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Stress Management among Senior Academic Administrators in Ghana's Public Universities: A Cross-Sectional Design Study

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Abstract: This study explores the sources of stress among administrative staff in Ghana's Public Universities, focusing on their socio-demographic characteristics, work experience, schedules, and stress management strategies. A total of 90 respondents participated, exhibiting a diverse age range predominantly between 26-55 years, with a significant gender imbalance favoring females (66.7%). The analysis reveals that 46.7% of participants have over ten years of experience in their roles, primarily working regular 9-5 hours (83.3%). The findings indicate that travel distance, work breaks, and overtime patterns significantly influence stress. A notable 83.3% of respondents report that travel distance increases their stress levels. Furthermore, 93.3% are unaware of university-provided stress management programs, and most of those who have attended stress management training workshops perceive them as ineffective. Recommendations for improving staff well-being include implementing health and wellness programs, enhancing work-life balance, providing stress management education, and improving on work environments. These insights underscore the urgent need for effective interventions to mitigate stress and foster a healthier workplace culture.

Keywords: Stress levels, administrative staff, management, overtime, work, stress management

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1. Introduction

Stress refers to a group of emotional imbalances brought by the demands of modern life combined with professional commitment at work (Thanem & Elraz, 2022). Workplace stress is one of the biggest obstacles one can experience. Stress at work can take various forms and dimensions, affecting all sectors of economy professionals and careers. A research study reported the following findings: 83% of US workers report work-related stress, and 25% feel that their job is the primary source of stress. About one million working-class Americans miss work every day due to stress (Bajji, *et al*, 2022) and 76% of these report that workplace stress affects their relationships. The increasing physical and mental toll that this new economic culture is taking on employees, together with the rising expenses that businesses are bearing due to lost productivity from absenteeism, turnover, and disability leave, all point to the creation of more stressful work conditions (Goh, *et a*l, 2015).

Job stress is detrimental physical and emotional reactions that arise when someone's needs, resources, or talents are not met by the demands of their job, as defined by The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH). To Elaborate, (Demerouti & Bakker, 2023) states that job stress occurs when there are discrepancies between the job's expectations, the employee's capacity, and the resources to meet those demands. This explanation points out in the scenario that what one person finds stimulating may produce a diverse stress level for another person by demonstrating the rapport between individuals and their working environment. In their study, Ornek & Esin, (2020) took a health-related view, as defined occupational stress as the process in which worker's psychological experience and demand (stressors) produce both short-term (strains) and long-term changes in mental and physical health. Although stress issues were common in professional settings, mostly in institutions, until recently, stress has gained significant attention. Stress is a challenge that cannot be disregarded whether it is real or imagined, common or uncommon, rare or widespread, misused or misunderstood, the stress issue cannot be ignored (Stanford, 2020). Mainly in the educational sector is one of the professional categories where stress is recognised to be the highest (Daniel, 2019).

Based on various definitions, stress is the strain that workers experience and how it affects their emotions, competence, and ability to perform or give their best. It is tensions and pressures that employees experience because of hectic circumstances in the work environment.

Depression-related absenteeism costs US firms $51 billion annually, with an additional $26 billion in treatment expenses (Shapiro, 2022). Compared to the 1990s, middle-aged participants estimated that stress would have more than 27% impact on their financial conditions in the years 2010s (Almeida et al., 2020). More than 50% of employees are disengaged, which lowers productivity (Stansbury & Summers, 2018). Firms spend around 75% of employees' annual salaries to replace staff members or compensate for the lost productive time. The leading causes of workplace stress are workload (39% of workers), interpersonal problems (31%), balancing work and personal obligations (19%), and job insecurity (6%) (SHINA, 2022).

Most, if not all, educational institutions globally face this challenge with no exception. Many firms still invest significant money to help their employees manage the stress of performing or carrying out their roles and responsibilities. According to a Gallup poll, the daily stress record has risen high, increasing from 38% in 2019 to 43% in 2020 as a result of workplace closure, border closure, and job losses. Leaders and managers should address this at all levels, as it may result in a rise in disengagement, anger, and burnout. The fact that university administrators are multitasked duty assignments to them is one of their main sources of occupational stress. Administrators in Ghana, especially those at the University for Development Studies (UDS) and Akenten Appiah-Menka University of Skills Training and Entrepreneurial Development (AAMUSTED), are no exception. At the university, administrative duties have increased alongside the escalating demands associated with student course verification, counselling, and research responsibilities.

