



Job Stress and Coping Strategies among Healthcare Professionals in Specialist Hospital in Jalingo, Taraba State

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Abstract

The study investigated job stress and coping strategies among healthcare professionals in a specialist hospital in Jalingo, Taraba State. Three specific objectives with corresponding research questions guided the study. The study adopted a cross-sectional research design. The population for the study consisted of 1670 healthcare professionals from specialist hospital in Jalingo, Taraba State. The sample size was 320 respondents. The random sampling technique by balloting without replacement was used to draw the sample for the study. The instrument for data collection was researcher-developed instrument titled Job Stress and Coping Strategies Questionnaire” (JSCSQ). The instrument was subjected to face validation. The reliability index of 0.70 was obtained for the internal consistency of the instrument using the Cronbach Alpha method. Mean and standard deviation was used for answering the research questions. The findings of the study indicated that there was job stress experienced by healthcare professionals in specialist hospital in Jalingo, Taraba State. It was also found that age, gender, and designation were not significant factors for job stress among healthcare professionals. It was recommended among others that Seminars and workshops should be organized by government to sensitize HCPs on stress improvement coping strategies.

Keywords: Job stress, Coping strategies, Healthcare professionals.

Introduction

Stress is experienced in every human life and is rapidly becoming a worldwide challenge that needs urgent public health intervention. The magnitude of the problem of stress was emphasized in the report of the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention which claimed that, on average, death by suicide is about 70 per cent more likely among physicians than among other professionals and 250–400 per cent higher among female doctors. It is generally acknowledged as a global phenomenon with significant health and economic consequences in both developed and developing countries (International Labor Organization [ILO], 2016). World Health Organization ([WHO], 2020) stated that job stress is an indisputable fact that is an integral part of human activities. Lorente, Vera, & Peiró (2020) reported that healthcare workers especially nurses encountered stress that affects the psychological and mental health. This is in line with Mansoor, Fida, Nasir, and Ahmed (2011) who stated that job stress is when the pressure or requirements of a situation on an individual are wider than he or she can handle, and if these requirements are huge and continue for a long period without any interval, mental, physical or behavioral problems may occur.

Job stress can be long term or short term. Zhou, Guan & Sun (2021) stated that job stress can be very devastating hence it triggers off long term or short term mental and physical health problems. Job stress can be generally defined as an undue, inappropriate, or exaggerated response to a situation (Birhanu et al., 2018; Roohafza et al., 2012). Job stress is a feeling of emotional or physical tension. It can come from any event or thought that makes



someone feel frustrated, angry, or nervous. Job stress is a body's reaction to a challenge or demand. In short bursts, job stress can be positive, such as when it helps an individual to avoid danger or meet the deadline (Murtaza et al., 2015). In medicine, job stress is the body's response to physical, mental, or emotional pressure. Job stress causes chemical changes in the body that can raise blood pressure, heart rate, and blood sugar levels. It may also lead to a feeling of frustration, anxiety, anger, or depression. Job stress often occurs when individuals' physical and emotions do not match or cannot handle their job demands, constraints, and/or opportunities (Adeolu, Yussuf, & Popoola, 2016).

In Africa, the prevalence of job stress is on the increase among public workers. There is a growing increase in the psychosocial work environment for the delivery of high-quality healthcare (Babore et al., 2019). Job stress is associated with poor mental and physical health resulting from night calls, long hours of work, the monotony of the job, less time for leisure, poor pay, and poor working condition (Adeolu, Yussuf, & Popoola, 2016). Healthcare professionals under stress are more likely to treat patients poorly, both medically and psychologically. Job stress is also evident in the Nigerian healthcare system among healthcare professionals. The Nigerian health system is bedeviled with chronic underfunding, dilapidated health facilities, poor staffing, and inadequate working tools which have been sources of stress to healthcare providers (Kushwaha, 2014). Most healthcare providers especially at the secondary and primary levels of healthcare in Nigeria have to work under very harsh and uncondusive conditions which contribute to the increase of job stress of healthcare staff (Onasoga, Ogbemor, & Ojo, 2013). According to Etim, Bassey, and Ndep (2015), job stress distraction or sleeplessness accounts for an estimated 60% to 80% of accidents on the job and near misses.

