewed stress as the bodily changes that can take place when the external pressures on an individual reach an intolerable pitch, causing weak job performance and ill-health. Stress is a dynamic condition in which an individual is confronted with an opportunity, constraint or demand related to what he or she desires for

which the outcome is perceived to be both certain and uncertain. Kreiner (2001) said that stress is used both in medical and management literatures to refer to an internal state of psychological, emotional and physiological tension or imbalance and strain within an individual resulting from his attempt to adapt and adjust to both internal and external pressures or to both physical and mental demand.

Hence, Alabi, Murlala and Lawal (2012) identified anxiety, depression, collective anxiety, breakdown and burnout as some terms associated with stress in schools. Stress has many causes and sources. They discovered that the actual jobs done by the worker might constitute a source of stress for him. The writer identified workload as one of the stressors inherent to a worker and classified this into two, namely: qualitative work overload and quantitative work overload. Quantitative work overload means having too much work to do, while qualitative work overload means having to make a very difficult decision that will have a strong effect on the life of others. Other factors leading to stress have been identified as long hours of work, calendar overlap, and excessive extra-curricular activities during weekends and excessive travels, the combination of administrative and academic responsibilities and the demand for publications to attain career promotions.

This work related stress is said to be harmful physically, psychologically and emotionally to the lecturers thereby resulting in considerable low job performances (Idris, 2014). Work stress can lead to poor health and even injury. World Health Organisation (1992), divided factors associated with work stress into occupational and human conditions. The occupational conditions include work environment like job task, work overload, working hours, workers' role conflict, role ambiguity, job security and such organizational factors as supervisory, managerial, colleagues-relationship, risk and safety status in the organization. Human conditions include workers' capacities, needs,

expectation, culture and private life. All these are in a dynamic interaction that may lead to emotional disturbance and behavioural disorder or problems that are likely to result in workplace stress.

Workers and professionals face tension as a result of continuous interaction with people who have problems. This can lead to a loss of care as it is often perceived in the character of medical practitioners who seem undisturbed by patients' worried health condition. Usoro and Etuk (2016) opined that lecturers that face large number of students with academic problems are likely to experience stress in their job. They asserted that one visible aspect of work stress is the increased feeling of emotional exhaustion and tiredness by workers.

According to Thapa (2014), stress is a mental feeling when job duties are beyond person's capabilities. These mental feelings create the anxiety and tension which are symptoms of stress. According to "The National Job Safety and Health Institution", job stress is an annoying excitement which occurs when there is no proportion between person's wants, job requirements, and person's talents, or worker's resources and needs.

There are three different views of stress definition. First, stress could be an environmental stimulus. In this case, environmental events that make demands on the person partly are tolerable and not stressful. Second, stress might be a reaction by the person to the extra burden. Finally, stress can be an unknown body reaction to a demand that leads to pressure or stress in reaction or response conditions. In other words, response of stress in different people and conditions are different (Giga, Cooper, & Faragher, 2003:281).

Although, stress has been defined in different forms, but the common aspect of these definitions is that reasons of stress are both physical or emotional stimulation and

how a person responds to it in a specific manner. Stress can be seen as an individual reaction to adapt stimulation which can create great physical and emotional demands and consequences at same time. According to “the General Adoption Syndrome”, people resist against stressful events in a normal level. Some people can be tolerant against stress while the others cannot. When the person faces the stress factor, general adoption syndrome begins. The first stage of syndrome is called “warning”. In this stage, the person feels stressed up without any reason and may be confused. If the factor is strong, the person may be unable to handle it. Any way, he will employ his all physical and mental power to resist the negative effects of the stress. Therefore, at the second stage of the syndrome, person starts to resist against the effects of the stress factor. In many cases, it is possible that the person finishes the syndrome at the resistance stage. On the other hand, with permanent existence of stress factor and lack of solution, person enters to the third stage of syndrome called exhaustion. At this stage, person really gives up and will not be able to encounter stress any more (Moorhead & Griffin, 1995:256).

Most studies regard today's modern life as the origin of stress as well as organisational field. Also, the root of anxiety and pressure is the modern life style and stress is a modern illness. Some researchers believe that the origin of fear and stress is working activities of modern institutions. These risky working conditions allow managers and organisations to use fear and stress to control and increase the organisation's productivity (Vasconcelos, Vasconcelos, Gouveia, &Crubellate, Marcelo, 2008:41). Other studies on stress at work have identified many factors, Some of them are: taking turns, ignoring the personal capability, lack of work and impatience, overworking, job roles confliction, prejudice in wage, ambiguity in job security, relationship with colleagues,

qualitative state of machines and also the work safety (Giga, Cooper, & Faragher, 2003:116).

In view of the above, the American Health and Safety Executives' (HSE) definition of stress captured one of the major purposes of this research, whereby it defines stress as "the adverse reaction people have to excessive pressures or other types of demand placed on them". Recent research shows that this 'adverse reaction' can seriously undermine the quality of people's working lives and, in turn, the effectiveness of the workplace.

Organisational stresses are factors in the work environment which can cause stress. There are four groups of stress in the workplace: Job requirements: they are stress factors at work. For example some jobs are more stressful than the other, physical requirement which depends on the location of job. One of the important factors is temperature. Office design can be problematic too. Role requirements: they can cause stress. It is possible that stress originates from role ambiguity (not clear expectations) or role confliction (coordination between two or more roles). The interaction with others: the last group of stress factors is interaction requirements which could face the person in organisational environment (Moorhead and Griffin, 1995: 257).

Stress is much in the news at present but it is not a new problem. Pressure is part and parcel of all work and helps to keep us motivated, but excessive pressure can lead to stress which undermines performance, is costly to employers and can make people ill. In 2006 it was estimated that 12.8 million working days were lost to stress, depression and anxiety. Each new case of stress leads to an average of 31 days off work. Work-related stress costs society about £3.7 billion every year (Rowe, 2006). If organisations can reduce stress they can reduce these costs, and effective management and communication seems to

be one of the best way of doing this. Recent research links effective people management to good performance and productivity asLee (2010:12) rightly observed:

> However, for many people 'stress' still represents something of an unknown quantity, but it is equally important for employers to understand the demands made on their employees; the level of control employees have over their work; the support employees receive from managers and colleagues; the clarity of an employee's role within the organisation; the nature of relationships at work.

As stress accumulates, it always breeds undesirable consequences. There are various ways in which stress can affect the individual and society at large. According to Behnaz (2012), consequences of stress are in different categories: ‘organisational consequences’ which means organisational commitments get accordingly affected along with the personal motivation; ‘functional consequences’ which is lack of proper and correct function; and ‘Personal-Organization Consequences’ which involves Quitting, absence and resigning attitude towards the job, this also includes lack of satisfaction and mood swings.

Exhaustion is the final consequence of stress that either affects person or organisation. Exhaustion is the feeling of fading. It appears when the person is bearing many pressures and little satisfaction (Moorhead and Griffin, 1995:261-262). Stress also has a lot of other consequences and job effects such as migraine, alcohol or drug abuse and smoking cigarette, or physical and emotional effects such as migraine, high blood pressure and consequences concerning mental health such as depression (Giga, Cooper, & Faragher, 2003:116).

Lockwood (2015) mentioned three types of stress as identified by The American Psychological Association

1) Acute: This is the most common type of stress and is short term, such as hurrying to meet a deadline, and if it occurs infrequently causes little problem.

However, if acute stress happens frequently, it can cause psychological and physical distress.

2) Episodic acute: This is repetitive short-term acute stress, such as the person who always runs late for work and appointments or never completes assignments or tasks on time. These people are in a constant state of arousal and anxiety.

3) Chronic: This type of stress deals with the ups and downs of emotions associated with more acute stress, but it is a constant weight that burdens people and results in anxiety and depression

Despite the deficiencies in definition up to this point, several key concepts can be gleaned from the literature on stress. From the above discussion, it becomes clear that the stress response has both psychological and physiological corollaries. There are different sources of stress, the Klinic Community Health Centre (2010:4) highlights four basic sources of stress which are first, the environment can challenge you with intense and competing demands to adjust. Examples of environmental stressors include weather, noise, crowding, pollution, traffic, unsafe and substandard housing, and crime. Secondly, it could be seen from the social angle. Here, one can experience multiple stressors arising from the demands of the different social roles we occupy, such as parent, spouse, caregiver, and employee. Some examples of social stressors include deadlines, financial problems, job interviews, presentations, disagreements, demands for your time and attention, loss of a loved one, divorce, and co-parenting.

Thirdly, it could be physiological – situations and circumstances affecting our body can be experienced as physiological stressors. Examples of physiological stressors include rapid growth of adolescence, menopause, illness, aging, giving birth, accidents, lack of

exercise, poor nutrition, and sleep disturbances. And finally, it can affect the thoughts in which your brain interprets and perceives situations as stressful, difficult, painful, or unpleasant. Some situations in life are stress provoking, but it is our thoughts that determine whether they are a problem for us.

2.3 Signs and Symptoms of Stress Overload

It is important to learn how to recognize when your stress levels are out of control or having an adverse effect. The signs and symptoms of stress overload can be almost anything, stress affects the mind, body, and behaviour in many ways, and everyone experiences stress differently. In discussing the signs and symptoms of stress, KCHC (2010:8) observed that:

Three common ways that people respond when they are overwhelmed by stress are:

1) An angry or agitated stress response. You may feel heated, keyed-up, overly emotional, and unable to sit still.
2) A withdrawn or depressed stress response. You shut down, space out, and show very little energy or emotion.
3) Both a tense and frozen stress response. You "freeze" under pressure and feel like you cannot do anything. You look paralyzed, but under the surface you may feel extremely agitated.

There are common warning signs and symptoms of stress. The more signs and symptoms one notices in oneself, the closer one might be to feeling stress overload. Meanwhile, these symptoms could be cognitive which affect memory problems, Inability or difficulty concentrating, poor judgment, seeing only the negative,anxious, or ruminating thoughts and constant worrying. Emotional symptoms like moodiness, irritability or short-tempered, agitation, inability to relax, feeling overwhelmed sense of loneliness or isolation, depression or general unhappiness. Other symptom would be physical like aches and pains, muscle tension, Diarrhoea or constipation, Nausea, dizziness, or butterflies in the stomach, chest pain or rapid heartbeat, loss of sex drive, frequent colds, shallow breathing and sweating Sometime stress could manifest in behavioural problems such as

eating more or less, sleeping too much or too little, isolating yourself from others procrastinating or neglecting responsibilities, using alcohol, cigarettes, or drugs to relax Nervous habits (nail biting, pacing) (Adapted from KCHC, 2010).

2.4 Understanding Stress Management

With knowing that stress is widespread in organizations and potentially is harmful, the organisations and worker should pay special attention to manage stress effectively. There is variety of personal and organizational strategies to manage the stress (Moorhead and Griffin, 1995, p.266). Stress management can be performed either in form of eliminating stress factor or training the personnel to know conditions which create stress (Vasconcelos, et. al., 2008:40). Many researchers have studied social, psychological and medical aspects of stress.

Stress management is a popular term, and has been in common use by the lay public and mental health professionals for many years. The term "stress" has appeared in medical and medically-related literature since 1956, when Selye developed the concept of stress to explain the physiological response of people to various environmental stimuli. Considerable research was conducted in the area of epidemiology in public health. A later development in stress research concerns the personality type and other psychological characteristics of individuals, particularly men, who respond to stress situations with physiological breakdown, e.g., cardiac disease, peptic ulcers, and other psychosomatic disorders.

In the last decade or so, researchers have looked at more psychological variables in an effort to understand the stress response. At approximately the same time, Laxarus (1966), preferred to talk almost exclusively about psychological stress and defined the term as "the threat or anticipation of future harm."

In addition, David (1982), postulates that all individuals respond to stimuli or a stimulus condition idiosyncratically. In other words, what is stressful for someone may, in fact, not be stressful for someone else. A third basic concept which emerges is that stress is a constant condition to which everyone must continuously adjust. Similarly, Coelho, Hamburg, and Adams (1974), opined that stress is a "stimulus condition that is constant and is impinging on the organism at some optimum value." Physiological and psychological breakdown may occur when this "optimum value" is exceeded in one or more spheres of activity. Our thoughts about the situations in which we find ourselves are the critical factor. When something happens to us, we automatically evaluate the situation mentally. We decide if it is threatening to us, how we need to deal with the situation, and what skills we can use. If we decide that the demands of the situation outweigh the skills we have, then we label the situation as “stressful” and react with the classic “stress response.” If we decide that our coping skills outweigh the demands of the situation, then we do not see it as “stressful.”

Stress can come from any situation or thought that makes you feel frustrated, angry, or anxious. Everyone sees situations differently and has different coping skills. For this reason, no two people will respond exactly the same way to a given situation. Additionally, not all situations that are labelled “stressful” are negative. The birth of a child, being promoted at work or moving to a new home may not be perceived as threatening. However, we may feel that situations are stressful because we do not feel fully prepared to deal with them. Stress is a normal part of life. According to KCHC (2010:26)

> In small quantities, stress is good; it can motivate you and help you become more productive. However, too much stress, or a strong response to stress can be harmful. How we perceive a stress provoking event and how we react to it determines its impact on our health. We may be motivated and invigorated by the events in our lives, or we may see some as “stressful” and respond in a manner that may have a negative effect on our physical, mental, and social well-being.

This connotes that if we always respond in a negative way our health and happiness may suffer. By understanding ourselves and our reaction to stress-provoking situations, we can learn to handle stress more effectively. In the most accurate meaning, stress management is not about learning how to avoid or escape the pressures and turbulence of modern living; it is about learning to appreciate how the body reacts to these pressures, and about learning how to develop skills which enhance the body's adjustment. To learn stress management is to learn about the mind-body connection and to the degree to which we can control our health in a positive sense.

According to helpguide.org, if a simple stress is left to turn into chronic stress it disrupts nearly every system in one's body, it can shut down the immune system, upset digestive and reproductive system, raise blood pressure, increase the risk of heart attack and stroke, speed up aging process and leave one vulnerable to many mental and physical problem. Physical or mental stresses may cause physical illness as well as mental or emotional problems. First, Stress triggers mental and emotional problems such as insomnia, headaches, personality changes, irritability, anxiety, and depression. Secondly, high stress levels may cause excessive hair loss and some forms of baldness. More so, spasmodic pains in the neck and shoulders, musculoskeletal aches, lower back pain, and various minor muscular twitches and nervous tics are more noticeable under stress.

Stress can cause or aggravate diseases of the digestive tract including gastritis, stomach and duodenal ulcers, ulcerative colitis, and irritable colon. Some individuals react to stress with outbreaks of skin problems such as eczema and psoriasis. It can affect the reproductive system causing menstrual disorders and recurrent vaginal infections in women and impotence and premature ejaculation in men. Mouth ulcers and excessive dryness are often symptoms of stress. Cardiovascular disease and hypertension are linked

to accumulated and poorly managed stress. Finally, high levels of mental or emotional stress adversely affect individuals with asthmatic conditions (KCHC, 2010:10).

2.5 Stress Management Strategies

Here are some stress management strategies according to Academic Skills Centre of California Polytechnic State University that could help the academic staff of the University to manage stress.Firstly doing something you enjoy, take on a hobby, hang out with friends, and learn to balance your life. If you are feeling upset, express your feelings. Do not keep them to yourself because that will only add to your stress. Second, avoid alcohol and cigarettes – this is just a quick fix. Once the chemical leaves your body, you are back to feeling stressed and you are probably worse off than when you started. Third is, healthy eating – get the proper nutrition. Eat at least one hot-home cooked meal a day; thinking rationally can take you a long way. More so, exercise – physical activities can help you in not only burning off calories, but burning off stress. Exercises help to release tension. Exercisefor 30 minutes a day for at least 3 times per week. Henderson (2014)

Fifth, relaxing your mind and body – take deep breaths. Visualize success. Set some "alone time" where you do something you enjoy. Practice "mindfulness", focusing your attention on the present moment. Six, sleep – at least 7 hours of sleep are needed in order for your brain and body to function at optimum level. Avoid taking naps for more than 1 hour. Furthermore, healthy relationships – talk and relate with friends. Find someone you relate to and with whom you can share your problems with. Conversely, know how to manage your time – get a planner, create a schedule, map out what your quarter will look like. Once you have done that, do a schedule for each week. Then create a schedule for each day and establish your priorities for the day.

More importantly, budget: create a budget for your monthly expenses. Distribute your money according to the bills you need to pay for the quarter (i.e. rent, tuition, groceries,

personal items, house bills, gasoline, etc.). Determine about how much money you will be able to spend "for fun." Bragardeta'l (2005)

1) Spirituality – spiritually is regarded as finding meaning in your life, the ability to connect with others.
2) Determine your learning style – find out whether you are a visual, auditory or kinaesthetic learner.
3) Slow Down – take a deep breath and know your limits. Take your time so that you can ensure a well done job.
4) Find a support system – whether it is your Mother, sister, brother, friend or counsellor, find someone you feel comfortable sharing your feelings with. Sometimes all we need is to vent off the frustration.
5) Delegate responsibilities – when school or work becomes overwhelming, dividing up the work or responsibilities helps alleviate pressure and stress.

2.6 Conceptualizing Communication

Communication stems from a Latin word- 'COMMUNIS', which means common or shared understanding. Communication therefore is a purposeful effort to establish commonness between a source and receiver (Schramn 1965). Whatever is being shared could be associated with knowledge, experience, thought, ideas, suggestion, opinions and feelings, Communication then means the process of exchanging or sharing information, ideas and feeling between the sender and the receiver.

It has been shown that there exist various definitions for communication, as there are different disciplines. While some definitions are human centred, others are not. Therefore, there is no single definition of communication agreed upon by scholars. Psychologists, sociologists, medical practitioners, philosophers and communication

specialists, all define communication based on their orientations and perspectives. Psychologists define communication as "the process by which an individual (the communicator) transmits stimuli (usually verbal symbols) to modify the behaviour of the other individuals (communicates)." This definition describes what many extension workers and change agents hope to achieve.

Man has always tried to share his thoughts experiences and feeling with others. We achieve our goals according to our ability to communicate effectively; communication is the basis of all socio-economic, political and cultural activities. There can be no society without communication (Patil, 2013).

Communication is very central to all human activities; this is because everything we do and do not, communicates. Man's interaction with other human beings is a result of communication; communication is the key around which human life revolves.Communication is what exposes individual or people to knowledge, information and education, which guides them to form opinions, perceptions and develop new attitudes. Communication is a common phenomenon that cuts across the daily activities of human being. As food and water are very important to man's survival so is communication (Hassan, 2010).

To Hovland, Janis & Kelly (1953), Communication is a process where people (Communicator) sending stimulus in purpose to change or to make behaviour of other people. It is always a unique feature that differentiates the living from the dead. Obilade (1989) defines communication as a process that involves the transmission of message from a sender to the receiver. Communication is a Two-way process of reaching mutual understanding, in whichparticipants not only exchange (encode-decode) information, news, ideas and feelings but also create and share meaning. In general communication is

a means of connecting people or places. In business, it is a key function of management--an organization cannot operate without communication between levels, departments and employees. It is also the essence of human interaction and learning. The nature of communication is dependent on interaction between two or more individuals and understanding is constructed through that interaction (Gode, 1960).

Communication is a basic human right and essential to our quality of life as a social species. As human beings, we use communicationto: relate to others, socially connect, greet, call attention, share feelings, express an opinion, agree, disagree, explain, share information, question, answer, tease, bargain, negotiate, argue, manipulate, compliment, comment, protest, complain, describe, encourage, instruct, provide feedback, show humour, discuss interests, be polite Effective communication skills are fundamental to success in many aspects of life (Frank Dance & Carl Larson 1989)

Therefore adequate attention and care has to be taken in the process of selecting the right information and stress management to communicate to the staff of the University and the communication channels to use, because the Academic staff may not have been receiving the desired information that would assist them in knowing how to manage stress and gain enough rest for healthy living and maximum performance with regards to the excellent discharge of their duties.

