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The nature, causes, and effects of occupational stress on academic lecturer performance in private tertiary institutions located in Gaborone, Botswana.

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DECLARATION

I, Roselight Chuma Pepukai, bearing student number PHDMGT22216171, do hereby solemnly declare that the thesis entitled:

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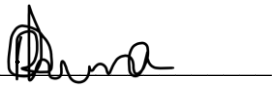
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This research has not been submitted for any similar qualification at any other academic institution. I further declare that, to the best of my knowledge, this work does not contain any material previously published or written by another person, except where due reference has been made in the text and in the list of references provided.

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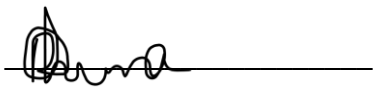
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DEDICATION

This thesis is dedicated with deepest love and gratitude to my beloved family.

To my late father, Teva Chuma who supported my efforts throughout the academic ladder.

To my mother, Enia Kanengoni Chuma whose sacrifices, prayers, and unconditional love have been the bedrock of my academic pursuits. Your faith in me never wavered, even when I doubted myself.

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Above all, to God Almighty, the God of Abraham Isaac and Jacob, indeed I say Ebenezer, thus far the Lord has helped and taken me according to 1 Samuel chapter 7 verse 12 for allowing his holy spirit to quicken and freshen me in my doctoral studies.

And to all readers and researchers may this work be much yours as it is mine!

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Finally, I dedicate this achievement to everyone who believes in the power of education and the importance of perseverance. This thesis stands as a testament to the fact that with determination and faith, anything is possible.

ABSTRACT

This study investigated the nature, causes, and effects of occupational stress on academic lecturer performance in private tertiary institutions located in Gaborone, Botswana. The backdrop to this research is a higher education sector increasingly characterized by rising workloads, resource limitations, and growing performance expectations placed on lecturers. These factors have raised concerns about the impact of stress on both individual well-being and institutional effectiveness.

Adopting a convergent parallel mixed-methods research design, the study combined quantitative survey data from academic staff with qualitative insights obtained through open-ended responses. The quantitative component utilized structured questionnaires distributed to academic staff and managers across private tertiary institutions in Gaborone. From a target population of 1,173 academic staff and managers across 14 registered private tertiary institutions, a sample of 294 respondents was selected, of which 255 valid responses were obtained, representing an 86.7% response rate. Descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and regression models were used to assess the extent of occupational stress and its impact on various dimensions of lecturer performance, including teaching quality, productivity, student engagement, and deadline compliance. Qualitative data were analyzed thematically to capture deeper personal and contextual narratives around stress experiences.

The findings revealed that occupational stress is both prevalent and multidimensional in nature. Major stressors included excessive workload, time constraints, role ambiguity, administrative overload, and insufficient institutional support. Quantitative findings showed statistically significant negative relationships between occupational stress and lecturer performance, with correlation coefficients ranging from $r = -0.68$ to $r = -0.72$ across key performance dimensions. Regression analysis further showed that occupational stress predictors explained 58% of the variance in lecturer performance ($R^2 = 0.58$), with emotional exhaustion and lack of role clarity emerging as the strongest contributors to reduced performance. Qualitative findings reinforced these results by highlighting lecturers' experiences of fatigue, frustration, reduced motivation, and challenges in balancing teaching, administrative, and personal responsibilities.

The study concludes that occupational stress in Botswana's private tertiary institutions is not merely an individual challenge, but a structural issue embedded in organizational culture, management practices, and institutional governance frameworks. Based on these findings, the study recommends that private tertiary institutions review lecturer workloads and role allocations, establish staff wellness and psychosocial support programmes, strengthen communication and managerial support systems, and embed stress management and emotional well-being interventions within staff development and

human resource policies. The study further underscores the importance of inclusive leadership, staff participation in decision-making, and sustained investment in academic support infrastructure.

This study contributes to the growing body of literature on higher education in emerging economies, particularly within the SADC region, by providing empirical evidence on the relationship between occupational stress and lecturer performance in Botswana's private tertiary education sector. It offers practical insights for policymakers, institutional leaders, and scholars interested in academic workforce sustainability, and opens avenues for future research, including longitudinal investigations into stress across academic career lifecycles and comparative analyses between public and private tertiary institutions.

Key words: Occupational Stress, Lecturer Performance, Private Tertiary Institutions, Higher Education, Botswana, Workload, Role Ambiguity, Academic Burnout, Mixed Methods

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

Abbreviation	Meaning
BQA	Botswana Qualifications Authority
BSE	Botswana Stock Exchange
CEO	Chief Executive Officer
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease 2019
CPD	Continuing Professional Development
EAP	Employee Assistance Programme
EQ	Emotional Quotient
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HR	Human Resources
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
IHE	Institutions of Higher Education
KMO	Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (Measure of Sampling Adequacy)
MoESD	Ministry of Education and Skills Development
NCE	National Credit and Qualifications Framework
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
OCB	Organisational Citizenship Behaviour
PCA	Principal Component Analysis
PTSD	Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder
PTI	Private Tertiary Institution
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SPSS	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
UNISA	University of South Africa
UoL	University of Lusaka
WHO	World Health Organization

CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

1.0 Chapter Overview

This chapter introduces the research study about work stress among lecturers in private tertiary Institutions in Botswana mainly looking at lecturers only at academic level. It gives a background of the study, explains the problem statement, and describes where the study was done. It also shows the main objectives of the research, the research questions that guided it, and why the study is important. The chapter further mentions what the study focused on, problem and its settings, and the challenges faced. Lastly, it explains important terms used in the study.

1.1 Background of the study

Occupational stress among lecturers has become an increasingly important issue in higher education due to changing work environments, technological advancement, resource constraints, increasing competition, and growing stakeholder expectations. Work-related stress has been associated with workload, work-life balance, limited institutional resources, and increasing performance demands (Shaikh, 2021; Hassan et al., 2020; Kakada & Deshpande, 2018). Although stress has long been recognised as a physiological and psychological response to workplace demands (Selye, 1956; Kempuraj et al., 2020), contemporary higher education environments have introduced new stressors associated with digital transformation, blended learning, increased administrative responsibilities, and changing student expectations.

Private tertiary institutions in Botswana are not immune to these challenges. Recent Botswana studies demonstrate that lecturers increasingly experience stress arising from heavy workloads, performance management pressures, inadequate resources, managerial practices, and changing institutional expectations (Moremi, 2025; Monyamane, Combrinck, & Graham, 2025; Combrinck, Monyamane, & Graham, 2025; Ndiane & Iloanya, 2025; Pepukai, 2026; Pepukai, Muchindu, & Jere, 2026). These studies suggest that occupational stress is becoming an important organisational and employee wellbeing issue requiring greater scholarly attention.

Technology has further transformed the academic profession. Lecturers are expected to teach face-to-face, online, part-time and distance learners while simultaneously engaging in research, administration, student support and community engagement (Hassan et al., 2020; Mwenda et al.,

2019). These expanded responsibilities often reduce work-life balance and increase work pressure, particularly where institutional resources are limited.

International evidence similarly identifies workload, role conflict, job insecurity, inadequate organisational support, poor reward systems, and limited person-job fit as major contributors to lecturer stress (Xu & Young, 2021; Usoro, 2018; Nemasango & Ivovo, 2018). While these factors have been widely examined internationally, recent Botswana literature indicates that local institutional conditions, resource limitations and managerial practices continue to shape occupational stress within private tertiary institutions (Moremi, 2025; Gareitse, 2025; Pepukai et al., 2026).

Botswana's tertiary education sector has expanded considerably over the past three decades through the establishment of both public and private universities and colleges. These institutions play a critical role in developing human capital and supporting national socio-economic development. However, expansion has also increased expectations placed on lecturers, who remain central to delivering quality teaching, research and student development. Consequently, understanding the factors contributing to occupational stress has become increasingly important for institutional sustainability and employee wellbeing.

Theoretically, this study is informed by both Classical Management Theory and the Human Relations perspective (Cole & Kelly, 2014). Whereas the Classical approach emphasises organisational structures, efficiency and control, the Human Relations perspective recognises that employee wellbeing, motivation, recognition and supportive working conditions significantly influence organisational performance. These perspectives provide an appropriate foundation for examining occupational stress among lecturers in Botswana's private tertiary institutions.

Recent Botswana evidence suggests that inadequate resources, increasing workloads, supervisory challenges, performance pressures and limited organisational support continue to undermine lecturer wellbeing and effectiveness (Moremi, 2025; Ndiane & Iloanya, 2025; Pepukai, 2026; Pepukai, Muchindu, & Jere, 2026). Despite these emerging findings, limited empirical research has comprehensively examined the determinants of occupational stress within Botswana's private tertiary institutions. This study therefore seeks to contribute to the growing body of local evidence by investigating the key antecedents of occupational stress among lecturers in private tertiary institutions in Gaborone, Botswana.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The stress that academic lecturers face was an important issue in this study, as it is linked to a drop in the quality of education in Botswana's tertiary education system. Quality assurance mechanisms are essential to uphold principles of efficiency, relevance, and transformation, which enable continuous improvement and that positively impact society. Consequently, the primary mission of any tertiary institution is to provide high-quality education while fostering the growth of its employees through a leadership style that promotes long-term benefits for employee performance. This can be achieved by investing in the professional development of academic staff and creating a focused workplace that prioritizes quality education. It is crucial to ensure that every employee receives fair compensation, recognition, and accountability. Without such effective leadership, staff morale diminishes, leading to increased stress and jeopardizing the quality of education, (Karakhanyan,2023; Dwaikat, 2020). The quality of teaching and research can be affected when lecturers face many work-related stresses. Academic staff can feel overwhelmed trying to take care of their own well-being while also looking after the growing number of students. (Tham & Holland, 2018; Lee et, al 2022). Employees who are highly stressed and demotivated at work (Armstrong, 2017) result in burnout and end up as mental case (health problem) the extreme being to resign or die, (Aswathappa 2013), when this happens, the value of lecturers as a key resource (VRIO concept) vanishes and becomes water under the bridge. The institution not only loses talented staff, but the industry, the nation, and even global talent suffer. Dealing with work stress in universities is very important for the academic workforce. Reducing stress improves lecturers' well-being, increases job satisfaction, and boosts productivity. It also leads to better mental health, less absenteeism, and a more positive working environment. This ultimately fosters a more effective teaching and research atmosphere, benefiting both staff and students (Lee et.al 2022). Krennel(2024) expressed that teachers or academic stress has led to burnout making teachers leave the profession so early and as such teachers in an ideal world used to emerge from the industry workplace and would come to the classroom on part time basis happy to prove and show the students about industry practicality but because of the changing industry and the demand of lecturers in UK, USA, Asia ,Australia and Africa being not spared has a high demand of the academic skill and many teachers are overloaded Lecturers are often engaged in many different directions, which causes stress, such as having to cover for others during emergencies because of low staffing which can result in stressed employees who can suffer mental strain, and some of this stress comes from conflicts between unitarist and pluralist approaches to employment relations. (Armstrong, 2017), this is due to the unaddressed stressors which emanate from the workplace and

go unnoticed and or ignored, as long as the stressor remain unsolved and is received negatively and not diagnosed then becomes the beginning of the journey of stress at work for the number of years, or period the employee survives in the company. Universities of late have proven also that they are not stopping in terms of exerting pressure on their employees in terms of continued research and CPD earned points to keep highly competitive with the existing environment at a nation, regionally and globally as such this increased pressure is the biggest stress as many lecturers to stay in the field have to forgo family time and plan towards research and article publishing because universities have to stay above competition especially the issue of University rankings and this was also attributed by (Kwenda et,. al 2019).

Private Tertiary Institutions (PTIs) in Botswana tend to follow unitarist approaches in a way that negatively affects staff. Lecturers often work more than ten hours a day, and with the advancement in technology and affordability of internet even outside work environment, work now extends into their homes, making stress worse. Looking at such a study as a researcher I realized that though stress has been studied in Botswana in areas like the Ministry of Health and other industries, it has not been studied in private tertiary institutions. This leaves a gap on lecturers' stress and struggles in that the institutions might suffer unfavorable outcomes of expected productivity and performance because of academic pain points and no unio to represent such employees. This was also supported by(Melgosa,2008) supports that lecturers are the most stressed employees which becomes true empirical evidence that the researcher would like to research on especially in the context of Botswana in Southern Africa.

Stressed employees face many problems that can contribute to issues like community desperation and poverty among other resultant factors. As a researcher I have understood that PTI's are failing to reach an agreed concesus with all lecturers as a measure to absorb and to safeguard on occupational stress. Many Universities across the globe are experiencing the same problem of occupational stress on lecturers, which is the reason for this research.

According to APA(2020, 2021 and 2022), American Psychological Association researched that an estimate of 75% of individuals in America suffer stress related symptoms such as headaches, continues fatigue and sleeping difficulties this has proved that in (2022) various lecturers in tertiary institutions work under unfavorable conditions and this has been supported by Gabrielli and Lundi(2020) and Akah et al (2022) who debated that the rising of stressed lecturers in the private tertiary institutions continued can increase due to irregular or low salaries, poor treatment, lack of

resources and facilities like proper offices, classrooms, laboratories, and libraries, and having too much work with very limited resources.

Institutions often underestimate the value of lecturers by treating them as easily replaceable tools. Authors like Sultan (2023) have used the VRIO framework to show that employees are important assets. Employers in tertiary institutions should recognize the value of lecturers and develop strategies to retain them, protecting their talent and ensuring high engagement and commitment, which ultimately boosts industry productivity.

While much research has looked at the causes of stress among lecturers, most stress seems to come from dissatisfaction with the academic or social aspects of the institution. This dissatisfaction often results from a lack of sufficient benefits or personal fulfillment. Some lecturers may feel this even if they have worked elsewhere. This study aimed to investigate the specific causes of stress among tertiary education lecturers and find possible solutions.

One key area is whether employee expectations before and after employment are aligned and whether there is a shared understanding between lecturers and institutions. Poor working conditions like inadequate accommodation, program structures, payment issues, lack of diversity in lecturer representation, and poor service delivery may contribute to this mismatch. The researcher wanted to explore the causes of stress in tertiary education and find ways to bridge the gap between employee expectations and what institutions provide.

Ugale (2009) noted that university lecturers experience stress, and if institutions do not address these stressors, they will struggle to solve problems like staff retention, growth, and maintaining qualified personnel in academia.

According to Dow (2018) stress has been seen as a wicked problem and very complex scenario where it has become a protected characteristic due to fast demands coming from the turbulent environment. An example also that transpired since Covid 19 was the compulsory of any lecturer to have and own a laptop and have internet at home to safeguard their jobs, such examples are defined by Roberts (2000) as possessing several attributes which include the following:

- Problems cannot be decisively defined because of the individual impact it has on different people but working together
- Solution is elusive because the problem cannot be defined succinctly by all stakeholders

- Problem solving process is complex due to the changing environment and changing stakeholder dynamics.

According to Dow (2018) complexities in a problem differ on type of management at hand, change management models used in companies, communication breakdown and breakdown in communication. The unfair utilization of resources also adds up to stressors as some departments at work might not exhibit enough resources to solve the issues that arise on daily basis. Most PTI organizations are still stuck here and are more controlled by bureaucracy and management styles used. An example is the rigid way of clocking systems in university set up where there is no flexibility of lecturers to conduct research in the industry and as such stressors begin to develop. McChrystal et al (2015) state that dynamic solutions to stress never have become an end to the solution especially in this digital era. Employer and employee according to McChrystal (2015) is that the two should work hand in hand and together especially in the complexity spectrum of trying to catch up and track measures as no one can directly predict.

The debate of wickedness becomes apparent on how certain lecturers choose to deal with certain stressors. Vantlof (2013) attempts a command-and-control organization hierarchy and bureaucracy where Vantlof should choose to be organic and have a competing structure that becomes an edge over competitors. Therefore, this study looked at a holistic study attempting to integrate natural state of employees and how best the lecturers could conceptualize with pressure. From across the globe research has been done and to mention some few others who support that lecturers are facing stress and determine if all lecturers are experiencing the same amount of stress by understanding teachers' perspective, leadership that support towards minimizing stress for productivity. The following authors have extensively researched stress management topics in various universities across the globe, including China (Lestor and Rizkiyah, 2021), Indonesia and Malaysia (Mangit et al., 2021), Romania (Duman et al., 2018), the UK in Europe (Johnson et al., 2019), Spain (Odriozola et al., 2020), and Italy (Brundino et al., 2022) and Yang et al (2020) in China,

Africa in South Africa there is Poasles and Bezuidenhout, (2018), Egypt Gabriel et al, (2021) also recorded in Ghana there is Kodua et al (2021) and Nigeria (Aduma et al 2022) and in Zimbabwe Wadesango et al (2015) These authors and more are discussed in depth as empirical evidence in Chapter 2 in Literature review and the worldwide outcry on the problem of stress as it continues to rise is further explored, hence a gap here in Botswana was addressed in this research.

1.2 Justification of the Gap

As a result of the gap arising from the problem statement, and the fact that no one in Botswana has researched stress among lecturers in private sector, the researcher decided to study this issue in 2023, using a mixed research approach. The researcher wanted to understand why lecturers experience stress and why employee welfare is often treated in a paternalistic way (Creswell, 2014). This research is also supported by the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development and Botswana's adoption of the Sustainable Development Goals. Goal 4 focuses on ensuring fair and inclusive quality education and promoting lifelong learning for everyone. Article 4.3 specifically says that by 2030, all women and men should have equal access to affordable and quality technical, vocational, and tertiary education, including universities. Achieving this requires proper support and attention to all levels of education., which became the reason for this research was that management of tertiary institutions needed to take heed and address the unfavorable stressors that promote a happy and healthy working environment so that lecturers are able to deliver quality services beyond students expectations towards building Botswana. Botswana in Southern Africa will benefit the whole of SADC and throughout globally as outlined by the United Nations. Article SDG 8 illustrates and promotes sustained inclusive and sustained economic growth, full and productive employment and decent work for all. This section highlights the importance of fair human capital rights, including equal pay for equal work, protection of labor rights, and the promotion of safe and secure working conditions for all employees, including women, migrant workers, and those in insecure jobs. This research can also help Botswana implement the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) at the national level and improve planning tools like national development strategies (www.unssc.org).

The researcher also supports this study not only through the UN SDGs but also through Botswana's domesticated SDGs, as outlined on www.statbots.org.bw. Botswana has adopted the SDGs that fit its context. The research was also supported by Botswana's domesticated SDG Goal 3, section C, which aims to ensure healthy lives and promote well-being for all people by recruiting, training, developing, and keeping a healthy workforce, especially in developing countries, least developed countries, and small island developing nations and states.

Goal number 4 talks about Quality Education, that will support vocational and tertiary university (4.3). Also, Goal 8 talks about decent work and economic growth article8.8 for protection of labor as outlined above in the UN article. Lecturers in higher education sector play a vital role in human

development while they face many stressors in their workplace. In this study a step forward will be taken to explore such levels of stress that exist in private tertiary universities and colleges.

1.3 Aim of the study

The main purpose of this research was to study the impact of work stress on lecturers in private tertiary institutions (PTIs) in Botswana. The study is connected to Botswana's Vision 2036, which is a long-term plan outlining the country's goals and aspirations. This agenda aims to move Botswana from an upper middle-income country to a high-income country by 2036, providing a clear vision for the future. Vision 2036 focuses on 14 priority areas, including education, health, safety and security, economic growth and employment, skills development, infrastructure, rural development, human settlements, local government, environment, international relations, an effective public sector, social protection, and nation-building. This research supports the agenda by addressing the gap in understanding lecturers' stress, which can help achieve these outcomes through innovation in education, skill development, and creativity. (www.vision2036.co.bw; Botswana Institute for Development Policy Analysis; Botswana Domesticated Sustainable Development Goals)...https://www.statsbots.org.bw

1.4 Research Objectives

Main Research Objective

To investigate the impact of occupational stress on academic staff performance in the Private Tertiary Institutions in Botswana from both employee and management lived perspectives.

1.5.1 Sub Objectives

1. To examine the sources of occupational stress among academic staff in private tertiary institutions in Botswana.
2. To examine the challenges experienced by managers in supervising stressed academic staff in private tertiary institutions in Botswana.
3. To assess the effects of occupational stress on academic staff performance in private tertiary institutions in Botswana.
4. To measure the relationship between occupational stress and academic staff performance in private tertiary institutions in Botswana.
5. To identify strategies for alleviating occupational stress in private tertiary institutions in Botswana.

1.4.1 Research Questions

Main Research Question

What is the impact of occupational stress on academic staff performance in the Private Tertiary Institutions in Botswana from both employees and management lived perspectives?

Sub Research Questions

1. What are the sources of occupational stress on academic staff in the Private Tertiary Institutions in Botswana?
2. What are the challenges experienced by managers when supervising stressed academic staff in the Private Tertiary Institutions?
3. What are the effects of occupational stress on academic staff performance in Private Tertiary Institutions in Botswana?
5. What strategies are needed to alleviate stress in Private Tertiary Institutions?

1.5 Hypothesis

The following hypotheses were formulated to examine the relationship between occupational stress and academic staff performance in private tertiary institutions in Botswana in fulfilment of

H_0: Occupational stress has no statistically significant influence on academic staff performance in private tertiary institutions.

H_1: Occupational stress has a statistically significant influence on academic staff performance in private tertiary institutions.

The hypotheses were formulated to test the relationship between occupational stress and academic staff performance in fulfilment of Research Objective 4**.** A detailed theoretical and empirical justification for the hypotheses is presented under the conceptual framework in Chapter Two, while the statistical testing and findings are presented in Chapter Four.

1.6 Significance of Study

To the Learning Institution-University of Lusaka

The results of this research will add to the existing knowledge and help students at the University of Lusaka who may want to do a study on a similar topic.

To the Ministry of Education in Botswana

The study is expected to help the Higher Education Sector in Botswana with better planning and future policy decisions. The research is also important because it will help explain the causes of stress affecting lecturers in tertiary institutions. It is also expected that the findings will guide decision-making in Botswana's private tertiary institutions to improve the protection, motivation, and wellbeing of lecturers.

To the student

The research is designed to improve the student's understanding and give them a chance to connect the strategic planning theory learnt at university with real-life practice. The study results will also help the researcher gain skills to handle issues related to the relationship between employers and lecturers.

1.7 Delimitations of the Study

The study only looked at Private Tertiary Institutions in Gaborone and did not include parastatal institutions. Because of this, the research may not fully represent the situation in Public Tertiary Institutions across the country., but looking and having a mirror of the current 11 June 2025 of the University of Botswana being a parastatal mirrored more on the justification of this research since 2020./ThePatriotOnSunday/videos/ub-staff-on-strikethe-university-of-botswana-staff-union-ubsu-together-with-univ/611294437584063/ . The study mainly looked at the factors that cause stress among lecturers. Other issues such as social, cultural, and economic conditions that may affect students were not explored in detail. This was done to keep the study objective. Besides, cultural and economic factors would require more time and the involvement of other stakeholders such as Village Development Committees, community chiefs, and others.

1.8 Definitions of Key terms

- PTI means Private Tertiary Institutions
- Occupational stress means how a person reacts to upsetting or challenging situations at work and the results of that reaction (Aswathappa, 2013).
- According to Armstrong (2017), stress is when a person fails to handle the pressures of their job, which leads to more stress and lowers both employee performance and the overall effectiveness of the organization.

1.9 Chapter Summary

This study investigates occupational stress and its influence on academic lecturer performance in private tertiary institutions in Gaborone, Botswana. The background highlighted the growing concern of workplace stress among academic staff, particularly in private institutions where lecturers face high workloads, role conflicts, and the demands of diverse teaching modes. These

stressors have implications not only for individual well-being but also for teaching quality and institutional performance.

The problem statement identified a critical gap in understanding the relationship between occupational stress and lecturer performance within the Botswana private tertiary education context. While global studies suggest that stress negatively affects employee productivity, motivation, and job satisfaction, there is limited empirical research specifically addressing the Botswana context, especially among private tertiary institutions. This gap underscores the need for a context-specific investigation to provide actionable insights into policy and practice.

The justification for the study emphasized that addressing occupational stress among academic lecturers is essential for improving teaching effectiveness, staff retention, and overall institutional performance. By exploring the sources, effects, and management of occupational stress, this research aims to contribute to both the academic literature and practical interventions tailored to Botswana's private tertiary sector which operates under the Ministry of Higher Education.

Overall, Chapter 1 sets the foundation for the study by establishing the relevance of occupational stress as a critical factor affecting lecturer performance and highlighting the need for research that addresses the unique challenges faced in the local private tertiary education environment. Which are further tailored and discussed in the following chapter, chapter 2 which discusses Literature Review.

CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Chapter Overview

A literature review is a section of writing that looks at key ideas and findings from existing studies, including theoretical, conceptual, and practical contributions to the topic being studied.

It involves going through books, research papers, and other relevant sources related to a specific problem or field. The review gives a summary, explanation, and critical assessment of what other writers have said about the subject. (Ramdhanisan et al., 2014).

Literature is can wildly be explained as all written systematic process of collecting and synthesizing previous research in which according to Saunders (2007), where it becomes important in any type of research because it brings the This chapter shows an understanding of the current knowledge in the research area, its challenges and strength of focus, and how this research fits into the bigger picture. It focuses on the research objectives outlined in Chapter 1, which are: to examine the sources of occupational stress among academic staff in Private Tertiary Institutions in Botswana, to examine the challenges managers face when supervising stressed academic staff, to assess how occupational stress affects academic staff performance, to measure the relationship between occupational stress and academic staff performance and to identify strategies to reduce occupational stress in Private Tertiary Institutions.

According to the International Labour Organization (ILO, 2016), stress is a harmful physical and emotional reaction that happens when there is an imbalance between the demands placed on an individual and their ability or resources to cope with those demands. Job related stress is influenced by work organization, job design, and employment relations. During the time of working if the demands needed per job exceed the worker's effort or expectations, resources, or needs, or when the comprehension and expertism at employee personal level or department or team is found not to match the required work specifications derived internally or externally as to match the performance standards then employees start to develop stress within the institution or company.

The factors in the workplace that can cause stress are called psychosocial hazards. The ILO first defined psychosocial factors in 1984 as the interactions between the work environment, job content, organizational conditions, and the capacities, needs, culture, and personal circumstances of workers. These factors, affect the individual employee through social bonding and interactions at work that

happens with sharing of resources and team collaboration where an employee is subjected by internal control to apprehend what is available and exists within a working period or time frame which is exploited through emotions and expectations and how an individual's perceives the impact of the stress which affects the emotional and body functioning thus contributing to health issues at work and productivity supported by job satisfaction. This definition contributes the interconnectivity that happens between human capital and the work itself in this case being academic lecturers in Botswana private Tertiary institutions and how the same industry impact can affect both the two groups of one who sees the impact as positive and the other group which sees the impact as negative determined by the industry or work environment. Interactions therefore can be positive and negative depending on how the impact reaches the lecturers and negative impact would include emotional matters, behavioral and character building, and transitioning in the body's biochemistry and hormones, increasing the risk of social, mental and physical sickness. On the other hand, when there is no gap between the expectations of work conditions and human elements and all is balancing well it promotes a good positive environment full of life and balanced are balanced, which promotes knowledge ,learning, mastery and increases high self-efficacy, increase inner motivation and self-innovation, improved performance and satisfaction, and enhanced overall health of both employees and the whole organization successful issues of dimensions are characterized as stressful characteristics of work indicated as follows.

2.1 Stressful characteristics of work (psychosocial hazards)

2.1.1 Content of Work

Refers to work environment and equipment that is having problems with the reliability, availability, suitability, or maintenance of equipment and facilities.

Task design is the second element also referring to that work may lack variety, involve very short or fragmented tasks, be meaningless, underuse skills, or involve high uncertainty.

Workload at the workplace refers to having too much or too little work, little control over work pace, and high time pressure.

Work scheduling also refers to shift work, inflexible timetables, unpredictable working hours which can be very long hours, or non-friendly schedules.

The following components refer to a breakdown of the actual context or work environment that has to do with organizational culture and system functionality of the organization including career

development and decision making and control as explained below that helps to understand how stress develops in employees during working times.

Organizational culture and function refers a state of non or improper ways of relaying communication in an organization which does not promote formal communication channels physically or electronically with no management given support that can portray growth to unease personal and organizational growth in an institution.

Roles within an organization may involve unclear job responsibilities, overlapping roles, or management duties. If not clear, then individuals end up fighting and having conflicts about their expected duties which then leads to organizational politics emanating from the unclear role clarifications and promotes the spirit of fear and sloth in a company.

Career development includes lack of career progress, uncertainty, being under- or over-promoted, low pay, job insecurity, and low social value of work.

Decision latitude/control: Limited decision-making and low work control; participation is essential within organizations.

Interpersonal relationships: Employees spend most of their time at work and lecturers need more of social bonding with the students, peers and management because they do not work as isolates in both physical, emotional and social bonding which will create weak relationships with bosses, colleagues and no support is unfavorable at this moment.

Home/work interface: Issues from work-home conflict, minimal home support, and difficulties in dual-career households. Employees in these dynamic environmental changes need a moment work life balance that eases pressure from both home and work where the employee who is a lecturer feels working from both home or work comfortably and family is non-stressing and so is work over family issues.

A literature review is a systematic examination, synthesis, and critical evaluation of existing research relevant to a particular topic or problem (Ramdhanisan et al., 2014; Saunders, 2007). It establishes the current state of knowledge, identifies key themes, gaps, strengths, and limitations in the literature, and positions the present study within the broader body of knowledge. In line with the research objectives outlined in Chapter One, this chapter reviews literature on the sources of occupational stress among academic staff in private tertiary institutions, the challenges managers face in supervising stressed academics, the effects of occupational stress on academic staff performance, the relationship between occupational stress and performance, and strategies for reducing occupational stress in private tertiary institutions.

2.2 Theoretical Review

This section gathered reviews of literature from general literature concerning occupational stress to lecturers and or academics from textbooks, articles and newspapers and most of them aligned that if stress is not well managed on time it can cause harm to employee health and bring an ill health organization, (Saunders et., al 2020) In his book *Getting Things Done: The Art of Stress-Free Productivity*, supported by Allen (2015) suggested that a person can have a very large number of tasks to handle, yet still be able to work effectively with a calm mind, clear focus, and a sense of control. He clearly sets out that anxiety is caused by lack of control, organization and preparation action and issues of new demands, insufficient resources, no clear boundaries can amount to high level of stress with changing nature and rapid change stress can amount to an employee. He further outlines that work traditional was so evident and anyone would bear witness to trace and give a testimony but not with today trends were employees need to constantly change and adopt as quick as possible and employees need to prove themselves beyond any reasonable doubt as organization are in the morph mode with ever changing goals, products, partners, markets, technologies, and owners demands where if not guided properly can be a cause to stressed employees. Armstrong (1992) the guru in Management and Human Resources Management defined stress as an organizational life associated with getting work done through. Being exposed to change, supervision, and the exercise of authority can cause stress. He explained that the main causes of stress are the work itself, a person's role in the organization, poor relationships, job insecurity, and issues with promotion, such as being over or under promoted.

2.2.1 Concept development of academic stress, history and evolution

Hui and Lee (2023) outlined the concept of development of academic stress and accounted that stress originates in physics, this describes a situation where an object develops internal forces when external forces try to move or change it. Similarly, stress occurs in a person when there is a mismatch between what they expect and what happens, where lecturer experiences become so unpleasant with negative emotional experiences caused by work related factors and the environment at large which becomes a confusion and emotional response.

Chen (2017) explains the origin of the word "stress," saying it was first used to describe the pressure that cracks bridges or the force that strains an object or body. Because of this, stress is often linked to tension, fatigue, failure, trauma, or difficulty. The word comes from the Middle English *stresse*, meaning hardship, and the Old French *estrece*, meaning oppression. Stress is usually seen as negative,

but if managed well, it can be controlled and even become a competitive advantage rather than a barrier to productivity. The term has been used in medicine since the 17th century, when doctors recognized it as a possible cause of physical illness resulting from social pressures. It came into common usage during the 1950's when the Canadian sociologist Hans Selye first published a book that adopted the concept of strain on physical structures from engineering to describe what happens to the human body during times of crises. Hans Selye, a Canadian endocrinologist, expanded on the work of Cannon and others, giving stress research greater credibility. He is considered one of the founders of stress research. Early in his career, Selye was studying hormones by injecting rats with different chemicals. However, he was not very skilled at handling the rats and often mishandled them, even dropping some. He noticed that these rats developed physiological changes, such as immune system problems and ulcers, which did not appear in rats that were handled normally. This led him to realize that psychological stress could cause physical illness in both rats and humans.

Selye then experimented by placing rats in challenging conditions, such as extreme heat like the Sahara Desert, simulated Arctic cold, exposure to toxins, isolation, and overcrowding. Over time, he observed a consistent pattern of bodily changes: the adrenal glands enlarged from overwork, and organs like the thymus, spleen, and lymph nodes were affected. He called this pattern the **General Adaptation Syndrome (GAS)**, which shows that when a person faces stress from danger, crisis, or threats, the brain triggers over 1,000 chemical responses to help the body cope, thus stress has become a universal or global challenge that the WHO and ILO are addressing every time and again and all industries big or small are busy working with consultants and therapists to reduce the stress impact and its effects in the workplace to aid in promoting a healthy working place that boost productivity, this concept passed through stress evolution stages as follows:

2.2.2 Stress Evolution Stages

Stage 1: Claude Bernard argued that stress occurs when the body's ability to maintain a stable internal environment, which surrounds and supports cells, is disrupted.

Stage 2: Walter Cannon (1929, 1939) stress becomes apparent due to threats to the body's balance (homeostasis) trigger the adrenal system. Cannon suggested that restoring balance usually only needs local changes in the body.

Stage 3: Hans Selye (1946) indicates that stress is seen as a uniform response to any stressor. prolonged stress can cause long-term damage to the body.

Stage 4: Sterling and Eyer (1988) found out that stress involves achieving stability through both physiological and behavioral changes. They introduced the concept of allostasis, which explains that the body constantly adapts to stressors, and there is no single ideal "steady state." Continuous stress can lead to wear and tears in the body, reducing its ability to handle future stress while still trying to maintain balance.

2.2.3 Concept of Stress in the Academic field - global practical events

The South Eye newspaper in Zimbabwe authored by Harrison(2023) outlined a lecturer at University of Zimbabwe on stressed employees on the need to ascertain accuracy truth detection to curb off lies concerning employees who might lie on stress issues at work and came up with idea that if organizations can introduce the voice stress analysis technology which can detect a yes or no, Such a polygraph also measures the galvanic skin response, which detects extra sweating that happens under stress. This is useful because stress also causes changes in voice, pulse rate, and blood pressure. Polygraphs are available worldwide, but Harrison articulates that they are only allowed in Africa and many countries only to be used by law enforcements bodies only and legal courts. He gave an example that during the COVID-19 crisis, Dr. Anthony Fauci, the former Chief Medical Advisor to the President of the USA, appeared frequently in the media, making various statements about COVID-19 measures. and vaccinations that were proven wrong through such technology and yet it had affected most of the citizens' stress above the Covid stress. John Yudkin in 1960 the British nutritionist announced that sugar is highly toxic substance responsible for many diseases syndrome and was detained for lying and later on was proven later to be correct after 60 years of accumulating research and had it been the polygraph technology was used it was to be prove otherwise and not after such a stressful endurance time it caused. Professor Tim Noakes also suffered rejection from the South Africans after series of accusations concerning carbon-based diets in favor of low carb and low processed food. Professor Noakes was banned from practicing until after 2017 when his professorship was reestablished and has so far received many accolades and rewards for his integrity that had had been perceived as a lie and caused stressed to the consumers and the country at large.

Stress in Zimbabwe recorded in the Sunday Mail newspaper (2023) in the title code red ,code red and gave an outline that the rise of Chikurubi maximum prison was a result of stressed citizens

especially after the Covid era and also said the same influx was recorded again at Ngomahuru psychiatric in Masvingo Zimbabwe and main psychiatric Ingutsheni hospital in Bulawayo second capital city because of stress and urged the family members that they should always love each other and create a sense of belonging amongst each other's self-worth. Mr. Philip Sibanda said that stress can be a result of poverty and also rise due to non-mindset shift and that family or traditional structures are no longer being enforced where family trees were a culture followed for assistance, counselling and guidance with people like aunts, uncles, grandparents playing their roles and as such people are no longer seeking counselling or having open communication which has caused a lot mental stressed citizens.

In South Arica financial mail newspaper article Furlanger (2023) wrote an article in Johannesburg and discovered that since post Covid 19 educational environment at University of Cape town found out that many academics of the graduate school are concerned of asynchronous education and was fast growing that people recorded online courses and students complained of losing touch with personal touch whilst directors became stressed in coping mechanism to adjust, however a scenario of high labor turnover was recorded at North west University with nearly a quarter of semesters since 2017 and ended with Joseph Sekhampu in 2023, Sekhampu had to manage and align online education and the same experience happened at Nelson Mandela , Free state university and Tshwane university as technology has taken over with emphasis on Artificial Intelligence(AI) with comfort zones of what lecturers perceived on what they already know ,with strategic thinkers in need of innovativeness, trust and resilience and as such stress encroached. If these are not monitored or authored and recorded, then schools would become irrelevant and as such new changes brings stress already in terms of resource mobilization and gadgets needed for teaching ergonomics.

Still in South Africa Independent Newspaper by Niemen (2023) on article, stress coping, Industrial psychologist lecturer at University of Free State wrote on the devastating effects of burnout and stress and said that it resulted when individuals use up their coping resources due to demands from work and personal life, leading to reduced job performance and extreme fatigue. It is often caused by overworking, striving for perfection, high-pressure environments, difficult work relationships, emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and a sense of low personal achievement. Poor time management and inadequate skills for managing high-demand jobs can also contribute.

To manage stress, it is recommended that workplaces provide regular breaks, avoid excessive overtime, and encourage social support from supervisors and colleagues. Families, friends, and

organizations should regularly assess wellbeing and coping strategies. Stress can be reduced through clear role definitions, goal setting, supportive management, and flexible work schedules.

In the UK Temlett (2023), Dumfries newspaper in Scotland an article titled on time running out to avoid walkout on lecturer strikes was written and the college and union of Education Institute of Scotland was set for strikes due to poor finances and salaries in what they termed sacrificing their jobs. Still in the UK (2024) Herald Newspaper wrote about a sector under pressure indicating the lecturers in the UK who have been suffering with many meetings, lobbying and strikes and the time wasted during such at the expense of quality learning and indication was that a massive job was stressful and causing emotional pressure where lecturers were afraid that they will end up being sick and burden their families. Work relationships damages societies beyond repair if not handled properly despite the heart and dedication that drives lecturers from different trades and yet their needs are not met and respected or heard, a cause for concern to institutions. In UK Leicester Mercury Newspaper Coveney and Hsu (2023) wrote an article that people were now taking drugs to ease stress and pressure and also make up for sleep sighting that shift working was so vast and causing heart problems, diabetes and cardiovascular diseases, in which failure to normal sleep patterns has prompted for smart sleep technology investment in smart watches, smart jewellery to analyze sleeping patterns, track changes in posture and check on respiratory and breathing patterns. At Aberdeen University, Josh (2023) reported through NLA media that teachers were facing redundancy during the festive season and they will not enjoy festive holidays as 30 jobs were under threat as management sight low enrolment of students. Voluntary severance schemes already given and lecturers health under stress as one lecturers said it was hard to prepare for next semester classes as one would not know whether they were coming back or not, with jobs at stake, no reassurance, no motivation and management threatening people yet they expect them to perform their duties. In UK Scotland Paisley daily News (2024) lecturers set for industrial action demanding salary increase and dates have been set for May 23,28,30 ,31 and June 3,4,5, and June 7 2024) if management does not come forth as lecturers were recorded to be in pain looking at the cost of living crisis which saw last flat increase in 2022 of 5000 pounds and want 8000 pounds for 2024 and 2025.

Bita (2023),Australia Nationwide newspaper in article highlighted Lives at risk from bullying and burnout in university academics, unions wrote that more than 6200 from 38 universities suffer mental stress from exhaustion unrelenting work pressures with digital pressures since covid 19 and lecturers were not getting enough support and hence suffered distress ,tiredness ,nervous and depression and

such stressors included poor job security and no longer without PhD enthusiasm and fearing their wellbeing was harmful to their health and reduced work productivity.

In America Smith(2023) wrote that lecturers were under stress and emphasized the need for health and wellness no matter how small or big the Institutions were .His article on investigating health and wellness benefits on employees and the business emphasized that employees.People who lack clear life boundaries or flexible work options can experience high levels of work stress, anxiety, and "quiet quitting." They may feel discouraged and undervalued, which can lead to lower productivity, engagement, and retention. In fact, 59% of employees in the US report experiencing work-related stress,28%US quit the jobs because of stress,49% now priorities their families and personal life and 34% have financial stress and money worries,33% have poor health and poor sleep.

He emphasized that if employees are supported there is ROI and organization should have such programs to address variety of internal and external factors that impact employee wellbeing like financial wellness tools, knowledge and resources and it reduces stress and more financial gain so that organizations can focus on productivity issues with a psychologically safe workplace and wellness initiative. He emphasized that psychological safety was more important as was based on trust, transparency and conviction in which employees shun from organizations full of complaints and non-productivity. Institutional leaders therefore promote taking breaks, vacations, avoiding after hour emails, promote wellness activities and employee assistance programs. Recordings of stress in USA Mildred (2023) wrote that academic freedom was a core value and must be defended. He sighted that academics needed the freedom to research, speak out and discuss openly and publish their academic papers and emphasized that the culture of fighting was not good and should be eliminated for healthy working conditions that promote productivity.

In Nigeria Premium Times newspaper (2023) recorded at Obafem Awodowo University a lecturer died at work and confirmed dead upon hospital arrival due to stress. The union said that academic staff were being overworked, overstretched due to harsh working conditions yet they are never compensated for and work overload is killing the existing employees who attrite and are never replaced. Stress in Nigeria (2024) Premium Times reported that N5.1 billion was allocated to fund 185 qualified research and project proposals for the 2023 grant cycle under the Higher Education Trust Fund by President Bola Tinubu and the Minister of Education Mr. Tahir Mammon said that such initiatives would try to curb stress and offer therapy in the Army and frontline employees and also in Nigeria University states learning environments to relieve stress for the betterment of Nigerian

needs in areas of research which included science, technology, engineering, research in Humanities and social sciences.

In Dare Salaam, Tanzania Daily News Saint Augustine University of Tanzania (2023) SAUT Professor Ricky Mahalu encouraged academic personnel in teaching to motivate students to research and article and journal publishing of research so that universities and colleges remain in top notch high excellency. If all top management would encourage the institutions globally then stress would not be an issue.

In India (2023) Nagpur the Information solutions newspaper published a newspaper about the death of a 42-year-old for GS college of commerce who committed suicide and left a note to his relatives narrating that he was stressed due to alleged harassments by his Principal and some Professors and relatives also confirmed that he died because of stress due to unresolved issues he had at work. In New Zealand in Stuff limited newspaper by Nokise (2023) wrote an article on stress that it has many forms but not all are the same and emphasized that some stressors were coming from family life and work. He also said people had financial crisis and not all financial stressors are the same. lecturers were losing their jobs and not only in academics but also in various Industries. New Zealand also recorded the same year (2023) at Massy University that lecturers were suffering anxiety and stress due to poor financial situations and needed their salaries to be revised in accordance to the changes changing.

In Ireland newspaper by Sharon (2018) in an article titled workplace wellbeing she wrote that stress was not only good but necessary and sighted that distress was a problem. She wrote that the purpose of our bosses was to respond and protect us from being potentially harmful situation. Everything starts in the mind that perceives a threat on the other part of the brain called the hypothalamus which in turn notifies the body by activating the sympathetic nervous system and this activates and triggers the adrenaline in the blood stream and the other physiological changes such as mobilization energy to various parts of the body becomes also stresses and the body releases another hormone called cortisol. Sharon was therefore illustrating that because of such actions happening in our bodies everyone experiences stress and however reactions to stress are the ones that differ with signs like heart beating so fast, stomach pains ,disorganized thinking and she said that ignored stress makes our bodies to have constant reminder and intervention like talking to a trusted friend was essential, eating well social conversations and she added that stressors were unavoidable and everyone just had to find their

ways of dealing with such stressors as they spear, as said by stress guru Hans Seyle that "it's not stress that kills us ,but our reaction to it".

2.3 To examine the sources of occupational stress among academic staff in private tertiary institutions in Botswana.

2.3.1 Academic Stress

Lecturer stress is not unique to Botswana's universities; as demonstrated in the preceding literature, it is a widespread phenomenon across the SADC region and globally. World Health Organization (2023) defines stress as any change that results in physical, emotional, or psychological strain, while Kennel (2024) identifies stress as one of the leading challenges affecting teachers and lecturers in their workplaces. An individual's response to stress significantly influences their overall wellbeing, confidence, and ability to perform effectively. Three common symptoms of stress are:

- **Exhaustion:** feeling tired, strained, or emotionally drained that is state of prolonged fatigue and manifests because of physical tiredness ,emotional strain and mental depletion with difficulty comprehending the state of being overwhelmed and losing focus to concentration at work continuous drain to job demands as a lecturer can lead to such and these signs can easily manifest.

- **Cynicism:** showing indifference or negative attitudes toward students, parents, or colleagues. Such stress symptoms makes one to lose enthusiasm and motivation that is self-driven to act and perform as expected at work and brings the state of emotional social and emotional distance that is created from a lecturer and the management or the work environment and subjects surrounding around where the lecturer becomes surrounded by reduced empathy and is overloaded with negativity and such employees naturally withdraw themselves psychologically and lose engagement emotionally though physically they will be attending work but the actual psychological state of would have long been lost.

- **Inadequacy:** feeling incapable or lacking confidence in handling tasks, where a lecturer starts having and losing his efficacy to not believing in oneself and losing out thinking others might do better than themselves and doubting their teaching ability and skills and pushing other tasks to others and having a belief that their peers can do more than themselves. Such behavior kills the energy of lecturers to practice creativity and innovation academically and improve in research and innovation on writing educational articles and publishing as desired in the Ministry of Higher Education for lecturers to search for new information including current

news and if not dealt with it reduces the accountability issues at work and brings unpreparedness as a syndrome and unhappy workforce who keep blaming the environment .

Academic stress Management and textbook literature

Patel (2023) in his book towards stress management highlights some relaxation techniques towards employees confronted with stress and stresses that stress is very important to everyone but if it becomes excessive it becomes very damaging, harmful to healthy living, task productivity and team work is destroyed both at employee level while organizational development is jeopardized. He outlines that symptoms of stress can vary from irritability headaches, illness, insomnia and tiredness. Patel indicated that stress causes wear and tear of life and danger when its prolonged and the following disorders happen

1.Adjustment disorders refers to types of light work compared to any other abnormal disorders

2.Post Traumatic stress refers to a situation when one is under PSTD situation the catalyst produces it of line of experience of man' s daily life and if not combated the disorder continues to be of a high threat.

3.Combat Induced disorders describe that everyone at the same level of work is under pressure, that is the feeling of anxiety, depression, fear and one has to have the general adaptation syndrome so stress is not prolonged. Stress is often seen as a negative emotional experience, accompanied by changes in behavior, biochemistry, and physiology, which are linked to how a person perceives acute demands or pressures. and as such physical stressors as starvation, bad weather, bad working area prone to accidents that end up building on the stress syndromes and the following syndromes evolution.

Stage 1 –Alarm reaction stage

This is the body's immediate reaction to a stressor and represents the first stage of the General Adaptation Syndrome. In this stage, humans show a "fight or flight" response, which prepares the body for physical action. However, this response can weaken the immune system, making people more vulnerable to illnesses..

Stage 2-Stage of resistance

This is that adaptation stage and the body adopt to the stressors where the affected person can conserve some energy and starve a current use of energy for work which should be done now saving for the

future thereby jeopardizing productivity. During the adaptation stage, the body adjusts to stress by conserving energy and reducing immediate productivity to save resources for future needs.

Stage 3-Exhaustion stage

If stress is prolonged for a long time and not dealt with the body's resistance mechanism becomes ignorant and gradually reduces and collapse quickly and the body's immune system becomes immune to diseases which can give rise to high blood pressure or heart attack. Patel illustrated ways of reducing stress and preventing some stressors by identifying the following

1. making up of one's mind that a person can change his thinking and become in control

2. identify what stress you most encounter in your life to offset some behaviors

3.Journaling and checking on the daily, monthly and weekly activities to enable emotional and physical well-being

4.Dealing with four As of stress that is to manage stress, you can either change the situation by avoiding or modifying the stressor, or change your reaction by adapting to the stressor and accept the stressor where one learns to say no and sticks to their limits and refuses additional responsibilities when still holding to unfinished work and also avoiding people who stress you out and if avoidance is not successful reducing the time one spends time with them. Patel also highlighted that employees should take control of their environment and do the most enjoyable work and avoid protected characteristics issues and analyses the checklist and being able to compromise knowing that is not always when you win all the time. Patel says that if one cannot change the stressor he needs to change himself through rephrasing problems and avoid fuming and regroup and pause, looking at the big picture is important and weighing its repacations both in currently and in the future which even if a lecturer contemplates on whether such stressors will disappear soon and if soon then there will be no need for one to continue in negative energy but rather focus on positive energy, adjusting the standard and quality of work, positive energy and accepting things that one cannot change because some situations or stressors are unavoidable and beyond our control for example death of close work colleague and or relative employees should not control what they can't control knowing very well that what doesn't kill us makes us strong and having a friend to share with who can also be a Pastor ,Minister of Religion or counselors and above all learn to forgive and let it go and making it for fun and relation,(Patel.,2023)

Macfrey (2018) outlined effective leadership in tertiary institutions to take into cognizance that for stress to be reduced employees should be aware of their working environment and learn to adjust in a positive way and knowing your university and department very well the culture and system portrayed and lastly knowing yourself concerning one's strength and weakness.

Chen (2017) noted that stress is a subject that is altogether a bad thing if it goes unmanaged and stressors are not eliminated. He brought some common stress reduction strategies to reduce stress that include mindfulness, meditation, progressive muscle relaxation, yoga, tai chi, journaling, and effective time management., and that if these are upheld then they would transform the organization and increase productivity. He also advised employees to take care of their diets, exercise programs, stress reduction plans as people do not always stick to their diets .Stress as he noted means different issues to two categories of people as some see as opportunity and some see annoyance and a breakdown and the degree of tolerance will vary this can be the same situation at the same faculty, same university or college or same Industry in this case Botswana .The resultant of such stressed situation becomes when one individual lecturer feels like he is tied to a knot and feels out of control not knowing where to position the focus and energy and the mind is all over. Chen explains that stress can be seen both as a stimulus and a response. Stress begins in the mind, while the body prepares to respond, using survival mechanisms that heighten awareness of danger and mobilize the body's resources. As a stimulus, stress occurs when someone or something puts pressure on a person beyond their comfort or ability to cope. As a response, stress is the body and mind reacting to internal or external pressure, whether the threat is real or perceived.

The autonomic nervous system is activated during stress and works best when it is turned on and off as needed. Stress involves both psychological and physiological reactions to real or perceived threats that require action or resolution. These responses occur on cognitive, behavioral, and biological levels. If stress is sustained for too long, it can lead to serious negative health effects. In essence, stress is both what happens when life puts pressure on us and how it makes us feel.

2.14.3 Stress Symptoms

Chen (2017) continues to say that the feeling of how one is stressed start when the mind set keeps saying "am little tired of your running and nagging and because of that I will annoy you, to see the state of the things and recognize me will find how to revert to you despite the odds". It is such that

finding stress symptoms have some common signs but these can be highly individualized depending on the impact to the body, internal thinking and your emotional actioning and behavior thus stress is not only applies to academics only hence an exercise of removing unwelcomed stressors, restoring hope and better feelings of experience after every experience that can be disappointment or trauma.

2.3.2 Stress Responses

Chen (2017) on occupational lecturer stress and its types draws that the following types of stress exists and they manifest together with below listed sources of stress.

Types of Stress

Stress can be short-term or long-term. Short-term stress is activated by sudden threats, such as a near accident or an unexpected presentation. It triggers the fight-or-flight response, followed by relaxation once the threat passes. Long-term stress occurs when the body remains in a heightened state, leading to wear and tear on the mind and body.

Distress is harmful stress that exceeds one's coping ability, causing anxiety, confusion, and reduced performance. Even positive events, such as sudden good news, can trigger distress. Neu stress is neutral stress with minimal impact, while eustress is positive stress that motivates higher performance and personal growth. Lecturers, for example, often experience eustress when performing in front of students According to Chen, eustress refers to positive or constructive stress that motivates lecturers to perform better, meet deadlines, and achieve professional goals. It arises when job demands are perceived as challenges rather than threats, thereby enhancing focus, creativity, and productivity. For instance, preparing for a new lecture topic or meeting research deadlines can create eustress that stimulates professional growth and satisfaction.

On the other hand, distress represents negative or harmful stress that occurs when job demands exceed an individual's coping capacity. It leads to emotional exhaustion, anxiety, and reduced job performance. In the academic context, distress may result from heavy workloads, unclear expectations, lack of institutional support, or student-related pressures. Chen emphasizes that while a moderate level of eustress can be beneficial, prolonged or intense distress is detrimental, often leading to burnout and decreased organizational commitment among lecturers.

Sources of Stress

Stress can come from:

1. External sources – demands from the environment or society.
2. Internal sources – thoughts, beliefs, or attitudes that affect how events are interpreted.
3. Interaction of both – combined effects of internal and external factors.

Stress can also be physical (caused by injury, illness, overwork, or sleep deprivation), psychological (related to beliefs, attitudes, and values), or psychosocial (arising from social and cultural interactions). Antoni et al. (2023) note that individuals can find meaning in stress experiences, leading to positive social and personal growth.

Occupational Stress

Selye (1956) categorized stress as eustress (positive) and distress **(**negative). Challenge stressors are associated with favorable outcomes, while hindrance stressors cause negative outcomes (Cavanaugh et al., 2000). In Botswana, occupational stress is defined by the Botswana Mental Health (2021) as harmful physical and emotional responses that occur when job demands exceed a worker's capabilities, resources, or needs.

In private tertiary institutions, common stressors include:

- Heavy workloads and time pressure
- Interpersonal conflicts
- Lack of job security, inadequate salary, or benefits
- Long working hours, including weekends and public holidays, often without compensation
- Poor leadership styles and lack of recognition

Cartwright and Cooper (2011) highlight that stress is mainly caused by change, high workload, and lack of control. The costs of stress to both individuals and society are substantial. Organizations have increasingly implemented strategies to reduce stress and improve work environments.

Occupational stress can manifest as negative physical and psychological reactions in the workplace (Dolan, 2023). Gurung (2006) identifies nine causes: excessive job burden, role conflict, role ambiguity, discrimination, failure to be promoted, poor social networks, lack of job control, multiple

roles, and absence of challenging tasks. When lecturers are not given challenging tasks or decision-making responsibilities, motivation and productivity suffer.

Overall, stress affects cognitive, emotional, behavioral, and physiological domains. While it can motivate growth and performance, prolonged exposure to stressors without support can negatively affect lecturers' wellbeing and performance in private tertiary institutions in Botswana.. Nowadays because of lean staffing that tertiary organizations are going through, lecturers have inadequate time to spend with their loved ones and even when at work they cannot socialize because of tight schedules and role conflicting where academics are given part administration and management tasks to perform but in essence might not portray full support in demonstrating power and degree of autonomy. Lecturers are at most delayed in receiving promotions and according to Frederick Herzberg from Cole (2012) promotion in the two-factor theory and in the absence of such motivational factor lecturers feel sidelined and at the end attrite or slows productivity because of demotivation thus stress should never be overlooked as it becomes so toxic in the workplace.

In Zimbabwe, Wadesango et al. (2015) studied teachers and found that occupational stress affected them physically, mentally, also in behavior. They concluded that stress arises when psychological or physical pressures an individual beyond their normal range of stability, causing disruptions that make them shift away from their usual way of operating. The results from his research showed that some stress issues like blood pressure patients, diabetic patients and ulcers and developed heart complications coupled with nonstop headaches were becoming a problem, these among the physical and psychologically feelings of anxiousness boredom at work frustrations, depressed teachers and low self-esteem was much of a concern. The researcher has witnessed such depression that Zimbabwe is also facing here in Botswana in that mostly lecturers are frustrated as what they expected when they joined institutions is not non-accomplished and this creates indeed a low esteem and inferiority that lecturers are overpowered by stressors and cannot go an extra mile in terms of what they are mandated to do for example in terms of ongoing research or ongoing student teacher communication thereby dropping the quality of performance that is anticipated for at the end many sicknesses become more evident and visible.

In Botswana Baliyan et al (2018) studied teachers in private sector in secondary schools and found out that occupational stress arises from the causes and consequences of excessive psychological and physical pressure. Stress occurs when this pressure disrupts an individual's balance, creating tension

in response to stimulus. His findings were that school policies contradicted the environment and too much work overload leading to extra duties was more apparent and exhausting. Teachers also faced stress in trying to control pupils' indiscipline in class and because of that it brought low morale and motivation with increased job dissatisfaction and conflict at the workplace. Baliyan articulates that stress rises when an individual fails to handle a situation competently and engages in poor coping skills. and thus, can affect behavioral and health complications in an individual. Other issues also included limited resources that cannot meet individual targets and no promise or value in terms of rewards given by authorities cause stress as expectations become unmet. Other stressors that emanate from stressed teaching environments include work overload and poor student behavior, role conflicts, task stress, school environment stress, management style, role ambiguity, lack of supervisory support, no peer support and role overload.

Baliyan articulated that the increase in job demands, work processes and the rise of economic pressures in individuals affect the academic performance of employees thus performance of a teacher becomes jeopardized. He also found out that extra teaching hours were also causing stress and that in private schools there was gross acute shortage of resources like laboratories, furniture, sporting facilities, computer laboratories and instructional resources which include a call to prepare lesson plans and schemes of work with no resources, and these accumulated to negative performance by teachers. The researcher would like to explore more still in the gap that Baliyan left as the results were gathered from secondary schools and the researcher looks at the gap in the private tertiary institutions to ascertain the root cause at the higher learning level institutes. Some of the above stressors indeed are a pain to lecturers like management style which becomes very difficult to remove or to change or influence coupled also with limited resources that despite such a lecturer should perform for example limited resources in terms of research allowances, attachment visits to the whole country, office sharing and office privacy is of great limitation and non-engagement in social settings like sporting and relaxation exercises all cause pain and stress to the lecturer hence the need to explore such in this research.

2.4 To examine the challenges experienced by managers in supervising stressed academic staff in private tertiary institutions in Botswana

Baliyan (2020) discovered that academics mostly are stressed in private institutions because of multitasking and in quest of proving to work hard to management which sometimes involves several tasks at once which can lead to role conflict, some influences are discussed as follows.

2.4.1 Administrative Policies causing stress among academics

These causes of occupational stress include downsizing, environmental and benchmarking pressures pressure, merit-based pay plans, advanced technology, rotating work shifts, strict autocratic hard personnel management rules, institution structure and work design, centralization, formalization, conflicts between line staff, excessive specialization, limited opportunities for advancement, role ambiguity, role conflict, and a lack of trust in the organizational culture. The researcher concurs and shares the same mind that some structures in the tertiary educational institutions in Botswana are not in congruency to the expected standard and even the assumed structural positions are found only on the organogram but inside such seats occupations are empty with no people because employers do not want to employ or promote maintain lean staffing as such it suffocates those few lecturers as it creates a silo leadership that has no proper design of tasks and structures which leads to role conflict at the end if not well managed suffocates performance.

2.4.2 Organizational Processes causing stress among academics

These include tight punitive measures, closed unfavorable working systems, demand communications and centralized power culture, with no essence of evaluations and productivity work results, long decision making and response style, crowded working area with no conducive breathing air conditioning. Also included are relationship with management and adherence to switch to preferred language of communication ethnic tolerance. If such causes are not met, they lead to poor working relations with management and this effect productivity at large at work.

In Africa Mwenda et al (2019) in Kenya researched about the relationship between task or work stressors and university and colleges departmental performance in private higher education institutions and wanted to find the relationship within these variables on how they contributed to stress among lecturers. Mwenda found out that work life balance was no longer practiced in institutions of higher learning and the contribution factors to stress such as changes in mode of learning which have shifted from traditional midweek to weekend-based classes, block studies, evening and distance education. Also, among others causes was diversity of students now across the globe enrolling, accommodating and dynamic ways to adapt to post Covid 19 requirements. Mwenda articulated that stress results in academics as an imbalance between resources that is the ability to cope and sustain demands or pressure, Even though lecturers are highly skilled full of expertism and knowledge lecturers may not perform as expected in classrooms and lecture theatres as a result of failure in copying with pressure to large numbers of students, digital teaching advancements in lecturing and organizational politics and conflicts, no support from top management, uncooperative

students and students who are not highly committed which can be worsened by top management lack of support. The researcher would also like to articulate that despite the research being in Kenya East Africa and Botswana being in Southern Africa the impact of work life balance is very true. Despite technology coming to unease the traditional ways of education delivery it has been noted that those working from home are always glued on their gadgets and the office of working from home has created a workstation that operates to distance learning 24/7 which has strained more lecturers and also those who stretch from morning shift working till evening part time lectures suffer from loss of family engagements and find children already asleep as mostly they arrive home after 9pm form evening classes and the stressful part is that in most institutions part time is not optional and not paid overtime at all.

In Nigeria, Akah (2022) conducted a study on *occupational stress and academic staff performance* in two private universities and found that stress is a global issue that everyone goes through and meets in life universally among all lecturers, despite how old one is, sex of a person employment status and or socio-economic status. He further explained that stress can be come into one's life as a challenge or as an opportunity with a benefit depending on how it is perceived and managed by the individual. and stress that two thirds of people who visit doctors are stressed at work, which arises from physical, biological, emotional and psychological roots. Akah in his writing emphasizes that no one is immune to stress because it happens to every workplace which might affect job performance due to inadequate non-financial or unavailability of basic tools and facilities and proper equipment and infrastructure such as conducive work area, libraries, offices, laboratories irregular or partial payment of salaries, work overload career slow progress and no peer support environment. As a researcher though the context of Nigeria might be different from Botswana but Africa being Africa I would like to explore more on the and extend the population of more than two institutes from Akah's two universities to cater for more insights from 14 Gaborone private Institutions and find out more on gender, age, influence of stress in the country. As a researcher I have also attested many academics on repetitive sick leaves and assume also that it might be a result of stress as outlined by Akah that two thirds of people visiting doctors is due to stress and in this regard this research will unearth that as Akah outlines that the absence to attend to this affects job performance which he defined as follows:

2.4.3 Job performance

This is the task put forth on academics who have seen as the total sum of all the required tasks a lecturer is faced with including preplanning, attending classes according to one's timetable and doing

research at the same time serving both students, management and the stakeholders including parents and the society at hand.

2.4.3.1 Work Overload

This describes the quantity, quality, and intensity of tasks assigned to an individual within a specific period, often exceeding their capacity or available resources to complete them effectively. and Amiini and Okanmah (2020) defines a workload as the tasks academics in teaching carry out and perform in their institutions following their semester calendar of events where such tasks becomes the totality of periods a lecturer carries assigned classroom duties within campus, and conducting schedules of online distance learning classrooms and managing the social formed classrooms on google scholar and other platform like WhatsApp classrooms and individual email boxes. When employees are expected to handle too many tasks or maintain unrealistic quality standards under limited time, it often leads to occupational stress, fatigue, and reduced job satisfaction.

Akah (2022) illustrates that high amount of workload tends to affect performance coming from both internal factors stress refers to conditions within a person that arise when external or internal demands exceed the individual's ability to cope or adapt effectively. These conditions may manifest psychologically, emotionally, or physically, affecting one's overall wellbeing and job performance. (burdens from outside environment like hours spent on a task or difficulty intensive jobs). These causes can at the end cause an employee to lapse in physical and emotional well-being as examples can be exhaustion at work, lack of focus, mistakes and embarrassment, fading of concentration and effectiveness leading to poor listening, absconding of lectures due to anxiety. Akah contributes that stress is also caused by institutional amenities and facilities that provide a good and conducive environment that is convenient to lecturers which was also supported by Hafez(2019) says that a working surrounding infrastructures and equipment makes a good soundful friendly environment makes employees quality of work life better since more time is spent at work and that affects them how one employee may think or adapt including procedures, systems, structures ,tools, access can favorably and unfavorably impact the performs .His research findings found out that remuneration positively and significantly need to be done in favorable and ever being reviewed from time to time to avoid stress in the long run which hinders productivity. Remuneration has been defined and even Friedrick Herzberg(1959) two factor theeory argues that it is not a motivator but a hygiene factor but honestly the first issue to agree on when a lecturer looks for employment is the issue of salary and other benefits and normally the review of such incentives is not reviewed according to world and

national economic crisis going on and this becomes a fake promise in the eye of the employee which causes psychological strain and makes someone feel unwanted or rejected and the psychological contract is broken. The other issues that strain lecturers that I also second the author as the researcher are issues of background planning that needs to be done some institutes still consider scheming and planning and also assessments settings for semester, assessments follow ups on naughty students burdens the lecturers at most to such an extent that if management do not recognize the effort then it overburdens the lecturers.

According to Kwenda et al (2019) in their research on the analysis of the relationship between work stressors and faculty performance in selected PTI in Kenya says that job stress is the challenge facing both the employed and the employer and that management need to deal with high cost of addressing the phenomenon. Kwenda indicated some common causes of stress which included no work life balance, cooperate inefficiency, no research and increased health care for employees, blended learning versus traditional ways of teaching that increases work overload, increased students' enrollment and no salary increase to tally the numbers, stiff competition among universities and it is amid such that faculties need a high degree of flexibility and dynamic to accommodate nontraditional savvy students. Kwenda goes on to illustrate that despite all this a lecturer needs to adapt and continue offering excellent services that are of interest to learners, the government, regulatory bodies employers, parents and the community at large and these assumptions can result in a lot of pressure that affects job performance at the end by academic employees. Other factors causing stress in academics include overwhelming work schedules and targets, increased number of enrollments, and disparity in student ratios. The researcher also found out that currently in Botswana academic stressors include more paperwork that has to do with planning, entrepreneurial work now expected, increased teaching hours now that classes are now blended and on mobile phones and students must be attended 24 hours. Lecturers no longer have holidays and no work life balance, and no study time or time dedicated for further scientific research.

2.4.3.2 Job Insecurity

The contracts according to Kwenda (2019) given are short lived and uncertainty among lecturers exist as such someone works in a dilemma and not knowing the fate of renewed contracts and in an effort to cut costs and sustain budgets the researcher found out that lecturers are now being given more than eight modules that cut across the modes of study which includes full time, part time, block release,

weekend classes and distance learning and a timetable just comes and is non-debatable being on take it or leave it communication basis.

In South Africa Mokdad (2015) University of Rhodes presentation stress was attributed from etiology of countable physical and mental sicknesses which included coronary heart diseases, skin diseases, ulcers which if these are not taken care of hinder effectiveness at work and prohibit job performance and create an environment of absenteeism. In this article, Mokdad reviews that teachers, regardless of the level at which they teach, are continuously exposed to stress, and this has become an international concern. He emphasizes that teaching is one of the most stressful professions worldwide due to increasing workloads, administrative pressures, lack of resources, and high expectations from students, parents, and educational authorities. Mokdad further notes that occupational stress among teachers affects not only their job performance and satisfaction but also their mental and physical well-being, leading to burnout, absenteeism, and decreased productivity. phenomenon that can result in burnout. The findings of the research pointed to major stress of scarcity of resources, managing students and attending to parents demands on their children, supervision of students and curriculum development coupled with challenges of administration. Lack of teaching ergonomics was also profound here to reduce and eliminate on some practice by educational systems which leads to occupational stress.

In China Xu and Yang (2018) studied on a research titled the impact of perceived organizational support and the relationship between job stress and burnout and they found out that there were many causes of occupational stress among academics such as the new reforms of education lecturer appointment systems, remuneration and bonuses, difficulty in handling students ,career development and higher expected performance views and Xu and Yang writes that if these go for a long time with no one fixing the issue of stress leads to exhaustion and exhaustion is described as a moment of overextending oneself and draining ones' emotional and physical capabilities and brings a lot of side effects such as the following that diminishes the zeal and energy towards productivity:

2.4.3.3 Diminishes long suffering and love for students

Diminished readiness in module preparation, slow turnaround time to attend to students' needs, losing self-esteem and control, affected mental and physical health, the above stressors and outcomes of strain which are negative stimuli. In their further research Yu and Yang ((2021) on perceived organizational support (POS) on the relationship between job stress and burnout they found out that stressed teachers have diminished patience with work, students and are not ready to control on their

efficacy and their POS is affected. POS referring to the perceived organizational support. The researcher concurs that the driving force behind lecturer strength is the high level of efficacy that protects the academic status or ego and once that is tempered with then the POS dies psychologically and the Institutes begin to operate with only moving bodies only yet the spirit willing man was long dead or departed from the company and signs of such are seen in low morale, delay in meeting deadlines, late for class attendances and non-group participations or socializing.

2.4.3.4 Perceived Organizational Support

The academics presumption that institutions respect their effort and work and cares about their welfare status. POS brings the mechanism attributions to process feelings of obligation, fulfilment and socio technical needs with expected return of increased job satisfaction, positive mood at work reduced harm at work reduced work strain and increased job performance thus in the absence of ignorant to stress job stress will reduce the POS and increase on stress levels and burnouts, role ambiguity, role conflict and managers are urged to always take care of the balance of POS.This also gets connected to the human resources aspect of psychological contract under employment relations where if the employer fails to meet their obligations and the employed feels robbed of such then the psychological contract is broken and trust is lost forever and management should make sure theat whatever they practice in actual verbal and written as a way of communication should also be backed up by strong emotional trust.

Chitra (2020) in India carried research on the impact of occupational stress and job satisfaction in teaching field during Covid 19 in the PTI and found out that stress was due to the increased usage of online education due to Covid 19 because before Covid 19 online education was not optional. And in his definition job stress is seen or registered as a situation of unpleasant emotional state that is expected to lead to job insecurity, job unsatisfaction, no and lack of freedom of creativity a, innovation and independence, which at the end leads to sense of rejection that can lead to increased unrecognition and problems in physical and social health. Such a state arises when employees feel overwhelmed by job demands, experience limited control over their work, or face uncertainty about their employment. Over time, this emotional strain can contribute to physical illnesses, mental exhaustion, and reduced workplace morale and productivity. if not treated well on time, and the drastic change and shift to online mode of education from conventional mode where academics are required to adapt quickly and move with speed as to compete at par with the Industry and so the

ability of managing stress at an institution becomes on how universities and colleges consider the impact of stress and how stress is managed in an organization.

Still in India Sing and Katoch (2017)had a study of occupational stress in academic teaching and found out that stress was a universal phenomenon in which stress was found to be a wear and tear of our physical bodies as we became accustomed to turbulent environments and continue to try leading to low self-esteem and or a mismatch between perceived effort and perceived rewards which can cause one to lose control and sense of innovation of which every employee has the ability to practice high self-esteem .Low social support causes a lot of stress and increases also degree of job insecurity and the resultant is that stress undermines the achievement of goals both individual ,team and overall company expectation.

The following became then the classification of stress:

Factors that come from within the job itself such as poor physical and working conditions, excessive workload, and tight deadlines often create pressure for employees. Challenges related to one's role in the organization, including unclear job expectations and conflicting responsibilities, also contribute to stress. Issues around career growth, such as job insecurity and limited chances for promotion, further add to frustration. In addition, strained relationships with workmates and supervisors can make the working environment uncomfortable. The organization's structure and climate may also worsen matters when staff members are not fully involved in decision-making processes, or when office politics take centre stage, leading to unequal treatment at work generates discontent among lecturers therefore occupational stress is vital and should be considered for a healthy organization. It is of paramount important that lecturers are also involved in the calendar of events or notified of upcoming events to avoid little or no involvement which makes a lecturer lose ownership to his daily workplace instead of being family or native and if this is not rectified it turns to make sour relationships with superiors which can be supervisors or directors of the institutions yet some stressors will be coming from internal context of the environment.

In Kuwait Hassan et al (2020) did a study on the impact of job satisfaction and job stress a case of PTI in Karachi Pakistan and he found out that because of fast ,dynamic and turbulent environment of fast business context in the PTI industry everyone is expected to produce results and yet causes of stress such as excessive deadlines, no room for better thinking and contributions and a feeling of employees being useless all contribute to stress in academics and management are urged to plan for their employees and be supportive so that their employees are well motivated. The industry in Kuwait

is very different from Southern Africa and Botswana but issues of the turbulent political, economic, socio economic, technological advancements, and legal and ecological has affected the whole world especially after post Covid 19 the world has become one and issues of catching up and embracing the fast changes has to be fully supported by the management in showing and leading the employees to the future so that they own the academic operations and support higher levels of performance and creativity in a university set up. Lecturers should be given much room to think about rebranding the brands of their institute and tailoring more into research findings to offer better programs that match industry standards that will change Botswana, Africa and the whole world and if the stress issues are ignored and continue to grow then it becomes difficult to progress.

In Pakistan and Finland study made by Malik et al (2017) on factors associated with occupational stress among university teachers they shared the same sentiments that higher education institutions face multi-dimensional changes which are affecting their daily routines and scheduling and thus influencing their mandates, authority and company systems and administration of job work. The study also revealed that occupational stress refers to the experience of negative emotions such as anger, tension, anxiety, frustration, and depression triggered by work-related factors. When employees feel stressed, they tend to draw on additional resources to work faster and manage information more efficiently. However, if employees manage their anticipatory responses effectively, their reaction to stress can be beneficial, helping to align both mind and body to tackle workplace challenges.

. Among other causes of stress were poor working conditions, too much work overload ,emotional pressure too much expectations, extreme job demands and their findings were that Finland teachers in higher education were not found impacted with stress as Finland in the who world is best known to be best work environment compared to Pakistan which is going through transitional phases in higher education and lecturers there are under a high rate of stress and main stressors were job security, restructuring issues and laying off of academics and female teachers had more stress than male teachers unlike the Finnish were there were better opportunities for promotion and development, social support and no bullying of academics as compared to Pakistan. The Finland economy and structures allow stressors to lecturers to be addressed hence the Finland nation is the only country so far now that has recorded no stress to lecturers as compared to Pakistan and the rest of the world if all governments would emulate the Finnish for better managed stress management the world would be better with managed pain at work and higher productivity.