Top administrative staff members are expected to produce top-notch research in reputable publications to advance within the firm. "Job insecurity" and "work intensification" are two important consequences of these economic changes (Mauno, *et al*, 2023), while the former speaks to the extent to which employees are being forced to work harder than they did before the past, and the latter is concerned about the possibility or worries of losing their jobs. More stressful work environments are being established, as proven by the growing financial and psychological toll that this new economic culture has brought on workers, as well as the increase in expenses that firms are bearing owing to lost productivity from absenteeism, turnover, and disability leave (Goh, *et a*l, 2015)A few of these are having too much work to do, not enough time, no opportunities for growth, getting too little credit, shifting roles at work, and receiving fewer finances and resources.

Moreover, various other stresses have been recognised, such as having high expectations for oneself, experiencing job instability, systemic injustices, being concerned about mergers, and a lack of performance feedback (Carrero Pinedo, *et al*, 2022). Stress-

related problems are growing concerns among employees (particularly non-academic staff) of institutions of higher learning.

Aluko, O. I. S., (2023) summarized the critical nature of job stress for this particular set of workers: occupational stress seriously compromises the personal and professional welfare of a large percentage of university staff, which in turn affects the quality of education and research work. The role of university non-academic employees is significant and supportive, this category of labour executed by university employees will undoubtedly continue to expand as institutions increase in size globally. Sharma et al. noted that this category of labour executed by university employees will undoubtedly continue to expand as institutions increase (Sharma et al., 2022).

Because of the demands of jobs, stress management among university administrators is a vital topic of concern. The existing literature offers insightful analysis of the limitations in understanding the subject and recommends possible lines of inquiry for investigation. Even though the significance of the metrics in research appraisal and oversight has been extensively examined, there has not been much attention paid to university administrators' stress management, according to Graves, *et al*, (2021). This points to a knowledge gap regarding the unique stressors that administrators face in the academic setting and advocates for further studies to address this issue. Bush, (2020) emphasized the relevance of comprehending stress resistance mechanisms, which can apply to the context of stress management among university administrators. This suggests a possible avenue for future research to investigate the coping mechanisms and resilience strategies administrators adopt to mitigate the impact of stress in their professional roles.

The overview of Virtual Reality (VR) in mental health therapy that emphasizes its limits as well as recent advances (Park et al., 2019). While this study focused on mental disorders, it can also be applied to the stress management setting of higher learning managers. This underscores the necessity of conducting studies to determine whether VR-based therapies might effectively lower administrators' stress levels. Future studies can build on this to explore cooperative approaches between academic institutions and industry partners to create efficient stress-reducing plans for university administrators. During COVID-19 pandemic, Abbas, *et al* (2021) highlighted the relevance of social media in crisis management and mental health challenges. Even though the focus was on a different context, the insights can be used to examine how social media affects university administrators' stress levels and mental health. This could be a comprising direction for future research. University administrators in the face of stress can be improved by implementing effective knowledge management techniques, according to research by Chow et al., (2018) on the relationship between knowledge management and organisational performance.

This study aims to assess and propose stress-mitigating techniques or healthy coping mechanisms for university administrators, especially female administrators (senior staff), to handle stress and enhance their ability to function more effectively, efficiently, and productively. This would enhance academic quality, reduce healthcare expenses, and boost productivity within the university system. The results of the study would also help the university's management understand potential stressors and offer the required solutions to help lessen stress and its detrimental effects on productivity.

2. Materials and Methods

This section details the steps taken to conduct the study. These are discussed under the following headings: research design, research setting, population, sample and sampling procedure, instrument, data collection procedure, data analysis, and ethical issues involved in research involving human participation.

2.1 Research Design

A cross-sectional descriptive research design was used for this study. A cross-sectional design is appropriate for examining relationships between variables and making inferences about stress management issues among administrative staff in the study population. Mixed methods were appropriate research methods because it support a more

comprehensive understanding of the problem. The quantitative component helps identify the extent and patterns of stress, while the qualitative component captures the underlying reasons and perceptions of stress management. This combination provides both breadth and depth of the research, offering a holistic view of the issue (Weyant, 2022).

2.2 Study Area and Setting

The study was conducted at the University for Development Studies (UDS), Tamale, and Akenten Appiah-Menka University of Skills Training and Entrepreneurial Development (AAMUSTED), Kumasi. UDS is a premier public university in northern Ghana. Established in 1992 and operates with a core mandate of integrating academic work with practical development challenges, particularly in underserved and rural areas. It has two major campuses in Tamale and Nyankpala, with satellite campuses for distance learners spread out to other parts of the country. Its major faculties/schools include agriculture, education, medicine, nursing, engineering, business, etc.