Information is fundamental to choice and making informed decisions. Without information, there is no choice. Information helps knowledge and understanding. It gives patients the power and confidence to engage as partners with their health service. (Department of Health, 2004:32). Communication is the means by which such information is imparted and shared with others. Put more formally, it is the transfer of information

between a source and one or more receivers; a process of sharing of meanings, using a set of common rules (Northouse and Northouse, 1998). We communicate information in much different way; in humans, it is frequently done through spoken and/or written language, but non-verbal communication also plays a significant role in our interactions. Thus, our body posture and expressions constantly communicate information intentionally or unintentionally about our perceptions, intentions and feelings, as well as our identity. Even saying or doing nothing conveys a message. Not smiling or laughing at an appropriate time can send just as strong a signal as smiling or laughing. Communication is central to our everyday functioning and can be the very essence of the human condition (Hargie and Dickson, 2004).

As so aptly put by Hybels and Weaver (1998:5), 'to live is to communicate', to communicate is to enjoy life more fully'. Without the capacity for sophisticated channels for sharing our knowledge, both within and between generations, our advanced civilization would not exist (Hargie and Dixon, 2004). At its simplest level, communication requires a sender, a message, a receiver and a channel of communication, however, any communicative event is enormously complex; senders are often receivers, and multiple and contradictory messages may be sent via different channels. We have all experienced situations where a person says one thing but their tone of voice or body language indicates that they actually believe something else.

Communication is social in a variety of ways. It frequently involves relations between people and requires people to have a shared understanding of what particular sounds, words and gestures mean. It is the primary means by which people influence others and, in turn, are influenced by them. In such interpersonal settings, it is typically an ongoing and dynamic, or transactional, process. However, human communication may

also occur in other settings. It is often necessary to impart information to the wider public in order to reach mass audiences, such as in public health campaigns, effective health promotion campaigns require different communication skills and strategies from those involved in one-to-one or small-group interactions.

However from the above statements we can now add that to know how to communicate alone may not be enough but to know how to communicate effectively is mostly what is needed to achieve a goal when communicating, that is why the concept of effective communication has a major role to play when communicating rest and stress management to the academic staff of the University.

> Effective communication occurs when a desired effect is the result of intentional or unintentional information sharing, which is interpreted between multiple entities and acted on in a desired way. This effect also ensures that messages are not distorted during the communication process. Effective communication should generate the desired effect and maintain the effect, with the potential to increase the effect of the message (Hassan, 2010:13)

Therefore, effective communication serves the purpose for which it was planned or designed. Possible purposes might be to elicit change, generate action, create understanding, inform or communicate ascertain idea or point of view. When the desired effect is not achieved, factors such as barriers to communication are explored, with the intention being to discover how the communication has been ineffective.

2.8 Organizational/Institutional Communication

It is not possible to have good human relations in any institution without communication. On the other hand, effective communication is required not only for human relations but for a good and successful business. In practice, there is no organization without communication.Organizational communication is usually organized based on the hierarchy of the organization; it is regarded as its interactional expression. Moreover, a sea-change in communication technologies has contributed to the

transformation of both work and organizational structure. In other words, information should be available at the right time and the right place (Farkas, 2002).

McCroskey, & McCroskey (2005:5) define organizational communication as the process by which individuals stimulate meaning in the minds of other individuals by means of verbal or nonverbal messages in the context of a formal organization. Some portions of thisdefinition may need clarification. The word process indicates that communication is dynamic and ever changing. Organizations have recognized that the level of communication within the organization determines the efficiency of the organization.Organizational communication encompasses many aspects of communication including internal communication and external communication (Zdravkovska, 2013:1).

Organizational communication can be seen in two light; internal and external communications. Organizational internal communication according to Cutlip (1985), should, create and maintain mutually beneficial connection between the organization and its staff whom its success and failure depends on. According to Bevan and Bailey (1991), internal communication is such a process, in which an organization shares its information, builds commitments and manages the changes. As the main factor in the motivation and performance of staff, communication plays an important part in the competitiveness of the organization.

Myers and Myers (1982:xv) conceptualize organizational communication as "the central binding force that permits coordination among people and thus allows for organized behaviour," and Rogers and Rogers (1976:3) argue that "the behaviour of individuals in organizations is best understood from a communication point of view." Organizational communication as a scientific discipline is not new but recently it has been recognized as a field of academic study (Spaho, K., 2011). Organizational communication

can be viewed from different angles. It is commonly used as a tool that refers to a specific sub-division of the communication field.Theorists like Grenier and Metes (1992), D'Aprix, (1996), Witherspoon (1997), Von Krogh et al. (2000), have stated that communication is not only an essential element of organizational changes, but effective communication can be viewed as a foundation for modern organizations (Baker, 2002:2).

Successful organizations have incorporated effective communication in engaging their employees. Mckinney, Earl. & et al, (2004) opined that "communication in organization can be viewed as a medium, a means to performance ends, or as constitutive, as the end in itself." Thus communication is essential to effective team performance and communications for any organization is like blood flow in the human body. The most efficient managers are those that understand communication and they use it in their organizational environment. Even though an organization performs its tasks more efficient than expected, one should know that this success will not continue so long if it lacks the same efficacy in communication (Matin, et. al, 2010).

The success of communication depends on several factors. Transmission of message by the process of encoding and decoding the message, which may result in short-term perception, is not adequate for the success of communication. Communication should be in such a way that will give opportunity for the respondent or receiver to take decision with regard to the message he perceived (Master, 2008). The nature of communication that operates within an organization is regarded to as formal communication. Supporting this, Nwachukwu (1988:165) reiterated that:

> In organizations, formal communication follows the established chain of command. Communication flows from top executives to the subordinate to operative employees. It is the management that provides the channel through which communication flows upward. In both upward and downward communication, the management is involved for they create the favourable climate for free flow of

> ideas and information. …there is communication among people on the same level in the organization hierarchy often referred to as lateral communication.

This means that the nature of communication that takes place in an organization is regarded to as formal communication which is provided by the management. The above definition also clarifies that organizational communication could either be upward or downward. Nwachukwu, (1988:166) believes that upward communication is a means of promoting good human relations. Upward communication consists of messages that start at the bottom of the hierarchy and are transmitted up the hierarchy to the highest rungs of the hierarchy. Upward communication can be considered a bottom-up approach to organizational communication.

The upward flow of communication in an organization is intended to provide channels for the feedback of information passed down. Some deterrents may prevent a good return flow, but there are ways to promote more effective administrator-staff communications. The behaviourists have emphasized the establishment of upward communication flows. In a school organization, this refers to communication that travels from staff member to leader. This is necessary not only to determine if staff members have understood information sent downward but also to meet the ego needs of staff. Ideally, the organizational structure should provide for both upward and downward communication flows.

Communication should travel in both directions through the formal school organization hierarchy. Unfortunately, communication from the bottom does not flow as freely as communication from the top (Cheney, 2011). Invariably, Harriman (1974) defines downward communication as a communication system in which subordinates react most effectively to those matters that they judge to be of greatest *personal* interest to the boss. Among the various commands, policies, practices, and suggestions that come from

above, subordinates select those most important according to their perception of their bosses' character, personal and style and give them priority.

Traditional views of the communication process in school organizations have been dominated by downward communication flows. Such flows transmit information from higher to lower levels of the school organization (Lunenburg, 2010:3). However, Canary (2011) has identified five general purposes of downward communication. He opine that first purpose of communication is for the implementation of goals, strategies, and objectives**.** Communicating new strategies and goals provides information about specific targets and expected behaviours. It gives direction for lower levels of the school/school district, community college, or university.

For example: "The new reform mandate is for real. We must improve the quality of student learning if we are to succeed." Secondly, communication in the workplace is for instructions and directions. These are directives on how to do a specific task and how the job relates to other activities of the school organization. Schools, community colleges, or universities need to coordinate individual and departmental objectives with organization-wide goals. The failure of the provision of enough of this kind of information, leaving it to the individual staff member to get the information on how to manage stress has become the bane of effective communication of stress management.

Communication is also meant for the relay of messages on procedures and practices. These are messages defining the school organization's policies, rules, regulations, benefits, and structural arrangements in order to get some degree of uniformity in organization practices. In school organizations, this information is transmitted to staff members through board and organization-wide policy manuals, handbooks, and the day-to-day operation of the school organization. Fourthly,

communication serves the purpose of performance feedback. Departmental progress reports, individual performance appraisals, and other means are used to tell departments or individuals how well they are doing with respect to performance standards and goals. For example: "Mary, your work on the computer terminal has greatly improved the efficiency of our department."

Finally, communication is meant for socialization. Every organization tries to motivate staff members to adopt the institution's mission and cultural values and to participate in special ceremonies, such as picnics and United Way campaigns. It is an attempt to glf belonging, and a unity of direction among staff members (Lunenburg & Ornstein, 2008). For example: "The management thinks of its employees as family and would like to invite everyone to attend the annual picnic and fair on May 30." (Culled from Lunenburg, 2010:3). The downward flow of communication provides a channel for directives, instructions, and information to organizational members. However, much information gets lost as it is passed from one person to another. Moreover, the message can be distorted if it travels a great distance from its sender to the ultimate receiver down through the formal school organization hierarchy (Tourish, 2010).

Upward and downward communication flows generally follow the formal hierarchy within the school organization. However, greater size and complexity of organizations increase the need for communication laterally or diagonally across the lines of the formal chain of command. This is referred to as lateral/horizontal communication**.** These communications are informational too, but in a different way than downward and upward communication. Here information is basically for coordination — to tie together activities within or across departments on a single school campus or within divisions in a school-wide organizational system (Lunenburg, 2010:5).

Lateral communication involves communication among persons who do not stand in hierarchical relation to one another. While recent trends to flatten organizations have enhanced the importance of lateral communications, studies on lateral communication still lag behind those on vertical communication. One fairly limited study found rather high levels of satisfaction (85%) with lateral communication among human resource managers, but lateral communication across managers of dissimilar functional divisions was often cited as a major source of organization dysfunction, It has been assumed that lateral communication at the worker level is less problematic, at least within a functional area (Wrench & Carter 2012).

In addition, Nwachukwu (1988:167) sees lateral communication as a form of communication among people on the same level in the organizational hierarchy. This communication is important if work processes are to be facilitated. He further emphasized that, “at some instances, there is more interaction between people on the same level in the organization than there is between them and their immediate boss especially in a decentralized organization.” From the myriads of definitions on different forms of organizational communication, it is apparent that those formal communication forms are complimentary in covering their prospects and problems. Since the study is about communicating rest and stress within an organization, the different forms of organizational communication are relevant. Hence, there is a need to do a review of health communication.

2.8 Health Communication

Having examined what communication and effective communication is, next is the issue of health communication. Health as it is generally known is a term that concerns the general fitness and wellbeing of all living things. It is the state and condition of wellness of

a human being. In order to communicateHealth one needs an effective communication strategy to avoid any misconception that may lead to unwanted result. It is particularly important, because good communication contributes to virtually all aspects of healthcare. Health communication had been defined as referring to 'any type of human communication whose content is concerned with health' (Rogers, 1996:15), where the focus is on health-related transactions and the factors that influence these. There is now a substantial body of evidence to show that patients who are dealt with by healthcare providers with good communication skills have better health outcomes. The converse, ineffective communication, whether at the individual health professional or wider public health level, can lead to patients not even engaging with the healthcare system, refusing to follow recommended advice or to adhere to treatment regimens and failing to cope with the psychological consequences of their illness.

However, we also know that such positive outcomes are not always obtained. Whereas effective communication has been shown to have the above beneficial effects, ineffective communication can lead to a whole range of negative outcomes. These include, patients not engaging with the health service when they should, refusing to follow recommended health behaviours and undergo necessary treatment, failing to adhere to treatment regimens, or failing to cope with their own or another's illness. In extreme cases, poor communication can lead to psychological damage, physical harm, litigation or, at worst, death (MacDonald, 2004).

In a nutshell, as noted by Pettigrew and Logan (1987), communication promotes both health and illness in society, and makes the system run at optimal or marginal effectiveness. The importance of effective Health communication is not just relevant to inter- actions that relate to patients in healthcare settings, such as General Practitioner

(GP) practices, hospitals and clinics, but is also fundamental to the wider public health level and educational Institutions. Indeed, it has been argued that the most significant determinant of health is social and economic circumstance, and that the least important is individual health behaviour (French and Adams, 2002). Thus, it is suggested that we should be focusing more effort on broader public health education campaigns than on trying to influence behaviour at the individual level, as the former is likely to be the most cost-effective approach to health promotion (Bennett and Murphy, 1997).

Another way of reaching mass audiences is to use the media, Internet and other modes of communication. Again, in recent years, there has been a dramatic increase in the use of these channels to spread health-related information. However, such communication channels are often used by 'non-official sources' to disseminate health information and the reliability of some of this has been called into question. Given the massive explosion in the public's engagement with such media to access health-related information, there are benefits and disadvantages of communication via these channels. However in reality there are two factors that have a large effect on individual's motivation level and their ability to process the message. Motivation is primarily affected by the extent to which a person has involvement with the particular issue (for example, when the message relates to a newly diagnosed medical condition). Thus, it is argued that, under high involvement, people will engage in more issue-relevant thinking. Similarly, use of the central route is more likely to occur when people feel more able to process the information effectively.

Now to be able to achieve results in health communication, few things are pertinent and must be considered. First of all good communication is central to effective health- care Communication, and information provision plays key roles in determining whether people engage in recommended health behaviours and whether the behaviours have a positive

outcome. Health communicators may want to achieve any of a number of goals, including providing information, instruction or reassurance, influencing opinion, attitudes, and changing behaviour. Edwards and Hugman (1997:223) identified six core issues that need to be taken into account when planning any health communication:

1) The purpose of the message
2) The state of mind of the intended recipient(s), including their cognitive abilities and emotional state
3) The general context or climate in which the message will be received
4) The medium of communication to be used
5) Feedback mechanisms, to assess the effects of the message
6) Monitoring and evaluation.

In most situations, healthcare professionals will need to take account of many, if not all, of these factors when planning their communications with patients and others.

2.9 Health Promotion in the Workplace

The workplace is one of the most important settings affecting the physical mental, economic and social wellbeing of workers, in turn their families, communities and societies also get affected by their wellbeing. The health of the workers is affected by both work and non-work related factors, but when organizations and institutions help by improving the workers' skills and knowledge on how to manage their health and by establishing an environment conducive to their health, within and outside their respective workplace in form of a health program, that can bring about positive changes which support the overall success of an organization.

For those in employment, work is a key part of life. Knobel (1983) estimated that it is possible to reach 85 per cent of the US population via the worksite, and similar proportions can apply in other countries in the world. It is not surprising; therefore, that delivering health education to the workforce is a key aspect of governments' health promotion strategies. According to the UK following the establishment of the European Network for Workplace Health Promotion (Federal Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, 1996), the network identified five key priorities for action:

1) Increased awareness of workplace health promotion, and the promotion of responsibility for health with regard to all stakeholders.
2) Identification and dissemination of models of good practice.
3) Development of guidelines for effective workplace health promotion
4) Ensuring commitment of members states to incorporate principles of workplace health promotion in their respective policies
5) Addressing the specific challenges of working effectively with small and medium-sized enterprises (Tones and Tilford, 2001).

Similar commitments and efforts have been made in the USA and many Asian countries. Systematic reviews have shown that the introduction of health education and promotion into the workplace has led to many successes. In general, interventions have been found to be more successful when they were associated with individualized delivery of Health information, In an institution like Ahmadu Bello University it is expected that all the academic staff are learned people going by what is obvious, so therefore to be able to communicate rest and stress management to them, the issue of risk communication has to be palpable in the whole message.

Now Risk was defined by the British Medical Association in 1990 as 'the probability that something unpleasant will happen' (BMA, 1990, p. 14). Thus, it is not certain that the event will occur but, if it does, the event will have negative rather than positive consequences. Given that there is risk associated with almost everything we do, or that happens to us, healthcare professionals need to determine which risks are the most relevant and significant ones that need to be communicated. This will involve consideration of the severity of the risk (such as whether it is life threatening or not) as well as the likelihood of it occurring.

Taking account of considerations such as these, MacDonald (2004) suggested that there are six questions one needs to consider when want to communicate health risk information. These are:

i. What are the pertinent unwanted outcomes?
ii. How permanent is any unwanted outcome?
iii. When will the unwanted outcome occur?
iv. How likely is the unwanted outcome?
v. Does this result from a single exposure or multiple exposures with cumulative risk?
vi. How much does the unwanted outcome matter to this individual person?

Risk communication also needs to be based on up-to-date scientific evidence, and should come from a trusted source. Even the most well-constructed and presented communication will not be accepted and acted on if the recipients do not have faith in the source of the information. Thus for a place like the University, source or reference of information is always vital, therefore in order to communicate the risk of not taking the appropriate rest and managing undue stress, information provided must be proven to be up

to date with adequate reference. In recent years, it has become increasingly apparent that there is more to effective risk communication than simply getting the content of risk messages correct (e.g. Berry 2004, 2006; Paling, 2004) has this to say, The 'right' content will not necessarily bring about the desired effects, and may lead to unwanted or harmful effects, if it is not presented in an appropriate way and interpreted by the recipient in the way intended by the communicator.

In presenting risk communication, factors to consider should not only be the format in which to present information, but also the order of information, as this can affect people's understanding and memory of the information. Another factor to consider is recognizing that our health depends on our environmental, social and economic circumstances and this is very important. For by the end of the nineteenth century, several studies had identified cause-and-effect relationships between things people did, or let happen, and its adverse health effects.

In general, health promotion is any event, process or activity that facilitates the protection or improvement of the health status of individuals, groups, communities or populations (Marks et al., 2000). Its main objectives are to prolong life or to improve the quality of life. As Bennett and Murphy (1997) pointed out, health promotion is premised on gthe understanding that the behaviours in which we engage, and the circumstances in which we live, impact on our health. In line with this, the World Health Organization (WHO) has identified the need for a multiple approach to health promotion which acknowledges the important role that the environment and public policy play in relation to health. The emphasis is more on thinking about the positive aspects of health, rather than thinking of it as the absence of disease and infirmity.

2.10 The Behavioural Change Approach

The key objective of this approach is to bring about changes in the behaviour of individuals through changing their cognitions (thoughts and beliefs). This typically requires increasing people's knowledge about the causes of health and illness through the provision of information about health risks and hazards. The Behavioural Change approach is based on the assumption that people are rational decision makers and that their health behaviours are informed by their cognitions. Thus, applying social cognition models, such as the Health Belief Model (Rosenstock, 1974), to plan health interventions would be an example of this approach to health promotion.

Limitations of this approach include its focus on the cognitions of individuals; actually the shortcoming of this model is something this study would take advantage of, its failure to take sufficient account of individual differences, and the fact that it has not had much success in targeting important socio-economic causes of ill health. Thus the central theme of this research is attempting to launch a health promotion that would communicate rest and stress management to the academic staff Ahmadu Bello University, while putting into consideration the different cognitive level of the staff and their environment.

2.10.1 The Self-Empowerment Approach

The main objective of this approach is to empower people to make healthy choices so that they can increase control over their physical, social and internal environments. This is mostly done through participatory learning techniques (such as group work, counselling and social skills training). It is based on the assumption that power is a universal resource

that can be used by everyone. However, a limitation is that it seems to ignore the fact that there are systematic inequalities that are known to exist with regard to access to material and psychological resources. Like the previous approach, the Self-empowerment approach has also been criticized for focusing on the individual as 'the target for change'.

2.10.2 The Collective Action Approach

The main aim of this third approach to health promotion is to improve public health by addressing the important socio-economic and environmental determinants of health. Specifically, the key objective is to modify the relevant social, economic and physical structures that generate ill health. In order to achieve this, however, individuals must act collectively to improve their social and physical environments. The Collective Action approach is therefore based on the assumption that individuals share sufficient interests to allow them to act in the necessary collective way. As should be apparent, this third approach is more 'political' than the other two approaches and, to be effective, can require significant resources.

Clearly, effective communication is central to all three approaches. However, the particular way in which it is applied will differ according to which approach is taken. Thus, the content of the message, and the way in which it is presented, will differ according to whether the main aim of the activity is to change individual behaviour, empower people or to address major socio-economic and environmental determinants of health. An important point to note is that communication in all cases involves more than simply getting a message across. Rather, it involves building relationships and empowering people so that they can make appropriate health-related choices and decisions (Katz et al., 2000).