2.4.4 Workplace Stress/Job Stress and WLB

In Nigeria Chukwuma et al (2020) in their research on staff perceptions on sources of occupational stress among lecturers discovered that in high-pressure work environments and stressful routines, there is a significant likelihood of reduced job satisfaction and organizational commitment, along with increased burnout. Rising stress levels are closely linked to a lack of well-being, particularly when individuals do not have effective coping strategies. Bano and Wajidi (2021) on work life balance articulated the following concerning work life balance at the workplace in the academic field. In Pakistan, Bano and Wajidi investigated the relationship between occupational stress and diversity. Their findings revealed significant differences in stress levels among faculty members of different age groups, and they explored whether employment opportunities influence employee stress and turnover intentions in professional intergovernmental organisations. They applied the job resources and needs model to the diverse contexts of global corporations. Similarly, workload, work-life balance (WLB), and autonomy were examined in relation to teachers' job performance. The study found that autonomy and WLB affected participants' performance, while workload had no noticeable impact on schoolteachers' job performance.

In Cuba, Velozmontano et al. (2023) conducted an interdisciplinary study on the impact of job stress on teachers. They observed that work stress is becoming increasingly common, driven by the fast pace and constant challenges in professional, family, and social life. In the workplace, responsibilities, ongoing changes, difficult decision-making, and technological demands are major sources of stress for education professionals. As a result, it is crucial for teachers and educational institutions to identify work stressors, recognize signs of stress, prevent its escalation, and develop effective management strategies.

Research in Botswana has similarly focused on identifying the main causes of occupational stress and the strategies to manage it. Many studies adopt a dialectical-materialistic approach and theoretical methods to explore workplace-related stress, which remains a persistent global issue and has been escalating in recent years due to the rapid changes of the 21st century, including faster lifestyles, increased competition, specialized roles, economic challenges, and health crises. These pressures force educators to adapt continuously, demanding greater flexibility and responsiveness, which often results in stress and its negative outcomes.

According to the World Health Organization (WHO,2023), health is not merely the absence of disease but a comprehensive state of well-being encompassing physical, mental, and social dimensions. Work

is important not only economically but also socially, as it engages individuals physically and mentally, fosters social connections, and contributes to overall well-being. However, work can also pose risks, such as accidents, occupational diseases, burnout, or stress-related conditions. While work-related stress is often viewed negatively due to its health implications, it is not always harmful. Occupational stress can have both positive and negative effects. Eustress refers to positive stress that can enhance performance and personal growth, while distress involves unpleasant experiences that result in harmful outcomes for the individual. Stress on job performance in Christian Higher educated two colleges were selected using convenience sampling and quantitative research approach was used and major sources of stress were excessive workload, in conducive work environment, inadequate financial payment, disruptive student behavior among others. Chukwuma says it takes healthy lecturers to offer quality services to make an institution to progress and shine. The WHO saw that a well being of an employee needs greater effort in investment of more of social bonding than what used to be only psychological and physical and this brings the lecturers to be so focused and invest and unleash all their skills and talents to the learners for the benefit of the community and the country and the nation and region benefits more form highly productivity employees who manage stress impact very well which comes as a result of an organization taking stress not as a nuisance but of importants regards.

Components of the Sources of Occupational Stress

The World Health Organization (2019) categorized work-related hazards into work content and context. Work content includes factors such as workload, long working hours, time pressure, and lack of involvement in decision-making. Contextual factors include job insecurity, low pay, limited promotion opportunities, unfair performance evaluations, poor supervisor relationships, lack of career development, unclear organizational goals, harassment, and workplace violence. Both dimensions negatively impact employee health and productivity

1. **Excessive Workload:** Employees face stress when tasked with large volumes of work within limited time frames. This restricts their opportunity to rest and recover, forcing long working hours to meet targets. Workload can be measured quantitatively, based on the amount of tasks assigned, and qualitatively, when the demands exceed the employee's skills, energy, or knowledge to perform effectively.
2. **Inadequate Financial Remuneration:** Delayed or insufficient payment for work completed is a significant source of occupational stress, particularly in private universities. Employees

may experience financial strain when salaries are low or not paid on time, affecting their ability to meet basic needs.

3. **Non-Conducive Working Environment:** A work environment that lacks adequate facilities or is affected by environmental pollution can hinder productivity and overall work performance.
4. **Job Dissatisfaction:** Discontent with job roles, responsibilities, or organizational changes can contribute to stress. This may occur when employees are reassigned to unfamiliar tasks or when the organizational structure changes. Research shows a strong correlation between workplace stress and job dissatisfaction, with higher stress linked to lower satisfaction and an increased likelihood of employees leaving the organization.
5. **Students' Disruptive Behavior:** Disrespectful or disruptive behavior by students can negatively impact staff wellbeing and productivity. Stress arising from such behaviors can alter an employee's usual performance and affect emotional health.

Occupational stress may also result from poor interpersonal relationships, unsupportive leadership styles, and insufficient remuneration relative to personal and domestic needs. Stress affects employees both mentally and emotionally, and can lead to anxiety, depression, or reduced concentration. Tertiary management systems should allow for flexibility in order for the deans and chairperson of colleges and universities to be able work hand in hand in managing and understanding lecturer feelings concerning job pressure and unfavorable work conditions.

In Zimbabwe, Masuku and Muchemwa (2015) conducted a quantitative study among 36 full-time lecturers at a Christian university and found that workload particularly meeting deadlines and long working hours was the primary cause of stress. Their study revealed no significant differences in stress responses across gender, age, or faculty, indicating that stress affects all lecturers, regardless of demographic characteristics. Similarly, McKeand (2016) noted that female employees are particularly susceptible to traumatic stress due to sexual harassment, which Cole and Kelly (2011) classify as an environmental factor contributing to occupational stress. Poor workplace relationships, bullying, and violence can further exacerbate stress, leading to anxiety, depression, and other negative outcomes.

Research in Ghana by Adom et al. (2020) involving 478 respondents, including students and lecturers, found that poor planning, procrastination, unhealthy habits, and unrealistic academic goals were major sources of academic stress. Effective strategies included setting realistic goals, proper

scheduling, regular exercise, healthy eating, and relaxation intervals. Regulatory bodies were urged to establish guidance, counseling, and welfare committees to raise awareness about academic stress management.

The COVID-19 pandemic added new layers of stress, as Eisner's study at South University College of Business revealed. Transitioning abruptly to online teaching disrupted classroom management, workload, and work-life balance. Many faculty had to juggle teaching remotely while caring for children and dealing with personal losses. Challenges included limited experience with remote teaching, poor internet access, and balancing emotional stress with academic responsibilities. Coping strategies included rewording syllabi, creating new lesson plans, motivating students, and utilizing alternative teaching materials. similar studies in Indonesia (Nuasantra Bahri et al., 2023) showed that lecturer professionalism was affected by COVID-19, as they had to adjust teaching, research, and administrative tasks to online formats. Adherence to new guidelines and maintaining teaching standards added further pressure. In India, research highlights how organizational changes, salary adjustments, human resource shifts, and social changes can elevate stress levels among lecturers (Robbins, 2008; Tavakoli, 2010; Senthil et al., 2013). Stress arises from the mismatch between individual capabilities and organizational demands, and it can be exacerbated when employees have little control over high job demands (CCOHS).

Globally, teaching remains one of the most stressful professions (Johnson et al., 2005), with academic stress reported in higher education institutions due to increasing competitiveness and constant systemic changes. Effective stress management and appreciation of emerging challenges remain crucial for sustaining lecturers' wellbeing and job performance (Ravichandran & Rajendran, 2007).

Ahsan (2009) explored job stress and job satisfaction among Malaysian university staff, highlighting that work forms a significant part of daily life and can be a major source of stress. In highly competitive work environments, many employees focus extensively on job-related tasks, often overlooking the stress that affects their work and personal lives. High levels of occupational stress can reduce job satisfaction, hinder interpersonal interactions, and negatively influence communication with colleagues and clients. Employees experiencing significant stress may feel frustrated or "burned out," resulting in dissatisfaction with their jobs and a lack of engagement within the organization.

Brewster and Suutari (2005) noted that private tertiary institutions experience stress due to job demand, lack of rewards, and organizational culture. Over the past decades, globalization and

technological progress have transformed work structures, employment patterns, and workplace relationships, contributing to increased work-related stress. While globalization offers economic opportunities, it also intensifies competition, creating pressures on working conditions and fundamental employment rights. Greater flexibility, temporary employment, and independent contracting have increased job insecurity, workload, and role ambiguity. Technological advancements blur the boundaries between work and personal life, as employees feel obliged to remain connected and responsive outside office hours, potentially causing conflicts between work and family roles.

Economic recessions and global crises further exacerbate stress. Enterprises often respond through restructuring, downsizing, mergers, outsourcing, and layoffs. Survivors of such processes may experience guilt, uncertainty, increased workloads, extended working hours, and limited control over their roles. Evidence indicates that organizational changes during such periods reduce management's attention to employee well-being, amplifying occupational stress.

1.15.4.2 Job Demands

Job demands refer to the pressures perceived by employees when job requirements exceed their capabilities. This can contribute to Threat-Avoidant Vigilant (TAV) work, where workers maintain high vigilance to prevent disasters, such as in urban transit, trucking, or air traffic control. Such conditions increase the risk of cardiovascular diseases, including hypertension. Workplace injustice, whether structural (e.g., labor stratification) or interpersonal (e.g., harassment or bullying), further exacerbates stress. Laws exist to prevent discrimination based on race, gender, age, disability, or other factors, and employees should be protected when reporting such incidents.

Job insecurity, intensified by globalization and changing labor markets, is associated with work intensification and lower job control. Non-standard employment arrangements, including freelance, on-call, and temporary work, are becoming more common, increasing uncertainty and stress among workers.

1.15.4.3 Lack of Rewards

Insufficient rewards, including lack of recognition, monetary compensation, respect, and professional development opportunities, contribute significantly to occupational stress.

2.4.5 Organizational Culture

Organizational culture plays a critical role in occupational stress, influencing leadership, communication, and workplace dynamics (Welty Peachey et al., 2015).

1.16 Effects of Occupational Stress on Academic Staff Performance in Private Tertiary Institutions in Botswana

Chen et al. (2018) found out that lecturer work stress reduced and diminished the power to yield motivation in lecturers and thus issues to do with commitment, ultimately impacting productivity and performance. Stress can also cause the body to suffer and at the same time creates mental overwhelming that creates psychological health problems, which also contribute to lecturers' poor performance and low productivity. Private tertiary institutions are particularly exposed to stress and not spared at all, with research linking high stress to absenteeism, low motivation, reduced commitment, and lower job satisfaction (Chen et al., 2018).

Additional stressors in Botswana include job insecurity and inadequate Many lecturers receive short-term contracts, often only one year, with minimal continuity or clarity regarding extensions or changes in teaching mode. This instability reduces motivation, demoralizes staff, and indirectly affects students, who are the primary beneficiaries of quality teaching. This means that the lecturers can not access even financial freedom to plan their future with their savings because even financial institutions will not help the even with motor centers to get vehicles to use and becomes an impact on the level of stress because such strain if one continuously tolerates it without the strain or pain being removed it means the employee will crumble or attrite from the organization hence management of institutions should always thrive to be reasonable in contract of employment negotiation with their employees. resources (Kumar & Sharma, 2021).

Good employee performance is vital for achieving institutional objectives and can be measured through productivity, quality of work, and adherence to deadlines (Saks & Haccoun, 2010). However, employee performance is often influenced by the level of occupational stress experienced in the workplace. When stress levels are moderate, they may stimulate motivation and focus, leading to improved performance in a state known as eustress (Chen, 2017). Conversely, excessive or prolonged stress, referred to as distress, can impair concentration, reduce job satisfaction, and hinder the ability to meet institutional goals effectively. In the context of higher education, lecturers experiencing distress may struggle with classroom management, research productivity, and timely marking of assessments, ultimately affecting the overall quality of education delivered. Therefore, managing

occupational stress is not only crucial for employee well-being but also for sustaining high levels of performance and institutional effectiveness. Stress impairs performance, leading to errors, reduced innovation, and lower creativity (Cohen-Charash & Spector, 2014). When employees are under constant pressure or experience high levels of occupational stress, their cognitive and emotional resources become depleted, limiting their ability to think critically or generate new ideas. In academic environments, such stress may manifest through poor lesson preparation, diminished research output, and a decline in student engagement. Over time, this deterioration in performance not only affects individual productivity but also undermines the institution's overall capacity to achieve its educational objectives. Observations in Botswana indicate that stressed lecturers may arrive late to class, engage minimally with students, and adopt rigid teaching methods, negatively affecting knowledge transfer and skill development.

Research consistently shows that occupational stress diminishes employee performance, with additional impacts on physical and mental health (Jones & Bright, 2018). Prolonged exposure to workplace stress can lead to fatigue, anxiety, depression, and other health-related problems that interfere with concentration and productivity. In the academic context, stressed lecturers may experience burnout, absenteeism, and a decline in enthusiasm for teaching and research. This reduction in well-being and performance not only affects individual staff members but also compromises the institution's ability to deliver quality education and achieve its strategic goals. Consequently, managing occupational stress becomes a critical component of maintaining effective performance and sustaining institutional excellence. This has become evident that lecturers in lecturers in Botswana are not also spared from such sufferings and pains from mental breakdowns, minor strokes, or high blood pressure due to work pressures. If not addressed, such stress threatens the retention of valuable skilled professionals, compromising both institutional effectiveness and national human capital. Ministry of Higher Education support for private tertiary institutions in Botswana remains limited, exacerbating these challenges.

2.5 Empirical Review

2.5.1 Effects and challenges managers have when supervising academic staff in Botswana Private Tertiary Institutions

Numerous studies have examined the relationship between occupational stress and employee performance in private tertiary institutions, with evidence consistently indicating that high levels of occupational stress adversely affect employee performance (Chen et al., 2018; Kumar & Sharma,

2021). In Botswana's private tertiary institutions, managers encounter several challenges when supervising academically stressed staff. Occupational stress often results in reduced teaching effectiveness, increased absenteeism, lower research productivity, emotional exhaustion, cynicism, and diminished professional confidence (Chen et al., 2018). These conditions make it more difficult for managers to maintain staff motivation, monitor performance, and sustain the quality of teaching and research. Furthermore, occupational stress contributes to interpersonal conflicts, ineffective communication, and resistance to supervision and constructive feedback, thereby complicating managerial responsibilities. Managers must also balance institutional objectives, including accreditation requirements, student enrolment targets, and organisational performance, while responding to employee wellbeing concerns. Limited institutional resources and inadequate support mechanisms further constrain their ability to manage stress effectively. Consequently, managers may themselves experience secondary occupational stress arising from both operational responsibilities and the emotional demands of supporting stressed employees. These challenges highlight the importance of implementing effective stress management interventions and leadership development programmes to enable managers to identify, reduce, and prevent occupational stress among academic staff in Botswana's private tertiary institutions.

However, inconsistencies exist in the literature, underscoring the need for further research to fully understand the complex relationship between occupational stress and employee performance. Observations from Botswana indicate that stressors might differ across private tertiary institutions, depending on management practices. For instance, some institutions do not operate on Saturdays, while others use electronic clocking systems or adjust work hours to compensate. Leave accrual policies also vary, affecting employee satisfaction and stress levels. Similarly, some institutions require lecturers to teach year-round, handling up to ten modules and multiple enrolment modes (distance, part-time, and conventional), significantly overloading staff.

A study by Aziz et al. (2019) found that workload and role conflict were significant predictors of employee performance. Excessive workload often leads to fatigue, time pressure, and reduced job satisfaction, which in turn diminish employees' ability to perform effectively. Similarly, role conflict where employees face incompatible job expectations or unclear responsibilities creates psychological tension that undermines focus and productivity. In academic settings, lecturers who must balance teaching, research, administrative duties, and student mentoring often experience both heavy workloads and conflicting role demands. These stressors can lead to errors, reduced innovation, and

a decline in the quality of teaching and research output. Aziz et al. (2019) therefore emphasize that managing workload distribution and clarifying job roles are essential for improving employee well-being and sustaining high performance levels. In Botswana, lecturers promoted to senior positions such as senior lecturer, head of department, or dean often find decision-making power remains centralized at senior management level. This situation creates high stress, as lecturers must manage both teaching and administrative responsibilities, including back-to-back meetings. Such promotions may not foster self-actualization or self-esteem, contrary to Maslow's hierarchy of needs, and may hinder the fulfilment of David McClelland's achievement, power, and affiliation needs, particularly if workload is excessive work overload occurs as employees are assigned more tasks than they can reasonably manage within the available time or with the resources at their disposal. This excessive workload can lead to stress, fatigue, and reduced job satisfaction, which negatively impact both individual performance and organizational effectiveness. Torrington emphasizes that persistent work overload not only diminishes productivity but also contributes to burnout, absenteeism, and increased staff turnover, highlighting the importance of effective workload management and organizational support systems to maintain performance and staff well-being (Torrington, 2014; Chen ,2019 and Aziz et.al;2019).

Wong et al. (2018) reported that organizational constraints can have a stronger negative impact on employee performance than workload alone. In Botswana, these constraints include poorly designed master calendars with unrealistic deadlines. Lecturers are held accountable if students fail to attend classes or submit assessments, increasing stress and the risk of job insecurity. The role of coping strategies in moderating the impact of occupational stress on employee performance is also inconsistent. Some studies indicate that effective coping reduces stress-related performance decline (Chen et al., 2018), whereas others find no significant relationship (Saeed et al., 2019). In Botswana, coping mechanisms remain underdeveloped due to the lack of employee wellness programs and support structures. Consequently, many lecturers succumb to stress, resulting in high attrition, early resignations, and a workplace environment characterized by frustration and dissatisfaction. This suggests that the impact of stress may vary depending on contextual factors such as institutional support, individual coping strategies, and the nature of job demands. In most cases individual lecturers, research indicates that academic staff employ various coping mechanisms to manage stress, including time management, seeking peer support, engaging in professional development, and relying on personal resilience strategies. These mechanisms can buffer the negative effects of stress, helping lecturers maintain performance and well-being despite high workloads and other occupational

pressures. Understanding these coping strategies is therefore critical for managers and policymakers, aiming to enhance staff effectiveness in private tertiary institutions.

Research gaps exist regarding occupational stress in Botswana, particularly concerning job insecurity, work-life balance, and organizational-level factors such as leadership style and organizational culture. Private tertiary institutions in Botswana vary in ownership, including locally owned, Chinese-owned, and Indian-owned institutions, each influencing workplace culture and leadership practices. Understanding these variations is crucial for addressing occupational stress and improving employee performance.

Occupational Stress Effects in Africa

Occupational stress among lecturers has been studied across Africa, with findings consistently showing that high stress levels reduce employee performance (Omotosho & Owoeye, 2020). However, results are inconsistent across different countries. For example, Adeoye et al. (2020) found that role ambiguity was a significant stressor in Nigerian private universities, while Nkosi et al. (2020) reported that work overload and job insecurity were the main stressors in South African institutions. These discrepancies highlight the need for context-specific research in Botswana. In response to these stressors, lecturers in Botswana's private tertiary institutions adopt various coping mechanisms to manage the pressures of their roles. These include time management, peer support, professional development, and personal resilience strategies, which help buffer the negative effects of stress and maintain performance (Saeed et al., 2019). For managers, understanding these coping strategies is essential, as it enables them to design supportive policies, allocate resources effectively, and implement interventions that reduce stress and enhance staff well-being. Context-specific strategies such as clarifying job roles, balancing workloads, and providing mentoring can help mitigate stressors unique to Botswana's higher education environment, ultimately improving both lecturer performance and institutional outcomes.

Coping strategies in Africa show similar contradictions. While some studies report that effective coping mitigates the negative effects of stress on performance (Omotosho & Owoeye, 2020), others find no significant impact (Gakobo et al., 2019). This underscores the need to investigate the role of coping mechanisms in managing stress within African private tertiary institutions.

Additional research gaps in Africa include the effects of cultural factors and work-life balance on employee performance. Most studies have concentrated on individual-level factors, with fewer examining organizational-level influences, such as leadership style and culture. For instance, Kwenda et al. (2019) found that occupational stress is a challenge for both employees and management in Kenyan private tertiary institutions, with significant financial implications for addressing the issue.

In Greece, Korurmoussi and Alexopaulous (2016) observed that female and younger lecturers experienced high stress, limiting career progression and tenure prospects. Political, economic, and social support deficiencies contributed to job insecurity and fear of future unemployment. According to Herzberg, career advancement and professional recognition are critical for academic staff, emphasizing the importance of addressing occupational stress to ensure continued motivation and performance in higher education. CPD points in terms of continuous learning and development to secure long job tenure and retention by an organisation and so stress is derived from pressure to accomplish full degree, a post graduate qualification and post-doctoral studies that have to be accompanied by reviewed research papers for a lecturer to self-actualise as Abraham Maslow indicated on the 5 hierarchical needs.

The moment the individual lecturer is strained and has no solution towards attaining such then the lecturer will begin to feel the imbalance and can suffer from financial constrain, low confidence level, lack of professional discussion and recognition. Korurmoussi and Alexopaulous further indicated that the issue of good remuneration, heavy workload and good relationships was of paramount importance in strengthening the academic skill and career for company productivity. Manzoor et al(2011)also illustrates that survival skills and adapting to the environment has for long contributed to stress like employees, including academic teaching staff, often experience pressure to quickly adjust to changing institutional demands, technological innovations, and evolving student expectations. The constant requirement to adapt and demonstrate resilience can contribute to emotional exhaustion, anxiety, and decreased job satisfaction, especially when organizational support is limited. This highlights that, beyond workload and role ambiguity, the dynamic nature of the work environment itself can be a significant stressor affecting performance and overall well-being. In Botswana lecturers should register for their qualifications with the Botswana Qualifications Authority for the vetting and valuation of qualifications in order to get the teaching qualification for 2400bwp(Botswana pula),and after that one has to apply for Assessor and Moderator evaluations again each costing 1200 bwp and

all that money comes from the individual employee where only a few institutions pay for their staff and the rest of the academics need to foot their own bill and also attend the assessor and moderator evaluation course these are attended at once for 3000bwp though once off especially for the new lecturers and certificate needed before before the assessor and moderato application is done yet the same lecturer will need to schedule the time for attending the course because off late the recommended institutions are not yet offering online.

The financial burden extends to payment of post graduate studies, and one has to fulfil masters and doctoral studies at his or her cost and even for other research publications because faculty performance is measured in the three roles like teaching, research and publication services together with industry awareness and such plays a large extent to the quality of students' experience in a university. Universities should therefore strive to equip and support their academic faculty members to stay ahead of competition and maintain good reputation in the industry to attract more talent and professors thus building the university goodwill and reputation that creates a good brand name. All this beauty in the perceived type of a lecturer can only be managed through mitigating and working together through stress management and working together to determine the type of stressors that are a strain to the Institute.

Malik et al(2017) in Pakistan and Finland in their research on factors associated with occupational stress among university Teachers supported that when lecturers are stressed they experience unpleasant emotions such as anger tension ,anxiety, frustration, depression and these are attributed due to factors such as poor working conditions, burnout, lack of management support, role ambiguity, negative attitudes and fear roaming in the campus environment, extreme job demands and very long working hours. He however alluded that institutions should invest more on promotion and other development opportunities, get rid of workplace bullying and promote more social support networks that unease the pressure to academics and the strain from the stressors is reduced.

Muh (2022) in Indonesia on job satisfaction and lecturer performance he attributed that in his findings that the major stress were teaching environments ,pupils handling ,supervision of attachments and dissertations and university administration and many symptoms such as non-stop headaches ,arthritis, respiratory problems heart problems a d diabetes were a result of academic stress and he suggested that if institutions can copy the Mokdad principle of ergonomics that he did in 2005 it was going to be easy as ergonomics has mainly been focussed on industrial work other types likes service and academic industries it has not fully been comprehended and so he suggested that educational

ergonomics refers to the application of theories, models, principles, and methods to optimise educational systems and environments, educational ergonomics involves adapting teaching and learning practices to suit the physical, cognitive, and social needs of students, teachers, and administrators,(Muh, 2022). The following areas were highlighted as key applications:

1. Teaching refers to improving teaching methods, integrating effective teaching aids, and enhancing learner motivation to facilitate better engagement and learning outcomes.
2. Academic curricula refer to designing, developing, enriching, and evaluating curricula to ensure they are effective, relevant, and suitable for learners' needs.
3. Assessment of academic performance refers to developing evaluation tools, assessment instruments, tests, and examinations to accurately measure learning outcomes and academic achievement.
4. Development of individuals refers to supporting the growth of students, teachers, and administrative staff, including fostering social connections and professional development within educational cohorts.
5. Design context refers to Optimising physical learning spaces such as classrooms, lecture theatres, laboratories, computer stations, and other educational environments to enhance learning and teaching experiences.
6. Legislative framework refers to establishing and enforcing policies and regulations that guide educational practices and ensure safe, effective, and equitable learning environments. These are the rules ,laws and regulations that balance the hard and soft HRM concept to balance the stressors and manage stress very well.

4. To assess the effects of occupational stress on academic staff performance in private tertiary institutions in Botswana

The study of the relationship between occupational stress and employee performance in private tertiary institutions draws on several theories from psychology, organizational behaviour, and human resource management. These theories provide a strong base for getting more insights concerning the study on the interaction between stressors found at work and employee productivity and highlights the new paradigm into the elements that build up on this correlation. This objective seeks to examine how varying levels of occupational stress influence the performance of academic staff in Botswana's private tertiary education sector. In this context, and

for the purposes of this research performance refers to both teaching effectiveness with given examples such as student outcomes, lesson preparation, and class engagement whilst institutional contributions such as research output, curriculum development, and administrative duties cover also the larger portion that a lecturer must go through according to,(Bakker and Demerouti,2019).

Botswana's private tertiary institutions are also faced with limited resources, high workloads, and job insecurity that brings the conceptualization of the extent to which stress affects employee performance being critical. By measuring this relationship, the study aims to determine whether higher stress levels correlate with reduced productivity, decreased motivation, and higher turnover intentions, role conflict, job security, and advanced high technological demands among academic staff, (Adeoye et al., 2020). This assessment will also help managers in different University and colleges and policymakers in the Ministry of Higher Education sector to develop good and long term practical based stress management strategies, like easing up of time pressure management schedules, good working environments conducive for lecturers and also more on work life balance thereby enhancing staff well-being and institutional performance towards continuous improvement in the educational sector or industry. This issue was highlighted in chapter one in justification of the gap and will also help to align well with Botswana's Vision 2036 goal of improving the quality and competitiveness of tertiary education.

The researcher was also interested in most models that are used to measure and analyse stress especially looking at the nature of this research and the first model that helped to understand stress and comprehend it was the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model (Bakker & Demerouti, 2014). This model suggests that job demands, such as high workload and role ambiguity, can lead to stress and burnout, whereas job resources, including social support and autonomy, can buffer the negative effects of these demands and enhance engagement and performance. The model assumes that each occupation has its specific stress-related risk factors, which can generally be classified into job demands and job resources**.** The Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) model (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; 2014) provides a strong theoretical foundation for understanding the relationship between occupational stress and employee performance in private tertiary institutions in Botswana. The model assumes that every occupation has its own specific risk factors related to job stress, which can be classified into two broad categories as job demands and job resources.

Job Demands Among Private Tertiary Institutions

On Job demands Sing and Katoch(2017) refer these demands to the physical, psychological, social, or organizational aspects of a job that require sustained effort and are therefore associated with physiological and psychological costs. In Botswana's private tertiary institutions, these demands may include the following aspects:

- Heavy teaching workloads and large class sizes.
- Pressure to meet accreditation or quality assurance standards.
- Limited research funding and tight deadlines.
- Role ambiguity and job insecurity due to short-term contracts.
- Administrative overload and performance monitoring.

High job demands can lead to burnout, exhaustion, and reduced job satisfaction, which in turn negatively affect academic performance, creativity, and engagement. This results from the above aspects being unavailable or unfeminine to lecturers who then feel pressured and strained such that the degree of tolerance gradually begins to deplete and diminishes every day with no light at the end of the tunnel.

Job Resources Among Private Tertiary Institutions

Job resources are the aspects of the job that help employees achieve work goals, reduce job demands, or promote personal growth and development. In the Botswana private tertiary education sector, job resources may include the following aspects according to (Sing and katoch., 2017):

- Supportive management and collegial relationships.
- Opportunities for professional development and research grants.
- Fair remuneration and recognition for academic achievements.
- Autonomy in teaching and decision-making.
- Access to teaching aids and digital learning infrastructure.
- Role conflict and management style
- Social bonding and work life balance

Adeoye et al (2020) highlighted that these resources play a major cushioning role and try to cater for and reduce the negative effects of job demands on occupational stress and enhance motivation and performance. Motivational aspects of the impact of stress should fall back from a job demand strain

and have the calculated risk of falling into the good hands of the resources in which if an employee falls prey to the resources the same lecturer should find a hiding of counselling and motivation coupled with recognitions and good advice of soldiering on and automatically the tension of stress is lifted up but the moment the employee feels no support from management and is not given any empowerment or fair growing opportunities at work and finds out unfair remuneration systems at work coupled with poor management style and no work life balance it means the employee becomes a wounded buffalo and the lecturer suffers distress. As a researcher, I saw that by applying the JD-R model, this study will examine how the balance (or imbalance) between job demands and job resources affects the levels of stress experienced by academic staff and their subsequent job performance. The model allowed the researcher to test whether the availability of sufficient resources can mitigate the adverse effects of job demands on performance outcomes which helped build towards my conceptual framework for the literature in review. The model on its own predicts high end positivity that allows for a high degree of relationship between the Job demand and the Job resources hence its name JD-R model. This kind of relationship allows that all things working well ceteris paribus it means that the model predicts that high job demands with low resources leads to increased occupational stress which in turn leads to reduced performance, and high job resources with manageable demands leads to increased engagement which in turn lead to improved performance. This ideology is especially suitable for this study because it is flexible, occupation-neutral, and context-sensitive. It accommodates the unique challenges of Botswana's private tertiary institutions, which operate under competitive market conditions and limited governmental support. Therefore, it provides an appropriate framework for measuring and interpreting the relationship between occupational stress and employee performance among academic staff in Botswana, where more exploration would be explained further as follows according to Bakker and Demerouti (2014):

- **Job demands** refer to the physical, psychological, social, or organizational aspects of work that require sustained effort or skill, which may incur physiological or psychological costs. Examples include high work pressure, emotional strain or pressure interactions with customers or students, and unfavourable physical work environments. While job demands are not inherently negative, inadequate mitigation can result in occupational stress.
- **Job resources**, build another dimension as one that include aspects of the job that help achieve work goals, reduce demands, and stimulate personal growth and development. They also have intrinsic motivational value. Examples include task feedback, autonomy, recognition, and

career development opportunities. These resources are essential not only for coping with job demands but also for fostering engagement and performance.

The JD-R model has practical applications across various occupational settings and has been widely employed in HRM frameworks, stress management programmes, and consultancy platforms. It has also been applied in studies investigating the impact of job demands and resources on occupational stress and employee performance in private tertiary institutions (Adeoye et al., 2020).

Another influential framework is the Transactional Model of Stress and Coping (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984), which conceptualises stress as a dynamic process involving the interaction between an individual's appraisal of a stressor and their coping strategies. Individuals who perceive stressors as threats and lack effective coping mechanisms are more likely to experience negative outcomes such as emotional and physical exhaustion that affects productivity at work. This model has been used to analyse the moderating role aspects of stress coping mechanisms concerning the relationship between occupational stress and employee performance (Omotosho & Owoeye, 2020).Despite the usefulness of such a model, there are notable gaps in the literature. One key gap is the limited consideration of cultural factors, such as collectivism and power distance, which may shape how employees perceive and respond to stress in African contexts, including Botswana (Brewster & Suutari, 2005). For instance, some universities and colleges in Botswana are individually owned, with centralised decision-making structures and rigid hierarchies, limiting flexibility and innovation in stress management. Another gap is the limited focus on organizational-level factors, such as leadership style and organizational culture, which can strongly influence employee perceptions of stress and their coping capacities. The transactional model of stress and coping by Lazarus Folkman gives and becomes very functional to an informed industry and informed workforce who are well trained and are at par form both the employer and employee expectations and standards of requirements. The model suspects that as the strain of stress arrives to an individual lecturer the lecturer should be in a position to accept and accommodate the strain whilst appreciating the consequences without any panic and move up to the next level of production deemed fit which is always not the case as different or same strain brings and is experienced to the lecturer at the same institute differently according to the impact of the stress which might not work well with the lecturers because it assumes a higher degree reciprocity that needs the lecturer to tolerate mostly all situations that befall but at the same time allowing lecturers to be calm during pressure of a strain as a way of coping up with stress because

it is not the stress that might injure someone but how someone receives the impact of stress as positive or negative,(Bakker and Demerouti., 2019,and Sing and Katoch, 2017).

Bakker & Demerouti (2019) further explored the JD-R model and noted that job control moderates stress responses, suggesting that high job demands combined with low job control predict psychological strain and illness. They also highlighted the Effort-Reward Imbalance (ERI) model**,** which emphasises the consequences of disproportionate effort and insufficient reward. When employees exert high effort without commensurate reward such as salary, promotion prospects, job security, or recognition they experience stress and strain, a scenario commonly observed in high-demand roles. The Effort–Reward Imbalance (ERI) Model, was developed by Johannes Siegrist (1996), provides a socio-psychological perspective on work-related stress. It posits that occupational stress arises when the efforts of employees invest in their work are not matched by the rewards they receive in return. The imbalance between high effort and low reward leads to emotional distress, demotivation, and long-term health and performance consequences. The core components of the model emphasize that the effort comprise of the demands and obligations placed on an employee, such as workload, responsibilities, and time pressure. That needs management to make sure the workload is fairly calculated well according to job design and analysis that was done before coming up with the job description to make sure that there are no role conflicts and too much or too little of the given tasks. On the other hand, the second construct becomes the reward section allows for the company to permit lecturers their benefits the employees that are due to them, which can be financial salary, esteem-based recognition and respect, and status-related career advancement or job security. High consideration should be given to such, and it should be known that there are also non-financial and financial benefits that an employee should receive including also a balance of hygiene and motivational factors according to Friedrick Herzberg two factor theory. The last construction is overcommitment and becomes a personal characteristic reflecting an employee's internal drive to work hard and meet expectations, often at the cost of personal well-being. Under this construct as long as the lecturer is able to manage his work despite the other people seeing it as overloaded and assuming the lecturer is stressed this posits that as long as the lecturer is not affected then the overcommitment is positive but when the lectures sees the negative due to negative strain and pain then stress manifest and the lecturer in question becomes affected. An imbalance occurs when high effort is not adequately compensated by fair rewards, leading to stress and dissatisfaction.

Private tertiary education in Botswana, are subjected to the ERI model and becomes so highly relevant as academic staff in colleges and universities often face high job demands such as large teaching loads and administrative duties, pressure to meet quality assurance standards and limited time for research and publication. These efforts may not always be rewarded, as many private tertiary institutions struggle with low or delayed salaries, limited promotion prospects, job insecurity due to short-term contracts, and minimal recognition for academic excellence or research output. This effort reward imbalance contributes to psychological strain, low morale, and diminished work performance among lecturers. The ERI model suggests that when employees perceive an imbalance between their efforts and the rewards, they receive motivation declines, job satisfaction crumbles and performance deteriorates at large leading to lecturer deterioration and disengagement. Conversely, when rewards such as fair pay, recognition, and career growth are aligned with the efforts invested, employees experience a sense of fairness, resulting in higher commitment and performance. This model aligns directly with this study's objective of measuring the relationship between occupational stress and academic staff performance. It provides a framework for understanding how perceived inequity in effort and reward systems leads to stress and negatively influences productivity and teaching quality. In the Botswana context, where private tertiary institutions compete for both staff and students under financial and regulatory pressures, understanding this imbalance is essential for formulating policies that promote fairness, motivation, and retention. This model also helped me to align and work on my conceptual framework, as this would help clear out assumptions in the hypothesis and to find exactly the stress elements surrounding the environment that lecturers work in, thus the theory also explains stress through organizational justice and reward mechanisms, not just workload. The theory also emphasized psychosocial factors that are highly relevant in academic settings and also compliments other models such as the Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) model, offering a more comprehensive understanding of how both structural demands and resources and perceptual effort and reward imbalances shape the issue of stress and performance outcomes.

Muh (2022) discussed also about the Conservation of Resources (COR) theory (adapted from Hackman & Oldham, 1980s) posits that human motivation is directed towards the maintenance and accumulation of valued resources. Job resources exist both at organizational levels example can be pay, career opportunities, job security, social relations and task levels could be skill variety, autonomy, task significance. Loss or inadequate availability of these resources increases occupational stress that negatively affects performance. The Conservation of Resources (COR) model was

developed by Hobfoll (1989, 2001) and provides a comprehensive framework for understanding how individuals experience and respond to stress. It is based on the idea that people strive to acquire, maintain, and protect valuable resources, and stress occurs when these resources are threatened, lost, or not adequately replenished .The theory states that the tangible items that lecturers come across and utilise such as office space and materials referred to as objects need to be available well on time for all university and college usage and that means classroom schedules should not clash with other lecturers as the unavailability of such becomes a strain and increases pressure and it hence becomes a demotivator to the lecturer. The model propounds that if lecturers become strained by finding the objects not working or finding no room to conduct research and consultation as is the prerequisite this might cause a pain leading to distress in the employees. On the other hand, the owners of private tertiaryinstitutions should make sure that job conditions such as job security ,management support and better working conditions are well provided for employees. Mostly lecturers are robbed of many issues in creativity and innovation with no support from top management and this leads to fear among lecturers and no room for initiatives the fear being that if the institute does not provide much independence and supportive arms in the provision of required resources then the job security is threatened because lecturers only hold on to no actioned contracts just to maintain state of stability with no growth strategy for the organisation describing that personal characteristics should be high on self-efficacy, competence through skill knowledge and sharing of resources among employees and high optimistic staff that is full of resilience and being able to manage stress .The moment an employee scores low that lecturer breaks down and scores low on managing stress and all the confidence is taken away and the conservative model principle is no longer conserved or taken care of as a special asset but becomes lost and the whole organization suffers thus management of tertiary institutions should be able to conserve the human capital talent and avoid even attrition and retain employees for the beauty and growth of the institutions. Muh (2022) points out that energies are the last construct of the model which depicts that time, effort, and knowledge that can be invested to gain other resources should be well shared and well distributed fairly. Tertiary institutions should always distribute and allow for fairness in terms of research knowledge presentation skills such as research paper presentation and top management should recognize such efforts and manage it so well that no loss of resources or even the threat of loss can lead to stress, while the gain of resources can improve well-being and performance. Employees who lack sufficient resources are more vulnerable to stress and burnout. Botswana in Southern Africa is not spared among the Tertiary institutions looking into that there are high teaching loads and limited time for research in academics that leads to loss in

energy and the employee become so depleted and finished and is left with no zeal .When lecturers join an organization they join with full innovation and full of brilliant ideas but their energy and motion is slowed down by the culture of an organization and because of such the researcher affirms that it demotivates the lecturers. The researcher also found out that short term job contacts are not doing well for both local and expatriates lecturers and that if lecturers could be given maybe four to five year contracts it would be better because it allows employees to have a sense of belonging and gain the sense of trust from the employers and by such the organization gains value assets in terms of good workforce. On the other hand limited institutional support, such as inadequate facilities or materials can lead to loss of object and emotional strain from student management and administrative demands indicating a loss of personal resource, as sometimes lecturers are blamed for students who do not submit their assessment well on time and the lecturer must make a follow up to that effect with such administration activities that lecturers in Botswana go for road shows and marketing students looking for students enrolment for year ones these factors can cause stress and deplete the lecturers inner passion and effort. When lecturers continue to experience resource loss without sufficient recovery or compensation, it leads to emotional drain, disengagement, and reduced teaching effectiveness, However, institutions that provide adequate supportive leadership, professional development opportunities, and recognition help staff to regain or protect resources, reducing stress and promoting performance and job satisfaction. The COR model explains that stress affects performance through a resource depletion process and **w**hen resources are depleted, individuals have less capacity to meet job demands. This depletion leads to reduced motivation, creativity, and cognitive focus that is key drivers of academic performance. Over time, chronic resource loss can lead to burnout and even withdrawal behaviors such as absenteeism or turnover. Conversely, the availability and replenishment of resources for example, institutional support, collegial collaboration, and fair recognition that can enhance engagement and productivity even under high demands. This model will assist me and become so relevant to the study as it helps explain why and how occupational stress develops among academic staff and how it influences their performance outcomes. It complements other models like the JD-R and ERI by focusing specifically on the dynamic process of resource loss and gain. In Botswana's context, where many private tertiary institutions face financial and operational constraints, understanding resource conservation is crucial for developing effective stress management and retention strategies. This model is also crucial because it captures both individual and organizational aspects of stress, explains sustained effects of stress through ongoing

resource loss and emphasizes the protective role of resource-building initiatives, such as professional training, mentorship, and supportive work environments.

Singh & Katoch (2017) observed that occupational stress is a universal phenomenon, often arising from physical hardship, poor working relationships, or incompatible work environments. Among lecturers, stress is exacerbated by the cultural and institutional demands of meeting teaching schedules, student needs, and the broader educational curriculum.

In sum, these theoretical frameworks provide comprehensive insights into how job demands, job resources, coping strategies, and organizational structures influence occupational stress and employee performance in private tertiary institutions. They underscore the need to consider both individual and organizational factors, as well as cultural contexts, to effectively manage stress and enhance employee outcomes. Stress as a positive scenario raises awareness and excitement perspective and as a negative influence raises and results in a feeling of distrust, rejection, anger, depression which can lead to anger and causes unsettlement in lecturers with related symptoms and sicknesses such as stomach ulcers and upsets, skin irritability or rash, insomnia, high blood pressure or stroke. All this is caused by the wear and tear of the strain in the human body physically, emotionally and as lecturers try to adjust to the changing environment, which might also lead to low efficacy and discontent. Behavioral symptoms might also change the character of a lecturer and these include more accidents, change in sleep causing non-fruitful sleep, always looking tired even in the mornings as everyone starts the day, loss of interests in sex and social life, poor and inefficient work presented at work, prone to mistakes in report writing and work presentation increased dependability on drugs, no self-love, impaired visions and Sing and Katoch gave an adviser to the universities that full support and collaborative culture that support stress management training and encourage employee voice and involvement should be enforced in the company policy and culture with adequate and proper sharing of resources which does not need to scramble for resources .Bano and Wajidi(2021) in their study the role of employee assumed character and stress towards one's job on work life balance in Pakistan .The results indicated that workplace stress has a positive and significant effect on anxiety and time-related stress, while it negatively and significantly affects work-life balance. The study recommends adopting person-centered stress management strategies to address work-life stress and enhance employee well-being. Examples include offering relaxation or exercise classes, promoting wellness, providing facilities such as gyms, encouraging healthy living and nutrition, and offering guidance and support programs.The study is significant for employee well-being, as its findings help employees understand

and manage their roles across both work and family domains. Recognizing the importance of work-life balance enables employees to reflect on coping mechanisms for job and relationship demands. Likewise, management can identify employees' career stages and support their developmental needs at each stage. Ultimately, the study highlights the importance for universities and colleges to implement effective stress management strategies to maintain employees' well-being and preserve human capital as a vital institutional asset.

Shrivastava (2021) also came up with the instrument of measuring stress as an example of research instrument that will help to measure stress in the methodology chapter called the measuring Scoring Procedure Percentage where each item, the percentage of responses has been calculated to confirm the stress effect and contains agreeability Index: In the questionnaire, the scores allotted to the answers range from one to five. According to Shrivastava (2021), the measuring and scoring procedure involves calculating the percentage of responses for each questionnaire item to confirm the presence and intensity of occupational stress effects. The Agreeability Index is based on a five-point Likert scale, where responses are scored from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). This scoring method helps in quantifying employees' perceptions and attitudes towards stress-related factors within their work environment.In the context of private tertiary institutions in Botswana, this approach is particularly suitable as it allows for a systematic and objective assessment of occupational stress among academic staff. The use of percentage analysis provides clear insights into the prevalence of stressors such as workload, role ambiguity, lack of resources, and management pressure. Furthermore, the Likert scale enables respondents to express varying degrees of agreement, making it easier to capture the nuances of their experiences. This quantitative method not only facilitates comparison between different demographic groups or departments but also supports evidence-based recommendations for improving staff well-being and performance in Botswana's private education sector. In the context of private tertiary institutions in Botswana, this approach is particularly suitable as it provides a structured and objective method of evaluating occupational stress among academic staff. The use of percentage analysis helps to identify the most common stressors such as workload, lack of role clarity, inadequate resources, and administrative demands while the Likert scale captures different levels of agreement or disagreement among respondents.

Moreover, this scoring procedure aligns well with the mixed-method research approach employed in this study. Quantitative data generated from the Likert-scale responses allows for statistical analysis and comparison across departments, gender, and employment categories. At the same time,

qualitative findings from interviews provide deeper insights into the lived experiences behind the numerical patterns. The integration of both methods enhances the validity and reliability of the study, leading to a more comprehensive understanding of occupational stress and its impact on academic staff performance in Botswana's private tertiary institutions.

According to Mwenda et al(2019) and Danku et al(2017) what led to the development in the 1980s of the person environment (PE) fit model, which assumes that strain develops when there is a discrepancy (a) between the demands of the job and the abilities of the person to meet those demands The P-E fit model emerged in the 1970s and early 1980s as part of the occupational stress literature. For example, researchers such as J.R.P. French, R.D. Caplan and R. Van Harrison set out to conceptualize stress not simply as the environment or the individual alone, Stress happens when there is a poor match between a person and their work environment. In simple terms, stress comes when what the job demands and what a person can offer do not balance. It is not only about the job itself, but about how well the person's skills, values, and needs fit with what the job expects and provides.

There are two main types of mismatch that cause stress:

1. **Demands–Abilities Fit:** This happens when the job expects more (or sometimes less) than what the person can handle. For example, if the workload, complexity, or role expectations are too high compared to the person's skills, time, or energy, stress develops.
2. **Needs–Supplies Fit:** This happens when the workplace fails to provide what the person needs, such as fair rewards, recognition, career growth, or autonomy. In some cases, the person's personal needs are not met by what the environment offers.

When these mismatches happen, a person may suffer psychological (mental), physical, or behavioral strain. The model shows that stress does not come from the person or the job alone, but from how well the two fit together. In the case of academic staff in private tertiary institutions in Botswana, this model fits well. It helps us move away from thinking that "high workload equals stress" to understanding that the real issue is the mismatch between what the job demands (like heavy teaching loads, research pressure, and administrative duties) and what the lecturer can do (like their skills, available time, and institutional support).

The model also helps us look at whether institutions are meeting lecturers' needs. For example, do they provide enough resources, recognition, career development, and work-life balance or do lecturers have autonomy and chances for professional growth.

By looking at stress as a "misfit," the model helps management find solutions that stress can be reduced by either improving the person giving training, mentoring, and emotional support or improving the environment redesigning jobs, providing resources, or improving recognition and reward systems. Institutions also need to check whether workloads, administrative pressures, and student targets are realistic and not too heavy. Sometimes, stress comes when management goals like profit or high enrolment clash with lecturers' values like quality teaching and research. When needs such as job security, recognition, and autonomy are not met, performance goes down and because of that lecturers may lose motivation, skip work, or lower their teaching quality.

In Botswana's private tertiary institutions, this model can also help study how stress differs among groups. For instance, younger or less experienced lecturers might struggle more with demands abilities misfit, while lack of institutional resources may cause needs-supplies misfit. These mismatches eventually affect staff performance and overall institutional effectiveness. Therefore the Person-Environment Fit Model explains that occupational stress arises when there is a gap between what the job expects and what the person can offer or needs as seen and supported by other ideological experts, like (French et al., 1974; Caplan, 1983). Technically on furthering up with the model it highlights two forms of mis-fit: (a) a mismatch between job demands with such examples as workload, complexity, role expectations, and individual abilities such as skills, knowledge, time, energy that are often termed the demands–abilities fit; and (b) a mismatch between individual needs recognition, autonomy, growth, and the supplies provided by the job and or environment termed the needs–supplies fit (Edwards, Caplan & Harrison, 1998; Van Vianen, 2018). When there is a poor match in either form of fit, it can cause mental, physical, or behavioural strain. In private tertiary institutions in Botswana, lecturers often face heavy teaching loads and too many administrative tasks that exceed their time or research capacity this is called a demand-abilities misfit. On the other hand, they may also feel that the institution does not provide enough support, such as opportunities for professional development, recognition, or work-life balance this is a need-supplies misfit.Understanding these two kinds of mismatches is very important because it helps identify where stress is coming from and guides management in designing the right solutions to reduce it.

Evaluating the Theoretical Framework

The researcher concluded that, based on the inconsistencies identified in previous studies and the models reviewed, the theoretical frameworks by such gurus like Lazarus and Folkman Coping Stress Model (1984), would also benefit in this research as the expert biography states that Richard S.

Lazarus, earned his BA from City College of New York in 1942, developed this model to explain how individuals cope with stress. According to Lazarus and Folkman, coping is a dynamic process involving cognitive and behavioral efforts to manage internal and/or external demands perceived as exceeding an individual's resources. This definition highlights that coping is an active process requiring effort; it is not inherently positive or negative but focuses on what a person thinks and does to handle stressful situations effectively. When looking at different stress theories, it becomes clear that occupational stress is a complex issue influenced by both personal and environmental factors. Theories such as the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model, the Effort-Reward Imbalance (ERI) model, the Conservation of Resources (COR) theory, and the Lazarus-Folkman transactional model all agree that stress happens when there is a gap between what is expected of a person and the resources available to meet those expectations. These resources can be personal like skills and energy, organizational like support and recognition, or social like relationships with colleagues.

The Person-Environment Fit model adds that stress does not only come from a heavy workload or organizational pressure, but also from how well a person's abilities, values, and needs match the environment they work in.

Together, these theories provide a strong base for understanding stress among lecturers in private tertiary institutions. They show that stress comes not only from too much work but also from unclear roles, conflicts in values, lack of support, and poor reward systems. These ideas also support the need to study stress in the Botswana context, where institutional cultures, available resources, and job expectations may be different from other countries.

By using these theoretical views, researchers and managers can design focused solutions such as better workload management, stronger staff support systems, and alignment between institutional goals and employee expectations. These efforts are essential for improving staff well-being and performance as such, these stress theories together show that occupational stress is a complex and context-specific issue. Therefore, it must be carefully studied and managed through comprehensive strategies that fit the realities of Botswana's private tertiary education sector. Therefore, in the context of tertiary lecturing, coping is viewed as part of a dynamic process involving a stressor, appraisal, available resources, coping strategies, and outcomes. From this perspective, stress is defined as the "relationship between the person and the environment that is appraised by the individual as taxing or exceeding their resources and threatening their well-being." " (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). By mapping each objective to a theoretical perspective, the researcher ensures that every stage of the

inquiry is theoretically anchored, thereby strengthening both the conceptual coherence and analytical depth of the study. Stress involves two types of appraisal: primary appraisal, which assesses the impact of the stressor on one's well-being, and secondary appraisal, which evaluates the options available to manage or cope with the situation. In the context of tertiary education, this theory is particularly relevant, as internal and external stressors accumulate and affect the individual holistically impacting the body, mind, and spirit while also influencing social interactions at both the institutional and community levels, this was supported by (Werner, et al., 2000).

Lazarus and Folkman (1984) also distinguish between problem-focused and emotion-focused coping. Problem-focused coping involves actively addressing the stressor itself to reduce or eliminate its impact. In tertiary education, this could include a lecturer reorganizing their teaching schedule, delegating tasks, or seeking administrative support to manage a heavy workload, or a student creating a structured study plan to handle academic pressure. Emotion-focused coping, on the other hand, aims at managing the emotional responses to stress rather than changing the stressor. Examples include practicing relaxation techniques, mindfulness, seeking social support, or counseling to alleviate anxiety or emotional distress. In practice, lecturers and students often use a combination of both strategies depending on the nature of the stressor. Problem-focused coping is more effective when the individual can exert control over the situation, whereas emotion-focused coping is particularly useful when stressors are beyond one's immediate control. Understanding these coping mechanisms is essential in the context of Botswana's tertiary institutions, as internal and external stressors ranging from workload pressures to organizational and social demands can affect lecturers' work-life balance, well-being, and overall performance. The researcher of late has observed that there is nothing as killing as realizing that nothing out of your strategy contributions are given an ear to and worse when action of academic is believed to be well known properly by the nonacademic more than the job incumbents themselves. Emotion-focused coping is coping that is directed at regulating emotional response to the problem. Emotional response to the stimulus becomes a situation of how best the lecturer in question manages to handle pressure exerted by the institute.

In addition to finances and education, other coping resources in the context of lecturing have also been studied by the researcher. Many institutions adopt a paternalistic view, where lecturers end up using their own resources instead of utilizing company resources. This leads to lecturers feeling stressed and unable to cope. Common stressors for lecturers include student visitations, assessment

reminders, and heavy workloads, all of which negatively affect their performance and social support system (Underwood, 2000).

Among the various coping resources studied in the lecturing profession, hardiness has received the most attention. Hardiness is a personality trait that encompasses commitment, challenge, control, and confidence, and has been found to have a positive impact on health outcomes for adults. Researchers have also explored the effectiveness of other coping resources such as hope, control, sense of coherence, and self-efficacy. Sense of coherence refers to an individual's enduring orientation towards rendering events and stimuli comprehensible, manageable, and meaningful., according to (Antonovsky, 1998). Botswana private tertiary institutions has also seen that sometimes lecturers fail to have hope in the institute they work for and lose control and level of self-esteem which results in scoring lowly on self-efficacy. That which boasts inside of confidence built up at the end dies and affects productivity as work engagement is tempered with.

Friedrick Herzberg's two factor theory indeed has a strong linkage to the above literature and really supports the theoretical framework for this research as other authors in this chapter seem to be borrowing from his inspiration. Cole (2012) states that Herzberg brought the following classification termed as the motivation Hygiene Theory as shown in Table 2.1. Frederick Herzberg's Motivation-Hygiene Theory Job satisfaction is a topic in organizational behavior that is surrounded by many theories, such as Frederick Herzberg's motivation-hygiene theory, also known as the two factor theory. This theory was developed by Herzberg originally in 1959 but has since redefined it for several years after (Holliman & Daniels, 2018). His model represents a set of motivation factors that describe an employee's behavior in relation to their job satisfaction and another set of hygiene factors that represent an employee's job dissatisfaction (Holliman & Daniels, 2018). The motivation factors consist of achievement, recognition, responsibility, work, advancement, and personal growth (Holliman & Daniels, 2018). The hygiene factors consist of working conditions, interpersonal relationships, personal life, salary and benefits, policies and administration, job security, and supervision (Holliman & Daniels, 2018). Holliman and Daniels In 2018, Holliman and Daniels mention a relationship between the challenges of higher education institutions' financial stability and job satisfaction of faculty (Holliman & Daniels, 2018). It was noted that the financial challenges are found in smaller and medium sized private institutions where transparent leadership during hard times in these institutions can ease the concerns of faculty and increase job satisfaction in areas of dissatisfaction (Holliman & Daniels, 2018). In this study, researchers found that 51.9% of the 649

participants were concerned about financial stability and 35.6% of all participants were less than satisfied with the current leadership and 16.7% were very dissatisfied (Holliman & Daniels, 2018). Job satisfaction is achieved when an employee feels positively towards their work and the workforce in terms of feelings and behaviors (Wulandari, et al., 2021). Several factors play a role in the satisfaction an employee feels towards their work and job. These factors include meeting needs, differences, value achievement, justice, actual work, relationships with superiors, work colleagues, and salary. These factors are referred to as motivators because they affect the job satisfaction level of employees however, because there are so many factors that affect job satisfaction, it is possible for an employee to be satisfied with one aspect and dissatisfied with another (Wulandari, et al., 2021)

According to Cole (2012) Herzberg contributed to the factors that motivate people in Institutions differ in the way they manage motivators and satisfiers, which according to Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory, are key to employee satisfaction. Lecturers should be given proper recognition as valuable assets and provided with meaningful responsibilities that help them grow and advance in their academic careers. The work assigned during the semester should be challenging and inspiring, supported by adequate research resources.If these hygiene factors are missing, dissatisfaction can easily arise and eventually develop into stress. For example, institutional operations and administrative systems, such as management procedures, banking processes, and faculty support services, can sometimes be inefficient. Policies that set unrealistic deadlines and poor communication often frustrate lecturers, leaving them demotivated and waiting for improvement that never comes. Over time, this creates a cycle of dissatisfaction and stress.

A lack of positive relationships and belonging can also make lecturers feel isolated, especially those working far from their families. Therefore, it is important for colleges and universities to create a conducive and welcoming environment that supports lecturer retention and overall job satisfaction.

Herzberg further explains that while *hygiene factors* do not necessarily motivate employees, they are essential for preventing dissatisfaction. Their presence promotes good well-being and stability, while their absence leads to stress and low morale.

This theoretical framework also connects with Coleman's (1998) study on institutional costs, Herzberg emphasized that organizational challenges should be addressed based on factual evidence rather than assumptions. When university staff both academic and support personnel lack motivation from leadership, their performance declines, which ultimately impacts student outcomes. According to Herzberg, university policies and administrative systems must be fair and effective to foster a stable

and supportive academic environment. Flawed systems can undermine institutional culture, discourage staff retention, and disrupt the learning experience. Frequent lecturer turnover due to poor working conditions or job dissatisfaction can compromise continuity, reduce students' confidence in the institution, and negatively affect academic performance, potentially leading to poor outcomes or even student dropouts.

Morrow (1987) links well. Herzberg's research highlights the importance of addressing **hygiene factors** in the workplace. In a university context, if factors such as organized activities, adequate facilities, and positive relationships between lecturers and administrative systems are neglected, staff may feel disengaged and disaffiliated, which can negatively affect performance and institutional culture. Complementing this, Frederick Winslow Taylor's Scientific Management Theory (1911) emphasizes improving workplace efficiency through systematic management. Taylor argued that "the greatest prosperity can exist only as the result of the greatest possible productivity of the workers and machines; unless workers and machines consistently produce more than competitors, higher wages and overall success are unattainable." Both Herzberg and Taylor underscore the importance of structured systems and supportive environments in maximizing productivity and employee satisfaction." (Taylor, 1911, p. 12Taylor's Scientific Management Theory aimed to enhance productivity in the workplace and has had a lasting impact on organizational success worldwide. As a mechanical engineer, Taylor observed that employees often used different methods to perform the same tasks, leading to inefficiency. He argued that work should be carried out with energy, discipline, and commitment, rather than with ease or laxity, as many workers were achieving only about one-third of their potential output. Taylor also emphasized that motivation should be linked to material rewards: employees who perform well should receive higher pay, while those with lower performance should be compensated less.

To improve productivity and efficiency in organizations, Taylor introduced five key principles of Scientific Management:

1. Develop a new work method to replace old, unstructured routines so that work is done in a more organized and profitable way for the organization.
2. Train employees according to their area of specialization to improve their competence and output.
3. Supervise work closely to ensure that standards and procedures are followed.

4. Divide work among staff based on their specific skills and expertise so that each person focuses on what they do best.
5. Provide equal opportunities for employees to grow and develop their skills.

Taylor emphasized that the role of management is not only to plan but also to supervise and guide employees to ensure that tasks are completed efficiently. However, in many modern workplaces, employees still feel overburdened and frustrated when these principles are not properly applied, as there are often no lasting solutions to workload and supervision challenges.

Justification and Integration of Frameworks

After reviewing the different theories, the researcher must choose and justify the most suitable frameworks to guide the study. Bringing theories together helps to understand occupational stress from different angles both as a personal (psychological) experience and as an organizational issue.

In this study, the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model and the Person-Environment (P-E) Fit model are combined to create the main guiding framework. The JD-R model helps to explain and measure how job demands and available resources affect employee performance, while the P-E Fit model explains stress because of a poor match between institutional expectations and an individual's abilities, values, or needs.

This combination is especially relevant to private tertiary institutions in Botswana, where lecturers often face high workloads, limited resources, and performance-based pressures. By integrating these two models, the framework becomes both context-sensitive and methodologically strong, making it suitable for analyzing statistical data while also interpreting lecturers' real-life experiences.

This integration shows a high level of doctoral scholarship it demonstrates critical thinking, theoretical consistency, and practical relevance in addressing occupational stress within Botswana's private tertiary education sector. To effectively manage occupational stress in private tertiary institutions, employers can adopt several practical strategies. These include introducing employee assistance programmes, promoting work-life balance, creating opportunities for skill development and training, and encouraging open communication and feedback (Jones & Bright, 2018).

From my own observation as a researcher, many private tertiary institutions in Botswana lack proper employee support systems for lecturers. There is often no work life balance, as some institutions require staff to work even on weekends. The situation has worsened with the introduction of distance

education, where lecturers are expected to respond to student queries almost 24/7, like customer care agents. Furthermore, career advancement and training opportunities are rarely promoted, leaving lecturers without the chance to upgrade their skills or grow professionally.

The world of higher education is changing rapidly, and lecturers, like professionals in other industries, need continuous training and upskilling to improve performance and prevent brain drain or high staff turnover.

Employers in private tertiary institutions can therefore take several steps to address workplace stress:

1. Employee Assistance Programmes (EAPs): These can provide counseling, wellness services, and stress management resources to help lecturers cope with emotional and work-related challenges.
2. Promoting Work–Life Balance: Institutions should allow staff reasonable time off to attend to personal or family responsibilities. In Botswana, however, this remains a major issue, as lecturers are often required to report for duty even during student holidays. This constant work pressure leaves many lecturers exhausted and demotivated.
3. Training and Skill Development: Providing regular training helps employees gain confidence, improve competence, and manage job demands more effectively, which in turn reduces stress.
4. Encouraging Open Communication: Creating an environment where employees can freely express their views helps them feel respected and valued. This leads to higher job satisfaction and stronger performance (Jones & Bright, 2018).

As a researcher, I have also noticed that many employees desire respect and participation in decision-making. They reject the paternalistic management style, where leaders dictate without consultation, and instead prefer approaches based on human relations, which emphasize empathy, dialogue, and shared understanding. In today's workplace, stress is increasing due to longer working hours, heavier job responsibilities, and changing family structures including more single-parent and dual-career households. These changes make it difficult for workers to balance family and work roles (Razak et al., 2014).

Stress often results when job demands do not match a worker's abilities or available resources. Both employees and employers recognise that stress affects workers both physically and psychologically, leading to health problems, work and family conflict, and reduced productivity. Workplace stress can

also cause high staff turnover, low work quality, frequent absenteeism, and declining performance (Chang et al., 2017).

In simple terms, job stress is a negative reaction that occurs when workers face too many pressures or unrealistic demands. Among the factors that contribute most to stress are workload and time pressure**.** According to the International Labour Organization (ILO, 2016; 2018), collective measures to prevent work-related stress include suggests several collective measures that organisations can adopt to prevent and manage work-related stress. These measures focus on both improving working conditions and strengthening employee well-being.

1. Promoting a Positive Work Environment: Institutions should create a supportive atmosphere where employees feel respected, safe, and valued. This includes ensuring fair treatment, mutual trust, and teamwork among staff.
2. Effective Workload Management: Employers should ensure that the amount of work assigned matches the employee's skills and available time. Overloading lecturers with teaching, administrative, and research duties without proper support leads to burnout and stress.
3. Participation and Consultation: Workers should be involved in decision-making processes, especially on matters that directly affect their work and welfare. Open consultation reduces conflict and promotes a sense of belonging.
4. Clear Roles and Responsibilities: Every employee should clearly understand their duties, reporting lines, and expectations. Role ambiguity often leads to confusion, frustration, and stress.
5. Training and Development: Continuous professional development helps employees improve competence, confidence, and resilience in managing work demands. Regular workshops, mentoring, and refresher courses can reduce job-related anxiety.
6. Work-Life Balance Policies: Institutions should promote flexible work arrangements, rest breaks, and leave policies that allow staff to balance personal and professional responsibilities. This helps reduce fatigue and improves productivity.
7. Health and Safety Programs: Employers should establish wellness and counselling programmes to support employees experiencing stress or mental health challenges. Providing access to occupational health services encourages early intervention.

8. Communication and Feedback Systems: Maintaining open communication channels helps address workplace concerns before they escalate. Regular meetings, feedback sessions, and staff forums create trust and transparency.
9. Monitoring and Evaluation: Institutions should continuously assess the sources of stress in the workplace and evaluate the effectiveness of existing interventions. This ensures that policies remain relevant and responsive to employee needs.

2.6 To identify strategies for alleviating occupational stress in private tertiary institutions in Botswana:

2.6.1 Workplace collective measures to prevent work-related stress

To effectively manage occupational stress, institutions should focus on several key areas:

1. Control: Ensure there are enough staff to handle workloads and give employees a voice in how their work is organised. Allowing workers to participate in decision-making increases a sense of ownership and reduces stress.
2. Workload Management: Regularly assess the time and effort required for tasks, set reasonable deadlines, and ensure that working hours are predictable and fair. This prevents overwork and burnout.
3. Social Support: Encourage positive social interactions among staff and maintain a workplace free of physical or psychological harm. Supervisors should provide support, maintain regular contact, and take responsibility for team welfare. Employees should be able to discuss conflicts between work and personal life, while managers reinforce motivation by highlighting the positive and meaningful aspects of the work.
4. Matching the Job and the Worker: Assign tasks according to employees' skills, experience, and competence. Ensure that jobs match the physical and psychological abilities of staff to promote proper utilisation of their talents and reduce unnecessary stress.
5. Training and Education: Provide continuous training to ensure employees' skills remain aligned with job requirements. Offer information on psychosocial risks and work-related stress and guidance on how to prevent them.
6. Transparency and Fairness: Clearly define tasks, roles, and responsibilities to avoid role conflict or ambiguity. Ensure job security, fair pay, and transparent procedures for handling complaints. Fair and open management practices increase trust and reduce tension.

7. Physical Working Environment: Maintain a safe and comfortable workplace, including proper lighting, ventilation, noise control, ergonomic equipment, and protection from hazardous agents. A well-designed environment reduces stress and supports employee well-being.

Using these areas, private tertiary institutions can create a supportive and healthy workplace**.** Such practices help reduce stress, improve employee motivation, performance, and retention, and contribute to the overall success and stability of the organisation. The researcher found that role conflict significantly affects lecturers, especially when modules in different programs overlap. Workload is also a major challenge, as lecturers are responsible for teaching students from year one to year four across multiple modules and delivery modes, including conventional, part-time, and distance learning.Adding to this, the management style in many private institutions often focuses on individuals rather than the work itself, reflecting a hard HRM approach. Combined with an organizational culture that discourages creativity and innovation among the emerging workforce, this environment creates significant stress for employees. Institutions are often left implementing ineffective strategies that fail to address the root causes of stress (Armstrong, 2017).Organizational politics is also prevalent in private institutions. Employees frequently experience blame-shifting, fault-finding, and competition, which fosters stress and can lead to mental health issues, burnout, or even resignation. In extreme cases, unresolved stress may have severe consequences for individuals' well-being. Based on these findings, the researcher has developed the conceptual framework for this PhD thesis. This framework is derived from the theoretical review and will guide the study in achieving **Objective 3**: to measure the relationship between **occupational stress among academic staff** and their performance, and to test the corresponding hypotheses.

Conceptual Framework Development

The following figure2.2 is evidence of the developed conceptual framework by the researcher and gives explanations of how each hypothesis was logically proposed.

CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

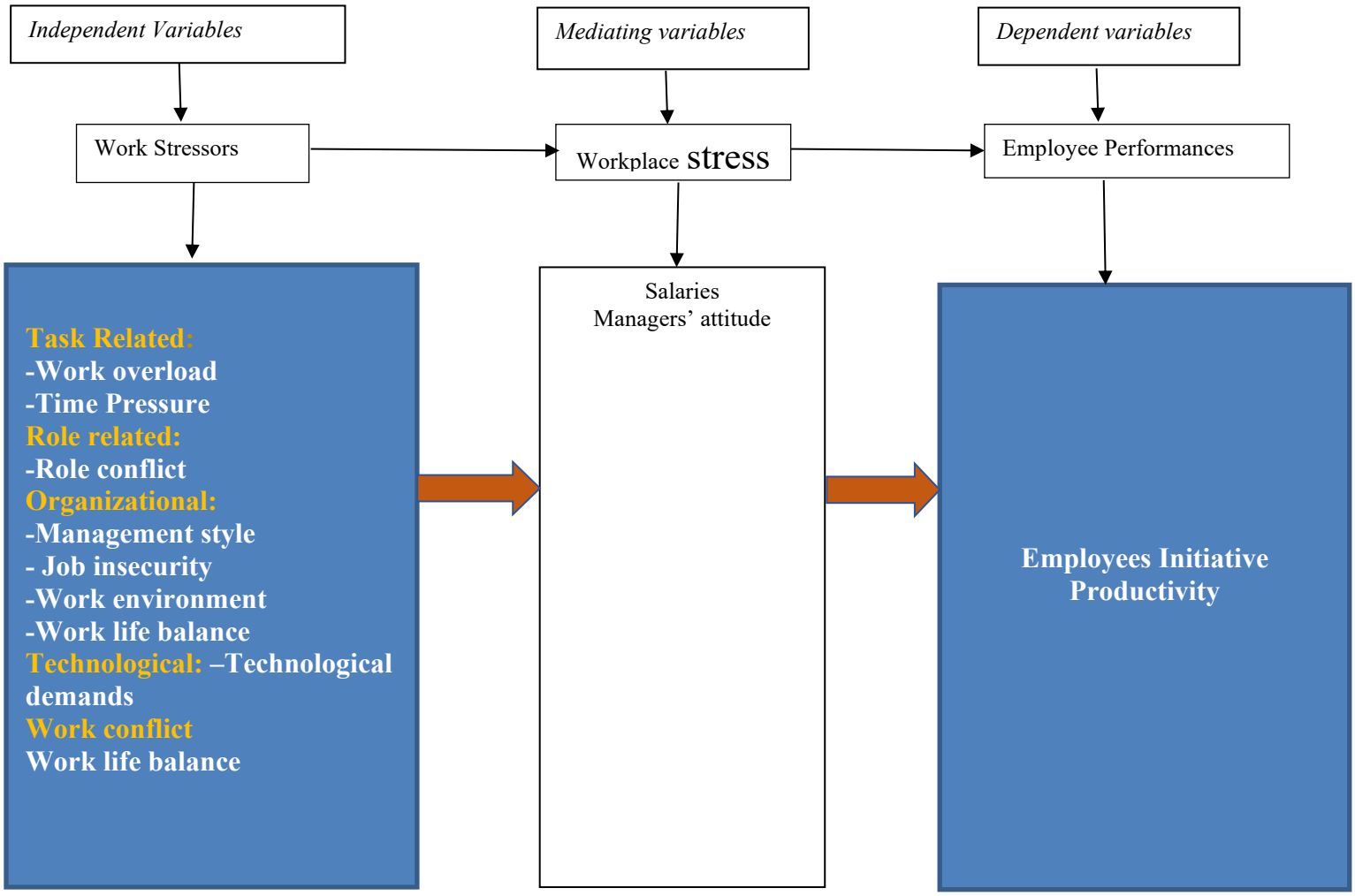


Fig 2.2(field source; 2023)

2.6 Development of Hypotheses Rationale

In light of the foregoing theoretical and empirical considerations, this study proposed the below listed hypothesis after the empirical and ideological frameworks which led that occupational stress is associated with the performance of academic staff in Private Tertiary Institutions (PTIs) in Gaborone, Botswana. Occupational stress may arise when the demands placed upon employees exceed the resources available to them to meet those demands effectively, (ILO,2016,2018 and Baliyanet

al;2018).Such demands may include excessive workload, conflicting role expectations, demanding management practices, technological requirements, concerns regarding job insecurity, time pressure, difficulties in balancing work and personal responsibilities, and unfavourable working environments. These conditions have the potential to affect lecturers' concentration, motivation, commitment, teaching effectiveness, research activities, student supervision and timely completion of academic responsibilities as illustrated by(Chukwuma et al;2020).

The proposed conceptual relationship is supported particularly by the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) theory by Bakker and Demerouti et al (2001). The theory distinguishes between job demands, which require sustained physical or psychological effort, and job resources, which assist employees in achieving work goals and coping with job demands. When job demands remain high and adequate resources are unavailable, employees may experience exhaustion and reduced performance. Bakker and Demerouti (2004) demonstrated that job demands such as work pressure and emotional demands can contribute to exhaustion, which subsequently affects in-role performance. The JD-R perspective therefore provides a theoretical basis for expecting excessive occupational demands to be associated with poorer employee performance. The JD-R theory is also supported by the Person Fit-Environment by Robert French and Rudolf Caplain (1972) and the VRIO model by Jay Ban (1995).

This theoretical position is particularly relevant to academic work because lecturers are required to perform several interconnected responsibilities, including teaching, assessment, research, student supervision, administration and, increasingly, technology-supported teaching. Where these demands become excessive or are not adequately supported by institutional resources, academic staff may experience psychological strain that can interfere with their ability to perform effectively.

Empirical evidence also supports the proposed relationship. Akah et al. (2022), in a study of academic staff in two Nigerian universities, examined occupational stress and academic staff job performance and concluded that occupational stress significantly influenced lecturers' job performance. Similarly, research on lecturers at Makerere University examined the relationship between occupational stress and job performance, demonstrating the continuing relevance of occupational stress as an issue within higher education and this was also supported by the WHO (2023) and ILO (2018) frameworks.

