

## STRESS MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES AND WORKERS' PRODUCTIVITY IN SELECTED INDUSTRIES

**<sup>1</sup>Edoho, Glory Emmanuel, PhD**

gloryedoho80@gmail.com  
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-8070-9313>,

**<sup>1</sup>Arikpo, Esther Bassey, PhD**

estherarikpo136@gmail.com  
<https://orcid.org/0000-0002-0748-6459>

&

**<sup>2</sup>Eki, Rose Akom,**

roseek85@gmail.com

<sup>1</sup>Department of Continuing Education and Development Studies  
University of Calabar, Calabar.

<sup>2</sup>Department of Agriculture Education  
University of Calabar, Calabar.



### Abstract

This study examined the relationship between stress management strategies and workers' productivity in selected industries in Southern Senatorial District of Cross River State, Nigeria. To guide the study, two research questions and corresponding hypotheses were formulated. A correlational research design was adopted for the study. Census sampling technique was applied. The population of the study comprised 485 workers from Cross River Garment Factory, Cross River Noodles Factory and Cross River Feed Mill within the study area. Data were collected through a 35-item structured questionnaire titled: "Stress Management and Workers' Productivity Questionnaire (SMWPQ)." Which was validated by three experts from Continuing Education Department and another two experts from Department of Educational Psychology (Tests and Measurement unit), University of Calabar. Pilot test was carried out on 20 workers outside the specified sample size yielding a reliability coefficient of 0.94. The data were analysed using simple linear regression analysis. The findings revealed that effective stress management significantly enhances workers' productivity by reducing absenteeism, improving job satisfaction, increasing employee motivation, and promoting better work performance. The study demonstrated a positive relationship between stress management and worker's productivity in the study area which means that time management and work-life balance significantly relate to workers' productivity. The study therefore recommended that management of industries should establish comprehensive stress management policies, strengthen employee support systems, and create conducive working environments that minimise workplace stress and enhance productivity. These measures will contribute to sustainable organisational growth and improved employee well-being.

**Keywords:** Stress Management, Workers' Productivity, Employee Welfare, Work-Life Balance, Industrial Workers, Organisational Performance.

## Introduction

The modern workplace is characterised by increasing competition, technological advancements, economic uncertainties, and growing organisational demands. These factors have significantly altered the nature of work and have exposed employees to various forms of occupational stress. Stress has become one of the most prevalent challenges affecting workers across different industries worldwide. Davis (2021) reported that, a moderate level of stress can actually challenge employees to put in their best though a prolonged stress can negatively affect workers' physical health. Stress management refers to the various strategies, policies, and practices adopted by individuals and organisations to reduce, control, and cope with workplace stress (Moss, 2021). It involves identifying stressors, implementing coping mechanisms, providing supportive work environments, and promoting employee well-being. According to Lazarus and Folkman (2024), stress occurs when individuals perceive that environmental demands exceed their ability to cope with available resources. In organisational settings, stress may arise from excessive workload, role ambiguity, poor working conditions, job insecurity, inadequate remuneration, interpersonal conflicts, and work-family imbalance. (Edoho & Olabisi, 2023) also support the motion that effective management of these stressors is essential for maintaining a productive workforce. Stress arises when individuals perceive that environmental demands exceed their available coping resources so therefore, within organisational settings, stress may stem from excessive workload, role ambiguity, unfavourable working conditions, job insecurity, inadequate remuneration, interpersonal conflicts, (Aeon & Aguinis, 2017). From a human resource management perspective, stress management is a systematic organisational approach that identifies workplace stressors and implements preventive and corrective measures to improve employee well-being, engagement, and productivity. Without any doubt, if these stressors are not effectively managed, they can negatively affect employees' psychological well-being and work performance. In support of this view, Robbins and Judge (2022) added that employees should not be subjected to prolonged stress during working hours since that can lead to difficulties in concentration, decision-making, and efficient task execution.