2.11 Empirical Review

Thapa (2014) researched on the "prevalence of risk factors of Coronary Heart Disease among Government School Teachers in Urban Area of Belgium. The study aim was to assess the demographic factors contributing as causes to heart disease. The study was conducted by randomly sampling 119 teachers. The study found out those teachers that are overweight Lack physical exercises and were most likely to have heart diseases. The study's finding is relevant to this research in the sense that it contains factors whose consequence is heart disease. However, the difference between the study and this present research lies on.

Illkwu-Lowalle (2006) undertook a study on "Enhancing staff mental health in response to aggression and violence it is a longitudinal study on aggression minimization training. The study was conducted among 103 mental health staff divided in controlled and experimental group. After being observed for a period of 18 months, the study found out that those in the experimental groups who were exposed to the training and have knowledge on how to manage aggression had significant minimization in their level of aggression. The aspect of knowledge as a way of informing the workers about aggression is very relevant to this study. However, the methodology used in this study which is quantitative and qualitative method makes it different from the research carried out by Ilkiw-Lavalle (2006). While the research considered minimizing aggression, this current study focuses on stress management among academic staff.

Usoro, and Etule (2016), conducted a research on workload related stress and job effectiveness of University lecturers in Cross River and AkwaIbom States, Nigeria. The research was carried out to determine the extent to which workload related stress influences job effectiveness among lecturers. The study was a survey research that made

use of the quantitative methods. The instrument of the research was the (6) point Likert structured questionnaire. The study's population was drawn from the University of Calabar and University of Uyo which had 1002 and 1166 staffs respectively. The study reduced the sample size for each university to 286 and 298 lecturers respectively. The results of the research show that lecturers' workload are related stress significantly affect their effective teaching, publication and other self-development practices. The findings are relevant to this study as it highlighted possible effects of workload related stress on the lecturers. The methodology also adopted is relevant to this study in that the study population is University academic lecturers which are similar to the population that this research is considering. However, the point of difference is the lack of communication strategy on stress management which is of very crucial concern to the present research.

Idris (2014), research on the impact of additional responsibilities on Academic staff of Universities in Nigeria. The study was aimed at assessing the impact of extra-academic roles on the effective management of the University. The population was from 37 Federal Universities, 37 State Universities and 50 Private Universities, totaling 124 universities. The research instrument used in the study was the structured questionnaire. Findings from the study revealed that given additional responsibilities to academic staff beyond lecturing and supervision of undergraduate and post-graduate students hindered effective job performance of academic staff. The methodology and findings of this study are relevant to the present research being undertaken to investigate the influence of communication strategy on effective stress management in the University. As noted, while Idris's (2014) research focused on the impact of the responsibilities on academic staff, the present research investigated the nature and relationship between the effectiveness of the

communication strategy and stress management in Nigerian Universities with special focus on Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria.

Alabi, Murtala, and Lawal (2012) researched on lecturers' work stress and job performance in Kwara State College of Education, Nigeria. The aim of the research was to identify stress causing factors and the coping strategy adopted by management in order to enhance lecturers' job performance. The study made use of quantitative survey research using questionnaire – "Work Stress Measurement Questionnaire (WSMQ). The population of the study was 380 lecturers of the Colleges of Education in Ilorin, Oro and Lafiaji. The population was reduced to a sample size of 191 lecturers. Results from research indicated that the number of hours undertaken by lecturers in a week were factors that led to stress. Also, it was revealed that working under poor lecture conditions and the lack of rest could result in stress which affects job performance. The methodology and findings in this study are relevant to the current research being undertaken on communication and stress management strategy. Alabi *et al* (2012) differ from the present study which is interested in the communication channels and how they could be used to effectively manage stress causative factors.

2.13 Theoretical Framework

The researcher found the Health Belief Model and the Diffusion of Innovation Theory to be more suitable to this study. The Health Belief Model was originally proposed by Rosenstock (1966) and was further developed by Becker and Rosenstock (1984). This model was the first analysis of decisions concerning health behaviours that emphasized that such decisions are a function of people's subjective perceptions about a potential health threat and a relevant behaviour. This means a persons' behaviour is determined by how vulnerable he/she is to contracting a disease before taking a decision on the issue, or

the severity of risk he/she is exposed to a particular illness before reacting, and that only happens when a person is adequately informed on a certain particular illness or behaviour that poses a threat to his/her life.

According to the model, perceived threat motivates people to take action; also threats in terms of both perceptions of the severity of a particular health problem and how susceptible a person is to that health problem encourage people to take heed to that particular health problem. Academic staff of Ahmadu Bello University needs to be informed and be provided with a lot of information on the level of their vulnerability, to contacting major health problems while working under undue stress and not taking proper rest.

The Health Belief Model has been applied to a variety of health behaviours, including smoking, dieting and exercise, and research has shown, that health behaviours such as eating a healthy diet and taking regular exercise are related to individual beliefs, that it is when the health concern is severe, and people begin to realise that they are susceptible to huge risk and that the benefits of adopting the health behaviour will outweigh any costs before a particular health behaviour could be adopted.

To contextualize this, we can say even if the academic staff knew or are aware of the importance of managing stress, they still need some form of persuasion that would encourage them to do the right thing. For instance, the University management may at every day put out notices passing out information that points out the dangers of what stress can do to individual and diseases associated with stress and lack of rest as identified earlier medically.

Diffusion of Innovation Theory on the other hand is a research model developed by Everett Rogers (1962), which describes how a new idea, product or positive health behaviour spreads through a community or social structure. The model identifies several factors that influence how quickly an idea or behaviour is adopted. For Rogers (2003), adoption is a decision of "full use of an innovation as the best course of action available" and rejection is a decision "not to adopt an innovation". Rogers defines diffusion as "the process in which an innovation is communicated through certain channels over time among the members of a social system". As expressed in this definition, innovation, communication channels, time, and social system are the five key components of the diffusion of innovations.

Rogers describes innovation as an idea, practice, or project that is perceived as new by an individual or other unit of adoption" (Rogers, 2003:12). An innovation may have been invented a long time ago, but if individuals perceive it as new, then it may still be an innovation for them.The second element of the diffusion of innovations process is communication channels. For Rogers (2003), communication is "a process in which participants create and share information with one another in order to reach a mutual understanding". According to Rogers (2003), the time aspect is ignored in most behavioural research. He argues that including the time dimension in diffusion research illustrates one of its strengths. The innovation-diffusion process, adopter categorization, and rate of adoptions all include a time dimension.

The social system is the last element in the diffusion process. Rogers (2003) defined the social system as "a set of interrelated units engaged in joint problem solving to accomplish a common goal". Since diffusion of innovations takes place in the social system, it is influenced by the social structure of the social system. For Rogers (2003),

structure is “the patterned arrangements of the units in a system”. He further claimed that the nature of the social system affects individuals’ innovativeness, which is the main criterion for categorizing adopters. However, there are several stages to the final adoption of an innovation. These stages include; knowledge stage, persuasion stage, decision stage, implementation and confirmation stage.

Also the issue of stress management was at some point introduced by the management of Ahmadu Bello University to the entire academic and non-academic staff but the initiative was not sustained. The theory is be used to examine the communication channels that were used in passing information across to the staff. Again, the theory helped us to understand and identify the process involved the establishment of the sport and relaxation exercise.

This study adopts two theories basically to arrive at creating a well-intended and people based stress management communication strategy. The Health Belief Model helped the researcher to factor in issues of vulnerabilities which will make the staff to take positive health decision on the issue of stress. While the diffusion of innovation theory helped to consider important factors when createdstress management strategies are to be issued out and communicated to the academic staff.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

For the purpose of this research, the researcher adopted the survey method to derive the relevant data needed for this study. According to Baran (2002) “surveys allow communication researchers to measure characteristics, opinions or behaviours of a population by studying a small sample from that group, and then generalize findings”.

3.2 Research Design

A research design refers to a detailed outline of how an investigation is going to take place. It includes how data is to be collected, what instruments will be employed, how the instruments will be used and the intended means for analyzing data collected. Leedy (1993) further asserts that research design can be defined as the common sense and clear thinking necessary for the management of the entire research endeavour, the complete strategy of the research problem. The survey research design is a valuable tool for assessing opinions and trends because it is used to handle a large population especially on issues of the moment that involve systematic collection of data from population of study through the use of questionnaires, interview, observation etc. However, the researcher will make use of the survey method because the survey method gets an overview of the opinion of respondents.

This research work was conducted through the quantitative and qualitative survey methods of research. Harwell (2011) posits that, quantitative research methods attempt to maximize objectivity, reliability, and generalization of findings, and are typically interested in prediction. Integral to this approach is the expectation that a researcher will set aside his or her experiences, perceptions, and biases to ensure objectivity in the

conduct of the study and the conclusions that are drawn. The essence of adopting this method is because of its flexibility and interactive nature that will best assist in the collection of data on the phenomenon under study.

Qualitative research method focuses on gathering of verbal and written data rather than measurement. According to Shank (2002), qualitative method is “a form of systematic empirical inquiry into meaning”. By systematic and empirical Shank suggests a process of inquiry that is “planned, ordered and public”, and which thus is grounded in the world of experience.The suitability of both methods for this research is due to the fact that they are needed to address the research topic in accordance with the research objectives. More so, the study adopts both methods because of their flexibility and interactive nature that will assist in the collection of data on the phenomenon under study.

3.3 Population of the Study

A population is a collection of elements about which we wish to make an inference. This refers to a set of all possible cases of interest in a given research activity. It is a collection or set of individuals or objects whose properties are to be analyzed. (Bello and Ajayi, 2001). Corroborating this view, Marzcyk, DeMatteo and Festinger (2005) see population of a study as the entire relevant number of people within the scope of the research. This is usually defined by the purpose of the study or the research questions or rather what the research is aimed at answering. Data from the Human Resources department puts the entire ABU academic staff population currently to be Two thousand Six hundred (2,600) together with nine (9) University Management staff, hence, the entire population for this study is Two thousand Six hundred and Nine (2,609). But specifically, the Study Population for this research work areonly the academic Staff from three selected

Faculties namely Faculty of Arts, Sciences and Social Sciences, which record showed us to be Six hundred and Nineteen (619) academic staff.

3.4 Sample Size/Sampling Technique

The main function of the sample is to allow the researcher to conduct the study on individuals from the population so that the results of their study can be used to derive conclusions that will apply to the entire population. The population "gives" the sample, and then it "takes" conclusions from the results obtained from the sample. The researcher used a random sampling technique in the collection of data. This was achieved through the use of questionnaires so as to enable the researcher effectively analyze and assess theresearch phenomenon under study.

However, out of the 619 academic staff selected as the study population, the researcher used the Raosoft (2016) online sample size calculator with the error level of 5 percent and the confidence level of 95 percent to arrive at the two hundred and thirty eight (238) academic staffthat formed the sample size for this study.

3.6 Method of Data Collection

The collection of data was carried out quantitatively and qualitatively by the researcher using the structured and designed instruments, 238 copies of questionnaire were administered personally to the respondentsacross the 3 selected Faculties (Arts, Sciences and Social Sciences), giving them 7days to complete and submit to the researcher. As for the Key Informant Interview, interviews scheduled were used and discussions were recorded on Midget recorder and later transcribed.

3.5 Instruments for Data Collection

Research instruments are tools used by researchers to collect valuable data. The essence of research instruments is to enable the researcher gather pertinent data that will be used to answer the research questions. This study, therefore, used the following research instruments for data collection:

3.5.1 In-depth Interview

The Key Informant Interview is a method of rigorous and deep interview used for collecting data. This involves presentation of oral-verbal stimuli and reply in terms of oral-verbal responses. This method can be used through personal interviews and, if possible, through telephone interviews. In-depth Interview method requires the interviewer asking questions generally in a face-to-face contact to the other person or persons. At times, the Interviewee may also ask certain questions and the interviewer responds to these, but usually the interviewer initiates the interview process and collects the required information. (Somekh, and Lewin, 2005). Meanwhile, the researcher used this instrument to interview five (5) Management Staff, the Deputy Vice Chancellor Administration, Deputy Vice Chancellor Academic, Registrar, Director Academic Planning, Director Public Affairs and Director University Medical Centre. This enabled the researcher to get first-hand information on what the University is doing about stress management strategies and policies.

3.5.2 Questionnaire

According to Marther, al (2009) questionnaire is a very convenient way of collecting useful comparable data from a large number of individuals. Bello and Ajayi (2000) further assert that, a questionnaire is a series of relevant questions or statements which are usually used to elicit information from target population of a given study. The

Questionnaire forms part of the instrument for data collection for this study because it provided one of the best means for collecting the varied views of the respondents in order to generate information on the workload of the academic staff and its impact on their health.

There are two types of questionnaire that are commonly used in research: close-ended and open-ended questionnaire format. The close-ended questionnaire is the type that no respondents' answers are limited to a fixed set of responses, usually the 'Yes' or 'No' response and/or several options from which to choose. The open-ended questionnaire is the type that no options or predefined categories are suggested. The respondents supplied their own answer without being constrained by a fixed set of possible responses. For this study, the close-ended and open-ended questionnaire format was employed in order to get adequate data from the respondents. The copies of questionnaire were issued to the academic staff in the selected Faculties earlier mentioned from the rank of Assistant Lecturer to the rank of Professor basically because most Staff on these ranks usually have more workload.

3.7 Method of Data Analysis

Quantitative data was statistically analyzed using Computer Software Programme, known as Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 21 to yield some statistics for comparison and establishment of nature of relationship between variables. Descriptive analysis was used to analyze qualitative data in the study in order to upscale the respondents view on the activities of the study area. The narrative format was used to analyse the information gotten from the interview with the interviewees. Both the Qualitative and Quantitative Data were merged for comparison in order to arrive at valid deductions for the sections.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION, ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

4.1 Data Presentation

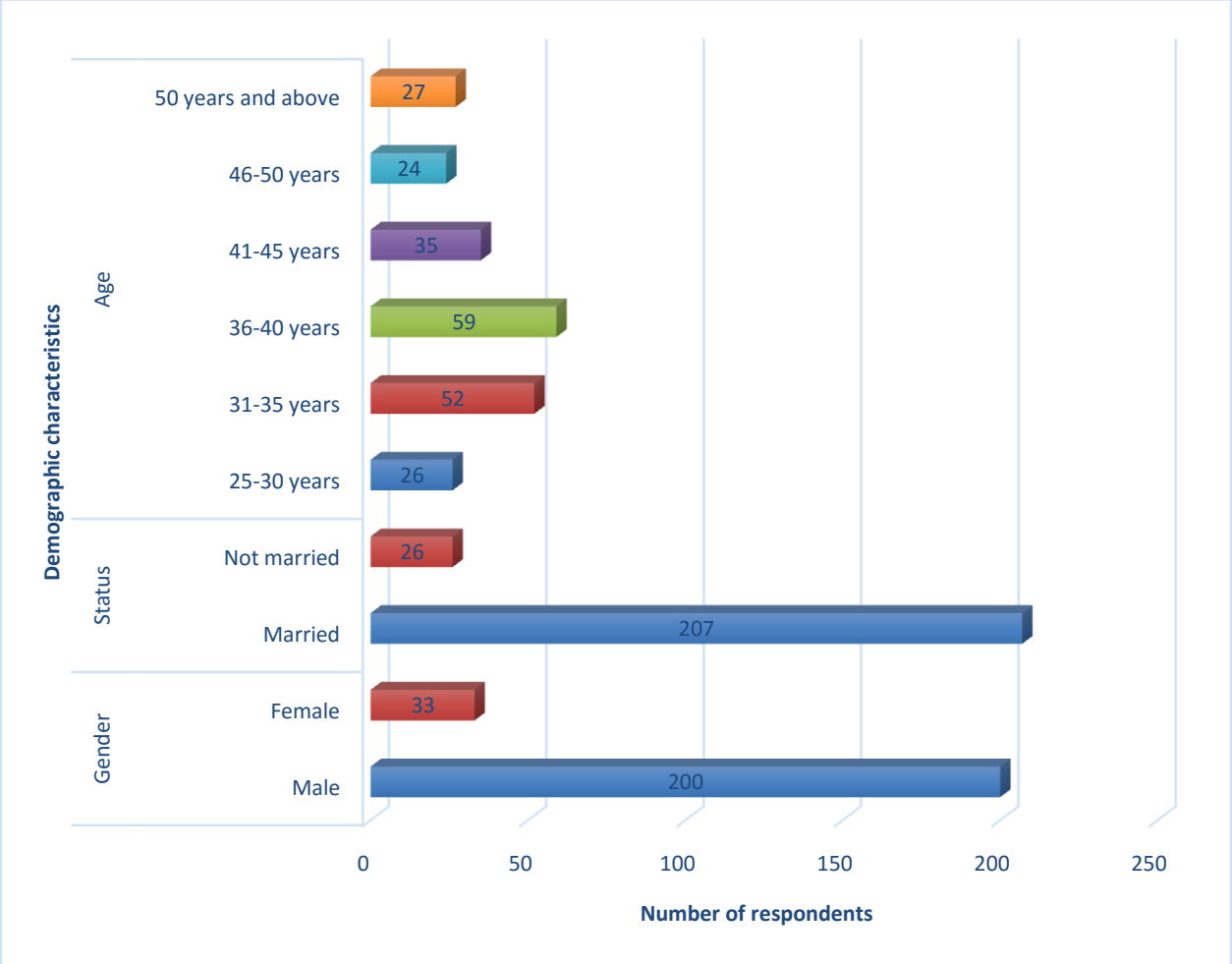
This chapter presents the result of analysis from the data and information gathered from the copies of questionnaire and Key Informant Interviews being the instruments used in this quantitative and qualitative survey research. The respondents of this study comprised the staff of the Faculty of Arts, Sciences and Social Sciences additionally Key Informants were drawn from Ahmadu Bello University Management Staff namely, the Deputy Vice Chancellor Administration, Director of Academic Planning and Monitoring, the Acting Director, Public Affairs Directorate and the Director University Medical Center for the qualitative aspect.

Based on the objectives of this study, the quantitative data gathered through questionnaire were first analyzed using simple descriptive statistics showing frequency distribution and percentages while the qualitative data from the Key Informant Interview were drawn to strengthen the findings of the quantitative data. The quantitative data presentation is in three sections: Section A deals with the socio-demographic variables, Section B addressed itself to the study objectives while section C considered the implications of the study findings. Furthermore, the information gathered and processed from the Key Informant Interview were also analyzed in line with the research objectives and triangulated with the data processed and analyzed from the questionnaire. In the analysis, findings from both the quantitative and qualitative data are discussed against the background of the reviewed literature to demonstrate the contributions of this study to knowledge.

4.2 Data Analysis

Out of 238 copies of questionnaire retrieved, five (5) copies were weeded out for carrying incomplete information leaving the researcher with 233 copies with complete information. The total response and return rate for the 233 completed copies of questionnaire was 98%. Based on this, the returned copies of questionnaire and respondents response rate were considered statistically significant for the presentation of the data, its analysis and interpretation.