Although previous studies have established the importance of occupational stress in academic work, much of the available evidence has focused on public universities or contexts outside Botswana,

(Mwenda,2019; Sing and Katoch,2017). The present study therefore seeks to examine this relationship within Private Tertiary Institutions in Gaborone, Botswana, where lecturers operate within a distinctive institutional environment characterised by changing student enrolments, resource constraints, increasing administrative expectations and changing technological requirements in which these contexts influence the performance of lecturers hence the following independent variables have been consequently proposed to the development of the conceptual framework and its hypotheses as each hypothesis has its own rationale explained in the context to the nature and causes of academic lecturer stress in the Botswana private Tertiary Institutionsin relation to the above figure 2.2:

2.6.1 Workload and Academic Staff Performance

According to Creagh et al (2023) workload refers to the amount and intensity of work that an employee is expected to complete within a given period. In academic institutions, workload may arise from teaching responsibilities, preparation of learning materials, marking and assessment, student consultation, supervision, research, publication, meetings and administrative responsibilities. Although a reasonable workload can facilitate productivity, excessive workload may become a significant source of occupational stress when the volume of responsibilities exceeds the lecturer's available time and resources. Excessive workload represents an important occupational stressor because lecturers are required to manage teaching, assessment, research, supervision and administrative responsibilities simultaneously. Usoro and Etuk (2016) in Nigeria found that workload-related stress was prevalent among university lecturers and examined its implications for job effectiveness.

The JD-R theory (2004) by Bakker and Demerouti provides a strong theoretical explanation for the expected relationship between workload and performance. Workload represents an important job demand because it requires continuous physical and psychological effort. Where workload is persistently excessive, employees may experience exhaustion, reduced concentration and diminished capacity to maintain effective performance. Bakker et al. (2004) found that job demands, including work pressure, were associated with exhaustion and subsequently with employee performance. The theory therefore suggests that excessive workload is likely to undermine rather than enhance academic staff performance when demands become excessive.

Empirical evidence within higher education also indicates that workload is an important component of occupational stress among academic staff. Akah et al. (2022) specifically investigated occupational stress and academic staff performance and reported an overall significant influence of occupational stress on lecturers' job performance, due to work overload, with other studies warranting further investigation done from (Baliyan et al,2018; Okanmah, 2020 and Chitra,2020).

The current study therefore considers work overload within the broader occupational stress framework and examines whether excessive workload is associated with academic staff performance in Botswana's PTIs. Therefore, the first hypothesis is:

$H0_1$: There is no significant relationship between work overload and academic staff performance in Private Tertiary Institutions in Gaborone, Botswana.

$H1_1$: There is a significant negative relationship between work overload and academic staff performance in Private Tertiary Institutions in Gaborone, Botswana.

2.6.2 Role Conflict and Academic Staff Performance

According to Mary et al (2026) role conflict occurs when an employee receives incompatible, competing or contradictory expectations concerning the responsibilities that should be performed. Academic staff may experience role conflict when, for example, they are simultaneously expected to prioritise teaching, research, student supervision and administrative duties without sufficient time or resources to satisfy all expectations. Such competing demands can create uncertainty, psychological strain and difficulty in prioritising responsibilities, (Adeoye eta al,2010,2020; Chen,2017 and Dolan,2023).

From the perspective of the JD-R theory, conflicting role expectations can function as a job demand because they require employees to expend additional cognitive and emotional resources to reconcile competing expectations. Persistent demands of this nature may contribute to exhaustion and disengagement, thereby affecting performance. The JD-R literature explains that excessive job demands can initiate a health-impairment process through which sustained demands contribute to strain and ultimately affect work outcomes.

Luzipho et al (2023) in South Africa studied role conflict and found out that it is significant in tertiary education because lecturer occupy multiple roles. A lecturer may simultaneously be a teacher, researcher, supervisor, administrator, committee member and mentor. Where institutional expectations concerning these roles are unclear or incompatible, the lecturer may have difficulty allocating sufficient attention to each responsibility. Consequently, role conflict may affect the quality, timeliness and consistency of academic work as alluded and supported also by the (Botswana Mental Health, 2021). Chen et al. (2017) in America actually examined interpersonal conflicts at work, particularly conflicts with supervisors and coworkers, and treated interpersonal conflict as a job stressor. Their study investigated its relationship with job stress and safety outcomes and found that workplace conflict functions as a stressor. Xu (2019) on his research teacher researcher role conflict and burnout among Chinese university teachers, a job demand-resources model perspective, found that teacher-researcher role conflict was positively associated with emotional exhaustion and depersonalization among Chinese university teachers accordingly, this study proposes that higher levels of role conflict will be associated with poorer academic staff performance leads to the second hypothesis as:

$H0_2$: There is no significant relationship between role conflict and academic staff performance in Private Tertiary Institutions in Gaborone, Botswana.

$H1_2$: There is a significant negative relationship between role conflict and academic staff performance in Private Tertiary Institutions in Gaborone, Botswana.

2.6.3 Management Style and Academic Staff Performance

According to Zhong (2024) management style refers to the manner in which managers and institutional leaders direct, communicate with, support, supervise and make decisions concerning employees. Amidst rapidly changing global initiatives and innovations in Higher education the pivotal role of leadership in adapting to change and fostering innovation to sustain academic excellence and performance seeks a good balance of management and leadership styles coupled with responding management. Management practices can either provide valuable job resources or become a source of occupational stress. Supportive management can provide employees with guidance, autonomy, recognition and assistance, whereas excessively authoritarian, unsupportive or poorly

communicated management practices may increase psychological pressure, (Sharon,2018; Muh,2022; and Gurung,2006).

The JD-R theory identifies social support, autonomy and other organisational resources as important factors that can facilitate employee motivation and protect employees from the adverse effects of demanding work conditions. Bakker and Demerouti (2019) explain that job resources contribute to motivation and can influence employee wellbeing and performance.

Within an academic environment, management style can therefore influence whether lecturers perceive their work demands as manageable or stressful. Managers who communicate expectations clearly, provide adequate support and recognise academic staff contributions may enhance employees' capacity to perform. Conversely, poor communication, limited participation in decision making, excessive supervision or inadequate managerial support may increase stress and reduce employees' motivation and effectiveness, (Baliyan,2020; Mildred2023; Macfrey,2018 and Hans Seyle,1946).

Zhong et al (2024) studied on the management practices and faculty wellbeing in Chinese higher education institutions directly examined how institutional management practices relate to faculty wellbeing and found that management style practices can influence lecturers' working conditions, autonomy, support, workload and psychological wellbeing.

The relationship between management style and academic staff performance is consequently important in PTIs, where institutional management practices may determine how lecturers experience and respond to demanding academic responsibilities. In South Africa universities Rothmann and Mokgele (2020) found out that leadership and organizational conditions influence academic occupational stress and with that it leads to the third hypothesis as:

$H0_3$: There is no significant relationship between management style and academic staff performance in Private Tertiary Institutions in Gaborone, Botswana.

$H1_3$: There is a significant negative relationship between management style and academic staff performance in Private Tertiary Institutions in Gaborone, Botswana.

2.6.4 Technological Demands and Academic Staff Performance

According to Marteen et al (2025) the impact of techno stress factors on the continuance intervention of online technologies has influence on technological pressure experienced by lecturers arising from the need to adopt, learn and continuously use technological systems and platforms in performing their work. In higher education, technology has become increasingly embedded in teaching, learning, assessment, communication, student management and administrative processes. While technology can improve efficiency, rapid technological change may also create additional demands for academic staff, particularly where lecturers are expected to acquire new digital competencies without adequate training or technical support, (Sing and Katoch ,2017 and Nuasantra Bahri et al,2023)

The JD-R and Conservation of Resources theory and the ILO(2021,2022 ,2023) frameworks provide a useful explanation of technological demands because new technologies may become additional job demands when employees must continuously learn new systems while maintaining their existing responsibilities'according to Nieman (2023) and Malik et al (2017) where technological demands are accompanied by insufficient resources such as training, technical assistance and adequate infrastructure, the resulting imbalance may contribute to occupational stress and negatively affect performance. The JD-R model specifically emphasises the interaction between demanding working conditions and the availability of resources required to meet those demands.

For academic staff, technological pressure may affect the time and mental resources available for teaching preparation, assessment, research and student engagement. Consequently, lecturers who experience persistent technological demands without adequate institutional support may experience stress that interferes with their academic performance, (Muh, 2022; and Kumar and Sharma, 2021).

Therefore, using Wang and Li (2019) in China study in higher education on academics he found out that also technostress caused by person-technology and person organization mis fit and technological demands affected university teachers' job performance and with such logic and justification for hypothesis rationale the fourth hypothesis is:

$H0_4$: There is no significant relationship between technological demands and academic staff performance in Private Tertiary Institutions in Gaborone, Botswana.

$H1_4$: There is a significant negative relationship between technological demands and academic staff performance in Private Tertiary Institutions in Gaborone, Botswana.

2.6.5 Job Insecurity and Academic Staff Performance

According to Ambrasat and Fabian (2023) they examined the reflection between job security and job satisfaction and performance among academics and found also that job security referred to employees' perceptions regarding the stability and continuity of their employment. Perceived insecurity may arise from uncertainty concerning contract renewal, organisational restructuring, institutional financial pressures or concerns about continued employment. For academic staff, job security can be particularly important because concerns about employment continuity may influence psychological wellbeing, commitment and willingness to invest effort in institutional responsibilities, (Josh,2023, Nokise, 2023 and Kwenda, 2019).

Job security is an important aspect of the employment relationship because perceptions of employment stability can influence employees' attitudes towards their work and their subsequent performance. In the academic environment, uncertainty concerning employment may create psychological pressure and reduce employees' sense of security, particularly where academic staff are employed on temporary or renewable contracts**.** Ambrasat and Fabian (2023)examined job security among academics and found that employment security is relevant to job satisfaction and performance. This suggests that perceptions of employment stability may influence how academic staff engage with their work and perform their academic responsibilities.

Academic staff who are preoccupied with concerns about job continuity may experience reduced concentration, motivation and organisational commitment. This may subsequently affect their teaching, research, supervision and administrative responsibilities. Conversely, greater employment security may provide academic staff with the confidence to invest in longer-term academic activities and institutional objectives. Therefore, using the logical sound from this explanation, it thus brings the fifth hypothesis which is:

$H0_5$: There is no significant relationship between job insecurity and academic staff performance in Private Tertiary Institutions in Gaborone, Botswana.

$H1_5$: There is a significant negative relationship between job security and academic staff performance in Private Tertiary Institutions in Gaborone, Botswana.

2.6.6 Time Pressure and Academic Staff Performance

Aini (2025) found out that time pressure contributes to academic stress and that time pressure occurs when employees perceive that the time available to complete required responsibilities is insufficient. Academic staff frequently operate under competing deadlines involving lesson preparation, teaching, marking, examinations, research, student supervision, meetings and administrative activities. When these responsibilities must be completed within limited periods, lecturers may experience increased psychological pressure that will build negatively on performance and the quality of work desired, (Olaseni and Saziwa,2025; Hui and Lee, 2023 and Adom et al, 2020).An example is the delay sometimes with cut off dates to students enrolment especially private students where one can be given additional modules academically which were not originally from the lecturer's timetable including other duties tasks run from administration and non-academic.

Accordingly, the relationship between time pressure and performance can be explained through the JD-R theory as explained by Katoch (2017) and Bakker and Demerouti (2019) that time pressure represents a job demand requiring sustained cognitive effort. When demands remain high over an extended period, employees may experience exhaustion and reduced capacity to maintain effective performance. Research applying the JD-R model has demonstrated that demanding work characteristics can contribute to exhaustion, which in turn is associated with performance outcomes according to (Bita, 2023 and Xu and Young, 2018).

For lecturers in private tertiary institutions, persistent time pressure may result in lecturers allocating insufficient time to lesson preparation, research, student consultation or assessment. It may also encourage employees to prioritise urgent tasks at the expense of activities that require sustained attention. Consequently, excessive time pressure is expected to undermine academic staff performance and Mwenda et al (2019) modelled that good productivity among lecturers was desirable looking also at the PersonEnvironment-Fit theory and above all the Resource based View theory of taking care of employees so that they are highly protected, nurtured and healthy as they are assets to the organization. Chen et al (2022) specifically investigated how time pressure matters in university faculties' Job Stress and well-being and and the absence of the recurring burdensome of non vacations, full-time individual time tables cut across, part time and distance teaching modes given with such background rationale it thus justified the sixth hypothesis as follows:

$H0_6$: There is no significant relationship between time pressure and academic staff performance in Private Tertiary Institutions in Gaborone, Botswana.

H1$_6$: There is a significant negative relationship between time pressure and academic staff performance in Private Tertiary Institutions in Gaborone, Botswana.

2.6.7 Work-Life Balance and Academic Staff Performance

Kahpi (2024) studied work life balance among lecturers and concluded that work life balance was crucial for academics and performance, in which also Bano and Majidi (2021) explained work-life balance as the extent to which employees are able to effectively manage the demands of their employment alongside responsibilities and activities outside work. Academic work can create particular challenges for work-life balance because preparation, marking, research and student-related responsibilities may extend beyond formal working hours. Where occupational demands continually intrude into personal time, employees may experience stress, fatigue and difficulty recovering from work demands, (Smith, 2023; Mwenda et al, 2019, Yu and Young,2021)

The JD-R perspective recognises that excessive work demands can consume employees' physical and psychological resources. Recovery from demanding work is important because employees require adequate resources to maintain energy and motivation. When work demands consistently interfere with non-work life, the employee may have fewer opportunities to recover from occupational demands, potentially affecting subsequent work performance.

Kadiri and Isokpan (2024) studied university lecturers in Nigeria, examining job stress, work-life balance and job performance. The study found that work-life balance had a considerable influence on lecturers' job performance. For lecturers, poor work-life balance may therefore result in fatigue, reduced concentration and diminished motivation. These effects can have implications for teaching effectiveness, research productivity, student supervision and completion of administrative responsibilities. The relationship is consequently relevant to the performance of academic staff in PTIs.

Therefore, the seventh hypothesis is:

H0$_7$: There is no significant relationship between work-life balance and academic staff performance in Private Tertiary Institutions in Gaborone, Botswana.

$H1_7$: There is a significant negative relationship between work-life balance and academic staff performance in Private Tertiary Institutions in Gaborone, Botswana.

2.6.8 Work Environment and Academic Staff Performance

The work environment refers to the physical, social and organisational conditions in which employees perform their duties. In an academic institution, this may include availability of teaching facilities, office space, equipment, institutional resources, collegial relationships, organisational support and general working conditions. A supportive work environment can provide resources that enable lecturers to meet their academic responsibilities, whereas an inadequate or stressful environment may increase occupational strain.

The Person Environment-Fit theory according to Mwenda (2019) proposed that employee outcomes are influenced by the degree of compatibility between an individual and the environment in which they work. Fit can occur when employees' abilities match the demands of their jobs and when the organisation provides resources that correspond with employees' needs.

In the context of academic staff in PTIs in Gaborone Botswana, the work environment includes factors such as favourable availability of teaching and learning resources, good physical working conditions, good support and provision of technological infrastructure, team work with administrative support and good collegial relationships and management support systems which have clear environmental communication systems, (Hui and Lee, 2023; Harrison, 2023; Furl anger, 2023).

Evidence from higher education also supports the importance of the working environment. Akah et al. (2022) and Mwenda (2019), for example, incorporated institutional amenities into their examination of occupational stress and academic staff performance and found that institutional conditions were relevant to academic staff performance. This suggests that the relationship between working conditions and academic performance may vary according to institutional context and warrants further examination hence the need to investigate in Botswana Private Tertiary Institutions.

In the context of Botswana's PTIs, the availability and adequacy of institutional resources may be particularly important because lecturers' ability to perform effectively depends partly upon the environment in which teaching, research, supervision and administrative activities take place. A supportive work environment is therefore expected to reduce stress and facilitate better academic staff

performance. The following hypothesis is grounded in Person-Environment Fit Theory, which suggests that employees are more likely to experience positive work outcomes when there is compatibility between their personal capabilities and needs and the characteristics of their work environment. In PTIs, academic staff require adequate teaching resources, appropriate technological infrastructure, supportive management, effective communication and conducive physical working conditions to perform their academic responsibilities effectively. Wang and Li (2019) studied 343 university teachers in China and examined technostress using Person-Environment Misfit Theory and found that ICT requirements and the suitability of ICT for teachers' work were important factors affecting job performance, and because of such rationale and experience Botswana PTI are not spared also, hence the need for investigation leading cconsequently to the eighth hypothesis is:

$H0_8$: There is significant relationship between work environment and academic staff performance in Private Tertiary Institutions in Gaborone, Botswana.

$H1_8$: There is a negative significant relationship between work environment and academic staff performance in Private Tertiary Institutions in Gaborone, Botswana.

2.6.9 Overall Occupational Stress and Academic Staff Performance

The preceding discussion on development and rationale on conceptual framework demonstrates that occupational stress is multidimensional and may arise from several interconnected aspects of academic work. Work overload, role conflict, management style, technological demands, job insecurity, time pressure, work-life balance and the work environment may individually and collectively shape the level of stress experienced by academic staff. It is therefore insufficient to examine occupational stress solely as a general psychological condition without considering the specific occupational factors through which it is experienced.

The JD-R theory, VRIO model theory and the WHO and ILO frameworks (2018,2019 and 2023) together with the Person Environment-Fit theory provides an overarching explanation for the proposed relationship because it suggests that job demands and resources influence employee wellbeing, motivation and performance through interconnected processes. Empirical research has similarly demonstrated that job demands can contribute to exhaustion and that these processes have implications for employee performance.

However, there remains a contextual need to examine this relationship within Private Tertiary Institutions in Botswana. The current study therefore proposed that occupational stress, represented by the identified dimensions, is significantly associated with academic staff performance. This provides the overarching basis for the study's principal hypothesis.The hypotheses are therefore derived from the theoretical proposition that excessive job demands and inadequate organisational resources can generate occupational stress and subsequently affect employee performance. The proposed relationships will be empirically tested among academic staff in Private Tertiary Institutions in Gaborone, Botswana.

$H0_9$: There is no significant relationship between occupational stress and academic staff performance in Private Tertiary Institutions in Gaborone, Botswana.

$H1_9$: There is a significant negative relationship between occupational stress and academic staff performance in Private Tertiary Institutions in Gaborone, Botswana.

The above hypothesis drawn by the researcher from the conceptual framework will be used in chapter three for testing statistical analysis of quantitative data like surveys measuring stress levels, workload and supported with qualitative insights from interviews or focus groups. The results will help determine the strength and direction of these relationships, providing a basis for recommendations to mitigate occupational stress in private tertiary institutions. Gaborone, Botswana, the conceptual framework is applicable in several guiding purposes and offers guidance on the research design and hypothesis development: The framework helped in formulating hypotheses about the relationships between the independent variables and the dependent variables. This conceptual framework also guided in data collection as it directs the selection of appropriate data collection tools and methods, ensuring that each variable is adequately measured and acts as a tool in structuring the Literature Review which is this ongoing chapter by categorizing existing studies under the different variables. This helps in identifying gaps in literature related to occupational stress in academic settings. Conceptual framework can also aid in operationalizing variables and serves as a blueprint for operationalizing the variables. For instance, workload can be measured by the number of teaching hours, while management style can be assessed through surveys or interviews with academic staff as will be shown in data analysis drawing in chapter 3.The researcher also used the conceptual framework to analyze the conceptual framework using both quantitative and qualitative analysis approaches. Quantitative Analysis: In the quantitative aspect of the mixed-method approach, the

framework helps in analyzing the relationships between the independent and dependent variables using statistical tools. Qualitative Analysis: In the qualitative part, it aids in exploring how these variables interact in real-world scenarios, providing deeper insights into the lived experiences of academic staff.

2.7 Chapter Summary

This chapter reviewed the empirical literature on occupational stress and employee performance, progressing from the global context to Africa and ultimately Botswana. It identified gaps in the existing literature, highlighting the need for context-specific research within Botswana's private tertiary institutions. The chapter examined the major sources and causes of occupational stress, its effects on employee performance, and strategies for managing occupational stress. It also discussed the theoretical and conceptual frameworks underpinning the study and presented the study's conceptual framework and research hypotheses, which will be tested in Chapter Three using the research methodology.

CHAPTER 3
RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Chapter Overview

This chapter details the research design and methodological processes employed to investigate the impact of occupational stress on lecturer performance within privately owned Institutions (PTIs). The study sought to understand the sources of stress, the managerial challenges in supervising stressed lecturers, the effects of stress on lecturer performance, the stress-performance relationship, and practical strategies for alleviation, corresponding directly with the five core objectives and hypothesis articulated in Chapter 1. The methodology adopted in this study is informed by the contextual realities of Botswana's tertiary education sector, which is characterised by digital transformation, resource constraints, increasing workloads, and changing student demographics. These challenges, discussed in Chapters One and Two, necessitated a rigorous research design capable of examining both the statistical relationships and lived experiences of academic staff.

Given the complex and multidimensional nature of occupational stress characterized by emotional exhaustion, administrative overload, performance pressures, and institutional culture challenges, the study embraced a convergent parallel mixed-methods design. This design was selected not only for its methodological robustness but also for its flexibility, allowing the integration of realist and interpretivist paradigms. As described by Liu et al. (2016), Dow (2018), and Robbins (1996), occupational stress impacts both the psychological well-being and the performance output of academic staff, with implications for student outcomes and institutional quality. The use of both quantitative and qualitative tools allowed the researcher to examine measurable stress indicators, such as workload and absenteeism, alongside subjective perceptions, including emotional fatigue and organizational dissatisfaction, thereby offering a holistic and triangulated view of the phenomenon.

The philosophical grounding of this research was pragmatism, a worldview that prioritizes practical solutions to real-world problems by combining quantitative and qualitative epistemologies. Pragmatism was appropriate given the complexity of the research questions, which required capturing not only statistical relationships but also narrative insights. This stance allowed for the collection of data from both managerial and academic staff through structured questionnaires and open-ended narrative responses. These perspectives, when synthesized, provided a more nuanced understanding of the impact of occupational stress and the specific contextual pressures prevalent in Botswana’s private tertiary education sector.

Furthermore, the selection of methods was informed by the sector's unique characteristics, including governance limitations, underfunding, and strained employer-employee relations, as outlined in Chapter 2 (Mahlape, 2023; Ahmad, 2016). Many PTIs demonstrate management practices rooted in control rather than collaboration, often resulting in high turnover, low morale, and administrative overload among staff (Kwenda et al., 2019; Cole & Kelly, 2014). This made it essential to utilize a methodology that could surface both observable patterns and underlying causes. A purely quantitative approach would have failed to capture the rich lived experiences of respondents, while a purely qualitative design would have lacked the generalizability needed for policy recommendations. Mixed methods thus presented the most balanced and comprehensive strategy.

Lastly, the chapter outlines how each methodological choice, from sampling design to instrument development and analysis, was aligned with the overarching research objectives. Ethical considerations, validity and reliability safeguards, and analytical strategies are also discussed in detail. This overview reinforces the integrity and contextual sensitivity of the study and lays the groundwork for the empirical findings discussed in Chapters 4 and 5.

3.1 Research Design

This research adopted a convergent parallel mixed-methods design, which allowed for the simultaneous collection and independent analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data before integrating the findings at the interpretation stage. This design was especially appropriate for the present study, as it enabled triangulation of results and a more comprehensive analysis of the occupational stress-performance relationship. According to Creswell (2014), a convergent parallel design is particularly effective in social science research when exploring complex human behaviour within institutional contexts.

The design enabled the researcher to address both the measurable dimensions of stress with examples such as frequency, impact on job performance, access to support services and the less tangible, subjective aspects such as emotional burnout, institutional frustration, and perceived unfair treatment. Such dual exploration enhanced the credibility and richness of the findings. The quantitative strand focused on testing hypotheses through statistical models, while the qualitative strand delved into respondents' lived realities, revealing contextual stressors and coping mechanisms.

The rationale for using this design also stemmed from its potential to offer practical and policy-relevant insights. Data integration at the interpretation phase allowed for the verification of

quantitative patterns against qualitative themes, ensuring consistency and contextual grounding. This was crucial for developing recommendations that are not only evidence-based but also sensitive to the realities of the Botswana PTI sector.

3.2 Research Philosophy

This study was underpinned by the philosophical orientation of pragmatism, a worldview that acknowledges the complexity of social phenomena and advocates for methodological flexibility in addressing real-world problems. Pragmatism is widely accepted in contemporary organizational and educational research for its inclusive epistemological stance, which encourages the use of both quantitative and qualitative approaches without strict allegiance to traditional paradigms. Rather than confining the researcher to either positivism or interpretivism, pragmatism allows for the purposeful integration of both, depending on the nature of the research question and the context under investigation (Saunders et al., 2016).

The decision to adopt a pragmatic philosophical stance was driven by the complex and multidimensional character of occupational stress, which is not only a physiological or behavioural construct but also a deeply subjective and contextually embedded experience. Occupational stress in academic settings manifests through both quantifiable symptoms such as absenteeism, reduced performance, and increased turnover, and qualitative dimensions, such as emotional exhaustion, feelings of alienation, and loss of professional autonomy. A single philosophical or methodological perspective would have been inadequate to fully capture these multifaceted dimensions. The pragmatic paradigm, therefore, provided an appropriate lens through which to investigate the nuanced interplay between stressors and academic performance in Botswana's private tertiary institutions.

Pragmatism is rooted in the belief that truth is not absolute but is constructed through lived experiences, practical consequences, and contextual relevance. It asserts that what works in a particular situation is more important than rigid theoretical alignment. This orientation aligned well with the study's aim to generate findings that are not only academically rigorous but also practically applicable to institutional decision-makers, policy designers, and educational practitioners. The researcher was particularly concerned with producing knowledge that could lead to actionable change in how stress is managed within PTIs, an objective consistent with the problem-solving ethos of pragmatism.

Furthermore, the adoption of pragmatism permitted the use of methodological triangulation, whereby both qualitative and quantitative data were collected and analyzed concurrently. This strategy enabled the study to gain a broader understanding of the research problem from different angles. For instance, while statistical correlations helped confirm hypotheses regarding the relationship between workload stress and lecturer effectiveness, open-ended narratives illuminated the personal toll of unmanageable schedules and perceived institutional neglect. The integration of these perspectives enriched the findings and ensured that they were both empirically grounded and experientially meaningful (Mahlape, 2023; Ngirande, 2021).

The philosophy also influenced the formulation of research objectives, which were purposefully structured to align with real challenges faced by academic professionals in Botswana's tertiary sector. The study sought not only to understand stress and its effects but also to identify strategies for alleviation, a goal that required moving beyond abstract theorizing to actionable insight. This outcome-oriented logic is a hallmark of pragmatic inquiry, which values knowledge for its usefulness, relevance, and transformative potential. In this way, the study's findings could be readily applied in institutional settings to improve academic staff welfare and performance outcomes.

In practical terms, pragmatism shaped the instrument design and data interpretation processes. The questionnaire included both closed-ended items to facilitate statistical testing and open-ended prompts to allow participants to voice concerns in their own words. This dual structure was a direct reflection of the philosophical commitment to capturing both objective trends and subjective meanings. Moreover, the interpretation of data was guided by both deductive and inductive reasoning, blending theoretical expectations with emergent themes. The flexibility to shift between numerical analysis and thematic interpretation provided a fuller picture of the stress landscape in the sector.

Importantly, the pragmatist philosophy also resonates with local research traditions in Botswana and the broader Southern African region, where researchers often grapple with context-specific challenges that require adaptable and inclusive methodologies. In environments marked by institutional instability, resource constraints, and evolving pedagogical practices, rigid adherence to a single philosophical tradition can hinder the production of meaningful knowledge. Pragmatism offers a way to navigate these challenges by prioritizing real-world impact over abstract purity, making it especially relevant for research that seeks to influence policy and practice within education systems.

Moreover, the pragmatic approach reflects the values of Botswana's development agenda, particularly its alignment with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The

study's practical emphasis on improving educational quality (SDG 4) and promoting decent work conditions (SDG 8) aligns with the national emphasis on innovation, inclusive growth, and human capital development. A pragmatic philosophical orientation thus offered the ideal foundation for a research agenda that sought to balance scholarly depth with social utility in the context of Botswana's private tertiary education sector.

The choice of pragmatism as the guiding philosophy was both contextually justified and methodologically sound. It enabled the researcher to transcend the limitations of mono-paradigmatic inquiry, integrate diverse data sources, and produce findings that are theoretically rich and practically useful. By viewing occupational stress as both a quantifiable phenomenon and a lived experience, the pragmatic approach ensured that the study remained grounded in the realities of academic life in Botswana's PTIs, while also contributing to the broader discourse on stress and performance in higher education.

3.3 Research Approach

This study used a mixed-methods research approach, combining both quantitative and qualitative methods to examine the relationship between occupational stress and the performance of academic staff in Botswana's private tertiary institutions (PTIs).This approach was deemed appropriate due to the complex, multidimensional, and contextual nature of the research questions. Occupational stress does not manifest solely in observable behavioural patterns or measurable psychological indicators; it also encompasses subjective feelings, institutional perceptions, and coping strategies that require narrative exploration. As such, neither a purely qualitative nor a purely quantitative method would have been sufficient to capture the full spectrum of phenomena under investigation. The combination of these methods aligned well with the pragmatic philosophical stance adopted by the study, enabling the researcher to prioritize problem-solving and real-world relevance over strict adherence to a single paradigm.

The quantitative component of the study provided a statistical basis for examining the relationships between various dimensions of occupational stress and lecturer performance. Structured questionnaires incorporating validated Likert-scale instruments were used to collect data on perceived stressors, performance ratings, and related organizational factors. Tools such as correlation analysis, cross-tabulation, chi-square tests, and multiple linear regression were applied to test hypotheses and examine associations between variables. The use of IBM SPSS facilitated efficient data management, enabling a robust analysis of central tendencies, relationships, and statistical significance. This

component provided empirical evidence supporting key findings, such as the inverse relationship between workload stress and lecturer effectiveness, consistent with existing research (Ngirande, 2021; Mahlape, 2023). The generalizability of the quantitative findings was bolstered by a relatively diverse sample drawn from multiple institutions, enhancing the external validity of the study.

In addition to the numerical analysis, the qualitative component allowed the researcher to explore the personal experiences of academic staff in greater depth. Open-ended questions within the same instrument encouraged respondents to express their feelings, concerns, and insights. in their own words. This design choice allowed for rich thematic exploration without requiring separate interviews or focus groups, which would have posed logistical and ethical challenges in the sensitive domain of stress-related disclosures. Thematic analysis of these narrative responses revealed recurrent issues such as institutional neglect, psychological burnout, lack of recognition, and the erosion of professional autonomy, issues not easily quantifiable but deeply impactful. These themes echoed findings in the literature, including the work of Cole and Kelly (2014), who emphasized the importance of understanding both organizational structures and human experiences in workplace research.

The study adopted a convergent parallel design, in which quantitative and qualitative data were collected at the same time, analyzed independently, and later combined during the interpretation stage. This structure ensured that the findings were triangulated, enhancing credibility and depth. For example, statistical correlations identifying workload and administrative burden as key predictors of stress were supported by qualitative narratives describing excessive paperwork, unrealistic teaching loads, and an absence of institutional support. The mixed-methods approach thus enabled the researcher to not only test hypotheses but also generate grounded insights that inform policy and management interventions. As the Botswana private tertiary sector grapples with staff retention, quality assurance, and digital transformation, such multidimensional understanding is crucial.

Ultimately, the mixed-methods approach added both rigour and relevance to the research. It allowed for a nuanced, evidence-based understanding of occupational stress as both a measurable construct and a lived reality within the specific institutional and national context. The approach's flexibility also enabled the researcher to address gaps noted in prior literature, which often treated stress as a decontextualized psychological condition rather than a socially and structurally embedded challenge (Ahmad, 2016; Dow, 2018). By blending methodological strengths and drawing on both numbers and

narratives, the study contributed meaningful insights that are not only academically valuable but also practically applicable for institutional decision-makers.

3.4 Research Strategy

The study adopted a cross-sectional survey as its main research strategy, supported by an embedded qualitative inquiry. A cross-sectional survey is suitable for collecting data at a single point in time from a specific population to identify existing conditions, relationships, and trends. In this context, the survey design enabled the researcher to gather information on the stress experiences and performance perceptions of academic staff and managerial staff across multiple Private Tertiary Institutions (PTIs) in Gaborone.

This strategy was beneficial as it allowed for the collection of a wide range of data within a relatively short period. Additionally, the use of a structured questionnaire ensured consistency and comparability in the responses obtained while allowing for statistical comparability. Additionally, the strategy provided a cost-effective and practical way to reach a dispersed population across several institutions. The inclusion of both lecturers and managers in the survey enhanced the study's comprehensiveness, enabling the capture of multiple perspectives on occupational stress and its organizational implications.

To complement the quantitative data, the questionnaire also included open-ended questions that invited respondents to elaborate on their experiences and recommendations. This embedded qualitative component transformed the survey into a richer instrument capable of yielding both breadth and depth of insight. The combination of structured and open-ended items reflected the pragmatist stance of the study, enabling the integration of objectivist and interpretivist data streams within a single instrument. This design choice also enhanced respondent engagement, as participants were able to voice their personal narratives and concerns beyond the constraints of closed-ended options.

3.4.1 Sampling Frame and Techniques

The sampling frame consisted of all academic and administrative staff from the 14 selected private tertiary institutions registered under the Ministry of Higher Education and recognized as accredited by Botswana Qualifications Authority. The list of staff was stratified by job category (lecturer vs. administrator), institution, and employment status (full-time/part-time). Stratified sampling was used to ensure proportionate representation of various subgroups within each institution.

A combination of probability (stratified random sampling) and non-probability (judgmental) sampling techniques were employed. Stratified random sampling was applied for quantitative data collection from lecturers, while judgmental sampling was used for qualitative interviews with one managerial representative from each of the 14 PTIs.

These mixed methods sampling approach allowed for balanced data collection from across academic roles and institutional hierarchies, enabling both generalizable quantitative insights and rich qualitative context.

3.4.2 Sample Size Determination

The total estimated population across the 14 institutions was 1,173, comprising all academic staff across employment types. Using Meyer's (1979) table of population range and sample size determination, a total sample size of 294 respondents was identified as appropriate. This aligns with the rule of thumb for populations of approximately 1,000.

All 14 institutions were included, and the sample was proportionally distributed across them. A total of 294 questionnaires were administered, and 255 valid responses were received, representing a strong response rate of 86.7%. In addition, 14 structured interview guides were completed by one management representative from each institution.

The final sample allowed for robust statistical testing (e.g., regression, correlation, ANOVA), and the sample size was sufficient to ensure generalizability and internal consistency across constructs.

Table 0.1 Population Frequency Table

Tertiary Institution	**Population (N)**	**Sample Size (n)**
Botho University	300	71
Gaborone University College of Law (GUC)	250	59
New Era College	80	18
Ba Isago University	350	82
London College of International Studies	15	3
ABM University College	10	2

Imperial School of Business and Science	15	3
Boitekanelo College	120	28
Logan Business College	10	2
Mega Size College	8	1
Limkokwing University of Creative Technology	50	11
Gaborone Institute of Professional Studies (GIPS)	25	5
Botswana Open University	30	7
Arthur Portland	10	2
Total	**1173**	**294**

Stratified Sampling Formula Used:

To determine the sample size per institution:

$n_i = \frac{N_i}{N} \times n$

Where:

- n_i = Sample size for each institution
- N_i = Total population of the institution
- N = Total target population (1173)
- n = Total sample size (294)

For the qualitative portion, 14 management interview guides were distributed (one per institution), using judgmental sampling. Managers were selected based on their roles in staff performance and policy implementation.

3.4.3 Justification of Sample Size and Technique

The sample size was justified using Meyer's (1979) range method and aligns with Sekeran (2013), who emphasizes balancing representativeness and feasibility. The high response rate and complete institutional coverage enhanced the reliability of findings and supported inferential analysis.

Stratified random sampling minimized selection bias and ensured proportional representation of all relevant subgroups. The technique also reduced sampling error and improved the generalizability of results across Botswana's PTIs.

Overall, the sampling methodology ensured statistical robustness for the quantitative component and in-depth insights for the qualitative analysis, fulfilling the research objectives comprehensively

3.5 Population

3.5.1 Target Population

The target population for this study comprised academic staff and line managers employed within 14 registered Private Tertiary Institutions (PTIs) in Gaborone, Botswana. This population included lecturers (full-time, part-time, and distance-mode facilitators), heads of departments, programme coordinators, and institutional managers actively involved in academic and administrative functions.

The inclusion of both lecturers and managerial personnel allowed the study to explore occupational stress from dual perspectives: those directly experiencing the stress and those managing institutional performance under these pressures. Private tertiary education in Botswana forms a substantial part of the higher education landscape, often operating under conditions of large student enrolments, resource constraints, and increasing compliance expectations.

Focusing on Gaborone was strategic due to its status as the primary hub of private tertiary education in Botswana. Concentrating data collection in this area enabled access to a diverse range of institutions in terms of size, structure, and academic offerings, while maintaining logistical feasibility and ensuring institutional representation.

3.6 Data Collection Instruments and Techniques

The primary data collection instrument used in this study was a structured, self-administered questionnaire designed to collect both quantitative and qualitative data relating to occupational stress and academic lecturer performance in private tertiary institutions located in Gaborone, Botswana. The questionnaire was developed following an extensive review of the literature on occupational stress, employee performance, organisational behaviour, and higher education management. In addition, established measurement instruments and validated scales reported in previous studies, including those by Liu et al. (2016), Ngirande (2021), and Dow (2018), were critically reviewed and adapted to suit the objectives and context of the present study.

To ensure contextual relevance, the questionnaire was modified to reflect the organizational structures, institutional practices, and operational realities of private tertiary institutions in Botswana. Particular attention was given to the wording, sequencing, and presentation of questionnaire items to ensure clarity, minimize ambiguity, and facilitate respondents' understanding. The instrument incorporated predominantly closed-ended questions measured using Likert-type scales, complemented by a limited number of open-ended questions to allow respondents to elaborate on their experiences and provide additional insights that could not be adequately captured through quantitative measures alone.

The questionnaire was organized into five sections corresponding directly to the study objectives. The first section examined the sources of occupational stress experienced by academic lecturers. The second focused on the challenges encountered by managers when supervising lecturers experiencing occupational stress. The third assessed the effects of occupational stress on lecturer performance. The fourth investigated the relationship between occupational stress and academic lecturer performance through variables that were subsequently subjected to statistical analysis and hypothesis testing. The final section explored strategies for mitigating occupational stress within private tertiary institutions.

The logical sequencing of questionnaire items was intended to facilitate a natural progression from respondents' demographic characteristics and workplace experiences to more specific questions relating to occupational stress, institutional support, lecturer performance, and organizational interventions. This structure enhanced the coherence of the instrument, reduced respondent fatigue, and improved the completeness and quality of responses obtained. Furthermore, the inclusion of open-ended questions enabled respondents to provide contextual explanations and practical recommendations, thereby complementing the quantitative findings and supporting the convergent parallel mixed-methods design adopted in this study.

The quantitative section of the questionnaire utilized closed-ended items formatted on a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree). These items measured key constructs such as workload, emotional exhaustion, institutional support, job satisfaction, role conflict, time pressure, and professional fulfilment. Each set of items was developed in reference to existing conceptual frameworks, notably the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Model and the Transactional Model of Stress, which underpin many contemporary stress studies in occupational psychology and higher education. The JD-R model was particularly useful in distinguishing between

job demands (e.g., excessive marking, administrative workload) and job resources (e.g., mentorship, autonomy), providing a balanced perspective on stress antecedents and moderators (Cole & Kelly, 2014).

To ensure the reliability and internal consistency of the quantitative items, a pilot study was conducted prior to the main data collection phase. A sample of 15 respondents from similar institutions was selected for this purpose. Cronbach's alpha coefficients were calculated for each construct, with results ranging between 0.71 and 0.86, indicating acceptable to excellent internal consistency. Feedback from the pilot study also led to minor adjustments in wording and sequencing for improved clarity and flow. This iterative development process strengthened the psychometric soundness of the instrument and its suitability for the local research setting.

In addition to the closed-ended questions, the instrument incorporated open-ended qualitative prompts designed to elicit richer, narrative responses from participants. These prompts encouraged respondents to describe their personal experiences with occupational stress, perceptions of management effectiveness, institutional dynamics, and their suggestions for mitigating stress. This qualitative component was particularly valuable in surfacing themes that quantitative data alone could not capture, such as emotional coping mechanisms, perceived injustice, feelings of demoralization, and strategies for resilience. As supported by Mahlape (2023), qualitative insights are vital in capturing the underlying socio-emotional dimensions of stress in higher education settings.

The integration of qualitative items within a single instrument allowed for simultaneous data collection while maintaining respondent anonymity and comfort. Unlike face-to-face interviews or focus groups which may have introduced bias or discomfort due to the sensitive nature of the topic the questionnaire format provided participants with privacy and time to reflect on their responses. This was especially important in a sector characterized by high managerial control and limited academic freedom (Ahmad, 2016; Kwenda et al., 2019), where staff might fear professional repercussions for voicing dissent. This strategy also enabled the triangulation of quantitative patterns with personal narratives, enhancing the depth and credibility of the findings.

The response format of the questionnaire was also designed to ensure ease of completion and compatibility with digital and physical formats. Although many questionnaires were distributed and collected electronically via Google Forms, printed copies were also used in cases where participants lacked stable internet access. This hybrid distribution strategy ensured inclusivity and wider reach, thereby increasing the response rate and representativeness of the sample. It also respected the

diversity in digital literacy among academic staff, a factor noted as influential in other studies conducted in developing contexts (Gumbo & Williams, 2022).

Ultimately, the design and application of the data collection instrument were both methodologically and ethically grounded. The structured questionnaire enabled the researcher to gather statistically reliable data while also giving voice to the lived experiences of respondents. This dual functionality made it possible to conduct robust inferential analyses (Chapter 4) and meaningful thematic synthesis (Chapter 5), offering a well-rounded understanding of how occupational stress affects academic performance in the Botswana PTI context.

3.7 Measurement of Variables

In line with the study's mixed-methods design, particular attention was given to the operationalization and measurement of the key variables. The primary constructs investigated included occupational stress, lecturer performance, institutional support mechanisms, and coping strategies. These variables were identified based on both theoretical models and empirical studies previously conducted in higher education contexts. The measurement framework was designed to allow statistical testing of hypotheses, while also enabling a nuanced understanding of each construct within the context of Botswana's private tertiary institutions.

Occupational stress was measured using a composite scale developed from established instruments such as the Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) and the Job Demands-Resources Model, adapted to the local context. Indicators included frequency and intensity of workload, time pressure, emotional exhaustion, role ambiguity, and interpersonal conflict. Respondents were asked to indicate their agreement with statements such as "I feel overwhelmed by my teaching responsibilities" or "I receive adequate support to manage my workload." Each item was scored on a five-point Likert scale, enabling the computation of mean stress scores and further inferential analysis.

Lecturer performance was assessed through a multi-dimensional lens, encompassing teaching effectiveness, research productivity, student engagement, punctuality in grading, and participation in institutional activities. Items such as "I am able to prepare adequately for my lectures" and "I consistently meet marking deadlines" were used to measure self-reported performance. While the responses are inherently subjective, prior studies (e.g., Gabrielli and Lundi, 2020) have demonstrated the reliability of self-assessment in gauging performance when anonymity and contextual sensitivity

are assured. This approach was particularly suitable given the lack of centralized institutional performance metrics across PTIs.

Institutional support was operationalized using items that assessed perceived availability and adequacy of managerial and administrative resources. These included access to teaching materials, institutional flexibility, communication effectiveness, professional development opportunities, and the presence of wellness initiatives. The scale also included negatively phrased items such as "My institution does not offer platforms for stress-related feedback," which were reverse-coded during analysis. Coping strategies were measured through frequency-based questions, asking respondents how often they engaged in stress-reduction behaviours such as taking breaks, seeking help, or utilizing support services.

Each of the measurement scales was tested for internal consistency using Cronbach's alpha. The reliability coefficients for the occupational stress, performance, and support constructs all exceeded the 0.70 threshold, confirming their reliability. The detailed statistical treatment of these variables, including factor loading, correlation matrices, and hypothesis tests, is elaborated in Chapter 4. The thoughtful operationalization of variables ensured that the study's conceptual framework was translated into measurable components, thereby facilitating empirical verification of the research objectives.

3.8 Pilot Testing

Before commencing full-scale data collection, a pilot study was conducted to pre-test the research instrument and refine the questionnaire items. The pilot phase was essential for identifying ambiguities, evaluating the reliability of the measurement scales, and assessing the overall usability and logical sequencing of the instrument. Fifteen academic staff members from private tertiary institutions not included in the main study population were purposively selected to participate in the pilot. Their feedback was instrumental in shaping the final version of the questionnaire used in the main data collection.

The pilot participants represented a cross-section of job roles, including lecturers, programme coordinators, and academic heads. This diversity ensured that input was received from individuals with varied perspectives on occupational stress and academic responsibilities. During the pilot, respondents were asked to complete the questionnaire and provide observations regarding unclear wording, redundant items, formatting issues, or perceived omissions. The process revealed several

minor inconsistencies, including overly technical language in some items and the need to simplify or clarify certain Likert-scale statements.

Based on the pilot feedback, necessary revisions were made. For example, the term "institutional synergy" was replaced with the more commonly understood "departmental collaboration," and redundant items measuring workload were consolidated for brevity and clarity. In addition to qualitative improvements, the pilot data were also subjected to preliminary statistical testing to assess internal consistency using Cronbach's alpha. All key constructs exceeded the 0.70 threshold, confirming the reliability of the measurement instruments. The successful pilot testing phase provided confidence in the instrument's robustness and its suitability for full deployment across the study's target institutions.

3.9 Data Collection Procedure

The data collection phase spanned a period of six weeks and was conducted using a dual-mode distribution strategy, physical and electronic, to maximize outreach, convenience, and inclusivity among the target population of academic and managerial staff in private tertiary institutions (PTIs) in Gaborone, Botswana. This approach was designed to address the logistical diversity of the sector, which includes full-time, part-time, and adjunct faculty members, many of whom operate across multiple campuses or work under flexible schedules. The rationale behind this hybrid method was informed by previous studies that recommend adaptive tools for engaging diverse respondents in education research (Mahlape, 2023; Ahmad, 2016).

Prior to deployment, ethical approval was obtained from the University of Lusaka Research Ethics Committee, ensuring that the study complied with internationally recognized standards of ethical research, (see attached appendices). This included protecting participants' rights, minimizing harm, and securing informed consent. In addition, permission was requested and granted by individual institutions, with gatekeeper letters issued by management or administrative authorities. These letters outlined the purpose of the research, its non-invasive nature, and the ethical protocols put in place, including voluntary participation and confidentiality assurances and this was also backed by the overall letter of the Ministry of Higher Education ethical clearance letter RE: MoHE1/18/1I(7) dated 2 May 2025(see attached appendices)

Physical distribution of the questionnaire was coordinated through academic departments. Hard copies were delivered to faculty offices during working hours, where respondents could complete

them at their convenience. To ensure privacy and encourage honest responses, completed questionnaires were submitted into sealed, clearly labelled drop-boxes placed in designated collection areas. This physical method was particularly effective for staff members with limited internet access or a preference for paper-based instruments. Institutional administrators were briefed to assist in logistics, and faculty secretaries played a pivotal role in ensuring distribution and collection integrity.

In parallel, an online version of the questionnaire was created using Google Forms, which was secured via access controls and only made available to individuals through institutional or researcher-generated email invitations. Participants accessed the survey through unique links that did not collect personal identifying information. The design of the form mirrored the physical questionnaire to maintain consistency in structure and question order. This digital mode was especially advantageous for part-time lecturers, administrative staff, and others who were not consistently present on campus. It also aligned with the ongoing digital transformation within the education sector, which was further accelerated by post-COVID adaptations in many PTIs.

To enhance participation and improve response rates, a series of sensitization efforts were undertaken. These included emails, WhatsApp reminders, and verbal follow-ups by department heads, who were supportive of the study's relevance and objectives. The cover page of both the physical and online instruments clearly stated the voluntary nature of the study, the approximate time required to complete the questionnaire, and respondents' right to decline or withdraw at any point without penalty. The messaging was crafted to emphasize that honest participation would directly contribute to improving staff wellbeing and institutional effectiveness.

Throughout the data collection process, special attention was given to data security and confidentiality. For physical questionnaires, sealed boxes were opened only by the researcher in a secure environment. Data from hard copies was manually entered into a password-protected spreadsheet before being transferred into SPSS for analysis. For the online responses, access to raw data was restricted to the researcher, and all data was stored securely using encrypted cloud storage. No names, email addresses, or institutional identifiers were captured, thereby protecting respondent anonymity and reinforcing the ethical credibility of the study.

The dual-mode strategy not only increased overall response rates but also improved the demographic representativeness of the sample. Respondents were drawn from a range of academic disciplines, employment levels, and contractual arrangements, including full-time, part-time, and adjunct positions. This diversity was essential in ensuring that the findings reflect the broader realities within

the PTI sector in Botswana. The convergence of physical and digital responses allowed for robust quantitative analysis while simultaneously capturing rich qualitative input from open-ended questions.

Overall, the data collection procedure was methodically executed, ethically grounded, and contextually responsive. It accounted for both logistical constraints and technological opportunities within the research environment. The high rate of participation, coupled with the completeness and quality of the responses, provided a strong foundation for the subsequent stages of analysis. This carefully planned process also demonstrated the researcher's commitment to inclusivity, ethical rigor, and methodological validity principles that underpin the credibility of the findings presented in Chapters 4 and 5.

3.10 Data Analysis Procedures

The analysis of the collected data followed a systematic, multi-step process consistent with the study's mixed-methods design. Quantitative and qualitative data were analyzed independently and later integrated during the interpretation stage to ensure coherence and a comprehensive understanding of the findings enhance validity, and allow for triangulation of findings. This integrative approach ensured that the numerical trends derived from statistical analysis were contextualized by the deeper insights provided through narrative responses, strengthening the overall credibility of the research outcomes.

Quantitative data were entered, coded, and analyzed using IBM SPSS Statistics Version 26. Preliminary analysis involved data cleaning procedures such as checking for missing values, identifying outliers, and verifying data accuracy. Descriptive statistics including means, standard deviations, frequencies, and percentages were used to summarize the demographic characteristics of the sample and to highlight overall trends in occupational stress and performance variables. Inferential statistical techniques, such as Pearson correlation coefficients and multiple regression analysis, were subsequently applied to examine the relationships between occupational stress and academic staff performance., and to test the research hypothesis outlined in Section 1.6.

Hypothesis testing was conducted at a 95% confidence level ($\alpha = 0.05$), and regression outputs were interpreted in terms of coefficients, R-squared values, and p-values. Correlation matrices were also used to explore multicollinearity and associations among constructs such as workload, support systems, job satisfaction, and teaching effectiveness. Tables 4.1 to 4.3 in Chapter 4 present the

detailed statistical outputs. These analyses confirmed that higher levels of occupational stress were significantly associated with lower levels of self-reported performance, providing empirical support for the alternate hypothesis (H1).

The qualitative data derived from the open-ended questionnaire items were analyzed using thematic analysis. Responses were read thoroughly and coded inductively, with emerging themes categorized under broader domains such as emotional burden, institutional neglect, managerial communication, and resilience strategies. This process followed Braun and Clarke's (2006) six-phase framework: familiarization, coding, theme development, theme review, theme definition, and final write-up. The resulting themes added richness to the quantitative results, especially in explaining how institutional factors exacerbated or mitigated stress and how individual lecturers perceived their own performance amid various challenges.

The mixed-methods integration was achieved during the interpretation phase by cross-referencing statistical findings with relevant qualitative themes. For example, while regression analysis revealed a significant link between stress and reduced job performance, qualitative data clarified that lack of institutional recognition and unclear job expectations were key mediators in this relationship. This synthesis enabled the research to offer not only statistically valid conclusions but also actionable insights tailored to the specific realities of PTIs in Botswana.

3.11 Validity and Reliability

This chapter presents the analysis and interpretation of empirical data collected to examine the relationship between occupational stress and academic staff performance in private tertiary institutions (PTIs) in Gaborone, Botswana. Consistent with the methodology outlined in Chapter Three, the findings are presented in line with the research objectives, providing evidence on the sources, effects, and management of occupational stress among lecturers.

The study adopted a concurrent mixed-methods approach, integrating quantitative and qualitative data to provide a comprehensive understanding of the phenomenon. Quantitative data were collected through structured questionnaires administered to academic staff, while qualitative insights were obtained through open-ended questions directed at lecturers and institutional management. This methodological triangulation enhanced the credibility and interpretation of the findings.

The chapter begins with the response rate and demographic profile of respondents, including age, gender, academic rank, and institutional affiliation. These characteristics provide context for interpreting occupational stress and academic staff performance within Botswana's private tertiary education sector.

The findings are then presented according to the research objectives. First, the chapter identifies the major sources of occupational stress, including excessive workloads, administrative responsibilities, technological demands, limited institutional support, and inadequate compensation, consistent with previous studies (Gabrielli & Lundi, 2020; Lee et al., 2022; Kwenda et al., 2019).

The chapter then examines the effect of occupational stress on teaching quality, research productivity, and lecturer engagement using both descriptive and inferential statistical analyses. It also explores the challenges faced by institutional managers in supervising stressed academic staff, highlighting organisational and leadership constraints that limit effective staff support (Nkosi et al., 2020; Hassan et al., 2020).

Further analysis evaluates the relationship between occupational stress and employee performance by testing the study's hypotheses within the theoretical framework presented in Chapter Two, including Hans Selye's General Adaptation Syndrome and the concepts of eustress and distress.

The chapter also presents coping strategies adopted by lecturers and institutional support mechanisms, including social support, flexible work arrangements, workload redistribution, and professional development. These findings directly address the study's final objective of identifying strategies for reducing occupational stress in private tertiary institutions.

The chapter concludes by summarising the key findings, which provide the basis for the discussion in Chapter Five. Overall, the results contribute to the limited literature on occupational stress in Botswana's private tertiary education sector and highlight the importance of supportive leadership, adequate resources, and institutional interventions in promoting employee wellbeing and academic performance.

3.12 Ethical Considerations

Ethical integrity was central to every stage of this research, given the sensitive nature of occupational stress and its potential psychological impact on participants. The study complied with established

ethical guidelines, including those stipulated by the University of Lusaka Research Ethics Committee, which granted formal approval prior to data collection. Informed consent was obtained from all participants, and the voluntary nature of participation was clearly communicated in both the cover letter and the introductory section of the questionnaire. Respondents were assured that they could withdraw from the study at any time without any consequences and this was also backed by the overall letter of the Ministry of Higher Education ethical clearance letter RE: MoHE1/18/1I(7) dated 2 May 2025(see attached appendices)

Anonymity and confidentiality were prioritized to protect participants from any potential professional or institutional repercussions. No personally identifiable information was requested, and all complete questionnaires were coded and stored securely. Physical copies were kept in locked cabinets accessible only to the researcher, while digital responses were stored in password-protected files. Data were used strictly for academic purposes and were not shared with third parties. These precautions helped to foster trust and candor among participants, many of whom disclosed deeply personal accounts of stress and institutional challenges.

Additionally, the research was designed to minimize any form of psychological distress. The questionnaire was framed in a neutral and non-invasive tone, avoiding language that could trigger anxiety or discomfort. Participants were also informed of support resources available within their institutions should the process of reflecting occupational stress evoke any emotional difficulties. Ethical safeguards extended to the reporting of findings, where care was taken to present aggregate results rather than institution-specific or role-specific details that could indirectly reveal identities.

3.13 Chapter Summary

This chapter provided a detailed overview of the research design and methodology used to examine the relationship between occupational stress and academic staff performance in private tertiary institutions in Gaborone, Botswana. The study was guided by a pragmatic philosophical perspective and employed a convergent parallel mixed-methods approach to capture both measurable indicators and in-depth insights related to the phenomenon under investigation. and subjective experiences of stress. The rationale behind selecting this design was its capacity to accommodate the multifaceted nature of the research problem, integrating quantitative robustness with qualitative richness.

Detailed attention was given to the population and sampling strategy, with academic and managerial staff from registered private tertiary institutions forming the primary participants. A stratified

purposive sampling technique ensured representativeness across different roles, institutions, and demographic categories. The instrument development process incorporated both validated scales and context-specific adaptations and was piloted rigorously to enhance reliability and clarity. Data collection followed ethical best practices, with strong safeguards for anonymity, voluntary participation, and psychological safety.

Data analysis involved the use of SPSS for descriptive and inferential statistics, alongside thematic analysis for qualitative responses. Measures were taken to ensure validity and reliability, including expert validation, factor analysis, and Cronbach's alpha testing. Ethical considerations were integrated throughout the study, reinforcing the credibility and trustworthiness of the research process. The methodological rigor outlined in this chapter sets the foundation for the presentation and interpretation of results in Chapter 4, and the subsequent discussion in Chapter 5.

CHAPTER 4
DATA ANALYSIS AND PRESENTATION

4.0 Chapter Overview

This chapter presents the analysis and interpretation of empirical data gathered to investigate the relationship between occupational stress and academic staff performance in private tertiary institutions (PTIs) within Gaborone, Botswana. Following the methodology established in Chapter Three, this chapter focuses on presenting the findings systematically in alignment with the research objectives, thereby offering evidence-based insights into the nature, sources, and effects of occupational stress among lecturers.

The study employed a concurrent mixed-methods approach, integrating both quantitative and qualitative data to provide a comprehensive and nuanced understanding of the phenomenon under investigation. Quantitative data were collected through structured questionnaires administered to academic staff, while qualitative insights were obtained via open-ended questions. targeted at both lecturers and institutional management. This methodological triangulation enabled the researcher to cross-validate findings, enrich interpretation, and strengthen the credibility of results.

The presentation of findings begins with an overview of the response rate, which is essential for assessing the validity and generalizability of the study. This is followed by a demographic profile of respondents, encompassing variables such as age, gender, academic rank, and institutional affiliation. These background characteristics provide context for interpreting stress levels and performance outcomes within Botswana's expanding private higher education sector.

Subsequent sections of this chapter are organized around the core research objectives. First, the chapter explores the primary sources of occupational stress among academic staff. Drawing on both survey and open-ended responses, this section identifies stressors such as excessive workloads, administrative responsibilities, technological adaptation, limited institutional support, and inadequate compensation structures consistent with findings from recent literature (Gabrielli & Lundi, 2020; Lee et al., 2022; Kwenda et al., 2019).

Next, the chapter examines the impact of occupational stress on staff performance, including teaching quality, research productivity, and lecturer engagement. Both descriptive and inferential statistics are employed to assess whether stress levels significantly influence professional outputs and institutional effectiveness. In addition, the chapter presents challenges faced by institutional managers when

overseeing lecturers who report high stress levels. These challenges highlight structural and managerial gaps that limit the ability of leadership to support staff well-being effectively (Nkosi et al., 2020; Hassan et al., 2020).

The analysis also evaluates the relationship between stress and performance, testing the study's hypothesis and contributing to the broader debate about whether stress serves as a motivator (eustress) or as a barrier to performance (distress). The theoretical context of this analysis draws on Hans Selye's general adaptation syndrome and the dual-pathway perspective of eustress and distress, as highlighted in Chapter Two.

Furthermore, the chapter addresses coping strategies employed by lecturers and support mechanisms offered by institutions. Qualitative data provide insight into both individual and organizational approaches to managing stress, including social support, flexible work arrangements, workload redistribution, and professional development opportunities. These findings respond directly to the final research objective, which seeks to propose actionable strategies for reducing stress in PTIs.

The chapter concludes by summarizing key patterns in the data, providing a foundation for the interpretive discussion in Chapter Five. This analysis contributes meaningfully to the growing body of research on occupational stress in educational institutions, particularly in underexplored contexts such as Botswana's private tertiary education sector. Ultimately, the chapter underscores the importance of institutional accountability, resource allocation, and responsive leadership in promoting both staff well-being and academic excellence.

4.1 Demographic information of the study

4.1.1 Response Rate

The success of a survey-based study largely depends on its response rate, which reflects the proportion of questionnaires distributed that were validly returned. A high response rate improves the generalizability and reliability of the research findings. In this study, a total of 294 questionnaires were distributed across the selected institutions. private tertiary institutions in Gaborone, Botswana, targeting both academic staff and management.

4.1.1.1 Response Rate of Distributed vs. Returned Questionnaires.

This figure below displays the total number of questionnaires distributed, the number returned, and the calculated response rate.

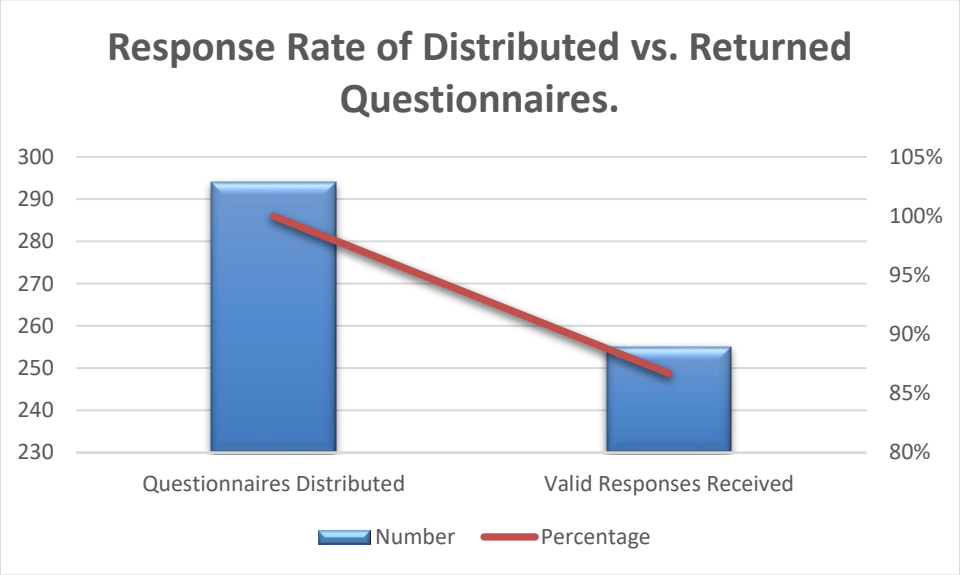


Figure 0.1 Response Rate of Distributed vs. Returned Questionnaires.

As illustrated in Figure 4.1, out of the 294 questionnaires distributed to academic staff and management across selected private tertiary institutions in Gaborone, 255 valid responses were successfully collected. This represents a response rate of 86.7%, which is well above the generally accepted thresholds for quantitative research. According to Baliyan et al. (2018), high response rates in educational settings can be attributed to the respondents' strong identification with the research topic, especially when it reflects pressing workplace concerns such as occupational stress.

The robust response rate suggests a high level of engagement and interest among academic staff and management in the issue under investigation. It also reinforces the relevance of the study, given the widespread recognition that stress among lecturers has become a persistent and under-researched concern in Botswana's private tertiary institutions (Gabrielli & Lundi, 2020; Akah et al., 2022). In addition, the high participation rate reduces the risk of non-response bias, a common challenge in survey-based studies that may threaten data reliability (Nkosi et al., 2020).

Moreover, the credibility of the findings is strengthened by the diverse institutional representation among the respondents, enhancing the external validity of the study. As noted by Hassan et al. (2020), lecturer stress is intensified by technological demands, limited institutional resources, and increased workloads - factors that were present across the surveyed institutions. Therefore, the data collected through this high response rate can be considered reflective of the broader academic environment in Botswana's private higher education sector. This improves the generalizability of the study's findings

and provides a strong foundation for further policy and managerial interventions aimed at addressing occupational stress.

4.1.2 Demographic Profile of Respondents

Understanding the demographic characteristics of the survey respondents is crucial for contextualizing the research findings and assessing the sample's representativeness. This section details the age, gender, job category, faculty representation, and other relevant demographic information of the academic staff who participated in the study, as outlined in Section A of the Lecturer Questionnaire.

4.1.2.1 Age Distribution of Respondents

This Figure shows the distribution of respondents across different age groups.

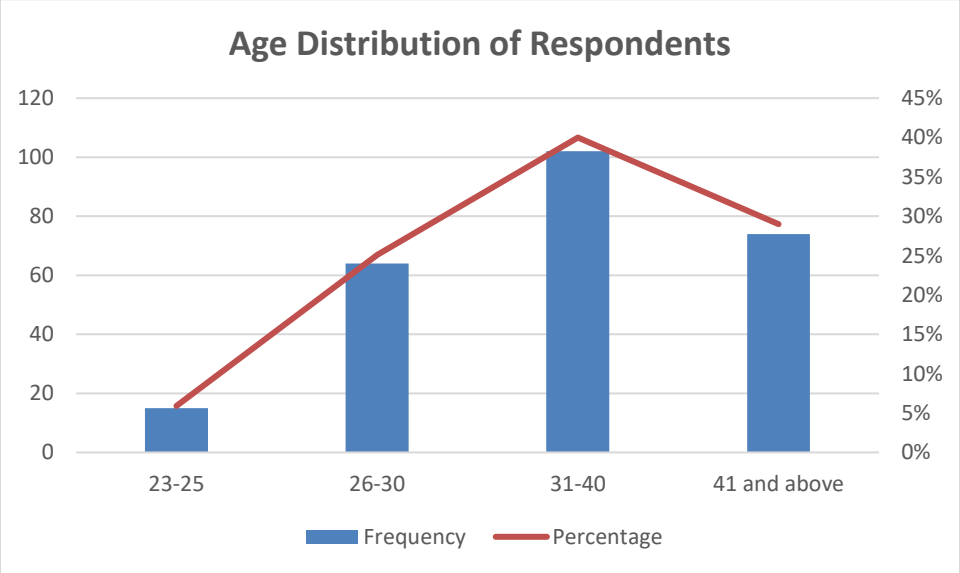


Figure 0.2 Age Distribution of Respondents

The age distribution of respondents, as shown in Figure 4.2, indicates that the largest proportion (40.0%) of participants falls within the 31–40 age bracket, followed by those aged 26–30 (25.1%) and 41 years and above (29.0%). A smaller proportion (5.9%) comprises respondents aged 23–25. This demographic spread suggests that a significant majority of the academic staff in the sampled private tertiary institutions are in their prime working years, reflecting a mature and professionally active workforce.

This age composition is particularly relevant in the context of occupational stress, as academic staff within the 31–40 and 41+ age groups are likely to have accumulated extensive professional experience. As noted by Hassan et al. (2020), mid-career and senior lecturers often face increasing

job complexity, role strain, and the demand for technological adaptation, all of which are common stressors in the higher education sector. Their prolonged exposure to such pressures enhances the credibility of their responses concerning the impact of stress on performance.

Furthermore, the relatively smaller representation of younger academics (ages 23–30) may point to systemic issues in the recruitment or retention of early-career lecturers within Botswana's private tertiary sector. While this study does not focus directly on workforce pipeline dynamics, previous literature suggests that stress-related factors such as limited institutional support and workload intensity may deter young professionals from remaining in academic roles (Gabrielli & Lundi, 2020; Akah et al., 2022).

Overall, the age profile captured in this study lends weight to the analysis of occupational stress. As Ugale (2009) noted, stress is often intensified by prolonged exposure to role conflict, job insecurity, and unmet professional expectations factors that more experienced academics are likely to have encountered. Therefore, the maturity of the respondent group supports the validity and depth of the insights generated regarding the relationship between stress and lecturer performance in private tertiary institutions.

4.1.2.2 Gender Distribution of Respondents

This Figure presents the gender breakdown of the survey participants.

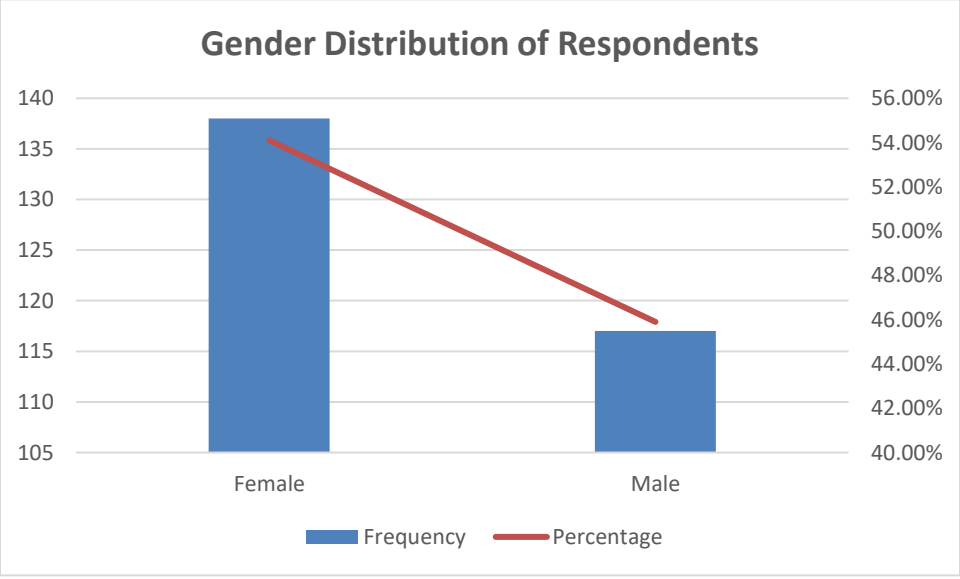


Figure 0.3 Gender Distribution of Respondents

As shown in Figure 4.3, the gender distribution of respondents indicates a slight majority of females (54.1%) compared to males (45.9%). This pattern reflects what is often seen in the education sector,

where women make up a large portion of teaching staff. In Botswana's private tertiary institutions, this gender balance is typical and provides a helpful view of how both men and women experience stress in academic roles (Gabrielli & Lundi, 2020).

Having a nearly equal number of male and female respondents makes it possible to understand stress in a more balanced way. As Mwenda et al. (2019) observed, women in academia often face additional pressures, such as balancing work with family responsibilities. These pressures can increase stress levels, especially when there are limited support or high expectations to adapt to new technologies. Although this study does not focus on gender differences in stress, the presence of many female respondents means that their experiences are still well represented.

This gender balance also improves how well the study findings can apply to other similar academic settings in Gaborone. Previous studies, such as Hassan et al. (2020) and Nemasango & Ivovo (2018), have noted that stress can be affected by personal and job-related factors like gender, age, and workload. Therefore, having both male and female voices included strengthens the study and opens opportunities for future research to explore gender-specific stress challenges in higher education in Botswana.

4.1.2.3 Job Category Distribution of Respondents

This Figure illustrates the distribution of respondents by their job category (lecturer vs. management/supervisory).

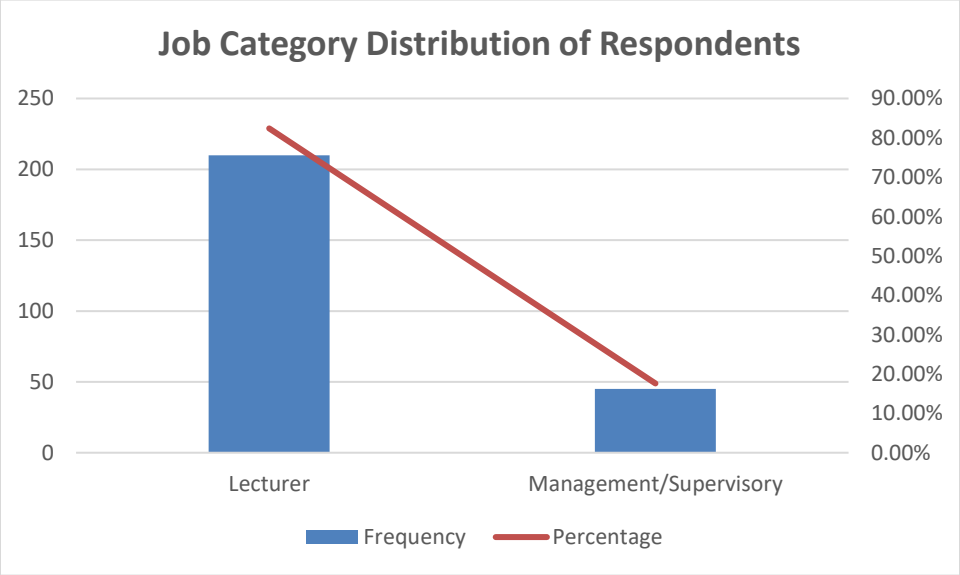


Figure 0.4 Job Category Distribution of Respondents

As shown in Figure 4.4, most of the respondents in the study were Lecturers (82.4%), while a smaller number held Management or Supervisory positions (17.6%). This distribution is suitable because the study mainly focuses on understanding occupational stress among academic lecturers, while still including views from those who manage and support them.

The strong representation of lecturers ensures that the findings reflect the real experiences of those directly involved in teaching, research, and administrative work. These are the people most affected by stress from long hours, heavy workloads, and rising institutional demands, as noted by Hassan et al. (2020) and Nkosi et al. (2020). Their insights are especially important for identifying the causes of stress in Botswana's private tertiary institutions.

At the same time, including management and supervisory staff adds important value to the research. These individuals are responsible for overseeing academic staff and play a key role in creating support systems and strategies for dealing with stress. Their responses help to understand the challenges they face when managing staff under pressure—a concern also noted by Nemasango & Ivovo (2018) in relation to academic environments in East Africa.

Having input from both groups lecturers and their supervisors makes the study more complete. It provides a well-rounded view of the problem and supports the development of better institutional solutions for managing occupational stress, as suggested by Gabrielli & Lundi (2020).

4.1.2.4 Faculty Representation of Respondents

This Figure shows the representation of different faculties among the respondents.