Job demands may cause stress among health workers especially when it deprives sleep and rest which can transmit to depression and restiveness. Brugger, Hengalova, and Stefan (2021) stated that job stress is any event or circumstance that causes fatigue, depression, and tension in people and employees in all types of businesses and industries. Additionally, job stress has also been referred to as the non-specific negative response of the body to demand in the workplace (Roohafza, Sarrafzadegan, Sadeghi, Talaei, Talakar, & Mahvash, 2012; Usman, Ahmed, Ahmed, & Akbar, 2011). Job stress is also defined as hazardous physical and emotional responses that occur as a result of situations where job demands exceed worker's capabilities (Mohajan, 2012). It refers to the employee's response when facing work demands and pressures that are not matched to their resources, needs, abilities, and knowledge, which overcome their ability to cope or manage (Khudaniya & Kaji, 2014). Operationally, Job stress is also defined as a gradual process in which individual cognitive assessments of occupational stressors generate adverse health conditions with severe behavioral consequences. Occupational stress results from a "toxic" work environment such as poor control, high work demands, and lack of information, extreme pressure and low decision-making latitude

Researches have shown that healthcare professionals are highly prone to stress at work and experience more negative outcomes of stress than other professionals. Barelo et al. (2021) reported that during the outbreak of Covid-19 healthcare professionals encountered numerous job stresses that were negative. Job stress among healthcare professionals might cause negative outcomes like adverse psychological well-being, job burnout, and a significantly larger number of suicide attempts, alcohol dependency, and other psychosocial problems (Brugger et al., 2011). Healthcare professional effectiveness might be harm by stress and then decreases attention, reduces concentration, impinges on decision-making skills, and reduces providers' abilities to establish strong relationships with patients (Emmett, 2013). Job stress also may lead to increased burnout and is defined as a syndrome of depersonalization, emotional exhaustion, and a sense of low personal accomplishment



(Tarnini, & Kord, 2011). Job stress is evident among healthcare professionals, therefore the need for coping strategies becomes imminent.

Coping strategies are the measures to overcome adverse circumstances. Martinez, Zabalegui and Sevilla (2021) stated that coping strategies for stressful events play a central role in the interaction between individuals and their environment. Al-Mazrouei, Al-Faisal, Hussein, El-Sawaf, and Wasfy (2015) maintained that job stress coping strategies are thoughts and actions that are used to manage stressful conditions which include: gratitude in every circumstance, practice the essence of humanity, compassion, connection, care and kindness, one should practice mindfulness meditation, personal health, and wellness among others. On the other hand, Etim, Bassey, and Ndep (2015) stated that stress coping strategies for healthcare professionals include employment of more staff, provision of equipment, proper remuneration, and management's intervention on staff's welfare. In this study, therefore, coping strategies are those strategies that healthcare professionals in specialist hospitals in Jalingo, Taraba State take in dealing with their related stress. Job stress and coping strategies among healthcare professionals can be influenced by several socio-demographic variables.

Several socio-demographic variables have been identified in literature as influencers of job stress and coping strategies among healthcare professionals in specialist hospitals (WHO, 2018). This study, however, would investigate the influence of age, gender, and designation on job stress and coping strategies among healthcare professionals in a specialist hospital in Jalingo, Taraba State. (Why did you settle for only age, gender and designation?, Provide justification for the above)

Over the years, there are inconsistencies in the service delivery among healthcare professionals due to occupational or Job stress. Job stress has become the order of the day globally among healthcare professionals, especially in Nigeria. Several factors were reported in literature such as work overload, reduction of finance, delay in payment of salary, high job demand, and have been attributed to Job stress among healthcare professionals especially in Jalingo, Taraba State. These unpleasant situations have to lead to low performance, and burnout syndrome.