4.2.1 Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Respondents



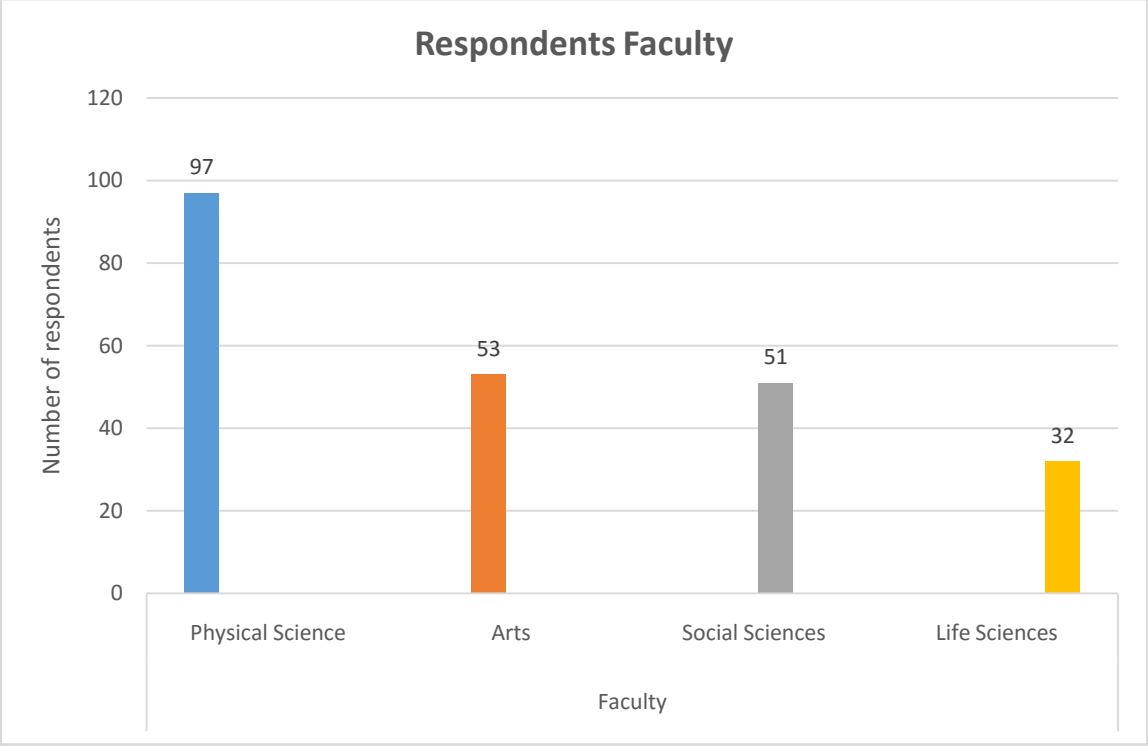
Source: Field survey, 2017

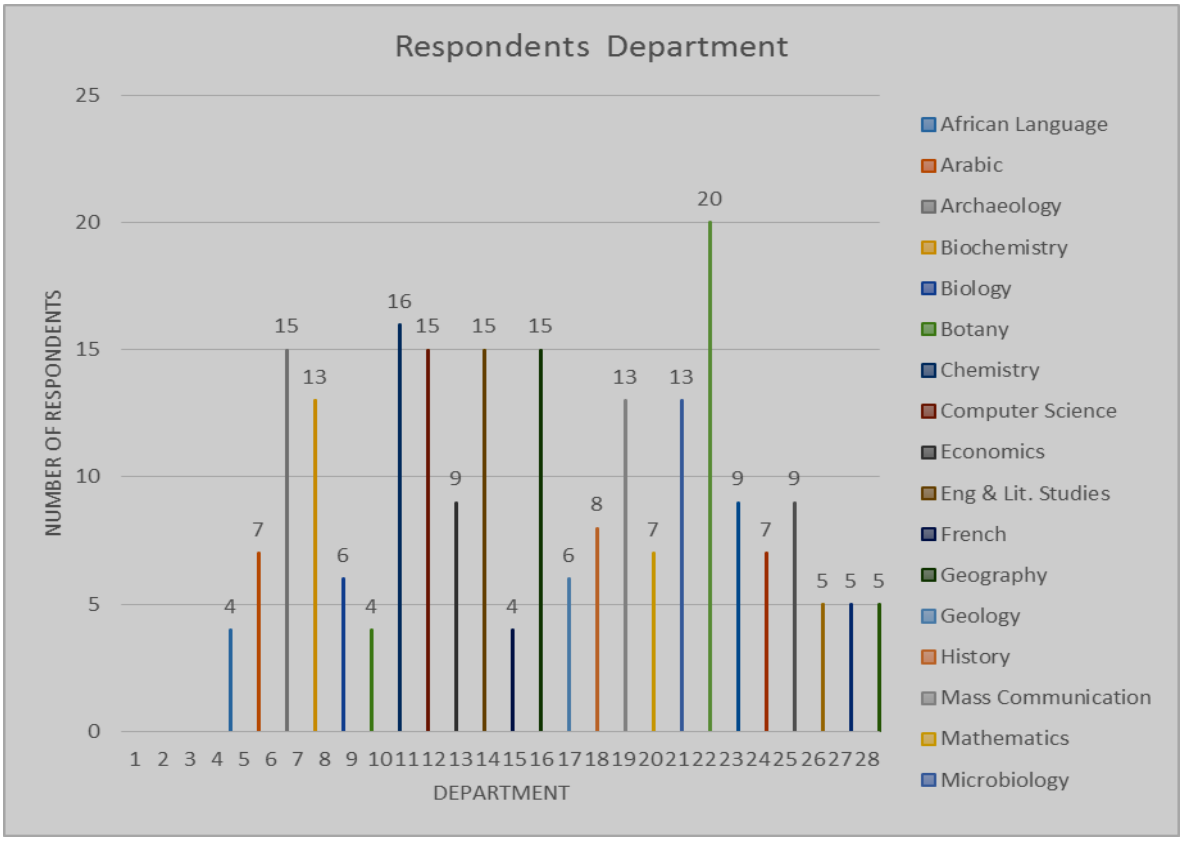
The Socio-Demographic characteristics are presented in the chart 4.2.1 above. In the chart, 85.8% of the respondents were male while 14.2% were female. The reason for this disparity in gender is because more male staff are found to be employed in Nigerian tertiary education sector than their female counterparts especially in Ahmadu Bello University Zaria. This confirms the findings by Fapohunda (2012), Omirin and Faremi (2012) that gender inequality in employment and education in Nigeria is largely traced to the socio-cultural dynamics of the Nigerian society. They assert that since the country is largely a patriarchal society, more male are encouraged to study and work than their female counterpart. However recognizing this disparity, emphasis is now being placed on girl or women education motivating them to acquire tertiary education and get employment opportunities. This is evidenced in the growing number of female staff emerging in the tertiary educational sector of the country.

Another socio-demographic variable collated in this research was the marital status of the respondents. Here in this chart, 89% of the respondents are married while 11.0% of the respondents are yet to marry. The high number of married respondents in the educational sector is in agreement with Salami (2008) research where it was found that most organizations prefer that their staff are married as a way of showing commitment and responsibility to their work. Other researches by Azim, Hague and Chowdury (2013) and Adejumo (2011) assert that marital status of workers especially married workers significantly affect their job satisfaction especially when they are socio-economically empowered to cater for their home.

Another significant socio-demographic variable investigated in this study was the age of the respondents. From the chart, 22.3% 25.3%, 15% and 14.6% of the respondents were between the ages of 31-35 years, 36-40 years, and 46-50 years respectively. This

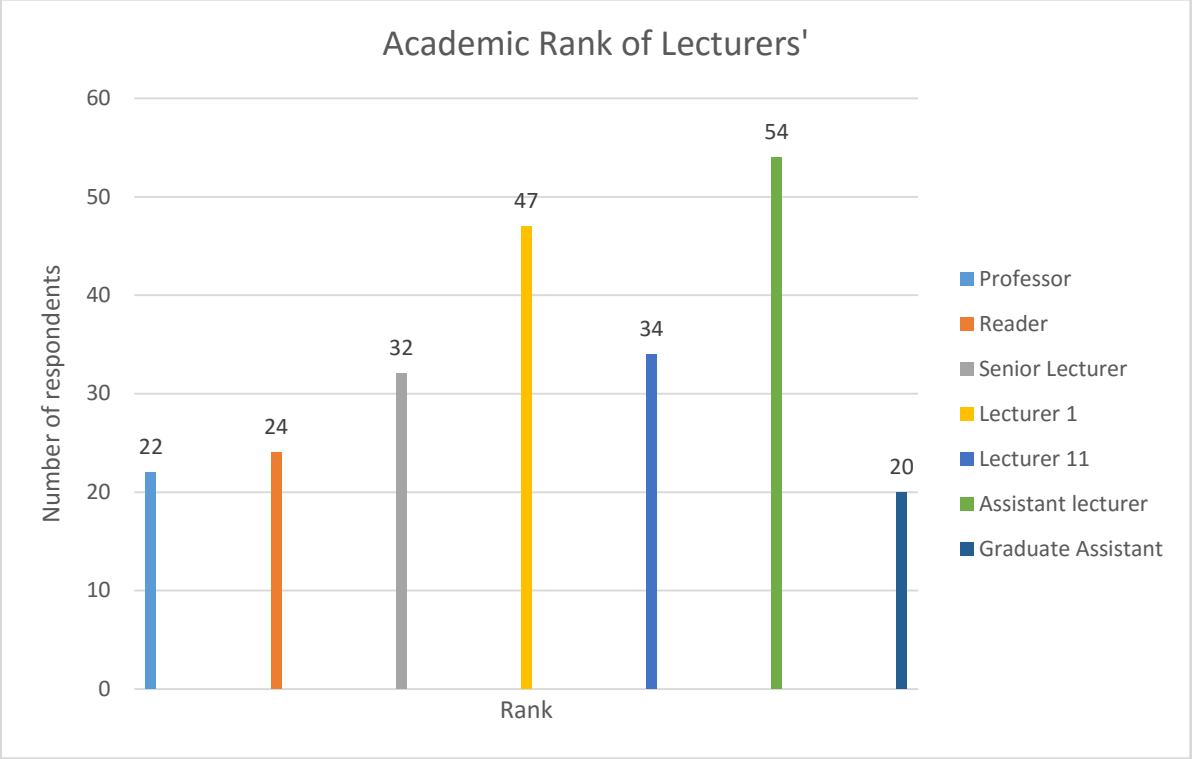
means that respondents within these age brackets who are adults can provide the research with information on their work schedule as well as the communicative effort of the university's authority at managing such challenge among staff.





Source: Field survey, 2017.

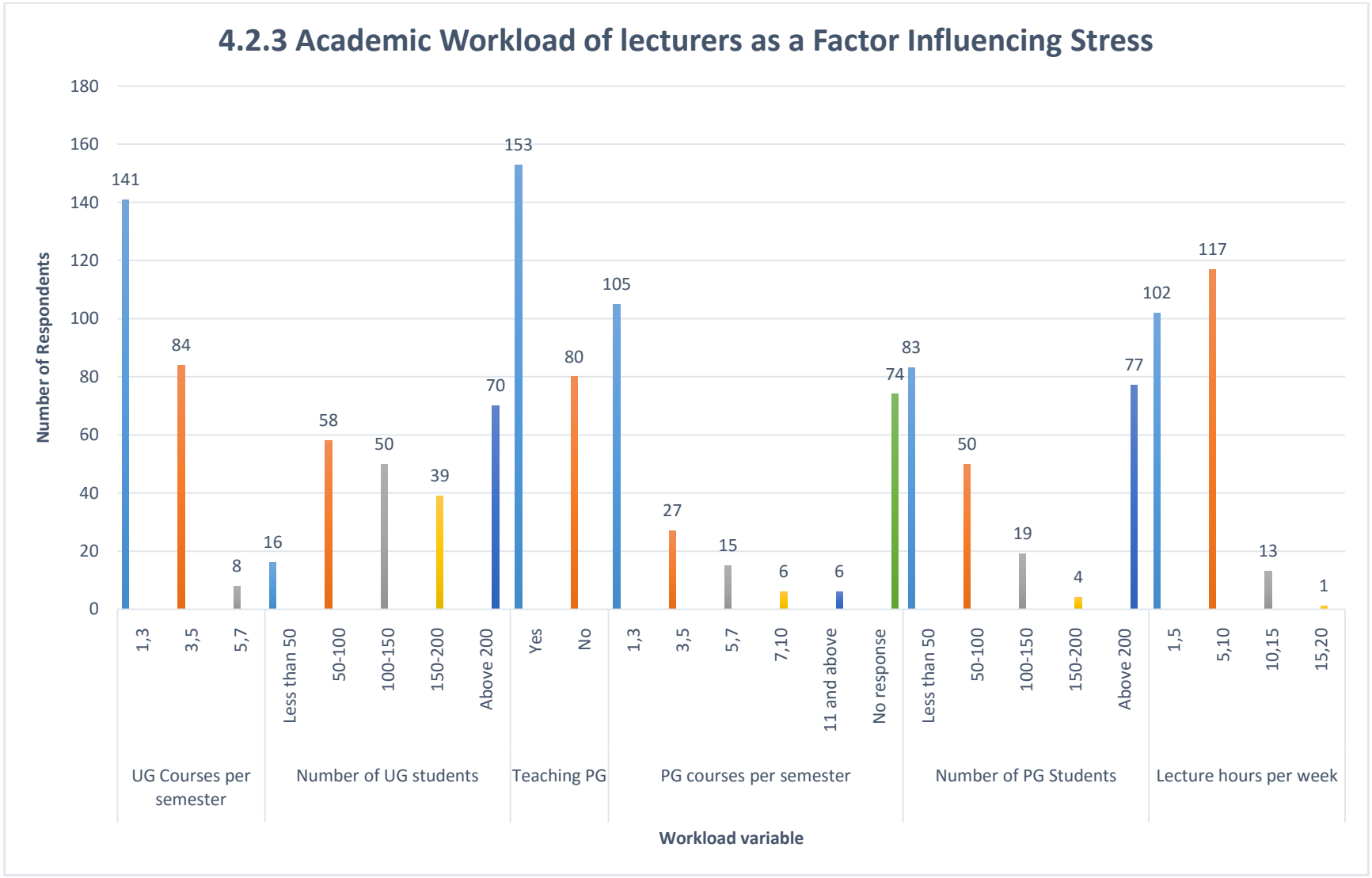
The chart here shows the respondents from the faculties as well as their departments and their ranks. From the chart, most of the respondents that is, 35.8% and 38.3% were from the faculties of physical sciences and Arts while 15% and 8.1% of the respondents were from the faculties of social sciences and life sciences. This implies that respondents from the sampled population are statistically significant and could be used for further analysis. Furthermore, the respondents' departments were also investigated in this study. Here, the chart shows respondents according to their departments. Each department was significantly represented with each department showing representation of more than a percent.



Source: Field survey, 2017

On this chart, most of the respondents were in the rank of Assistant Lecturers, lecturer I, Lecturer II and Senior Lecturers with 23.2%, 20.2%, 14.6% and 13.7% respectively. Other rank of lecturers with a very significant percentage representation are; Associate Professors or Readers, Professors, and Graduate Assistants having a percentage representation of 10.3%, 9.4% and 8.6% respectively. It could be deduced from the chart that respondents were significantly represented according to the ranking structure in an academic environment such as the university.

Research Objective One: To identify factors influencing stress among the academic staff of ABU Zaria.

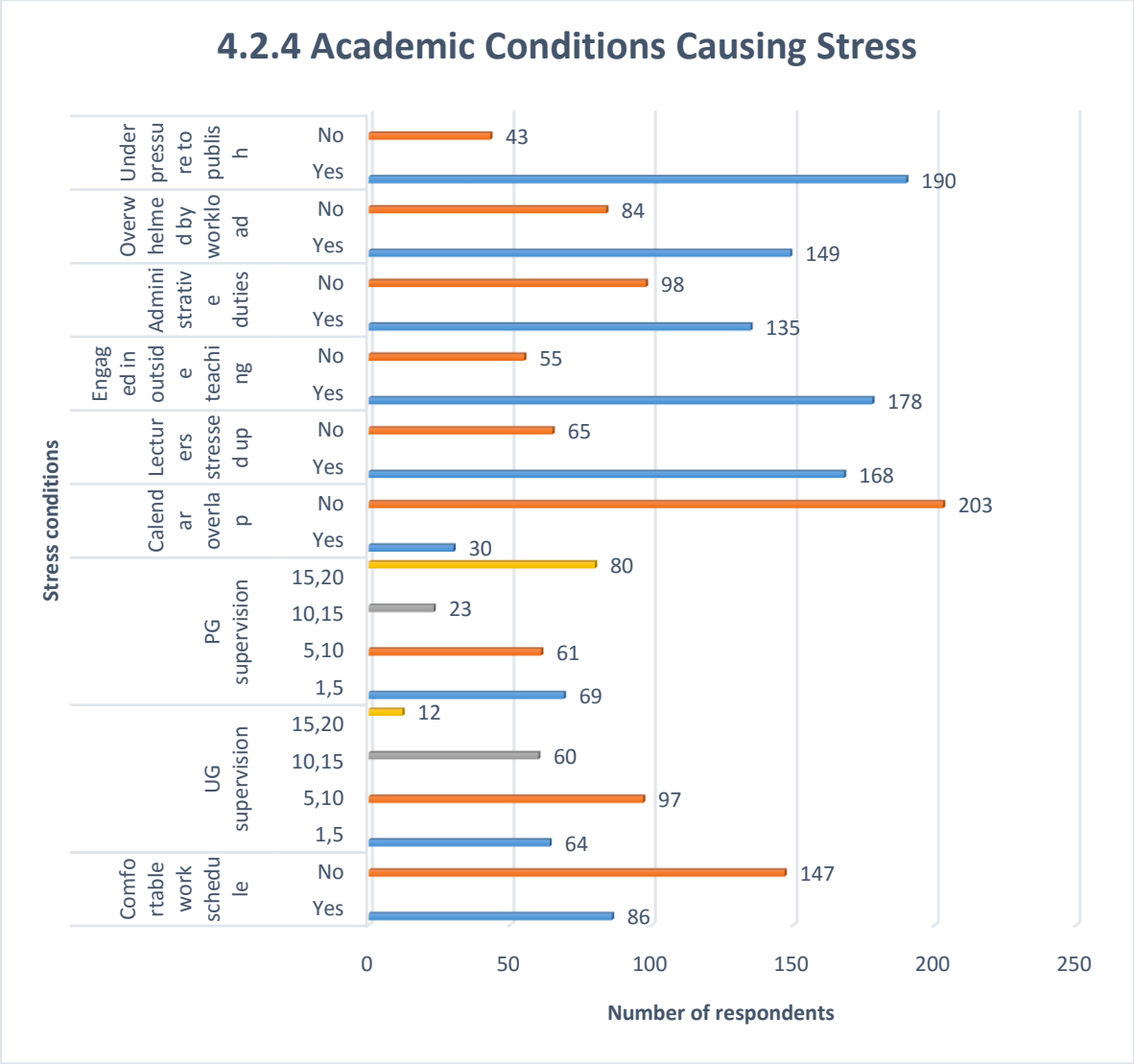


Source: Field survey, 2017.

It is no longer news that certain activities, workload and lecture schedules in an academic environment have the tendency to cause stress. The extent to which this happens has been statistically investigated and that is what this chart is all about. Here in the chart, majority of the respondents, 60.5% indicated that they teach between 1-3 courses per semester, 36.1% of the respondents indicated teaching between 3-5 courses per semester and a few of the respondents, 3.4% indicated teaching between 5-7 courses across Undergraduate and Postgraduate. It could be said that the number of courses that lecturers take in the university per semester is high and this has the tendency to cause them stress especially when the number of students taking the course from the department is more, coupled with students who are either carrying over the course or other students who are coming to pick it as required electives from other faculties. This deduction is giving more credibility as majority of respondents 30.0%, 24.9% and 21.5% indicated that they had from 50 to above 200 students taking each course that they taught. Also a significant percentage of the respondents that is 16.7% and 6.9% indicated that they had between 150-200 and sometimes less than 50 students in their courses that they taught.

In this chart also, beside the undergraduate students taught by this set of lecturers, a very significant percentage of them that is 65.7% of them, are also involved in teaching postgraduate courses with a degree of variation in the number of courses that they are assigned per semester and the number of students per course. Their workload demands an extensive time to handle both teaching and supervision of students per week and this could be stressful as indicated by majority of the respondents that is 50.2% and 43.8% who indicated that they lecture for between 5 – 10 hours and 1-5 hours weekly. Also, a few of the respondent that is 5.6% and 0.4% indicated lecturing between 10-15 and 15-20 hours per week especially when they are engaged in postgraduate teachings. It could be inferred

that the combination of these variables like courses taught, number of students (undergraduate and postgraduate) as well as the durations of lecture has the tendency to cause stress among staff.



Source: Field Survey, 2017.