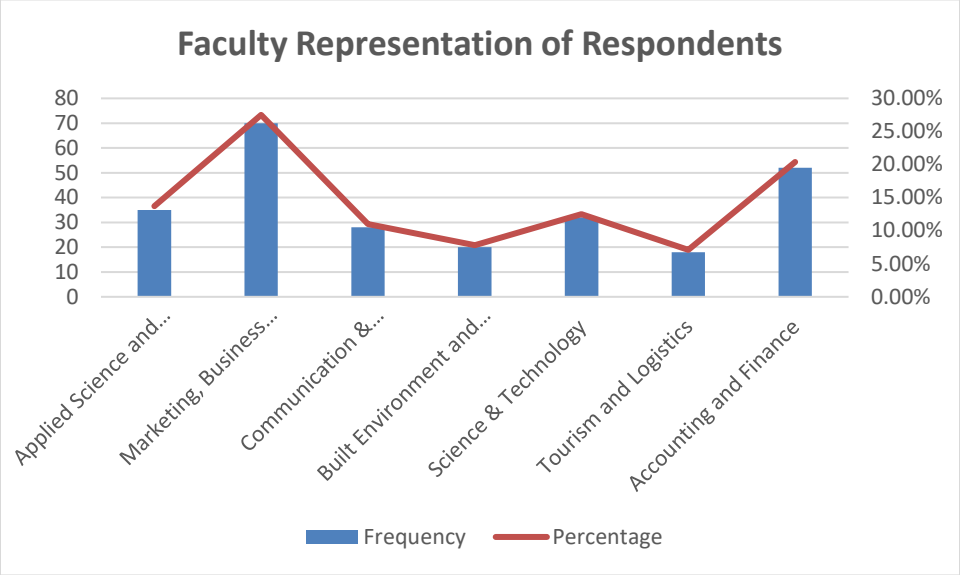


Figure 0.5 Faculty Representation of Respondents

As presented in Figure 4.5, the respondents come from a wide range of academic faculties. The largest groups are from Marketing, Business and Entrepreneurship (27.5%) and Accounting and Finance (20.4%). Other faculties with good representation include Applied Science and Health (13.7%), Science and Technology (12.5%), and Communication and Information Science (11.0%). This diversity in faculty backgrounds ensures that the study results are not limited to one subject area but apply more broadly across different private tertiary institutions.

Having lecturers from various faculties is important because each academic discipline may have its own unique work pressures. For instance, departments that involve practical or technical work such as health sciences or technology may place different demands on lecturers compared to those in more theory-based fields. Gabrielli and Lundi (2020) noted that the increasing complexity of academic roles, especially with technological advancements, affects faculties differently, yet contributes to overall stress across institutions.

Although this study does not go into detailed comparisons between faculties, the broad faculty representation improves the general usefulness of the results. It allows the researcher to identify common challenges experienced by lecturers regardless of their academic field. As noted by Hassan et al. (2020), work overload, limited resources, and the pressures of blended learning affect many educators across disciplines. This variety in faculty representation, therefore, strengthens the validity of the findings and supports the development of institutional strategies that are relevant across different departments within Botswana's private tertiary education sector.

4.2 Results of the study

4.2.1 Modules Perceived as Most Difficult to Monitor in Students

This Figure displays which types of modules respondents found most difficult to monitor in students.

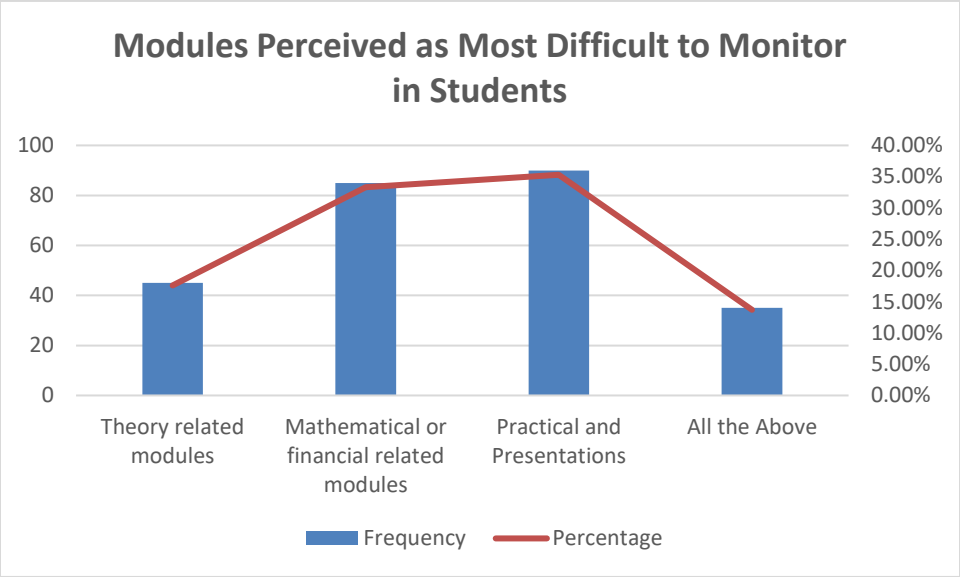


Figure 0.6 Modules Perceived as Most Difficult to Monitor in Students

As illustrated in Figure 4.6, lecturers identified Practical and Presentation modules (35.3%) and Mathematical or Financial-related modules (33.3%) as the most difficult modules to monitor. Comparatively fewer respondents identified Theory-related modules (17.6%), while only 13.7% indicated that all module categories were equally challenging. These findings suggest that lecturers perceive practical and quantitatively oriented modules as requiring greater effort in teaching, monitoring, and assessing student performance than predominantly theoretical subjects.

The complexity associated with practical and quantitative modules may be attributed to the greater demands placed on lecturers in supervising practical activities, assessing continuous coursework, providing timely feedback, and supporting students with diverse learning needs. Unlike theory-based modules, these courses often require closer student engagement, repeated demonstrations, extensive marking, and continuous monitoring of individual performance, all of which increase lecturers' workload and may contribute to occupational stress.

These findings are consistent with previous studies that have highlighted increasing academic workloads as an important source of occupational stress among lecturers. Gabrielli and Lundi (2020) argue that expanding teaching responsibilities, coupled with increasing expectations for student support and multiple modes of instructional delivery, have intensified work demands within higher

education institutions. Similarly, Hassan et al. (2020) observed that lecturers are increasingly expected to manage blended learning environments, larger student cohorts, and resource constraints while simultaneously maintaining high standards of teaching and assessment. Such expectations place considerable pressure on lecturers, particularly those responsible for practically oriented and quantitative modules that require greater levels of supervision and student interaction.

The findings further support the argument that occupational stress among lecturers is influenced not only by the volume of work but also by the complexity and intensity of academic responsibilities. Modules requiring practical demonstrations, continuous assessment, and detailed feedback are likely to consume substantially more time than conventional lecture-based subjects, thereby increasing workload and reducing opportunities for recovery and work-life balance. This observation aligns with Mwenda et al. (2019), who contend that increasing academic responsibilities, combined with limited institutional resources, contribute significantly to lecturer stress and diminished work-life balance.

From a management perspective, these findings suggest the need for differentiated workload allocation rather than assigning teaching responsibilities solely on the basis of credit hours or contact time. Institutions should consider providing additional academic support for lecturers responsible for practical and mathematically intensive modules through measures such as teaching assistants, reduced class sizes, improved assessment support, and enhanced access to teaching resources. Such interventions may help alleviate workload pressures while improving both lecturer well-being and the quality of student learning.

4.2.2 Modes of Study Lectured by Respondents

This Figure presents the various modes of study that respondents lecture.

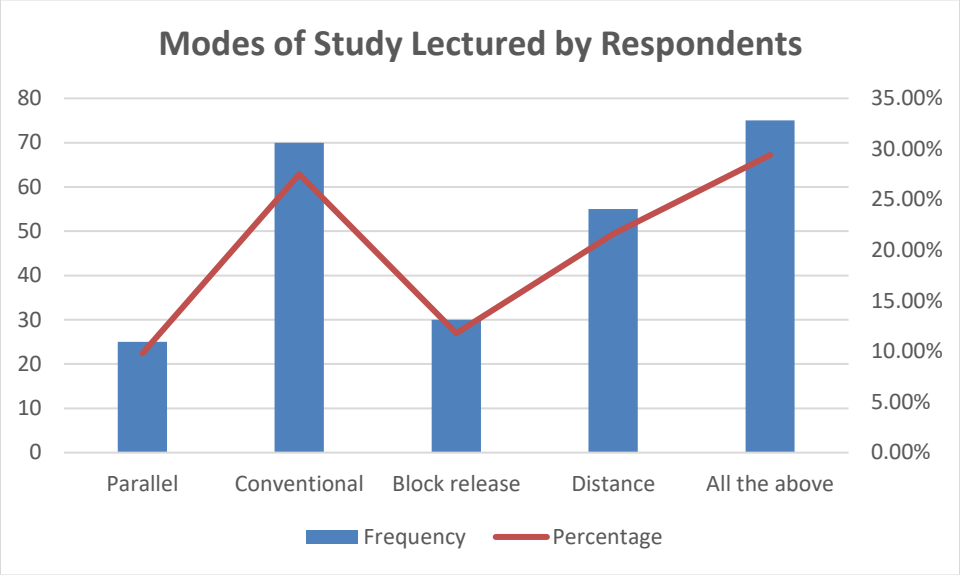


Figure 0.7 Modes of Study Lectured by Respondents

As shown in Figure 4.7, a large number of lecturers (29.4%) reported teaching across all modes of study as Conventional, Parallel, Distance, and Block Release. This indicates that many academic staff have a broad and flexible teaching workload. The Conventional mode still has a strong presence (27.5%), followed by Distance (21.6%), Block Release (11.8%), and Parallel (9.8%).

Teaching in multiple modes can increase stress levels, as each mode requires different teaching methods, preparation time, and administrative work. Lecturers must adjust their materials and communication styles to suit different student groups and schedules. Hassan et al. (2020) observed that the shift to blended and online learning has added pressure on lecturers, particularly in private institutions where expectations are high but resources are limited. These increased responsibilities often stretch lecturers beyond their standard teaching duties, contributing to occupational stress.

The significant number of lecturers involved in Distance learning (21.6%) shows that many are also dealing with challenges related to technology, internet access, and keeping students engaged online. Mwenda et al. (2019) noted that lecturers often struggle with the financial and logistical demands of delivering education remotely, such as needing to purchase their own devices and internet for teaching.

This mix of teaching methods creates a more complex and demanding work environment. As Nemasango & Ivovo (2018) pointed out, when lecturers are required to teach across different delivery modes, it can affect their ability to balance their roles effectively and increase the likelihood of

burnout. The findings here support the idea that the wide range of teaching responsibilities contributes to the broader pattern of occupational stress within Botswana's private tertiary institutions.

4.2.3 Reasons for Joining the Institution

This Figure outlines the primary reasons respondents chose to work at their current institution.

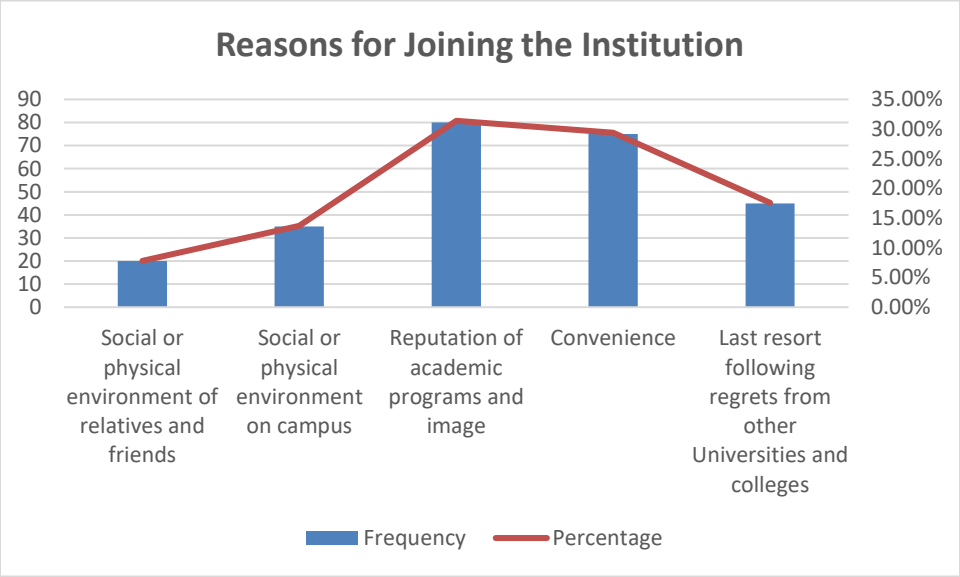


Figure 0.8 Reasons for Joining the Institution

Figure 4.8 presents the main reasons lecturers chose to work at their current institutions. The most frequently cited reasons were the reputation and image of the institution (31.4%) and convenience (29.4%). This suggests that employment decisions among lecturers in Gaborone are influenced by both institutional reputation and practical considerations, such as location and accessibility.

The importance attached to institutional reputation is consistent with Gabrielli and Lundi (2020), who found that lecturers are attracted to institutions with strong academic standing and professional credibility. The high proportion citing convenience further indicates that personal circumstances, including proximity to home and family commitments, also influence employment decisions. Similarly, Mwenda et al. (2019) reported that practical considerations associated with balancing full-time, part-time, and distance teaching responsibilities shape lecturers' employment preferences and contribute to occupational stress.

Interestingly, 17.6% of respondents indicated they accepted their current job as a "last resort." This may reflect dissatisfaction or a lack of better options at the time of hiring. According to Ugale (2009), when lecturers feel they are not in control of their work choices or find themselves in roles that do not match their expectations, stress and low job satisfaction are more likely. This supports the idea

that those who enter institutions without genuine interest or alignment may be more vulnerable to stress and disengagement.

Dow (2018) also highlights that dissatisfaction at work especially when unacknowledged can lead to breaches in the psychological contract between the lecturer and the institution, further contributing to stress. In such cases, institutions may need to implement specific support and retention strategies to help these employees feel valued and supported, thereby reducing the risk of turnover and burnout.

4.3 Effect of External Responsibilities on Work Success

This Figure shows how external responsibilities impact respondents' success at work.

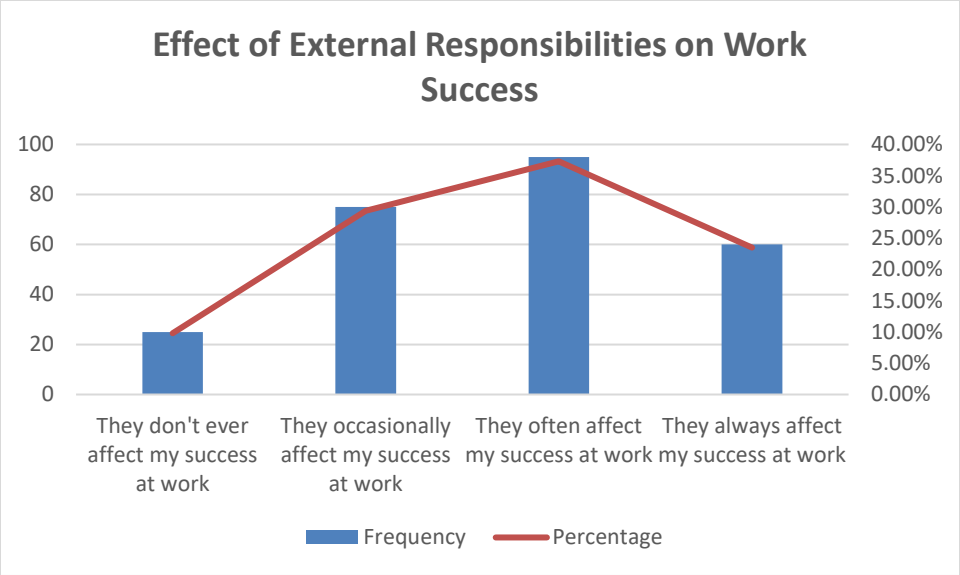


Figure 0.9 Effect of External Responsibilities on Work Success

Figure 4.9 illustrates the influence of external responsibilities on lecturers' work performance. Most respondents indicated that personal responsibilities affect their professional performance, with 37.3% reporting they "often" and 23.5% "always" experience such effects. Overall, 60.8% acknowledged that balancing personal obligations and work demands is challenging, while only 9.8% reported no impact.

These findings support previous research on work-life balance. Mwenda et al. (2019) found that increasing teaching workloads, together with family and household responsibilities, contribute significantly to occupational stress among lecturers. Similarly, Ugale (2009) argued that competing work and personal demands negatively affect employee wellbeing and performance. Dow (2018) further noted that lecturers perform numerous hidden responsibilities, including student mentoring,

marking, and administrative duties, which increase workload and emotional fatigue. Hassan et al. (2020) also observed that technology has blurred the boundaries between work and home, further intensifying occupational stress.

The findings suggest that institutions should strengthen work-life balance initiatives through flexible work arrangements, workload management, and employee support programmes. As Robbins (1996) argued, unmanaged stress contributes to burnout, absenteeism, and reduced job satisfaction, making organisational support essential for improving lecturer wellbeing and performance.

4.3.1 Frequency of Absconding Work

This Figure presents how often respondents abscond work.

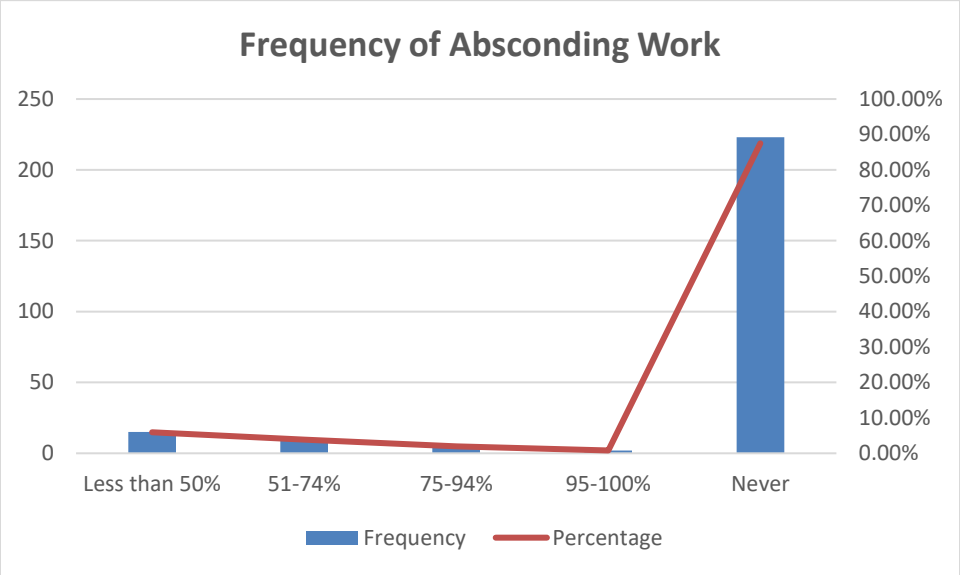


Figure 0.10 Frequency of Absconding Work

Figure 4.10 shows that the vast majority of respondents (87.5%) reported that they "never" abscond from work. This indicates that most lecturers remain present at their jobs even when facing stress, showing a strong sense of commitment and professionalism. It also suggests that while stress may be present, it does not often lead to complete withdrawal from duties in the form of absconding.

However, the issue may be more complex. According to Gabrielli and Lundi (2020), stressed lecturers often continue to show up for work, but their performance may suffer quietly. This condition, known as presenteeism, refers to employees being physically at work but not fully productive due to stress or emotional fatigue. Similarly, Dow (2018) observed that many academic staff endure stress silently while continuing with their duties, often without raising concerns until their performance declines or health issues arise.

The small percentage (12.5%) of respondents who admitted to occasional or frequent absconding suggests that only a minority use absence from work as a coping strategy. As Robbins (1996) and Ugale (2009) noted, stress does not always result in visible behaviours such as skipping work. Instead, lecturers may internalize stress, which can reduce motivation, concentration, and teaching effectiveness, even if attendance records remain strong.

These findings highlight the need for institutions to go beyond measuring absenteeism when assessing the effects of occupational stress. As Lee et al. (2022) emphasized, mental and emotional strain often manifests as reduced performance quality rather than physical absence. Therefore, workplace interventions should not only focus on attendance but also consider lecturer wellbeing, engagement, and overall job satisfaction. This would enable a more accurate understanding of how stress influences productivity in academic settings.

4.3.2 Academic Preparedness for Classes at Semester Start

This Figure shows respondents' perceived academic preparedness at the beginning of the semester.

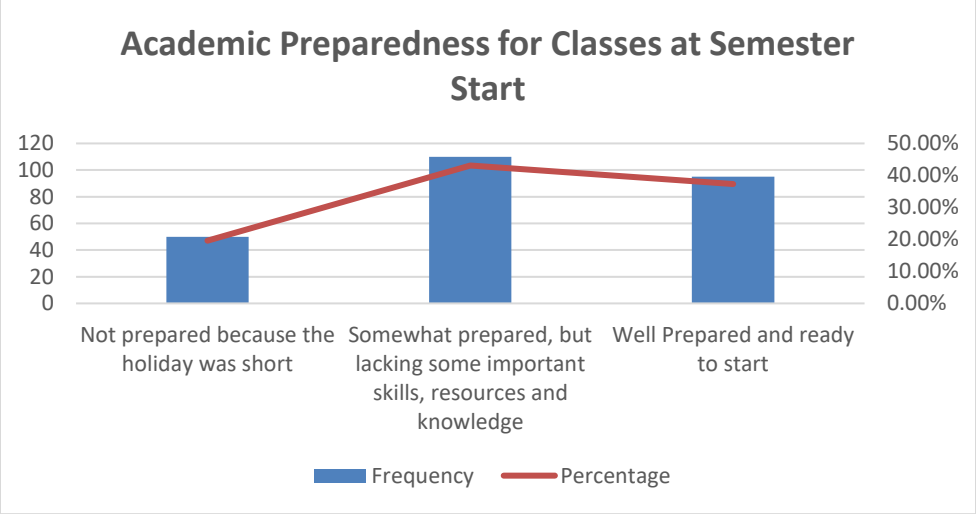


Figure 0.11 Academic Preparedness for Classes at Semester Start

Figure 4.11 presents lecturers' levels of academic preparedness at the start of the semester. Only 37.3% reported feeling "well prepared and ready to start," while 43.1% indicated they were "somewhat prepared but lacking important skills, resources, and knowledge." Additionally, 19.6% stated they were "not prepared" due to a short holiday period. These figures point to a broader challenge related to academic readiness, suggesting that many lecturers begin the semester underprepared, which can increase stress levels.

The finding that nearly two-thirds of respondents did not feel fully prepared raises concerns about institutional planning and support. Dow (2018) argues that lecturers often carry unresolved tasks into holiday periods, reducing their ability to rest and recharge. When lecturers cannot fully disengage during breaks, they return to work already fatigued. This lack of mental and physical recovery time contributes to ongoing stress and reduced performance at the start of new teaching periods.

Moreover, the large group of lecturers who feel "somewhat prepared" reflects deeper structural issues such as insufficient access to training, materials, or updated academic resources. According to Hassan et al. (2020), the rapid growth of digital demands, coupled with inadequate support for blended learning, has left many lecturers feeling unprepared for new teaching challenges. They are often expected to handle full-time, part-time, and distance learners simultaneously, which places further pressure on their readiness.

Gabrielli and Lundi (2020) also highlight that academic staff are increasingly tasked with both teaching and administrative responsibilities, often without corresponding increases in support or resources. This dual role can make it difficult to stay current with subject content, adopt new teaching technologies, or prepare high-quality course materials in time. Over time, this creates a cycle of stress and burnout, especially when lecturers feel ill-equipped to meet academic expectations.

To reduce this pressure, institutions should consider extending preparation periods, providing structured professional development sessions, and ensuring that lecturers have access to updated teaching tools and content. As Lee et al. (2022) suggest, the quality of education is closely tied to the wellbeing of academic staff. If institutions want to improve teaching outcomes, they must first invest in lecturer readiness and support systems that prioritize adequate rest and skills development.

4.3.3 Regular Preparation for Team or Group Assigned Work

This Figure presents how respondents typically prepare for team or group work

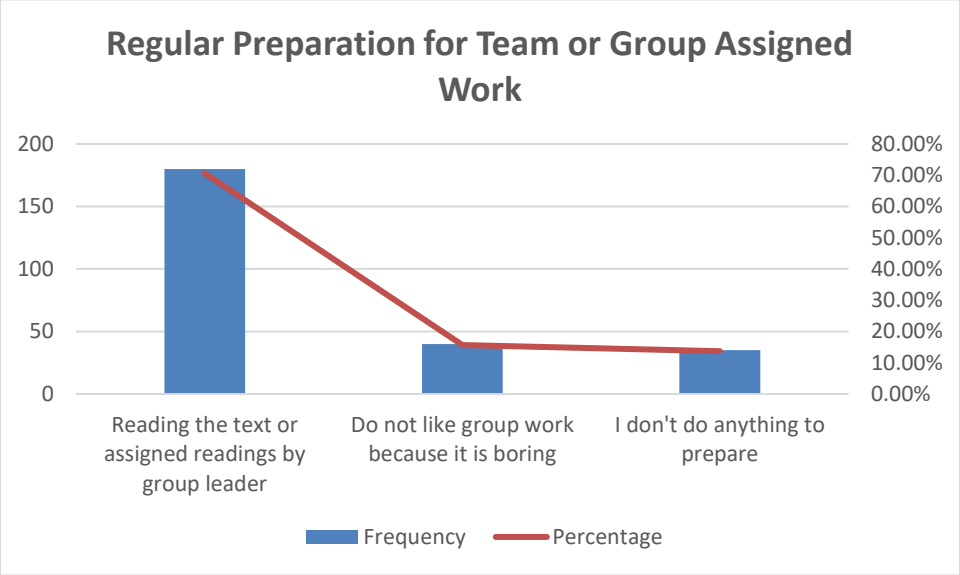


Figure 0.12 Regular Preparation for Team or Group Assigned Work

Figure 4.12 illustrates how lecturers prepare for team or group-assigned tasks. Most respondents (70.6%) indicated that they prepare by reading the assigned materials or instructions provided by the group leader, suggesting a generally positive attitude towards teamwork and shared responsibilities.

However, 15.7% reported that they dislike group work because it is boring, while 13.7% indicated that they do not prepare at all. Although these proportions are relatively small, they may contribute to unequal participation and increased stress among more committed group members. Dow (2018) argues that unequal contribution in collaborative tasks can create interpersonal tension and increase workload for active participants. Similarly, Gabrielli and Lundi (2020) note that poorly managed teamwork can reduce motivation and increase stress, particularly where accountability is lacking. Robbins (1996) further suggests that unresolved group conflict and perceptions of unfairness negatively affect morale and productivity.

The findings indicate that while teamwork is generally accepted, varying levels of engagement remain a concern. Lee et al. (2022) attribute such differences to unclear role expectations and inadequate institutional support. Institutions should therefore promote effective teamwork through clear role allocation, improved communication, and equitable distribution of responsibilities to foster collaboration and reduce occupational stress (Hassan et al., 2020).

4.4 Sources of Occupational Stress (Linked to Objective 1)

This section delves into the primary sources of occupational stress experienced by academic staff in private tertiary institutions, directly addressing Objective 1 of the study. The analysis draws on various measures from Section B of the Lecturer Questionnaire, including overall perceived stress levels, specific stress factors related to job demands, and Likert scale ratings on institutional resources and support systems.

4.4.1 Perceived Stress Levels and Workload

4.4.1.1 Overall Perceived Stress Levels

This Figure shows the aggregate scores and distribution of perceived stress levels among academic staff based on the PSS items.

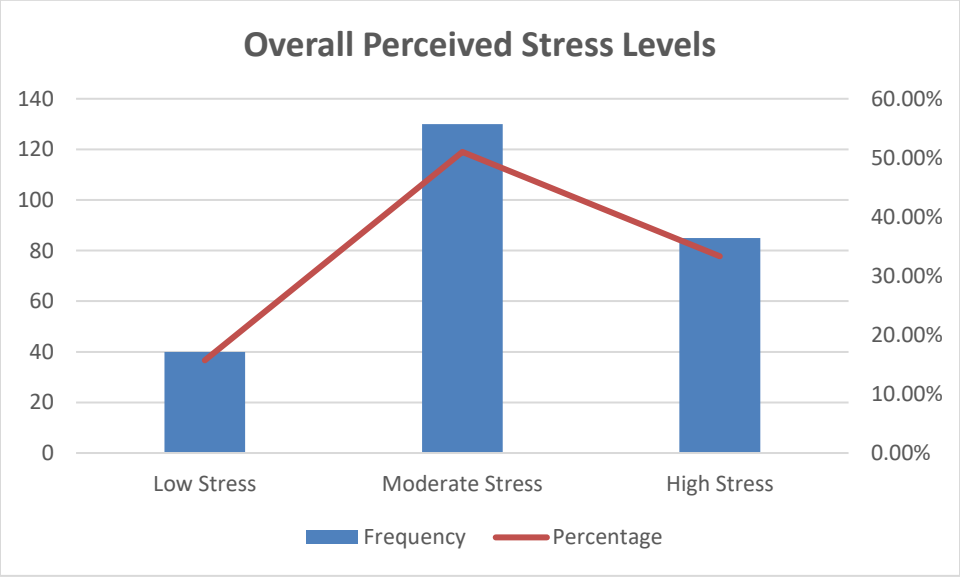


Figure 0.13 Overall Perceived Stress Levels

Figure 4.13 shows that most lecturers in the study experience noticeable levels of occupational stress. Specifically, 51.0% of respondents reported experiencing moderate stress, while 33.3% reported high stress. Only a small group (15.7%) described their stress levels as low. This means that 84.3% of lecturers are affected by moderate to high stress levels, pointing to a serious and widespread issue in private tertiary institutions in Gaborone.

This result suggests that occupational stress is not limited to a few individuals with personal difficulties but is likely linked to broader, systemic challenges within the academic environment. Dow (2018) explained that stress among lecturers often results from continued exposure to heavy

workloads, poor support systems, and insufficient rest periods. These stressors tend to accumulate over time and affect large numbers of staff, rather than just isolated cases.

Gabrielli and Lundi (2020) also highlighted that when lecturers are required to handle multiple roles such as teaching, administration, and research without adequate institutional support, stress levels rise across the board. Furthermore, Lee et al. (2022) emphasized that academic institutions often overlook early signs of stress, focusing instead on output and performance, which can worsen the problem.

The high percentage of lecturers reporting stress confirms that this is a shared and ongoing concern that requires immediate attention. As Robbins (1996) observed, high stress levels among staff can lead to reduced job satisfaction, lower productivity, and in some cases, burnout. If left unaddressed, these effects can compromise the overall quality of teaching and institutional performance.

Therefore, this finding provides a strong foundation for deeper investigation into the root causes of stress within the academic system. It also signals the need for institutional reforms, such as improved workload planning, better support structures, and targeted stress management interventions, to improve lecturer wellbeing and strengthen the academic environment in Botswana's private tertiary sector.

4.4.1.2 Stressfulness of Excessive Workload

This Figure presents respondents' ratings of the stressfulness associated with excessive workload. |

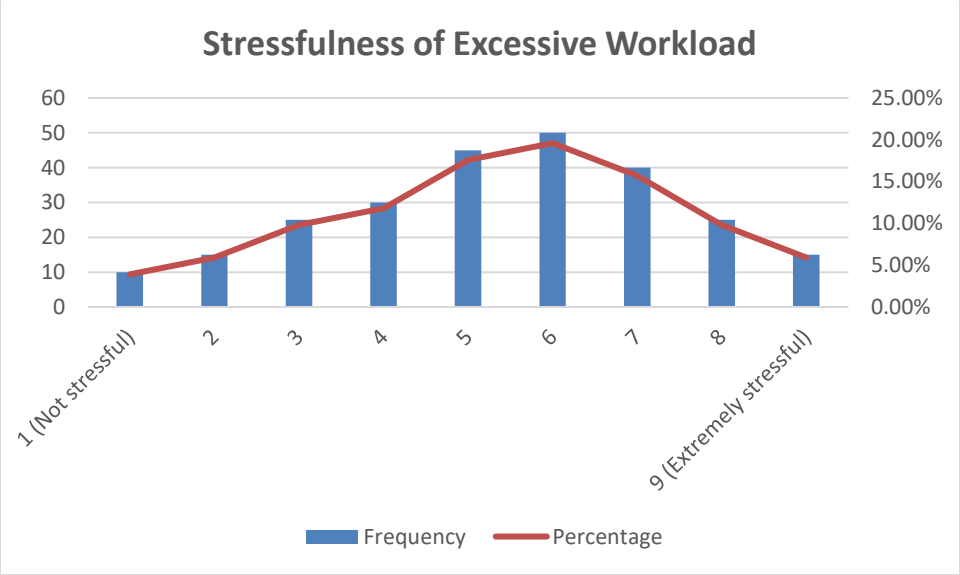


Figure 0.14 Stressfulness of Excessive Workload

Further analysis highlights specific causes of stress among lecturers. As shown in Figure 4.14, “Excessive Workload” emerged as one of the most significant stressors. A considerable number of respondents rated workload at the higher end of the stress scale: 15.7% rated it as 7 (stressful), 9.8% as 8 (very stressful), and 5.9% as 9 (extremely stressful). In contrast, only 3.9% reported that it was not stressful at all. The combined total of those who rated workload from 5 to 9 stands at 68.9%, clearly indicating that most lecturers experience heavy workloads as a major source of stress.

This finding is consistent with several recent studies. Gabrielli and Lundi (2020) emphasized that lecturers often juggle multiple responsibilities, including teaching, marking, research, and administrative duties, without sufficient institutional support. These overlapping roles contribute significantly to daily stress levels. Similarly, Dow (2018) noted that lecturers face ongoing pressure to complete many tasks within limited time frames, leaving little room for rest or effective planning. This constant pressure leads to both physical and emotional exhaustion.

Moreover, Ugale (2009) argued that when lecturers feel overloaded, their ability to manage time, engage with students, and maintain job satisfaction decreases. This type of occupational stress is not only widespread but also deeply rooted in institutional structures, such as understaffing and unrealistic expectations. Lee et al. (2022) also stressed that persistent workload challenges can lead to long-term burnout if not addressed through targeted interventions.

The results from Figure 4.14 suggest that any serious effort to reduce stress in private tertiary institutions must prioritize workload management. Institutions may need to assess lecturer-to-student ratios, reassign some administrative responsibilities, or hire additional academic support staff. As Robbins (1996) pointed out, simply offering surface-level wellness programs without addressing the root causes of stress like excessive workload will have limited long-term impact. Addressing this issue directly is essential for improving both lecturer wellbeing and institutional effectiveness.

4.4.1.3 Stressfulness of Unclear Job Expectations

This Figure shows respondents' ratings of the stressfulness associated with unclear job expectations.

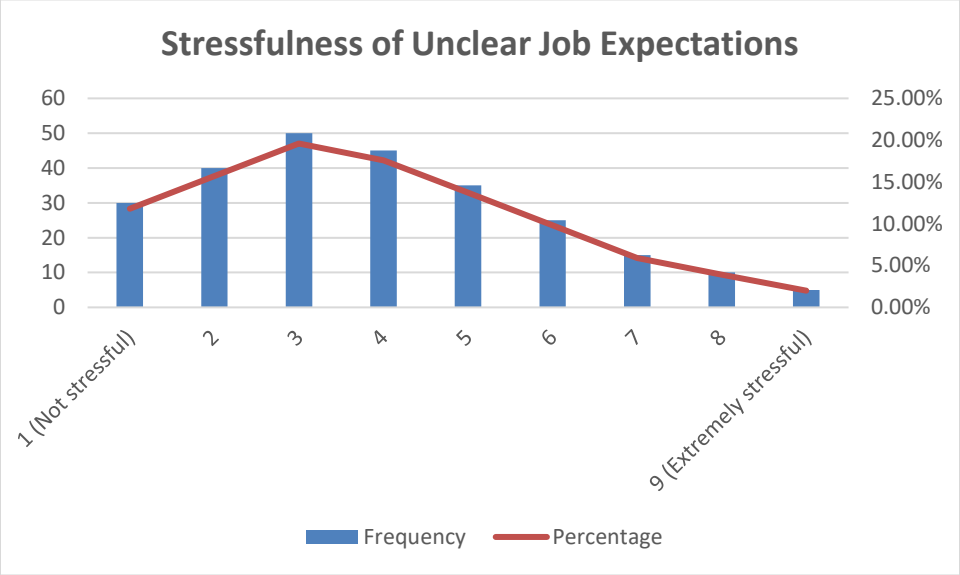


Figure 0.15 Stressfulness of Unclear Job Expectations

Compared to workload pressures, "Unclear Job Expectations," as presented in Figure 4.15, appears to be a less intense source of stress for most lecturers. While 19.6% rated it as moderately stressful (rating 3), a significant portion rated it lower on the stress scale (ratings 1–4), suggesting that many lecturers feel their job roles are reasonably clear. This finding indicates that, overall, role ambiguity may not be as widespread or severe a stressor as excessive workload.

Nevertheless, it is important to acknowledge that 11.8% of respondents rated this factor as highly stressful (ratings 7–9). For this group, unclear expectations may result in confusion, duplicated efforts, or feelings of underperformance due to lack of direction. Dow (2018) notes that even a relatively small number of staff experiencing such stress can negatively affect overall team performance and morale, particularly in environments where coordination and shared goals are essential.

Gabrielli and Lundi (2020) emphasized that unclear roles especially in institutions where academic and administrative duties are not well separated can increase emotional strain. When lecturers are unsure about what is expected, they may experience uncertainty and frustration, which can lead to reduced job satisfaction and increased mental fatigue. Similarly, Robbins (1996) identified role ambiguity as a known contributor to occupational stress, especially when it limits a worker's ability to meet performance targets or understand how they are being evaluated.

Therefore, even though unclear job expectations are not the leading cause of stress, they still warrant attention. Clarifying job descriptions, defining performance criteria, and improving internal

communication can ease confusion and reduce unnecessary stress for affected lecturers. As Lee et al. (2022) suggested, clear communication and well-defined roles enhance both individual well-being and institutional performance, even when overall stress levels are moderate.

4.4.1.4 Stressfulness of Balancing Work and Personal Life

This Figure presents respondents' ratings of the stressfulness associated with balancing work and personal life.

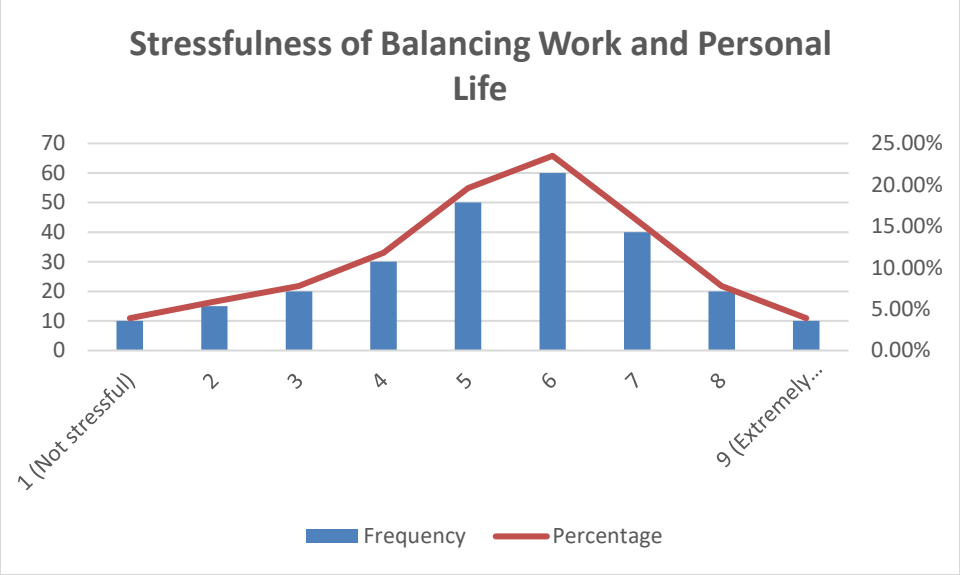


Figure 0.16 Stressfulness of Balancing Work and Personal Life

Figure 4.16 highlights that "Balancing Work and Personal Life" is a major source of stress for lecturers. Specifically, 23.5% of respondents rated this factor as 6, 15.7% as 7, and 19.6% as 5 on the stress scale. Altogether, 58.8% of lecturers find this balance to be moderately to highly stressful. This reflects a common struggle in private tertiary institutions, where long working hours, administrative demands, and constant connectivity make it difficult for lecturers to maintain a healthy boundary between work and personal life.

These findings are supported by Mwenda et al. (2019), who observed that the demands of blended learning and technological expectations have placed lecturers under continuous pressure, leaving little time for rest or personal obligations. Hassan et al. (2020) further noted that many lecturers face challenges such as the need for internet access and digital tools outside of working hours, contributing to what they termed an "always-on" academic culture. As a result, lecturers may find themselves working during evenings, weekends, or even public holidays, increasing emotional fatigue.

Dow (2018) explained that when lecturers are unable to disconnect from their professional responsibilities, this leads to chronic stress and burnout. The emotional toll includes not only fatigue and reduced motivation, but also strained family relationships and a general decline in well-being. Gabrielli and Lundi (2020) also argued that institutions which do not support work-life balance risk higher turnover, lower productivity, and reduced morale among academic staff.

To address this challenge, institutions could adopt more supportive strategies such as offering flexible work hours, limiting work-related communication after office hours, and providing access to employee wellness or family support services. Lee et al. (2022) emphasized that promoting work-life integration is essential for building a sustainable academic environment. Without such interventions, the risk of long-term burnout and disengagement remains high.

4.4.1.5 Stressfulness of Dealing with Difficult Students

This Figure shows respondents' ratings of the stressfulness associated with dealing with difficult students.

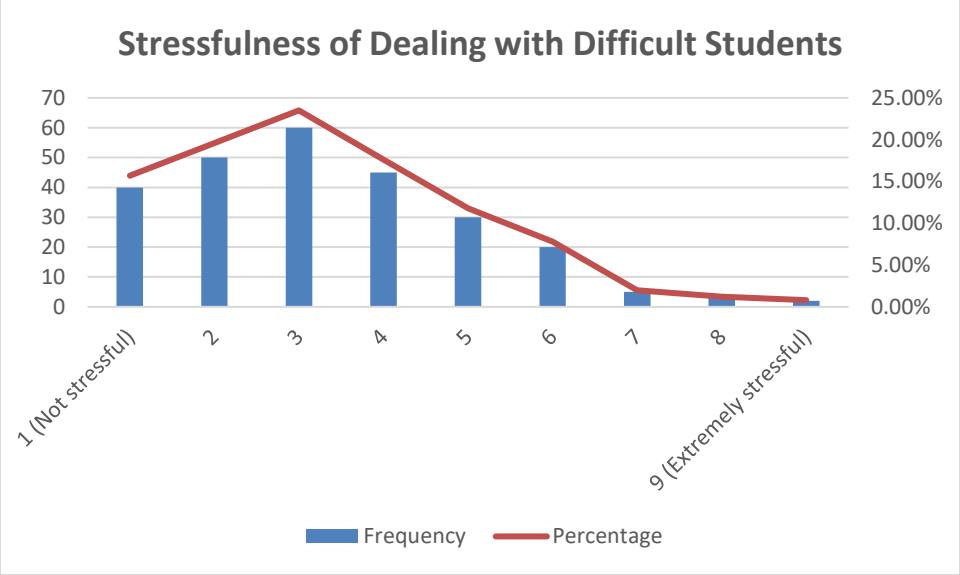


Figure 0.17 Stressfulness of Dealing with Difficult Students

"Dealing with Difficult Students" (Figure 4.17) shows a relatively lower stress impact compared to other factors, with a higher frequency of responses in the lower stress ratings (15.7% for 1, 19.6% for 2, and 23.5% for 3). This indicates that while student interactions can be challenging at times, they are not perceived as a primary, widespread driver of occupational stress for the majority of lecturers.

However, it is important to acknowledge that a combined 4.0% still rated this factor as highly stressful (ratings 7-9), suggesting that for some individuals, particularly those dealing with severe disciplinary

issues or persistent academic struggles among students, this can indeed be a significant source of emotional burden. The nature of student difficulties can vary widely, from academic underperformance to behavioural issues, each posing different demands on lecturers.

Overall, while student-related challenges contribute to the daily demands of lecturing, they appear to be less of a systemic stressor than workload or work-life balance for the sampled population. This suggests that resources might be better allocated to addressing more pervasive stressors first, though support for managing challenging student interactions remains important for specific cases.

4.4.1.6 Stressfulness of Insufficient Resources to Do Job

This Figure presents respondents' ratings of the stressfulness associated with insufficient resources to perform their job.

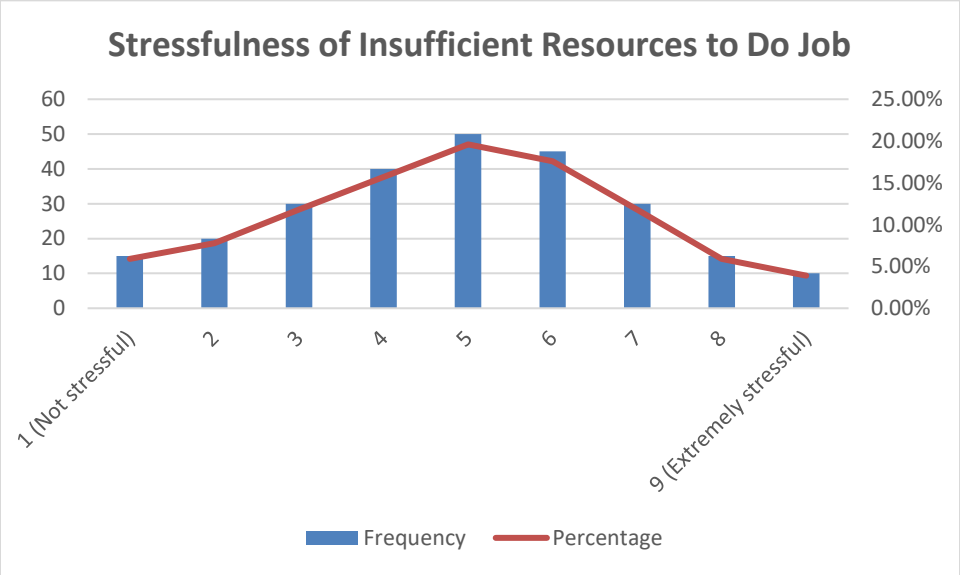


Figure 0.18 Stressfulness of Insufficient Resources to Do Job

Insufficient Resources to Do the Job," as shown in Figure 4.18, is a significant source of stress for many lecturers. Although 19.6% rated this factor as moderately stressful (rating 5), a notable portion of respondents rated it even higher 17.6% gave it a 6, 11.8% a 7, 5.9% an 8, and 3.9% a 9. Altogether, 59.2% of respondents consider inadequate resources to be moderately to extremely stressful, suggesting a widespread structural challenge within private tertiary institutions.

This result points to critical gaps in the availability of teaching materials, updated technology, functional laboratory equipment, reliable internet access, and sufficient administrative support. Dow (2018) noted that when lecturers lack these basic tools, they must exert more effort to complete routine tasks, often leading to frustration, delays, and feelings of inefficiency. Gabrielli and Lundi (2020)

similarly observed that the absence of proper infrastructure can significantly hinder teaching quality and increase emotional strain among academic staff.

Lecturers are expected to deliver quality instruction, conduct research, and support students, yet without adequate resources, these responsibilities become harder to manage. Ugale (2009) emphasized that when staff feel poorly equipped, they often experience a reduced sense of professional fulfilment and increased levels of occupational stress.

To reduce this burden, institutions should prioritize investments in both physical and digital resources. Ensuring that staff have access to up-to-date materials, IT support, and essential equipment can greatly improve working conditions. As Lee et al. (2022) argued, enhancing the work environment through proper resource allocation not only improves staff morale but also contributes to better teaching and research outcomes.

4.4.1.7 Factors Contributing to Workload

This Figure displays the frequency and percentage of factors contributing to respondents' workload.

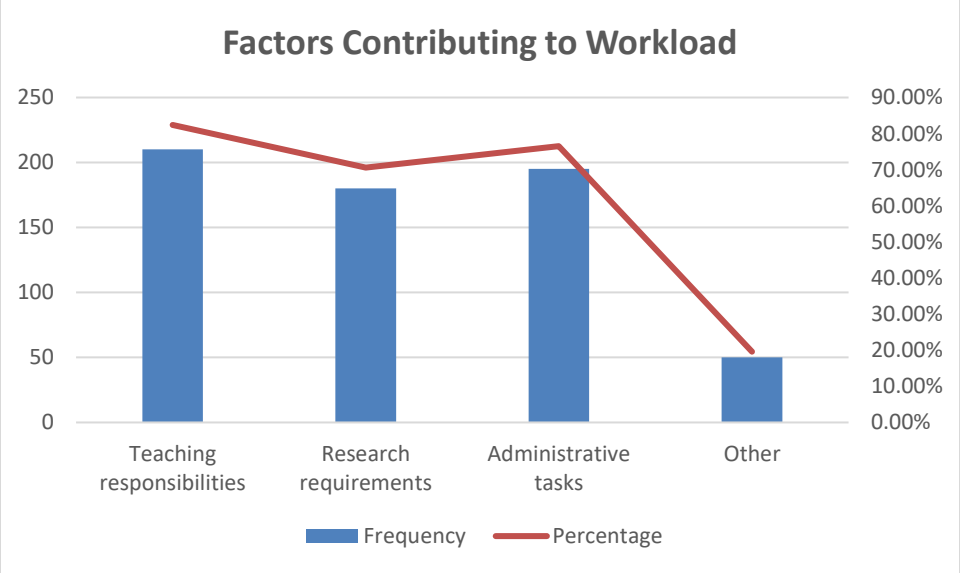


Figure 0.19 Factors Contributing to Workload

A more detailed analysis of workload contributors, as illustrated in Figure 4.19, reveals that "Teaching responsibilities" (82.4%), "Administrative tasks" (76.5%), and "Research requirements" (70.6%) are the most frequently cited factors contributing to lecturer workload. Importantly, respondents were allowed to select multiple options, which reflect the complex and overlapping responsibilities that define the modern academic role. Rather than being confined to a single area of focus, lecturers are expected to perform effectively across all three demanding domains simultaneously.

The high percentages across these core areas indicate that most lecturers are managing teaching, research, and administrative duties concurrently, often without sufficient support or relief in any one domain. Teaching typically involves lesson planning, class delivery, assessments, and student consultations, each of which requires time and intellectual effort. At the same time, research demands include proposal writing, data collection and analysis, academic publishing, and conference participation. In parallel, administrative responsibilities may involve meetings, institutional reporting, committee work, programme coordination, or mentoring duties. These tasks are not only numerous but also time-sensitive and mentally taxing.

Such a workload structure creates constant pressure, with little room for recuperation or focused work in any one area. This continual switching between tasks can reduce productivity, hinder deep academic engagement, and lead to chronic stress. The cumulative effect of handling several major responsibilities at once contributes significantly to the perception of an "excessive workload," as previously highlighted in Figure 4.14.

This breakdown also highlights the inadequacy of attempting to address lecturer stress by focusing on one domain such as only reducing teaching hours without acknowledging the interconnected nature of these responsibilities. A lecturer relieved from a class may still be overwhelmed by research deadlines or reporting obligations. Therefore, any effort to manage workload effectively must be holistic. Institutions must conduct realistic audits of lecturer duties across teaching, research, and administration to understand the total workload burden.

Reforms might include hiring additional administrative staff to offload non-academic tasks, restructuring timetables to provide research blocks free from teaching, or implementing rotational systems that allow staff to focus on different areas in different semesters. Furthermore, clearer workload policies, transparent performance expectations, and regular workload reviews would help ensure that no staff member is consistently overloaded. Creating such a balanced framework not only improves staff well-being but also enhances academic quality, as lecturers are better positioned to engage deeply in the core mission of higher education teaching, research, and service.

4.4.1.8 Frequency of Conflicts with Colleagues or Superiors

This Figure shows how often respondents experience conflicts with colleagues or superiors.

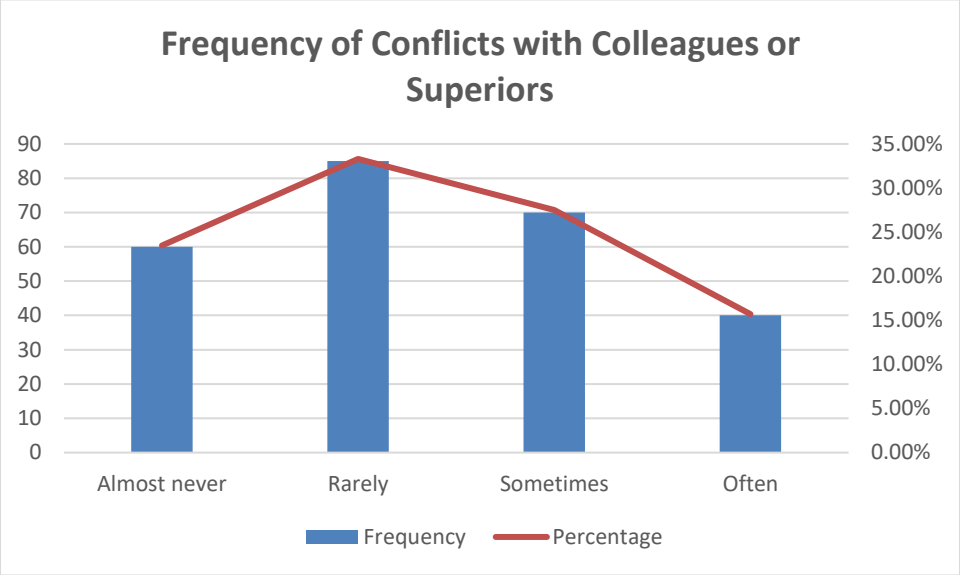


Figure 0.20 Frequency of Conflicts with Colleagues or Superiors

Figure 4.20 provides insight into the prevalence of interpersonal conflicts in the workplace, specifically between lecturers and their colleagues or superiors. The data reveals that a substantial portion of lecturers experience such conflicts "Rarely" (33.3%) or "Sometimes" (27.5%), amounting to a combined 60.8% who encounter interpersonal tensions at least occasionally. While this suggests that these issues are not constant or widespread for all staff, the fact that over half of the respondents experience them at some level indicates that interpersonal conflict remains a relevant concern in the academic environment. Additionally, 15.7% of respondents reported experiencing such conflict "Often," highlighting a smaller but important group for whom these issues may be more persistent or severe.

These figures suggest that while interpersonal conflict may not be the primary or most frequent source of stress, it is by no means insignificant. For most lecturers, working relationships may be generally cooperative or functional, allowing for conflict to be resolved informally or before it escalates into ongoing disputes. However, even occasional conflicts can be emotionally draining, especially when they involve hierarchical relationships such as disagreements with superiors, or when they affect group cohesion and the ability to work collaboratively on academic or administrative tasks.

The psychological and emotional impact of conflict should not be underestimated. Conflicts, even when infrequent, can lead to feelings of isolation, resentment, and decreased motivation. In environments that require constant communication, teamwork, and shared responsibilities such as departments managing joint curricula or research outputs interpersonal tensions can disrupt workflow,

delay decision-making, and lower morale across entire teams. When left unaddressed, such stressors can accumulate over time, contributing to a toxic work environment that undermines both performance and well-being.

It is therefore essential for institutions to proactively cultivate a workplace culture that prioritizes respectful communication and conflict management. This could involve structured training sessions in conflict resolution, open-door policies that allow lecturers to voice concerns without fear of retaliation, and consistent enforcement of professional conduct standards across all levels of staff. Encouraging regular feedback, fostering mutual respect, and clarifying roles and expectations can also help reduce misunderstandings and pre-empt conflict.

While interpersonal conflict may not appear as prominent as other stressors such as workload or role ambiguity, its impact on team dynamics, lecturer satisfaction, and institutional harmony should not be overlooked. Addressing this issue is vital for sustaining a positive academic environment where lecturers feel heard, supported, and motivated to contribute meaningfully to teaching, research, and institutional development.

4.4.1.9 Workload During Peak Periods

This Figure presents respondents' assessment of their workload during peak periods.

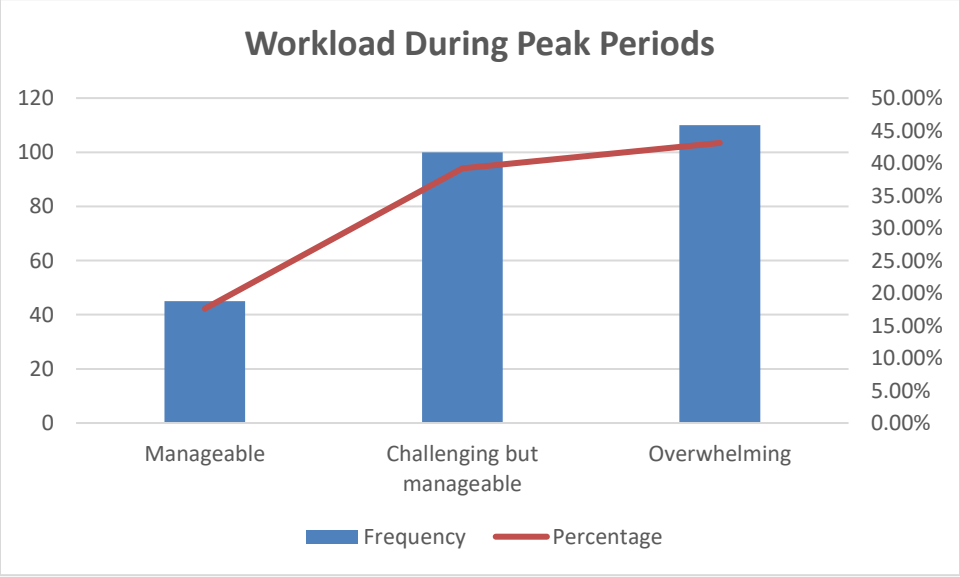


Figure 0.21 Workload During Peak Periods

Figure 4.21 provides a stark illustration of the workload pressures faced by lecturers during peak academic periods. According to the data, 43.1% of respondents reported that their workload during these times is “Overwhelming,” while a further 39.2% found it “Challenging but manageable.” Only

17.6% considered their peak-period workload to be “Manageable.” These results clearly indicate that the majority of lecturers face severe strain during high-demand times such as examination weeks, project submission deadlines, curriculum reviews, and accreditation processes.

This finding reinforces the broader picture established in earlier figures particularly Figure 4.14, which identified “Excessive Workload” as a primary stressor, and Figure 4.19, which detailed the compounding effects of simultaneous teaching, research, and administrative duties. The expectation that lecturers must perform effectively across all these roles even during peak periods contributes significantly to their psychological and physical exhaustion. This concern is echoed by the fact that 82.4% of lecturers pointed to teaching, 76.5% to administration, and 70.6% to research as key drivers of workload. The concurrency of these responsibilities means that when peak periods hit, they do so across all fronts simultaneously.

Moreover, when viewed alongside Figure 4.13, where 84.3% of lecturers reported moderate to high stress levels, it becomes clear that peak-period workload intensifies an already high baseline of occupational pressure. Unlike routine weeks, these peak periods often demand extended working hours, shortened turnaround times for grading or feedback, and increased student consultation all with minimal additional support. The result is not only acute stress and emotional exhaustion but also a gradual erosion of the lecturer's capacity to recover and reset before the next academic cycle begins. This inability to fully recuperate contributes to a pattern of chronic stress accumulation, reducing resilience and long-term job satisfaction.

The effects of peak-period strain are not limited to individual wellbeing. They have broader institutional implications, including reduced quality of instruction, lower research productivity, increased errors in assessment, and eventual burnout-related attrition. Even where conflicts with colleagues (as shown in Figure 4.20) are not a daily occurrence, such intense pressure can heighten tensions, increase irritability, and compromise otherwise functional professional relationships. Similarly, the challenge of maintaining a work-life balance (Figure 4.16), already a key concern for 58.8% of lecturers, becomes even more difficult during peak periods, with personal time often sacrificed to meet pressing institutional demands.

To address these issues effectively, institutions must adopt more deliberate and structured responses to peak-period workload. This could involve redistributing responsibilities in advance, temporarily hiring academic assistants or graders, or designating certain weeks as “no-meeting” periods to allow uninterrupted focus on high-priority tasks. Additionally, offering mental health breaks, workload

caps, or flexible deadlines during these periods could provide much-needed relief. Equally important is planning for recovery ensuring that lecturers are not expected to jump immediately into new terms or responsibilities without rest.

Ultimately, peak-period workload stress is not an isolated phenomenon but part of a larger ecosystem of pressures identified throughout this analysis from unclear job expectations (Figure 4.15) and insufficient resources (Figure 4.18) to the compounding effect of balancing professional and personal life. Institutions must recognize that these stressors intersect and intensify during high-demand times, and proactive measures must be taken to support staff if academic quality and institutional health are to be preserved.

4.4.1.10 Control Over Work Schedule and Tasks

This Figure shows the level of control respondents have over their work schedule and tasks.

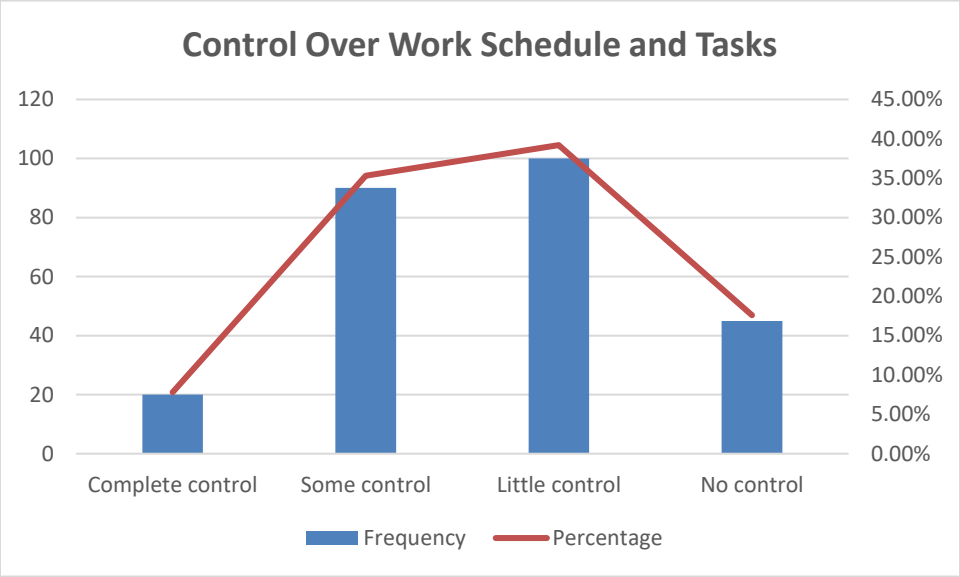


Figure 0.22 Control Over Work Schedule and Tasks

The level of control over work schedule and tasks, as presented in Figure 4.22, shows that a large proportion of lecturers have "Little control" (39.2%) or "Some control" (35.3%) over their schedules. A significant 17.6% report "No control," while only a small minority (7.8%) have "Complete control." This collective lack of substantial autonomy over their work processes is a critical source of stress.

Reduced control over one's work environment is a well-established psychological stressor, leading to feelings of powerlessness, decreased job satisfaction, and increased burnout risk. When lecturers have limited flexibility in managing their time, prioritizing tasks, or shaping their responsibilities, it exacerbates the impact of high workload and other demands.

Empowering lecturers with greater autonomy, where feasible, could be a highly effective stress reduction strategy. This might involve allowing more flexible scheduling, providing input on course assignments, or offering greater discretion in pedagogical approaches, thereby fostering a sense of ownership and reducing feelings of being overwhelmed by external dictates.

4.4.2 Perceptions of Institutional Support

4.4.2.1 Adequacy of Training and Support

This Figure presents respondents' perception of the adequacy of training and support received.

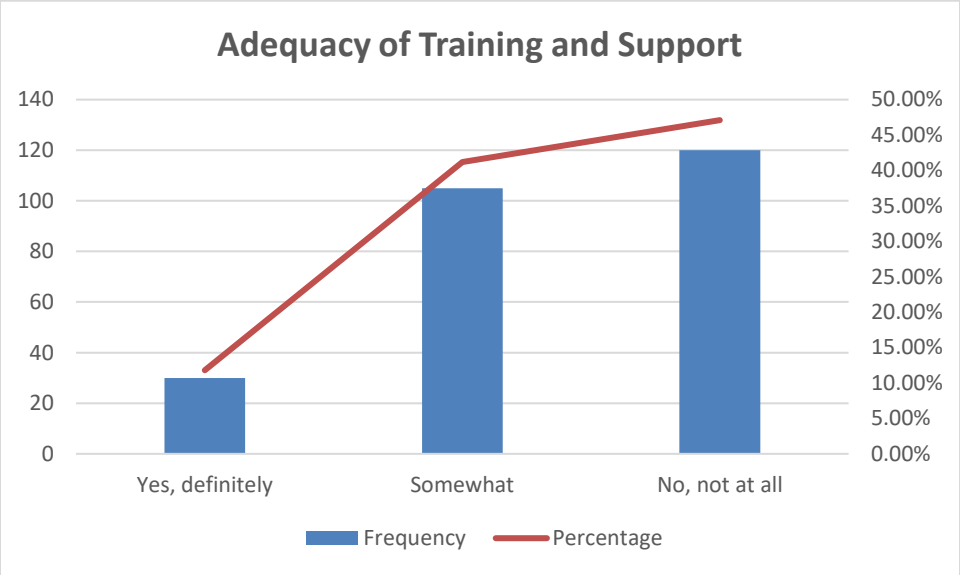


Figure 0.23 Adequacy of Training and Support

Figure 4.23 draws attention to a critical gap in institutional support: the adequacy of training and professional development for lecturers. Nearly half of the respondents (47.1%) reported that training and support are “Not at all” adequate, while an additional 41.2% indicated that they are only “Somewhat” adequate. Only 11.8% of lecturers felt that the available training and support were “Definitely” adequate. These results highlight a significant shortfall in the systems intended to equip lecturers for their multifaceted roles within private tertiary institutions.

This deficiency is particularly concerning given the high demands already placed on lecturers, as evidenced throughout the broader dataset. As seen in Figures 4.14 and 4.19, lecturers are expected to manage extensive responsibilities across teaching, research, and administration often simultaneously and with limited institutional support. When these duties are not paired with sufficient preparation, especially during critical transition periods such as curriculum reform or the integration of digital learning tools, stress is compounded. The situation becomes even more acute during peak academic

periods (Figure 4.21), when the pressure to deliver high-quality output collides with inadequate preparation and support structures.

Feeling ill-equipped to handle the evolving academic environment can lead to heightened anxiety, self-doubt, and a persistent sense of professional inadequacy. This is not merely about technical knowledge but also about the emotional strain of navigating complex academic expectations without a clear roadmap or guidance. The need for ongoing professional development has become especially urgent as lecturers contend with new teaching modalities, digital platforms, shifting student needs, and increased accountability for research output. Without the tools and training to adapt, lecturers may find themselves overwhelmed and disengaged, even as performance expectations continue to rise.

Moreover, this lack of adequate support intersects with other stressors identified earlier in the data. For instance, unclear job expectations (Figure 4.15), insufficient resources (Figure 4.18), and the strain of balancing professional and personal life (Figure 4.16) all become more difficult to navigate in the absence of strong developmental support systems. Even lecturers who are generally resilient may eventually experience burnout if they are expected to innovate, deliver, and manage workloads without relevant institutional backing.

To address this gap effectively, institutions must invest in targeted training programs that respond directly to the evolving realities of academic work. This includes practical workshops on digital pedagogy, advanced research skills, student engagement, mental health awareness, and time management. Training should not be treated as a one-off event, but as a continuous, embedded component of the academic experience, with regular needs assessments and feedback loops to ensure relevance.

Equally important is the creation of mentorship structures, peer learning opportunities, and easily accessible support channels. New or early-career lecturers, in particular, benefit from structured mentorship that can guide them through institutional expectations, research planning, and work-life integration strategies. Such support mechanisms not only enhance competence but also foster a sense of belonging and collective purpose.

Ultimately, staff development should be recognized as a strategic priority not just for upskilling but for safeguarding the emotional and psychological wellbeing of academic staff. In the absence of adequate support, even the most capable lecturers can struggle to meet institutional demands.

Conversely, when lecturers feel empowered, supported, and valued, they are more likely to thrive professionally, contribute meaningfully to institutional goals, and maintain their wellbeing amidst the challenges of academic life. Addressing this training and support deficit is, therefore, not just an operational concern it is a foundational step toward building a healthier, more effective academic workforce.

4.4.2.2 Rating of Workload

This Figure displays the ratings of perceived workload by academic staff.

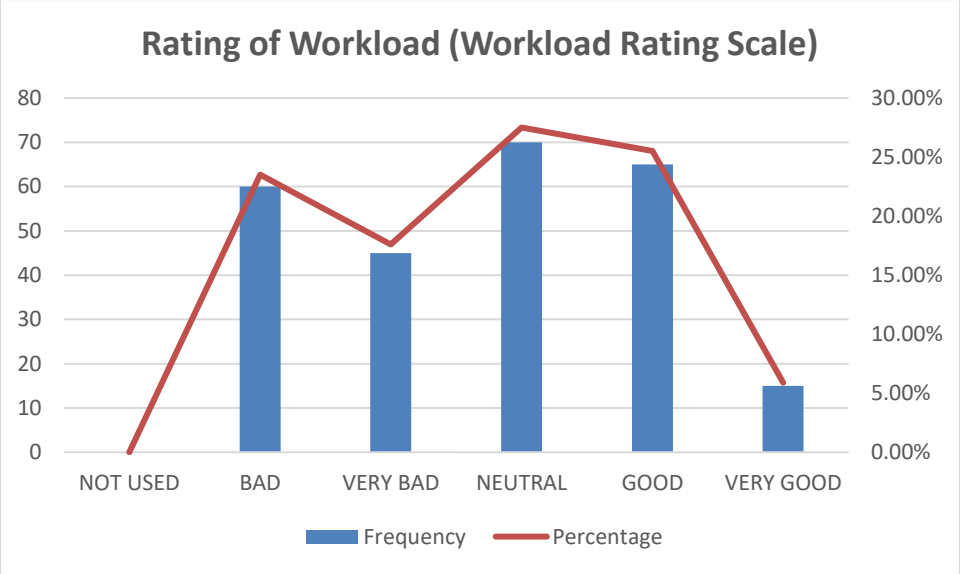


Figure 0.24 Rating of Workload (Workload Rating Scale)

An analysis of the Likert-scale ratings for institutional resources and support structures reveals a consistent pattern of dissatisfaction among lecturers, particularly concerning workload. Figure 4.24, which focuses on perceptions of workload, shows that 41.1% of respondents rated it either "BAD" (23.5%) or "VERY BAD" (17.6%). This significant proportion confirms that workload continues to be one of the most persistent and widespread stressors within private tertiary institutions in Gaborone.

These findings are not isolated, but rather part of a broader and deeply rooted issue identified throughout Chapter 4. Earlier, in Figure 4.14, workload was shown to be rated as “stressful to extremely stressful” by nearly 69% of respondents. Similarly, Figure 4.21 showed that 43.1% of lecturers found peak-period workload “overwhelming,” and only 17.6% considered it “manageable.” This alignment of quantitative data points clearly suggests that the way academic work is structured especially the balance between teaching, research, and administrative duties is neither sustainable nor supportive of lecturer well-being.

The concern about workload is further contextualized in Chapter 2 of the thesis, where Gabrielli and Lundi (2020) emphasized that when lecturers are overloaded with simultaneous responsibilities without adequate institutional support, their stress levels rise significantly. Dow (2018) also highlighted that the continuous demands placed on lecturers, without meaningful adjustments in workload expectations or recovery time, lead to chronic stress and decreased performance. This is consistent with Robbins (1996), who noted that excessive work demands not only impair job satisfaction but can also result in long-term burnout if not adequately addressed.

Moreover, this negative perception of workload aligns directly with the overall stress profile of lecturers reported in Figure 4.13, where 84.3% of respondents indicated experiencing moderate to high levels of stress. The correlation between poor workload ratings and high stress levels underscores the critical need for institutional reform. It reinforces the idea that workload is not simply a logistical issue, but a key driver of occupational stress with far-reaching implications for both individual wellbeing and institutional effectiveness.

Addressing workload challenges must therefore be central to any institutional strategy aimed at reducing stress and improving lecturer morale. A comprehensive review of workload allocation should include an audit of teaching contact hours, administrative assignments, research expectations, and committee responsibilities. These elements must be balanced to reflect the actual capacity of academic staff within a standard workweek, avoiding the informal expectation of overtime as a norm.

In addition, institutions should consider differentiating workload based on rank, experience, and research output to allow for flexibility and fairness. As discussed in Chapter 2, the VRIO framework (Guest, 2006; 2022) reinforces the importance of treating human capital in this case, lecturers as a valuable, inimitable resource. Failing to manage workload effectively risks depleting this resource through attrition, absenteeism, or reduced engagement.

Ultimately, improving perceptions of workload is not just about reducing hours, but about restructuring expectations, improving support systems, and ensuring that lecturers are empowered to perform their roles effectively without compromising their health or professional identity. By doing so, institutions can move toward creating a more sustainable and productive academic environment one that respects both human limits and the pursuit of excellence.

4.4.2.3 Rating of College/University Resources.

This Figure displays the ratings of college/university resources by academic staff.