Scholars have recommended certain coping strategies for job stress to reduce the demands and pressure placed on healthcare professionals. Healthcare professionals face daily situations that expose them to high levels of stress. Increasing number of healthcare professional positions are now untenured, the workload has increased, and healthcare professionals are under increased pressures to attract external funds for their research and to gain more knowledge on their field of studies. This could expose them to a high level of stress that could force them to deviate from normal functioning. From the observation of the researcher, it has shown that healthcare professionals in Taraba State are usually faced with stressful situations which predispose them to several negative symptoms. Hence the study investigated job stress and formulated coping strategies among healthcare professionals in the specialist hospitals in Jalingo, Taraba State.

Methods and Materials

The cross-sectional research design was adopted in this study. This is a research design that produces a snapshot of the population in a given period of time (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2011). The population for the study comprised 1,670 healthcare professionals in the specialist hospital in Jalingo, Taraba State. The sample for the study consisted of 330 healthcare professionals. The sample size was computed based on Yemane (1973) (not referenced) sample size determination formula. The sample size was drawn using proportionate stratified random sampling technique to select 0.198 (19.8%) healthcare professionals from each of the 10 categories of healthcare professionals in the population.

The instrument for data collection was a researcher-developed instrument titled “Job Stress and Coping Strategies Questionnaire” (JSCSQ). The face validity of the instrument was established by giving the copies of the instrument, the purpose of the study with its specific objectives and research questions as well as hypotheses to five experts in the Department of Human Kinetics and Health Education, University of Nigeria, Nsukka.

To ascertain the internal consistency of the instrument, the reliability index of 0.70 was obtained using Cronbach’s alpha methods. The returned copies of the completed questionnaires were properly cross-checked for completeness of responses. The data collected were coded and analyzed using Internal Business Machine Statistical Package for Social Sciences, IBM-SPSS (version 23 statistics for windows). Research questions were answered using mean and standard deviation, adopting a criterion mean of 2.50. Therefore, an item with mean score less than 2.50 was not identified as job stress and coping strategy for stress respectively while an item 2.50 mean score and above was interpreted as job stress and coping strategy for stress respectively. The null hypotheses were tested using t-test and one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA). All the null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance. However, null hypotheses with exact probability less than 0.05 was not accepted (hence there is a significant difference) but those 0.05 and above will be accepted (there is no significant difference).

Results

Table 1: Mean and Standard Deviation of Respondents on Job Stresses Experienced by Healthcare Professionals in Specialist Hospital in Jalingo, Taraba State

| SN | Item Statement | \bar{x} | SD |
|---------------------|---|-------------|-------------|
| 1 | I have an extremely large amount of work to do | 3.63 | 0.73 |
| 2 | I can't complete work in the required item | 3.61 | 0.85 |
| 3 | I have to work as hard as I can | 3.68 | 0.76 |
| 4 | I have to pay very careful attention | 3.74 | 0.67 |
| 5 | My job is difficult in that it requires a high level of knowledge and technical skill | 3.84 | 0.52 |
| 6 | I need to be constantly thinking about work throughout the working day | 3.82 | 0.64 |
| 7 | My job requires a lot of physical work | 3.65 | 0.88 |
| 8 | I can work at my own pace | 3.49 | 0.99 |
| 9 | I can choose how and in what order to do my work | 3.75 | 0.73 |
| 10 | I can reflect my opinions on workplace policy | 3.78 | 0.68 |
| 11 | My knowledge and skills are rarely used at work | 3.73 | 0.76 |
| 12 | There are differences of opinion within my department | 3.67 | 0.76 |
| 13 | My department does not get along well with other departments | 3.64 | 0.79 |
| 14 | The atmosphere in my workplace is friendly | 3.62 | 0.77 |
| 15 | My work environment is void of lighting, temperature, ventilation | 3.55 | 0.84 |
| 16 | My work environment is noisy | 3.26 | 1.09 |
| 17 | This job suits me well | 3.50 | 0.97 |
| 18 | My job is worth doing | 3.51 | 1.02 |
| Overall Mean | | 3.63 | 0.47 |