The Akenten Appiah-Menka University of Skills Training and Entrepreneurial Development (AAMUSTED) is Ghana's leading institution dedicated to Technical and Vocational Education and Training (TVET) as well as Entrepreneurship and Teacher Education. The University comprises of nine Faculties with twenty-three Academic Departments. The main campus in Kumasi hosts five Faculties and twelve (12) Academic Departments, while the Asante-Mampong Campus houses four (4) Faculties and eleven (11) Academic Departments.

The administrative staff play crucial roles in managing the university's day-to-day operations, including students' admissions, academic records keeping, and resource management. Given the high demands of their roles, administrative staff face significant stressors related to workload and their roles in community projects.

The study included University staff who perform administrative roles, are permanent employees of the institution, have worked for at least six months in their related position, and were willing to participate and present during the data collection period. It excluded academic staff, part-time employees, and those who have worked for less than six months in these universities. Staff who were on long-term leave were also excluded, as their experiences may not reflect current stress conditions.

2.3 Sample and Sampling Procedures

Sampling, an act, process, or technique of selecting a suitable sample, or a representative part of a population to determine the parameters or characteristics of the whole population. It involves the selection of a number of study units from a defined study population (Rahman et al., 2022).

The sample size for this study was calculated based on the total number of administrative staff available at UDS and AAMUSTED who meet the inclusion criteria using Yamane (1967) formula for sample size determination. Using the total number (**N**) of the known population and an alpha level (e) of 0.05, the sample size was reached using Yamane's (1967) formula.

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

Where: **n** = required sample size, **N** = Available population and **e** = alpha level. Thus, $n = \frac{N}{1+N(0.05)2}$ = n = 116 / 1+116(0.05)^{2} = 116 / 1+0.29 = 116/1.29 = 89.92= 90 respondents

A purposive sampling process was used to recruit 90 administrative staff who met the inclusion criteria at both UDS and AAMUSTED. Purposive sampling was chosen because it allows the researcher to focus on a specific group, in this case, administrative staff. This method ensures that only participants who can provide relevant, meaningful data are included. The researcher recognises the importance of sample size in the generalisation of findings. A purposive sampling in which decisions concerning the individuals to be included in the sample are sorely taken by the researcher, based upon a variety of criteria, which may include specialist knowledge of the research issue or capacity and willingness to participate in the research (Baltes & Ralph, 2022).

2.4 Data Collection Instruments

Data for this study was collected by using a structured questionnaire for the quantitative phase and a semi-structured questionnaire for the qualitative phase. The questionnaire was developed in accordance with the objectives set for the study. The quantitative questionnaire was structured to cater for the participants' demographics, stress assessment sources, and coping mechanisms. The semi-structured questionnaire was designed to elicit the qualitative aspects of stress management, using exploratory questions (Mazhar et al., 2021).

2.5 Data Collection Procedure

Before the main study, pilot testing was done using a small fraction of administrative staff to ensure clarity and relevance. Feedback was used to refine the questionnaire. Also, prior to the administration of the questionnaire, the researcher sought assistance from the heads of departments of the various units to identify the participants who qualified to participate in the study. Pre-testing of the questionnaire was conducted among twenty (20) administrative staff members, ten (10) from each university. This was done to help eliminate ambiguity and make the questionnaire clear and reliable. The researcher administered the structured questionnaire to the respondents online, allowing participants to complete it at their convenience. The semi-structured questionnaire was also conducted face-to-face and online via video calls and recorded electronically. The time frame for the questionnaire was the upper limit based on the pilot study, which allowed ample time for the participants.

According to Bhattacherjee, (2022) validity is the extent to which an instrument adequately represents what it is supposed to measure. To maintain the validity of the study, a standardised questionnaire was used, which answered the various objectives of the study. The tool was also made available to other senior researchers to have input in the form of correction before the instrument was administered, maintaining the questionnaire's trustworthiness.

2.6 Data Processing and Analysis

The data was collected, compiled, and analysed using Statistical Package for Social Science Software (SPSS) for the quantitative data, and MAXQDA was used for the qualitative data analysis. Using thematic summaries, results were presented in tables and charts according to their frequencies and percentages. These approaches were used in the data analysis process because it enabled the research findings' overall rigour and comprehensiveness. The analysis was based on the specific objectives set for the study. The analysis was done in descriptive approaches to identify answers to the objectives for which this study was carried out.