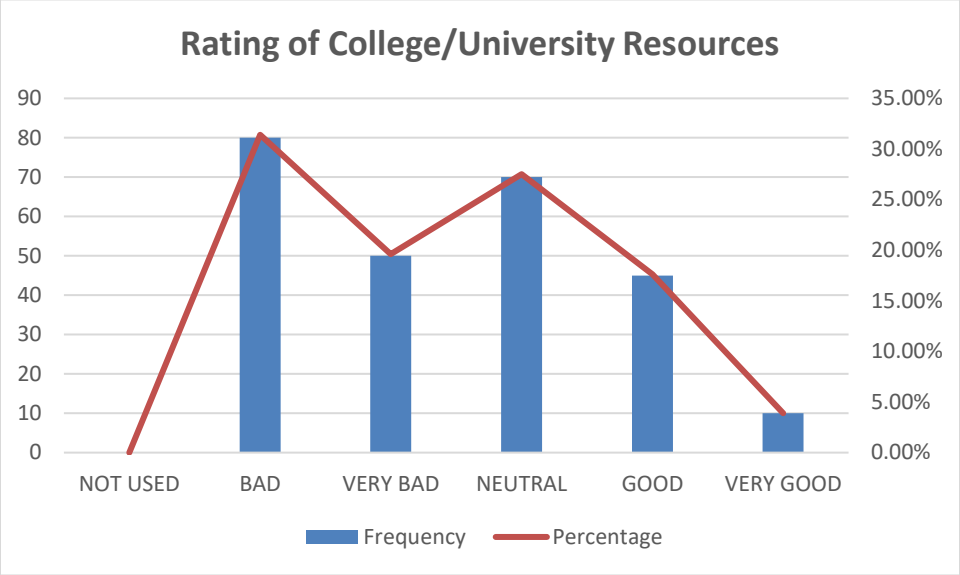


Figure 0.25 Rating of College/University Resources

Figure 4.25 shows that many lecturers are not happy with the resources provided by their colleges or universities. Specifically, 31.4% rated the resources as "BAD" and 19.6% as "VERY BAD," meaning that over half of the respondents (51%) feel that the tools and support they need to do their work are not good enough. This reflects a widespread sense of frustration among academic staff about the state of teaching, research, and administrative resources.

This dissatisfaction is closely related to what was highlighted in Figure 4.18, where 59.2% of lecturers reported that "Insufficient Resources to Do the Job" caused moderate to extreme stress. When lecturers do not have access to basic tools like up-to-date computers, stable internet, working projectors, relevant books or journals, or even proper office space they are forced to work harder just to meet normal expectations. This means more time spent improvising, more effort trying to fix problems that shouldn't exist, and more pressure when trying to meet deadlines. These daily inconveniences, although they may seem small on their own, build up and lead to high levels of stress and reduced job satisfaction over time.

When these resource challenges are combined with other pressures like the excessive workloads discussed in Figures 4.14 and 4.19, or the overwhelming peak-period demands in Figure 4.21 the impact becomes even more serious. Lecturers are not just facing one issue, but a mix of many challenges that interact and make their work lives more difficult. Poor resources can also worsen the problem of work-life balance (Figure 4.16), as lecturers often have to use their own personal time to find workarounds or complete tasks that would have been easier with proper institutional support.

Therefore, improving college or university resources is not just about upgrading equipment it is about reducing stress, saving time, and showing staff that they are valued. Investing in better facilities, updated technology, reliable internet, functional teaching tools, and well-trained support staff can make a huge difference. It helps lecturers focus more on teaching and research instead of dealing with operational frustrations. It also supports other important efforts, like reducing workload (Figures 4.14 and 4.24), improving training and support (Figure 4.23), and creating a healthier, more productive academic environment overall.

4.4.2.4 Rating of University Lecturer Support.

This Figure displays the ratings of university lecturer support by academic staff.

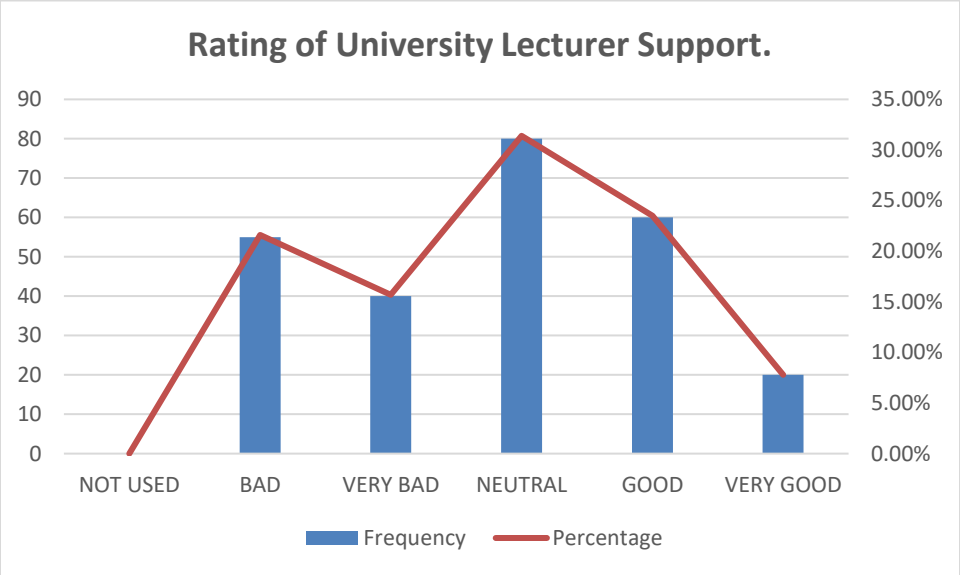


Figure 0.26 Rating of University Lecturer Support.

Figure 4.26 presents a concerning but nuanced view of how lecturers perceive the support they receive from their universities. The data shows that 31.4% of respondents rated university lecturer support as "NEUTRAL," while 21.6% rated it as "BAD" and 15.7% as "VERY BAD." Together, this means that nearly 69% of lecturers are either unsure about the level of support they receive or are clearly dissatisfied. In contrast, only 31.3% expressed satisfaction by rating support as "GOOD" or "VERY GOOD." This mixed response indicates that while some support systems may exist, they are either not consistent, not accessible to all, or not perceived as meaningful or effective by a significant portion of staff.

The data suggests that many lecturers feel unsupported in key areas of their work life. Support in this context can include a wide range of services mentorship from senior staff, help with navigating

academic policies, emotional and psychological support, career development opportunities, research assistance, and administrative help. When these forms of support are lacking or poorly communicated, it can lead to lecturers feeling isolated, overwhelmed, or undervalued especially in environments where they already face high workloads, as shown in Figures 4.14, 4.19, and 4.24, and deal with resource constraints (Figure 4.25).

This lack of strong support networks also ties in with the earlier findings in Figure 4.23, where 88.3% of lecturers reported that training and institutional support were either not adequate at all or only somewhat adequate. Without proper training and guidance, lecturers are left to navigate demanding responsibilities on their own, often without the tools or confidence they need. In addition, the challenges highlighted in Figure 4.16 regarding work-life balance, and Figure 4.21 about the intensity of peak-period workloads, are likely to be made worse when staff feel they have no one to turn to for help or encouragement.

Even those who rated support as "NEUTRAL" may represent individuals who are uncertain or ambivalent about institutional efforts not necessarily because the support is entirely absent, but perhaps because it is inconsistent, unclear, or does not meet their specific needs. This group is particularly important to focus on, as improved communication, visibility, and inclusiveness in support initiatives might easily shift their perceptions in a more positive direction.

To address these concerns, universities need to take a proactive approach in assessing and strengthening their lecturer support systems. This includes ensuring that mentorship programmes are not only established but actively functioning and monitored; that mental health and well-being services are both accessible and destigmatized; and that feedback mechanisms are in place so lecturers can voice concerns and see tangible responses. Institutions should also encourage informal peer support networks and cultivate a culture where collaboration and mutual support are normalised and rewarded.

4.4.2.5 Rating of University/College Creativity and Innovation.

This Figure displays the ratings of creativity and innovation at the university/college by academic staff.

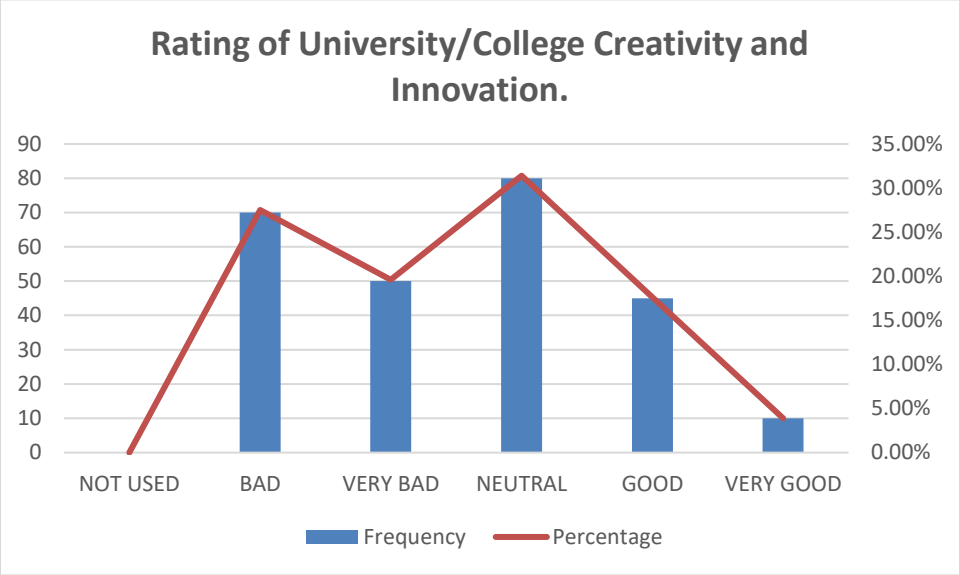


Figure 0.27 Rating of University/College Creativity and Innovation.

Figure 4.27 presents a concerning insight into how lecturers perceive the levels of creativity and innovation within their colleges or universities. A total of 47.1% of respondents expressed dissatisfaction, with 27.5% rating their institution's creativity and innovation as "BAD" and 19.6% as "VERY BAD." Additionally, 31.4% selected "NEUTRAL," suggesting that many lecturers do not strongly associate their work environment with innovation or creative progress. The relatively low level of positive responses points to a widespread belief that innovation is either undervalued or unsupported within their academic institutions.

In higher education, creativity and innovation are critical not just for improving student learning and academic outputs, but also for maintaining the motivation, satisfaction, and growth of academic staff. For lecturers, being able to explore new teaching methods, develop original research ideas, or contribute to curriculum reform offers intellectual engagement and a sense of professional contribution. When such opportunities are limited or unsupported, it can lead to feelings of stagnation, where lecturers are stuck in repetitive routines with little room for experimentation or personal academic expression. This, in turn, contributes to a decline in job satisfaction and an increase in workplace stress.

This finding ties closely with previous data presented in earlier figures. For instance, the stress arising from excessive workload (Figures 4.14 and 4.19), poor support (Figures 4.23 and 4.26), and insufficient institutional resources (Figures 4.18 and 4.25) all contribute to an environment where creativity is naturally suppressed. When lecturers are overburdened and lack both time and support,

they are less likely to take risks or innovate in their teaching and research. Similarly, when institutional support is rated as “NEUTRAL” or “BAD,” as shown in Figures 4.23 and 4.26, staff are unlikely to feel confident enough to pursue creative initiatives that may require trial, error, or deviation from the norm.

Moreover, innovation often requires resources such as funding for pilot projects, access to updated teaching tools, or time set aside for research exploration. As noted in earlier sections, many lecturers have reported challenges with inadequate resources and support systems, making it even harder to engage in creative practices. Without institutional encouragement and tangible backing, innovation risks becoming an empty slogan rather than a lived experience.

To change this, institutions must intentionally foster a culture of creativity by embedding innovation into their operational structures. This could include creating internal grant schemes for experimental teaching methods, dedicating time within workloads for independent or interdisciplinary projects, and providing recognition and rewards for novel academic contributions. Institutions can also host regular innovation forums, where staff from different departments can share ideas, collaborate, and develop joint initiatives.

By actively promoting innovation, universities signal to their staff that fresh thinking is not only welcomed but essential. This kind of dynamic environment can boost morale, attract and retain passionate educators, and help reduce stress linked to monotony or professional stagnation. A forward-thinking institution empowers its lecturers not just to perform routine tasks, but to imagine and shape the future of education an approach that benefits both staff and students.

4.4.2.6 Rating of Sports and Recreation Department.

This Figure displays the ratings of the sports and recreation department by academic staff.

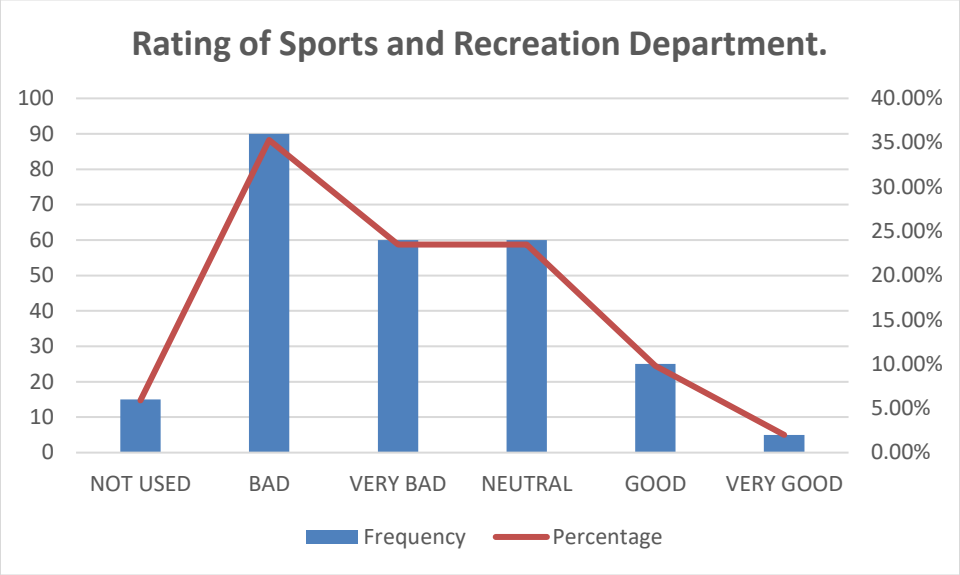


Figure 0.28 Rating of Sports and Recreation Department.

This trend of dissatisfaction extends to more specific support services. Figure 4.28 shows that the "Sports and Recreation Department" is rated "BAD" by 35.3% and "VERY BAD" by 23.5%, totaling 58.8% expressing negative sentiment. This highlights a significant perceived deficiency in the provision of facilities or opportunities for physical well-being and stress relief through recreation.

Access to sports and recreation facilities can play a crucial role in mitigating occupational stress by promoting physical activity, offering a break from work demands, and fostering social interaction. The overwhelmingly negative ratings suggest that existing provisions are either inadequate, poorly maintained, or inaccessible to lecturers.

Investing in and promoting the Sports and Recreation Department, or at least ensuring accessible and well-maintained facilities, could serve as a valuable non-work-related outlet for stress reduction. Encouraging lecturers to engage in physical activities through such provisions could significantly contribute to their overall health and well-being.

4.4.2.7 Rating of University/College Clinic.

This Figure displays the ratings of the university/college clinic by academic staff.

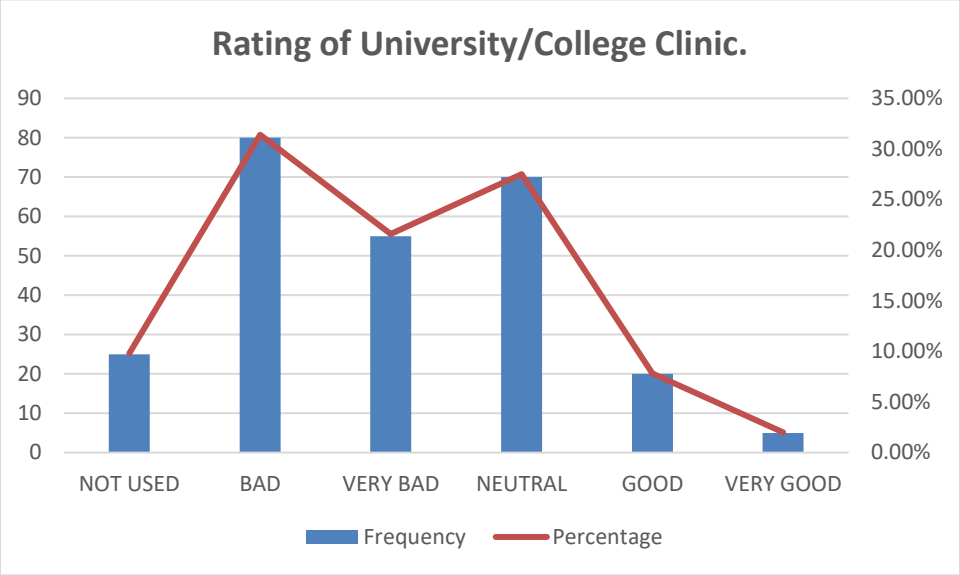


Figure 0.29 Rating of University/College Clinic.

Figure 4.29 provides valuable insight into how lecturers perceive the quality of their institution's health services, specifically the University or College Clinic. The data reveals that 31.4% of respondents rated the clinic as "BAD" and a further 21.6% rated it as "VERY BAD," meaning that more than half (53%) of the academic staff expressed dissatisfaction with the health services provided on campus. This substantial negative rating suggests that the institutional clinic, which should serve as a vital point of support for staff well-being, is seen as either ineffective, under-resourced, or poorly managed.

In a demanding academic environment where stress levels are already high as confirmed in Figure 4.13, where 84.3% of lecturers reported experiencing moderate to high stress the availability of a reliable, well-functioning health facility becomes not just a support service, but a necessity. Health clinics within university settings are expected to provide accessible, confidential, and competent care for both physical and mental health needs. When these expectations are not met, lecturers may hesitate to seek medical attention, delay treatment, or feel unsupported in managing their well-being. This can result in prolonged illness, untreated stress-related symptoms, and ultimately a decline in job performance and satisfaction.

Earlier sections of this study have already established that occupational stress in private tertiary institutions is driven by factors such as excessive workload (Figure 4.14), insufficient resources (Figure 4.18), and inadequate support systems (Figure 4.23). When these stressors are coupled with weak institutional health support, the effects on employee health can be magnified. Mwenda et al.

(2019), cited in Chapter 2 of the thesis, emphasized that a lack of institutional wellness infrastructure contributes directly to anxiety, burnout, and disengagement among academic staff. Similarly, Hassan et al. (2020) highlighted that lecturers who perceive poor access to mental and physical health services often experience intensified stress symptoms and lower coping ability.

Furthermore, studies such as those by Dow (2018) and Gabrielli and Lundi (2020) reinforce the argument that support systems especially healthcare services form a foundational part of occupational health and safety. These scholars advocate for holistic wellness strategies in the workplace, noting that institutions that fail to offer quality health services are at greater risk of high absenteeism, staff turnover, and reduced morale.

Given these concerns, it is imperative that universities and colleges critically assess and upgrade their campus health services. This includes ensuring that clinics are adequately staffed with qualified professionals, supplied with necessary equipment and medication, and capable of providing both preventive and reactive care. Confidentiality must be guaranteed, especially when dealing with sensitive mental health concerns, and services must be available during working hours to accommodate academic schedules.

Additionally, institutions should expand the role of their clinics to include regular wellness education campaigns, stress management workshops, and access to counselling services. These initiatives not only help address existing health issues but also serve as preventive measures, equipping staff with tools to manage stress before it becomes overwhelming. The VRIO framework discussed in Chapter 2 further supports this direction by stressing the strategic value of human resources; ensuring that academic staff are healthy and supported is essential for institutional performance and sustainability.

4.4.2.8 Rating of Your Own Faculty Hospitality.

This Figure displays the ratings of faculty hospitality by academic staff.

The rating of "Faculty Hospitality" (Figure 4.30) shows a more positive outlook compared to institutional-level resources and services. A combined 54.9% (35.3% "GOOD," 19.6% "VERY GOOD") express positive sentiment, with only a small combined percentage for "BAD" or "VERY BAD" (17.7%). This suggests that while overall institutional support may be lacking, there are pockets of positive interpersonal relationships and a supportive atmosphere within individual faculties.

This finding is significant as it highlights the buffering role of positive collegial relationships and a welcoming faculty environment against broader institutional stressors. A sense of belonging, camaraderie, and mutual support among colleagues can significantly mitigate the negative impacts of high workload or administrative frustrations.

Institutions should recognize and foster these positive internal dynamics within faculties, perhaps by encouraging collaborative activities, social events, or mentorship programs that build on the existing strengths of faculty hospitality. This internal support network can be a vital resource for lecturers dealing with occupational stress.

4.4.2.9 Rating of Administration & Academic Synergy.

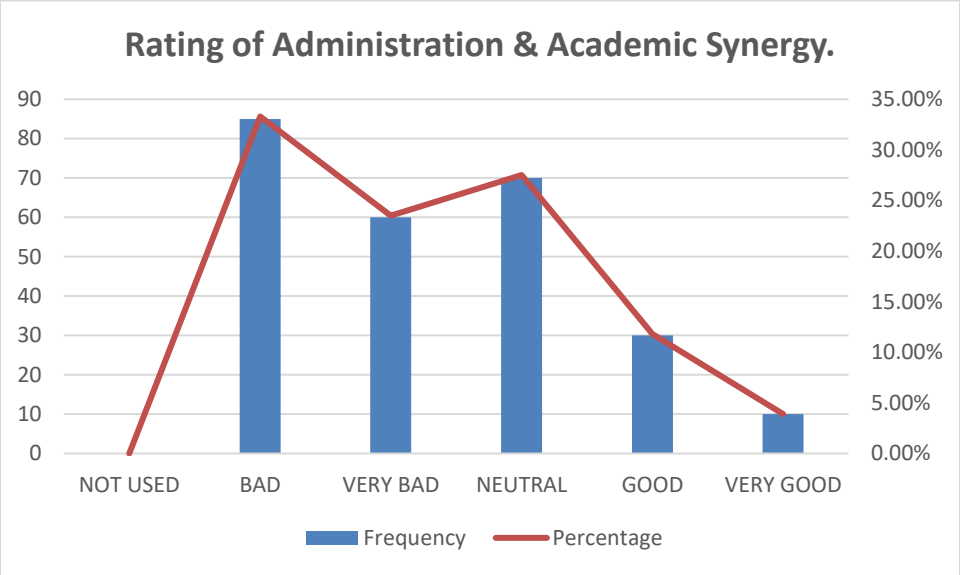


Figure 0.30 Rating of Administration & Academic Synergy.

Figure 4.30 highlights a serious concern about the relationship between academic and administrative units within institutions. According to the data, 33.3% of lecturers rated "Administration and Academic Synergy" as "BAD," and a further 23.5% rated it as "VERY BAD," meaning that over half of the respondents (56.8%) expressed dissatisfaction. In addition, 27.5% of respondents selected "NEUTRAL," suggesting that many lecturers either have no strong opinion or are unsure about the quality of this relationship. These findings indicate a clear gap in collaboration and coordination between the academic staff and the administrative departments.

This lack of synergy between the two critical arms of higher education academic and administrative is more than just a management issue; it is a source of stress for lecturers. When administrative

support is slow, unresponsive, or overly bureaucratic, lecturers are forced to spend extra time and energy resolving basic tasks that should ideally be seamless. These issues can delay course planning, budget approvals, procurement of teaching materials, or processing of student records all of which interfere with the academic workflow. When such delays occur frequently, they become an ongoing source of frustration and erode trust in the institution's operational support systems.

The findings in Figure 4.31 echo earlier patterns reported throughout Chapter 4. For example, the high stress levels observed in Figure 4.13 (where 84.3% of lecturers reported moderate to high stress) can be partially attributed to poor administrative support, which adds to the already heavy workload identified in Figures 4.14 and 4.24. Furthermore, insufficient resources (Figure 4.25) and inadequate institutional support systems (Figure 4.26) likely reflect a breakdown in administrative planning and responsiveness, further validating this disconnect.

Chapter 2 of the thesis also reinforces this issue. According to Dlamini and Makhubu (2021), poor communication and coordination between academic and administrative units significantly increase job-related stress, as lecturers are forced to navigate unclear policies and inconsistent support structures. Hassan et al. (2020) similarly observed that inefficient administration creates additional non-academic responsibilities for lecturers, diverting their attention from core teaching and research duties and leading to emotional fatigue and professional dissatisfaction.

The VRIO framework (Guest, 2022), discussed in the conceptual section of the thesis, supports the need for streamlined operations. Human resources especially academic staff are valuable and rare assets. When their time is wasted on preventable administrative delays, institutions are misusing a strategic resource and limiting their own performance potential.

Improving synergy between administration and academics should therefore be a priority for institutional leadership. This could involve several practical steps. First, open and regular communication channels should be established between the two groups, possibly through joint planning meetings, feedback forums, or internal service charters that clarify expectations. Second, administrative systems should be reviewed and simplified to ensure they are user-friendly, responsive, and aligned with academic needs. Digital systems could be adopted to automate approvals, reduce paperwork, and improve tracking of requests. Lastly, administrators should be trained to understand academic workflows so they can offer more tailored and timely support.

When administration and academics work as partners rather than in silos, institutional efficiency improves, delays are reduced, and the academic staff can focus more on teaching, mentoring, and research. As Figure 4.31 suggests, bridging this divide will not only ease operational friction but also reduce one of the more overlooked yet pervasive sources of occupational stress in private tertiary education institutions. Ultimately, improving this synergy is not just about internal harmony it is about creating an enabling environment for academic excellence and staff wellbeing.

4.4.2.10 Rating of Computer Services and IT Support.

This Figure displays the ratings of computer services and IT support by academic staff.

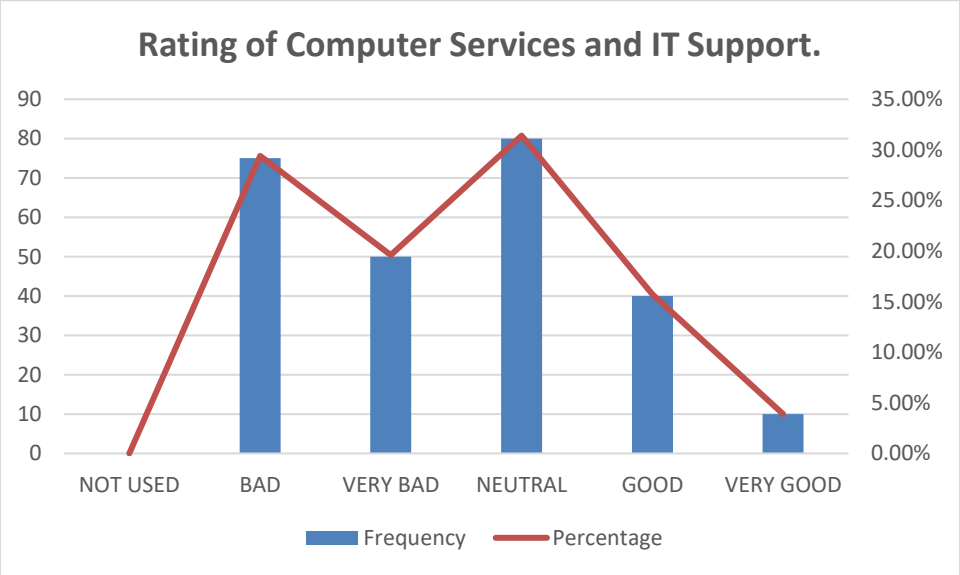


Figure 0.31 Rating of Computer Services and IT Support.

"Computer Services and IT Support" (Figure 4.31) also garners significant negative ratings, with 29.4% rating it "BAD" and 19.6% rating it "VERY BAD," totaling 49% expressing dissatisfaction. Furthermore, 31.4% remained "NEUTRAL," indicating a lack of strong positive perception even among those not overtly negative. These results collectively highlight deficiencies in a critical area of modern academic work.

In today's digitalized educational environment, reliable and efficient IT support is indispensable for teaching, research, and administrative tasks. Frequent technical issues, slow response times, or inadequate digital resources can lead to significant frustration, lost productivity, and heightened stress for lecturers.

Investing in robust IT infrastructure, providing timely and competent technical support, and offering training on digital tools are essential steps to alleviate this stressor. Ensuring seamless technological

operations is not just a convenience but a fundamental requirement for effective academic performance and well-being.

4.4.2.11 Rating of College/University Academia Teaching Preferences.

This Figure displays the ratings of academic teaching preferences offered by the college/university.

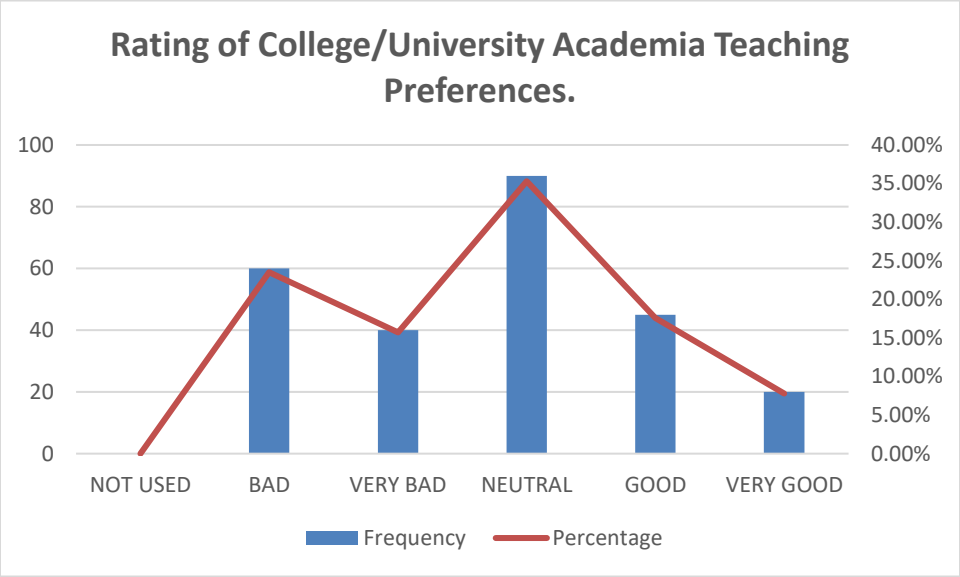


Figure 0.32 Rating of College/University Academia Teaching Preferences.

Figure 4.32 concerning "College/University Academia Teaching Preferences" shows a mixed perception, with a substantial "NEUTRAL" response (35.3%), and a significant portion rating it "BAD" (23.5%) or "VERY BAD" (15.7%). This indicates that the alignment between institutional expectations for teaching and lecturers' preferred methods or pedagogical approaches may not be optimal, potentially creating frustration and stress.

This suggests that lecturers may feel constrained by rigid teaching requirements or lack the autonomy to implement their preferred innovative pedagogical strategies. Such a mismatch can lead to a sense of professional dissatisfaction and reduced engagement, transforming a core aspect of their work into a source of stress.

To address this, institutions should consider fostering a more flexible and supportive environment for diverse teaching preferences. This could involve promoting pedagogical training, encouraging experimentation, and allowing lecturers more say in their course design within certain quality frameworks. Valuing and accommodating diverse teaching styles can enhance job satisfaction and reduce stress.

4.4.2.12 Overall Rating of Lecturers in Your Institution.

This Figure displays the overall rating of lecturers in the respondents' institution.

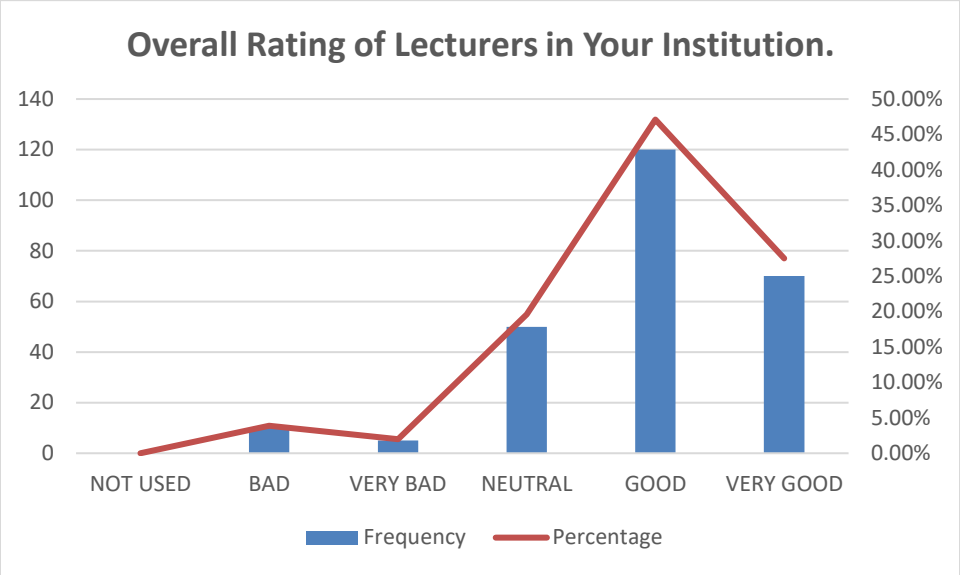


Figure 0.33 Overall Rating of Lecturers in Your Institution.

The "Overall Rating of Lecturers in Your Institution" (Figure 4.33) is overwhelmingly positive, with 47.1% rating them "GOOD" and 27.5% rating them "VERY GOOD." This indicates a high level of mutual respect and positive perception among academic peers, suggesting that despite facing common stressors, lecturers generally hold each other in high regard and perceive their colleagues as competent and effective.

This positive internal dynamic within the academic staff can be a crucial source of strength and support, acting as a buffer against external institutional stressors. A collegial environment fosters collaboration, shared problem-solving, and emotional support, which are vital for resilience in demanding professions.

Institutions should recognize and nurture this positive peer culture, as it represents a significant asset for overall well-being. Facilitating opportunities for peer interaction, collaboration, and informal support networks can further enhance this protective factor against occupational stress.

4.4.2.13 Overall Rating of Your Institution Administration.

This Figure displays the overall rating of institution administration by academic staff.

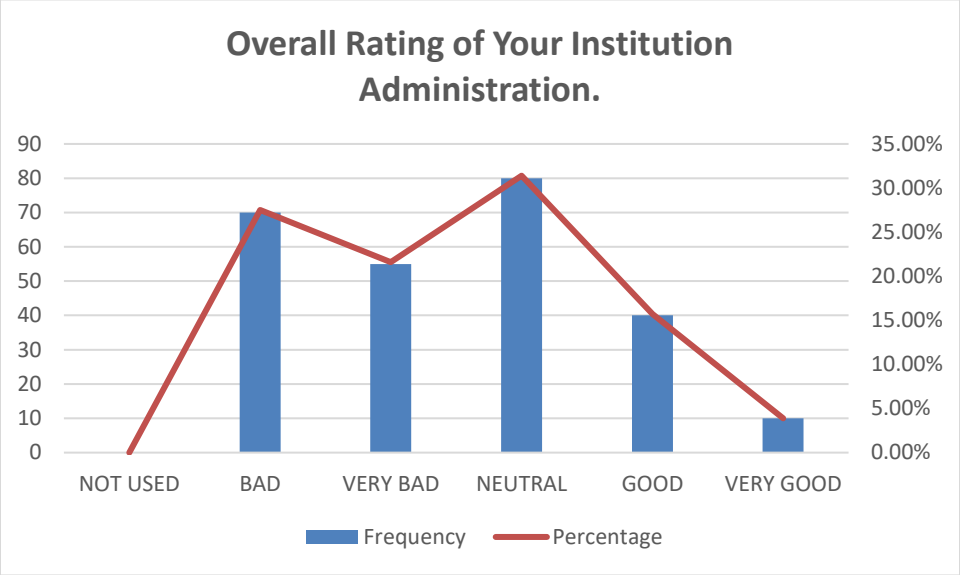


Figure 0.34 Overall Rating of Your Institution Administration.

In stark contrast to the positive perception of fellow lecturers, the "Overall Rating of Your Institution Administration" (Figure 4.34) presents a highly negative view. A significant 27.5% rated it "BAD" and 21.6% rated it "VERY BAD," totalling 49.1% expressing dissatisfaction. A further 31.4% remained "NEUTRAL," indicating a general lack of strong positive sentiment even among those not overtly negative.

This disparity points to a major disconnect between the academic staff and the administrative support they receive, confirming administration as a substantial source of frustration and, consequently, stress. Perceived bureaucratic inefficiencies, slow response times, lack of transparency, or unsupportive policies from administration can significantly impede academic work and add unnecessary burdens to lecturers already managing heavy workloads.

Improving administrative efficiency, fostering open communication channels between academic and administrative departments, and ensuring that administrative functions are genuinely perceived as supportive rather than obstructive, are critical for reducing this pervasive stressor. This gap in perception underscores a need for significant administrative reform to create a more harmonious and effective working environment.

4.4.2.14 Clear Picture on Modules Wanted.

This Figure shows respondents' agreement with having a clear picture on module choices.

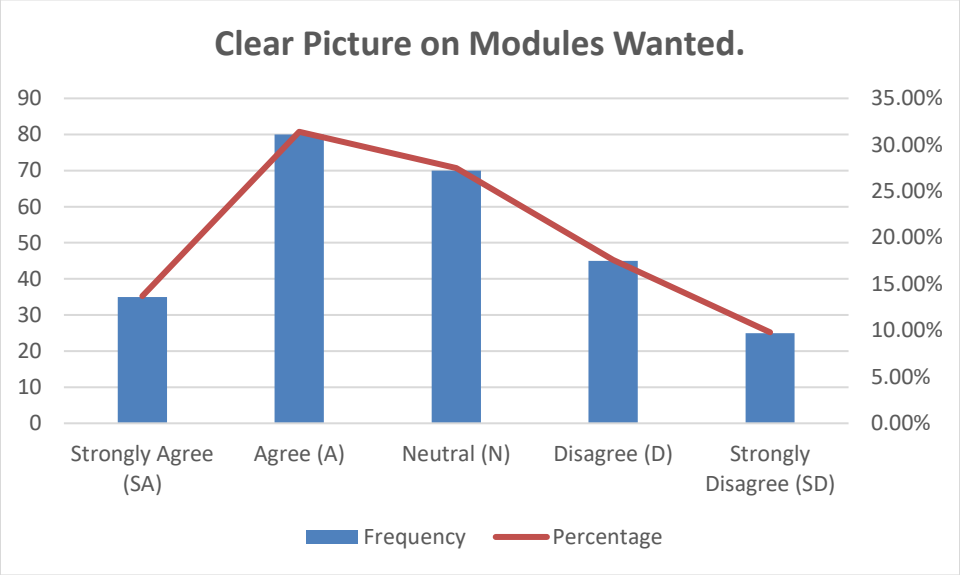


Figure 0.35 Clear Picture on Modules Wanted.

Attitudinal responses related to module choices further shed light on potential stressors. Figure 4.35 shows a mixed view on having a "Clear Picture on Modules Wanted." While a combined 45.1% (31.4% Agree, 13.7% Strongly Agree) express clarity, a significant proportion (17.6% Disagree, 9.8% Strongly Disagree, totalling 27.4%) experience ambiguity, with another 27.5% remaining "NEUTRAL."

This mixed perception suggests that clarity regarding module assignments, expectations, and the overall curriculum is not universally consistent across the institutions. For lecturers who experience ambiguity, this can be a significant source of stress, leading to uncertainty, duplicated effort, or a feeling of being unprepared to teach.

Ensuring transparent and consistent communication regarding module allocation, curriculum updates, and expected learning outcomes is crucial. Providing clear guidelines and involving lecturers in relevant planning processes can alleviate the stress associated with unclear expectations and contribute to a more organized and predictable teaching environment.

4.4.2.15 Inspiration in Choosing Your Career.

This Figure shows respondents' agreement with getting inspiration in choosing their career.

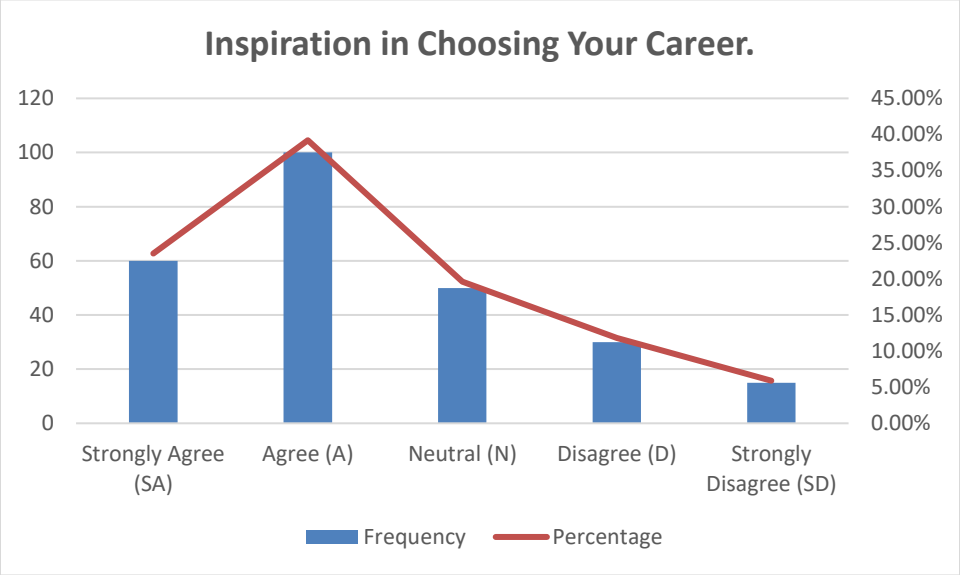


Figure 0.36 Inspiration in Choosing Your Career.

Figure 4.36, concerning "Inspiration in Choosing Your Career," indicates that a clear majority of lecturers (39.2% Agree, 23.5% Strongly Agree, totalling 62.7%) were inspired in their career choice. This is a positive indicator for intrinsic motivation and passion for the academic profession among a significant portion of the workforce.

Intrinsic motivation derived from a love for one's profession can serve as a powerful buffer against occupational stress. When lecturers find deep meaning and fulfilment in their work, they may be better equipped to cope with challenges and maintain resilience, even in demanding environments.

While external factors can certainly impact well-being, this finding suggests that a foundational passion for teaching and academia is present. Institutions should capitalize on this by fostering an environment that supports and celebrates this intrinsic motivation, ensuring that administrative burdens do not overshadow the fulfilling aspects of academic work.

4.4.2.16 University Offering Extrinsic Motivation.

This Figure shows respondents' agreement with the university offering extrinsic motivation.

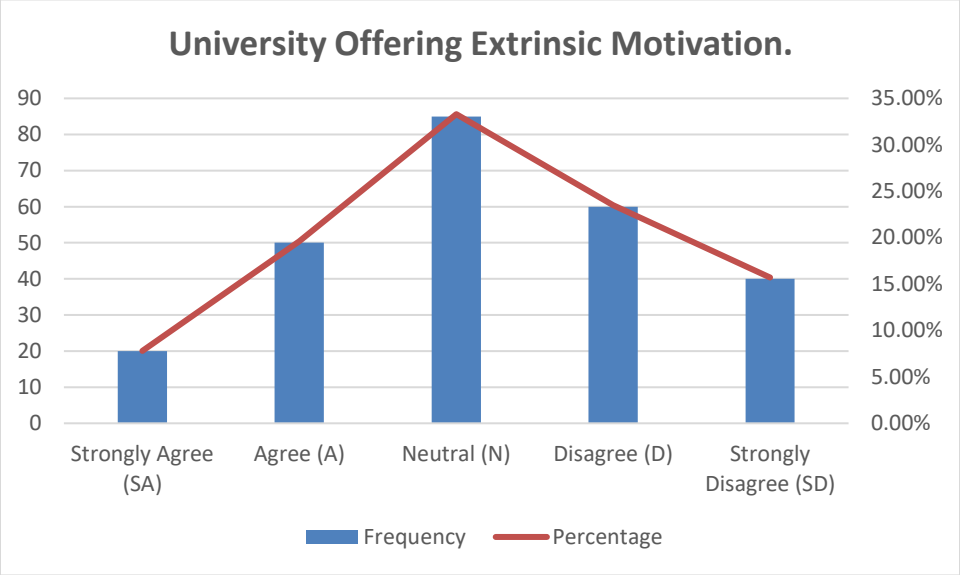


Figure 0.37 University Offering Extrinsic Motivation.

However, the university's role in providing "Extrinsic Motivation" (Figure 4.37) is perceived less positively. A significant portion of respondents are neutral (33.3%), while a combined 39.2% (23.5% Disagree, 15.7% Strongly Disagree) express dissatisfaction. Only a combined 27.4% agree or strongly agree. This suggests that while lecturers may be intrinsically driven, the institutions might not be providing sufficient external incentives or rewards.

Extrinsic motivators, such as competitive salaries, performance bonuses, clear promotion paths, or recognition programs, are crucial for retaining talent and ensuring fair compensation for demanding work. A perceived lack of these can lead to feelings of being undervalued, unappreciated, and unfairly compensated, even among those who are intrinsically motivated.

This finding highlights a critical area for improvement in human resource management within these institutions. Enhancing extrinsic motivation through transparent reward systems and equal compensation could significantly improve job satisfaction and potentially reduce stress related to financial concerns or lack of recognition

4.4.2.17 University Help in Moral, Financial, and Social Support.

This Figure shows respondents' agreement with the university providing moral, financial, and social support.

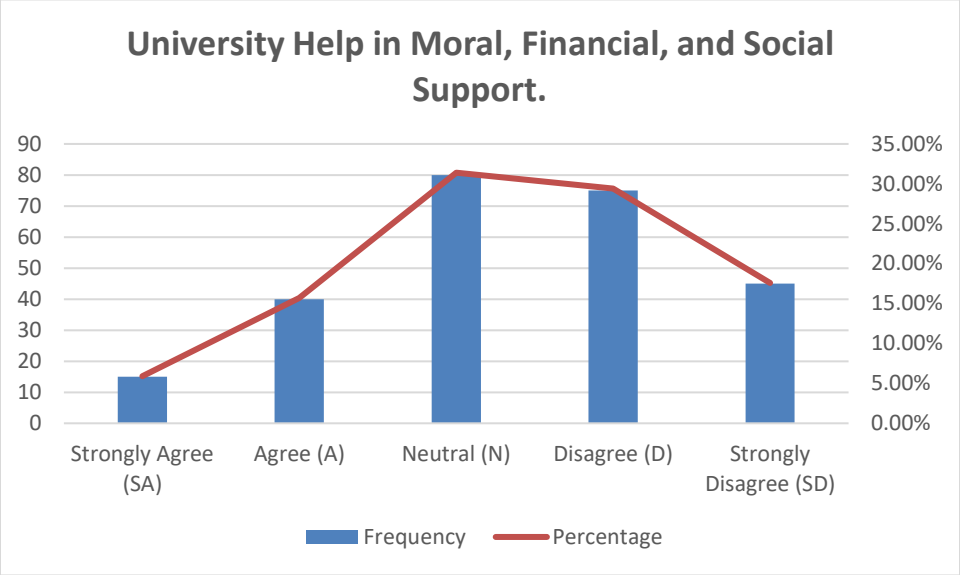


Figure 0.38 University Help in Moral, Financial, and Social Support.

The perception of the university's "Help in Moral, Financial, and Social Support" (Figure 4.38) is notably negative. A combined 47% (29.4% Disagree, 17.6% Strongly Disagree) indicate a lack of such support, with an additional 31.4% remaining neutral. Only a combined 21.6% agree or strongly agree that this support is provided.

This indicates a significant gap in the comprehensive support systems expected by lecturers. When institutions fail to provide moral (e.g., recognition, empathy), financial (e.g., fair compensation, assistance programs), or social (e.g., fostering community, wellness initiatives) support, it can leave lecturers feeling isolated, undervalued, and financially vulnerable. This absence of holistic support is a critical stress multiplier.

To address this, institutions need to re-evaluate and strengthen their employee support frameworks, ensuring they are multi-faceted and genuinely accessible. Providing tangible moral, financial, and social resources can significantly enhance lecturer well-being, build trust, and mitigate various stressors that extend beyond direct job duties.

4.4.2.18 . Enjoyment of Library Facilities.

This Figure shows respondents' agreement with enjoying the library facilities.

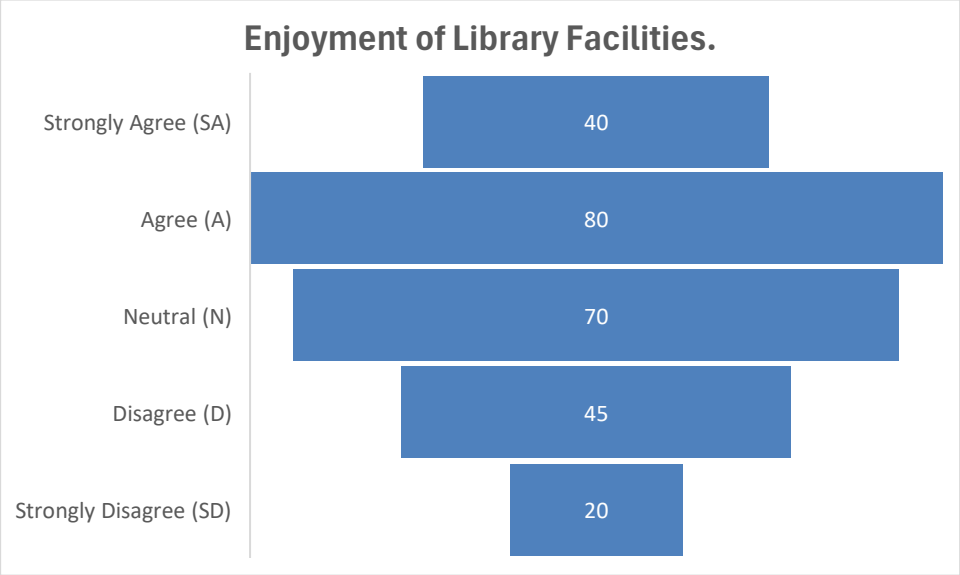


Figure 0.39 Enjoyment of Library Facilities.

While Figure 4.39 indicated that many lecturers have a generally positive view of the library facilities, the broader picture regarding overall resource adequacy on campus is considerably less encouraging. As shown in Figure 4.41, only 33.3% of respondents agreed or strongly agreed that resources on campus are adequate for their work. In contrast, a significant 35.3% of lecturers expressed neutral opinions, and another 31.4% were clearly dissatisfied 19.6% disagreed and 11.8% strongly disagreed. This distribution suggests that while some resources like the library may meet expectations, the general campus infrastructure and tools needed for effective academic work fall short for a large portion of the staff.

Figure 4.40 presents a moderately positive picture regarding lecturers' enjoyment of the institution's library facilities. A total of 47.1% of respondents indicated satisfaction, with 31.4% agreeing and 15.7% strongly agreeing that they enjoy using the library. However, 27.5% of respondents remained neutral, while a combined 25.4% expressed dissatisfaction 17.6% disagreed and 7.8% strongly disagreed. Although nearly half of the academic staff have a positive view of the library, the presence of a sizeable neutral and negative segment suggests that not all lecturers find the library facilities fully adequate, accessible, or relevant to their academic needs.

For lecturers, the library is more than just a study space it is a core academic resource that supports research, teaching preparation, and continuous professional development. A well-resourced, quiet, and accessible library can significantly reduce stress related to finding reading materials, conducting literature reviews, or accessing journals for publication work. As highlighted in Chapter 2 of the

thesis, Dlamini and Makhubu (2021) argue that lack of access to academic resources is a key contributor to occupational stress in higher education, particularly in research-driven institutions. Similarly, Gabrielli and Lundi (2020) noted that lecturers who lack access to modern research tools often report lower academic productivity and job satisfaction.

When library services are substandard whether in terms of outdated materials, limited access to digital journals, overcrowded spaces, or inadequate working hours lecturers are forced to seek alternatives or work under less-than-ideal conditions. This can lead to delays in academic tasks, frustration, and additional pressure, especially during peak academic periods, as discussed earlier in Figure 4.21. In such cases, even tasks as routine as preparing lecture notes or designing coursework can become stressful and time-consuming.

The 27.5% who remained neutral in their responses may reflect those who are unsure whether the library fully meets their needs. This group is particularly important, as their perceptions could be positively influenced through simple improvements such as better orientation sessions, improved digital access, or clearer communication about available services. On the other hand, the 25.4% who expressed dissatisfaction represent a more urgent concern. For these staff members, the library may lack essential academic materials, have poor working conditions, or may simply not be aligned with their specific teaching and research fields.

To improve library satisfaction and reduce related academic stressors, institutions must ensure that their libraries are fully aligned with current academic demands. This includes maintaining up-to-date textbooks and scholarly journals, providing robust access to online databases, creating quiet and comfortable workspaces, and offering technical support for digital research tools. In addition, libraries should regularly seek feedback from staff to understand gaps and emerging needs, especially as academic fields evolve.

Furthermore, better integration of library services with teaching and research goals can enhance their utility. For example, librarians can be involved in supporting research development, grant writing, and digital literacy training. These services not only expand the role of the library but also strengthen the academic ecosystem of the institution.

Therefore, institutions must consider significant investment in the overall adequacy and accessibility of campus resources not as a luxury, but as a fundamental requirement for supporting academic

excellence and reducing operational stress. These investments should be guided by regular staff input, needs assessments, and careful monitoring of how resource limitations affect teaching, research, and service activities. Furthermore, access to digital resources, modern classroom tools, ergonomic office environments, and research funding opportunities should be part of a standard institutional offering not an exception.

4.4.2.19 Adequacy of Resources on Campus for Work.

This Figure shows respondents' agreement with the adequacy of on-campus resources for their work.

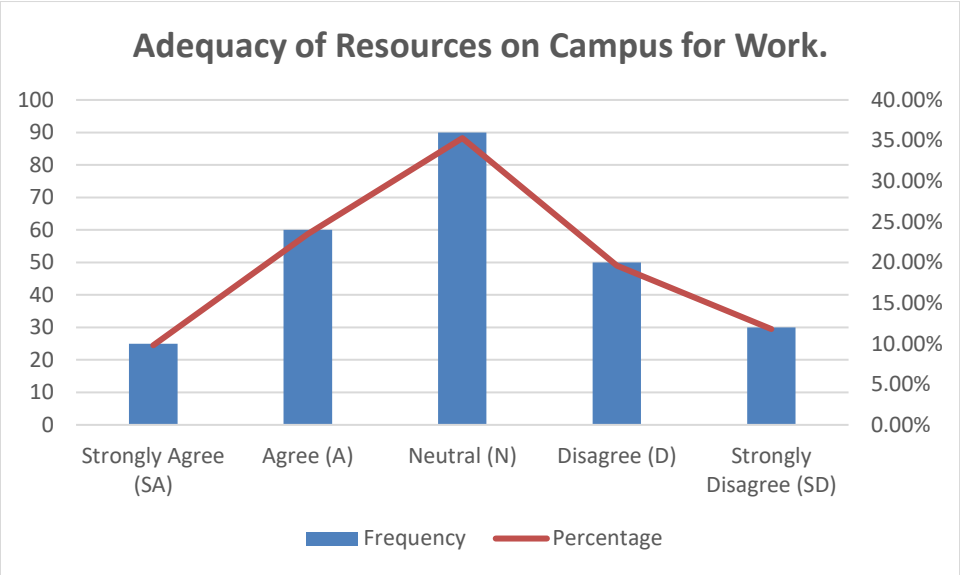


Figure 0.40 Adequacy of Resources on Campus for Work.

This finding reinforces the pattern established in Figure 4.18, where 59.2% of respondents reported moderate to extreme stress due to "Insufficient Resources to Do the Job." While the library may represent a well-managed component of institutional support, lecturers clearly experience broader resource challenges that hinder their productivity and increase stress. These could include outdated classroom technology, limited access to internet and printers, inadequate research tools, insufficient administrative assistance, or even a lack of basic office materials.

The implications of inadequate resources are far-reaching. When lecturers must compensate for resource gaps such as bringing their own laptops, purchasing their own teaching materials, or waiting extended periods for administrative processes they are not only burdened with additional effort but are also more likely to experience fatigue, job dissatisfaction, and reduced performance. This dynamic

contributes to the cumulative stress previously highlighted in Figures 4.13 (overall stress levels), 4.14 (workload), and 4.24 (perceived workload fairness). In addition, as discussed in Chapter 2 of the thesis, Dlamini and Makhubu (2021) noted that resource deficiencies are among the primary institutional stressors in Southern African higher education settings, where limited budgets often translate into underinvestment in key areas of staff support.

Moreover, this finding aligns with Gabrielli and Lundi (2020), who emphasized that operational inefficiencies, including poorly maintained infrastructure and lack of teaching or research resources, diminish academic morale and reduce the perceived value of staff contributions. In such environments, even well-meaning academic staff may struggle to meet performance expectations, not because of skill gaps, but due to a lack of tools needed to do their jobs effectively.

The presence of a high “neutral” response rate (35.3%) is also noteworthy. These individuals may not be strongly dissatisfied, but their lack of positive engagement may indicate either low expectations or resignation to the current state of institutional support. With appropriate interventions, many of these neutral staff members could potentially shift to a more satisfied group if their needs were proactively addressed.

4.4.2.20 Enjoyment of Classroom Infrastructure.

This Figure shows respondents' agreement with enjoying the classroom infrastructure.

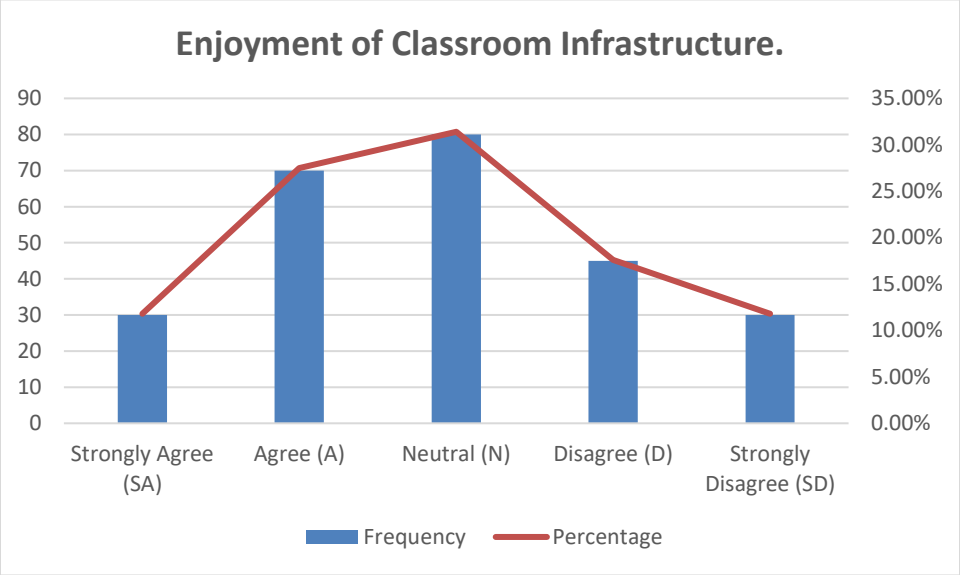


Figure 0.41 Enjoyment of Classroom Infrastructure.

Similarly, "Enjoyment of Classroom Infrastructure" (Figure 4.41) shows a mixed but generally positive perception, with a combined 39.3% (27.5% Agree, 11.8% Strongly Agree) expressing enjoyment. However, a significant 31.4% remained neutral, and a combined 29.4% (17.6% Disagree, 11.8% Strongly Disagree) expressed dissatisfaction. This mixed response suggests that while some classrooms might be well-equipped, there are inconsistencies or areas where infrastructure falls short.

The quality of classroom infrastructure (e.g., technology, seating, ventilation, whiteboards) directly impacts the teaching and learning experience, and by extension, a lecturer's comfort and effectiveness. Substandard facilities can lead to technical difficulties, pedagogical limitations, and increased stress during teaching sessions.

Ensuring consistent quality and functionality across all teaching spaces is important. This means not only updating outdated infrastructure but also providing reliable technical support and training on new equipment. Addressing these granular aspects of the work environment can significantly reduce daily stressors for lecturers and improve their teaching experience.

4.4.3 Physical and Emotional Symptoms

4.4.3.1 Frequency of Feeling Tired or Exhausted During Workday

This Figure presents how often respondents feel tired or exhausted during the workday.

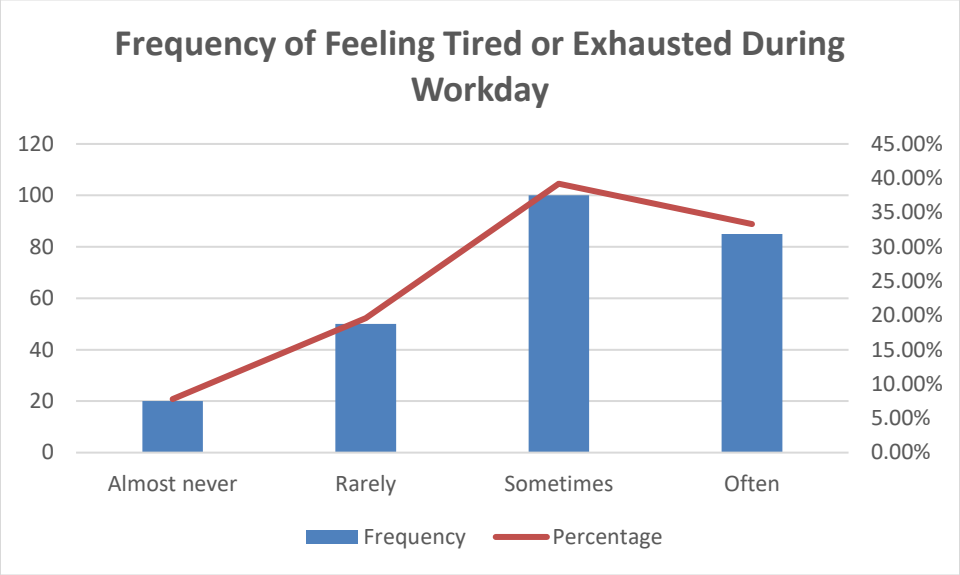


Figure 0.42 Frequency of Feeling Tired or Exhausted During Workday

Figure 4.42 reveals that a substantial portion of lecturers frequently experience exhaustion during the workday. A combined 72.5% (39.2% "Sometimes" and 33.3% "Often") report feeling tired or exhausted. This pervasive fatigue indicates that the demands of the job are leading to significant energy depletion, making it difficult for lecturers to maintain optimal performance throughout their working hours.

This consistent feeling of exhaustion is a clear indicator of the physical and mental toll of sustained occupational stress. It can manifest as decreased alertness, reduced cognitive function, and diminished capacity for tasks requiring sustained effort, directly impacting teaching quality, research productivity, and administrative efficiency.

The high prevalence of exhaustion suggests that current workloads and working conditions may be unsustainable, leading to chronic fatigue rather than healthy recovery. Addressing this requires examining factors such as workload balance, break policies, and the availability of supportive resources that help lecturers manage their energy levels effectively.

4.5 Effects of Occupational Stress on Performance (Linked to Objective 3)

This section analyzes the tangible and perceived effects of occupational stress on the performance of academic lecturers, directly addressing Objective 3 of the study. The data, primarily derived from Section D of the Lecturer Questionnaire, sheds light on how stress manifests in terms of exhaustion,

concentration, motivation, and emotional well-being, as well as broader implications for institutional talent retention.

4.5.1.1 Frequency of Making Mistakes or Difficulty Concentrating Due to Stress

This Figure shows how often respondents make mistakes or have difficulty concentrating due to stress.

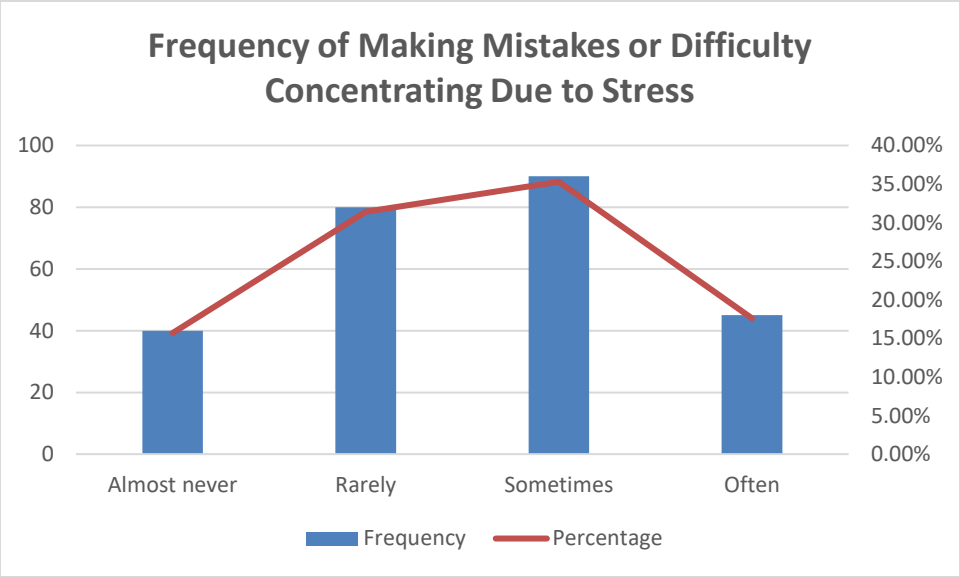


Figure 0.43 Frequency of Making Mistakes or Difficulty Concentrating Due to Stress

The impact of stress on cognitive function is highlighted in Figure 4.43, where 35.3% of respondents report making mistakes or having difficulty concentrating "Sometimes" due to stress, and 17.6% experience this "Often." This cumulative 52.9% indicates that over half of the lecturers perceive stress to directly compromise their cognitive performance, leading to errors and reduced focus.

This finding has significant implications for the quality and accuracy of academic work, including teaching delivery, grading, research analysis, and administrative tasks. Errors resulting from impaired concentration can affect student learning outcomes, research integrity, and institutional efficiency.

The direct link between stress and cognitive impairment underscores the urgent need for stress reduction interventions. Creating an environment that mitigates chronic stress could not only improve lecturer well-being but also enhance the overall academic quality and reduce operational mistakes within the institutions.

4.5.1.2 Frequency of Feeling Motivated to Perform Job Duties

This Figure presents how often respondents feel motivated to perform their job duties

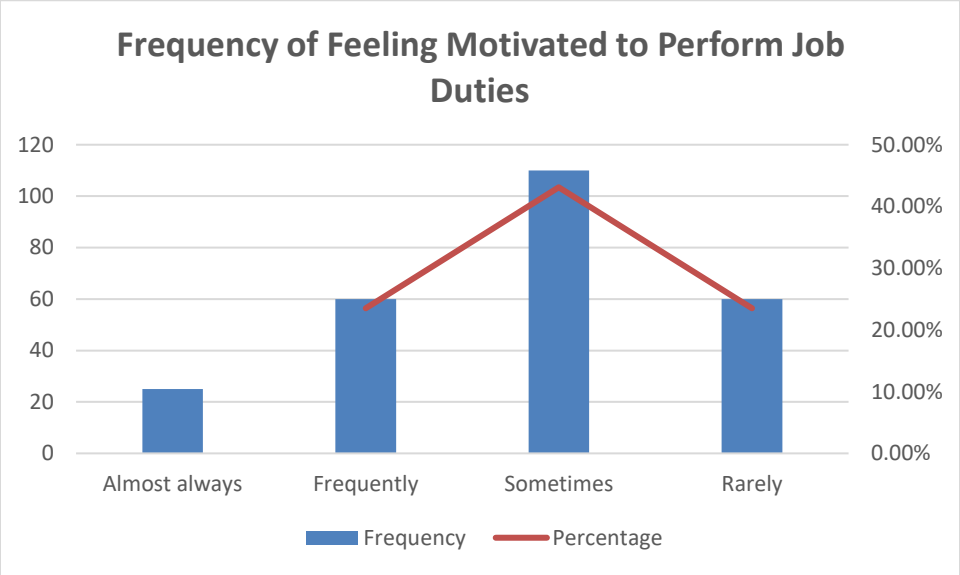


Figure 0.44 Frequency of Feeling Motivated to Perform Job Duties

Motivation levels among lecturers are noticeably influenced by occupational stress, as evidenced by the findings in Figure 4.44. Only a small fraction of respondents just 9.8% reported that they "Almost always" feel motivated in their work. A much larger portion, 43.1%, stated that they feel motivated only "Sometimes," while a further 23.5% admitted to "Rarely" feeling motivated. Combined, this means that over two-thirds of lecturers experience inconsistent or low levels of motivation, which is a strong indicator that stress and related workplace challenges are gradually eroding the drive, energy, and passion that are essential for sustained high performance in academic roles.

This erosion of motivation has far-reaching consequences. When lecturers lack consistent enthusiasm for their work, they are less likely to take initiative, explore new teaching strategies, or fully engage with their students. Over time, this may lead to reduced quality in lesson delivery, slower research progress, and weaker contributions to academic committees or institutional development.

Demotivation can also reduce creativity and innovation, both of which are crucial for curriculum development and adapting to changes in the education sector.

Furthermore, persistent low motivation can foster a sense of emotional detachment, where lecturers begin to view their work as a burden rather than a meaningful contribution. This type of disengagement often results in minimal effort, just enough to meet basic expectations, rather than striving for excellence. The effects can ripple outward students who may notice a lack of enthusiasm in their lecturers, which can reduce classroom participation, diminish interest in the subject, and lower the overall standard of academic interactions.

To reverse this trend, institutions must take deliberate action to address the underlying causes of stress that contribute to demotivation. Factors such as excessive workload, inadequate support, poor communication, and lack of resources issues already highlighted in earlier sections of the findings must be tackled comprehensively. Restoring motivation is not a matter of isolated interventions but rather requires a systemic approach that includes improving the work environment, ensuring staff feel valued, and providing clear pathways for growth and development.

Creating a positive and empowering academic culture can go a long way in reviving lecturer morale. This includes recognizing and rewarding effort, encouraging collaboration, offering autonomy in decision-making, and ensuring that leadership is approachable and supportive. When lecturers feel heard, supported, and equipped to do their jobs well, they are more likely to reconnect with the intrinsic motivation that originally drew them to academia.

4.5.1.3 Frequency of Feeling Emotionally Drained as a Result of Job Stress

This Figure shows how often respondents feel emotionally drained due to job stress.

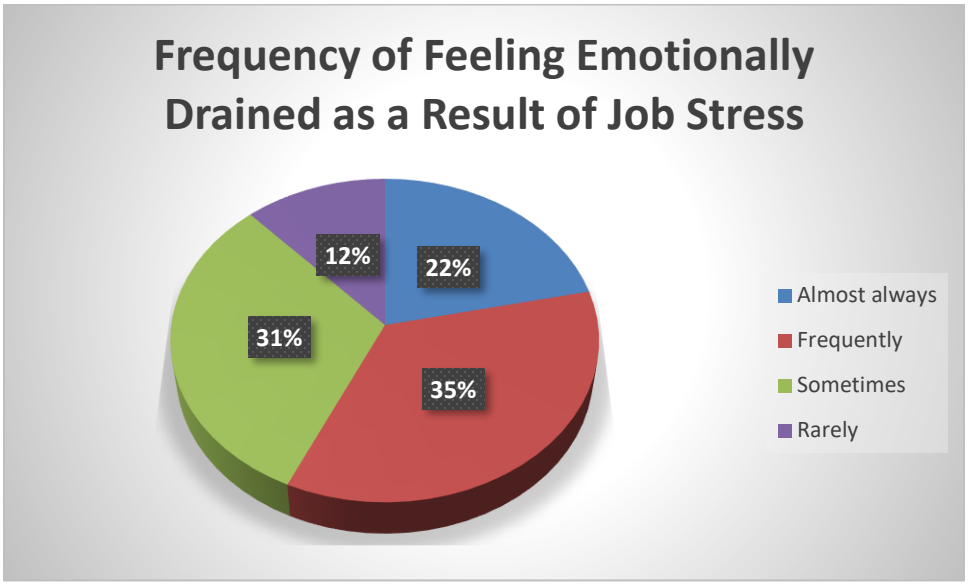


Figure 0.45 Frequency of Feeling Emotionally Drained as a Result of Job Stress

Emotional drainage caused by job-related stress appears to be a widespread and serious issue among academic staff. As shown in Figure 4.45, 35.3% of lecturers reported feeling emotionally drained "Frequently," while an additional 21.6% indicated they feel this way "Almost always." Together, this totals 56.9%, meaning that more than half of the lecturers surveyed experience high levels of emotional exhaustion on a regular basis. This finding illustrates that emotional fatigue is not an occasional problem, but a persistent condition affecting a significant portion of the workforce.

Emotional drainage is one of the key indicators of burnout, which is often triggered by chronic workplace stress that has not been successfully managed. When lecturers feel emotionally exhausted, they may begin to develop feelings of detachment, become less empathetic, and struggle to maintain the enthusiasm and energy needed for meaningful engagement with students, colleagues, and their academic work. This decline in emotional availability can negatively impact not only the lecturer's personal well-being, but also the broader academic environment, where collaboration, mentorship, and interpersonal communication are essential.

The effects of emotional drainage can be seen in many areas of academic life. Lecturers who feel constantly depleted may be less likely to participate in faculty meetings, contribute to new initiatives, or take on additional responsibilities. They may also become more withdrawn in classroom settings, limiting the level of interaction and support provided to students. Over time, this can erode the overall quality of teaching and weaken the sense of community within the institution. Additionally, emotional

exhaustion can lead to increased absenteeism, lower morale, and even decisions to leave the profession altogether.

These results underline the importance of implementing structured support systems that actively address emotional well-being. Institutions need to go beyond simply acknowledging the existence of stress and take concrete steps to reduce its impact. This might involve creating safe and confidential spaces for staff to discuss their challenges, offering regular mental health check-ins, and ensuring that workloads are balanced enough to allow for adequate rest and recovery. Small measures, such as offering flexible work schedules, promoting regular breaks, and encouraging the use of leave days, can also help reduce emotional fatigue.

Moreover, emotional well-being should be viewed as a shared institutional responsibility. While individual coping strategies are important, they must be supported by an organizational culture that values staff health and provides the resources to maintain it. Leaders within the institution should model healthy work behaviours, be approachable when staff need support, and avoid cultivating a culture of overwork or constant urgency.

4.5.1.4 Often Tired at Work.

This Figure shows respondents' agreement with often feeling tired at work.