The research investigated some pre-conditional activities that have the tendency to cause stress among the Lecturers. From the chart, majority of the respondents that is 63.1% indicated that they were not comfortable with the work schedule and the durations assigned to them each week. Another factor which could lead to stress as indicated by

respondents was the number of undergraduate and postgraduate students assigned to them to supervise. Here in the chart, majority of the respondents that is 41.6%, 27.5% and 25.8% indicated that they were given per session between 5 – 10, 1 – 5 and 10 – 15 undergraduate students to supervise respectively. Similarly, majority of respondents that is 34.4%, 29.6% and 26.2% indicated that they supervise between 15-20, 1-5, and 5 – 10 postgraduate students respectively. It could be deduced that attending to these number of students as well as supervising them effectively could be burdensome and have the tendency to lead to stress when the lecturers are overwhelmed.

Overlapping academic calendar of UG and PG admissions into the University could place enormous burden on lecturers with stress as a consequence. Here in this chart, majority of the respondents, that is, 87.1% indicated that the overlapping nature of academic calendar is unhealthy and has the tendency to induce stress among the Academic staff. This possibility of being overwhelmed with academic activities and teaching because of the nature of Academic calendar has been affirmed as making lecturers in ABU Zaria feel stressed according to 72.1% of the respondents as shown in the chart.

Furthermore, 76.4% respondents indicated that besides being overwhelmed by the teaching schedules and overlapping nature of the academic calendar, they have to grapple with other duties, engagements outside teaching like being asked to be departmental/Faculty examination officers, departmental Post Graduate Coordinator, representative at the departmental and Faculty meeting, Registration Officers attending conferences and so on. Again, 57.9% of the respondents indicated that they are also engaged in heavy administrative duties like being members of the University Special Committees, Heads of Department, Deans of faculties and members of students' bodies and groups which in the views of 63.9% of the respondents, made them to be

overwhelmed alongside the workload of teaching and supervision assigned to them. Beyond the University task and responsibilities were the recognition by 81.5% of the respondents that they also need to conduct research, do academic publication and attend conferences both locally and internationally necessary for their vertical mobility or promotion in the system. Judging from the data in this chart, it could be inferred that combining all these factors leaves them with little or no time to rest and significantly have the tendency to induce stress with resultant health implications.

Corroborating the above finding, KII with the Director of the Academic Planning and Monitoring Directorate of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria revealed the following:

> On the issue of crises with the University calendar, actually this situation started some years ago, when there was a delay in the PG admission which came later than that of the UG causing delay in the commencement of the PG session.From then we started operating two calendars one after the other. That is as one is finishing the other commences immediately. And unfortunately last session again, we experienced two calendars for the UG alone, because we had a delay in the 100 level admission so we had a separate calendar for the 100 level and then a separate one for the remaining UG levels, coupled with the PG calendar that was there already. So as I'm talking to you now we are running 3 calendars. I know it has been a topic of discussion in the campus and somewhere somehow, it is beyond us but we are working profusely with the PG School to harmonize the calendar, and I cannot dispute the fact that, that has been placing stress on the staff, but the issue with the calendar is something that started recently it has not been our tradition, it was actually 3 sessions back and since then we have been closing the gap which all things being equal, we hope to tackle it by 2017/2018 or 2018/2019 session whereby the staff will have enough time for rest as the sessions will all start and end at the same time so they can have their 10 weeks rest and come back refreshed and not be overburdened (*Intervsiew with Director of the Academic Planning and Monitoring Directorate of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria*).

Similarly, going by the views of the Director of the University Medical Center, the nature of the University academic calendar could have grave consequences on the health of the lecturers. She submitted as follows:

> This is definitely a yes, because it's either when the UG session ends then the PG session immediately begins and as it ends immediately its followed by the diploma program or LVT programme, so it's always a whirlwind situation all year round

and this stands to pose a health challenge to the academic staff and very risky to their health. And they do not have avenues to help alleviate this stress. I don't know at the individual level if in their various homes they do have ways to manage stress, but we all know this is Africa we have families and extended families so it's like you are leaving one stressful work environment to go back home to another if care is not taken. And I can categorically say that on our own side that is in the University and as far as the university management and Medical Centre is concerned; we don't have much avenues that will allow the staff engage in stress management strategies, now because of that, we increasingly receive cases of collapsed staff due to stress related ailments brought to our emergency room. Between 2014 and 2016, the ABU emergency room recorded 138 death among its academic staff with cases of 25 collapses from severe High Blood Pressure; 12 Stroke cases; 37 Collapse and Death before Arrival; 29 Stress induced collapse and 35 exhaustion collapse (*Interview with Director University Medical Center-UMC, ABU, Zaria*).

Therefore from the data and information gathered and presented here, it could be said that the factors which contribute to the increasing state and rate of stress among academic staff are the overwhelming number of admitted/registered students and the overlapping nature of the University's academic calendar

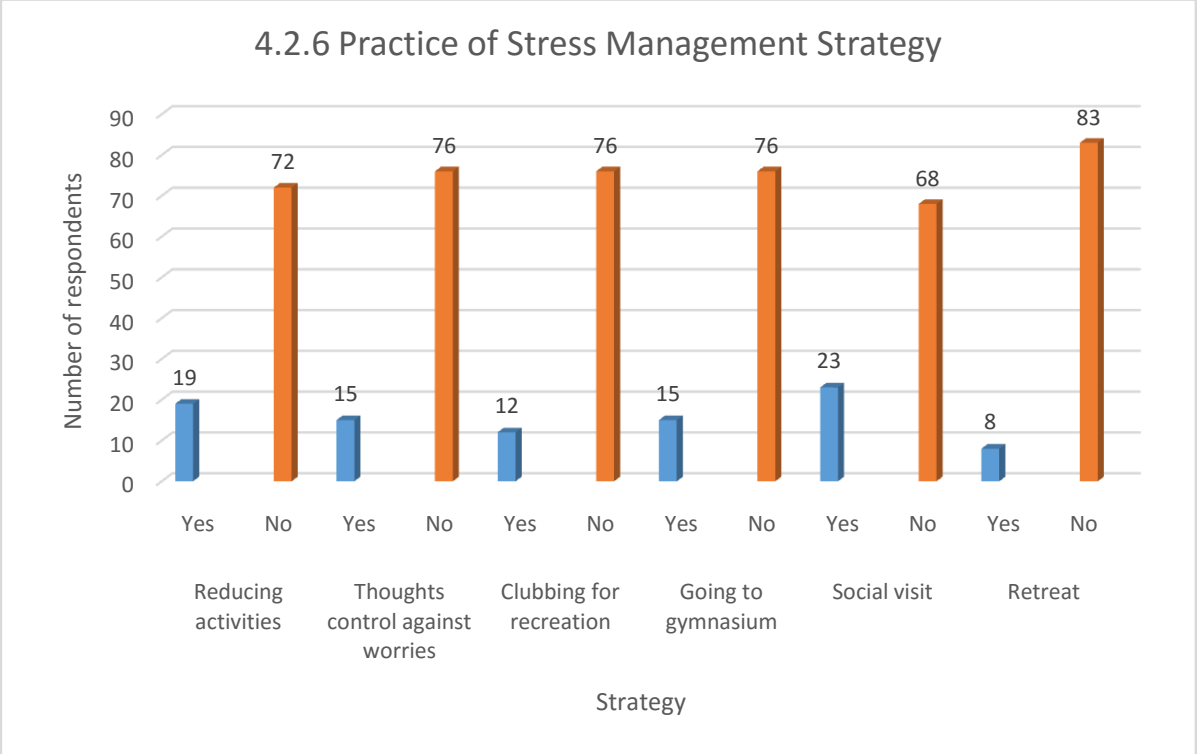
RESEARCH OBJECTIVE TWO: To investigate the extent of stress management strategy as observed by the academic staff of ABU.



Source: Field Survey, 2017.

Awareness and knowledge on the need to manage stress go to a large extent to influence healthy living, job performance and productivity. From the chart, majority of the respondents that is 87.1% indicated that they were not informed by the Institution on the need to manage stress. This lack of institutional information about stress management culminated into the lack of awareness on the diverse forms of stress management strategies that could help lecturers from experiencing stress and its consequences. Here in this chart, majority of the respondents, that is, 59.2% indicated that they do not know that going on leave or sabbatical is a form of stress management strategy. However, other significant percentage of respondents, that is, 40.3% indicated they knew that these are part of the stress management strategy that could be used to address stress issues in the workplace.

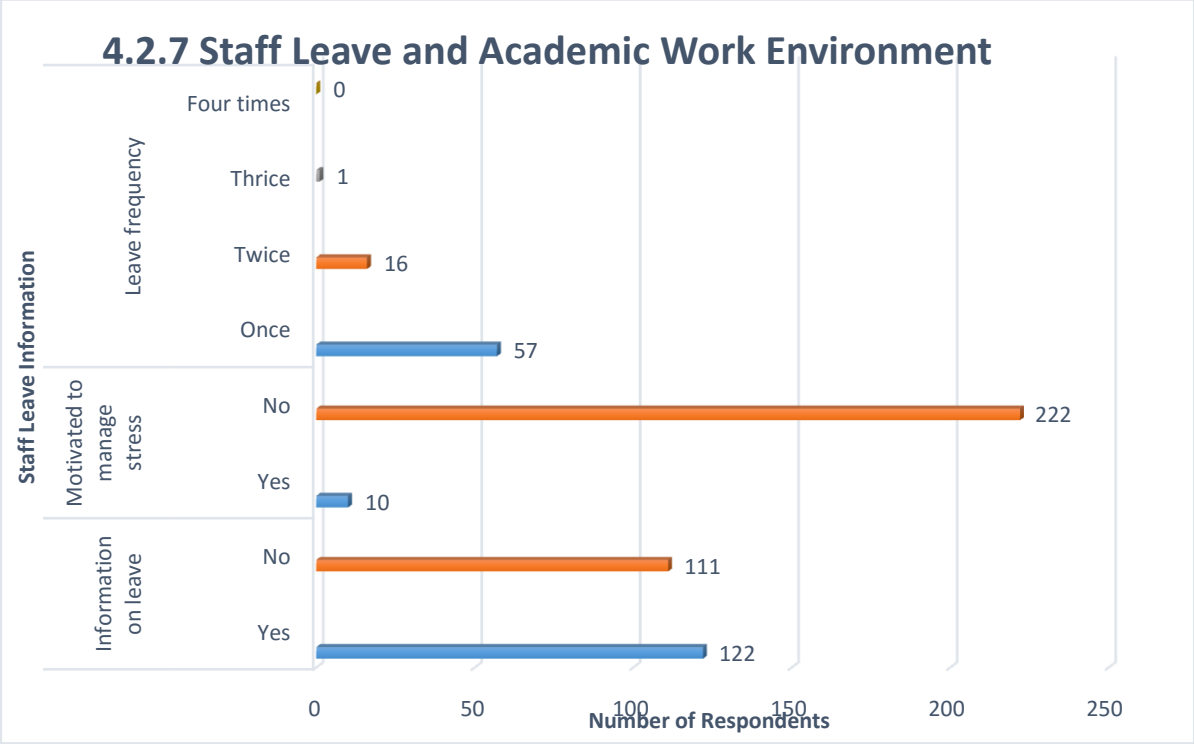
Again, only a few of the respondents that is 20.2% indicated that taking a nap or having a quiet time or siesta is a type of strategy that they ought to adopt in order to avoid stress. Because of the work load and teaching schedules, only a few respondents, that is 21.5% indicated that spending time with their family members is also a strategy, while 24.0% of the respondents indicated that sleeping well at night is another form of having completeness of rest to manage stress. From this chart, it could be deduced that respondents' knowledge and attitude towards stress management is shallow because the respondents ignored to take heed to institutional information as indicated by 12.9% respondents who said that they were made aware of the need to manage stress management by the university administration.



Source: Field Survey, 2017.

There is the need to understand that certain activities have the tendency to impair ones health alongside its resultant consequence on job satisfaction, performance and productivity. Here in this chart, respondents' knowledge and attitude towards practicing certain stress management strategies was further investigated. From the chart, only a very few number of the respondents, that is, 8.2% believed that reducing or curtailing their engagement in unnecessary activities, could make them manage stress. On how to control their thoughts in order to reduce stress, only a few of the respondents 6.4% indicated that, that too, could make them avoid stress. On the issue of engaging in recreational and gymnastic activities as a way of managing stress or relaxation to improve wellbeing, very few respondents, that is, 6.4% see it as a stress management approach. In the same vein, only a few respondents that is 9.9% and 3.4% respectively conduct social visits in order to manage stress and create distraction from routine academic work.

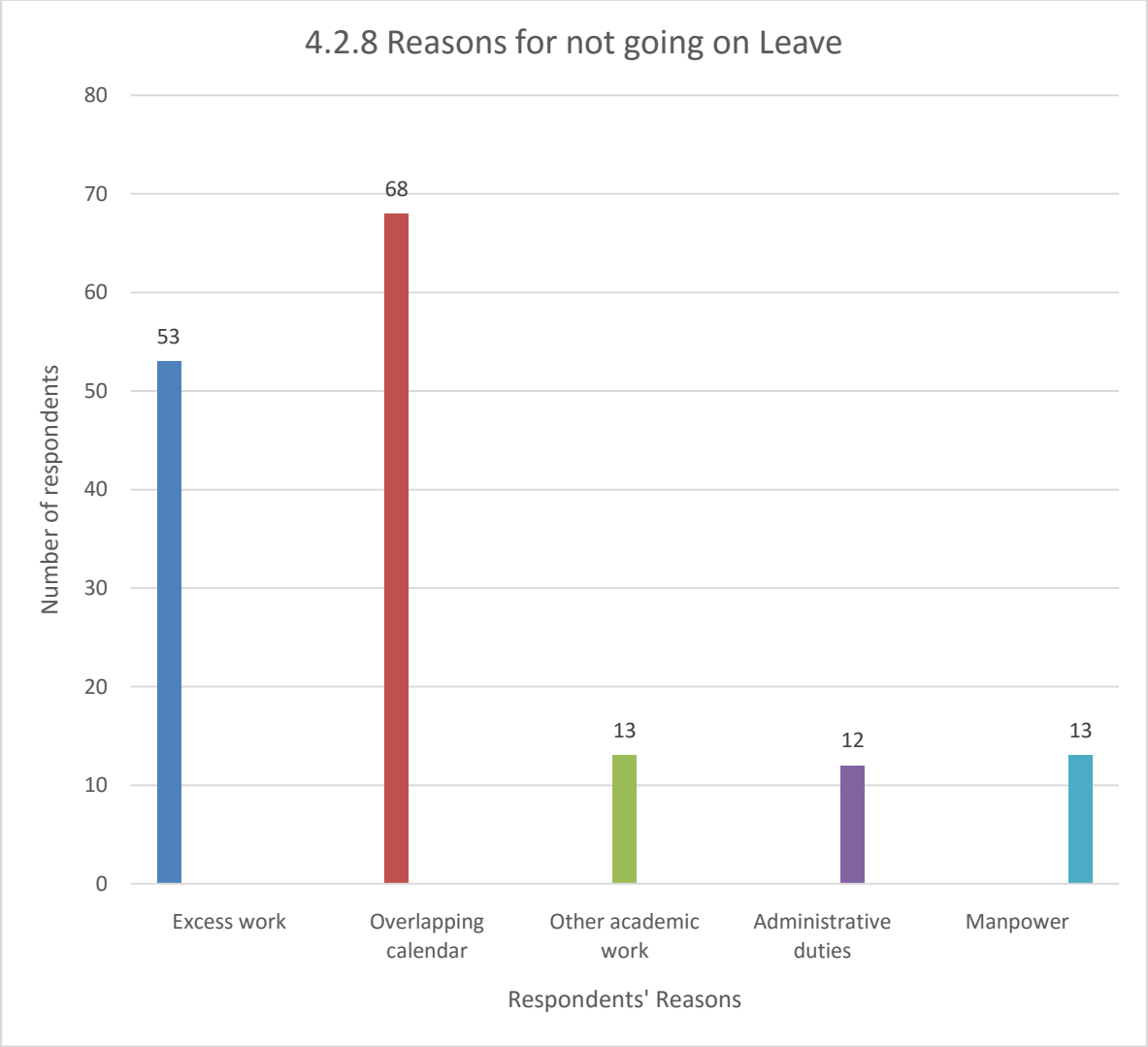
RESEARCH OBJECTIVE THREE: To find out ABU's policy on Staff leave and work environment and implementation of staff relaxation/stress management.



Source: Field Survey, 2017.

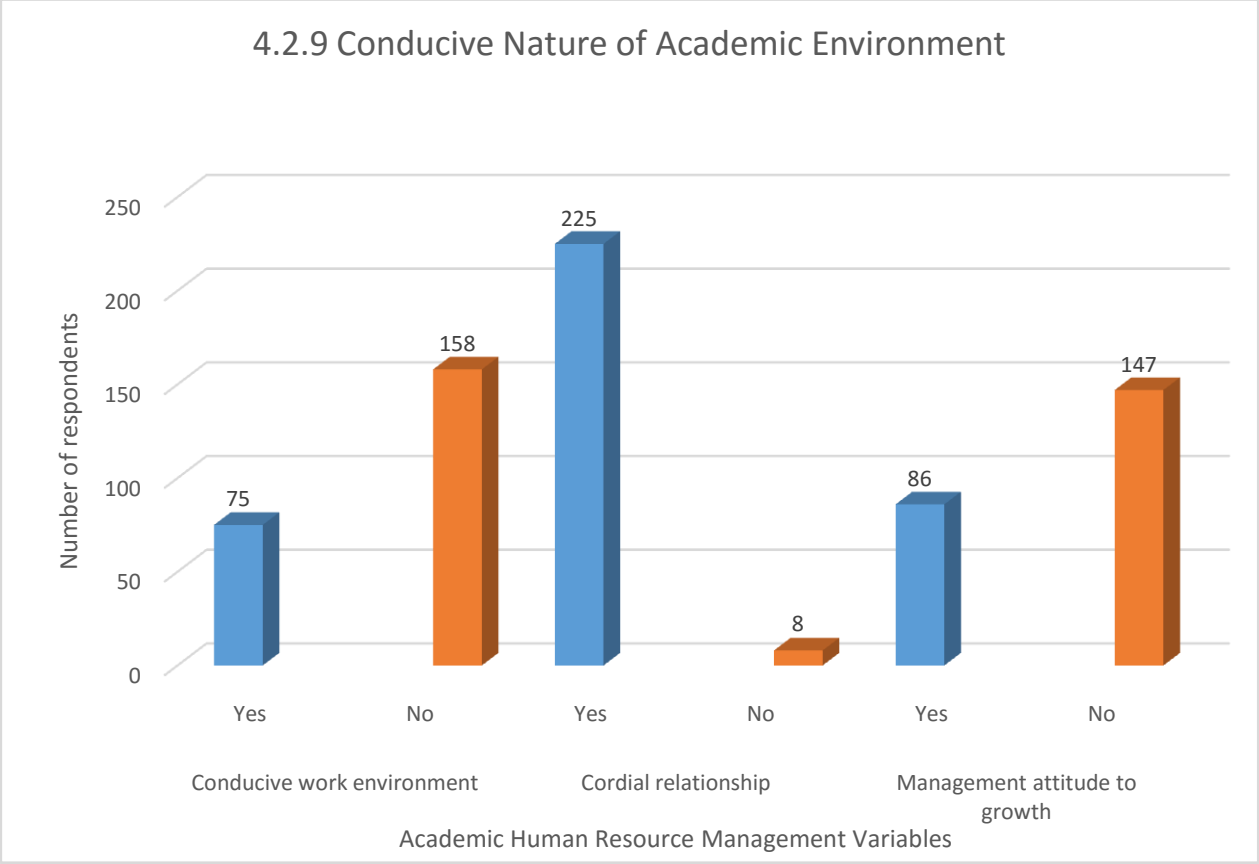
From the chart, work environment determines the quality of stress management and productivity of its workforce. It also has a place in determining whether its workforce is placed under stress or not. Majority of the respondents, that is, 52.4% indicated that there is a policy in the University that makes provision for staff to go on leave after working for a specified number of months or years. They also confirmed that, leave is a form of stress management strategy. However, there is a significant number of 95.3% of the respondents who indicated that there is low level of motivation available to workers to support them going on leave. This imply that lecturers could become discouraged and avoid going on leave thereby continuing with their teaching workload and schedules which have the tendency to make them become stressful in the long term.