2.7 Ethical Considerations

Ethical principles in research concern issues of honesty, privacy, confidentiality, and respect for the rights of individuals. The researcher obtained approval from the authorities of the University through the ethical review board prior to data collection. Ethical considerations are very important in research involving human beings as participants (Kang & Hwang, 2021). The ethical principles in research are general and concern issues such as honesty, privacy, confidentiality, and respect for the rights of individuals. The respondents in this research were assured and accorded confidentiality of the information they provided as required by ethics. The autonomy of respondents was also maintained, and they were made to understand the purpose of the study and their right to withdraw from the study at any point without consequences if they felt the need to do so. They were also made to understand that participation in the study was voluntary, and no respondent was coerced to participate.

3. Results

3.1 Socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents

Table 1 presents demographic data on age, gender, and marital status. A total of 90 were recruited for this study, with a 100% response rate in terms of age. The majority of individuals (43.3%) fall within the 26-35-year range, followed closely by those in the 46-55-year range (40.0%). The youngest and oldest age groups, under 25 and 56 and above, make up the smallest proportions, at 6.7% each.

The gender distribution shows a clear majority of females (66.7%), with males making up 30.0% and a small percentage (3.3%) preferring not to disclose their gender. This suggests a significant gender imbalance in the population. Regarding marital status, the majority of individuals (73.3%) are married, with a small percentage (6.7%) being widowed. The ranks are quite varied, with the most represented being Senior Assistant Registrars (40%) and Assistant Registrars (26.7%). Junior Registrars also account for 20%, while Deputy Registrars represent smaller portions at 13.3%. Also, in terms of roles, Faculty Officers dominate, constituting 76.7% of the total. Other roles, such as Directors, are much less represented, with percentages of 6.7%, 3.3%, and 13.3%, respectively.

Table 1: Socio-demographic Characteristics of the Respondents

Category	Variable	Frequency	Percentage (%)	
Age				
	Under 25years	6	6.7	
	26-35 years	39	43.3	
	46-55years	36	40.0	
	56 and above	9	10.0	=100%
Gender				
	Female	60	66.7	
	Male	27	30.0	
	Prefer not to say	3	3.3	=100%
Marital status				
	Married	66	73.3	
	Single	10	20.0	
	Widow/widower	6	6.7	
Rank				
	Assistant registrar	24	26.7	
	Deputy registrar	12	13.3	
	Junior registrar	18	20	
	Senior assistant reg	36	40	
Role				
	Director	6	6.7	
	Others	15	16.6	
	Faculty officer	69	76.7	

3.3 Years of Work Experience among Respondents

Figure 1 presents data on respondents' years of experience in their current roles. It shows that a significant portion of the workforce has extensive experience, with 42 (46.7%) respondents having 10 years or more in their current positions. Additionally, 33 (36.7%) respondents have been in their roles for 2-5 years. A smaller percentage, 9 (10%), have 6-10 years of experience in their current roles, while 6 (6.7%) of the respondents have less than 1 year of experience in their current roles.