Apparently, organisations seem to suffer substantial losses through reduced productivity, higher healthcare expenditures, workplace accidents, and increased employee turnover which has agree with Armstrong (2023) that effective management of workplace stress is crucial for employee well-being, sustaining high productivity levels, and improving overall organisational effectiveness. In recent years, industries in Nigeria have experienced significant economic and operational challenges that have intensified workplace stress among employees. Pfeffer (2018) listed some challenges such as economic instability, inflation, technological advancements, high production demands, job insecurity, and increasing organisational expectations. They have all contributed substantially to rising stress levels among workers. Employees in many industrial organisations are required to meet stringent deadlines, adapt to evolving technologies, and sustain high levels of productivity despite inadequate resources and support. These demanding work conditions often lead to physical fatigue, emotional exhaustion, reduced morale, and a decline in overall productivity, thereby affecting both employee well-being and organisational performance. Stress identification constitutes a critical dimension of stress management, as organisations must first recognise the sources of workplace stress before implementing effective intervention strategies (Edoho et al., 2024). Common workplace stressors include excessive workload, role conflict, role ambiguity, ineffective supervision, limited opportunities for career advancement, and unfavourable working conditions. The timely identification of these stressors enables management

to design and implement appropriate measures that address employees' concerns and mitigate potential negative consequences. When workplace stressors are promptly recognised and effectively managed, employees are more likely to maintain high levels of motivation, job satisfaction, and productivity, thereby contributing positively to organisational performance.

Workers' productivity, which serves as the dependent variable in this study, refers to the extent to which employees efficiently and effectively perform their assigned duties in order to achieve organisational objectives Ushie et al., (2026). It is often assessed through indicators such as the quality and quantity of work completed, timeliness in task execution, innovation, commitment, and overall job performance. Given the critical role of employee productivity in organisational success, organisations depend on a productive workforce to maintain competitiveness, enhance profitability, and ensure long-term sustainability, Kossek et al., (2011). Workers' productivity is a fundamental concept in management, industrial relations, economics, and organisational behaviour. It refers to the efficiency and effectiveness with which employees utilise available resources, skills, knowledge, and time to achieve organisational objectives. Productivity is not merely the quantity of work performed but also the quality, timeliness, and value of employees' outputs relative to the resources used in producing them.

In today's competitive business environment, organisations such as Cross River Garment Factory, Cross River Noodles Factory and Cross River Feed Mill increasingly recognise workers' productivity as a critical determinant of organisational growth, profitability, innovation, and sustainability. Consequently, organisations invest in human resource development, employee motivation, stress management, and conducive work environments to improve productivity. It is on this note that Edoho et al. (2024) listed out some of the indicators of workers' productivity such as: Efficiency in carrying out assigned tasks, Effectiveness in achieving work objectives, Quality of work output, Timely completion of assigned duties, Overall job performance and Commitment to organisational goals and those factors that influence productivity of workers in an organisation; Effective stress management, Time management, Work-life balance, Employee motivation, Training and development, Leadership style, Working conditions, Occupational health and safety, Availability of technology, Work resources and Job satisfaction. The importance of this study stems from its expected contribution to both academic knowledge and practical understanding of the relationship between stress management and workers' productivity in selected industries. The findings are anticipated to be valuable to several stakeholders, including:

**Industrial Organisations and Management:** The study will provide organisational leaders and managers with relevant empirical evidence on how effective stress management practices can improve employee productivity and overall organisational performance.

**Employees:** Employees will benefit from the study through increased awareness of the sources, consequences, and management of workplace stress and such awareness can help workers adopt appropriate coping mechanisms, improve their well-being, and enhance their job performance.

**Policymakers and Government Agencies:** Is a useful resource for policymakers, labour administrators, and government agencies in formulating policies and programmes that promote healthier working conditions and improve employee welfare.

**Researchers and Academics:** It will also provide a foundation for future researcher by offering empirical evidence and insights that can be utilised by scholars who will be interested in workplace stress and organisational performance.