Notwithstanding the low level of incentive opined by the respondents, majority of the respondents that is 69.5% and 30.0% indicated that about 3 – 5 and 1 – 3 lecturers do embark on leave as well as go on sabbatical to other institutions annually. The leave embarked upon by the lecturer in form of sabbatical is actually an extension of academic work in another institution as they are equally engaged to carry out teaching, supervisions and even administrative work for their host, so in essence it is not an opportunity to rest. In this chart also, a significant percentage of the respondents that is 24.5% and 6.9% indicated that they have gone on leave once and twice respectively while majority of the respondents, 68.2% indicated that they have not been able to go on leave so far.



Source: Field Survey, 2017.

The reasons given by the majority of the respondents include excessive work load (33.3%) and overlapping teaching calendar for staff teaching and supervising both undergraduate and postgraduate students (42.8%), other reasons are engagement in other academic work beyond their immediate duties.



Source: Field Survey, 2017.

Maintaining physical wellbeing is very important in achieving job satisfaction. In this regard, the conducive nature of the institution's academic environment vis-à-vis relationship with both management and colleagues was investigated. Here in the chart, majority of the respondents, 67.8% indicated that the academic environment is not conducive enough to warrant proper stress free conditions for the lecturers. However, with the non-conducive nature of the academic environment in ABU according to 96.6% of the respondents, it does not affect the relationship they are having with the management and their colleagues. They affirmed that relationship is cordial even as they are faced with glaring non-conducive nature of the teaching and learning environment which in return has the tendency to make lecturers restless and stressful. Furthermore in this chart also, majority of the respondents that is 63.1% opined that the combination of work

environment and management leadership style does not encourage staffs' physical wellbeing, growth and overall development while a significant percentage of the respondents 36.9% indicated otherwise. Hence it could be deduced that even though the work environment might make lecturers become stressful, the cordiality of relationship amongst them do significantly help the lecturers to somehow manage their stress as they tend to get together with their colleagues for recreation..

Although, the information from the respondents shows a low level of commitment on the part of University management to stress management of the academic staff of the University, the Deputy Vice Chancellor Academic has to say:

> Now Management is actually very concerned about the health of its academic staff knowing well the kind of stress they are subjected to. First we have this growing student enrolment figure because of the strategic importance of ABU in the general intellectual system of Northern Nigeria, we have to accept some of this student explosions, so that automatically increases the volume of academic work on staff in terms of teaching hours and staff student ratio also in terms of marking examinations scripts and assignments and supervision and all that. So with regards health Management first of all knowing this, has directed that all staff above the age of 40 must be subjected to medical examination, but what I don't know is whether they are complying or not, and I also don't know what steps management would take in due course to enforce it, but I know management out of sheer concern on the stress the staff go through they now stipulated that all academic staff above 40 because it's been identified most medical crisis start at about that age although evidence now shows that even at younger ages of 35 one begin to have some of these problems. Secondly management have also introduced sporting activities to the staff twice a week that all academic staff are supposed to go to the sport complex for exercises, the days officially stipulated were Tuesdays and Fridays but some may change it to their convenience depending on their lecture schedules as management knows the importance of sporting and exercises to health. Thirdly, the management is aware that in all we do we need to rest as resting is a very important aspect of stress management, so for a long period of time because of the instability of the academic calendar people were not able to take their leaves to rest, and it is difficult for people to rest because we are always having overlapping academic sessions whenever they want to rest. So management decided people must rest because of the health problems manifesting within the academic staff, and therefore whenever it is time for your leave as a staff just go for your leave as the management is not going to approve any more leave deferment, one has to go on leave make arrangement with your Head of department and take your leave to rest, so that you come back refreshed because we do not want people collapsing because

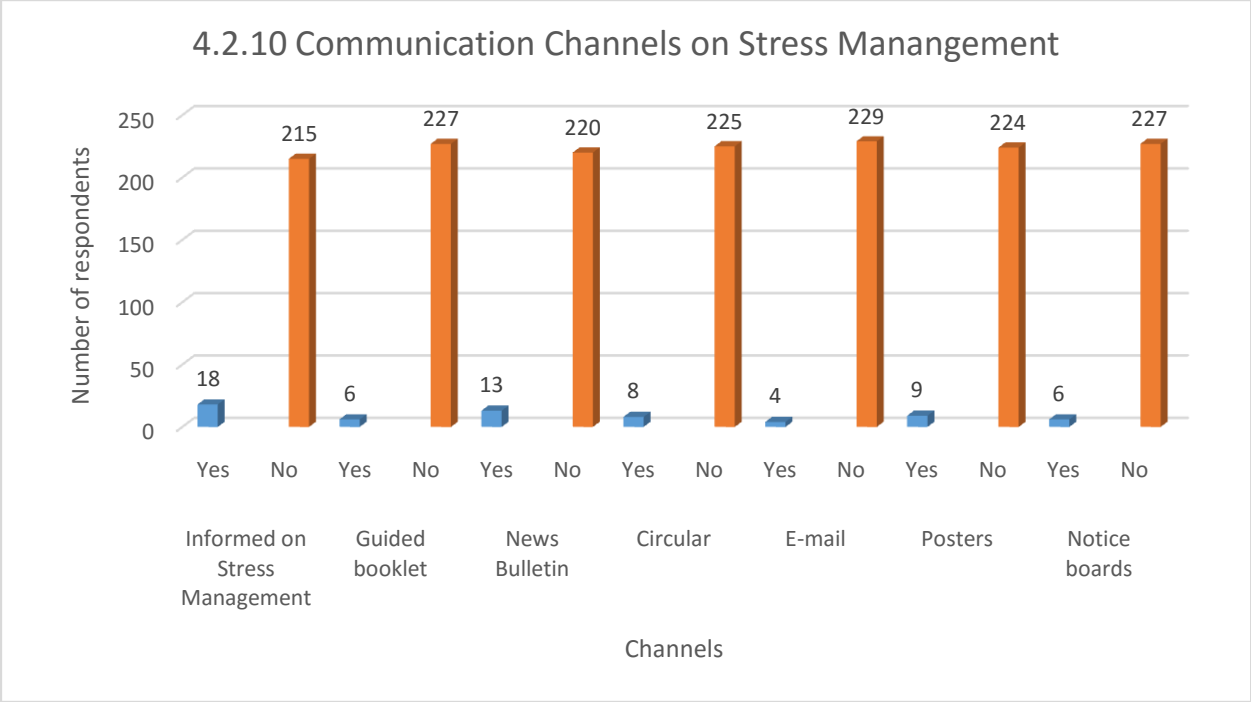
> of overworking and stuff like that. So these are some of the measures the management has taken to ensure it enforces the idea of rest on its academic staff (*Interview with Deputy Vice Chancellor, Ahmadu Bello University, and Zaria).*

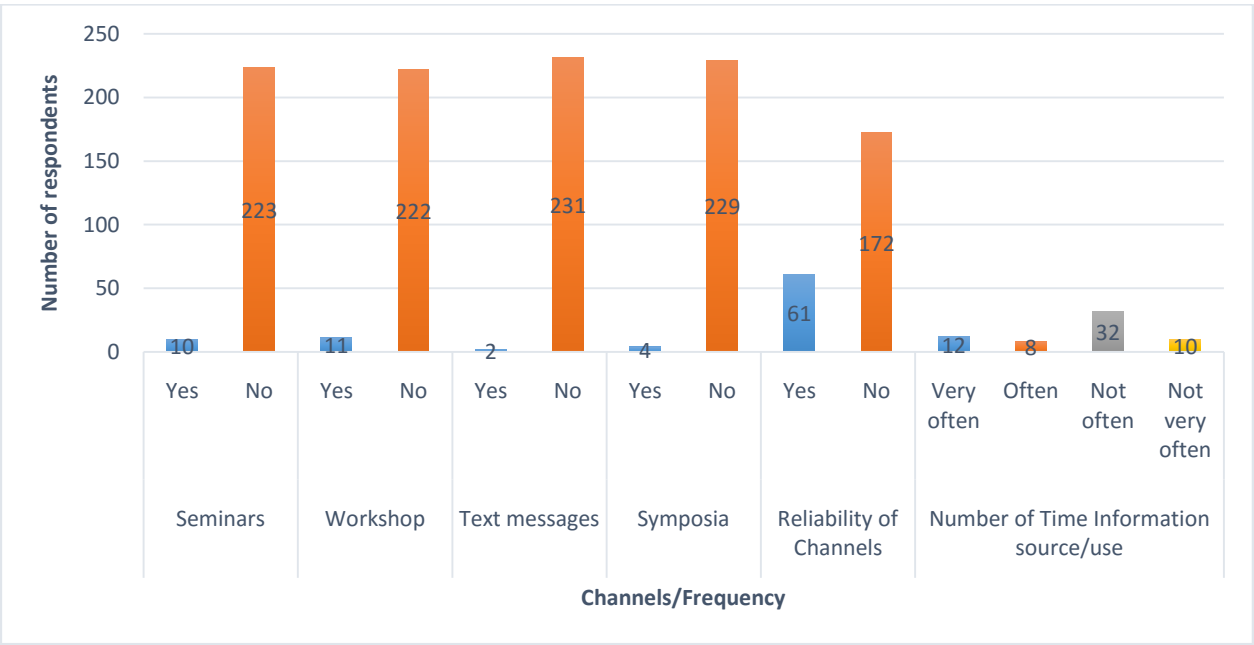
The Deputy Vice Chancellor went on to explain further how the University management is making effort at making sure that stress management is practiced in the institution. He gave this information:

> I think we don't have enough I will be frank with you on this, but there are a few facilities I am sure you are aware that a new ultra-modern gymnasium has recently been built in the University , and with so many different kinds of exercise equipment secondly the sports complex has been under renovations and once completed we will have more opportunity to relax and have a relaxing environment, of course the paucity of funds is what is holding the work down avoiding a quick completion of the sports complex but if that is finished as it is actually going to be a recreation complex and by the time this is done staff will be getting somewhere better to go and rest relax and manage stress. Though we could do more like we have the park the ICT as was part of the committee for the park proposal which is supposed to be a concept of a theme park and the theme is ICT and nature. it is supposed to be a very fine park as the idea is to compute while you relax but over time because of change of administration and lack of continuity the actual concept was lost you see the buildings are supposed to be iconic with a waterfall in place as water relaxes the mind so also the buildings are to be made in such a way looking at them relaxes you. We got the grant from first bank which we defended in their headquarters with our matching grant. Well we will remind the management and see if we can revive that because ABU needs such a place for the betterment of the lives and productivity of its entire staff *(Interview with Deputy Vice Chancellor Administration, Ahmadu Bello University, and Zaria*).

From the perspective of the interview response, it could be deduced that management is really doing more to ensure that academic staff are motivated to go for leave and sabbatical and host of other relaxation activities in order to bring about a physically and emotionally healthy workforce.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE FOUR: To examine the nature of communication channels, structures available for communicating stress management in ABU Zaria.





Source: Field Survey, 2017.

Communication is very important in conveying any policy message to the target public it is meant for. Adopting appropriate communication channels does have the tendency to make the message effective in line with the set goals of the message sender to the receiver.

Here in this study, the nature of communication channels used in conveying message about stress management was investigated. From the chart, majority of the respondents, 97.4%, 94.4% and 96.6% indicated that the institution does not use booklets, news bulletins and circulars to convey message on stress management to academic staff.

However, a few of the respondents, 2.6%, 5.6%, and 3.4% indicated that the institution does so by using news bulletins, and circulars. This implies that there is the tendency that the use of these communication channels was non-existent and not effective where available. Other communication channels investigated in this research are email, posters, notice boards, seminars and workshops. From the chart, majority of the respondents, 98.3%, 96.1%, 97.4%, 95.7% and 95.3% indicated that these communication channels were not used in conveying messages on stress management to the staff in the University. It could be deduced that these communication channels, although available to the institution, have not been utilized in communicating health related messages, especially the ones related to stress management to staff. The gap found here from the analysis of respondents' data, consequently forms one of the basis for possible suggestions by the respondents and recommendations in this study.

Interview questions put forward to the Acting Director Public Affair Directorate of Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, indicated the availability of several communication channels which are being used to communicate health and academic related messages to the staff of the university. He expressed this thus:

> Traditionally there are very fundamental channels and forms of communications that exist in the University; most importantly this office is a very functional structure that is used to disseminate information through various means like the bulletins. We have the special bulletins, the quarterly bulletins, circulars, and in the context of today's changes in technology, we have emails and text messages to disseminate vital information to the members of the University populace. And in

> most cases those channels are domiciled in Public Affairs Directorate (*Interview with Acting Director Public Affairs Directorate, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria*).

He went further to say that:

> It does not just rest on our special bulletins; we also use the Radio because we have a radio house in the University that is very vibrant and functional in prompt information dissemination to the public and to the University Community. I am sure in the last year or so, they created a health care programme where they invited health resource persons to the station to talk on major health issues I could remember there was a discussion on Hypertension, Cancer, Diabetes and stress. They also did a very powerful sensitization program on Ebola during the outbreak of Ebola in Nigeria. And all that is done with the support of the University Management (*Interview with Acting Director Public Affairs Directorate, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria*).

The response given by the Director Public Affairs Directorate was further corroborated by the Deputy Vice Chancellor Administration (DVC, Admin). He said that:

> A lot of announcements on health related issues are done during the senate meeting as all HODs, Professors, Deans and Directors are all members of senate, and they are all expected to carry back such decisions as approved by the management and senate and other information to their staff in the Faculties, Departments, Institutes and Directorates. So I think that is the best way to disseminate such issues especially those related to the benefits of rest and health risk (Interview *with Deputy Vice Chancellor Administration, Ahmadu Bello University, and Zaria*).

From the view of the management staff, it could be said that, there is the need for the University Management to evolve ways by which academic staff would not only be made to take issues concerning stress management serious but be monitored where necessary and possible.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE FIVE: This is the last research objective which is meant to identify ways through which communication can be effectively deployed to promote proactive stress management among the academic staff of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria and other tertiary institutions in Nigeria.

Towards Effective Stress Management Communication

Based on the glaring gap of lack of effective communication on stress management from the University management to the academic staff of the University, this

sectiontherefore sets out to provide ways/measures that can be employed by the University management to consolidate its existing communication approaches for active and effective stress management communication to the academic staff.

The first measure Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria can adopt is to fully incorporate its Management Information System (MIS) Unit into its strategic communication approach. The MIS unit is where staff employed into the University go for their documentations and in the process submit their detailed information and contacts; while the ICICT unit is the hub of the University's computer and internet connectivity and it also has the data of all academic staff. It was therefore suggested by the Director ICICT in an interview which the researcher had with him, that these units can be combined. He stated further that the ICICT unit had attempted in different ways to get the academic staff to log in and input their data on the university web, but not all the staff responded accordingly and thus there is still a reasonable number of academic staff in the University which the ICICT has not yet captured their data. Combining the two units therefore will help them to strengthen each other in order to provide a better documentation of the data of the academic staff in the University.

The two units can effectively serve as a powerful means of communicating stress management information to the academic staff of the University. As such the University Management can through these units be sending constant and periodic information to its academic staff either every fortnight or monthly through their phones and emails, sensitizing them how to prudently manage stress and to be aware of the dangers or consequences of not giving their health and wellbeing a good attention. Furthermore, the University can also utilize the capacity of its electronic billboards as another viable medium to communicate stress management issues to its academic staff. The electronic

billboards which happen to be at strategic areas can be creatively structured to carry inscriptions bordering on dangers associated with leaving with cumulative and unmanaged stress.

Another important avenue which the university has at its disposal but not being fully utilized is the Inaugural Lecture Forum. The inaugural lecture is a forum for a professor to make a public presentation or lecture on his or her areaof specialization. It is a vital platform for pulling together people from different areas of life especially the academic staff.Now exploring that avenue to make a welter of announcements on health issues would also be a good step in the right direction. This is because it is the major event, apart from the convocation ceremony, that one can find a high number of academic staff gathered in one place. Therefore the University Management can make a full use of this platform to, at the beginning of each inaugural lecture, give a 40-60 minute talk on stress management strategies. The inaugural lectures happen regularly in the University. This platform can be explored to provoke interaction and rubbing of minds among academic staff to ask pertinent questions and get useful information on how to manage stress. However in an interview with the Deputy Vice Chancellor Administration on channels or avenues where stress management can be effectively communicated to the academic staff, the Deputy Vice Chancellor Administration provides useful information on these issues as reported below:

> A lot of announcements on health related issues are done during the senate meeting as all HODs, Professors, Deans and Directors are all members of senate, and they are all expected to take back such decisions as approved by the management and senate and other information to their staff in Faculties, Departments, Institutes and Directorates. So I think that is the best way to disseminate such issues especially those related to the benefits of rest and health risk (Interview *with Deputy Vice Chancellor Administration, Ahmadu Bello University, and Zaria*).

Thirdly, another important strategy that the University can adopt to communicate stress management to its academic staff, is to fully utilize the University Special Bulletins. The Special Bulletin is what the University,through its Public Affairs Directorate, uses as day-to- day means of communication within the system. The Researcher's interview with the Acting Director Public Affairs confirmed the above as follows:

> Traditionally there are very fundamental channels and forms of communications that exist in the University; most importantly this office is a very functional structure that is used to disseminate information through various means like the bulletins. We have the special bulletins, the quarterly bulletins, circulars, and in the context of today's changes in technology, we have emails and text messages to disseminate vital information to the members of the University populace. And in most cases those channels are domiciled in Public Affairs Directorate (*Interview with Acting Director Public Affairs Directorate, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria*).

The University has been adopting the Special Bulletin to relate all manner of information to its staff especially on academic and administrative matters. The researcher is of the opinion that the University should devote a section or create a corner within the Bulletin to disseminate information on health issues most especially on stress management. One major advantage of the Bulletin is that it is constantly and frequently released, for it usually comes out twice or thrice a week, hence if properly used, the staff will be immersed in much information about managing stress therefore becoming more enlightened and sporadically motivated to imbibe messages on stress management strategy deployed on the Bulletin at some point in time. Measures of this nature have been carried out in other institutions like the California State University, though they used fliers' pamphlets which according to the American Health Association (AHA) (2005) yielded remarkable results, as the staff turned out to be more informed on the health risk associated with accumulating too much stress.

Adopting the use of the University FM Radio will also go a long way in addressing the problem of stress and stress management within the University. By introducing Radio

Drama, this will kindle the staffs' interest in listening to important messages that are creatively knitted around fictional stories aimed at educating the audience about Stress management. People naturally love entertainment. The University can take advantage of this by partnering with the Department of Theatre and Performing Arts ABU, to periodically come up with entertaining dramatic sketches loaded with lessons on health, personal hygiene, stress management and the need to manage stress. It is relevant to stress that Radio broadcast on health related matters will not only benefit the academic staff but also the general public. To support this, the Acting Director Public Affairs stated this during an interview session with the researcher:

> It does not just rest on our special bulletins; we also use the Radio because we have a radio house in the University that is very vibrant and functional in prompt information dissemination to the public and to the University Community. I am sure in the last year or so, they created a health care programme where they invited health resource persons to the station to talk on major health issues I could remember there was a discussion on Hypertension, Cancer, Diabetes and stress. They also did a very powerful sensitization program on Ebola during the outbreak of Ebola in Nigeria. And all that is done with the support of the University Management (*Interview with Acting Director Public Affairs Directorate, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria*).

Apart from the above, the University Management can also utilize the platform of unionism in the University to mobilize the staff on how to handle stress and take proper rest. Whenever Union leaders call for meetings, that avenue could call for fliers, handbills, tracts and small posters to be subtly distributed among the staff on how to handle stress live longer in the system and be more productive in the discharge of their duties.