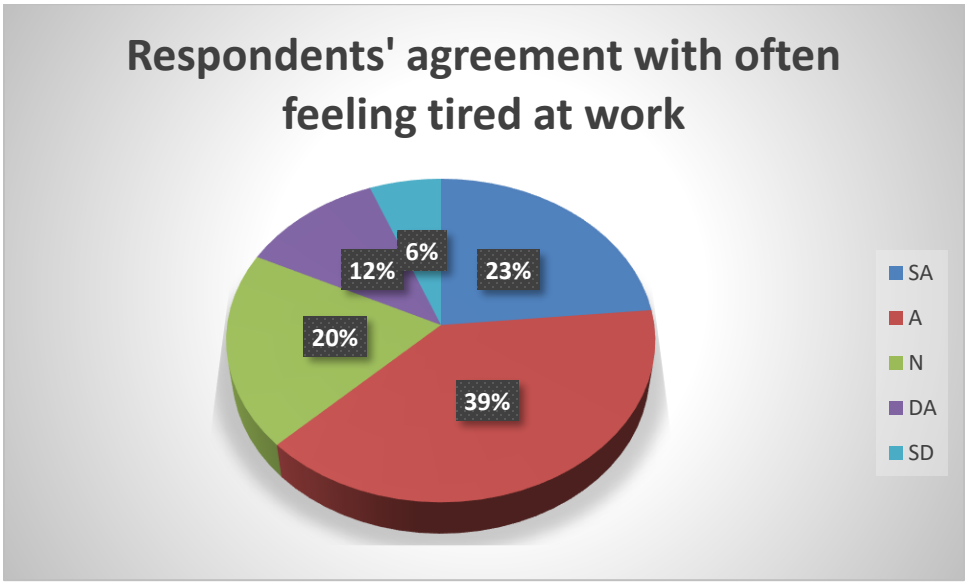


Figure 0.46 Respondents' agreement with often feeling tired at work

Attitudinal responses further reinforce the negative effects of stress. Figure 4.46 shows that a vast majority (39.2% agreeing, 23.5% strongly agreeing, totalling 62.7%) "Often" feel tired at work. This

direct agreement with frequent tiredness directly correlates with and validates the quantitative finding on "Frequency of Feeling Tired or Exhausted During Workday" (Figure 4.43).

This high level of perceived tiredness indicates a chronic state of fatigue among lecturers, suggesting that they are unable to adequately recover from the demands of their jobs. Chronic fatigue not only impacts daily performance but also has long-term health implications, contributing to burnout and decreased life satisfaction.

The consistency of this finding across different measures underscores that exhaustion is a fundamental manifestation of occupational stress in this context. Addressing the root causes of workload and providing adequate rest and recovery opportunities are essential to mitigate this pervasive issue.

4.5.1.5 Equal Opportunities Between Male and Female Lecturers.

This Figure shows respondents' agreement with equal opportunities between male and female lecturers.

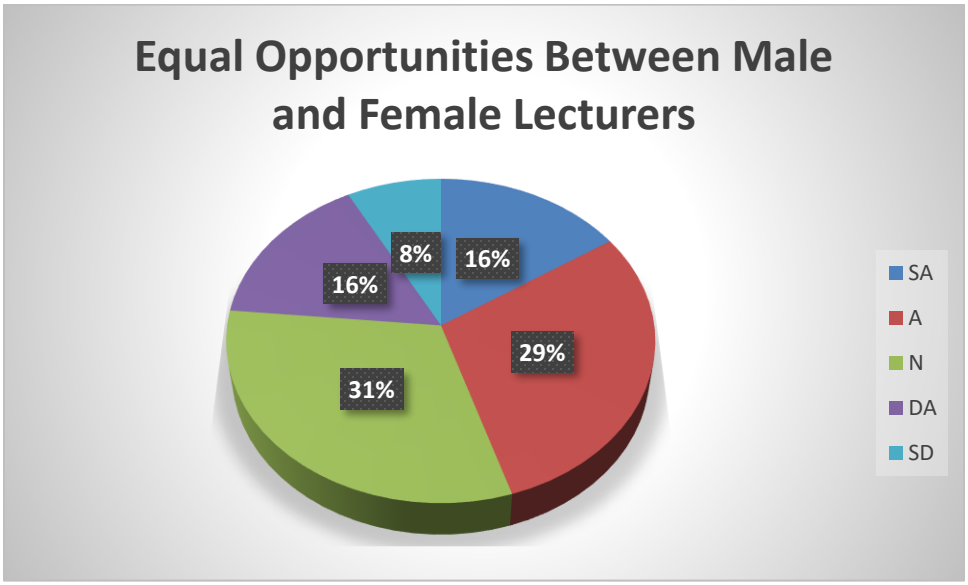


Figure 0.7 Equal Opportunities Between Male and Female Lecturers

Figure 4.47 presents respondents' perceptions of gender equality among academic staff. Overall, 45.1% agreed or strongly agreed that male and female lecturers have equal opportunities within their institutions, while 31.4% were neutral and 23.5% disagreed or strongly disagreed. These findings suggest that although many lecturers perceive the institutional environment as equitable, a considerable proportion remain uncertain or believe that gender inequalities persist.

The relatively high proportion of neutral responses may reflect uncertainty about whether equality exists in areas such as workload allocation, promotion, research recognition, leadership opportunities, and remuneration. Conversely, respondents who perceived inequality may feel disadvantaged in career advancement or organisational support, which can contribute to demotivation, occupational stress, and reduced engagement.

The findings further suggest that while institutions may have gender equality policies, their implementation and visibility may not be consistently experienced by staff. Perceptions of fairness are often shaped by personal experiences, departmental culture, and the transparency of organisational processes. Institutions should therefore strengthen equitable practices through transparent recruitment and promotion processes, fair resource allocation, balanced leadership representation, and continuous diversity and inclusion initiatives to foster a more inclusive academic environment.

4.5.1.6 Feeling Physical or Emotional Symptoms of Stress.

This Figure shows respondents' agreement with feeling physical or emotional symptoms of stress.

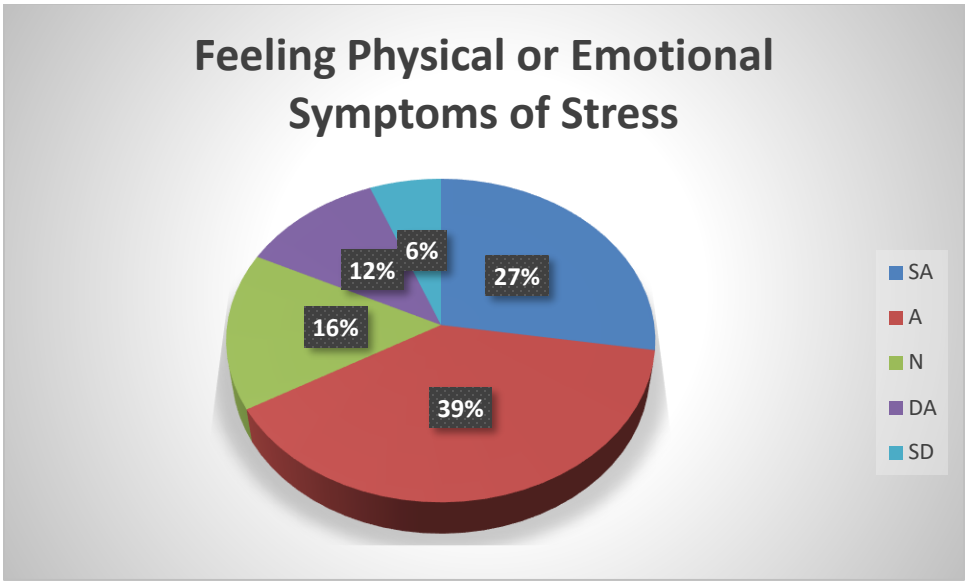


Figure 0.48 Feeling Physical or Emotional Symptoms of Stress

Furthermore, a substantial number of lecturers (39.2% agreeing, 27.5% strongly agreeing, totaling 66.7%) report "Feeling Physical or Emotional Symptoms of Stress" (Figure 4.48). This high level of agreement indicates that stress is not merely a mental state or a subjective feeling but manifests with concrete, measurable physical and emotional symptoms, significantly impacting their health and overall functionality.

These symptoms can range from headaches, digestive issues, and sleep disturbances to anxiety, irritability, and depression, all of which compromise a lecturer's ability to perform their duties effectively and maintain a healthy personal life. The prevalence of these symptoms underscores the severe health consequences of unmanaged occupational stress within these institutions.

This finding reinforces the urgency for institutions to implement comprehensive well-being programs, including access to mental health support, stress reduction workshops, and proactive health monitoring. Addressing these physical and emotional manifestations of stress is crucial for protecting the long-term health of academic staff and ensuring sustainable performance.

4.5.2 Staff Turnover and Retention Perception

4.5.2.1 Lecturer Resignation Due to Stressors.

This Figure shows respondents' agreement with lecturer resignation being due to stressors. |



Figure 0.49 Lecturer Resignation Due to Stressors

Figure 4.49 shows that most lecturers perceive occupational stress as a major reason for resignation. Overall, 68.7% of respondents agreed (37.3%) or strongly agreed (31.4%) that lecturers resign because of work-related stressors. This finding highlights occupational stress as a significant human resource challenge within private tertiary institutions.

The results suggest that stress affects not only current job performance but also staff retention. The loss of experienced lecturers reduces institutional knowledge, disrupts academic continuity, and increases the workload of remaining staff. Addressing the underlying causes of occupational stress is

therefore essential for improving staff retention, protecting institutional capacity, and sustaining academic quality.

4.5.2.2 Institution Losing Irreplaceable Talent Due to Resignations.

This Figure shows respondents' agreement with the institution losing irreplaceable talent due to resignations.

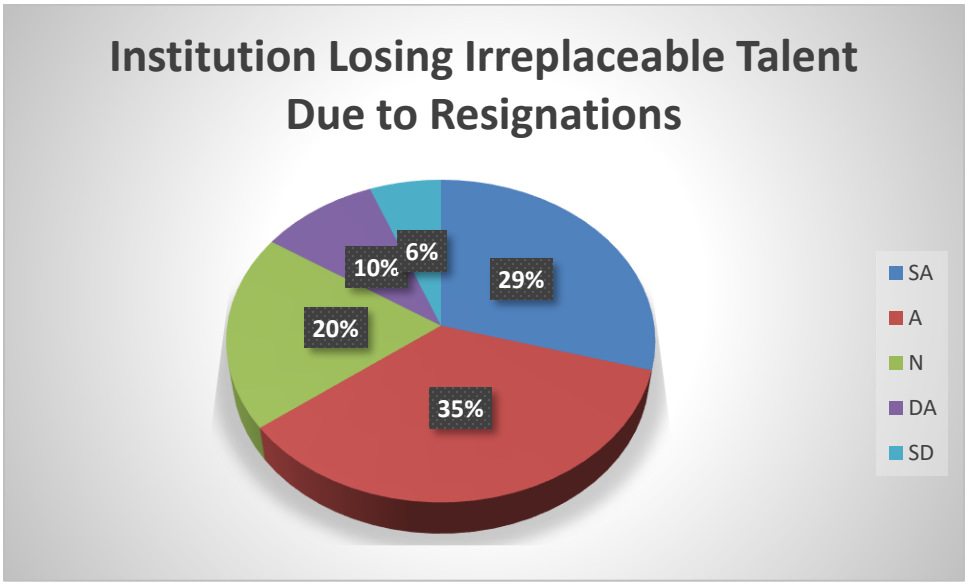


Figure 0.50 Institution Losing Irreplaceable Talent Due to Resignations

Figure 4.50 highlights a significant concern among academic staff regarding talent retention. A combined 64.7% of respondents 35.3% agreeing and 29.4% strongly agree that their institutions are losing irreplaceable talent due to resignations. This strong level of agreement indicates that the issue of staff turnover is not only visible but also deeply felt by lecturers, suggesting that it is affecting the stability and performance of the academic environment.

The use of the term "irreplaceable talent" is particularly noteworthy. It reflects the perception that those who are leaving are not just ordinary employees but individuals with unique skills, deep experience, or institutional knowledge that is difficult to replace. These may include long-serving lecturers who are deeply familiar with course content and student needs, staff with strong mentorship abilities, or researchers who contribute significantly to institutional output and academic reputation. When such individuals resign, their departure can leave critical gaps in teaching quality, research leadership, and departmental continuity.

This perceived loss of valuable personnel adds to an already challenging work environment. As discussed in earlier sections such as Figures 4.13, 4.14, and 4.46 many lecturers are dealing with high

levels of stress, excessive workload, emotional exhaustion, and insufficient resources. The resignations of skilled colleagues may further burden the remaining staff, who may be expected to absorb additional responsibilities without appropriate support or training. This creates a cycle where stress increases, motivation declines (as seen in Figure 4.46), and more staff consider leaving, thereby accelerating the institutional brain drain.

Moreover, the emotional impact of losing respected and experienced colleagues cannot be underestimated. For those who remain, it can create feelings of instability, anxiety about the future, or even a diminished sense of purpose or team morale. These effects are particularly damaging in academic environments, where collaboration, long-term planning, and shared intellectual goals are central to success.

The findings in Figure 4.50 thus underscore the urgent need for institutions to take proactive steps to retain talent and reduce the risk of further resignations. This includes not only improving working conditions such as fair workload distribution, better resource provision, and stress management but also creating a workplace culture where academic staff feel valued, supported, and invested in. Regular feedback opportunities, clear career development paths, recognition programs, and open communication between management and lecturers can all play a role in retaining skilled personnel.

4.5.2.3 High Labour Turnover Affecting Institution.

This Figure shows respondents' agreement with high labour turnover affecting the institution.

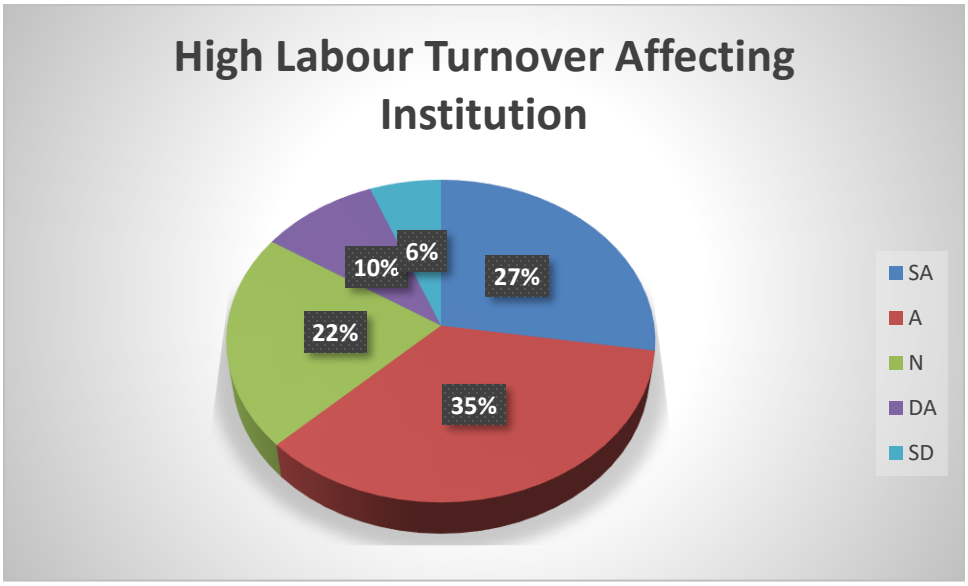


Figure 0.50 High Labour Turnover Affecting Institution

The perception that "High Labour Turnover Affecting Institution" (Figure 4.50) also resonates strongly, with 35.3% agreeing and 27.5% strongly agreeing, totalling 62.8%. This collective concern highlights the detrimental impact of stress-induced turnover not just on individual lecturers but on the overall stability, efficiency, and reputation of the institution.

High turnover leads to increased recruitment costs, loss of institutional memory, disruptions in academic programs, and increased workload for remaining staff. These cascading effects can create a vicious cycle, where the stress of turnover further exacerbates existing stressors for the remaining academic staff.

This finding reinforces the urgency for institutions to prioritize lecturer well-being and stress management as a core strategy for organizational health and sustainability. Addressing the causes of stress-induced turnover is not merely a human resources issue but a strategic imperative for institutional stability and growth.

4.5.2.4 Number of Lecturers You Started With Still the Same.

This Figure shows respondents' agreement with the number of lecturers they started with still being the same.

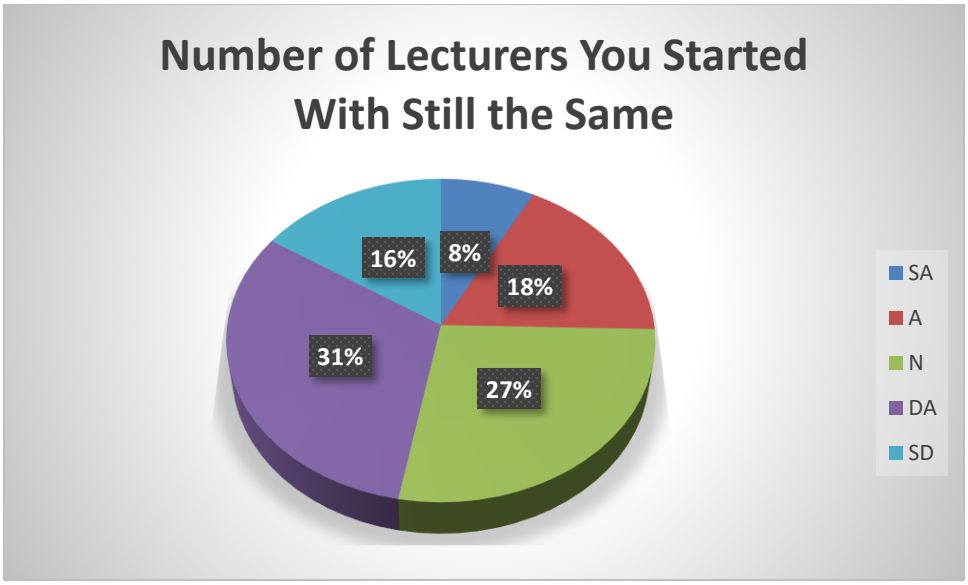


Figure 0.51 Number of Lecturers You Started With Still the Same

In contrast to the strong agreement on high labour turnover, Figure 4.51 indicates a significant proportion of lecturers (31.4% disagree, 15.7% strongly disagree, totalling 47.1%) feel that the "Number of Lecturers You Started With is Still the Same." Only a combined 25.4% agree or strongly agree. This discrepancy with general perceptions of turnover might imply that while turnover is

occurring, new hires are quickly replacing those who leave, masking the underlying problem from the perspective of individual cohorts.

Alternatively, this finding could suggest that lecturers perceive a continuous flow of staff, where the overall number appears consistent, but the composition of experienced vs. new staff is changing due to turnover. This constant flux can still be a source of stress as it impacts team cohesion, institutional memory, and mentoring relationships.

Therefore, while the overall headcount might appear stable, the underlying dynamics of staff movement, particularly related to stress-induced departures and subsequent replacements, warrant closer investigation. The perceived consistency in numbers might mask deeper issues related to the quality and experience of the academic workforce.

4.5.3 Institution Treating You as Valued Assets.

This Figure shows respondents' agreement with the institution treating them as valued assets.

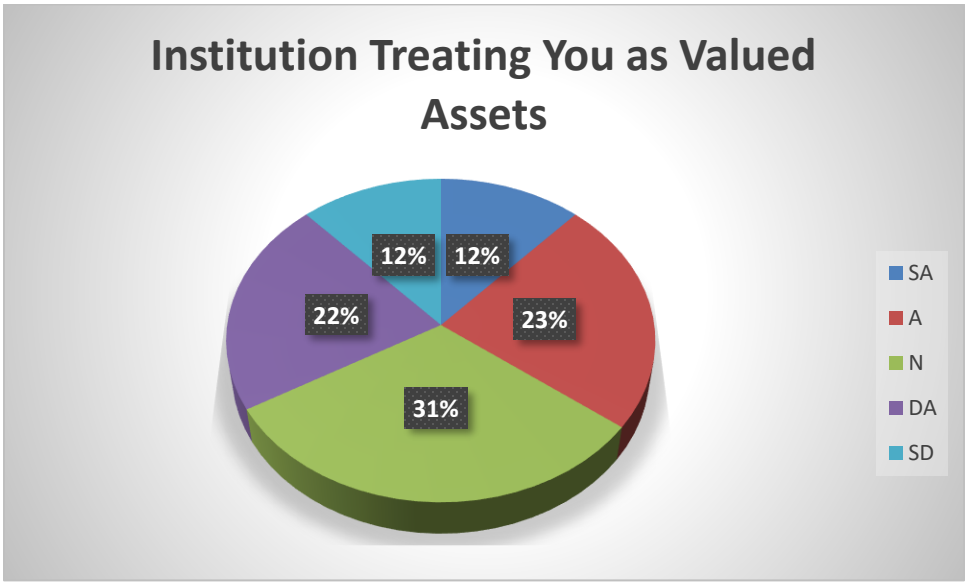


Figure 0.52 Institution Treating You as Valued Assets

The belief that the "Institution is Treating You as Valued Assets" (Figure 4.52) shows a neutral to negative leaning. A significant 31.4% are neutral, with a combined 33.4% (21.6% Disagree, 11.8% Strongly Disagree) expressing dissatisfaction. Only a combined 35.3% agree or strongly agree. This lack of feeling valued can significantly contribute to emotional exhaustion and reduced commitment, exacerbating the effects of stress on performance.

When employees do not feel appreciated, recognized, or valued for their contributions, their intrinsic motivation can wane, leading to disengagement and a higher propensity to experience stress and burnout. This perception can arise from inadequate compensation, lack of recognition programs, insufficient support, or a general disregard for their well-being.

Institutions should prioritize fostering a culture of appreciation and recognition. Implementing clear reward systems, providing opportunities for professional growth, and ensuring open communication channels where lecturers feel heard and respected are vital steps to ensure they feel like valued assets, which is essential for both morale and retention.

4.5.4 Stress Normally Draining You and Affecting Your Performance.

This Figure shows respondents' agreement with stress normally draining them and affecting their performance.

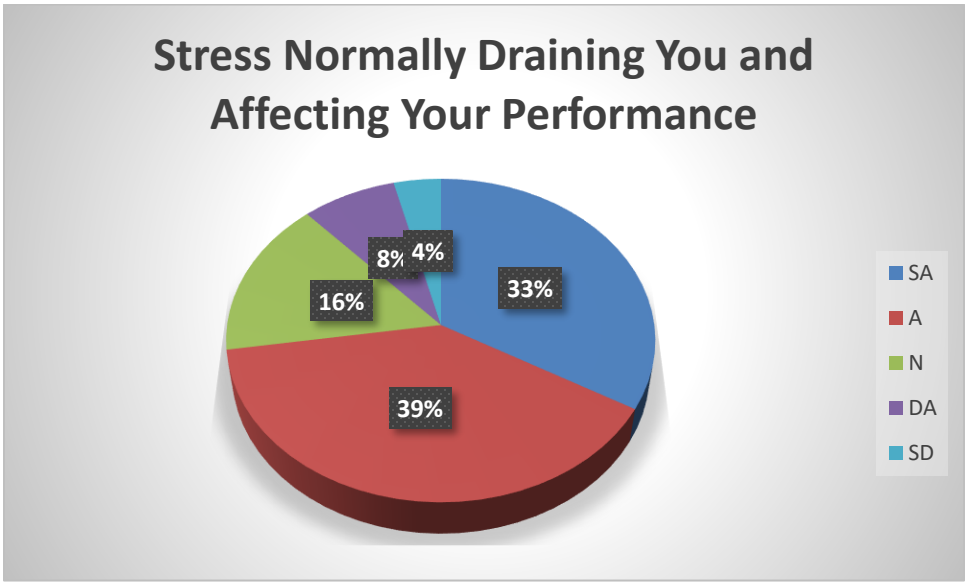


Figure 0.53 Stress Normally Draining You and Affecting Your Performance

Finally, Figure 4.53 emphatically states that "Stress Normally Draining You and Affecting Your Performance," with a combined 72.5% (39.2% Agree, 33.3% Strongly Agree) expressing strong agreement. This high level of consensus directly confirms that stress is not merely a discomfort or an emotional state but a significant, perceived impediment to academic performance for most lecturers.

This finding validates the core premise of this research study: that occupational stress has tangible and negative consequences for employee output. Lecturers clearly articulate that stress saps their energy and undermines their ability to perform their duties effectively, impacting both the quantity and quality of their work.

This direct link between stress and its detrimental effects on daily work output is a critical finding for both individual well-being and institutional productivity. It underscores the urgency of addressing stress not just for humanitarian reasons, but as a strategic imperative for improving institutional effectiveness and achieving academic goals.

4.6 Challenges Faced by Managers Supervising Stressed Lecturers (Linked to Objective 2)

This section investigates the challenges encountered by managers in supervising stressed lecturers, integrating perspectives from both the lecturer and manager questionnaires (Sections D of Lecturer Questionnaire and Sections A, B, C of Manager Questionnaire). This dual perspective offers a comprehensive understanding of the dynamics involved in managing occupational stress within the academic environment.

4.6.1 Manager-Lecturer Communication

4.6.1.1 Discussion of Stress Levels with Manager.

This Figure shows whether respondents have discussed their stress levels with their manager.



Figure 0.54 Discussion Of Stress Levels With Manager

Figure 4.54 reveals that a majority of lecturers (58.8%) have not discussed their stress levels with their manager, while only 41.2% have done so. This points to a significant communication barrier within the academic workplace, which may hinder early identification and intervention strategies aimed at managing stress effectively.

The reluctance to disclose stress to managerial staff may stem from several factors. Lecturers might fear being perceived as weak, incompetent, or unprofessional. Others may doubt whether raising such concerns would lead to any meaningful support or change. This hesitance results in a situation where stress is internalized rather than addressed, creating a silent strain that continues to grow. Consequently, managers may remain unaware of the true extent of stress affecting their teams, limiting their ability to respond proactively.

This finding is closely connected to earlier results in the study particularly the high levels of reported emotional drainage (Figure 4.46), declining motivation (Figure 4.45), and perceptions of inadequate institutional support (Figures 4.25, 4.26, and 4.41). It suggests that beyond the structural causes of stress, there are also cultural and relational barriers that prevent resolution. If lecturers feel unsupported or unprotected when raising their concerns, they are more likely to suffer in silence, leading to increased burnout, disengagement, and even attrition.

Therefore, creating an open, safe, and trust-based communication environment is essential. Institutions must work towards building a culture where staff feel comfortable and confident in discussing their well-being without fear of judgment or retaliation. Doing so not only enables better stress management but also strengthens staff-manager relationships, ultimately contributing to a healthier and more sustainable academic environment.

4.6.1.2 Feeling Supported by Manager (if discussed).

This Figure shows whether respondents felt supported by their manager after discussing stress. *Note: Total frequency here is based on the 'Yes' responses from Figure 4.56.*

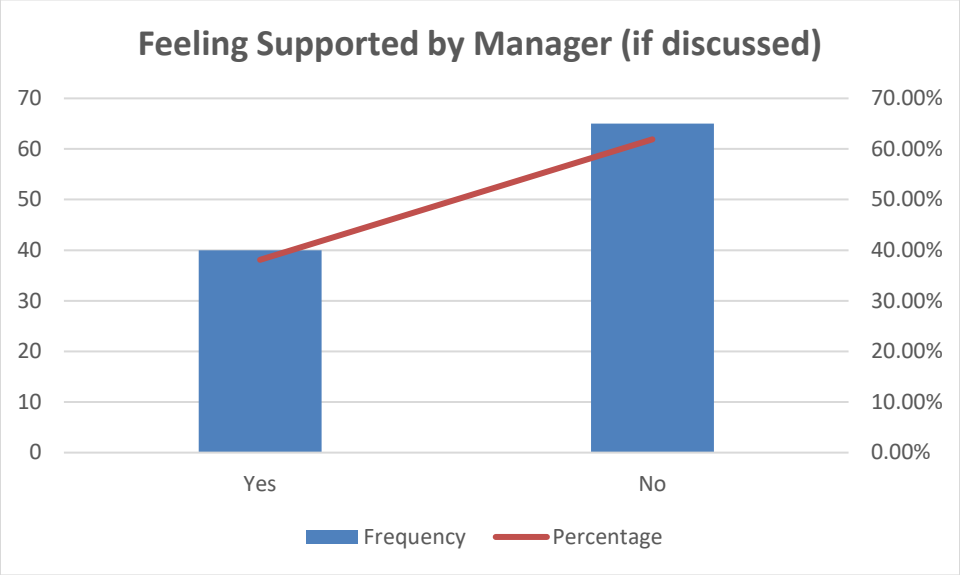


Figure 0.55 Feeling Supported by Manager (if discussed)

Among those who *did* discuss their stress, Figure 4.55 shows that a higher percentage (61.9%) did *not* feel supported by their manager, compared to only 38.1% who did. This is a highly critical finding, suggesting that even when lecturers overcome the barrier of disclosure, the perceived support from their managers is often inadequate or ineffective.

This discrepancy between the act of disclosure and the feeling of being supported could further discourage lecturers from seeking help in the future, reinforcing the perception that discussing stress is pointless or even detrimental. It undermines trust and can lead to a sense of abandonment when support is most needed.

For managers, this indicates a clear challenge in providing effective support, possibly due to a lack of training in managing stress, insufficient resources to offer solutions, or an inability to address the systemic causes of stress. This finding emphasizes the need to equip managers with the necessary skills and institutional backing to genuinely support their stressed staff.

4.6.1.3 Comfort Level in Discussing Job-Related Stress with Manager.

This Figure presents respondents' comfort level in discussing job-related stress with their manager.



Figure 0.56 Comfort Level In Discussing Job-related Stress With Manager

Figure 4.56 further reinforces earlier findings related to communication challenges around occupational stress. A significant majority of lecturers (68.6%) reported that they are not comfortable discussing job-related stress with their managers, while only 31.4% indicated that they are. This striking discomfort level presents a major obstacle for management in accurately assessing the extent of stress within academic teams and responding with appropriate support.

This reluctance to engage in open dialogue about stress may arise from a variety of concerns. Some lecturers might fear being judged as unprofessional or incapable, while others may worry that disclosing stress could negatively affect their career progression. Additionally, there may be a broader perception that management is either unapproachable or not genuinely responsive to staff well-being issues. Regardless of the underlying reasons, this communication gap significantly impairs early detection and timely intervention essential components of effective stress management.

This finding directly links to Figure 4.54, which showed that most lecturers have not disclosed their stress levels to their managers. It also complements insights from Figures 4.26 and 4.40, which highlighted low satisfaction with institutional support and resource adequacy. When combined, these patterns paint a picture of an academic environment where stress is common but rarely addressed through open manager-employee dialogue.

Therefore, there is a clear and urgent need to foster a workplace culture that prioritizes trust, empathy, and psychological safety. Managers must take the lead in creating consistent opportunities for open conversations, reassuring staff that their well-being is valued and that expressing difficulties will not

result in stigma or negative consequences. This may involve leadership training, regular one-on-one check-ins, confidential support channels, and visible responsiveness to staff concerns.

4.6.1.4 Manager Understanding of Job Demands.

This Figure shows respondents' perception of their manager's understanding of job demands.

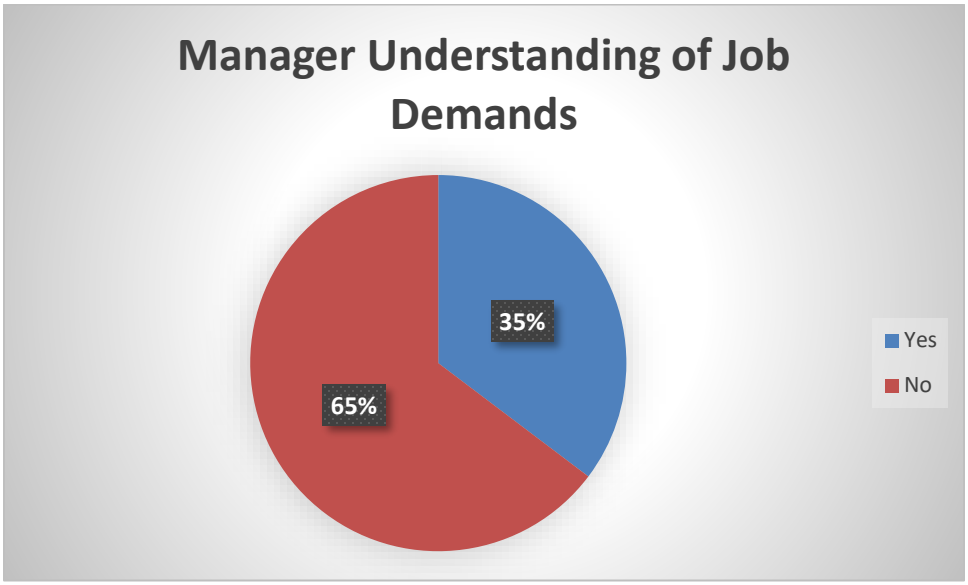


Figure 0.57 Manager Understanding of Job Demands

Lecturers' perception of their "Manager Understanding of Job Demands" (Figure 4.57) is also largely negative, with 64.7% feeling their manager does *not* understand their job demands. Only 35.3% believe their manager does. This lack of perceived understanding can lead to feelings of being overworked or unfairly treated, intensifying stress and hindering effective supervisory support.

When managers are perceived as detached from the daily realities and pressures of lecturers' roles, their attempts to provide support or allocate tasks may be seen as uninformed or insensitive. This can erode trust and make lecturers less likely to seek guidance or share their concerns.

Effective management of stress requires an accurate appreciation of the specific pressures faced by employees. Bridging this understanding gap necessitates that managers engage more closely with lecturers' day-to-day work, perhaps through regular check-ins, direct observation, or workload assessments that genuinely reflect the complexity and time commitment of academic duties.

4.6.2 Resource and Department Ratings

4.6.2.1 Rating of Employee Representatives Committees (Manager Questionnaire).

This Figure displays managers' ratings of employee representatives committees.

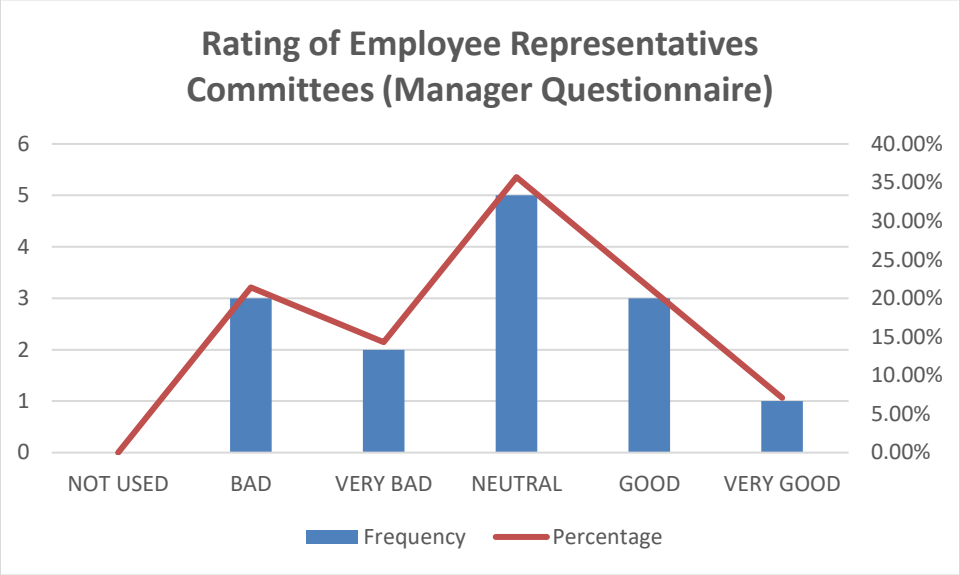


Figure 0.58 Rating of Employee Representatives Committees (Manager Questionnaire)

From the managers' perspective, the quantitative analysis of institutional support elements offers a critical viewpoint. Figure 4.60 indicates that "Employee Representatives Committees" are rated as "NEUTRAL" by 35.7% of managers, with a combined 35.7% (21.4% "BAD," 14.3% "VERY BAD") expressing negative sentiments. Only a combined 28.5% rated them positively. This mixed, often negative, perception suggests that these formal channels for addressing employee concerns may not be consistently effective or trusted, posing a challenge for managers who might rely on them for conflict resolution or stress alleviation.

The high "Neutral" response rate among managers could imply a lack of direct engagement with these committees, or a perception that their impact is negligible. For those who rate them negatively, it suggests that these committees are failing to adequately represent employee concerns or effect meaningful change.

This finding points to a systemic weakness in the institutional mechanisms designed to mediate employee-management relations and address workplace issues. Strengthening the mandate, effectiveness, and perceived impartiality of these committees could provide a more reliable avenue for lecturers to voice concerns and for managers to access constructive feedback.

4.6.2.2 Rating of Enough Library Resources for Teaching (Manager Questionnaire).

This Figure displays managers' ratings of the adequacy of library resources for teaching.

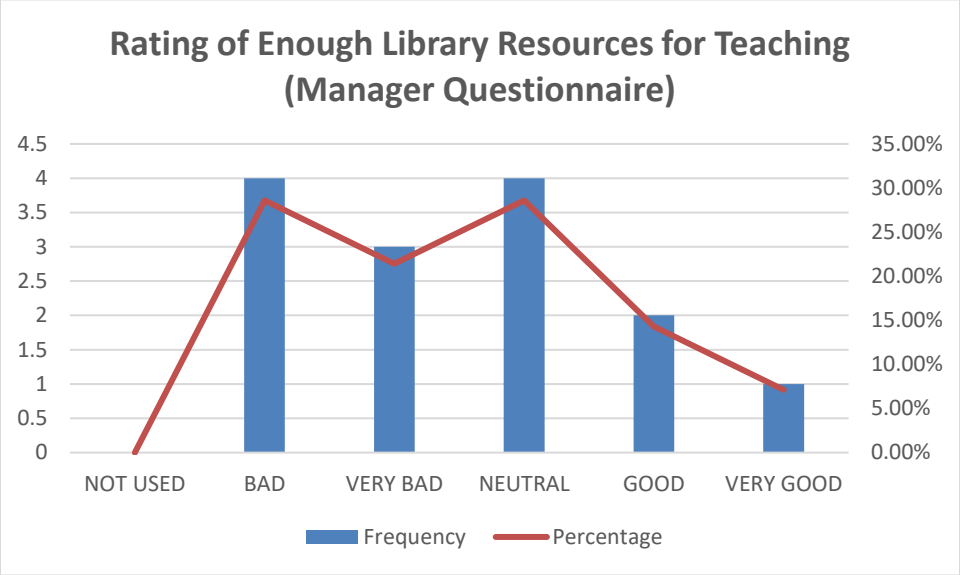


Figure 0.58 Rating of Enough Library Resources for Teaching (Manager Questionnaire)

Furthermore, managers' ratings of various institutional resources reveal areas of significant deficiency. For "Enough Library Resources for Teaching" (Figure 4.58), managers' perceptions are largely negative, with a combined 50% (28.6% "BAD," 21.4% "VERY BAD") indicating dissatisfaction. A further 28.6% remained "NEUTRAL." This mirrors the lecturers' concerns about resource adequacy (Figure 4.25).

The shared perception of inadequate library resources between lecturers and managers underscores a critical functional deficit. This suggests that the problem lies in the actual provision and quality of these resources, rather than merely differing perceptions. Insufficient library resources directly impede effective teaching and research, adding significant stress to lecturers' roles.

Addressing these resource shortcomings is fundamental for both academic performance and lecturer well-being. Managers, recognizing this gap, would be better positioned to support their staff if adequate and up-to-date library resources were consistently available.

4.6.2.3 Rating of University Staff Clinic (Manager Questionnaire).

This Figure displays managers' ratings of the university staff clinic.

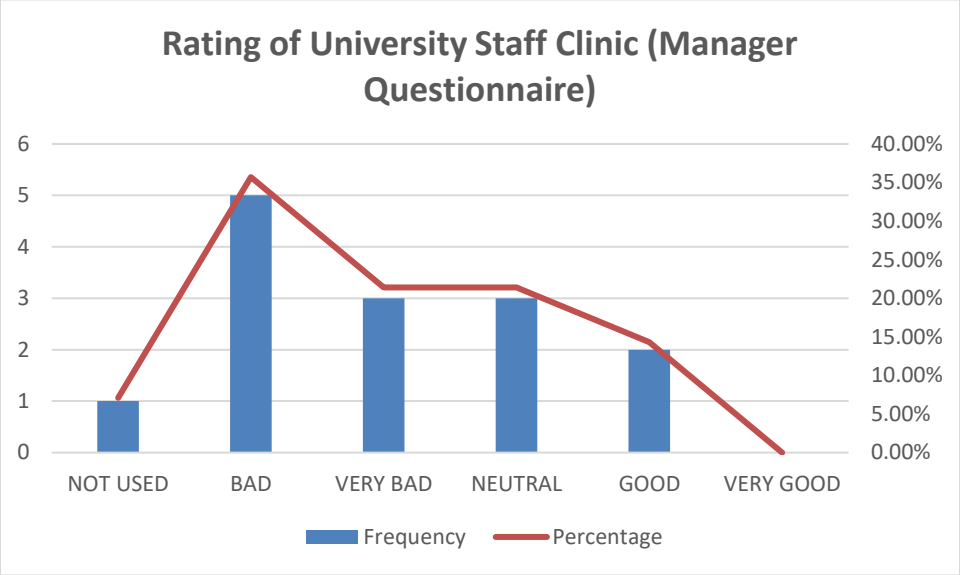


Figure 0.59 Rating of University Staff Clinic (Manager Questionnaire)

"University Staff Clinic" (Figure 4.59) receives predominantly negative ratings from managers, with a combined 57.1% (35.7% "BAD," 21.4% "VERY BAD") expressing dissatisfaction. A further 21.4% remained "NEUTRAL," and one manager indicated "NOT USED." This again aligns with the lecturers' negative perceptions from Figure 4.29.

The strong negative perception of the university clinic by managers highlights a shared concern about the adequacy of health support services for staff. In a high-stress environment, access to reliable and effective health care, including mental health support, is crucial for mitigating the physical and psychological toll of occupational demands.

When managers themselves acknowledge these deficiencies, it underscores a systemic issue in institutional wellness provisions. Improving the quality and accessibility of the staff clinic's services should be a priority, as it directly impacts employee well-being and, consequently, reduces a significant challenge for managers in supporting their stressed lecturers.

4.6.2.4 Rating of Lecturers Having Complain Platform (Manager Questionnaire).

This Figure displays managers' ratings of the existence and effectiveness of a complaint platform for lecturers.

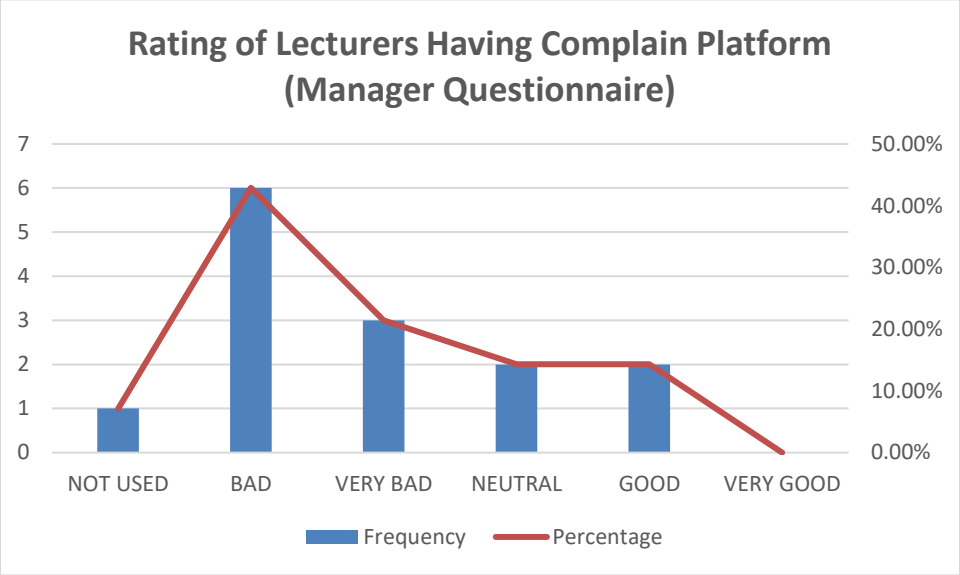


Figure 0.6045 Rating of Lecturers Having Complain Platform (Manager Questionnaire)

figure 4.60 reveals that most managers are dissatisfied with the current complaint platform available to lecturers. A combined 64.3% rated it negatively 42.9% as "BAD" and 21.4% as "VERY BAD." Only 14.3% rated the platform positively, while one respondent selected "NOT USED," indicating a possible lack of awareness or access. These results suggest that even at the managerial level, the formal mechanisms designed for addressing staff grievances are seen as ineffective, inaccessible, or unresponsive.

This finding strongly aligns with the patterns observed among lecturers, particularly their reluctance to discuss stress with management (Figure 4.56) and their discomfort in initiating such discussions (Figure 4.58). These patterns indicate that lecturers may lack trust in institutional structures or perceive them as bureaucratic and ineffective. Institutional cultures that do not foster openness and support often discourage academic staff from voicing their concerns, thereby allowing issues to remain unresolved.

The failure of a robust and trustworthy complaint mechanism represents a structural weakness in the employee support framework. When formal communication channels are either absent or perceived as ineffective, lecturers are more likely to internalize their stress, leading to increased emotional exhaustion and lowered morale. Managers are placed in a difficult position when the institutional tools meant to resolve conflict and grievances are either underutilized or fundamentally flawed. This not only limits their ability to intervene meaningfully but also undermines their efforts to foster a healthy and productive academic environment.

Furthermore, the lack of an effective complaint platform often correlates with a broader institutional culture that may be perceived as hierarchical or dismissive of staff feedback. As highlighted, participatory management practices are crucial for promoting transparency and reducing job-related stress. Where these practices are lacking, both lecturers and managers operate within a system that fails to support mutual accountability or emotional well-being.

4.6.2.5 Rating of Sports and Recreation Department (Manager Questionnaire).
This Figure displays managers' ratings of the sports and recreation department.

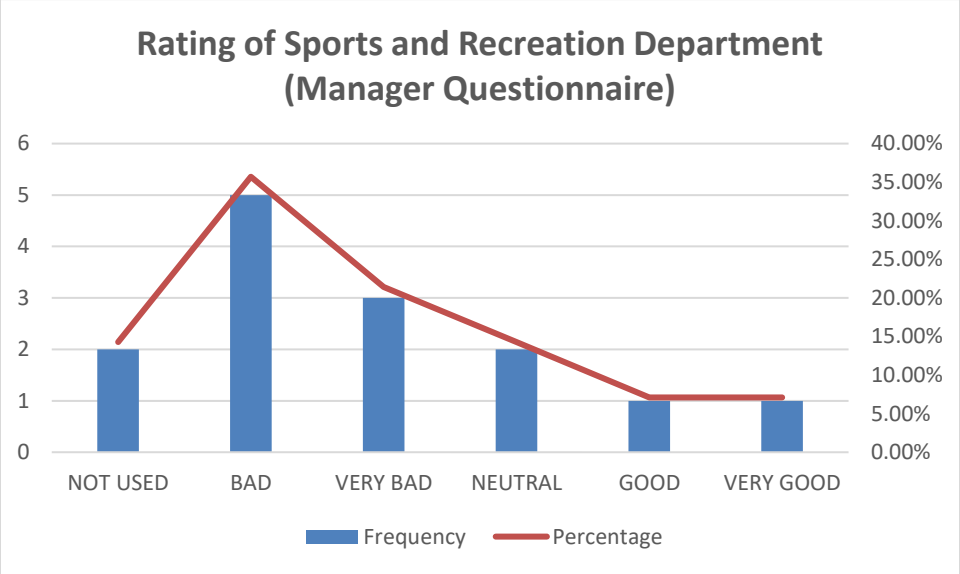


Figure 0.61 Rating of Sports and Recreation Department (Manager Questionnaire)

"Sports and Recreation Department" (Figure 4.61) receives similarly poor ratings from managers as from lecturers, with a combined 57.1% (35.7% "BAD," 21.4% "VERY BAD") expressing dissatisfaction. Two managers indicated "NOT USED," and only a small combined 14.2% rated it positively. This reinforces the perception that leisure and wellness facilities are inadequate or inaccessible.

The consistent negative feedback from both lecturers and managers regarding the sports and recreation department underscores a shared view that these resources are not effectively contributing to employee well-being. Physical activity and recreational outlets are crucial for stress management and maintaining work-life balance.

Institutions should prioritize improving these facilities and promoting their use, recognizing their role as non-work-related buffers against occupational stress. A well-utilized sports and recreation

department can contribute significantly to staff morale and overall health, thereby supporting managers in fostering a less stressful environment.

4.6.2.6 Rating of University/College Staff Affiliations (Manager Questionnaire).
This Figure displays managers' ratings of university/college staff affiliations.

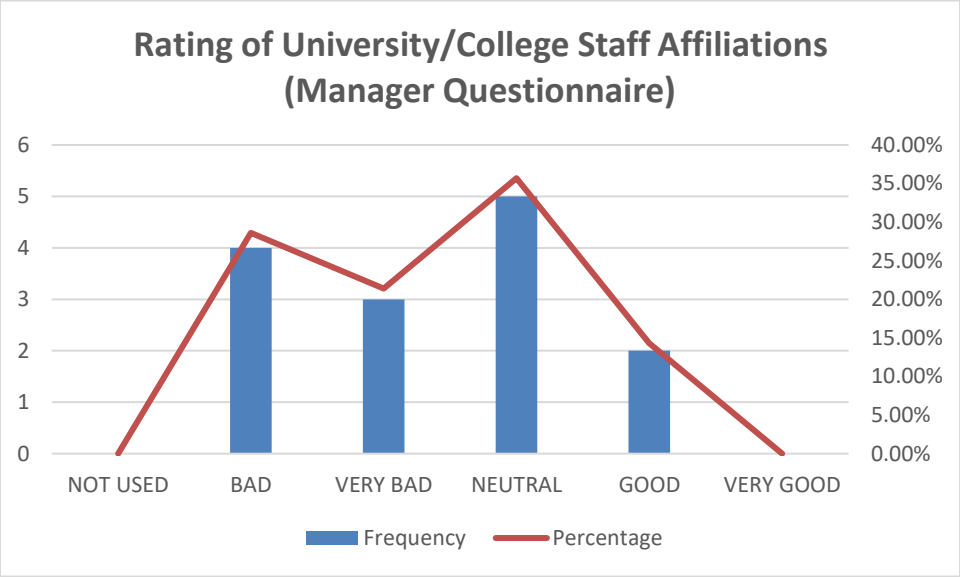


Figure 0.62 Rating of University/College Staff Affiliations (Manager Questionnaire)

Figure 4.62 reflects a mixed managerial perception of university or college staff affiliations, such as unions or professional associations. While 35.7% of managers reported a "NEUTRAL" view, a combined 50% expressed negative sentiments 28.6% rated affiliations as "BAD" and 21.4% as "VERY BAD." This overall dissatisfaction suggests that, from the perspective of many managers, staff affiliations are either not functioning effectively or are perceived as obstacles rather than assets in institutional development and staff welfare.

Staff affiliations typically play a vital role in protecting the interests of employees, promoting fair treatment, and serving as a formal platform through which lecturers can voice concerns and advocate for improved working conditions. However, if managerial perceptions lean negatively as these findings indicate it may point to strained relationships between these affiliations and institutional leadership. This adversarial dynamic could stem from ineffective communication, differing priorities, or perceived obstruction by unions in implementing institutional reforms.

This aligns with findings elsewhere in the study particularly the poor ratings of complaint mechanisms (Figure 4.63), lecturer discomfort in raising stress-related concerns (Figures 4.56 and 4.58), and perceptions of weak institutional support (Figures 4.26 and 4.41). The role of staff affiliations

becomes even more critical in such environments, serving as potential intermediaries when lecturers are unwilling or unable to communicate directly with management. Yet, the data suggests these affiliations may not be meeting that expectation, or they may be excluded from meaningful institutional processes.

Studies such as Omotosho & Owoeye (2020), emphasize the need for collaborative engagement between management and academic staff associations to foster participatory decision-making and resolve institutional tensions. Where affiliations are seen as adversarial, their ability to reduce occupational stress is undermined, and instead, they may become sources of friction that contribute to workplace dissatisfaction.

Improving the functionality and reputation of staff affiliations therefore requires intentional efforts from both sides. Management should recognize these bodies as legitimate stakeholders in institutional governance, while affiliations must operate transparently and constructively, aiming to build rather than block solutions. Establishing regular dialogue forums, shared governance structures, and joint task forces on issues like workload, professional development, and mental health could help bridge existing divides.

4.6.2.7 Rating of Faculty or Department Affiliations (Manager Questionnaire).

This Figure displays managers' ratings of faculty or department affiliations.

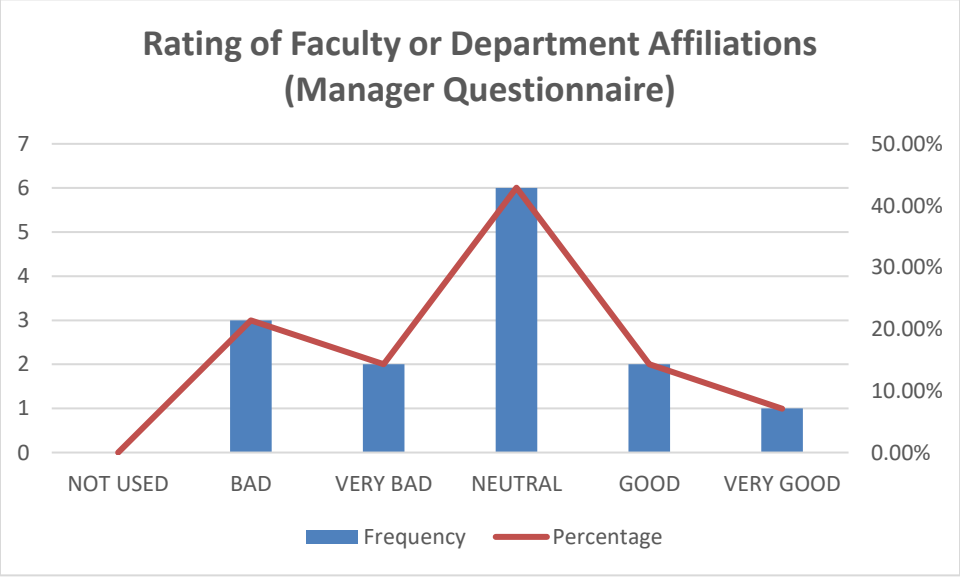


Figure 0.63 Rating of Faculty or Department Affiliations (Manager Questionnaire)

Figure 4.63 presents a similarly mixed assessment of faculty or departmental affiliations from the managerial perspective. A substantial 42.9% of managers remained "NEUTRAL," while a combined

35.7% rated these affiliations negatively with 21.4% as "BAD" and 14.3% as "VERY BAD." Only 21.4% expressed positive sentiment. These results suggest that even at the more localized level of faculty or department structures, formal affiliations are not widely regarded as effective by managerial staff.

This perception stands in contrast to earlier findings from lecturers, particularly in Figure 4.30, where faculty hospitality and collegial support received relatively positive ratings. This discrepancy indicates that while informal relationships within faculties may be strong and supportive, the formal structures or representative bodies embedded within these faculties such as department committees or academic boards may not be playing a strong or visible role in mediating staff concerns or promoting meaningful dialogue between lecturers and management.

When considered alongside findings from Figure 4.60 (ineffective complaint platforms), Figure 4.62 (negative views on broader staff affiliations), and Figures 4.56 and 4.58 (lecturers' discomfort in discussing stress), it becomes evident that both formal and informal communication channels within institutions require attention. While interpersonal collegiality may provide some emotional buffer, the absence of functional, trusted formal structures at the departmental level limits the capacity for structured problem-solving and coordinated well-being interventions.

Strengthening faculty or departmental affiliations would help bridge this gap. Clearer mandates, transparent processes, and stronger engagement between management and department-level representatives could enhance the utility of these affiliations. Doing so would provide localized, responsive mechanisms for addressing staff needs, enabling more targeted and collaborative efforts to manage workload, improve morale, and reduce occupational stress across departments.

4.6.2.8 Rating of Academic and Non-Academic Relationship (Manager Questionnaire).

This Figure displays managers' ratings of the relationship between academic and non-academic staff.

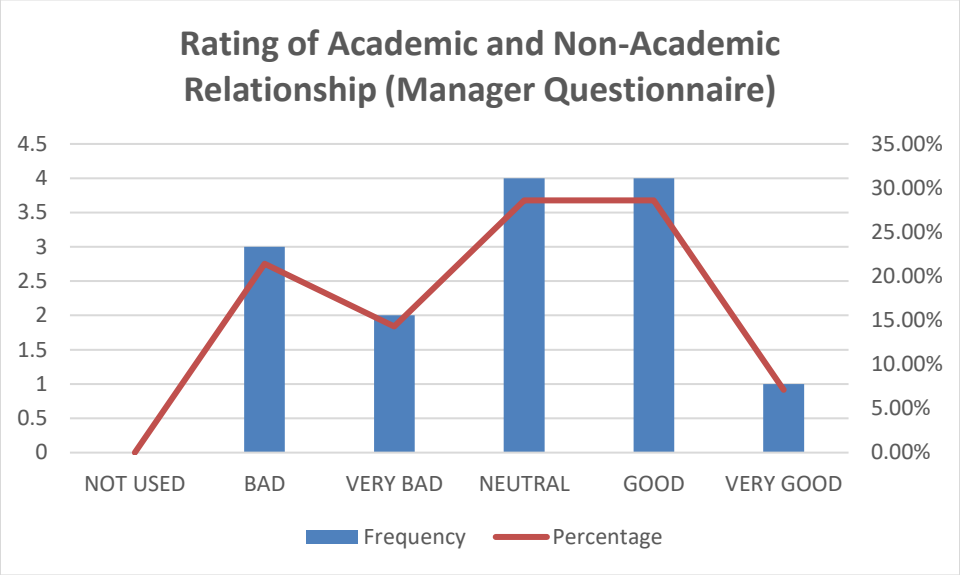


Figure 0.64 Rating of Academic and Non-Academic Relationship (Manager Questionnaire)

Figure 4.64 reveals a mixed managerial assessment of the relationship between academic and non-academic staff. While 35.7% of managers rated the relationship positively ("GOOD" or "VERY GOOD"), an equal percentage expressed dissatisfaction with 21.4% rated it "BAD" and 14.3% "VERY BAD." An additional 28.6% remained "NEUTRAL." This distribution highlights that the relationship between these two key groups within tertiary institutions is not consistently viewed as effective or harmonious by management.

The connection between academic and non-academic staff is central to the operational efficiency and institutional culture of higher education environments. When communication is poor or roles are not well understood, tensions may arise. Such friction often results in workflow disruptions, misaligned priorities, and administrative inefficiencies. For lecturers, this can translate into delays, misunderstandings, and the need to follow up on unresolved issues ultimately increasing their workload and contributing to the stress levels already discussed in Figures 4.14 (excessive workload), 4.40 (resource adequacy), and 4.58 (difficulty communicating stress).

This managerial concern mirrors findings from other parts of the study, particularly Figures 4.33 and 4.66, which also indicated problematic institutional synergy and weak faculty-level affiliations. The consistency of these perceptions across different dimensions points to systemic issues in cross-functional collaboration and institutional cohesion.

Improving the academic and non-academic relationship requires deliberate action. Institutions can promote joint workshops, cross-functional committees, and shared planning sessions to foster mutual

understanding and cooperative problem-solving. Encouraging open communication, clarifying roles and expectations, and valuing contributions from all staff categories can significantly reduce institutional friction. Over time, these efforts can contribute to a more integrated and productive work environment indirectly easing stress for academic staff and improving institutional effectiveness.

4.6.2.9 Rating of Computer Services Department & Laboratory Resources (Questionnaire Manager).

This Figure displays managers' ratings of computer services and laboratory resources.

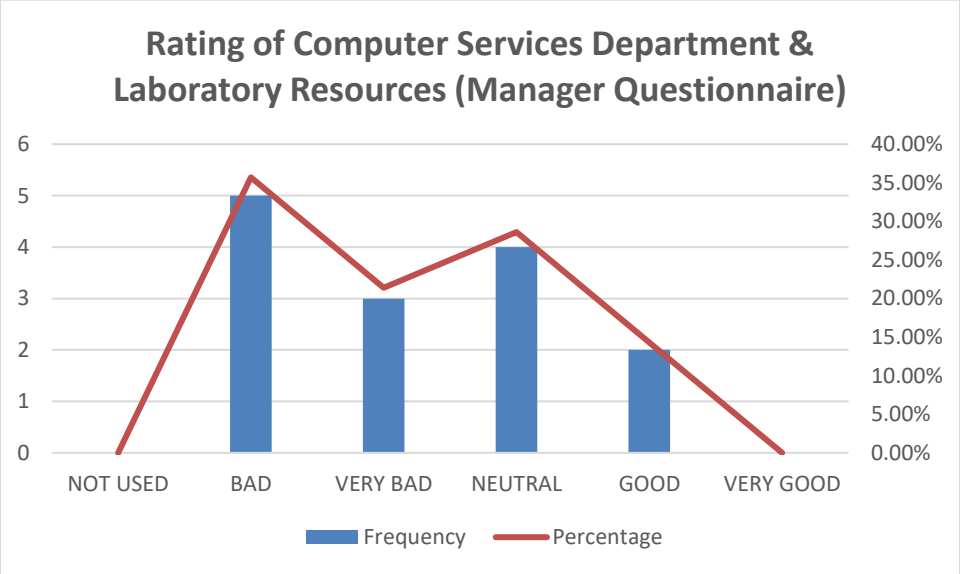


Figure 0.65 Rating of Computer Services Department & Laboratory Resources (Manager Questionnaire)

"Computer Services Department & Laboratory Resources" (Figure 4.65) garners significant negative ratings from managers, with a combined 57.1% (35.7% "BAD," 21.4% "VERY BAD") expressing dissatisfaction. A further 28.6% remained "NEUTRAL," and only 14.3% rated it positively. These substantial negative ratings from managers confirm widespread shortcomings in critical technological and infrastructure support.

This finding aligns with lecturers' own concerns about insufficient resources (Figure 4.18) and poor IT support (Figure 4.31), indicating a consistent perception of inadequacy across different levels of staff. In a modern academic environment, reliable computer services and well-equipped laboratories are fundamental for teaching, research, and administrative efficiency.

When these essential resources are lacking or poorly maintained, it creates significant operational frustrations and adds to the workload and stress of lecturers. Managers, by extension, face challenges

in ensuring their teams can perform effectively. Investing in and upgrading these critical resources is therefore a crucial step in alleviating occupational stress and improving overall institutional functioning.

4.6.2.10 Rating of Institution Offering Flextime (Manager Questionnaire).
This Figure displays managers' ratings of whether the institution offers flexitime.

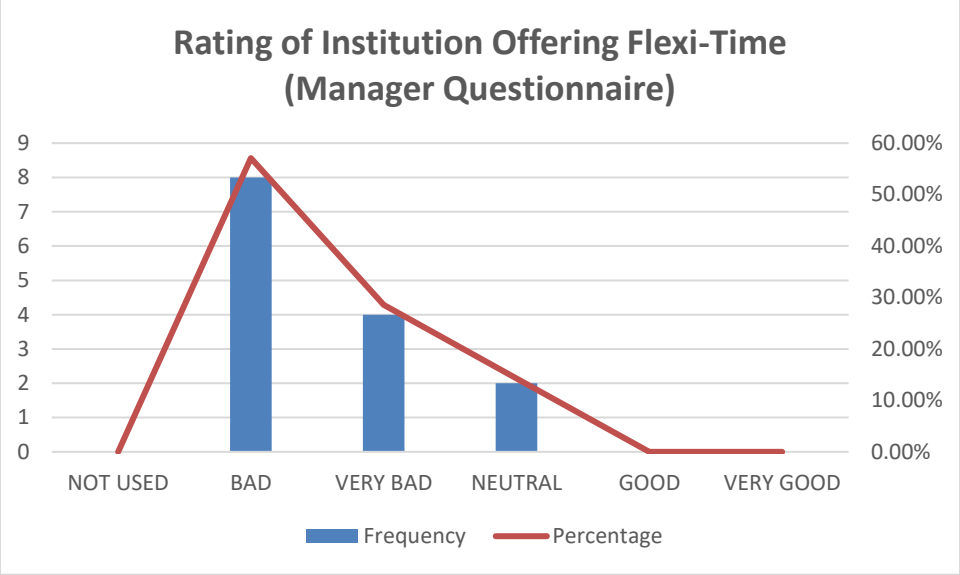


Figure 0.46 Rating of Institution Offering Flexi-Time (Manager Questionnaire)

A particularly striking finding from the manager questionnaire is the rating of the "Institution Offering Flexi-Time" (Figure 4.69), with an overwhelming 57.1% rating it "BAD" and 28.6% "VERY BAD," totalling 85.7% dissatisfaction. The remaining 14.3% were "NEUTRAL," with no positive ratings at all. This strongly implies that despite its potential as a stress-alleviation strategy, flexible work arrangements are either non-existent or poorly implemented and perceived as ineffective by managers.

This significant deficit represents a major structural challenge for managers attempting to support their stressed lecturers, as they lack a crucial tool for promoting work-life balance and reducing rigid work demands. The absence of effective flexi-time options contributes directly to the work-life imbalance stressor identified by lecturers (Figure 4.16).

Implementing genuine and accessible flexible work arrangements could be a transformative step in improving lecturer well-being and reducing occupational stress. Managers clearly recognize this gap, suggesting that institutional leadership needs to prioritize policies that enable greater autonomy and flexibility in working arrangements.

4.6.2.11 Overall Rating of All Lecturers (Manager Questionnaire).

This Figure displays managers' overall rating of all lecturers.

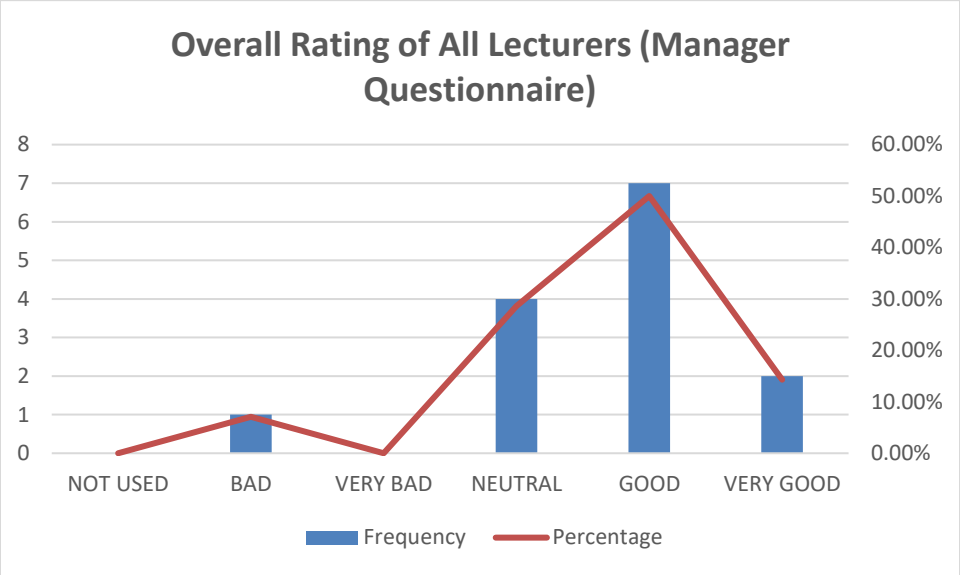


Figure 0.67 Overall Rating of All Lecturers (Manager Questionnaire)

Figure 4.67 reveals that managers generally hold a positive view of their academic staff, with 50.0% rating "All Lecturers" as "GOOD" and an additional 14.3% as "VERY GOOD," totalling 64.3%. This largely favourable assessment suggests that, despite the challenges present in the institutional environment, managers recognize and appreciate the professionalism, competence, and commitment of their academic teams.

This positive managerial perception aligns well with the self-perceptions expressed by lecturers in Figure 4.33, where many lecturers rated themselves highly in terms of performance and dedication. The consistency between these two perspectives reflects a shared mutual respect and reinforces the idea that lecturers are not only capable but also committed to their work. This foundation of respect and confidence between academic staff and management can serve as a valuable asset when designing and implementing interventions to address occupational stress.

Moreover, the contrast between this positive view of lecturers and the more critical assessments of institutional structures such as administrative inefficiency (Figure 4.30), poor complaint mechanisms (Figure 4.63), and resource inadequacies (Figures 4.25 and 4.40) suggests that the root causes of stress are largely systemic rather than individual. Managers' recognition of their lecturers' capabilities further implies a willingness to advocate for reforms that can improve the institutional environment, rather than focusing on individual performance deficiencies.

This finding supports the broader conclusion that addressing occupational stress in private tertiary institutions requires a shift in institutional policy and culture. By leveraging the strong relational foundation between lecturers and their managers, institutions can collaboratively develop and implement strategies aimed at workload balance, resource provision, and improved administrative support.

4.6.2.12 Overall Rating of All Administration (Manager Questionnaire).
This Figure displays managers' overall rating of all administration.

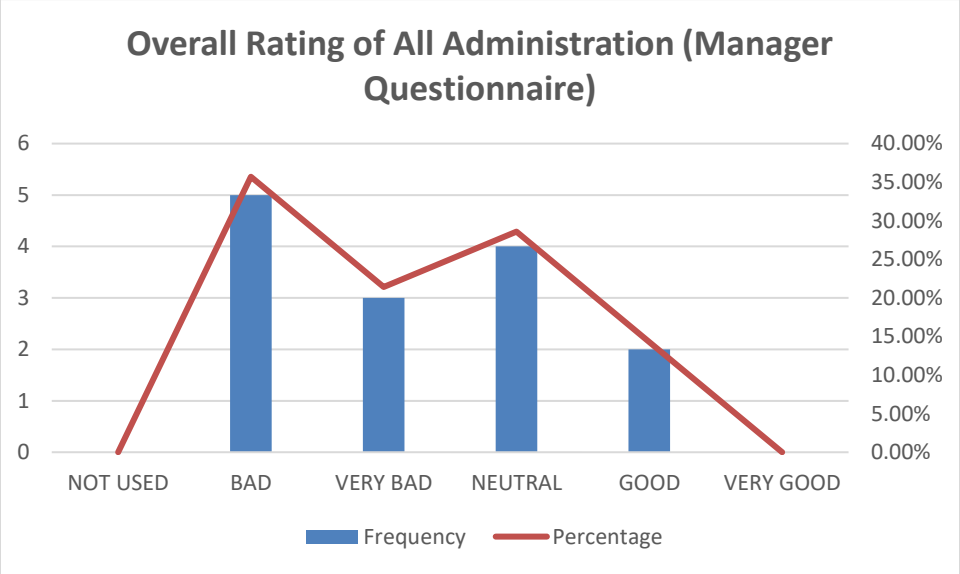


Figure 0.68 Overall Rating of All Administration (Manager Questionnaire)

In stark contrast to their positive view of lecturers, managers' "Overall Rating of All Administration" (Figure 4.68) is significantly negative. A combined 57.1% (35.7% "BAD," 21.4% "VERY BAD") express dissatisfaction, with 28.6% remaining "NEUTRAL" and only 14.3% rating it "GOOD." This strong negative perception mirrors the lecturers' assessment (Figure 4.34) and indicates a widespread dissatisfaction with administrative effectiveness and support.

This divergence in ratings between academic staff and administration highlights a critical operational and relational disconnect within the institutions. When administration is perceived as inefficient, unsupportive, or bureaucratic by both those who report to it and those it serves, it creates a significant source of friction and stress for the entire academic community.

This finding strongly suggests that administrative reform is crucial for reducing stress across the institution. Streamlining processes, improving communication, and fostering a service-oriented

approach from administration towards academic staff are essential steps to create a more harmonious and effective working environment.

4.6.3 Institutional Impact and Perceptions

4.6.3.1 Burnout Affected by Stress (Manager Questionnaire).

This Figure shows managers' agreement with burnout being affected by stress.

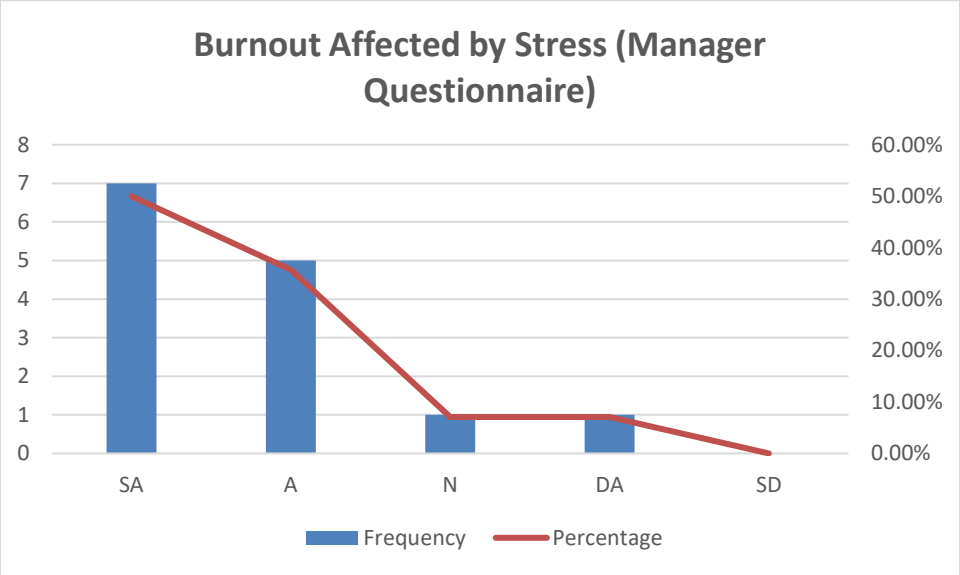


Figure 0.69 Burnout Affected by Stress (Manager Questionnaire)

Managers largely agree (50.0% Strongly Agree, 35.7% Agree, totalling 85.7%) that "Burnout is Affected by Stress" (Figure 4.69). This high level of agreement indicates a clear recognition among managers that the experience of burnout among their lecturers is a direct consequence of the stress they face in their roles.

This shared understanding of the link between stress and burnout is crucial for developing effective interventions. It suggests that managers are aware of this critical outcome, which can manifest as emotional exhaustion, cynicism, and reduced personal accomplishment in their staff.

The strong managerial perception underscores the importance of institutional strategies that not only address immediate stressors but also implement preventative measures against chronic burnout. This common ground between managerial awareness and lecturer experience provides a strong basis for collaborative solutions.