## **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between stress management and workers' productivity in selected industries in Southern Cross River State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. Examine the relationship between time management and workers' productivity in selected industries in Southern Cross River State.
2. Assess the relationship between work-life balance and workers' productivity in selected industries in Southern Cross River State.

## **Research Questions**

The following research questions will guide the study:

1. What relationship exists between time management and workers' productivity in selected industries in Southern Cross River State?
2. What relationship exists between work-life balance and workers' productivity in selected industries in Southern Cross River State?

## **Research Hypotheses**

The following null hypotheses will be tested at the 0.05 level of significance

1. There is no significant relationship between time management and workers' productivity in selected industries in Southern Cross River State.
2. There is no significant relationship between work-life balance and workers' productivity in selected industries in Southern Cross River State

## **Method**

This study adopted a correlational research design. The choice of this design was informed by its suitability for examining the nature and magnitude of relationships among variables without manipulating them. Specifically, the design enabled the researcher to investigate the association between stress management strategies and workers' productivity. Correlational research is particularly appropriate when the objective is to determine the extent to which variations in one variable are related to variations in another within a naturally occurring setting. Since the study sought to ascertain the relationship between stress management strategies and workers' productivity as they exist within the target population, without any experimental intervention or control, the correlational design provided a rigorous framework for generating empirical evidence and drawing valid inferences regarding the relationships among the variables under investigation.

The study was carried out in Southern Senatorial District of Cross River State. The district comprises seven Local Government Areas (LGAs), namely: Akamkpa, Akpabuyo, Bakassi, Biase, Calabar Municipal, Calabar South, and Odukpani. The district is bounded by the Atlantic Ocean to the south, the Republic of Cameroon to the east, and other parts of Cross River State to the north and west. The area is characterised by a tropical climate with distinct wet and dry seasons. Its vegetation consists predominantly of tropical rainforest and mangrove swamps, especially in the coastal areas. The district enjoys abundant natural resources, including forests, fisheries, limestone, and fertile agricultural land, which support various economic activities. Southern Cross River State serves as the commercial and administrative hub of the state, particularly through the city of Calabar, which is the state capital. The district hosts several public and private

establishments, manufacturing industries, service organisations, educational institutions, and government agencies. Major economic activities in the area include agriculture, fishing, tourism, commerce, transportation, and industrial production. The presence of industries such as cement production, cross river feed mill, cross river garment factory, hospitality services, cross river noodles factory, and other business organisations makes the district suitable for a study on stress management and workers' productivity.

The population of the study consisted of 485 industrial workers from the three listed industries. The researcher work with 142 Cross River Feed Mill, 211 Cross River Garment Factory, and 132 from Cross River Noodles Factory, all in Cross River State. The study adopted a census sampling technique where the entire population of 485 industrial workers in the specified industries were included in the study. Census sampling was considered appropriate because the population size was manageable and there is no room for selection. The researcher sought to obtain information from every member of the population, thereby eliminating sampling error and enhancing the representativeness of the findings.

The instruments used for data collection was a questionnaire titled “Stress Management Strategy and Workers Productivity Questionnaire (SMSWQPQ)”. The questionnaire that was developed by the researchers was made up of two sections namely: A and B. Section A contained information on demographic variables, while Section B contained 35 items arranged on four- point Likert rating scale: Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D), and Strongly Disagree (SD). A pilot test was conducted with 20 industrial workers who were not part of the main study sample. The pilot test yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.94, indicating that the instrument was highly reliable for the research. The data were analysed using simple linear regression analysis.

## Result

Hypothesis 1: There is no significant relationship between time management and workers productivity in industries.

To test this hypothesis, simple linear regression analysis was used. The result is presented Table 1.