Besides, other avenues like seminars, workshops, symposia, mini conferences etc could be departmentally arranged once in a while to build the capacity of academic staff on how to stay healthy and manage stress. The philosophy behind this phenomenon is that a healthy man is a wealthy man. When academic staff are healthy, it gives room for higher academic productivity and promotes academic excellence in the system. Both the staff and

the University system stand to benefit from the merit of running a sound, well sanitized and healthy system. Conversely, when the workforce breaks down, the system collapses. This therefore sends a signal to any administrative structures to keep the social capital (workforce) in good health for more efficiency and effectiveness if productivity at higher level will be attained.

Discussion of Findings

The discussion of findings on communicating stress management to academic staff of ABU is based on the data gathered from the respondents where it was understood that, several factors contributed to stress, all having serious consequences on the health of the academic staff. From the research as shown in charts 4.3 and 4.4, lecturers who take more than 3 and up to 7 courses per semester have the tendency to be overwhelmed by the excessive nature of the workload that they carry especially where the courses they taught are offered by more than 100 students. Furthermore, the involvement of the lecturers in teaching both undergraduate and postgraduate students concurrently could also be demanding aside the length of time spent each day in teaching and attending to students whom they are assigned to supervise.

Again, the involvement of staff in multiple assignments that are purely administrative in nature to a large extent deprives them of the time to rest despite also having the need to write papers for publication in academic journals and presentations of papers at conferences which is mandatory for them to progress academically. The finding here is supported by Giga et al (2003) who submit that when workers are overworked, the likelihood of them lacking rest and becoming stressed up is high. This is so, because the worker would be seen to be under excessive pressure to meet up with the demand which

the task requires of them. Similarly, findings from the study of Karvanes (2014) which also support this research, state that the consequences of these factors on workers' health could be heart related diseases and stroke.

Achieving higher productivity on the job has been attributed to not only the skills and capabilities of the individuals employed as well as their educational capacities but also on the state of the individuals' body and mind. This has made competitive enterprise and organizations invest more in making sure that their employees are always in the right state of mind as well as in physical wellbeing so that they carry out their duties efficiently and effectively.

Such organizations develop work schedules, relaxation and vocational timelines that workers benefit from regularly. Such organizations also instill into their staff the mindset of rest and physical wellness in order to avoid resultant consequences of the lack of rest and improper stress management on its workforce and overall productivity. Some of the job schedules range from 6hourly work shift which produces almost four (4) shifts per day or just two sessions of the day that is, from 8am – 2pm and from 2pm to 8pm. This kind of job schedule is most obtainable in the industrial and health care delivery sector of the nation's economy. The essence of this kind of job schedule is to avoid workers becoming excessively fatigued and tired on the job because they hardly find or have the time to rest.

In the academic environment also, the second range of work schedule is mostly obtainable in the primary and secondary schools system in the country as findings from the study carried out by Abutu (2015) has shown. The aim of this nature of work schedule is not different from that which is set for the industrial and Health care delivery system.

However, the tertiary academic environment which is the centre of academic teaching and learning in Nigeria has been unable to imbibe the culture of this work schedule as found in competitive industry as discovered in the study of Alabi, Murtala and Lawal (2012); Adebiyi (2013); Oghenetega, Ejedafiru and Rabiu (2014); Usoro and Etuk (2016). This is true because teaching in the tertiary academic setting could start as early as 7am and even stretches to the night thereby engaging most of the lecturers throughout the day and all through the week. The long stretch of lecture time without rest could have its own consequences on the mind and physical wellbeing of the staff and even the students involved.

The benefits of knowing about the impact of stress management on the mind and body of the individual cannot be overemphasized. In this research, we have pointed out that good stress management helps to repair the body muscles and blood vessels. It also reduces individuals' risk of having heart related diseases such as high blood pressure, heart failure, stroke and even sudden death in some cases. It is the knowledge of this health benefits to an individual and the society, that makes most productive organizations and institutions ensure that their workers or staff are enlightened on various forms of stress management strategies that they ought to undertake on the job and even after official hours. The knowledge acquired about the various strategies of stress management becomes the bedrock upon which the higher productivity and positive performance of the workforce thrives beside other factors such as academic qualifications, practical entrepreneurial skills, leadership capacities and capabilities.

In order to ascertain the knowledge and practice of the academic staff, the study investigates some common stress management techniques vis-à-vis staff knowledge of these techniques. In charts 4.5 and 4.6, it was discovered that the management of the

institution failed to adequately make the lecturers know about these common practice as revealed by over 87% of the respondents. Furthermore, it was also found out in this study that the majority of the lecturers hardly go on their annual leave nor pay social visits to families and friends nor go on retreat or adopt a host of other stress management practices as shown in charts 4.7 and 4.8 due largely to the excessive workload and overlapping calendars as indicated in chart 4.4.

Institutional policies are set rules which spell out the ground norm of the institution. At the point of entry or appointment, such norms are given to workers to frame their conducts and duties but which also highlight the benefits that could be accrued to them when they accept the offer of appointment. More so, institutional policy covers not only the job requirements of the workers or their performance and productivity on the job but also covers their healthcare. In short, some organizations require their new employees to first undertake health check to confirm their health status against what they stated on their employment form. This they do, so as not to employ workers with certain health challenges that could become aggravated by the demands or workload of the job. As such, they not only get their workers registered with reputable medical centres' but also go extra length of having their medical sections equipped with needed medical facilities for emergency services.The interview with the Director of University Medical Centre (UMC) confirmed the above assertion.

> The first thing we did was to open somewhere we can have free access to blood pressure check and we want to make it available for 24hours 7days a week, and once your blood pressure is checked and we see is high, the first thing we do is to write it in red and we book appointment for you with a specialist or consultant doctors that come here, in the process we were able to detect early those who are hypertensive and actually manage it before it aggravates; and those who are beyond the level of secondary care they follow these doctors to ABUTH and continue the treatment there. And since we have started this program of Hypertensive assessment, our record sheets are mostly covered with red pen because anybody

> that has abnormal BP level is recorded in red. We have an MOU signed with Doctors through the CMD, so that they can come and run specialist clinics here. So that instead of our patients going there they come here, and if there is the need for further investigation those patients will now follow them to the clinic there at ABUTH, and it has reduced a lot of stress on the staff and our medical staff also. And the staff have more confidence now coming here knowing that the doctors they see here would be the same doctors they would see when taken or referred to ABUTH and vice versa (*Interview with Director, University Medical Center-UMC, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria*).

On the part of stress management, organizational policy stipulates the number of man hours that a worker must attain before embarking on leave. In certain sections of the economy like the industrial, security and hospitality sectors, workers are given day-off duty weekly. In some cases, the leave could be bi-annual or annual depending on workers who decide to work overtime as well as combine their weekly leave together and take it at once. The essence of the policy on leave taking is primarily aimed at ensuring that workers are given the chance to rest adequately and regain lost energy and avoid the consequences associated with stress related diseases. The information gathered from the Interview session conducted with the Deputy Vice Chancellor should more light on the issue:

> The University Management is actually very concerned about the health of its academic staff knowing well the kind of stress they are subjected to. It has directed that all staff above the age of 40 must be subjected to medical examination, but what I don't know is whether they are complying or not, and I also don't know what steps management would take in due course to enforce it, but I know management out of sheer concern on the stress the staff go through now stipulated that all academic staff above 40 most embark on mandatory medical checkup routine, because it's been identified that most medical crises start at about that age although researches now show that even at younger age of 35 one begin to have some of these problems. Secondly management has also introduced sporting activities to the staff twice a week that all academic staff are supposed to go to the sport complex for exercises, the days officially stipulated were Tuesdays and Fridays but some may change it to their convenience depending on their lecture schedules as management knows the importance of sporting and exercises to health (*Interview session with, the Deputy Vice Chancellor Administration, Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria*).

Through the research, it was discovered that there is an institutional policy which made available leave and sabbatical as a form of stress management as affirmed by over 52.4% of the respondents in chart 4.9. However, with the availability of the leave as an institutional policy, it was found that there is lack of incentives and motivations on the part of the management in making sure that the lecturers are motivated and made to take this aspect of stress management seriously, as indicated by over 95.3%, the university is lacking in this area significantly. Available statistics from the University Health Service records (2015) shows that the overload of academics is the bane of effective stress management policy in the institution. Hence, the university and its work environment is seen to be a risk factor to the psychological and emotional wellbeing of lecturers, a fact supported by findings from Ahsan et al (2009) and Akitoye (2017) which revealed that excessive workload and the lack of lecturers participation in recreational activities are some of the reasons for stress and its consequences.

Communication is key to synergistic and smooth relationship between management and the workforce anywhere in the world. In some competitive organizations, all the strategies of communication that is vertical, horizontal and the admixture of both are adopted in conveying management policy decisions and messages to the workforce. Furthermore, the communication system in modern organizations is also structured so that the workforce can reach out to the management thereby making the cycle of communication complete and hence, achieving the effectiveness of the communication process. Any good communication process invariably would convey the policy information and decision of the management to and from the workforce. Thus, the nature, effectiveness and efficiency of channels the University would use to communicate stress management strategies to its academic staff cannot be overemphasized, as they determine

the impact the communicated messages would have on the staff. But as revealed by 97% of the respondents in chart 4.2.10 which indicated that the institution does not use certain channels and media to communicate health related messages to the academic staff, the Management only uses those channels to circulate academic or administrative related messages to them.

Although in the interview with the Director, Public Affairs Directorit was mentioned that various channels and media (Special Bulleting, Radio FM, Circulars, Senate meetings, Billboards etc) were used by the University for communicating to its academic staff, but none of those is fully explored as an avenue to communicate stress management strategies to the academic staff of the University.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the summary of the study, conclusion and recommendations for effective communication of stress management among the academic staff of ABU Zaria. The chapter also highlights how the study contributes to the advancement of knowledge.

5.2 Summary of the Study

Communicating health challenges primarily to the persons who are directly involved in certain activities that could be harmful to them warrants the need for the use of very effective and appropriate communication channels that would facilitate the change in their attitudes. Communicating health related issues have been carried out on several health issue like HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, cancer, polio, diabetes, malaria and measles with little research carried out on the communication of stress management to academic staff in particular and the general public, the consequence of which are increasing cases of heart failure, high blood pressure, stroke and eventual death. The consequences have the tendency to impact negatively on the workers' productivity and their quality of performance and a risk to their lives.

It was against this background that this research was undertaken to find out the communication channels used in communicating health especially stress management to the academic staff of Ahmadu Bello University Zaria. In order to achieve this, the study set out some objectives which include; identifying factors influencing stress among

academic staff of ABU Zaria; investigating the knowledge and practice of stress management and examining the ABU's policy on leave and stress management in the work environment. Other objectives are; examining the existing channels used in communicating stress management and the effectiveness of the channels and identifying ways through which communication could be deployed to effectively promote stress management especially among academic staff

To achieve these objectives, the study used quantitative and qualitative survey research design to gather data from using research instruments such as the questionnaire and Key Informant Interview (KII).The following findings therefore emerged from the research:

1. The work environment of the lecturers and the overlapping academic schedules, duties and teaching and unsteady calendars contributed significantly to increasing cases of stress among academic staff.
2. A considerable number of the university's academic staff, to a large extent hardly engages in stress management techniques and exercises even where there are meager facilities as well as statutory policy encouraging them to do so.
3. The university management is not proactive enough in ensuring that academic staff take their leave and sabbatical as at when due. This, as found in the study was due largely to the engagement of academic staff in administrative responsibilities, the overlapping nature of the academic calendar as well as the upsurge in the number of courses taken and students assigned to the lecturers.
4. The communication channels adopted by the University's Management in conveying health awareness messages and campaigns to academic staff especially on stress management are ineffective thereby requiring re-strategizing and the adoption of other more effective approaches.

5.3 Recommendations

In view of the findings above, the following recommendations are made:

1. There is a need for ABU management to hasten the harmonization and stabilization of the University academic Calendar. This will guarantee a break for the academic staff to enable them have some rest as a means of neutralizing the effect of cumulative stress consequent upon semester overlap and persistent workload. In addition to this, the University needs to urgently employ new academic staff in order to contend with the increasing population of students and also lessen the workload on the academic staff.
2. As found in this study, most respondents do not have adequate knowledge on stress management strategy, hence could not practice it. Therefore, the study recommends that there should be a more proactive and regular communication on stress management techniques among the academic staff. This can be achieved through the University Medical Centre in collaboration with the Public Affairs Directorate of the University and the Management Information System (MIS) Unit. The University Medical Centre also needs to develop a monthly programme for all the University Faculties with the aim of sensitizing academic staff on stress management and at the faculty level, there is a need for regular health campaigns where stress management strategies can be communicated.
3. There is also the need for the university to review its existing policy and come up with a more comprehensive policy that is aimed at addressing the issue of stress. The policy can create an avenue to make provision for incentive to be given to any member of academic staff that is due to proceed on annual and sabbatical leaves. It can also make provision for the adoption and use of e-learning facilities and

processes to teaching and learning in order to create a more relaxed atmosphere for teaching and learning by reducing more direct contact with students which could be stressful to academic staff.

4. The University Management, through its Public Affairs Directorate needs to intensify the communication of stress management. This can be done by utilizing all existing communication media and channels in the university such as radio station, special bulletin, billboards, notice boards, circulars, staff unions and associations, emails, SMS, seminars, workshops, conferences, inaugural lectures among others. Doing this will increase the knowledge level of all academic staff on the negative effects of cumulative stress, and how it can be managed effectively.
5. There is the need for the University authority to make plan to revamp existing relaxation and recreation centres in the university like the University Senior Staff Club. At such a place, recreational facilities like lawn tennis, swimming pool, and functional gym should be refurbished and where not available should be made available to staff for their relaxation and recreation. This would going a long way in curtailing issue of stress among the lecturers who will make use of this facilities.

5.4 Conclusion

Overwhelming stress has been found to be injurious to the general well-being of human beings. In the case of academic staff of tertiary institutions, it affects their general output thereby limiting the quality of education being given to the students. In ABU Zaria, which is the focus of the study, there has been increasing number of deaths as a result of extreme stress-related cases suffered by academic staff. This situation is further exacerbated by the inability of the university management to effectively utilize existing communication channels and media in the university to communicate stress management.

For instance, viable communication channels and media that include Senate meetings, special bulletins, ABU Radio, Academic Staff Union of Universities (ASUU) and Inaugural Lectures have hitherto not been adequately utilized for the communication of stress management to members of the academic staff.

Hence, it is imperative for the university management to step-up their concern for staff general well-being by incorporating stress management information into the existing media and channels in the university. When this is done, it is hoped that the general output of the academic staff of the University would be improve, thereby consolidating the position of ABU as not only the largest university in sub-Saharan Africa, but a leading epicenter of knowledge.

5.5 Contribution to knowledge

This research has made the following contributions to knowledge:

i. The study has proven that there is a link between knowledge and behavior change. This is because majority of the academic staff engaged in this study revealed that they do not have much knowledge on the negative impacts of stress, and stress management techniques, hence they struggle with cumulative stress and its attendant consequences. This implies that increasing their knowledge will unveil to them their level of susceptibility, thereby prompting them to embrace desired behavior change by practicing effective stress management techniques. This phenomenon is encapsulated in Health Belief Model (HBM) where behavior changed is linked to perceived susceptibility to health threats communicated to the target audience.

ii. The study has also shown that dissemination of health information does not automatically translate to desired behavior change. This is because findings from the study revealed that although the need for managing stress is sometimes communicated to members of staff, they seldom heed to it due to some structural or institutional variables such as crises-ridden academic calendar and unconducive work environment.

iii. The study also revealed that institutional norms and practices can render health communication ineffective. Each institution and organization has its own culture and practices which tend to submerge the individual cultures of its workers. Hence, institutional culture can impede or enhance any health intervention carried out in a given institution. This was demonstrated in the study where many academic staff reported to have never gone on leave because it is not the usual practice, while some of them have already embraced the practice of work without rest as the institutional culture of ABU Zaria. This has made many academic staff naturally not predisposed to any idea or information that tends to advocate rest and stress management.

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Appendices

Appendix I

Research Instruments

DEPARTMENT OF THEATRE AND PERFORMING ARTS
FACULTY OF ARTS
AHMADU BELLO UNIVERSITY,
ZARIA

Dear Respondents,

I am a postgraduate student of Development Communication, Department of Theatre and performing Arts, Faculty of Arts, Ahmadu bello university, zaria. I am conducting a research study on the topic: Communication rest and stress management for healthy living among academic staff of Ahmadu Bello University, Zaria. Kindly respond to the set of questions below as it applies to you. All information shall be treated confidentially and strictly for academic purpose.

Thank you.

Zainab Abdullahi Musa

QUESTIONNAIRE

Please tick ( ) on the options that represent your opinion

Section A – Demographic Data

1. Sex: Male ( ) Female ( )
2. Marital State: Married ( ) Not married ( )
3. Age bracket: 25 – 30 ( ) 30 – 35 ( ) 35 – 40 ( ) 40 – 45 ( ) 45 – 50 ( ) 50 and above ( )
4. Faculty: Physical science ( ) Arts ( ) Social science ( ) agriculture ( ) Medicine ( )
5. Rank: Graduate assistant ( ) Assistant lecturer ( ) Lecturer II ( ) Lecturer I ( ) Senior lecturer ( ) Reader ( ) Professor ( )

Section B: Academic staff work load schedules on teaching and research

1. How many undergraduate courses do you teach per semester? 1 – 3 ( ) 3 – 5 ( ) 5 – 7 ( )
2. What is the average number of students you teach per course including Gens courses? Less than 50 ( ) 50 – 100 ( ) 100 – 150 ( ) 150 – 200 ( ) above 200 ( )
3. Do you teach postgraduate courses? Yes ( ) No ( )
4. If yes, how many per semester? 1 – 3 ( ) 3 – 5 ( ) 5 – 7 ( )
5. What is the average number of Postgraduate students you teach per course? Less than 50 ( ) 50 – 100 ( ) 100 and above ( )
6. How many lecture hours do you have per week? 1 – 5 ( ) 5 – 10 ( ) 10 – 15 ( ) 15 – 20 ( )

7. Are you comfortable with the number of courses and hours you devote to teaching? Yes ( ) No ( )
8. How many undergraduate students do you supervise? 1 – 5 ( ) 5 – 10 ( ) 10 – 15 ( )
9. How many postgraduate students do you supervise? 1 – 5 ( ) 5 – 10 ( ) 10 – 15 ( )
10. The undergraduate and postgraduate calendar usually overlaps each other, do you find it healthy? Yes ( ) No ( )
11. Do you feel stressed up with the running of both calendar concurrently? Yes ( ) No ( )
12. Do you have other teaching engagements outside the university? Yes ( ) No ( )
13. Do you have other administrative duties assigned to you? Yes ( ) No ( )
14. If yes, please specify…….
15. Are you overwhelmed and put under pressure by the nature of workload you are faced with? Yes ( ) No ( )
16. Do you feel any pressure regarding publishing your research work? Yes ( ) No ( )

Section C: University staff leaves and work environment

1. Have you ever been informed or communicated to on various types of leave from the institution? Yes ( ) No ( )
2. If yes through what channel of communication were you informed? Guide booklet ( ) News bulletin ( ) Circular ( ) Email ( ) Posters ( ) Notice boards ( ) seminars ( ) workshop ( )

3. Is there any incentive or motivation in any form of welfare set aside by the institution for any academic staff that is on leave? Yes ( ) No ( )
4. Have you ever gone on leave? Yes ( ) No ( )
5. If yes, how often do you go on leave? ……
6. Also if yes, do you take the leave to rest or to attend other engagements outside the university? Yes ( ) No ( )
7. And if no to number 4 above, what are your reasons for not ever going on leave ……
   …
8. Do you find your work environment conducive enough for research and writing? Yes ( ) No ( )
9. Is the relationship between you and your colleagues/management cordial? Yes ( ) No ( )
10. Does the work environment and management style of leadership encourage your personal growth and development in the system? Yes ( ) No ( )

Section D: Communication systems available in the university, and the academic staff knowledge, practice and attitude on rest and stress management

1. Have you ever been informed by the institution about the need for rest? Yes ( ) No ( )
2. Is going on leave/sabbatical a form of rest to you? Yes ( ) No ( )
3. In view of your loaded work schedules, do you have enough time to rest? Yes ( ) No ( )
4. If yes, please tick any of the form of rest list below that you know and practice
   i. Taking a nap or siesta ( )

ii. Spending time with family at home ( )

iii. Sleeping well at night ( )

iv. Curtailing unnecessary activities to have enough time to rest ( )

v. Guarding you thoughts to avert worries ( )

vi. Going to staff club for recreation ( )

vii. Going on social media ( )

viii. Going on retreat ( )

5. Have you ever been knocked down by a stress related sickness due to work load? Yes ( ) No ( )
6. Do you have a prior knowledge of any stress management strategy? Yes ( ) No ( )
7. Please tick any of the stress management strategies you know and practice listed below

i. Meditation/yoga/deep breathing ( )

ii. Deep relaxation of mind/body ( )

iii. Job schedule design ( )

iv. Talking to a specialist ( )

v. Changing to healthy diet ( )

vi. Rapid eye movement (REM) sleep ( )

vii. Creating budget for monthly expense ( )

viii. Practicing self-control/confidence ( )

ix. Guided imagery ( )

x. Moving a vacation closer ( )

8. Have you ever been informed by the institution on how to manage stress? Yes ( ) No ( )
9. Please tick any of the following channels if you have ever received through it communication on stress management from the university
    i. Guide booklet ( )
    ii. News bulletin ( )
    iii. Circular ( )
    iv. Email ( )
    v. Posters ( )
    vi. Notice boards ( )
    vii. Seminars ( )
    viii. Workshop ( )
    ix. Virtual text ( )
    x. Symposia ( )
10. Do you have a reliable source from which you get information on rest and stress management from? Yes ( ) No ( )
11. If yes, how often to you seek information from that source and use it? Often ( ) very often ( ) not often ( ) not very often ( )

APPENDIX II

INTERVIEW TRANSCRIPT

Professor M. I Sule (Director Academic Planning and Monitoring)

1. **What is the standard NUC approved staff/student ratio? And what is the current ABU staff/student ratio?**

   In terms of Staff/Student ratio, we have two approved format. There is the NUC approved staff/student ratio and also, the professional courses have their own approved Staff/Student ratio. Courses that do not have any practical components like humanities which includes Arts, Social Sciences, Education Administration and Law, the Staff/Student ratio is usually 1 to 30. With respect to ABU, we do not have problem with these areas. As for the professional courses like Pharmacy, the ratio is 1:15, as well for Sciences, the ratio is 1:15, while Medicine and Veterinary medicine are 1:10. We do not have problem with all these and that is the truth.