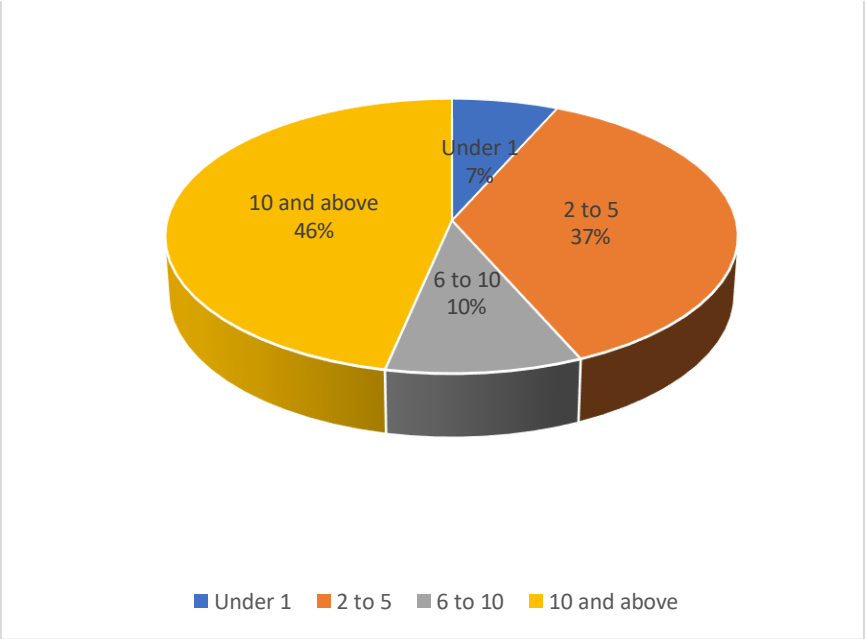

Figure 1: Years of work experience among respondents

3.4 Primary Sources of Stress Among Administrative Staff

3.4.1 Duration of work schedule

The chart below (Figure 2) shows the distribution of work schedules among individuals. The majority, 75 (83.3%), work regular 9-5 hours, indicating a traditional and stable work arrangement. A small percentage, 6 (6.7%), work flexible hours, which suggests some autonomy and adaptability in their schedules. Another 6 (6.7%) are engaged in shift work, implying varied and potentially non-traditional working hours.

The remaining 3 (3.3%) fall under the " Others " category, which could encompass a range of unique or unconventional work arrangements that do not fit into the other categories.

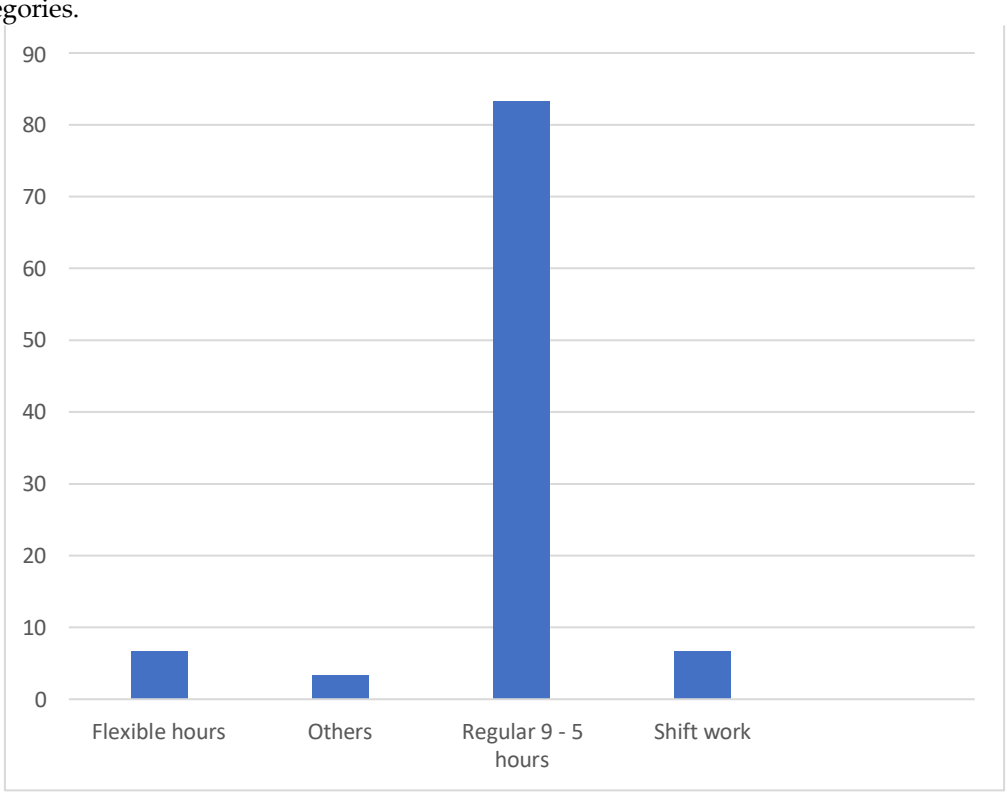

Figure 2: Duration of work schedule among respondents

3.4.2 Work Break Durations and Overtime Patterns.

Table 2 below presents data on the work habits and break periods of a group of individuals, focusing on break duration, overtime work, and the frequency of overtime. Starting with break periods, most respondents (46.7%) reported taking a break of 45 to 60 minutes, which suggests that most individuals have a substantial rest period during their workday. A significant proportion (40%) indicated they do not have a break. Only 13.3% of respondents take shorter breaks lasting 30 to 45 minutes.

Regarding overtime work, a substantial 56.7% of individuals reported that they often must work overtime; meanwhile, 40% of respondents indicated that they sometimes work overtime, while only a small percentage (3.3%) reported not working overtime.