**Table 1:** Summary of simple linear regression analysis of the relationship between time management and workers' productivity

| Variation of source | Sum of squares (ss) | df  | Means square (MS) | F      | Sig (p-value) |
|---------------------|---------------------|-----|-------------------|--------|---------------|
| Regression          | 350.45              | 1   | 350.45            |        |               |
| Residual            | 654.32              | 483 | 1.35              | 25.67* | 0.000         |
| Total               | 1004.77             | 484 |                   |        |               |

$R=0.59$ ,  $R^2 = 0.348$ , Adj.  $R^2 = 0.346$ , Std Error = 1.16

From Table 1, the hypothesis states that there is no significant relationship between time management and workers productivity in industries. The analysis shows that, the correlation coefficient (R) is 0.59, indicating a moderate positive relationship between time management and workers' productivity. The coefficient of determination ( $R^2 = 0.348$ ), meaning that 34.8% of the variation in workers' productivity can be explained by time management. The standard error of the estimate is 1.16, showing the average deviation of observed productivity score from the regression line. This value indicates the model's prediction accuracy, with smaller values reflecting better fit. The F-statistic, which tests and overall significance of the regression model, is 25.67 with a p-

value of 0.000. This result is statistically significant at the 0.05 level, indicating that time management has a significant meaningful impact on workers productivity. The high F-value and low p-value strongly support the hypothesis that regular time management is a significant predictor of workers' productivity in this context.

Hypothesis 2: There is no significant relationship between work-life balance and workers productivity in industries.

To test the hypothesis, simple linear regression analysis was used. The result is presented on table 2.

**Table 2:** Summary of simple linear regression analysis of the relationship between work-life balance and workers' productivity

| Sources of variation | Sum of squares (ss) | df  | Means square (MS) | F      | Sig (p-value) |
|----------------------|---------------------|-----|-------------------|--------|---------------|
| Regression           | 320.62              | 1   | 420.62            |        |               |
| Residual             | 584.15              | 483 | 1.21              | 34.89* | 0.000         |
| Total                | 1004.77             | 484 |                   |        |               |

$R=0.65$ ,  $R^2 = 0.419$ , Adj.  $R^2 = 0.417$ , Std Error = 1.10.

From table 2, the hypothesis states that there is no significant relationship between work-life balance and workers productivity in industries. The analysis shows that, the correlation coefficient (R) is 0.65, suggesting a strong positive relationship between work-life balance and workers productivity. The coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ) is 0.419, indicating that work-life balance explains 41.9% of the variability in workers' productivity. The standard error of the estimate, 1.10, reflects a good fit. The F-statistic is 34.89, with a highly significant p-value of 0.000. This result confirms that work-life balance has a statistically significant impact on workers productivity. The high F-value reinforces the robustness of the model.

## Discussion

The result from the analysis indicates a significant relationship between time management and workers' productivity. The unstandardised coefficient and standardised coefficient suggest that effective time management leads to an improvement in workers' productivity. The findings of the study is in-line with Aeon Aguinis (2017), time management has a significant positive influence on workers' productivity in the selected industries. This indicates that employees who effectively plan, prioritise, schedule, and organise their work activities are more likely to achieve higher levels of productivity than those who do not. Effective time management enables workers to complete tasks within stipulated deadlines, reduce work-related stress, improve efficiency, and enhance overall job performance. The findings further showed in the work of Moss (2021), Stephen & Timothy (2022), that employees who engage in proper planning and scheduling of tasks are better able to utilise available time efficiently, thereby minimising wastage of organisational resources. This result supports the view that time is a valuable organisational asset that must be managed effectively to achieve productivity goals. Workers who allocate sufficient time to important tasks and avoid unnecessary distractions are more capable of meeting organisational expectations and achieving desired outcomes.

In view of the second findings, the study revealed that work-life balance has a significant positive relationship with workers' productivity. This implies that, employees who are able to effectively

balance their work responsibilities with their personal and family lives tend to perform better, demonstrate greater commitment, and contribute more effectively to organisational goals which agrees with the work of Pfeffer (2018). It also suggests that work-life balance practices such as flexible work schedules, leave policies, family support programmes, and employee wellness initiatives enhance workers' productivity by reducing stress and improving job satisfaction. The result of this research as it addresses healthy balance between work and personal life which are more motivated and emotionally stable by Davis (2021). When workers are given adequate opportunities to attend to personal and family obligations without excessive work pressure, they are more likely to maintain high levels of concentration, commitment, and productivity. This finding indicates that work-life balance contributes significantly to employee well-being and organisational effectiveness.