The results of the study as presented in Table 1 show the mean and standard deviation of respondents on the job stresses experienced by healthcare professionals in specialist hospital in Jalingo, Taraba State. Results show that the respondents ‘very much so’; have an extremely large amount of work to do ($\bar{x} = 3.63$, $SD = 0.73$), can't complete work in the required item ($\bar{x} = 3.61$, $SD = 0.85$), have to work as hard as they can ($\bar{x} = 3.68$, $SD = 0.76$), have to pay very careful attention ($\bar{x} = 3.74$, $SD = 0.67$) and need to be constantly thinking about work throughout the working day ($\bar{x} = 3.82$, $SD = 0.64$) among others stress. The respondents also agreed that they can ‘moderately so’; work at their own pace ($\bar{x} = 3.49$, $SD = 0.99$) and that their work environment is noisy ($\bar{x} = 3.26$, $SD = 1.09$). The cluster mean of 3.63 with a standard deviation of 0.47 shows that health care professionals experience job stress in specialist hospital in Jalingo, Taraba State so very much.

Table 2: Mean and Standard Deviation of Respondents on Job Stresses Experienced among Healthcare Professionals in Specialist Hospital in Jalingo, based on demographic variables

| Socio-demographic variable | Level socio-demographic variable | Mean | S.D |
|----------------------------|----------------------------------|------|------|
| Gender | Male | 3.61 | 0.47 |
| | Female | 3.65 | 0.48 |

| | | | |
|-----|--------------------|--------|------|
| Age | 20-29 years | 3.59 | 0.56 |
| | 30-39 years | 3.59 | 0.53 |
| | 40-49 years | 3.69 | 0.35 |
| | 50 years and above | 3.68 | 0.40 |
| | Designation | Doctor | 3.65 |
| | Nurse | 3.55 | 0.50 |
| | Pharmacist | 3.64 | 0.43 |
| | LST | 3.60 | 0.47 |
| | Midwife | 3.62 | 0.55 |

The result of the study in Table 2 shows the mean and standard deviation of respondents on the job stresses experienced by healthcare professionals in specialist hospital in Jalingo, Taraba State based on age. Result shows that both male and female health care professionals experience job stress so very much. This is because the cluster mean rating for male health care professionals was ($\bar{x} = 3.61$, $SD = 0.47$), while the cluster mean for female health care professionals was ($\bar{x} = 3.65$, $SD = 0.48$). Since the overall mean rating for both male and female health care professionals was within the range of 3.50-4.00 set as criterion for ‘very much so’, these mean that the job stresses experienced by healthcare professionals in specialist hospital in Jalingo, Taraba State based on gender is so very much. Table 2 result showed that respondents within the age range of 20-29 years had an overall mean rating of ($\bar{x} = 3.59$, $SD = 0.56$), 30-39 years ($\bar{x} = 3.59$, $SD = 0.59$), 40-49 Years ($\bar{x} = 3.69$, $SD = 0.35$) and 50 years and above ($\bar{x} = 3.68$, $SD = 0.40$). Since the overall mean rating based on different age bracket is within the age range of 2.50 and above set as criterion for ‘so very much’, these mean that the job stresses experienced among healthcare professionals in specialist hospital in Jalingo, Taraba State based on age is very much. Result showed that all the health care professionals irrespective of their job designation experience job stress so very much. This is because the overall mean rating for Doctors was ($\bar{x} = 3.65$, $SD = 0.41$), for Nurse ($\bar{x} = 3.55$, $SD = 0.50$), for Pharmacist ($\bar{x} = 3.64$, $SD = 43$), for LST ($\bar{x} = 3.60$, $SD = 0.47$) and for Midwife ($\bar{x} = 3.62$, $SD = 0.55$). Since the overall mean rating for the various job designation for health care professionals were within the range of 3.50-4.00 set as criterion for ‘very much so’, these mean that the job stresses experienced by healthcare professionals in specialist hospital in Jalingo, Taraba State based on job designation is so very much. These also imply that irrespective of age, all health care professionals in specialist hospital in Jalingo, Taraba state experience job stress. To test whether age of respondents is a significant factor in determining the job stress among respondents in specialist hospital in Jalingo, see hypothesis One.