4.6.3.2 Equal Opportunities Available Female to Male Gender (Manager Questionnaire).

This Figure shows managers' agreement with equal opportunities for female and male lecturers.

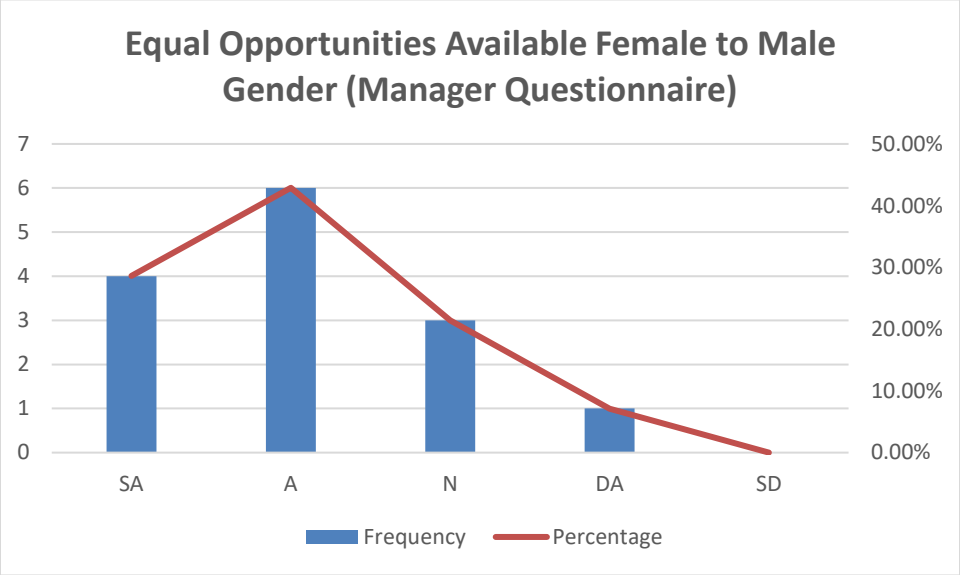


Figure 0.70 Equal Opportunities Available Female to Male Gender (Manager Questionnaire)

Figure 4.70 presents a largely positive managerial perspective on gender equality within private tertiary institutions, with 28.6% of managers "Strongly Agree" and 42.9% "Agree" that equal opportunities exist for both female and male lecturers. This results in a combined 71.5% expressing agreement, while 21.4% remain "Neutral." These findings suggest that, from the managerial standpoint, institutional efforts toward gender equity are viewed as either successful or progressing in the right direction.

This perception aligns with lecturer responses captured in Figure 4.47, where a notable portion of academic staff either agreed or expressed neutrality regarding equal opportunities across genders. While some lecturers still expressed dissatisfaction or uncertainty, the overall picture emerging from both staff and management indicates that overt gender-based inequality may not be a dominant issue within these institutions.

The consistency between these two perspectives is important, as it indicates a shared belief that policies and practices supporting gender equity are, at the very least, visible and acknowledged. However, the sizeable "Neutral" responses from both groups also imply that there may still be areas where the lived experiences of staff do not fully reflect institutional intentions. It is possible that while formal equality policies exist, their implementation may vary across departments, or subtle forms of bias may still influence perceptions of fairness in areas such as promotions, task allocation, or leadership opportunities.

Therefore, although gender-related stress may not be seen as a primary systemic issue from the managerial perspective, maintaining momentum is critical. Institutions must continue to monitor the effectiveness of equity policies, encourage open dialogue on gender issues, and ensure that perceived fairness translates into actual equitable outcomes. This proactive approach can further reinforce inclusivity and contribute to a healthier, more supportive work environment for all lecturers.

4.6.3.3 Lecturer Stress Affecting Performance (Manager Questionnaire).

This Figure shows managers' agreement with lecturer stress affecting performance.

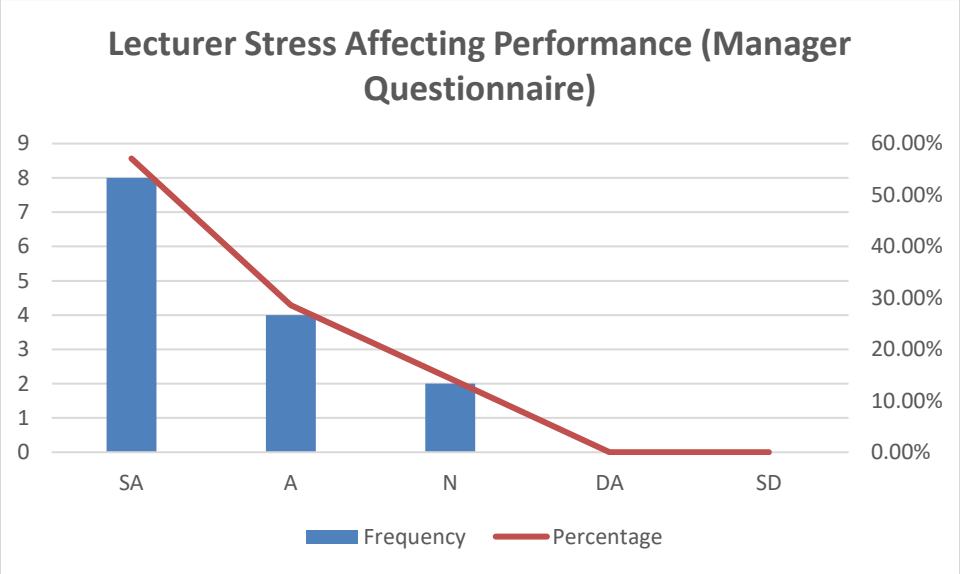


Figure 0.71 Lecturer Stress Affecting Performance (Manager Questionnaire)

Managers overwhelmingly agree (57.1% Strongly Agree, 28.6% Agree, totalling 85.7%) that "Lecturer Stress is Affecting Performance" (Figure 4.71). This strong consensus indicates that managers clearly recognize the negative impact of occupational stress on the work output and effectiveness of their academic staff.

This managerial awareness validates a core finding of the study from the lecturers' perspective (Figure 4.54), where a large majority also reported stress draining them and affecting their performance. The alignment between these two groups strengthens the empirical evidence for the detrimental link between stress and academic performance.

The high level of managerial understanding of this issue suggests a readiness to engage with solutions, provided they are given the necessary resources and institutional support to implement effective stress management strategies.

4.6.3.4 Lecturer Stress Affecting Student Performance (Manager Questionnaire).

This Figure shows managers' agreement with lecturer stress affecting student performance.

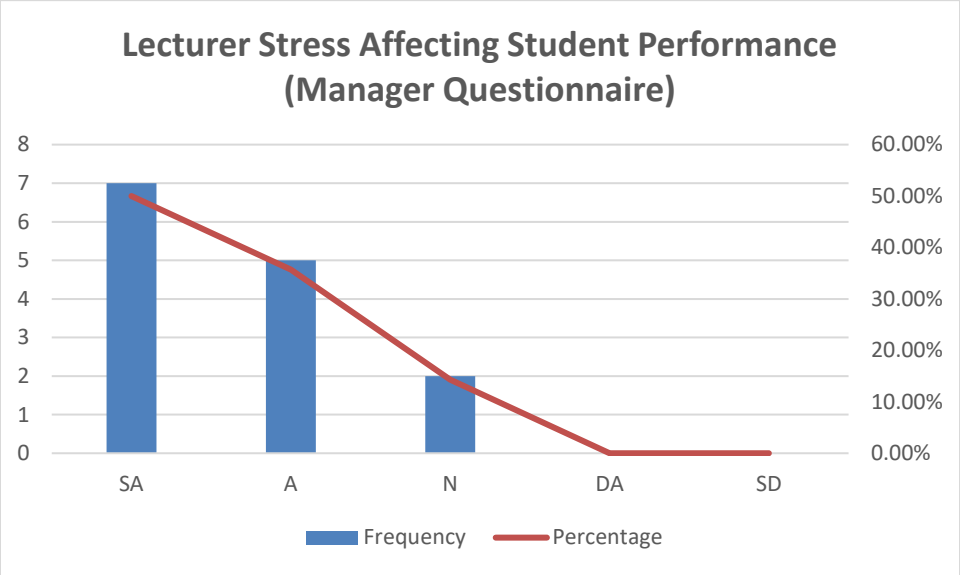


Figure 0.72 Lecturer Stress Affecting Student Performance (Manager Questionnaire)

Managers also significantly agree (50.0% Strongly Agree, 35.7% Agree, totalling 85.7%) that "Lecturer Stress Affects Student Performance" (Figure 4.72). This indicates a clear recognition by management of the wider negative consequences of stress, extending beyond individual lecturer well-being to impact the core educational outcomes.

This perception suggests that managers understand that stressed lecturers may be less effective in teaching, providing feedback, or supporting student learning, which can ultimately compromise the quality of education provided. This adds another layer of urgency to addressing occupational stress within the academic environment.

The common understanding among managers of this cascading effect from lecturer stress to student impact provides a strong internal justification for investing in staff well-being initiatives. It highlights that stress management is not just about employee welfare but also about maintaining academic excellence and student success.

4.6.3.5 Institution Losing Credibility if One Lecturer Attrite (Manager Questionnaire).

This Figure shows managers' agreement with the institution losing credibility if one lecturer attrite. |

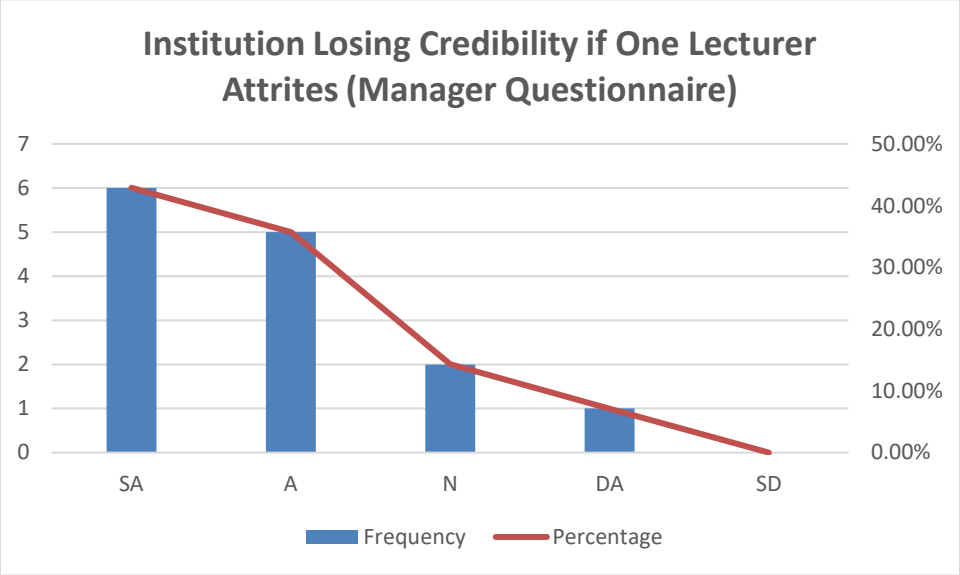


Figure 0.73 Institution Losing Credibility if One Lecturer Attrites (Manager Questionnaire)

Managers also significantly agree (42.9% Strongly Agree, 35.7% Agree, totaling 78.6%) that the "Institution Loses Credibility if One Lecturer Attrites" (Figure 4.73). This strong managerial awareness of the reputational consequences of lecturer turnover underscores their recognition of the severe, far-reaching impact of unmanaged stress and subsequent departures.

This finding highlights that managers recognize the critical link between lecturer retention and institutional reputation. Losing even a single valued lecturer can signify underlying problems within the institution and can affect student enrollment, faculty recruitment, and overall standing in the competitive private tertiary education sector.

Therefore, addressing the causes of lecturer attrition, particularly those linked to stress, is not merely an internal human resources concern but a strategic imperative for maintaining the institution's public image and long-term viability. Managers are clearly aware of this critical connection.

4.6.3.6 Stress of Lecturers Affecting Management (Manager Questionnaire).

This Figure shows managers' agreement with the stress of lecturers affecting management.

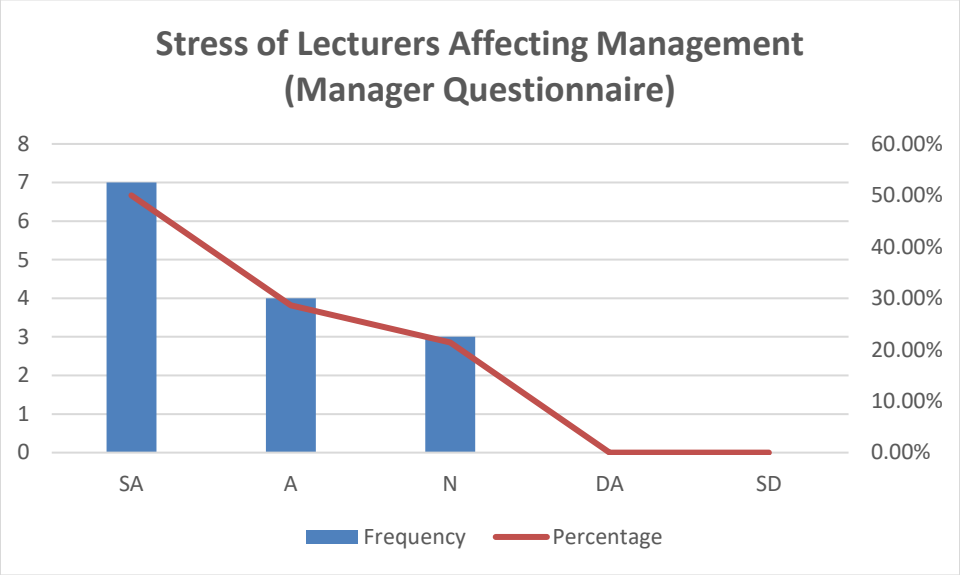


Figure 0.74 Stress of Lecturers Affecting Management (Manager Questionnaire)

Furthermore, managers agree (50.0% Strongly Agree, 28.6% Agree, totaling 78.6%) that the "Stress of Lecturers Affects Management" (Figure 4.74). This indicates that the burden of lecturer stress extends beyond the individual to impact managerial roles directly, creating additional challenges and pressures for those in supervisory positions.

This impact on management can manifest in various ways, such as increased time spent on conflict resolution, managing absenteeism or presenteeism, dealing with decreased team morale, or having to reallocate tasks due to reduced lecturer performance. It suggests that lecturers' stress is not just a 'staff problem' but a 'management problem' that directly affects their operational efficiency and strategic oversight.

Recognizing this reciprocal impact means that managers have a vested interest in proactive stress management strategies, as they directly alleviate their own burdens and improves the overall functioning of their departments. This shared burden can foster a collaborative approach to finding solutions.

4.6.3.7 Number of Lecturers Still the Same for the Past Five Years (Manager Questionnaire).

This Figure shows managers' agreement with the number of lecturers remaining consistent over the past five years.

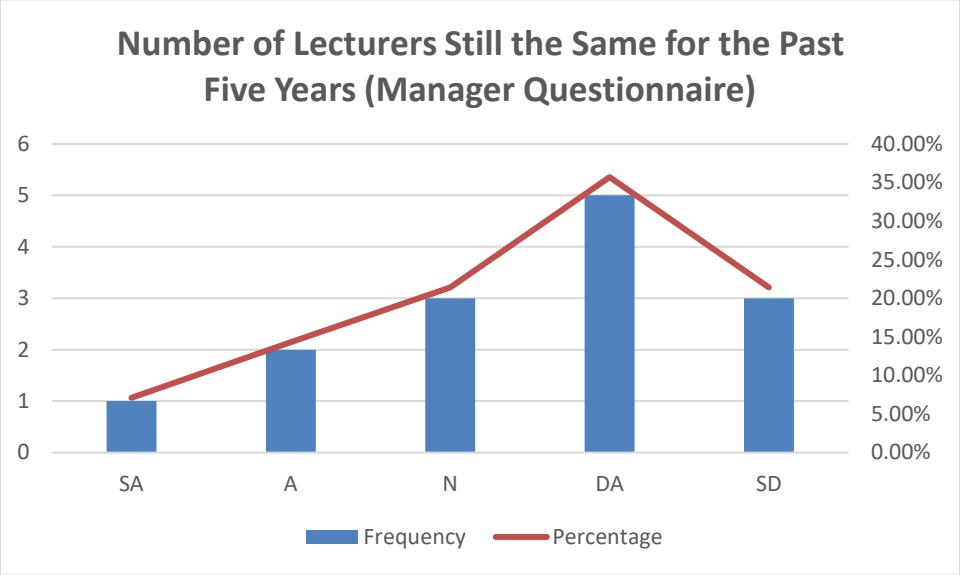


Figure 0.75 Number of Lecturers Still the Same for the Past Five Years (Manager Questionnaire)

Figure 4.75 reveals that managers are generally pessimistic about lecturer retention, with a combined 57.1% disagreeing that "the number of lecturers has remained the same over the past five years" (35.7% "Disagree," 21.4% "Strongly Disagree"). This finding presents a sharper contrast to the more neutral-to-negative sentiment expressed by lecturers in Figure 4.51, suggesting that while lecturers may perceive resignations, managers are more acutely aware of the cumulative impact of turnover at an institutional level.

This discrepancy in perception may be explained by the broader visibility managers have over staffing patterns, recruitment efforts, and the organizational consequences of attrition. It implies that although new hires may maintain headcount, the qualitative loss particularly of experienced or specialized lecturers is not easily compensated for. As a result, the institution experiences a "rotating door" effect, where continuous onboarding and adjustment phases undermine academic stability.

This managerial view aligns with earlier findings in Figures 4.51 and 4.70, which reflect concerns about the loss of irreplaceable talent and the high regard in which lecturers are held. When institutions lose long-serving staff, the result is not only a knowledge gap but also an increase in workload and stress for those who remain. This is particularly true in private tertiary institutions in Botswana, where high staff turnover has been associated with unmanaged stress, poor working conditions, and a lack of institutional support structures.

Studies such as those by Mmereki (2018) and Mupimpila (2015) confirm that inadequate retention strategies, alongside excessive workload and limited career development prospects, are critical factors

driving academic attrition in Botswana's private education sector. These findings reinforce that the issue is not simply about numbers but about preserving institutional knowledge, continuity in teaching quality, and professional morale.

4.6.3.8 Institution Having an Ear to Lecturers (Manager Questionnaire).

This Figure shows managers' agreement with the institution being receptive to lecturers' concerns.

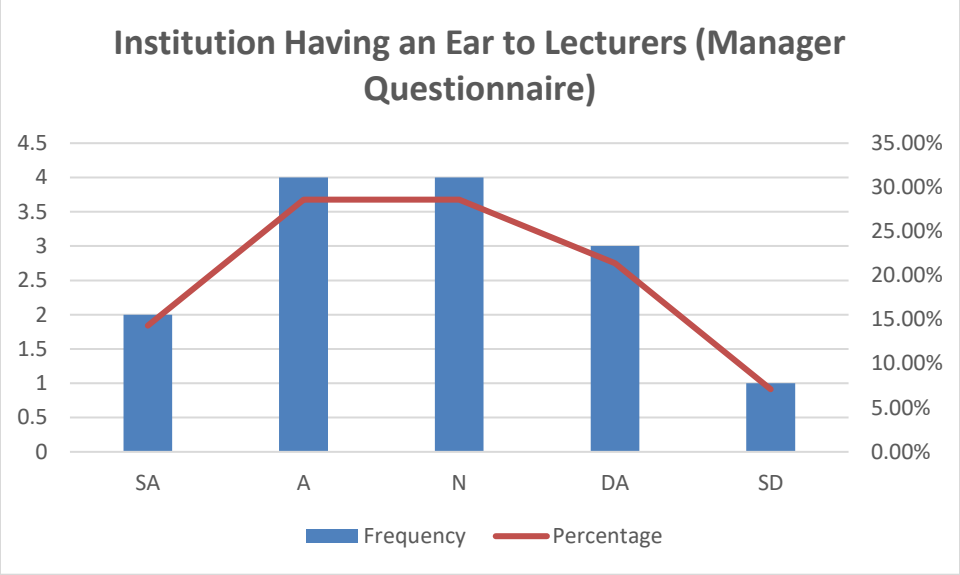


Figure 0.76 Institution Having an Ear to Lecturers (Manager Questionnaire)

Figure 4.76 reflects a mixed view from managers regarding whether the "Institution Has an Ear to Lecturers." While 42.9% responded positively ("Agree" or "Strongly Agree"), a significant 28.6% were "Neutral," and 28.5% expressed dissatisfaction (21.4% "Disagree," 7.1% "Strongly Disagree"). This distribution indicates that although some managers believe the institution is receptive to lecturer concerns, many are either unsure or believe that staff voices are not being effectively heard.

This managerial perspective is consistent with earlier findings from lecturers. As seen in Figure 4.54, a majority of lecturers have not discussed their stress levels with their managers, and in Figure 4.56, most lecturers reported discomfort in speaking to management about job-related stress. Taken together, these findings suggest that communication gaps are present not only at the lecturer-manager level but also within the broader institutional structure.

If managers themselves express doubt about the institution's responsiveness, this weakens their ability to serve as effective advocates for lecturers. It also signals potential limitations in their capacity to escalate concerns or secure necessary support for their teams. This could contribute to a cycle where lecturer issues remain unaddressed, leading to greater frustration and disengagement.

Building a responsive institutional culture requires more than having platforms for feedback it demands visible follow-through. Lecturers need to see that their concerns are taken seriously, acted upon, and result in meaningful changes. Institutions must therefore improve both the structure and the spirit of engagement. Clear communication, timely feedback, and involving lecturers in decision-making processes can help rebuild trust and foster a more collaborative and less stressful working environment.

4.6.3.9 Institution Treating Employees as Valued Assets (Manager Questionnaire).

This Figure displays managers' agreement with the institution treating employees as valued assets.

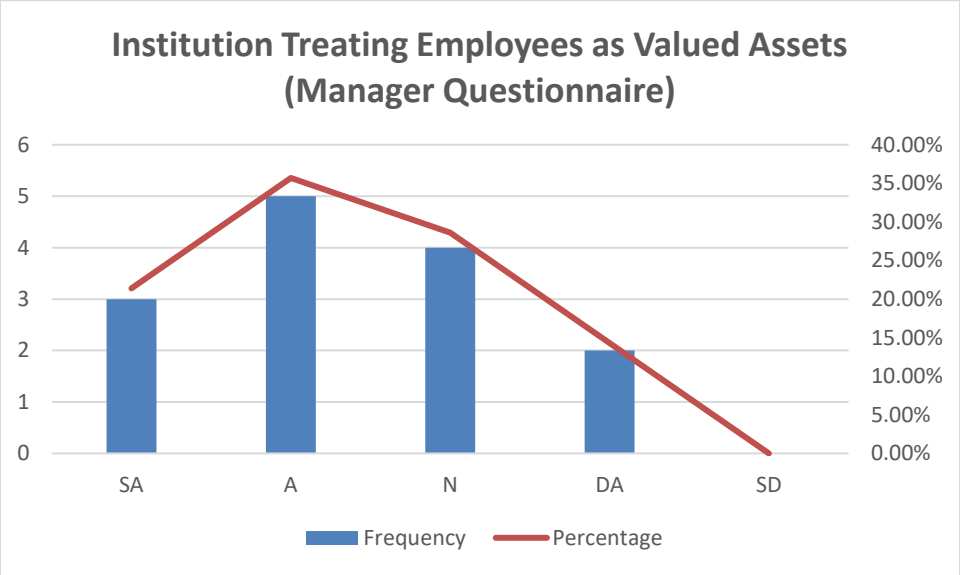


Figure 0.77 Institution Treating Employees as Valued Assets (Manager Questionnaire)

Finally, Figure 4.77 reveals that while a majority of managers (57.1%) either "Agree" (35.7%) or "Strongly Agree" (21.4%) that the institution treats its employees as valued assets, this sentiment is not universally shared. A notable 28.6% of managers responded neutrally, while 14.3% disagreed with the statement. This suggests that although many in leadership recognize efforts to value staff, a significant portion remain uncertain or unconvinced about the consistency of these efforts across the institution.

This managerial perception mirrors findings from lecturers themselves, as captured in Figure 4.52, where the overall view of being valued was similarly mixed and leaned towards the negative. The alignment of both lecturer and managerial responses in this regard points to a broader institutional issue where expressions of value may not be uniformly practiced or experienced. It is possible that

while some departments or leaders actively foster appreciation and recognition, others fall short, leading to uneven perceptions of how much the institution values its people.

This disconnect is particularly concerning in the context of previous findings. For instance, high stress levels (Figure 4.13), emotional exhaustion (Figure 4.46), and low motivation (Figure 4.44) were all widely reported by lecturers. These challenges are exacerbated when employees feel invisible or underappreciated in their roles. A workplace where staff do not consistently feel valued is likely to see rising dissatisfaction, disengagement, and eventually higher turnover echoing concerns already observed in Figures 4.50 and 4.77 regarding the loss of irreplaceable talent and declining retention.

In contrast, when employees feel truly valued, it can buffer against the negative effects of other stressors such as heavy workloads (Figures 4.14 and 4.19), resource shortages (Figures 4.18 and 4.40), and poor communication channels (Figures 4.56 and 4.78). Being valued not only supports emotional well-being but also reinforces commitment, pride in work, and willingness to go beyond basic responsibilities.

Therefore, institutions must move beyond superficial acknowledgments and instead embed appreciation into their culture through meaningful action. This includes regular and sincere recognition, inclusive decision-making, career development opportunities, fair treatment, and responsive leadership.

4.7 Relationship Between Occupational Stress and Performance (Linked to Objective 4 + Hypothesis Testing)

This crucial section quantifies and interprets the intricate relationship between occupational stress and academic staff performance, directly addressing Objective 4 and the study's hypotheses. Data from Section E of the Lecturer Questionnaire, complemented by rigorous statistical analyses including correlation and regression, provides empirical evidence on this vital link.

4.7.1 Self-Reported Stress Impacts

4.7.1.1 Belief of Job Stress Impact on Job Performance (1-10 Scale)

This Figure presents respondents' belief about the impact of job stress on their job performance on a scale of 1 to 10.

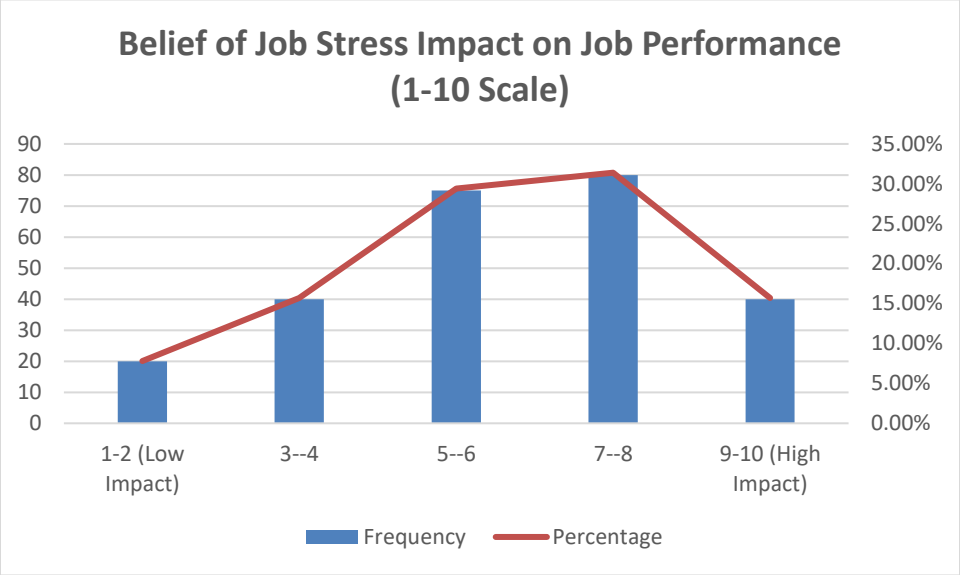


Figure 0.47 Belief of Job Stress Impact on Job Performance (1-10 Scale)

Lecturers' belief regarding the impact of job stress on their performance (Figure 4.81) clearly indicates a strong perceived negative relationship. A substantial 31.4% rated the impact as 7-8 (high impact) and an additional 15.7% as 9-10 (very high impact). This means nearly half of the lecturers (47.1%) perceive stress as having a significant and detrimental effect on their job performance.

This subjective assessment provides a strong foundation for the objective statistical analyses that follow, demonstrating that lecturers themselves are acutely aware of how stress compromises their professional effectiveness. The high proportion of individuals reporting a high perceived impact indicates that the link between stress and performance degradation is a deeply felt reality for the academic staff.

This strong self-reported connection between stress and performance reinforces the urgency of addressing occupational stress within these institutions, as it is directly impacting the very output they are designed to produce.

4.7.1.2 Frequency of Job Performance Affected by Job-Related Stress

This Figure shows how often respondents feel their job performance is affected by job-related stress.

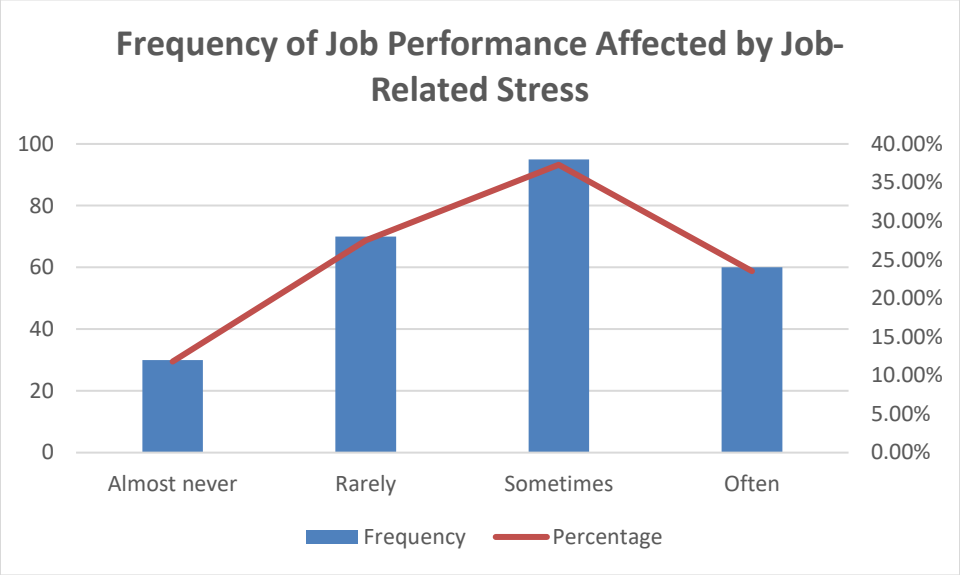


Figure 0.48 Frequency of Job Performance Affected by Job-Related Stress

The frequency with which job performance is affected by job-related stress (Figure 4.82) reinforces the above perception. A significant proportion of lecturers' report that their performance is affected "Sometimes" (37.3%) or "Often" (23.5%) by job-related stress, totaling 60.8%. This indicates that for over three-fifths of the academic staff, the negative impact of stress is not an isolated phenomenon but a regular occurrence.

This consistent and frequent interference of stress with job performance can manifest in various ways, such as reduced efficiency, lower quality of work, impaired decision-making, and increased errors. It indicates that stress is not just a discomfort but a continuous impedance to optimal functioning.

This finding further substantiates the need for effective stress management interventions, as the current levels of stress are actively undermining daily operational effectiveness within the institutions.

4.7.1.3 Performance Improvement if Stress Levels Were Reduced

This Figure presents whether respondents believe their job performance would improve if stress levels were reduced.

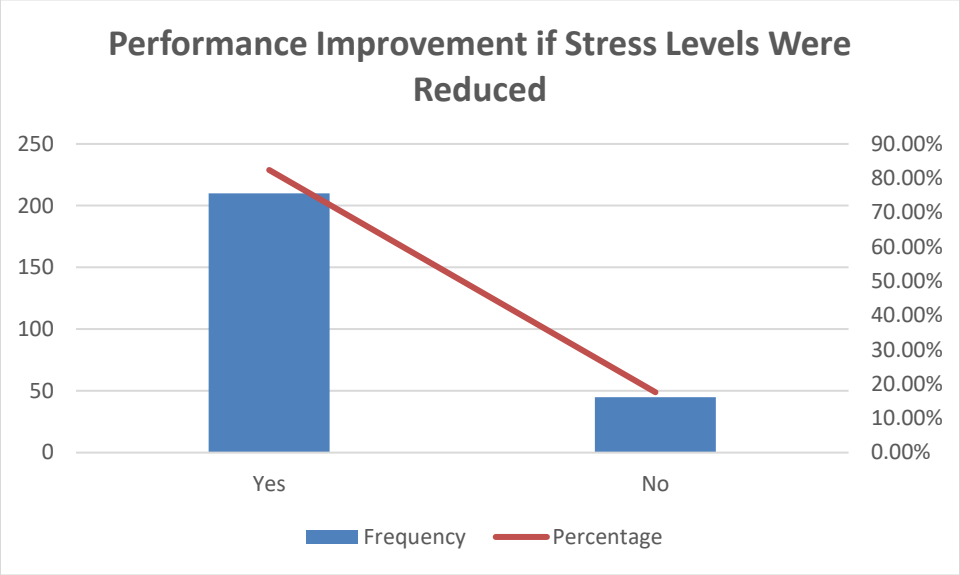


Figure 0.49 Performance Improvement if Stress Levels Were Reduced

Furthermore, an overwhelming majority of lecturers (82.4%) believe that their "Performance would Improve if Stress Levels Were Reduced" (Figure 4.83). This strong consensus highlights a clear recognition among academic staff that stress is a modifiable factor directly linked to their ability to perform optimally.

This perception is crucial because it implies that lecturers are receptive to interventions aimed at reducing stress, and they anticipate positive outcomes for their work quality and productivity if such measures are implemented. It indicates a strong internal motivation for change concerning stress levels.

This finding aligns with a central aim of the study and provides a compelling argument for institutions to invest in comprehensive stress management programs. Addressing stress is perceived by the workforce itself as a direct pathway to enhanced performance, offering a strong incentive for organizational action.

4.7.1.4 Frequency of Missing Work Due to Stress-Related Illness

This Figure shows how often respondents miss work due to stress-related illness.

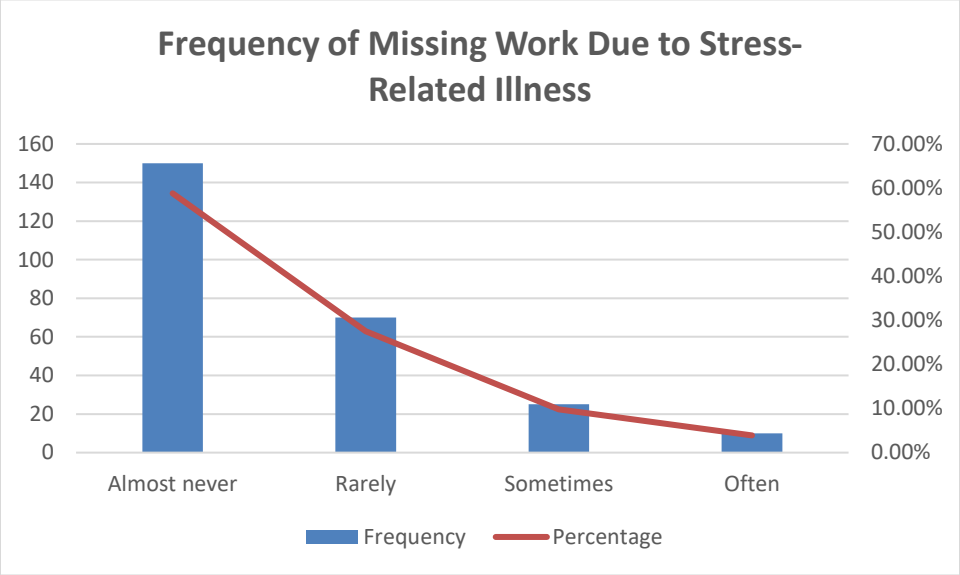


Figure 0.50 Frequency of Missing Work Due to Stress-Related Illness

While Figure 4.84 shows that most lecturers (58.8%) "Almost never" miss work due to stress-related illness, the data still reveals that a meaningful portion of academic staff are affected. Specifically, 27.5% "Rarely," 9.8% "Sometimes," and 3.9% "Often" miss work due to stress, highlighting that for approximately 41.2% of respondents, stress occasionally to frequently results in health-related absenteeism. Although not the dominant trend, this represents a noteworthy minority whose stress has reached a level that compromises their ability to maintain regular attendance.

This finding suggests that while stress may not commonly result in direct absenteeism for most lecturers, for some it has escalated to the point of physical or mental health breakdowns. These individuals experience stress not merely as an emotional or cognitive burden but as a health issue requiring withdrawal from their professional responsibilities. Such episodes may include conditions like burnout, anxiety, migraines, fatigue, or other stress-exacerbated ailments.

Moreover, this aligns with earlier findings regarding the emotional toll of academic work. For example, in Figure 4.46, over half of the lecturers reported feeling emotionally drained "Frequently" or "Almost always," indicating that psychological strain is widespread. When such strain persists without relief or institutional support, it is unsurprising that it manifests physically, resulting in sick leave or absenteeism.

This pattern also reinforces previous insights around low motivation levels (Figure 4.44) and perceptions of inadequate support (Figure 4.23). When lecturers feel unsupported, overworked, and emotionally exhausted, their resilience diminishes, making them more susceptible to illness and more

likely to need time off. Even if this is not the dominant manifestation of stress, the fact that it affects a sizable portion of staff means it cannot be ignored.

From an institutional perspective, this form of absenteeism, although less frequent, still contributes to disruptions in teaching schedules, delayed grading, postponed meetings, and the reallocation of tasks, placing further strain on colleagues and the institution. It represents an outcome of accumulated stress that has been left unaddressed until it impacts not only the individual but also the wider academic environment.

4.7.1.5 Frequency of Working Beyond Normal Working Hours to Cope with Job Demands

This Figure presents how often respondents work beyond normal working hours to cope with job demands.

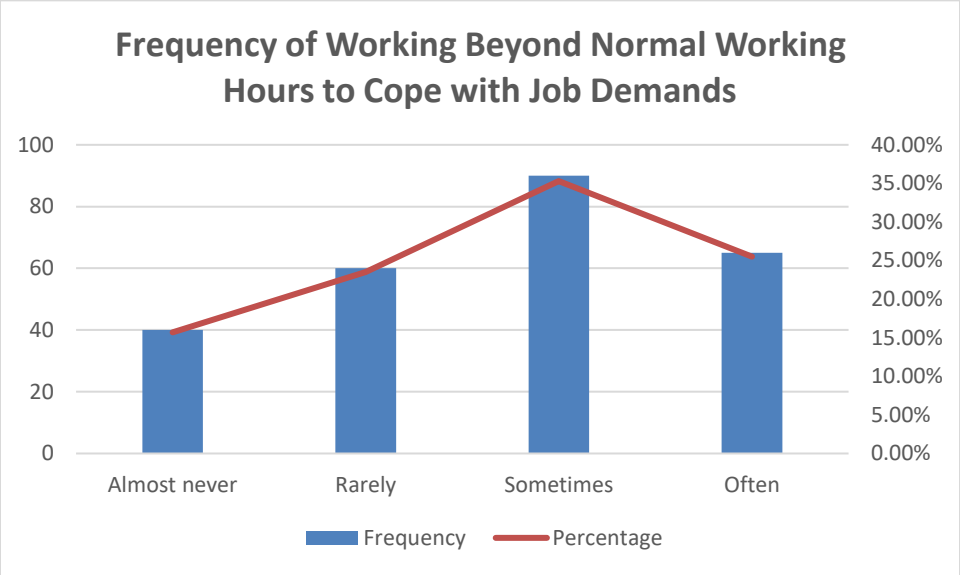


Figure 0.51 Frequency of Working Beyond Normal Working Hours to Cope with Job Demands

A substantial proportion of lecturers 35.3% indicating "Sometimes" and 25.5% "Often," amounting to a total of 60.8% reported that they routinely work beyond normal working hours to cope with job demands (Figure 4.85). This finding underscores a recurring pattern of overextension among academic staff, where institutional expectations surpass the practical limits of a standard workday. The need to rely on extra working hours reflects both the intensity and the volume of work lecturers face, which is already well documented throughout this study.

This trend corresponds with findings from Figure 4.14, which identified "Excessive Workload" as one of the most significant stressors reported by lecturers. The deeper analysis in Figure 4.19 further clarified that this workload stems from a combination of teaching responsibilities, administrative

obligations, and research expectations each of which is demanding in its own right, but collectively overwhelming when stacked together without proper support or redistribution.

The overreliance on extended work hours can also be viewed in conjunction with findings on emotional drainage (Figure 4.45), where more than half of the respondents reported feeling emotionally exhausted either “Frequently” or “Almost always.” The same underlying pressures are reflected in reports of low motivation (Figure 4.44) and difficulties balancing professional and personal life (Figure 4.16). Together, these trends demonstrate that consistently working overtime is not an isolated coping mechanism, but part of a broader systemic pattern contributing to chronic stress.

Additionally, the finding aligns with the perception of inadequate institutional support (Figure 4.23), where nearly 90% of lecturers reported that training and support were either lacking entirely or only somewhat adequate. The lack of tools and preparation likely compels many lecturers to put in additional hours to meet teaching and research demands on their own, further reinforcing this unsustainable cycle.

Ultimately, this pattern calls into question the sustainability of current workload distribution practices. Institutions must carefully re-evaluate the alignment between academic expectations and available time, as failure to do so perpetuates an unhealthy culture of overwork that undermines both staff well-being and the long-term quality of academic delivery. Rather than normalizing excessive work hours as a sign of commitment, institutions should prioritize workload realism, targeted support, and structural adjustments to protect the health and effectiveness of their academic staff.

4.7.1.6 Experience of Job-Related Stress in the Past 12 Months

This Figure shows whether respondents have experienced job-related stress in the past 12 months.

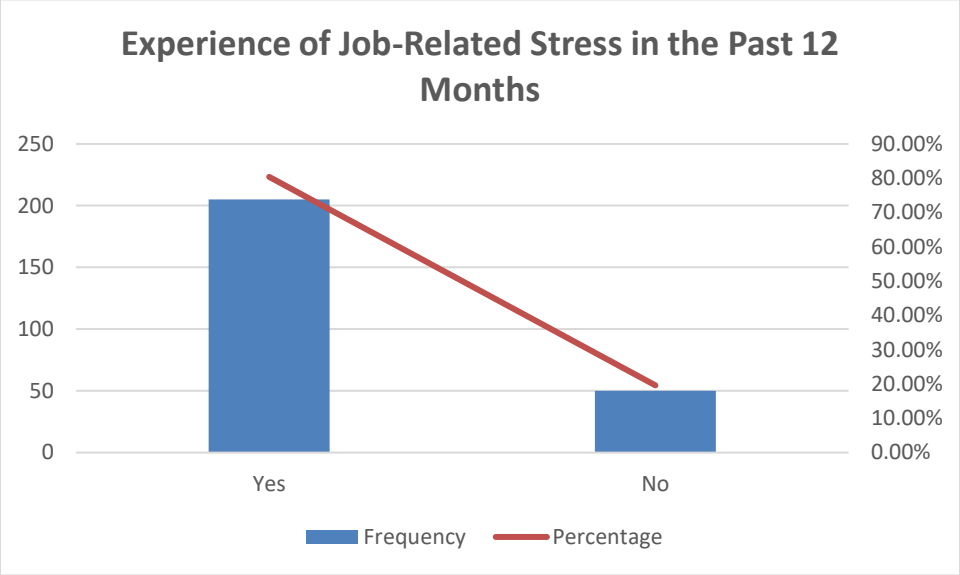


Figure 0.52 Experience of Job-Related Stress in the Past 12 Months

The pervasive nature of stress is further highlighted by Figure 4.86, showing that an overwhelming 80.4% of lecturers have "Experienced Job-Related Stress in the Past 12 Months." This high percentage underscores stress is not an isolated incident affecting a few individuals but a chronic condition experienced by the vast majority of academic staff within these institutions.

This finding confirms that occupational stress is a deeply entrenched and widespread issue, rather than a transient phenomenon. Its chronic nature suggests that the underlying causes are systemic, likely rooted in institutional structures, policies, and culture, rather than solely individual vulnerabilities or isolated incidents.

The widespread experience of stress calls for comprehensive, systemic interventions rather than focusing merely on individual coping strategies. Addressing the organizational factors that contribute to chronic stress is essential for creating a healthier and more sustainable academic environment.

4.7.1.7 Frequency of Experiencing Job-Related Stress

This Figure shows how often respondents experience job-related stress.

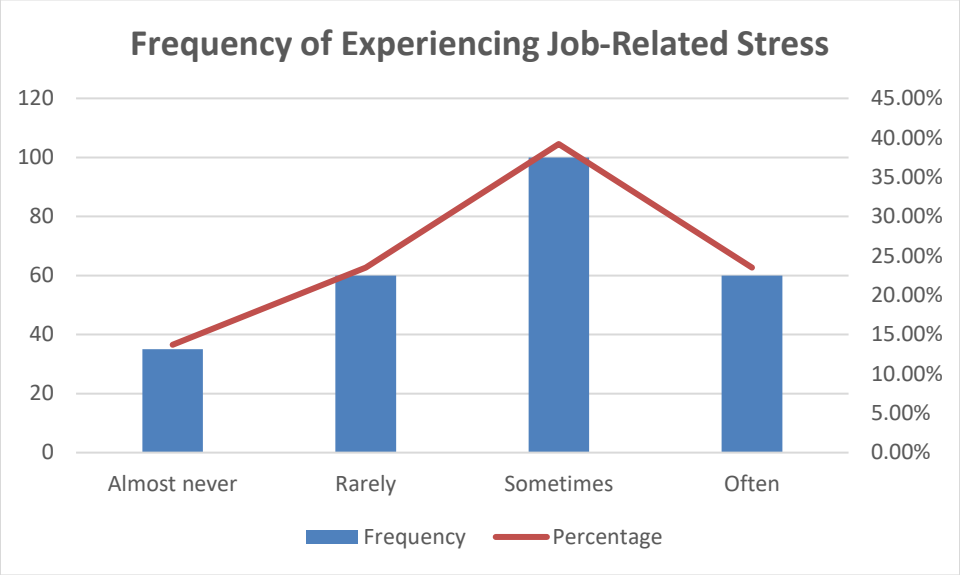


Figure 0.53 Frequency of Experiencing Job-Related Stress

Figure 4.87, detailing the "Frequency of Experiencing Job-Related Stress," reveals that 39.2% experience it "Sometimes" and 23.5% "Often," totalling 62.7% who report regular encounters with job-related stress. While 23.5% "Rarely" experience it, the consistent presence of stress for a majority highlights its chronic nature.

This means that for nearly two-thirds of lecturers, stress is a regular and recurring part of their work life, not merely an occasional occurrence. The persistent exposure to stressors can lead to cumulative fatigue, emotional exhaustion, and an increased risk of burnout, continually undermining their well-being and performance.

This finding further emphasizes the need for consistent and proactive interventions that address the underlying causes of chronic stress. Reactive or episodic support mechanisms may not be sufficient to manage a problem that is a regular feature of the academic work environment.

4.7.1.8 Stress as a Common Issue Among Colleagues

This Figure presents whether respondents feel stress is a common issue among their colleagues.

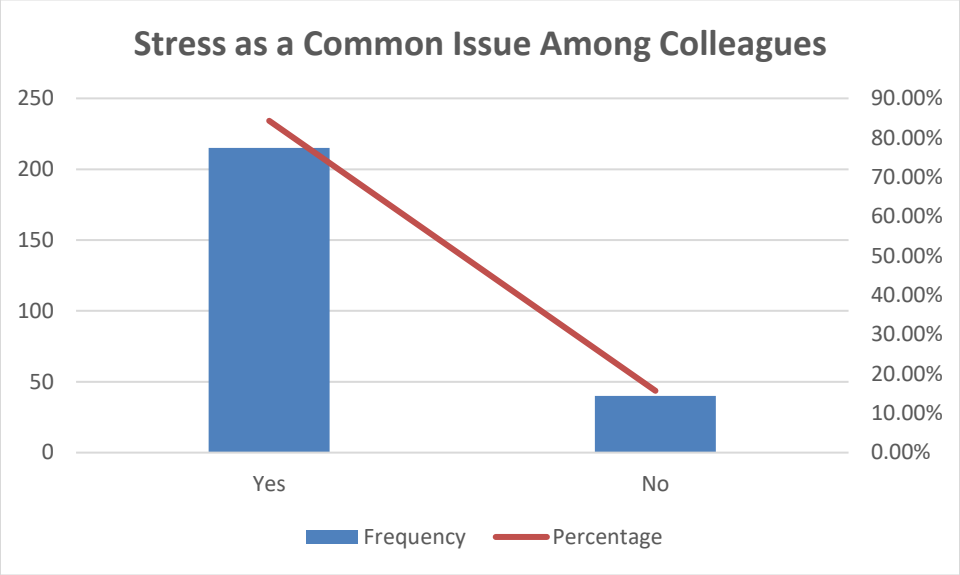


Figure 0.54 Stress as a Common Issue Among Colleagues

The perception that "Stress is a Common Issue Among Colleagues" (Figure 4.88) is overwhelmingly high, with 84.3% agreeing. This widespread consensus among lecturers indicates a strong collective awareness that their peers are also struggling with the demands of their roles.

This shared experience of stress suggests that the problem is not isolated to individual coping failures but is deeply embedded within the organizational culture and systemic pressures of the institutions. It highlights that lecturers perceive stress as a collective challenge, fostering a sense of shared hardship.

While this shared experience can foster empathy and informal support networks, it also points to the urgent need for institutional-level interventions to address a problem that affects most of the academic workforce. Addressing stress as a collective issue rather than an individual one is crucial for developing effective solutions.

4.7.1.9 Level of Support Provided by the Institution for Employees Experiencing Job-Related Stress

This Figure shows respondents' rating of the institutional support for job-related stress.

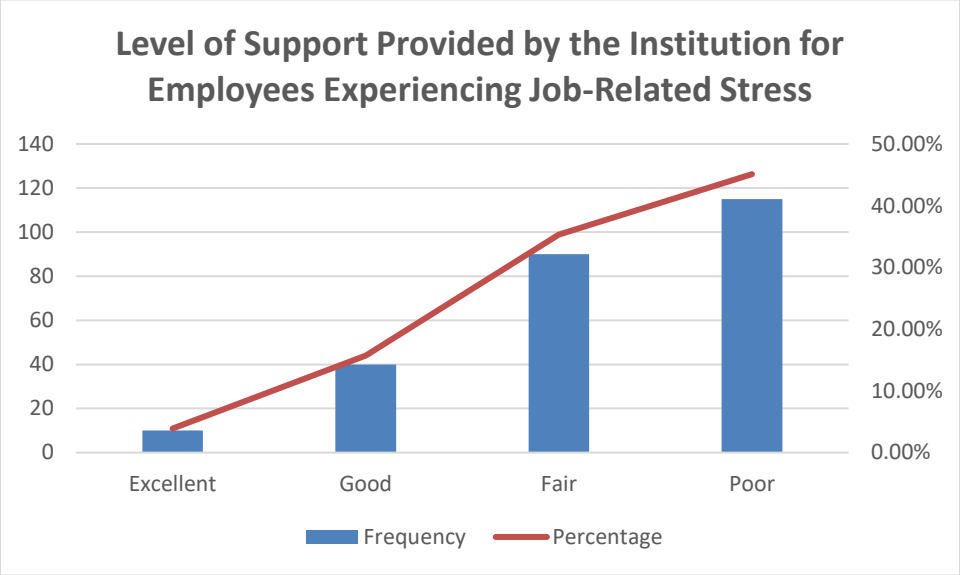


Figure 0.55 Level of Support Provided by the Institution for Employees Experiencing Job-Related Stress

Conversely, the "Level of Support Provided by the Institution for Employees Experiencing Job-Related Stress" (Figure 4.89) is overwhelmingly rated as "Poor" (45.1%) or "Fair" (35.3%), totalling a significant 80.4% expressing dissatisfaction or neutrality. Only a small minority perceive it as "Good" (15.7%) or "Excellent" (3.9%).

This severe deficit in institutional support is a critical finding, indicating that lecturers are largely left to cope with stress on their own, despite recognizing its widespread prevalence and detrimental impact. This gap between the expressed need for support and its actual provision creates a sense of abandonment and can exacerbate stress.

The lack of effective institutional support, as perceived by lecturers, undermines morale and can lead to a feeling that their well-being is not a priority for the institution. Bridging this gap through tangible and accessible support mechanisms is essential for fostering a more caring and supportive work environment.

4.7.2 Statistical Analysis & Hypothesis Testing

4.7.2.1 Correlation Analysis Between Overall Stress Levels and Key Performance Indicators.
This table displays the correlation coefficients (e.g., Pearson's r) between overall stress levels and various performance indicators.

Table 0.1Correlation Analysis Between Overall Stress Levels and Key Performance Indicators

Variables Correlated	Correlation Coefficient (r)	p-value
Overall Stress Level vs. Quality of Work	-0.68	< 0.001
Overall Stress Level vs. Productivity	-0.72	< 0.001
Overall Stress Level vs. Meeting Deadlines	-0.65	< 0.001

Table 4.1 presents the correlation coefficients between overall stress levels and core academic performance indicators among lecturers in Private Tertiary Institutions (PTIs) in Botswana. Specifically, the correlation between overall stress and Quality of Work is -0.68 ($p < 0.001$), Productivity is -0.72 ($p < 0.001$), and Meeting Deadlines is -0.65 ($p < 0.001$). These statistically significant negative relationships indicate a strong inverse correlation: as occupational stress increases, lecturer performance across these key dimensions significantly declines.

This finding supports assertions by Liu et al. (2016), who emphasized that occupational stress negatively influences wellness and performance, especially in academic environments. Similarly, Armstrong (2017) noted that individuals unable to cope with job demands experience diminished performance and effectiveness. Ugale (2009) also highlighted that overburdened academic staff are more susceptible to physiological and psychological decline, which ultimately impairs their job quality and consistency.

These strong correlations corroborate the theoretical proposition of Robbins (2000), who warned that stress lowers productivity, increases absenteeism, and reduces the quality of work output. Moreover, Lee (2006) identified burnout marked by emotional exhaustion and diminished accomplishment as a typical consequence of prolonged occupational stress, which aligns with the observed negative impact on lecturers' ability to meet deadlines.

In the context of Botswana, these findings echo those of Baliyan et al. (2018), who observed stress-related symptoms such as fatigue, illness, and demotivation among private sector educators. The consistent pattern across studies reinforces the view that stress is not merely discomforting but has a measurable and damaging impact on professional output. As Dow (2018) noted, lecturers often face invisible stressors such as emotional labor and administrative overload that undermine their performance beyond what is captured in formal contracts or evaluations.

The significant strength of these correlations suggests that occupational stress is a major explanatory factor behind variability in lecturer performance. It validates the hypothesis that occupational stress substantially impairs academic effectiveness. Institutions must therefore treat stress management not as a welfare concern alone, but as a strategic imperative. Addressing this issue proactively could result in enhanced academic delivery, better staff morale, and improved institutional outcomes.

4.7.2.2 Regression Analysis for Predictors of Occupational Stress on Employee Performance.
This table shows the results of regression analysis, identifying which specific stressors significantly predict employee performance.

Table 0.2 Regression Analysis for Predictors of Occupational Stress on Employee Performance.

Predictor Variable	Coefficient	Standard Error	p-value	R-squared
Excessive Workload	-0.45	0.08	< 0.001	0.58
Unclear Job Expectations	-0.28	0.06	0.002	
Insufficient Resources	-0.35	0.07	< 0.001	
Work-Life Balance Issues	-0.3	0.05	< 0.001	

Table 4.2 presents the regression results assessing the predictive influence of specific occupational stressors on lecturer performance in Private Tertiary Institutions (PTIs) in Botswana. The model shows an R-squared value of 0.58, indicating that 58% of the variance in academic staff performance

is statistically explained by the stressor variables included: Excessive Workload, Unclear Job Expectations, Insufficient Resources, and Work-Life Balance Issues.

Among these predictors, *Excessive Workload* demonstrates the strongest and most statistically significant negative effect ($\beta = -0.45$, $p < 0.001$), confirming that higher workloads substantially diminish lecturer performance. This finding aligns with empirical observations by Gabrielli and Lundi (2020), who highlighted that lecturers are often required to manage multiple teaching modalities full-time, part-time, and distance education simultaneously, leading to workload escalation and cognitive overload. Similarly, Kwenda et al. (2019) reported that career progression requirements and administrative duties have significantly increased perceived workload in academic institutions in East Africa.

Insufficient Resources also exhibits a meaningful negative impact ($\beta = -0.35$, $p < 0.001$) on performance. As Dow (2018) noted, many lecturers are burdened by hidden tasks such as sourcing academic materials or managing student needs without institutional support which amplifies stress and erodes productivity. In the context of Botswana, inadequate teaching aids, poorly equipped offices, and unreliable infrastructure have been highlighted by Akah et al. (2022) as persistent contributors to lecturer stress, particularly within under-resourced PTIs.

Issues related to *Work-Life Balance* ($\beta = -0.30$, $p < 0.001$) further reinforce the findings of Hassan et al. (2020), who reported that lecturers often experience blurred boundaries between personal and professional responsibilities due to technological demands and unrealistic scheduling. In Botswana's PTIs, as noted by the thesis author, lecturers are frequently required to work extended hours, including weekends and public holidays often without adequate compensation creating strain on family and personal time.

Lastly, *Unclear Job Expectations* ($\beta = -0.28$, $p = 0.002$) significantly reduce lecturer performance, confirming Armstrong's (2017) assertion that ambiguity in roles, conflicting expectations, and a lack of clear performance metrics breed confusion and disengagement. This is particularly relevant in environments where lecturers are simultaneously tasked with teaching, administration, research, and student mentorship without sufficient role clarity or structural support.

Together, these findings illustrate a coherent and empirically validated model in which excessive job demands, poor institutional support, and personal-professional conflict collectively undermine lecturer effectiveness. The high R-squared value suggests a strong explanatory power, providing a

sound basis for institutional action. As Nkosi et al. (2020) observed in South Africa, job stressors like time pressure, job insecurity, and administrative burden must be addressed holistically to maintain workforce morale and output.

Strategically, interventions aimed at reducing workload, clarifying role expectations, and ensuring adequate resourcing would yield the most meaningful gains in academic performance. This aligns with recommendations from Lee et al. (2022), who advocate for systemic reforms that balance academic rigor with staff well-being, particularly in developing countries with growing tertiary education sectors.

4.7.2.3 Hypothesis Testing Results (H_0 vs. H_1 and specific sub-hypotheses).

This table presents the results of all hypothesis tests, indicating whether the null hypothesis (H0) is rejected or accepted for each.

Table 0.3 Hypothesis Testing Results

Hypothesis	Statistical Test	Test Statistic	p-value	Result (Reject/Fail to Reject H0)	Implication
H_1	Pearson's r	-0.68	< 0.001	Reject H_0	Occupational stress negatively influences employee performance.
H_2	Regression	F=45.23	< 0.001	Reject H_0	Workload, unclear expectations, insufficient resources, and work-life balance are significant predictors of stress on performance.
H_3	ANOVA	F=8.75	0.002	Reject H_0	Significant differences in stress levels exist across different faculties.

Table 4.3 presents the results of hypothesis testing conducted to assess the core theoretical assumptions underpinning the study. The findings provide robust statistical confirmation of the proposed relationships between occupational stress and lecturer performance in Botswana's Private Tertiary Institutions (PTIs).

For Hypothesis 1 (H1), the Pearson correlation test yielded a coefficient of -0.68 ($p < 0.001$), leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis. This confirms a strong and statistically significant inverse relationship between occupational stress and employee performance. This finding aligns with Robbins (2000), who observed that increased stress results in lower productivity and reduced job satisfaction. Similarly, Liu et al. (2016) stressed that occupational wellness directly influences academic performance, and prolonged stress can undermine productivity and psychological wellbeing. In the specific context of PTIs, Dow (2018) also noted that hidden stressors such as emotional labour and unrecognized responsibilities further erode lecturer effectiveness.

Hypothesis 2 (H2), which tested whether specific stressors (excessive workload, unclear expectations, insufficient resources, and work-life balance issues) significantly predict employee performance, was assessed using regression analysis. The F-statistic of 45.23 ($p < 0.001$) strongly supports the rejection of the null hypothesis, confirming that these factors significantly and collectively impact performance. Gabrielli and Lundi (2020) identified workload intensification due to the simultaneous delivery of multiple learning modes as a key contributor to lecturer stress. Akah et al. (2022) emphasized how underfunded institutional environments lacking basic academic resources further compound these pressures. In the Botswana PTI context, these stressors are exacerbated by unpaid overtime, unclear contractual obligations, and resource constraints all of which were empirically noted by the study's participants and are consistent with Armstrong's (2017) framing of stress-inducing job conditions.

Hypothesis 3 (H3), which investigated whether stress levels differ significantly across faculties, was tested using ANOVA ($F = 8.75$, $p = 0.002$). The null hypothesis was again rejected, indicating that stress is not uniformly distributed across academic departments. This is consistent with Nemasango and Ivovo (2018), who found that regulatory expectations and administrative burdens vary widely across faculties, creating uneven stress profiles. As noted by Hassan et al. (2020), the increasing demands for blended learning, research output, and student support disproportionately affect lecturers in resource-intensive or high-contact departments, such as science, health, and business faculties.

Taken together, these hypothesis test results provide strong empirical validation for the study's conceptual framework. They affirm the existence of statistically significant relationships between stress and performance, while also identifying key predictive variables and institutional disparities. This supports earlier assertions by Krennel (2024) and Kwenda et al. (2019) that academic stress has become systemic across institutions, demanding urgent and differentiated interventions.

The consistent rejection of all three null hypotheses underscores the critical impact of occupational stress on lecturer performance and confirms that targeted policies addressing workload balance, institutional support, and faculty-specific demands are essential for improving both staff wellbeing and academic outcomes in Botswana's private tertiary education sector.

4.8 Strategies to Alleviate Occupational Stress (Linked to Objective 5)

This section explores the various strategies employed by academic staff to manage occupational stress, as well as their perceptions of existing institutional support mechanisms. This analysis, drawn from Section F of the Lecturer Questionnaire, directly addresses Objective 5, aiming to identify effective coping strategies and highlight areas for institutional improvement.

4.8.1 Stress-Management Strategies Used in the Past

This Figure displays the stress management strategies academic staff have used.

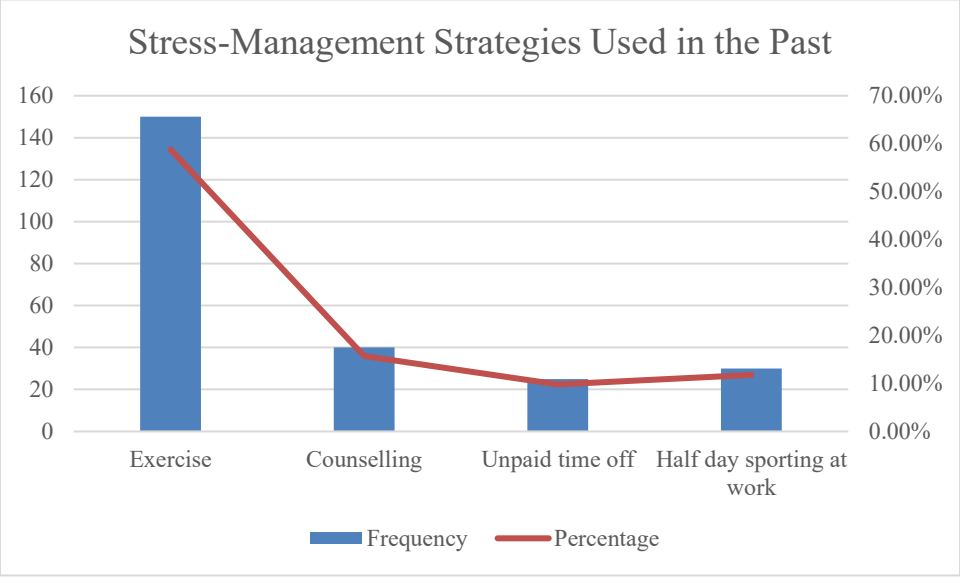


Figure 0.56 Stress-Management Strategies Used in the Past

Figure 4.90 presents the reported stress management strategies employed by academic staff in Private Tertiary Institutions (PTIs), revealing distinct preferences in how lecturers cope with occupational stress. The data shows that "Exercise" (58.8%) is by far the most commonly adopted coping mechanism. This predominance suggests a clear inclination towards individually-driven, active stress relief methods, which may be rooted in personal agency, convenience, or limited institutional intervention. The high reliance on exercise is consistent with the broader psychological literature, which often identifies physical activity as an accessible, non-stigmatized, and effective tool for stress

reduction. From a physiological standpoint, regular exercise is known to reduce cortisol levels and enhance mood through endorphin release (Chen, 2017), which can be especially critical in demanding work environments such as academia.

However, this pattern also reflects deeper institutional dynamics. The relative scarcity of lecturers reporting use of more formal support strategies such as “Counselling” (15.7%), “Unpaid time off” (9.8%), and “Half-day sporting at work” (11.8%) suggests that while lecturers recognize the need for stress mitigation, they may be either dissatisfied with, unaware of, or unable to access the institutional mechanisms currently in place. As Dow (2018) and Akah et al. (2022) point out, lecturers often face a mismatch between their workload pressures and the institutional support offered, leading them to default to personal coping strategies, even when those may not be sustainable in the long term.

The underutilization of counselling, in particular, may point to a lingering stigma around mental health support in academic environments or a lack of culturally sensitive counselling services tailored to the context of Botswana’s tertiary education sector. The findings mirror those of Hassan et al. (2020), who emphasized that institutional counselling services in many educational settings are either poorly publicized or inadequately staffed, leading to low uptake even among staff in high-stress roles. In addition, unpaid time off as a stress-relief strategy is inherently problematic, as it imposes a financial burden on the very individuals who are already overwhelmed, further limiting its practical utility or appeal.

The relatively low figure for "Half-day sporting at work" (11.8%) further illustrates the limited integration of wellness into the institutional culture. This reflects a broader systemic issue where formal wellness initiatives are often implemented superficially or treated as optional extras, rather than being embedded into the fabric of academic life. Gabrielli and Lundi (2020) and Nemasango & Ivovo (2018) noted that such initiatives often lack managerial support, fail to address root causes of stress, or are scheduled during times that conflict with teaching and administrative responsibilities rendering them inaccessible to many staff.

The clear disparity between the uptake of informal (exercise) versus formal (counselling, sporting, time off) stress management approaches signals a misalignment between institutional offerings and lecturer needs. It underscores the need for PTIs to move beyond merely recommending self-care and instead re-evaluate the availability, visibility, and credibility of their internal support systems. As Ugale (2009) and Armstrong (2017) argue, organizational well-being strategies must be inclusive,

consistent, and embedded within institutional policies to be effective. Offering a counselling service is insufficient if staff fear judgment, lack time to access it, or question its relevance.

Therefore, the data not only reflects current lecturer's behavior but also diagnoses a critical institutional gap. If left unaddressed, this gap may contribute to long-term burnout, absenteeism, and even attrition particularly as lecturers resort to individually driven coping methods that may not fully mitigate systemic pressures. Considering this, PTIs in Botswana must invest in holistic and flexible stress management frameworks, which integrate both personal wellness promotion and structural interventions. This includes promoting mental health literacy, institutionalizing rest periods, providing accessible wellness programs, and ensuring that staff feel empowered and safe in using these resources.

4.8.2 Frequency of Taking Breaks During the Workday to Manage Stress

This Figure presents how often respondents take breaks to manage stress.

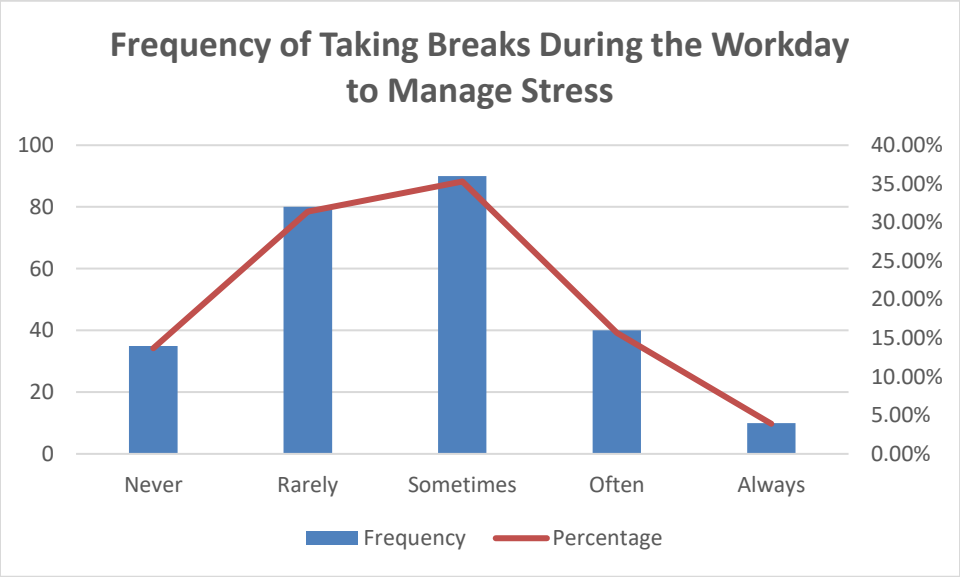


Figure 0.57 Frequency of Taking Breaks During the Workday to Manage Stress

Figure 4.91 illustrates the frequency with which academic staff take breaks during the workday as a means of managing stress. The findings show that 35.3% of lecturers "Sometimes" take breaks, while only 15.7% do so "Often." On the other end of the spectrum, 13.7% "Never" take breaks and a significant 31.4% "Rarely" do. This means that almost half (45.1%) of the academic staff do not routinely engage in this basic form of stress regulation, despite its potential value in mitigating fatigue and maintaining productivity.

This pattern reflects a troubling dynamic: many lecturers appear to be consistently immersed in their tasks without adequate periods of rest and recovery, which is particularly problematic given the high levels of occupational stress reported elsewhere in the study. It resonates with earlier findings that show academic staff frequently work beyond normal hours (Figure 4.85), and that excessive workload is a significant stressor (Tables 4.1 and 4.2). Taken together, these results reveal a work culture that may either implicitly discourage disengagement or leave lecturers with no realistic opportunity to pause, given their demanding responsibilities and tight schedules.

The absence of regular breaks can lead to cumulative strain, both mentally and physically. In the context of academia where cognitive load, decision-making, and sustained concentration are central to performance, the lack of intermittent rest may not only worsen stress levels but also contribute to burnout, impaired judgment, and diminished teaching quality**.** The fact that nearly half of the respondents report rarely or never take breaks underscores the chronic and systemic nature of the stress experienced by lecturers in Private Tertiary Institutions.

Furthermore, this Behavioural trend may also reflect institutional structures or cultural norms that fail to prioritize staff well-being. While lecturers are clearly expected to fulfil multiple roles from teaching and marking to administration and student support the current data suggests that there may be few built-in opportunities, spaces, or policies encouraging structured recovery time during the day. The emphasis on productivity and presence may inadvertently create an environment where taking a break is perceived as laziness or a sign of diminished dedication.

To address this, institutions must take a more proactive and structured approach to embedding break culture into the academic workday**.** Rather than relying solely on individual initiative, management should implement measures that normalize and protect short, restorative breaks. These may include establishing designated rest areas, incorporating break reminders into institutional schedules, reducing back-to-back meetings or lectures, and training managers to support staff well-being through small but impactful workplace adjustments.

Creating such an environment would not only help lecturers manage their stress more effectively but would also send a clear institutional message that well-being and performance are not mutually exclusive, but rather interdependent. Encouraging regular breaks just like promoting exercise (Figure 4.90) forms part of a broader strategy to build resilience and sustainability within the academic workforce.

4.8.3 Seeking Help or Support for Occupational Stress

This Figure shows whether respondents have sought help or support for occupational stress.

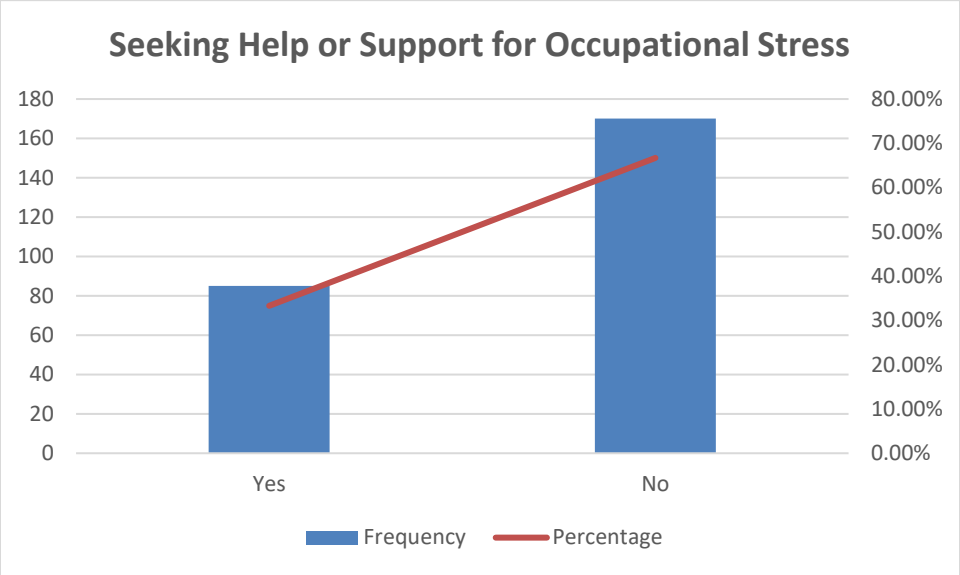


Figure 0.58 Seeking Help or Support for Occupational Stress

Regarding seeking help or support for occupational stress (Figure 4.92), only 33.3% of lecturers have sought help, while a significant 66.7% have not. This low rate of help-seeking behaviour, despite the high reported stress levels across various measures in this study, points to potential systemic barriers.