Finally, the frequency of overtime work reveals that 53.3% of respondents occasionally work overtime. Another 30% of respondents sometimes work overtime and a smaller group (13.3%) works overtime daily, while 3.3% reported never working overtime.

Table 2: Work Break Durations and Overtime Patterns

Question	Answer	Frequency	Percentage (%)	
How long is your break period?				
	30 - 45 minutes	12	13.3	
	45 - 60 minutes	42	46.7	
	No break	36	40	=100%
Do you often have to work overtime?				
	No	3	3.3	
	Yes	51	56.7	
	Sometimes	36	40	100%
How often do you work overtime				
	Daily	12	13.3	
	Never	3	3.3	
	Occasionally	48	53.3	
	Sometimes	27	30.0	100%

3.4.3 Implications of Travel Distance

Table 3 below presents data on daily travel, revealing various aspects of transport distance, transportation means, travel time, and its impact on stress levels among respondents. Regarding daily travel distance, the majority of respondents thus, 33 (36.7%), travel between 20 to 30 km, while 24 (26.7%) cover a distance of 10 to 20 km. A smaller portion, 21(23.3%), travel less than 10 km, and 12 (13.3%) cover distances not exceeding 30 km. Regarding transportation, personal cars are the predominant choice, with 75 (83.3%) respondents using them. Motorcycles are used by 9 (10%) of the respondents, and only 6 (6.7%) rely on public transport for their daily commute. Travel time varies among the respondents, with 33 (36.7%) spending 15 to 30 minutes on their commute. Another 27(30%) travel between 30 to 45 minutes, while 30 (33.3%) travel longer than 45 minutes. When examining the impact of travel distance on stress, a significant 75 (83.3%) of respondents report increased stress levels due to their transportation. Only 3 (3.3%) feel that their travel distance decreases their stress, while 12 (13.3%) experience no impact on their stress levels as a result of transportation.

Table 3: Implications of Stress among Respondents

Category	Variable	Frequency	Percentage (%)	
How far is your daily travel				
	10 - 20 km	24	26.7	
	20 - 30 km	33	36.7	
	Less than 10 km	21	23.3	
	More than 30km	12	13.3	= 100%

Means of transportation				
	Motorcycle	9	10	
	Personal car	75	83.3	
	Public transport	6	6.7	= 100%
How long do you travel from home to work place?				
	15 - 30 minutes	33	36.7	
	30 - 45 minutes	27	30	
	Above 45 minutes	30	33.3	= 100%
How does your travel distance impact your stress?				
	Decreases	3	3.3	
	Increases	75	83.3	
	No impact	12	13.3	= 100

3.5 Effectiveness of Current Stress Management Strategies Employed by Administrative Staff

Table 4 presents stress management strategies employed by administrative staff; the survey results revealed that a significant majority of respondents, 93.3%, are not aware of any stress management policies or programmes provided by the university, while only 6.7% of respondents are aware of such initiatives. Regarding participation in stress management training workshops, 76.7% of respondents indicated they had not taken part in such workshops, while 23.3% reported participating. Opinions on their effectiveness are varied among those who have participated in the workshops. A majority of 57.1% of these participants found the current stress management initiatives ineffective. In contrast, 28.6% considered the initiatives very effective, and 14.3% rated them moderately effective.

Table 4 Effectiveness of Current Stress Management Strategies Employed by Administrative Staff

Category	Variable	Frequency	Percentage (%)	
Are you aware of any stress management policies or programs provided by the university?				
	Yes	6	6.7	
	No	84	93.3	=100%
Have you participated in any stress management training workshops?				
	Yes	21	23.3	
	No	69	76.7	=100%
If yes, how effective do you find the current stress management initiative?				
	Not effective	12	57.1	
	Moderate effective	3	14.3	
	Very effective	6	28.6	=100%

3.6 Evidence-Based Interventions to Reduce Stress and Improve Overall Well-Being Among Administrative Staff

Figure 3 below shows some evidence-based interventions to reduce stress and improve overall well-being among respondents. When asked about their comfort level in discussing stress-related issues with their supervisor, 36.7% of respondents said they feel comfortable doing so, while 46.7% do not. Additionally, 16.7% of respondents were uncertain, responding with "Maybe." In total, 90 people participated in this survey.