Table 3: Mean and Standard Deviation of Respondents on the Job Stress Coping Strategies among Healthcare Professionals in Specialist Hospital in Jalingo, Taraba State

| SN | Item Statement | \bar{x} | SD |
|----|---|-----------|------|
| 1 | I've been turning to work or other activities to take my mind off things. | 3.43 | 1.08 |
| 2 | I've been concentrating my efforts on doing something about the situation I'm in. | 3.58 | 0.96 |
| 3 | I've been saying to myself “this isn't real” | 3.61 | 0.91 |
| 4 | I've been using alcohol or other drugs to make myself feel better | 3.50 | 1.03 |
| 5 | I've been getting emotional support from others. | 3.58 | 0.87 |

| | | | |
|----|--|-------------|-------------|
| 6 | I've been giving up trying to deal with it. | 3.71 | 0.76 |
| 7 | I've been taking action to try to make the situation better. | 3.72 | 0.72 |
| 8 | I've been refusing to believe that it has happened. | 3.56 | 0.95 |
| 9 | I've been saying things to let my unpleasant feelings escape. | 3.72 | 0.76 |
| 10 | I've been getting help and advice from other people. | 3.65 | 0.81 |
| 11 | I've been using alcohol or other drugs to help me get through it. | 3.46 | 1.05 |
| 12 | I've been trying to see it in a different light, to make it seem more positive | 3.56 | 0.89 |
| 13 | I've been criticizing myself. | 3.32 | 1.10 |
| 14 | I've been trying to come up with a strategy about what to do. | 3.52 | 0.95 |
| 15 | I've been getting comfort and understanding from someone | 3.43 | 1.01 |
| 16 | I've been giving up the attempt to cope. | 3.28 | 1.13 |
| 17 | I've been looking for something good in what is happening. | 3.44 | 1.08 |
| 18 | I've been making jokes about it. | 3.45 | 1.03 |
| 19 | I've been doing something to think about it less, such as going to movies, watching TV, reading, daydreaming, sleeping, or shopping. | 3.66 | 0.85 |
| 20 | I've been accepting the reality of the fact that it has happened. | 3.72 | 0.78 |
| 21 | I've been expressing my negative feelings. | 3.59 | 0.94 |
| 22 | I've been trying to find comfort in my religion or spiritual beliefs. | 3.79 | 0.64 |
| 23 | I've been trying to get advice or help from other people about what | 3.73 | 0.72 |
| 24 | I've been learning to live with it. | 3.67 | 0.76 |
| 25 | I've been thinking hard about what steps to take. | 3.75 | 0.69 |
| 26 | I've been blaming myself for things that happened | 3.49 | 0.99 |
| 27 | I've been praying or meditating | 3.71 | 0.74 |
| 28 | I've been making fun of the situation. | 3.56 | 0.99 |
| | Cluster mean | 3.57 | 0.36 |

The result shows the mean ratings and standard deviation of respondents on the job stress coping strategies employed by healthcare professionals in specialist hospital in Jalingo, Taraba State. Result shows that health care professionals in specialist hospital in Jalingo have been doing a lot to cope with job stress by employing the following strategies, these include; turning to work or other activities to take their mind off things ($\bar{x} = 3.43$, $SD = 1.08$), concentrating their efforts on doing something about the situation they are in ($\bar{x} = 3.58$, $SD = 0.96$), saying to themselves “this isn’t real” ($\bar{x} = 3.61$, $SD = 0.91$), using alcohol or other drugs to make themselves feel better ($\bar{x} = 3.50$, $SD = 1.03$), getting emotional support from others ($\bar{x} = 3.58$, $SD = 0.87$), giving up trying to deal with it ($\bar{x} = 3.71$, $SD = 0.76$), taking action to try to make the situation better ($\bar{x} = 3.72$, $SD = 0.72$), refusing to believe that it has happened ($\bar{x} = 3.56$, $SD = 0.95$), saying things to let their unpleasant feelings escape ($\bar{x} = 3.72$, $SD = 0.76$) and getting help and advice from other people ($\bar{x} = 3.65$, $SD = 0.81$) among others. The overall cluster mean of 3.57 with a standard deviation of 0.36 shows that health care professionals in specialist hospital in Jalingo have been doing a lot to cope with job stress in their work place.