## **Conclusion**

The study concluded that stress management is a significant determinant of workers' productivity in organisations. Findings revealed that excessive workplace stress adversely affects employees' performance, efficiency, commitment, and overall productivity. However, the adoption of effective stress management practices, including proper time management and work-life balance initiatives contributes positively to enhanced job performance and organisational effectiveness.

Furthermore, the study established that employees who effectively manage work-related stress are more likely to demonstrate higher levels of motivation, job satisfaction, creativity, and productivity. Consequently, organisations, particularly industries should regard stress management as a strategic organisational practice by implementing policies and programmes that promote employee well-being. Such efforts will foster a healthier work environment, improve organisational output, and facilitate the achievement of sustainable organisational goals.

## **Recommendations**

Based on the findings on time management and work-life balance as sub-variables; the following recommendations are made:

1. Organisations should implement effective time management training programmes to equip employees with skills in planning, prioritising tasks, setting realistic deadlines, and avoiding procrastination. This will enable workers to manage their workloads efficiently and enhance productivity.
2. Management should establish clear work schedules and realistic performance targets to prevent excessive workload and time pressure, which often contribute to workplace stress and reduced employee effectiveness.
3. Employees should be encouraged to utilise time management tools and techniques, such as work planners, task schedules, and digital productivity applications, to improve task organisation and efficient use of working hours.
4. Organisations should promote work-life balance policies by introducing flexible work arrangements, adequate leave provisions, and family-friendly programmes that enable employees to effectively balance their professional and personal responsibilities.
5. Employers should discourage excessive overtime and work overload, as these practices can negatively affect employees' physical and psychological well-being, ultimately reducing productivity and job commitment.
6. Government agencies and organisational leaders should formulate policies that support employee well-being, recognising that effective time management and a healthy work-life

balance are essential factors in sustaining high levels of workers' productivity and organisational performance.

## References

- Aeon, B., & Aguinis, H. (2017). It's about time: New perspectives and insights on time Management. *Academy of Management Perspectives*, 31(4), 309–330. <https://doi.org/10.5465/amp.2016.0166>
- Armstrong, M. (2023). *Armstrong's handbook of human resource management practice* (16th ed.). Kogan Page.
- Davis, P. (2021). *Beating burnout at work: Why teams hold the secret to well-being and resilience*. Wharton School Press.
- Edoho, G. E., & Olabisi, B. C. (2023). Promoting fringe benefits as motivational strategy and staff productivity in Nigerian Universities. *Kampala International Journal of Education (KJED)*, 3(2) 79 48-58. <https://doi.org/10.59568/KJED-2023-3-2-06>.
- Edoho, G.E., Ojong, A.R., Ukpanukpong, F. A., & Patrick, E. O. (2024). The Role of Perceived Motivation and Workers' Productivity within Educational Sectors in Cross River State, Nigeria. *LWATI: A Journal of Contemporary Research*, 21(1), 117-127.
- Kossek, E. E., Baltes, B. B., & Matthews, R. A. (2011). How work-family research can finally have an impact in organizations. *Industrial and Organizational Psychology*, 4(3), 352–369
- Lazarus, R. S., & Folkman, S. (2024). *Stress, appraisal and coping*. Springer
- Moss, J. (2021). *The burnout epidemic: The rise of chronic stress and how we can fix it*. Harvard Business Review Press.
- Pfeffer, J. (2018). *Dying for a paycheck: How modern management harms employee health and company performance*. Harper Business
- Robbins, S. P., & Judge, T. A. (2022). *Organizational behavior* (19th ed.). Pearson Education.
- Ushie, G.B., Edoho, G.E., Ellah, I. A. & Ituen, I.E. (2026). Reward System and Workers Productivity in Selected Industries in Southern Cross River State, Nigeria. *International Journal of Contemporary Social Science Education (IJCSE)*, 7(1), 10-16.