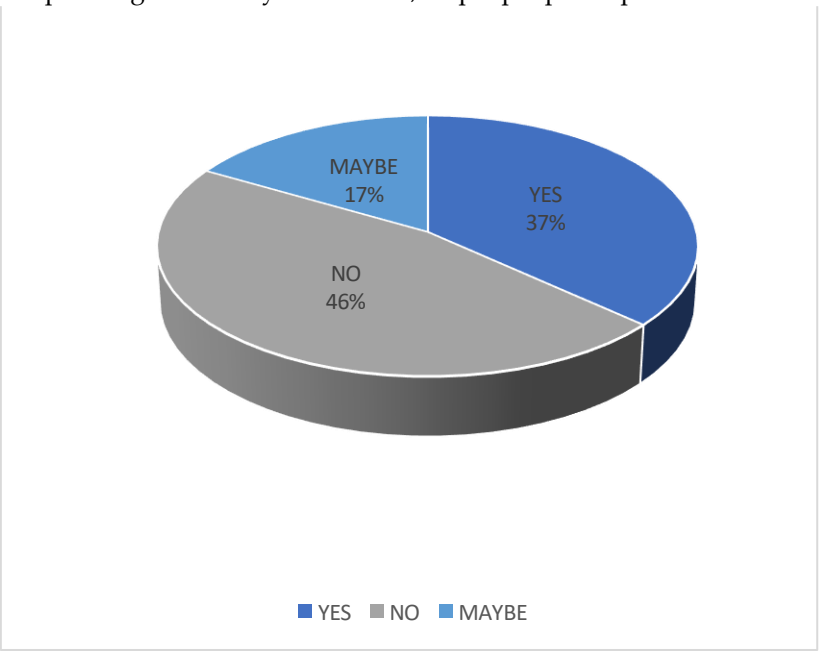

Figure 3: Evidence-Based Interventions to Reduce Stress and Improve Overall Well-Being Among Administrative Staff

3.7 Role Supervisors Play in Terms of Stress Management

The survey results indicate that a majority of respondents, 53.3%, believe their supervisor understands and supports their workload moderately well. Meanwhile, 30% of respondents feel their supervisor supports them well. However, 16.7% of respondents expressed that their supervisor does not understand or support their workload well at all. Overall, the survey gathered responses from 90 individuals.