Discussion

The result of the study as presented in Table 1 showed that health care professionals in specialist hospitals in Jalingo experience job stress very much. This result was clearly indicated in their responses which had mean ratings above 3.50. Healthcare professionals indicated that amount of work to do are always large, and couldn’t be completed within a



required time. This called for hard work with maximum attention, which otherwise cause stressful day for HCPs. The finding is in line with Zhou et al. (2021) who stated that job stress can be very devastating hence it triggers off long term or short term mental and physical health problems. Whenever HCPs experienced stress, it affects the ways they react to duty assignments, hence each with assigned duties which shall be done with a timeframe. The researchers are not surprise to the findings because it was expected. Reasons being that HCPs are professionals who are saddled with the responsibility of treatments and other related health checks and promotions aimed at improving health and wellbeing. In attempt to always achieve the tasks, HCPs encounter different stress. Agreeing on this, Lorente et al. (2020) reported that healthcare workers encountered stress that affect the psychological and mental health. However, when stress affects mental health of an individual, it also affects both his duty posts and relationship with family after works.

The result of this study therefore shows that health care professionals in specialist hospital, Jalingo experience a lot of stress at work place. Poor provision of Social supports for HCPs were associated with the development of stress-related symptoms in work place. The result of this study therefore shows that health care professionals in specialist hospital, Jalingo experience a lot of stress at work place. The finding was in line with Brugger et al. (2021) who stated that job stress is any event or circumstance that causes fatigue, depression, and tension in people and employees in all types of businesses and industries. The researchers expected the result because through observations and literature, HCPs always complained of lack of rest or break throughout when in duty post. Reason being that HCPs deal with human anatomy and physiology, and must be very careful, hence life will be lost. There are numerous challenges being encountered by HCPs in hospitals which triggered depression and tension capable of incapacitating each according to duty assigned to complete in a day.

The result of the study which dwelt on the job stresses experienced by healthcare professionals in specialist hospital in Jalingo, Taraba State based on gender shows that both male and female HCPs experience job stress very much. This means that, irrespective of gender, all health care professionals in specialist hospital in Jalingo, Taraba state experience job stress. This equally implies that gender of health care professionals is not a significant factor in determining the job stress. The result of the study is consistent with Etim, Bassey, and Ndep (2015) who carried out a study titled "Work-related stress among healthcare workers in Ugep, Yakurr Local Government Area, Cross-River State and found among other things that 180 (92.8%) healthcare workers felt stressed at work due to two or more of the following factors; work over-load, emergencies, adhoc duties (3.5%), lack of equipment (30.8%), poor work environment, poor managerial support, poor staff attitude to work and fellow staff (29.8%). Etim, Bassey and Ndep also found that gender was not a significant factor in determining work stress. This means that both male and female health care professionals experience job stress at work place.

The result of the study also shows the mean and standard deviation of respondents on the job stresses experienced by healthcare professionals in specialist hospital in Jalingo, Taraba State based on age. Result shows that all the respondents irrespective of their age range had mean ratings above 3.50 which implies that job stress was common among the health care professionals in specialist hospital in Jalingo. Although, health care professionals within the age of 40-49 had the highest mean rating but result from the test of hypothesis one showed that the difference in the mean ratings of respondents on the job stress experienced by healthcare professionals in specialist hospital in Jalingo, Taraba State based on age was not statistically significant. This implies that age of health care professionals in specialist hospital in Jalingo is not a significant factor in determining job stress. In other words, age does not influence job stress according to the finding of this study. The result of the study is consistent with Rizwan and Akhter (2021) who conducted a study on stress among physicians

working in a medical university hospital and found among other things that age was not a significant factor in determining job stress. This implies that all health care professionals in specialist hospital in Jalingo, Taraba state experience job stress.