2. **Sir, in your opinion, what do you think are the implications of these ratios with respect to effect of stress on academic staff?**

   As far as staff/student ratio is concerned in ABU, since the Vice Chancellor came into office last two years, a lot of appointments have been made to improve the staff/student ratio. So, most of the programmes in this university are not under staffed. That is the truth! For your information, most of our staff are engaged with so many activities outside the university in terms of Visiting appointments. This is how most of them experience stress. The records of staff/student ratio with only exception of one or two programmes showed we are doing well out of over 90 departments. Therefore, I believe the university is upholding the Staff /Student ratio as of now and that cannot be considered as a factor causing stress on the academic staff. If the academic staff are to stick to their primary assignment, they would not be over worked or have overloaded schedules with respect to undergraduate and postgraduate courses.

3. **In academic planning, what are the considerations with regards to rest and stress issue for academic staff while preparing academic calendar/session for both UG and PG?**

   We already have a draft for the 2017/2018 academic calendar. In it we gave at least 10 weeks of rest, like a long vacation before the commencement of the next session. On the issue of the calendar overlapping, this situation started about 3 years ago when there was a delay in the PG admission. It came later than that of the UG causing delay in the commencement of the session. So, from then, we started operating two calendars simultaneously. Unfortunately, last session again, we had to have two calendar for the UG alone, because we had a delay in the 100 level admission. Thus, we had a calendar for the 100 level and then a separate one for the remaining UG levels, couple with the PG calendar that was there already. As of now, the University is running 3 calendars. I know it has been a topic of discussion in the campus and we are working profusely with the PG School to harmonize the calendar. I cannot dispute the fact that, this has added to the stress level of the staff. The issue with the calendar is something that started recently it has not been our tradition. We hope to tackle it by 2017/2018 or 2018/2019 session, whereby the staff will have enough time for rest. The sessions will

all start and end at the same time so they can have their 10 weeks' rest and come back refreshed and not overburdened.

4. **What do you think is the implication of the current staff strength stress of the academic staff?**

In terms of staff strength, I am very sure that ABU is not understaffed because I have the records. As mentioned earlier, ABU now have adequate staff strength. For staff strength implication on stress, I still maintain that it is not due to staff capacity. The issue of staff stress is based on the two factors earlier mentioned. One is the calendar clash which do not allow them to rest after teaching undergraduates, they still have to take the postgraduate classes. Second reason is the extra-academic activities the staff engages in outside the university. I think this majorly adds up to their stress level t aside their primary duties in the university.

5. **How can the Directorate of Academic Planning and Monitoring aid in awareness creation, monitoring and management of academic staff's rest and stress to ensure healthy living and productivity?**

This issue came up during one of the management meetings where we were informed about the collapse of 2 or 3 of our academic staff and it became a thing of concern. The first major thing we agreed on at the meeting was that, we should put a machinery in place to ensure all academic activities come at once and that there should be time to rest. We also agreed that all the University staff should go to the University Medical centre regularly for medical checkups. Also, the Vice Chancellor mentioned at some point during one of the University Senate meetings the need to create packages that would ensure staff compliance with this measure. I think there was a time when the Vice Chancellor further advised all academic staff to engaged in physical exercises. Regarding any communication from DAPM to the academic staff to take care of themselves for healthy living and productivity, honestly we don't have any. I think this question of yours is an advice to try our best to come up with something in that respect. Truly, we do not have such avenue were we create awareness about dangers of stress and stress management techniques to the academic staff for healthy living and productivity. Since we have the Quality assurance monitors that give us feedback on what happens in faculties and departments, I believe this machinery on ground will be a veritable channel to communicate with our academic staff on health issues, since we are all working towards the greatness of the system and the development of the society at large. Thank you

Mallam AdamuMuhmammed

Acting Director Public Affairs Directorate

Interview Transcript

1. **What are the major forms of communication channels and structures available in the University?**

Traditionally, there are fundamental channels and forms of communications that exist in the University. Most importantly, this office is a very functional structure that is used to disseminate information through various means like the bulletins. we have the special bulletins, the quarterly bulletins, circulars, and in the context of today's changes in technology, we also have emails and text messages to disseminate vital information to the communities of the University. In most cases, these channels are domiciled here in Public Affairs Directorate.

2. **Has there been any communication from the management on health related matters to the academic staff?**

Yes. To the best of my knowledge, the university is involved and engages in sensitization programmes, especially those anchored by the University Medical Centre (UMC). There is also an annual event called the health week. In most cases, when such events come up, the UMC informs us beforehand so that we will be proactive to sensitize the University public on the various health matters which the University public needs to know. We publish it in our special bulletins and issue them out, that is, information about those health issues that would be discussed during the coming health week thus attracting more University staff to the event. That way, the success of such exercises happens with the help of our information dissemination.It does not just rest on our special bulletins, we also use the radio because we have a radio house in the University that is very vibrant and functional in prompt information dissemination to the public and the University Community. I am sure last year or so, they created a health care programme where they invited health care resource persons to the station to talk on major health issues. I could remember there was a discussion on hypertension, Cancer, Diabetes and stress. They also did a very powerful sensitization programme on Ebola during the outbreak of Ebola in Nigeria. All these were done with the support of the University Management.

3. **What communication channels are most effective when passing information from the Management to the academic staff? Why is it the most effective?**

I can say that effectiveness is relative. Relative in the sense that, what can get to everybody, like the special bulletins which depends on our distribution and dispatch arrangements. We try as much as possible to make sure it gets to every faculty and every office. Just like I buttressed earlier, the radio also orchestrates this. The reach out of the radio is beyond the Samaru campus environment, it gets to Congo Campus, even reaching Jaji in Kaduna state. So, I think the most effective is the radio, because they always rerun the programmes for weeks so that if you miss one airing, you might catch the next airing of the same programme. The special bulletins, followed by the quarterly bulletins, and also text messages are as well effective.

4. **How can the Public Affairs Directorate aid in awareness creation, monitoring and management of academic staff's stress to ensure healthy living and productivity?**

Our first and basic mandate at the PAD is to actually disseminate functional information, positive and vibrant functional information to the members of the university public. Like our current ABU NEWS magazine, a lot of health issues have been highlighted. A lot of proactive health awareness columns were created and dedicated to educate members of the University community about important health related challenges that affects their lives. So, if today we write on Cancer, next, we will write on diabetes and mental stress and so on. It is dynamic and not static. The issue of health today is not just about curative health, but more about preventive health. As the information arm of the university, we have to be proactive in trying to educate people about preventive health so that the staff can remain healthy and productive for the growth of the system and our society at large.

Professor Kabir Bala

Deputy Vice Chancellor Administration (DVC Admin)

Interview Transcript

1. **What is the management's view on the general health of its academic staff?**

I will first of all say that Management is concerned about the health of each staff of the University and students alike. Management is actually very concerned about the health of its academic staff knowing well the kind of stress they are subjected to. First, we have this growing student enrolment figure because of the strategic importance of ABU in the general intellectual system of Northern Nigeria. We have to accept some of these student explosions, which automatically increase the volume of academic work on staff in terms of teaching hours and staff/student ratio also in terms of marking examinations scripts, assignments and supervision. With regards to staff health, management had directed that all staff above the age of 40 must be subjected to medical examination. What I don't know is whether they are complying or not. I also don't know what steps management would take in due course to enforce it. Secondly, management have also introduced sporting activities to the staff twice a week. All academic staff are supposed to go to the sport complex for exercises. The days officially stipulated were Tuesdays and Fridays, but some may change it to their convenience depending on their lecture schedules. Thirdly, the management is aware that in all we do, we need to rest, as rest is an important aspect of stress management. For a long period, because of the instability of the academic calendar, people were not able to take their leaves to rest. Management decided that people must rest because of the health problems manifesting within the academic staff. Therefore, whenever it is time for a staff to go on leave, the staff should just go because the Management is not going to approve leave deferment again. Staff due for leave should make arrangement with their Head of Department and take their leave rest so that they can come back refreshed. We do not want people to collapse because of overworking and stuff like that. These are some of the measures the Management has taken to ensure it enforces the idea of rest on its academic staff. There use to be exemptions that management staff such as HODs, Deans and Directors could defer their leave because of the nature of their jobs. Now the management is saying, even HODs' should ask someone to act on their behalf and go for leave because we don't want a HOD or Dean to collapse. For instance, as I am talking now, my HOD is actually on leave and someone is acting for him.

2. **What activities are organised by the management to help monitor and manage stress levels of the academic staff?**

I will just talk about the monitoring aspect of the staff stress level. Actually, a detachment of staff from sickbay which is now the University Medical Centre, (UMC), do go to the Stadium before any staff start exercising. They would be checked first on what is known as the Body Mass Index (BMI). It is like a general check up of a persons' vital health reading such as your Blood Pressure and Temperature before you can start any form of exercise. There are exercises that are not meant for everyone, so, we also have staff from the Physical Health Education to guide us on what kind of exercises are good for a particular age group. Immediately after the exercises, the UMC Staff again still check your blood pressure and temperature to compare, and if a health problem is detected, the staff is given advice on what to do next to handle the situation on time. A lot of staff get to know what is happening especially with their blood pressure level through that monitoring exercise.

3. **What policy does the management have in place that handles the academic welfare?**

Welfare is a matter of definition. Most times, when welfare is mentioned, people tend to think in terms of monitory or material things that are given out. There used to be for instance, the furniture loan, housing loan and car loan, but those accounts had been depleted. We know the government did not resuscitate these accounts. Because of the paucity of funds in the university, even the little amount we have in the accounts are supposed to be revolving but is not enough to go round with the large number of staff in the university. If we have such welfare packages now, because of the economic situation in the country with so much inflation, the funds will not be adequate. Nowadays, the actual value of the income had been lessened and this has called for some kind of supplementary income. Many staff find ways of getting income elsewhere and one of them is this visiting appointment. Others engage in activities such as farming, animal husbandry, poultry and consultancy. Definitely, all these will increase the stress levels of the academic staff. Travelling alone increases stress couple with one's primary assignment in the University.

4. **How is it run and implemented?**

I cannot say in totality that the University does not have welfare packages. Yes! there are packages now, such as, the financial assistance that bursary offers to the academic staff and it helps a lot.

5. **What Communication tools/strategies are deployed by management in raising awareness on the benefits of rest and the health risk related to stress?**

I know a lot of announcement on health related issues are done during the Senate full house meeting. All HODs, Professors, Deans and Directors are all members of Senate, and they are all expected to take back such decisions and other relevant information as approved by the Management and senate. They are expected to convey to their staff in Faculties, departments, institutes and directorates. So I think that this is the best way to disseminate such issues especially those related to the benefits of rest and health risk related to stress.

6. **What are the facilities put in place by the management that can be used by the academic staff to rest and manage stress?**

I think we do not have enough. Let me be frank with you on this, there are a few facilities available. I am sure you are aware that a new ultra modern gymnasium was recently built in the University with different kinds of exercise equipment. The sports complex is under renovations and once completed, we will have more opportunity to relax and have a relaxing environment. Of course the paucity of funds is what is delaying the completion of the sports complex. If that is finished, it is going to be a recreation complex. By the time this is done, the staff will get somewhere better to go to rest, relax and manage stress. We could do more with what we intended doing with the ICT theme park. I was part of the committee for the park proposal which is supposed to be a concept of a theme park and the theme is ICT and nature. it is supposed to be a very fine park. The idea is to compute while you relax, but over time, because of change of administration and lack of continuity, the actual concept was lost. You see, the buildings were supposed to be iconic with a waterfall in place, as water relaxes the mind so also the buildings are to be made in such a way that looking at them relaxes you. We got the grant from First Bank which we defended in their headquarters with our matching grant. We will try and remind the Management and see if we can revive that because ABU needs such a place for the betterment of the lives and productivity of its entire staff.

Dr Nana Madugu

Director, University Medical Centre (UMC)

1. **How will the University Medical Centre (UMC) assess the health level of the Academic staff of the University?**

The University Medical Centre (UMC) cannot ascertain the exact health level of the University academic staff because the UMC only have the curative aspect and not the preventive aspect. The curative aspect which was initially called the sickbay and from the name 'sickbay' shows that it's just a place where you just keep people with minor ailments. That is how it has been working because what we were having back then was just meant to treat minor and common illness like Malaria, typhoid, and fever. When you have anything above those levels then, most of the patients would be referred to secondary places for treatment like the University Teaching Hospital. We eventually found out that the health needs of the University Staff are quite different from what we are offering them especially when I came to office 4 years ago. We discussed with the Management and decided that it is very important to upgrade the health services system of ABU to be able to cater for more needs of the staff of the University. Bearing in mind their health needs, their age, the ethnic diversity, their workload which is also what contributes to their stress and the fact that there is lack of any place in the University where they can go and relax. As far as ABUMC is concerned, there is none. Taken all these into consideration, we have to start with what we need the most and that is the upgrading of the health system so as to be able to provide the secondary care. We have gone far, we already have the in-ward and in-patient management, where we have fully equipped wards and theatre rooms, thus reducing the number of staff and students that we used to refer to ABUTH.

Also, we had an MOU signed with Doctors, so that they can come and run specialist clinics here. Instead of our patients going there, they come here. In case there is the need for further investigation, these patients will not follow them to the clinic there at ABUTH, and it has reduced a lot of stress on the staff and our medical staff also. The staff have

more confidence now coming here, knowing that the doctors they see here; would be the same doctors they would see when taken or referred to ABUTH.

Another important thing we discussed with the management is the issue of the age of the academic staff. We need to know and put into considerations ailments or pathological conditions that usually comes up at a particular age especially when you have a stressful condition. Hypertensive disorder and Diabetic Mellitus and their complications are the things we usually see here. We have cases of staff rushed here that collapse during lectures and some dead already before reaching here. These are all issues that indicate that people are under stress and there is nothing on ground to actually cater for that.

So the first thing we did was to open somewhere we can have free access to blood pressure check which we intend to make it available for 24hours7days a week, and once your blood pressure is checked and it recorded to be high, the first thing we do is to write it in red and we book an appointment for you with a specialist or consultant doctors that come here, so due to that we were able to detect early those who are hypertensive and actually manage it before it aggravates. And those who are beyond the level of secondary care they follow these doctors to ABUTH and continue the treatment there. And since we have started this program of Hypertensive assessment, our record sheets are mostly covered with red pen because anybody that has abnormal BP level is recorded in red.

Now base on that if we are to assess the health level of the academic staff in ABU, we can say about 80 % of the staff that come for the free blood Pressure check-up are usually recorded with high Blood Pressure which is common in the country as a lot of people are hypertensive here. We then alerted the Management that, their Staff are in serious problem as they are under so much stressful conditions. The Management decided to come up with the welfare package and we have gone far with the plan. The proposal of the welfare package is to make sure that the staff are able to manage their stress and find a place where the staff can go and relax so that the stress can be managed. We also have the 'well people's clinic' where a staff can have a mandatory check-up on all ailments.

So now until we are able be put all this structures which include upgrading the Medical System, and completing the 'well peoples clinic' and monitor it for a while, that is when we can say on a scale of 1-10, this is the health level of the University academic staff.

1) **Would the UMC say that the academic staff are exposed to stress factors and at the same time do not engage in much rest and stress management strategies?**

This is definitely a yes, because it's either when the UG session ends then the PG session begins and as it ends immediately its followed by the diploma program or LVT program, so it's always a whirlwind situation all year round and this stands to pose a health challenge to the academic staff and very risky to their health. And they do not have avenues to help alleviate this stress, I do not know at the individual level if in their various homes they do have ways to manage stress, but we all know this is Africa we have families and extended families so it's like you are leaving one stressful work environment to go back home to another if care is not taken. And I can categorically say that on our own side that is in the University and as far as the university management and medical centre is concern; we don't have much avenues that will allow the staff engage in rest and stress management strategies. Which I believe it is very important for us to have something on ground to help the staff manage their stress. Also as I've mentioned above that, is already in process. We will plan the logistics as it comes especially as regards the mandatory checkups which will go a long way in assisting us identify the staff health level and as we all know ABU has a huge number of staff, therefore we will

have to plan how we implement the package, it could be either on each staff's birthday or do it alphabetically but we are yet to conclude on that but will do in time because we have to really have to plan it properly if we are to achieve a set target.

2) **How can the University Medical Centre (UMC) aid in awareness creation, monitoring and management of academic staff's rest and stress to ensure healthy living and productivity?**

yes communication is very important and vital to all this is because whatever you are doing you need to communicate it, and that is one of the major problem we have right now because some people don't even know that we have develop this far, so communication is very important thus using the radio is one of our effective channel of communication to the staff, most especially the University FM Radio station we also have health talks in our General Out Patient Department (GOPD) on daily basis to any staff who is willing to listen. We sometimes use posters and fliers to distribute and give health tips and also to create awareness to the staff, informing them on what we are doing, what we have and what we want to do. Like when we want to open the special 'wellness clinic', we will have to produce special messages to be passed through various communication channels available. So these are what we want to do to create awareness among the academic staff to help them ensure healthy living and productivity. But truly the issue of stress among the academic staff is definitely something we have to look into because is quite alarming, as we have some that do not even know they are hypertensive or some know they are, but because of workload and other factors do not even have time to manage it, until it aggravates into something fatal. And that is what we do not want, for if the staff are having problem with their health automatically the university system and the students will be at the receiving end.

Therefore we are trying our possible best to see we bring everything closer to them and make it as accessible as possible also to make it available. With the issue of affordability, we do not think we have much problem on that because most of the academic staff are on the National Health Insurance Scheme (NHIS) but even the ones that are not on the Scheme platform we try as much as possible to make it affordable to them.

APPENDIX III

INTERVIEW PICTURES



The Researcher and Deputy Vice Chancellor Administration



The Researcher and Director, University Medical Centre



The Researcher and Ag. Director, Public Affairs Directorate