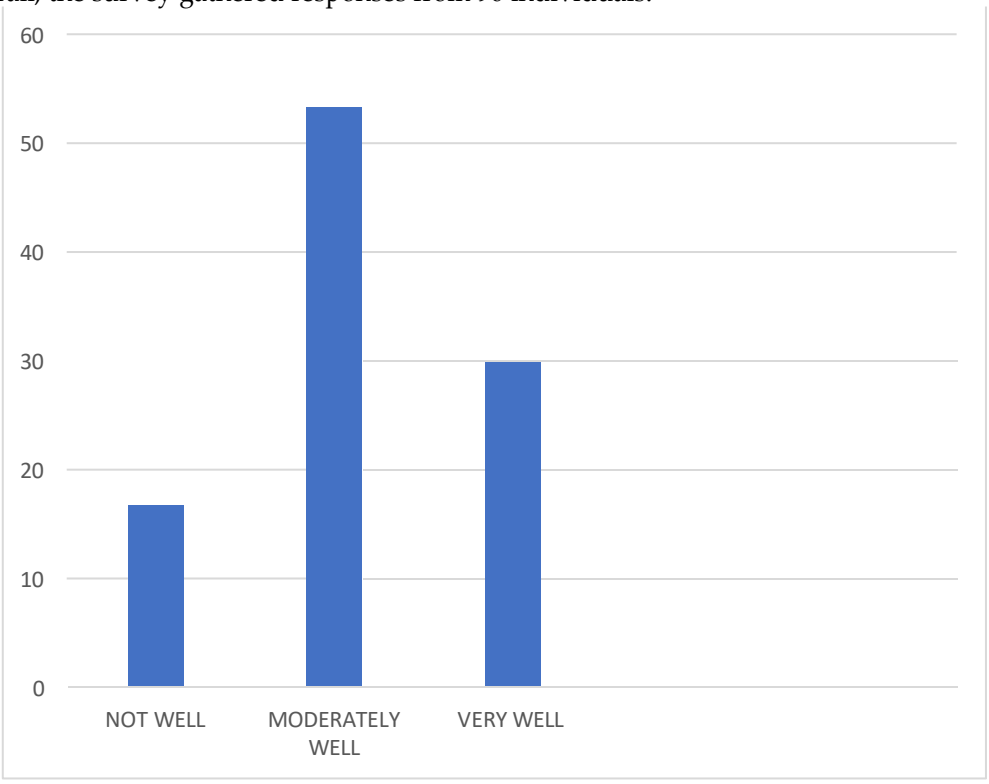

Figure 4: Role Supervisors Play in Terms of Stress Management

3.8 Measures Participants Recommended to Facilitate Leadership to Implement to Reduce Stress among Staff

All survey and interview participants were asked what measures can be implemented to reduce stress among administrative staff. Most participants (32%) emphasised the importance of Health and Wellness Programmes. This indicates a strong desire for initiatives directly addressing physical and mental well-being. Suggestions included organizing keep-fit clubs, providing free health screenings, and creating recreational facilities. One participant highlighted the holistic nature of stress management, stating, "Eat well, get enough sleep, be physically active, take time to relax, connect with others, etc."

Training and Stress Management Education was the second most recommended measure (28%). Participants expressed a need for workshops and professional training specifically focused on stress management. One respondent suggested, *"Organize professional training on stress management for staff," while another recommended* that "They should include stress management programs in the university policies."

24% of the responses emphasized work-life balance and flexibility. Suggestions in this category included implementing flexible working hours, encouraging staff to take annual leave, and recognizing employees for their hard work. One participant noted the importance of *"flexible hours, staff encouraged to take their break, excursions."*

Twenty per cent of the responses recommended improvements to the work environment and resources. Participants highlighted the need for better-equipped workspaces, improved ICT infrastructure, and clearer work objectives. One respondent stated, *"Issues with ICT should be fixed for work to progress effectively. Also, office space and resources should be made readily available to staff to ease stress at work."*

4. Discussion

The findings of the study showed that among the primary sources of stress, the duration of work schedule and workload constituted the primary sources of stress where administrative staff are required to work for longer hours and are given more roles to perform than they could contain hence producing stress in the course of working and these findings are consistent with the studies in academic literature that excessive work greatly influence productivity (Boakye et al., 2022; Nekoranec & Kmosena, 2015). These two factors are related in that administrative staff have to finish more work before the next day, which stresses them because they have to decide what to do and what not to do. Work break durations and travel distances were also reported to cause stress. A significant number of the respondents indicated they do not have a break at all, and some others indicated shorter breaks lasting 30 to 45 minutes. Also, some respondents have to travel between 20 km to 30 km for work, which contributes to stress by consuming valuable time, increasing exhaustion, and limiting personal time for rest and recovery. The study also explores the role supervisors play in terms of stress management. The study revealed that 30% feel that their supervisor supports them very well, 53.3% believe their supervisors understand their workload moderately well, while 16.7% of respondents expressed that their supervisor does not understand or support their workload. These suggest that unsupportive supervisions create tensions between staff and supervisors, one of the many influential factors that create workplace stress. The analysis also showed that 46.7% do not feel comfortable discussing stress-related matters with their supervisors. In comparison, 16.7% of respondents were uncertain, which suggests weak or no cordiality between staff and their supervisors. This is consistent with the works of (Ipsen et al., 2010; and Khanchel, 2019), who concluded that unhealthy relationships with supervisors and co-workers result in stress. Furthermore, 93.3% are not aware of any stress management policies or programs provided by the university, while only 6.7% of respondents are aware of such initiatives, which implies that little effort is made by university management to deal with work-related stress.

5. Conclusion

This study examined the causes and management of stress among administrative staff at the University for Development Studies. The findings reveal that most respondents experience stress levels caused by long work hours, inadequate break durations, and significant travel distances, with 83.3% reporting stress increases due to travelling. The study also found limited awareness and utilisation of institutional stress management initiatives, as 93.3% of respondents were unaware of formal policies supporting staff well-being. Of those who had participated in stress management workshops, some found these initiatives ineffective, signalling a gap in the practical benefits of existing programs.

Furthermore, while many staff members expressed discomfort in discussing stress with supervisors, 53.3% believed their supervisors moderately understood and supported their workloads. However, there remains a significant margin for improvement in supervisory support.

The study also emphasised the need for specific interventions; respondents' recommendations centred on flexible work schedules, health and wellness initiatives, and improved tools for stress management and professional growth. These actions are anticipated to reduce stress and promote a positive work atmosphere. Implementing such measures could significantly enhance staff productivity, morale, and overall well-being, contributing to a healthier institutional culture at the University for Development Studies.

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