The result of the study on the job stresses experienced by healthcare professionals in specialist hospital in Jalingo, Taraba State based on designation shows that all the health care professionals irrespective of their job designation experience job stress so very much. This is because the overall mean rating for the various job designation for health care professionals were within the range of 3.50-4.00 set as criterion for 'very much so', these mean that the job stresses experienced by healthcare professionals in specialist hospital in Jalingo, Taraba State based on job designation is so very much. These also imply that, irrespective of job designation, all health care professionals in specialist hospital in Jalingo, Taraba state experience job stress. The result from the test of hypothesis three equally showed that the difference in the mean ratings of respondents on the job stress experienced by healthcare professionals in specialist hospital in Jalingo, Taraba State based on designation was not statistically significant, implying that job designation is not a significant factor in determining job stress experience by health care professionals. The result of the study is somewhat consistent with Birhanu, Gebrekidan, Tesefa and Tareke (2018) who conducted a research on workload determines workplace stress among health professionals working in Felege-Hiwot Referral Hospital, Bahir Dar, Northwest Ethiopia and found among other things that prevalence of workplace stress was 68.2 per cent among health professionals. Health professionals who work 50 hours and more per week and in night shift on part times base were more likely to develop workplace stress. The researcher also found that based on job designation, there was no significant different between their mean responses on work stress. This therefore means that job designation does not significantly influence job stress among health care professionals in specialist hospital in Jalingo.

The result of the study which dwelt on the job stress coping strategies employed by healthcare professionals in specialist hospital in Jalingo, Taraba State shows that health care professionals in specialist hospital in Jalingo have been doing a lot to cope with job stress by employing the following strategies; turning to work or other activities to take their mind off things, concentrating their efforts on doing something about the situation they are in, saying to themselves "this isn't real", using alcohol or other drugs to make themselves feel better, getting emotional support from others, giving up trying to deal with it and taking action to try to make the situation better among others. These imply that health care professionals in specialist hospital in Jalingo have been coping with the job stress they experience. The result of the study is in agreement with Onowhakpor, Abdulkabir and Okojie (2018) who carried out a study on the prevalence, sources and coping mechanisms of occupational stress among medical doctors in a tertiary institution and found **that** the prevalence of occupational stress was 50.7 per cent. The authors found that most of the respondents reported using the following occupational coping strategies frequently, these included; prioritizing and solving problems accordingly 187(81.7%), reorganizing their work 179 (78.2%) and planning ahead 177 (77.3%) amongst others. This implies that most health care professionals adopt certain number of coping strategies to deal with job stress.

Conclusion

The increasing concerns of healthcare professionals and hospital managers on the implications of the job stress associated with HCPs in different hospitals call for constant research on improvement strategies. All the health care professionals experience job stress, irrespective of gender, age differences and designation. Therefore, it can be concluded that several factors reported in literature such as work overload, reduction of finance, delay in payment of salary, high job demand, and have been attributed to Job stress among healthcare professionals especially in Jalingo, Taraba State. These unpleasant situations have to lead to



low performance, and burnout syndrome. As a result, convenient and possibly effective coping strategies among healthcare professionals in the specialist hospitals in Jalingo, Taraba State were enumerated.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were made based on the findings of the study

1. Positive attitude towards reduction of job stress among HPCs should be well-inculcated into all hospital managers.
2. Healthcare professionals should strive to always adopt stress coping mechanism while in different duty posts.
3. Seminars and workshops should be organized by government to sensitize HCPs on stress coping improvement strategies.

Limitations

The limitations of the present study cannot be overlooked. Inability of the researcher to ascertain job stress among healthcare professionals in the specialist hospitals based on marital status. Healthcare professionals may encounter different job stress based on marital status. This calls for further prospective studies which could

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