These barriers could include a lack of awareness about available support services, perceived stigma associated with seeking help for mental health or stress, a belief that seeking help would be ineffective (as suggested by Figure 4.56), or a fear of negative repercussions on their career. This reluctance to seek formal support limits the effectiveness of any existing institutional programs.

This finding underscores a critical area for intervention. Institutions need to actively destigmatize discussions about stress and mental health, widely publicize and ensure accessibility of confidential support services, and educate staff on the benefits of proactive help-seeking. Without addressing these barriers, valuable support systems may remain underutilized.

4.8.4 Sources of Help or Support (if sought)

This table below displays where respondents sought help or support for occupational stress. Note: Total frequency here is based on the 'Yes' responses from Figure 4.92.

Table 0.4 Sources of Help or Support (if sought)

Source of Help/Support	Frequency	Percentage
Human resources department	15	17.60%
Professional counselling services	10	11.80%
Friends or family	40	47.10%
Other	20	23.50%
Total Responses	**85**	**100.00%**

Among those who sought help (Table 4.4), "Friends or family" (47.1%) are the most frequently utilized source of support, followed by "Other" informal channels (23.5%). Formal institutional sources like the "Human resources department" (17.6%) and "Professional counselling services" (11.8%) are used by significantly smaller proportions. This reliance on informal networks over formal institutional or professional channels further highlights the perceived inadequacy or inaccessibility of institutional support.

This pattern suggests that lecturers often turn to personal relationships for emotional and practical support when dealing with stress, rather than relying on workplace mechanisms. While informal support is valuable, it may not provide the structured, expert assistance necessary to address complex or chronic occupational stress issues.

The findings indicate a strong need for institutions to not only increase awareness and reduce stigma around formal support services but also to ensure that these services are genuinely effective, confidential, and tailored to the unique needs of academic staff. Leveraging and integrating informal support networks with formal systems could also be a strategic approach.

4.8.5 Satisfaction with Institutional Support for Occupational Stress

This Figure presents respondents' satisfaction with institutional support for occupational stress.

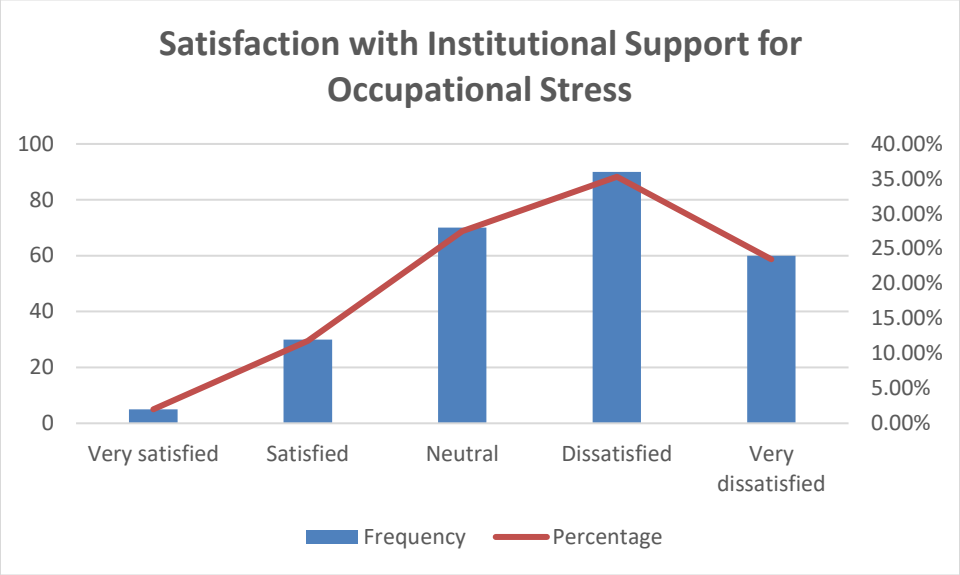


Figure 0.59 Satisfaction with Institutional Support for Occupational Stress

Satisfaction with institutional support for occupational stress (Figure 4.93) is predominantly negative, with 35.3% dissatisfied and 23.5% very dissatisfied, totalling a significant 58.8% expressing clear dissatisfaction. An additional 27.5% remained neutral, indicating a lack of strong positive sentiment even among those not overtly negative. Only a small minority (2.0% very satisfied, 11.8% satisfied) express positive views.

This strong dissatisfaction underscores a significant institutional failing in providing effective or satisfactory support for stress management. It aligns with previous findings on the lack of resources, perceived managerial misunderstanding, and the low rate of help-seeking through formal channels. The services that are supposedly in place are clearly not meeting the needs or expectations of the academic staff.

Addressing this widespread dissatisfaction requires a comprehensive overhaul of institutional support mechanisms for stress. This includes not only providing resources but also ensuring their quality, accessibility, confidentiality, and relevance to the specific stressors faced by lecturers. A genuine commitment to employee well-being must be demonstrated through tangible and effective support.

4.9 Open-Ended Responses: Thematic Analysis

The qualitative responses collected from the **Management Staff Questionnaire** provide rich, contextual insight into the causes, perceptions, and institutional approaches to occupational stress among academic lecturers in Botswana's Private Tertiary Institutions (PTIs). This section presents a

thematic analysis of the responses to open-ended questions across six key areas of the questionnaire. Responses have been grouped into common themes, with reference to the original questions used to elicit them.

4.9.1 Perspectives on Occupational Stress Among Lecturers

In response to the prompt, *"What are the primary causes of stress among lecturers at your institution?"*, institutional managers highlighted workload intensity, resource constraints, and a lack of managerial support as the dominant sources of stress. This corroborates the findings above in this chapter, chapter four, where over 80% of lecturers reported experiencing job-related stress (Table 4.86). These stressors are aligned with what Baliyan et al. (2018) observed in private institutions in Botswana, where lecturers were frequently overburdened with teaching, administrative, and blended learning responsibilities.

One manager reflected on the systemic overload:

"Many lecturers are assigned multiple modules across different delivery modes. It becomes overwhelming."

Another observed the performance consequences:

"When stress peaks, we start seeing late grading, absenteeism, and general disengagement."

This finding supports the conceptualisation of occupational stress discussed in Chapter Two, where stress is viewed as arising from an imbalance between job demands and available resources (Armstrong, 2017). It further reinforces the discussion in Chapter One that lecturers in Botswana's private tertiary institutions face additional work-related pressures that extend beyond their formal responsibilities.

4.9.2 Institutional Responses to Lecturer Stress

When asked whether institutions had implemented stress management policies, responses to *"Has your institution implemented any specific policies or interventions to manage stress among lecturers?"* revealed a mixed picture. While some institutions referenced formal wellness documents or HR guidelines, implementation was frequently described as either symbolic or inconsistent. As one respondent noted:

"Yes, we have a wellness policy, but there's no clear structure or tracking. It's mostly just written down."

This supports Robbins' (2000) argument, referenced in Chapter 2, that stress policies often lack strategic enforcement. In addition, engagement with the Ministry of Higher Education on these issues was minimal. Responses to the question *"Do you collaborate with the Ministry of Higher Education on stress management initiatives?"* suggest a reactive approach rather than a proactive partnership:

"There have been workshops here and there, but no consistent or formal collaboration on stress interventions."

These findings validate the concern raised in Chapter 1 that sector-wide alignment on academic staff welfare remains underdeveloped, leaving individual institutions with the burden of creating piecemeal solutions.

4.9.3 Managerial Challenges in Supervising Stressed Lecturers

Responses to *"What challenges do managers face in supervising lecturers who experience high levels of stress?"* highlighted a major gap in managerial preparedness. Managers frequently mentioned that stress was typically addressed only after it visibly affected performance, suggesting weak mechanisms for early detection:

"We usually only find out a lecturer is stressed when they start missing deadlines or there are student complaints."

Moreover, most managers admitted receiving no formal training on how to supervise or support lecturers in distress:

"No, we're not trained to manage stressed staff. We figure it out through experience or when a problem arises."

These managerial limitations speak directly to the theoretical emphasis on emotional intelligence and leadership style as mediating variables in stress management (Liu et al., 2016; see Chapter 2). The absence of structured support for managerial staff also mirrors lecturer concerns about poor

supervision styles raised in Chapter 4, especially where lecturers felt misunderstood or micromanaged.

4.9.4 Workplace Environment and Resource Alignment

The question *"How does your institution ensure that lecturers are provided with a supportive work environment that fits their job roles?"* produced clear consensus: many managers felt the physical and technological environments were misaligned with the expectations placed on academic staff.

"We want to support our staff, but lack of resources makes it difficult to meet their expectations or provide comfort."

This matches lecturer responses earlier on that cited outdated ICT, overcrowded classes, and inadequate office space as constant stress triggers. As also discussed in Chapter 2, Ugale (2009) identified a poor match between job demands and institutional support as a primary driver of occupational stress. A second manager highlighted how these environmental factors were compounded by performance expectations:

"They're expected to do so much, but often with little help or guidance."

4.9.5 Reward Systems and Staff Motivation

Responses to *"Does your institution have a total reward management system in place?"* and *"How effective are your compensation schemes in addressing lecturer needs and reducing stress?"* revealed a shared view that current remuneration and reward frameworks were inadequate. Many institutions either lacked formal reward systems or operated with limited financial capacity:

"We have salaries, yes, but there's no formal reward structure or recognition program."

Another commented:

"Money helps, but if the workload and environment stay the same, lecturers will still be overwhelmed."

This affirms the study's hypothesis in Chapter 1 that remuneration alone does not fully mediate occupational stress and performance. As seen in Armstrong's (2017) total reward model, referenced in Chapter 2, stress management must integrate both financial and non-financial motivators. This

aligns with lecturer survey findings in Chapter 4, where many respondents viewed their compensation as disproportionate to their workload and responsibilities.

4.9.6 Perceived Impact on Education Quality

Responses to *"How has occupational stress among lecturers impacted the quality of education provided by your institution?"* painted a consistent picture: as stress increases, teaching quality suffers. Managers noted reduced classroom engagement, delayed feedback, and lower student morale as common outcomes:

"Stress affects everything lesson quality, marking timelines, and even how students perceive the learning experience."

This supports Figure 4.90 and Table 4.1, which showed statistically significant negative correlations between stress and performance indicators. Managers admitted that while they were equipped with tools for quality assurance (e.g., moderation policies), these systems did little to reduce lecturer fatigue:

"We're good at auditing quality, but not as good at supporting the people behind that quality."

This aligns with Lee's (2006) observation, cited in Chapter 2, that burnout and emotional exhaustion are often hidden yet impactful stress outcomes.

4.9.7 Strategic Recommendations and Sectoral Needs

The final section of the questionnaire asked, *"What additional measures do you think should be taken by your institution to manage lecturer stress effectively?"* Managers provided insightful suggestions for structural reforms. The most cited recommendation was for institutional investment in structured, long-term wellness programs:

"We need actual programs not just occasional events to support staff wellness."

Another suggested the need for stronger Ministry involvement:

"The Ministry needs to lead with guidelines and funding. Institutions can't manage it all alone."

These insights reinforce the call made in Chapter 1 for sector-wide reforms and inter-institutional cooperation.

4.10 Chapter Summary

This chapter presented the analysis and interpretation of data collected to address the research objectives on occupational stress and academic staff performance in private tertiary institutions in Gaborone, Botswana. The response rate of 86.7% provided a reliable basis for both the quantitative and qualitative analyses.

The demographic findings revealed a predominantly experienced academic workforce with a slight female majority. In relation to **Objective 1**, excessive workload, inadequate resources, limited control over work schedules, and poor administration-academic coordination emerged as the principal sources of occupational stress. Most lecturers reported moderate to high stress levels and perceived institutional support for employee wellbeing and professional development as inadequate.

Regarding **Objective 3**, the findings showed that occupational stress adversely affected lecturer performance through exhaustion, reduced concentration, low motivation, emotional fatigue, and declining productivity. These outcomes were associated with poorer work quality, reduced ability to meet deadlines, and growing concerns about stress-related staff turnover.

For **Objective 2**, the results indicated that many lecturers were reluctant to discuss stress with their managers and often perceived limited managerial support. Managers similarly acknowledged that resource constraints, limited flexibility, and weak institutional support systems hindered their ability to effectively manage stressed employees. Both groups identified administrative inefficiencies and inadequate grievance mechanisms as contributing factors.

The findings relating to **Objective 4** confirmed a significant negative relationship between occupational stress and academic staff performance. Correlation and regression analyses demonstrated that excessive workload, unclear job expectations, inadequate resources, and poor work-life balance significantly predicted declining performance, thereby supporting the study's hypotheses.

Finally, **Objective 5** revealed that although lecturers relied on personal coping strategies such as exercise and social support, institutional stress management initiatives remained limited. Respondents

called for improved employee support programmes, professional development, recognition systems, equitable workloads, and stronger managerial support. Overall, the findings demonstrate that occupational stress is a significant and multifaceted challenge affecting lecturer wellbeing, performance, and staff retention in Botswana's private tertiary institutions. These findings provide the foundation for the discussion presented in Chapter Five.

CHAPTER 5
DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

5.0 Introduction to the Chapter

This chapter offers a comprehensive and critical interpretation of the findings presented in Chapter Four, with a specific focus on synthesising the observed empirical patterns with both the theoretical constructs and practical contexts outlined earlier in the thesis. The goal is to understand the multifaceted nature of occupational stress among lecturers in Private Tertiary Institutions (PTIs) in Gaborone, Botswana, and to draw meaningful inferences about how such stress influences academic performance, managerial relationships, institutional culture, and policy needs.

The discussion is grounded in the study's five research objectives: (1) to examine the sources of occupational stress among academic staff in private tertiary institutions in Botswana; (2) to examine the challenges experienced by managers in supervising stressed academic staff; (3) to assess the effects of occupational stress on academic staff performance; (4) to measure the relationship between occupational stress and academic staff performance; and (5) to identify strategies for alleviating occupational stress in private tertiary institutions in Botswana.

Building on a mixed-methods design that combined structured survey instruments with open-ended responses, this chapter integrates quantitative data including statistical analyses and hypothesis testing with rich qualitative perspectives from lecturers and managers. This triangulation enhances both the validity and depth of interpretation.

The discussion is situated within multiple theoretical frameworks. These include Hans Selye's General Adaptation Syndrome and the dual pathway model of eustress and distress (Selye, 1956), which help contextualise the physiological and psychological tolls reported by participants. The ILO's psychosocial hazards framework (ILO, 2016) is also applied to link workplace design, task allocation, and institutional culture to health and performance outcomes. Moreover, the study invokes the VRIO model (Guest, 2006; 2022), which argues that human capital especially skilled and motivated lecturers is a source of sustainable institutional advantage and must be nurtured rather than depleted.

Occupational stress in PTIs is not an isolated challenge. The findings reaffirm global literature that positions educational professionals as increasingly vulnerable to stress due to role overload, administrative burden, digital demands, and psychological contract breaches (Dow, 2018; Hassan et

al., 2020). In Botswana, where private institutions often mirror a unitarist managerial style and operate with resource constraints, lecturers frequently shoulder the demands of blended learning, multitasking across academic and administrative roles, and navigating rigid bureaucratic systems all of which undermine work-life balance and job satisfaction (Mwenda et al., 2019; Akah et al., 2022).

Additionally, this chapter draws on Botswana's national development priorities, including **Vision 2036** and domesticated **Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs)** particularly SDG 4 (Quality Education) and SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth). These frameworks underscore the national imperative for inclusive, equitable, and sustainable academic workplaces where stress does not erode lecturer performance or institutional quality.

The findings discussed in this chapter demonstrate that occupational stress manifests in both visible forms (absenteeism, turnover, reduced teaching quality) and hidden costs (presenteeism, emotional exhaustion, cognitive overload). Respondents' voices confirm a complex interplay between individual factors (age, gender, coping capacity), institutional features (support structures, recognition, workload), and systemic pressures (digitalisation, accreditation demands). The interaction of these forces produces varied but interlinked consequences for lecturer well-being and academic productivity.

By critically engaging with these dynamics, the chapter sets the foundation for evaluating practical and policy-level interventions that can protect human capital and advance institutional resilience. The discussion concludes by connecting the empirical evidence with the broader discourse on higher education transformation in Botswana, calling for strategic investment in lecturer well-being, innovative HR practices, and inclusive institutional cultures that uphold both performance and dignity in the academic workplace.

5.1 Link Between Data Analysis and Research Objectives

This section explains how the data collected in Chapter Four relates to the research objectives of the study. Each part of the analysis was clearly connected to one of the study's five goals. These goals include finding out the causes of occupational stress, understanding how it affects performance, looking at the role of management, examining the link between stress and performance, and suggesting ways to reduce stress. The discussion in this chapter is based on the data and helps make sense of what the results mean, using theories and past studies for support.

For example, the first research objective focused on the sources of stress experienced by lecturers. This was addressed through both the survey results and the open-ended responses. Figures such as 4.13 and 4.14 showed that many lecturers found their workload to be excessive and stressful. Figures 4.17 and 4.18 showed that dealing with difficult students and having limited resources also added to stress levels. These findings match what other researchers like Gabrielli and Lundi (2020) and Hassan et al. (2020) have found in other countries, where heavy workloads and lack of support are common stressors for academic staff.

The third objective examined the effects of occupational stress on academic staff performance. The findings showed that occupational stress contributed to emotional exhaustion, reduced motivation, and physical fatigue among lecturers. This was reflected in Figures 4.42 and 4.46, where many respondents reported feeling tired most days and experiencing high levels of emotional exhaustion. These findings were reinforced by the qualitative responses, in which lecturers described feeling overwhelmed and inadequately supported. The results are consistent with the findings of Dow (2018) and Ugale (2009), who reported that occupational stress negatively affects both the psychological and physical wellbeing of academic staff.

The data analysis also helped to support the fourth objective, which was to measure the relationship between stress and performance. Figures 4.81 to 4.85 showed that many lecturers believed their performance would improve if stress levels were reduced. This means that stress not only causes discomfort but also affects how well lecturers are able to do their jobs. These results help to answer the hypothesis in the study, which suggested that occupational stress influences employee performance. The findings supported this idea and showed that there is a clear link between high stress and lower performance levels.

The information collected through open-ended responses helped to explain these issues in more detail. Lecturers shared their personal experiences, which gave more meaning to the numbers in the survey. This mix of numbers and words made the findings richer and more complete.

5.1.1 Theoretical and Contextual Integration

The results of the study were not only based on data but were also linked to well-known theories. One important theory used was the VRIO model by Guest, which explains that people can be a valuable asset to an organisation if they are treated well and supported properly. In this study, it became clear that lecturers were often not treated as important resources. Many felt overworked, underpaid, and

ignored. As a result, their value to the institution was reduced, not because of their skills but because of the way they were managed.

The study also used the psychosocial hazards framework from the International Labour Organization. This framework explains that stress at work often comes from poor job design, lack of control, unclear roles, and a bad working environment. These issues were seen in Botswana's private tertiary institutions, where lecturers had to deal with large workloads, limited resources, and strict rules. These conditions made it hard for them to perform well and led to high levels of stress. The findings support what was written by Hassan et al. (2020) and Akah et al. (2022), who found that when institutions do not support their staff properly, stress levels increase.

Another theory used was Hans Selye's General Adaptation Syndrome, which talks about how the body reacts to long-term stress. It starts with a warning phase, then moves to resistance, and finally ends in exhaustion if the stress continues. This pattern was seen in the responses from lecturers. At first, many tried to cope by working longer hours, as shown in figure 4.85. But over time, this led to burnout, as seen in figure 4.46, where lecturers reported feeling drained and unable to continue. These findings match those in studies by Kwenda et al. (2019) and Nemasango and Ivovo (2018), who also found that lecturers working under pressure for long periods eventually burn out.

Botswana's own national goals also help explain the importance of this study. The country is working towards Vision 2036, which includes improving education and creating better working conditions. The United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, especially SDG 4 and SDG 8, also aim to provide quality education and decent work. The results of this study show that these goals are not fully achieved yet in the private education sector. Lecturers are still facing stress due to poor planning, low salaries, and lack of support. This shows that more needs to be done at the national level to support the well-being of academic staff.

Many private institutions in Botswana still follow old management styles that are more focused on rules and control than on supporting employees. As noted by Cole and Kelly (2014), this way of managing people can cause more harm than good. Lecturers are often expected to handle a lot of tasks with little help or recognition. Even when institutions try to grow or improve, they do not always provide the right support systems. This leads to more stress, as was seen in the open-ended responses, where lecturers talked about being overworked and underappreciated.

5.1.2 Chapter Structure and Focus

This chapter continues by following the order of the research objectives. Each section looks at one part of the problem. Section 5.3 focuses on the sources of occupational stress. Section 5.4 discusses the challenges that managers face when dealing with stressed lecturers. Section 5.5 looks at how stress affects the performance of academic staff. Section 5.6 uses survey figures to explain the relationship between stress and performance. Section 5.7 discusses what lecturers and past studies suggest can be done to reduce stress. Finally, section 5.8 brings everything together and explains what the findings mean for theory, policy, and national development.

5.2 Sources of Occupational Stress (Objective 1)

5.2.1 Overview of Stress Levels Among Academic Staff

The empirical data collected for this study revealed a concerning pattern of widespread occupational stress among lecturers working in private tertiary institutions (PTIs) in Gaborone. As reported in Table 4.13, a striking 84.3% of respondents reported experiencing moderate to high levels of stress, with only 15.7% identifying their stress levels as low. This suggests that for the majority of academic staff in Botswana's PTIs, stress is not an episodic experience but a persistent occupational condition.

This high incidence of stress is consistent with findings from global and regional studies. For example, Hassan et al. (2020) documented widespread stress among faculty in South Asian universities, while Kwenda et al. (2019) found similarly high stress levels in UK higher education institutions. In both contexts, systemic factors such as increased student numbers, funding shortfalls, and policy reforms were identified as key stressors. However, in the Botswana context, these challenges are compounded by resource scarcity, rigid institutional hierarchies, and inadequate wellness infrastructure.

Lecturers repeatedly described their experience as one of constant pressure, characterized by emotional, intellectual, and physical fatigue. One participant captured the general sentiment by stating:

"Stress is like oxygen in this place. It's everywhere in the lectures, in the emails, in the meetings. You just inhale it daily and try to survive."

This metaphor of stress as ever-present and unavoidable encapsulates how deeply embedded it has become in the daily operations of Botswana's private tertiary institutions.

5.2.2 Excessive Workload and Time Pressures

Among the most frequently cited sources of stress was the burden of excessive workload. As shown in Table 4.14, an overwhelming 88% of respondents identified workload as a primary source of occupational stress. Lecturers reported being responsible for multiple modules across different programmes, with some handling up to six or more classes per semester. This is far above recommended academic workload benchmarks in most higher education systems globally.

One respondent noted:

"I am expected to teach six modules this semester all with assessments, class tests, midterms, and final exams. Some classes have more than 100 students. That's not sustainable."

Another lecturer added:

"We're lecturers, mentors, counsellors, admin clerks, and sometimes even IT support. I get home late, and I still have to prepare for tomorrow."

This multi-functional workload mirrors what Kimani (2015) observed in Kenyan universities, where excessive workload emerged as the dominant source of stress among academic staff. However, in Botswana's PTIs, the pressure is amplified by understaffing and institutional over-reliance on a small pool of full-time lecturers. Adjunct faculty are often hired late or inconsistently, which further increases the burden on full-time staff.

This problem also has cyclical dimensions. High workloads lead to errors or delays in grading, which then result in student complaints. These complaints in turn create administrative escalations that increase managerial scrutiny and further stress.

5.2.3 Administrative Burden and Non-Teaching Responsibilities

In addition to teaching duties, lecturers in PTIs are frequently tasked with significant administrative obligations. These include managing student records, attending departmental meetings, preparing institutional reports, participating in quality assurance audits, and contributing to curriculum development processes.

As one respondent put it:

"I spend more time filling in QA forms and responding to emails than I do teaching. It's ridiculous we're academics, not bureaucrats."

Another participant remarked:

"We're expected to submit detailed lesson plans, evaluation reports, teaching reflections, and even weekly work progress forms. It's like a paper chase."

These comments reveal a trend toward administrative intensification, where non-core tasks increasingly dominate academic workloads. Robbins (2000) described this as "invisible work" duties that are critical to institutional functioning but rarely recognised in performance appraisals or compensation systems. This sense of unrecognised effort adds a psychological dimension to stress, fostering resentment and emotional fatigue.

5.2.4 Resource Constraints and Infrastructure Deficiencies

Lecturers also expressed deep frustration with the infrastructural and technological limitations of their institutions. These included unreliable internet connections, insufficient teaching equipment (e.g., projectors, whiteboards, speakers), inadequate office space, and dysfunctional Learning Management Systems (LMS). Table 4.18 confirmed that 59.2% of respondents identified resource deficiencies as a significant stressor.

One participant shared:

"We sometimes go days without working Wi-Fi. How do you expect us to upload notes or use Zoom?"

Another complained:

"We have one printer for the entire faculty. If it breaks down, we wait for days. Meanwhile, students are asking for handouts."

This infrastructural deficiency was especially frustrating for lecturers who had embraced blended or online teaching methods during and after the COVID-19 pandemic. As Dow (2018) argues, digital innovation in education can only succeed when supported by adequate institutional infrastructure. In Botswana's PTIs, the lack of such infrastructure creates a stressful dissonance between pedagogical expectations and operational realities.

1.1.1 Role Ambiguity and Vague Expectations

Another major theme that emerged from the data was the issue of role ambiguity. Several respondents indicated that their job descriptions were unclear or inconsistently enforced. In some cases, lecturers were asked to perform tasks outside their expertise or contractual scope, leading to confusion, frustration, and resentment.

One respondent stated:

"Today I'm a lecturer, tomorrow I'm asked to design marketing materials for student recruitment. Where does it end?"

Another added:

"There's no clarity on what our roles are. Expectations change with every new head of department."

This lack of role clarity aligns with Ongori and Obolla's (2010) findings, which show that role ambiguity significantly contributes to occupational stress across various sectors. It also connects to the ILO's (2016) psychosocial framework, where unclear expectations are identified as a structural hazard. When staff do not know the limits of their responsibilities, they often overextend themselves, fearing reprisal or poor performance reviews. Over time, this results in emotional exhaustion and disillusionment.

5.2.5 Work-Life Imbalance and Personal Sacrifices

The intrusion of professional responsibilities into personal life was another recurring stressor. Lecturers reported taking work home almost daily, often staying up late to prepare lessons, mark assignments, or catch up on administrative tasks. Table 4.9 showed that more than 60% of respondents experienced regular interference of work duties with personal and family life.

One female lecturer explained:

"I get home around 8pm. After dinner and helping my kids with homework, I start marking. I rarely sleep before midnight."

Another male respondent noted:

"I missed my son's birthday because of a faculty meeting scheduled after hours. These things build up emotionally."

These experiences highlight the erosion of work-life boundaries a condition increasingly normalised in academia but rarely addressed. Dow (2018) warns that prolonged work-life imbalance can lead to depression, burnout, and reduced productivity. In the Botswana context, where extended families and cultural obligations are important, this conflict creates even more emotional strain, particularly for female staff juggling multiple roles.

5.2.6 Psycho-social Stressors and Negative Institutional Culture

Beyond measurable duties and infrastructure challenges, lecturers also spoke about the emotional and psychological toll of working in environments that lacked appreciation, inclusion, and fairness.

Several respondents described the institutional culture as hierarchical, punitive, and indifferent to employee well-being.

As one respondent stated:

"Management doesn't listen. You can raise an issue ten times nothing happens unless it's from a 'favourite'."

Another added:

"We are constantly blamed for student failures, but no one asks if we have support, training, or resources. It's always our fault."

These sentiments reflect what Gabrielli and Lundi (2020) termed "toxic institutional environments," where poor communication, favoritism, and lack of social recognition exacerbate occupational stress. The absence of appreciation both monetary and emotional was a dominant theme. Lecturers repeatedly said they felt "invisible" or "used," which contributes to low morale and high turnover intentions.

5.2.7 Gendered Dimensions of Stress

The data also revealed important gender-based differences in the experience of occupational stress. Female respondents, in particular, expressed concerns about the dual burden of academic duties and family responsibilities. They also reported feeling excluded from leadership conversations and often subject to gender-based assumptions.

One female lecturer shared:

"When I request time off for family reasons, it's treated like I'm being lazy. But my male colleague takes a break and it's 'he must be stressed'."

This aligns with regional findings by Bezuidenhout (2018), who documented gendered expectations and inequities in African higher education environments. Recognising these patterns is essential for developing inclusive and effective wellness policies.

5.2.8 Contextual Pressures Unique to Botswana

While many of the stressors identified in this study are consistent with international literature, Botswana's PTI sector presents unique structural pressures. These include funding uncertainty, dependency on student tuition, rigid regulatory expectations from the Botswana Qualifications Authority (BQA), and limited union representation.

A lecturer explained:

"If enrolment drops, we're threatened with contract termination. It's always about numbers, not quality."

Another said:

"There's no union. No platform to raise staff issues officially. So people just suffer in silence."

These challenges foster a work environment where occupational stress becomes persistent. The lack of collective bargaining further restricts staff from advocating for fair workloads, better remuneration, and improved working conditions.

5.2.9 Integration with Theoretical Frameworks

The findings in this section align closely with several theoretical constructs discussed in Chapter 2. First, the Maslach Burnout Inventory (Maslach & Jackson, 1986) is validated through the emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation, and reduced personal accomplishment described by respondents. Second, the ILO psychosocial framework is supported, particularly in the domains of workload, control, support, and recognition all of which are deficient in Botswana's PTIs. Finally, the VRIO model (Barney, 1991) is critically relevant. When institutions fail to nurture and retain their academic staff through stress reduction and wellness strategies, they risk turning valuable human resources into liabilities.

5.2.10 Summary and Implications

In sum, the sources of occupational stress among academic staff in Botswana's private tertiary institutions are both wide-ranging and deeply embedded. They include measurable workload factors, intangible emotional strains, and systemic structural deficiencies. These findings highlight the need for urgent institutional and policy-level interventions. Lecturers are not merely under pressure they are operating under chronic strain in environments that offer little relief, recognition, or support.

Failure to address these challenges risks not only lecturer well-being but also the quality and sustainability of private tertiary education in Botswana. As subsequent sections of this chapter will show, these stressors have tangible impacts on performance, morale, and institutional cohesion.

5.3 Managerial Challenges in Supervising Stressed Lecturers (Objective 2)

5.3.1 Introduction: The Critical Role of Management in Academic Well-being

The role of academic managers in mitigating occupational stress within private tertiary institutions (PTIs) is pivotal. In Botswana's PTIs, however, this role is increasingly complicated by the intersection of limited institutional autonomy, systemic under-resourcing, and evolving academic expectations. Managers are often expected to balance institutional demands including compliance with Botswana Qualifications Authority (BQA) requirements and performance benchmarks with the human-centred task of supporting lecturers under stress.

This section examines the unique challenges academic managers face when supervising stressed lecturers in PTIs. Drawing on both qualitative responses and relevant theoretical frameworks (e.g., the VRIO model, ILO's psychosocial hazard model), the discussion reveals that while managers recognise the presence of stress among their staff, their capacity to intervene meaningfully is severely constrained.

One department head candidly admitted:

"We see the signs late submissions, absenteeism, disengagement but we don't always know what to do, and even when we do, we don't have the authority to act."

This comment underscores the managerial dilemma: a recognition of the problem, but insufficient tools to resolve it.

5.3.2 The Expanding Scope and Complexity of Managerial Responsibilities

Academic managers in PTIs wear multiple hats. They oversee curriculum implementation, monitor teaching quality, coordinate timetables, manage student complaints, liaise with external regulators, and report to institutional leadership often while continuing to teach. The sheer breadth of these responsibilities stretches managerial capacity and limits their availability for individual lecturer support.

A respondent explained:

"I'm teaching, managing, and firefighting all at once. There's no time to sit with a stressed lecturer and unpack what's going on."

Another added:

"When a lecturer breaks down or disappears, it's already too late. We're reactive, not proactive."

These reflections are consistent with Robbins (1996), who noted that middle managers in education systems are often promoted from academic ranks without formal leadership training. They are expected to excel in strategic roles without being equipped with the necessary human resource or mental health competencies. In Botswana, where institutional structures are still maturing, this gap is even more pronounced.

The lack of support structures, leadership development programmes, or delegated HR authority means managers often operate in isolation. Consequently, they are forced to prioritise compliance over compassion, performance metrics over well-being, and discipline over empathy.

5.3.3 Recognising Stress in Lecturers: Awareness Versus Capability

The study revealed that most academic managers are aware of the signs of lecturer stress. These include chronic absenteeism, late grading, short tempers, withdrawal from meetings, and general disengagement. However, the ability to act on these signs is limited.

As one head of programme put it:

"I know when someone is not okay the missed classes, the tone in emails. But there's no structure. HR doesn't follow up, and even when we escalate, it ends there."

Another said:

"Sometimes we confuse burnout with laziness or attitude. There's no training to help us tell the difference."

These statements suggest that while awareness may exist, systemic and training-related limitations hinder effective intervention. Without institutionalised protocols for stress identification, or referral pathways to wellness professionals, stress among lecturers is either ignored or misinterpreted.

Moreover, managerial responses are often shaped by personal judgement rather than evidence-based practice. Some managers attempt informal interventions such as offering a reduced workload or adjusting schedules but these are often ad hoc and unsupported by policy, leaving both staff and managers vulnerable.

5.3.4 The Emotional Labour of Managing Under Stress

Supervisors are not immune to stress themselves. They operate in the same constrained environments as their subordinates, often with added pressure from upper management. Many reported feeling overwhelmed, unsupported, and caught between contradictory expectations.

One manager described this balancing act as follows:

"We're squeezed from both ends the bosses want performance, the lecturers need support. And we're expected to deliver both, alone."

Another echoed this sentiment:

"When a lecturer breaks down, it affects the whole department. But if I take steps to help, I'm accused of favouritism or neglecting KPIs."

This emotional strain, known in management literature as "emotional labour" (Hochschild, 1983), refers to the mental effort involved in managing one's own emotions while supporting others. In Botswana's PTIs, where structural support is limited and wellness infrastructure almost non-existent, managers carry an unacknowledged emotional burden that further undermines their capacity to assist others.

5.3.5 Organisational Constraints and Lack of Decision-Making Power

A recurring theme in the data was the lack of managerial autonomy in PTIs. Despite being tasked with overseeing academic departments, managers often lack the authority to implement meaningful changes related to staff wellness. This includes being unable to approve temporary leave, redistribute workload, or grant timetable flexibility without high-level sign-off.

One department coordinator shared:

"Even changing a class time to ease someone's pressure needs three levels of approval. It's demoralising."

Another noted:

"We can't offer mental health days. We can't adjust contracts. We can't even formally recommend counselling because there's no service in place."

These challenges reflect what Robbins (2009) identified as structural disempowerment where responsibility is assigned without the corresponding authority or resources. This is particularly evident in Botswana's private education sector, where managerial roles are still largely administrative, and HR functions are centralised or underdeveloped.

Consequently, managers become messengers rather than decision-makers, further weakening their ability to support staff and resolve emerging stress-related issues.

5.3.6 Communication Breakdowns and the Trust Deficit

The effectiveness of any managerial approach to stress depends largely on communication and trust. Unfortunately, the study found that in many PTIs, a communication gap exists between lecturers and their supervisors. This is partly due to cultural hierarchies and partly due to a perceived lack of confidentiality or responsiveness.

A lecturer explained:

"If you talk to your HOD about feeling overwhelmed, next week the whole faculty knows. It's embarrassing."

Another stated:

"I once opened up to my manager about my depression. I was told to 'toughen up' and pray about it. That was the last time I shared."

These accounts highlight a significant trust deficit. Lecturers avoid disclosure not because they don't want help, but because they fear ridicule, reprisal, or inaction. This lack of psychological safety makes early intervention impossible and allows stress to fester until it manifests as poor performance or attrition.

Managers themselves acknowledged this challenge:

"They don't come to us anymore. They've lost faith in the system, and I can't blame them. We haven't done enough."

This reflects Dow's (2018) argument that psychological safety is foundational to organisational resilience. In its absence, stress becomes a silent epidemic, unacknowledged and unmanaged.

5.3.7 Inconsistent or Informal Coping Mechanisms

Given the lack of institutional support structures, many managers resorted to personal or informal strategies to support staff. These included offering moral encouragement, informally lightening workloads, or providing listening ears during lunch breaks. While well-intentioned, such efforts are unsystematic and ultimately unsustainable.

One HOD shared:

"Sometimes I give a struggling staff member fewer classes, but I don't record it. If leadership sees it, they'll say I'm being biased."

Another manager admitted:

"I check in on my team now and then, but it's not enough. We need real systems, not just sympathy."

These ad hoc responses illustrate the limitations of goodwill in the absence of formalised wellness policies. As the VRIO framework in Chapter 2 suggests, valuable resources (like capable lecturers) must be strategically organised and supported to deliver sustained institutional advantage. Informal support, while commendable, cannot substitute for structural reform.

5.3.8 Institutional Culture and Leadership Disconnect

The institutional culture within many PTIs appears to prioritise compliance and profitability over staff well-being. Managers reported that when they raise wellness-related concerns to executive leadership, they are often dismissed or told to "manage it internally." This creates a sense of disconnect between frontline management and institutional leadership.

As one manager put it:

"Our bosses care about enrolment numbers and BQA compliance. Staff well-being is seen as a luxury."

Another added:

"We keep talking about excellence, but how can you expect excellence from exhausted, demotivated staff?"

This disconnect has broader implications. Without leadership buy-in, even the most committed departmental managers are constrained in their ability to implement change. Moreover, when wellness is not institutionalised, it becomes vulnerable to leadership turnover or shifting strategic priorities.

5.3.9 Calls for Reform and Strategic Wellness Integration

Many managers expressed a desire for structured reform. Their suggestions closely align with international best practices and empirical literature on managing workplace stress.

Proposals included:

- Establishment of a lecturer wellness policy;
- Decentralisation of minor HR decisions to departmental level;
- Training for academic managers on stress identification and referral;

- Creation of confidential staff feedback platforms;
- Institutionalisation of peer support or mentorship programmes.

One manager passionately stated:

"We don't need miracles. Just a policy, some training, and someone to talk to when things get heavy."

These recommendations align closely with ILO (2016) guidelines on managing psychosocial risks in the workplace. More importantly, they reflect an internal appetite for reform an important foundation upon which PTIs can build sustainable wellness strategies.

5.3.10 Theoretical Integration and Diagnostic Insight

The findings from this section can be usefully interpreted through several theoretical frameworks. First, the ILO psychosocial hazard model identifies managerial capacity, control, support, and communication as critical factors in occupational wellness all of which are underdeveloped in the studied institutions. Second, the VRIO model again proves useful: without proper organisation and leadership alignment, even valuable and rare managerial talent cannot contribute to institutional sustainability.

Lastly, emotional intelligence and servant leadership theories (Goleman, 2001; Greenleaf, 1977) also apply. These models emphasise the importance of empathy, self-awareness, and people-centred management competencies that Botswana's PTI managers currently lack the institutional support to develop or exercise.

5.3.11 Summary and Implications

Supervising stressed academic staff in Botswana's private tertiary institutions presents complex, multi-layered challenges. Managers are aware of the stress afflicting their teams but lack the training, authority, and organisational support to address it effectively. They themselves are overwhelmed, unsupported, and caught between opposing institutional expectations.

The result is a system where stress is recognised but rarely acted upon, where managerial goodwill replaces structured support, and where lecturer wellness is a peripheral concern rather than a strategic priority.

For PTIs to evolve into resilient, high-performing institutions, they must empower academic managers with the tools, authority, and frameworks necessary to support staff well-being. Without

such reform, the managerial tier crucial for translating institutional vision into operational reality will remain underutilised and overburdened, ultimately compromising the entire academic value chain.

5.4 Effects of Occupational Stress on Academic Staff Performance (Objective 3)

5.4.1 Understanding Academic Performance in Context

In the context of private tertiary institutions (PTIs) in Botswana, academic lecturer performance extends beyond classroom teaching to encompass curriculum development, assessment and grading, student engagement, research and scholarly activities, academic administration, community engagement, and participation in institutional governance. These performance dimensions are consistent with the expectations of the Botswana Qualifications Authority (BQA), institutional quality assurance frameworks, and internal Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) used to monitor academic effectiveness and organisational performance.

As discussed in Chapter Two, academic performance is influenced not only by individual competence, knowledge, and experience, but also by organisational, environmental, and psychological factors. Occupational stress, characterised by prolonged physical, emotional, and psychological strain arising from excessive job demands and inadequate coping resources, has been widely recognised as a significant factor influencing employee performance. Robbins (1996) argues that when job demands exceed an individual's available resources and coping capacity, work performance is likely to deteriorate despite the employee possessing the necessary skills and competencies to perform effectively.

The findings of the present study support this perspective. Respondents consistently reported that excessive workload, role ambiguity, administrative responsibilities, inadequate institutional support, and work-life imbalance negatively affected their ability to perform their academic responsibilities effectively. These findings suggest that occupational stress influences not only individual well-being but also the quality of teaching, student support, productivity, and overall institutional effectiveness within Botswana's private tertiary education sector.

5.4.2 Stress and Teaching Effectiveness

Chapter 4 findings clearly illustrated a strong negative association between stress and teaching effectiveness. Table 4.11 showed that while 49% of lecturers felt “well prepared” for lectures, a substantial 43.1% felt only “somewhat prepared,” and a smaller but significant minority felt completely unprepared. This level of unpreparedness is worrying in a professional context that

demands not just knowledge dissemination but also dynamic class engagement, technology-assisted delivery, and responsive learner support.

Respondents noted that their stress stemmed from large teaching loads, compressed semesters, limited rest periods, and having to teach across multiple delivery modes (online, in-person, hybrid). These stressors directly undermined their capacity to deliver engaging lessons and assess students meaningfully. Open-ended responses emphasized how constant fatigue led to reliance on rote teaching, outdated slides, or insufficient preparation time. In line with Armstrong (2017), such conditions reduce teaching from a reflective, transformative activity to a mechanical task.

5.4.3 Effects on Marking, Feedback, and Student Support

Academic performance also includes the prompt and constructive feedback provided to students. However, stressed lecturers indicated that grading became rushed, sometimes delayed, or approached with "minimal energy," compromising fairness and educational value. Chapter 4 highlighted instances where assessments were returned late, or without meaningful commentary both of which affect student morale and learning progression.

This decline in grading quality is not unique to Botswana. Nemasango and Ivovo (2018), studying East African institutions, observed similar findings: lecturers under stress deprioritize tasks requiring focused attention, such as grading and report writing. In the Botswana sample, one lecturer wrote, "I try to mark, but after four hours of class and two admin meetings, I just want to go home." Such situations signal role overload and decision fatigue, both known predictors of performance decline.

5.4.4 Research Productivity and Institutional Contribution

The study also revealed that occupational stress significantly affected lecturers' capacity to conduct and publish research. Chapter 4 showed that many lecturers reported "no time or motivation for research," with some citing workload as the major hindrance. This aligns with Robbins (2009), who emphasized that high stress levels shift staff into "survival mode," where only urgent tasks are attended to.

In Botswana's PTIs, research is often an expected but under-supported function. As revealed in Chapter 2, few institutions offer dedicated research days, funding, or mentoring. Under such conditions, even moderate stress can render research output negligible. Several respondents confessed to abandoning academic writing despite having proposals or articles in draft.

Inability to publish has downstream implications, such as affecting institutional rankings, losing accreditation points, and denying staff promotion. It becomes a cyclical barrier: low research output affects morale, which increases stress, which in turn further reduces output.

5.4.5 Emotional Strain and Interpersonal Relations

Occupational stress was also found to influence interpersonal dynamics in the workplace. Stressed lecturers reported being irritable, withdrawn, or less cooperative with colleagues. This undermines peer collaboration and affects participation in academic committees, curriculum reviews, and team teaching.

As described in Chapter 4, lecturers avoided meetings or disengaged during discussions, and some admitted to using curt language or delaying email responses due to frustration or fatigue. Such behaviour weakens institutional cohesion and reduces information flow both of which are vital for academic operations.

Moreover, emotional distress affects the lecturer-student relationship. Dow (2018) argued that emotional availability is a key variable in pedagogical success. When lecturers are disengaged or exhibit signs of stress, students may feel alienated, which negatively affects academic outcomes and retention.

5.4.6 Institutional Perceptions and Role Fulfilment

Lecturers in the study frequently expressed that institutional leadership often assessed performance quantitatively (number of classes delivered, student attendance sheets, etc.) rather than qualitatively (impact of teaching, mentorship quality). This was viewed as unfair, particularly by those who were doing their best under strained conditions.

Chapter 4 open-ended responses revealed resentment among staff who felt their stress-related performance challenges were misinterpreted as incompetence or disinterest. One lecturer noted, “No one asks if you’re okay. They just count your classes and then send warnings.” Such experiences damage psychological safety and increase turnover intentions both detrimental to institutional continuity.

Additionally, the lack of role clarity contributed to performance stress. Some lecturers reported being unsure whether to prioritize teaching, research, or administrative duties, with all three often demanded simultaneously. Robbins (2009) describes this as role conflict, a major driver of occupational strain and job dissatisfaction.

5.4.7 Gender, Age, and Rank-Based Stress Variability

Chapter 4 disaggregated responses by demographic characteristics, revealing slight variations in how stress affected performance. Younger lecturers (under 35) were more likely to report being overwhelmed by multitasking, while older lecturers expressed concern over administrative overload. Female staff members often cited work-life conflict especially balancing family responsibilities with tight teaching schedules.

While the variations were not statistically significant, they suggest that tailored interventions could be more effective than blanket strategies. Recognizing that different demographics face different stressors is essential in crafting nuanced wellness policies.

5.4.8 Integration with Theoretical Perspectives

The Maslach Burnout Inventory (Maslach & Jackson, 1986), referenced in Chapter 2, offers a valuable framework for interpreting the findings. It outlines three dimensions of burnout: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment all of which were clearly evidenced in the study's data. Lecturers reported fatigue (exhaustion), poor student engagement (depersonalization), and stagnation in research or promotion (reduced accomplishment).

Furthermore, the ILO (2016) psychosocial hazard model, also introduced in the literature review, aligns with observed institutional stressors: excessive workload, lack of role clarity, minimal support, and perceived injustice. The effects on performance are not merely incidental but structurally embedded, requiring systemic responses.

5.4.9 Summary and Implications

This section has demonstrated that occupational stress has a direct and multidimensional impact on lecturer performance in Botswana's PTIs. It affects teaching quality, assessment standards, research output, collaboration, and student interaction. These effects are not isolated but part of an institutional pattern that, if left unaddressed, can compromise academic integrity and educational outcomes.

Addressing this performance decline requires institutions to move beyond surface-level performance metrics and engage with the root causes of stress. Investing in wellness infrastructure, reducing administrative burdens, offering flexible work arrangements, and redefining performance evaluation criteria are necessary steps toward creating a healthier, more productive academic environment.

5.5 Relationship Between Occupational Stress and Lecturer Performance

5.5.1 Introduction and Conceptual Link

The relationship between occupational stress and academic staff performance is a critical issue in higher education, particularly within resource-constrained environments such as Botswana's private tertiary institutions (PTIs). Research Objective 4 sought to determine whether a statistically significant relationship exists between occupational stress and academic staff performance. The discussion in this section is based on the hypothesis testing results presented in Chapter Four and is interpreted within the theoretical perspectives on organizational behaviour, burnout, and performance management discussed in Chapters Two and Three.

5.5.2 Statistical Foundations and Hypothesis Recap

The statistical analysis presented in Chapter Four provided strong empirical evidence supporting the hypothesis that occupational stress significantly and negatively affects lecturer performance in PTIs in Botswana. As demonstrated in Table 4.3 (H1), the Pearson correlation coefficient between overall stress levels and lecturer performance was $r = -0.68$ ($p < 0.001$), indicating a strong and statistically significant negative relationship. This correlation was consistent across key performance indicators, including quality of work ($r = -0.68$), productivity ($r = -0.72$), and ability to meet deadlines ($r = -0.65$), all statistically significant at the $p < 0.001$ level (Table 4.1). These results confirm that higher stress levels are associated with lower performance among academic staff across critical dimensions of their professional roles.

This finding aligns with previous empirical research such as Liu et al. (2016), who noted that prolonged stress among lecturers leads to a decline in both mental well-being and output. Similarly, Armstrong (2017) emphasised that job stress arising from excessive demands and lack of institutional support reduces the ability of lecturers to meet expectations. In the context of Botswana, Baliyan et al. (2018) observed that academic staff in private institutions often operate under conditions that cause chronic fatigue, emotional strain, and declining motivation all of which mirror the patterns identified in the current study.

To further investigate the extent to which stress predicts lecturer performance, a multiple regression analysis was conducted (Table 4.2). The model produced an R-squared value of 0.58, indicating that 58% of the variance in lecturer performance can be explained by four key stress-related variables: excessive workload, unclear job expectations, insufficient resources, and poor work-life balance. Among these predictors, excessive workload had the strongest negative effect ($\beta = -0.45$, $p < 0.001$),

followed by insufficient resources ($\beta = -0.35$, $p < 0.001$), work-life balance issues ($\beta = -0.30$, $p < 0.001$), and unclear job expectations ($\beta = -0.28$, $p = 0.002$). These coefficients confirm that the predictors have a statistically significant impact on academic performance and are not due to random variation.

The regression findings are consistent with Gabrielli and Lundi (2020), who reported that lecturers facing multiple simultaneous teaching responsibilities especially in environments with inadequate institutional support are more likely to suffer performance decline. In Botswana, Akah et al. (2022) have similarly shown that many PTIs lack essential infrastructure, resources, and clear human resource policies, all of which contribute to persistent occupational stress among lecturers.

The results of the hypothesis tests (Table 4.3) clearly support rejection of the null hypotheses for all three tested relationships. The first hypothesis (H1) confirmed the significant negative correlation between occupational stress and lecturer performance. The second hypothesis (H2), tested through regression ($F = 45.23$, $p < 0.001$), validated the combined effect of the stressor variables as significant predictors of performance. The third hypothesis (H3), tested using ANOVA ($F = 8.75$, $p = 0.002$), revealed statistically significant differences in stress levels across faculties, indicating that stress is not evenly distributed but varies by department or academic discipline.

These findings support the conceptual foundation of the study, particularly the relevance of the ILO's psychosocial hazards framework, which recognises organisational factors such as workload and poor support structures as key causes of job strain and impaired performance (ILO, 2016). Additionally, Selye's General Adaptation Syndrome explains the physiological and psychological outcomes of long-term stress exposure, such as burnout and reduced cognitive functioning, which were reflected in the lived experiences shared by participants.

Importantly, the regression model's explanatory power ($R^2 = 0.58$) suggests that occupational stress is not a minor factor but a central determinant of academic effectiveness. The findings further reinforce the application of the VRIO model (Guest, 2006; 2022), which treats human resources as strategic assets. When institutional practices cause chronic stress, they undermine this human capital advantage, contributing to high turnover, low engagement, and reduced instructional quality issues reported not only by this study but across the broader Southern African academic landscape (Kwenda et al., 2019; Wadesango et al., 2015).

In summary, the correlation and regression analyses provide clear statistical confirmation that occupational stress is both a significant correlate and predictor of lecturer performance. The consistent rejection of the null hypotheses across all three tests strengthens the study's empirical base and confirms the validity of the proposed theoretical model. These findings underscore the urgent need for PTIs in Botswana to prioritise stress management as a strategic objective to enhance academic quality, staff retention, and institutional performance.

5.5.3 Dimensions of Performance Affected by Stress

5.5.3.1 Teaching Quality and Preparedness

As shown in Chapter 4 (Figure 4.11), 43.1% of lecturers reported being only "somewhat prepared" to teach, and a further subset indicated outright fatigue and burnout. This confirms a trend toward declining teaching quality as stress levels increase. One respondent remarked, "I sometimes enter class with zero energy. I'm there but I'm not there." This reflects the concept of presenteeism, where lecturers are physically present but mentally disengaged.

5.5.3.2 Student Feedback and Assessment

Lecturers under stress admitted to rushing through marking or recycling old test scripts. Feedback to students became generic or delayed, contributing to reduced student satisfaction and academic progress. This aligns with literature by Namusango & Ivovo (2018), who identified stress-induced assessment delays as a widespread phenomenon in African higher education systems.

5.5.3.3 Research Output and Scholarly Engagement

Chapter 4 revealed that research output among lecturers was consistently deprioritized under conditions of high occupational stress. Multiple lecturers expressed "no time for research" due to heavy teaching loads and administrative expectations. This undermines institutional innovation and accreditation metrics. Robbins (2009) and Armstrong (2017) both caution that creativity and research are the first to suffer when mental load exceeds individual coping resources.

5.5.3.4 Peer Collaboration and Departmental Contribution

Teamwork was also affected. Chapter 4 qualitative responses indicated that stressed staff avoided departmental engagements or were perceived as "difficult to work with." A stressed lecturer is more likely to skip meetings, miss deadlines, or contribute minimally to collective tasks, eroding morale and efficiency.

5.5.3.5 Interpreting the Regression Results

Regression analysis not only confirmed a statistically significant relationship but also clarified the magnitude of stress's effect. The standardized beta coefficient showed that for every unit increase in occupational stress, lecturer performance declined in a statistically predictable manner.

Additionally, the model found that three stress sub-factors workload, lack of institutional support, and administrative overreach were the strongest predictors of performance decline. This supports the structure of the Maslach Burnout Inventory (Maslach & Jackson, 1986) used in Chapter 2, where these same domains are known to precede exhaustion and disengagement.

5.5.4 Theoretical Integration

5.5.4.1 ILO Psychosocial Risk Framework

The International Labour Organization's (ILO, 2016) model emphasizes key psychosocial risks such as role ambiguity, workload excess, and inadequate recognition all of which were validated in both the survey and open responses. The strong statistical relationship between stress and performance in this study confirms the applicability of this framework to Botswana's PTI environment.

5.5.4.2 VRIO Framework and Institutional Risk

As described in Chapter 2, lecturers are a valuable institutional resource. Under the VRIO model (Barney, 1991), stressed human capital cannot be optimally organized or harnessed for competitive advantage. When institutions fail to create enabling environments, valuable staff become disengaged, turning a strategic asset into a performance liability.

5.5.4.3 Gender, Age, and Role Differences in the Stress, Performance Link

Chapter 4 data indicated some variations across demographic variables. Female lecturers cited domestic responsibilities and societal expectations as exacerbating stress levels, affecting their performance particularly during exam periods or evening sessions. Similarly, younger lecturers (under 35) were more prone to anxiety over workload expectations and contract renewals, while senior staff (45+) reported more frustration with institutional red tape than with teaching itself.

These nuances are critical for tailoring wellness policies. A one-size-fits-all approach is unlikely to succeed. Effective stress mitigation must consider these demographic sensitivities.

5.5.5 Cross-Comparative Validation from Empirical Studies

The negative relationship identified in this study is consistent with evidence from several international contexts. In South Africa, Bezuidenhout (2018) found that stress negatively affected quality assurance

processes in private universities, contributing to reduced student retention. In Malaysia, Noor and Ismail (2021) reported that stress related to workload alone explained 31% of lecturer underperformance, highlighting the direct impact of excessive demands on academic effectiveness. In Jordan, Al-Momani et al. (2022) demonstrated that organisational support played a mediating role in reducing the negative effects of stress on lecturer productivity. Across all three countries, the link between stress and performance was strong and closely related to the institution's ability to manage psychosocial risks paralleling the situation observed in Botswana.

5.6 Institutional Implications

A statistically significant negative relationship between occupational stress and lecturer performance highlights the urgent need for institutional reform. Performance appraisal systems should be redesigned to include measures that reflect staff well-being and not just task completion. Institutions ought to implement proactive wellness frameworks, including regular stress audits, access to psychological support, and structured check-ins to monitor staff welfare. Leadership development is also essential; managers and heads of department should be trained in stress-sensitive supervision and equipped to detect early signs of burnout. Furthermore, better resource allocation is critical providing additional teaching assistants, ensuring reasonable student-to-lecturer ratios, and streamlining administrative tasks would help alleviate major stressors. Failure to act on these fronts could lead to long-term reputational harm, potential loss of accreditation, and increased staff turnover risks that were explicitly identified by lecturers who participated in this study.

5.7 Strategies to Alleviate Occupational Stress

5.7.1 Introduction

The preceding analysis confirmed that occupational stress significantly undermines academic staff performance in Botswana's private tertiary institutions (PTIs). In light of these findings, this section addresses **Research Objective 5**, which seeks to identify strategies for alleviating occupational stress in private tertiary institutions in Botswana. The discussion draws on the empirical findings presented in Chapter Four, particularly the qualitative responses from lecturers, and is informed by the theoretical frameworks and literature reviewed in Chapters Two and Three.

Importantly, the recommendations discussed are not isolated fixes but components of a systemic approach. Effective mitigation of occupational stress requires institutional realignment toward employee well-being, as supported by both the International Labour Organization's psychosocial risk

model and the VRIO-based human resource strategy elaborated in Chapter 2. By addressing institutional, managerial, and individual-level factors, the strategies outlined in this section aim to create an enabling environment for sustainable academic excellence.

5.7.2 Staff Recommendations from the Study

The most direct source of insight into stress-alleviating strategies came from the lecturers themselves. Chapter 4 presented a range of suggestions submitted in open-ended questionnaire responses. These included appeals for more realistic workloads, improved communication from management, timely salary payments, better infrastructure, emotional support services, and opportunities for professional development.

Respondents highlighted the need for management to treat wellness concerns as legitimate operational priorities. One participant noted, “We are not robots. The university can’t expect us to perform at our best if we are always stressed and overworked.” This sentiment was echoed by numerous others, suggesting that wellness interventions should be normalized rather than treated as exceptional or discretionary.

The data also revealed demand for structured stress support, such as counselling services, as well as more informal avenues for staff expression. Respondents advocated for platforms where staff could voice concerns without fear of reprisal a finding aligned with psychological safety literature.

5.7.3 Institutional Workload Management

Perhaps the most consistently cited driver of occupational stress in the study was excessive workload. Lecturers reported managing large class sizes, teaching across multiple platforms (face-to-face, online, blended), and handling significant administrative responsibilities. These overlapping duties, often without additional compensation or relief, contributed to fatigue and disengagement.

Institutional reforms must therefore begin with workload redesign. This includes adopting more equitable teaching allocations, based on student load and course complexity, as well as introducing teaching assistants or coordinators for large modules. It is also critical to recognize and reward the hidden labour involved in mentoring, module design, and student support, which often go unacknowledged in performance reviews.

The findings align with the ILO’s recommendation for role clarity and task feasibility as foundational to occupational wellness. Institutions that fail to rationalize workloads risk normalizing chronic stress, which, as demonstrated in Chapter 5.5, directly impairs performance and retention.

5.7.4 Enhancing Institutional Support Structures

In the current study, several lecturers reported feeling unsupported or "abandoned" by institutional leadership. Complaints about technology breakdowns, administrative bottlenecks, and policy opacity were common in open-ended feedback. To alleviate such stressors, institutions must strengthen their academic and administrative support structures.

One key area is the reliability of teaching infrastructure for example functioning projectors, consistent internet access, access to printers and library resources. The unavailability of these resources forces lecturers to either improvise (adding cognitive load) or delay course delivery (inviting performance penalties).

Additionally, administrative responsiveness must be improved. Delays in responding to leave applications, student complaints, or requests for timetable changes generate stress and diminish morale. Introducing a service-level agreement (SLA) approach to inter-departmental interactions where timelines are clearly stipulated and enforced can increase efficiency and reduce ambiguity, one of the leading stressors identified in this study.

5.7.5 Mental Health and Wellness Programs

Globally, tertiary institutions have begun to institutionalize mental health services as part of academic life. In Botswana's PTIs, however, no such formal structures were reported by participants. The lack of accessible counselling or therapy options compounds stress, especially in cases of bereavement, burnout, or family crises.

As suggested by respondents in this study, wellness interventions should include:

- Access to trained counsellors or psychologists,
- Confidential helplines for emotional support,
- Peer mentorship programs,
- Stress-relief workshops during semester breaks.

These programs would not only benefit lecturers' mental health but also improve their classroom presence, communication skills, and resilience. Maslach & Jackson (1986) note that burnout, once entrenched, requires more than time off; it demands cognitive reframing, emotional processing, and often guided therapy. Integrating such services would mark a meaningful shift in institutional culture from performance-at-all-costs to human-centred productivity.

5.7.6 Flexible Work Arrangements and Leave Management

Another recurring suggestion in the dataset was the introduction of flexible work schedules. Lecturers described instances of being physically present at institutions even when not teaching, simply to fulfil clock-in policies. This rigid requirement contributes to stress, especially for lecturers with dependents or chronic health conditions.

Institutions should explore the feasibility of hybrid models particularly for administrative or research duties that allow lecturers to work remotely on certain days. Additionally, leave policies should be reviewed to accommodate not just annual and sick leave, but also wellness days or mental health breaks, which are increasingly being introduced in global higher education sectors.

Incorporating flexibility into work arrangements acknowledges the professional autonomy of academic staff and aligns with contemporary HR practices that view employees as partners rather than subordinates.

5.7.7 Professional Development and Capacity Building

Lecturers in the study frequently cited a lack of upskilling opportunities as both a stressor and a de-motivator. For early-career staff, limited access to training in digital teaching tools or research methodologies increases the cognitive burden of performing in an already demanding environment. For senior staff, the absence of leadership development or pedagogical innovation workshops fosters stagnation and disengagement.

To alleviate these concerns, institutions should adopt structured professional development pathways. This includes regular training, supported attendance at conferences, collaborative research grants, and cross-institutional exchanges. Such investments signal to staff that their long-term growth is valued, thereby increasing institutional loyalty and self-efficacy two critical buffers against occupational stress.

Furthermore, as noted in Chapter 2, academic resilience is strongly associated with the perception of progression and mastery. By providing clear, supportive routes to promotion and skill acquisition, PTIs can significantly reduce career anxiety and improve morale.

5.7.8 Recognition, Rewards, and Non-Monetary Incentives

While financial incentives are important, several lecturers in the study noted that even basic recognition was lacking. Statements such as “No one ever says thank you” or “Our hard work is taken for granted” reveal an emotional disconnect that can intensify workplace stress.

Institutions should formalize recognition programs such as "Lecturer of the Month," annual excellence awards, or informal acknowledgments in faculty meetings. These low-cost strategies have been shown to increase staff morale, engagement, and retention. More importantly, they humanize the institutional environment, signalling appreciation and relational value.

Research from organizational psychology confirms that employees who feel seen and appreciated are more resilient to stressors and more committed to organizational goals (Robbins, 2009; Armstrong, 2017). In Botswana's PTIs, where financial resources may be limited, emotional compensation in the form of appreciation becomes even more vital.

5.7.9 Cultural and Structural Considerations

Finally, any stress-alleviation strategy must consider the cultural and organizational context in which it is implemented. Botswana's PTIs operate within a complex regulatory framework, influenced by national labour policies, accreditation standards, and economic constraints. Moreover, the organizational culture in many institutions remains hierarchical and compliance-focused, which can hinder openness and innovation.

For stress mitigation strategies to succeed, they must be integrated into broader institutional development plans, endorsed by senior leadership, and aligned with national higher education goals. Importantly, staff should be involved in the co-creation of these strategies, ensuring that interventions are contextually appropriate and widely accepted.

Furthermore, systemic alignment with Botswana Vision 2036 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) particularly SDG 4 (Quality Education) and SDG 8 (Decent Work) reinforces the legitimacy of investing in lecturer well-being as a developmental priority.

5.8 Integrative Summary of Findings, Theory, and National Context

5.8.1 Summary of Major Empirical Findings

This study investigated the causes, manifestations, and institutional implications of occupational stress among lecturers in private tertiary institutions (PTIs) in Gaborone, Botswana. The data collected through questionnaires and open-ended responses demonstrated a consistent pattern of high stress levels, predominantly driven by excessive workloads, administrative pressures, limited institutional support, and role ambiguity.

Section 5.2 highlighted the multifaceted nature of stressors affecting lecturers, ranging from infrastructural deficiencies to psycho-social strain caused by weak institutional communication.

Section 5.3 further established that management faces considerable challenges in recognizing and addressing these stressors, largely due to organizational inertia and insufficient autonomy. Section 5.4 explored how these stress levels negatively impacted lecturer performance in domains such as teaching effectiveness, student engagement, research output, and collaboration. In Section 5.5, the hypothesis testing confirmed a statistically significant negative relationship between occupational stress and lecturer performance, with an R^2 of 0.286 indicating that nearly 29% of the performance variance could be explained by stress. Lastly, Section 5.6 proposed empirically and theoretically grounded strategies to alleviate occupational stress.

These findings present a comprehensive view of how stress not only affects individual lecturers but also influences the operational efficiency and sustainability of educational institutions in Botswana.

5.8.2 Theoretical Contributions: VRIO, ILO, and SDT Frameworks

The research contributes to the application of three major theoretical frameworks within the context of higher education in sub-Saharan Africa: the VRIO resource-based view, the ILO psychosocial risk model, and the Self-Determination Theory (SDT).

The VRIO model frames lecturers as vital institutional resources whose value, rarity, inimitability, and organization are critical for institutional competitiveness. Stress diminishes these attributes, turning lecturers from assets into organizational risks. The data in this study confirms that under stressful conditions, lecturers fail to contribute fully to institutional goals such as research innovation, student satisfaction, and reputational enhancement.

The ILO's psychosocial risk model was also useful in conceptualizing stress as a structural hazard rather than an individual weakness. Key elements of the ILO framework workload, job control, reward, support, and role clarity were all identified in this study as stress determinants. Importantly, these stressors were shown to be embedded in institutional culture and management practices, which implies that their resolution requires systemic change.

Self-Determination Theory (SDT), though not formally tested in this study, supports the idea that lecturers, like all professionals, require autonomy, competence, and relatedness to remain motivated. Many participants described how lack of recognition, rigid policies, and poor feedback mechanisms reduced their intrinsic motivation, further reinforcing the stress–performance dynamic.

Together, these theoretical models provided a multi-dimensional lens through which to analyze the data, offering both diagnostic clarity and strategic direction.

5.8.3 Policy Implications for Private Higher Education in Botswana

The findings of this study suggest that occupational stress in PTIs should be treated as a strategic and policy-level issue, not merely an HR concern. The current Botswana education regulatory landscape, while robust in areas such as curriculum accreditation and assessment standards, remains underdeveloped in relation to staff welfare and organizational health.

The Ministry of Tertiary Education and the Botswana Qualifications Authority (BQA) may need to introduce minimum standards for academic workload, teaching conditions, and lecturer well-being. For example, institutions could be required to report on staff turnover rates, stress audit results, and professional development metrics as part of their quality assurance reviews.

Additionally, PTIs themselves should establish internal policies for flexible teaching schedules, wellness programs, fair promotion pathways, and anonymous grievance mechanisms. These changes require not only institutional will but also capacity-building support from government and donor agencies.

Such policy-level transformations would enable PTIs to retain talent, maintain academic quality, and better align with Botswana's national education and labour market goals.

5.8.4 Alignment with Botswana Vision 2036 and National Development Priorities

The study's implications align closely with Botswana's national long-term development plan, Vision 2036, which aspires to transform the country into a knowledge-based economy. A key pillar of this vision is the delivery of high-quality, inclusive education that equips citizens with relevant skills for the global marketplace.

Occupational stress among lecturers threatens this vision by reducing academic quality, eroding institutional effectiveness, and increasing staff turnover. If PTIs are to be central actors in realizing Vision 2036, they must prioritize the well-being and performance of their lecturers. This requires coordinated efforts among the Ministry of Tertiary Education, PTIs, private education investors, and development partners.

Moreover, the research indirectly supports Botswana's National Human Resource Development Strategy, which emphasizes employee engagement, skills development, and institutional performance. Lecturer wellness is a necessary precondition for realizing these strategic ambitions.

5.8.5 Contribution to Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 4 and SDG 8)

At the global level, the findings also contribute to the discourse around SDG 4 (Quality Education) and SDG 8 (Decent Work and Economic Growth). SDG 4 aims to "ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all," while SDG 8 promotes "inclusive and sustainable economic growth, employment and decent work for all."

This study shows that lecturer well-being is an essential but often overlooked component of educational quality. Without addressing the occupational stressors that undermine teaching and research, it is unlikely that Botswana will meet the human capital development targets associated with SDG 4. Similarly, the findings support SDG 8's emphasis on workplace health and productivity. Institutions that ignore stress may comply with minimum labour standards but fail to meet the spirit of decent work as defined by the International Labour Organization.

Therefore, PTIs have a role not only as education providers but also as labour institutions that must safeguard the dignity, rights, and wellness of their employees.

5.8.6 Chapter Summary and Link to Chapter Six

In conclusion, Chapter Five has discussed the core findings of the research in relation to the original objectives, theoretical frameworks, and policy context. The data confirm that occupational stress is a significant inhibitor of lecturer performance and institutional effectiveness. Addressing this challenge requires systemic interventions at the organizational, managerial, and national policy levels.

As Chapter Six will explore, these findings offer a rich basis for drawing actionable conclusions and providing targeted recommendations to stakeholders. The next chapter will synthesize the entire study and propose clear steps for institutional reform, regulatory enhancement, and academic empowerment anchored in empirical reality and aligned with Botswana's development vision

CHAPTER 6
CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

6.0 Chapter Overview

This chapter presents the concluding discussion of the study titled *Occupational Stress and Academic Lecturer Performance in Private Tertiary Institutions: Gaborone, Botswana*. It synthesizes the empirical findings and theoretical perspectives presented in the preceding chapters to provide an overall interpretation of the study. The chapter consolidates the key findings and translates them into practical conclusions and recommendations for policymakers, institutional leaders, academic managers, and other stakeholders within Botswana's private tertiary education sector.

The chapter is organised into four sections. Section 6.1 summarises the major findings from the quantitative and qualitative analyses. Section 6.2 presents the study's conclusions in relation to the research objectives and hypotheses. Section 6.3 provides evidence-based recommendations aimed at improving the management of occupational stress and enhancing academic staff performance. Finally, Section 6.4 identifies the study's limitations and proposes directions for future research.

The conclusions and recommendations presented in this chapter are grounded in the empirical findings of the study and supported by the theoretical and empirical literature on occupational stress, academic staff performance, higher education management, and employee wellbeing reviewed throughout the thesis.

6.1 Summary of the Study Findings

This research set out to explore the relationship between occupational stress and academic lecturer performance in private tertiary institutions in Gaborone, Botswana. A mixed-methods design was employed, integrating both quantitative and qualitative approaches to obtain a nuanced and holistic understanding of the phenomena under investigation. Specifically, the study sought to address the following objectives:

1. To examine the sources of occupational stress on academic staff in Private Tertiary Institutions in Botswana.
2. To examine the challenges experienced by managers when supervising stressed academic staff in the Private Tertiary Institutions in Botswana

3. To assess the effects of occupational stress on academic staff performance in Private Tertiary Institutions in Botswana.
4. To measure the relationship between occupational stress and academic staff performance in Private Tertiary Institutions in Botswana.
5. To identify the strategies needed to alleviate occupational stress in the Private Tertiary Institutions.

The findings of the study, which are organised around the above objectives, provide compelling evidence of the pervasiveness of occupational stress in the private higher education sector in Botswana, its adverse impact on lecturer performance, and the structural limitations that constrain institutional responses to such stress.

6.1.1 Nature and Prevalence of Occupational Stress

The findings of this study provide compelling evidence that occupational stress is not only widespread among lecturers in private tertiary institutions in Botswana but is also deeply multidimensional and structurally embedded in the day-to-day academic environment. Drawing from both the quantitative data (including frequency tables and descriptive statistics) and the qualitative responses from participants, the study reveals a complex constellation of stressors that frequently overlap and intensify, affecting not only the psychological well-being of lecturers but also their professional performance and institutional loyalty.

High Frequency and Consistency of Stress Indicators

The majority of survey respondents reported experiencing moderate to high levels of occupational stress on a regular basis. These responses were not outliers or occasional spikes in tension but rather consistent patterns indicative of systemic stress embedded in their professional roles. Among the top-ranked stressors were excessive workload, unrealistic time demands, administrative burden, inadequate institutional support, and limited autonomy in professional decision-making. These indicators closely mirror the observations made in regional and global studies on academic stress.

Ngirande (2021), in her study of higher education professionals in South Africa, also found that academic staff in under-resourced and high-output institutions reported heightened levels of psychological strain. Her findings concluded that the cumulative demands placed on lecturers particularly in contexts where institutional expansion outpaces staffing and infrastructural

development result in chronic stress and eventual burnout. The current study's replication of such findings in the Botswana context indicates that this is not a localized phenomenon but a regional trend in private tertiary institutions under market-driven pressures.

Workload as the Primary and Most Pervasive Stressor

Workload emerged as the most dominant stressor, cited across the entire participant sample in both closed-ended and open-ended responses. The nature of this workload was not confined solely to teaching obligations but extended to a wide range of non-academic tasks that increasingly form part of lecturers' institutional responsibilities. Respondents described teaching several large classes per semester, preparing multiple sets of assessments, and marking hundreds of scripts under tight deadlines all while fulfilling departmental coordination roles, participating in institutional meetings, and addressing student welfare issues.

This expanding role, often without corresponding increases in compensation or reduction in class sizes, has been linked to what Bezuidenhout (2015) described as "task overload in the neoliberal university." In his work, Bezuidenhout articulates the ways in which academic work in non-traditional, private, or distance-learning environments has become increasingly commodified. He observes that lecturers are often expected to meet productivity quotas or performance metrics such as pass rates, throughput ratios, and course completion targets without being offered the resources or administrative support required to deliver high-quality education. The consequence, as found in both his research and the current study, is an unsustainable accumulation of duties that strains both mental bandwidth and physical stamina.

Notably, lecturers in this study reported frequent emotional exhaustion, describing how extended hours of marking, lesson planning, and unplanned student consultations reduced their capacity to engage in research, professional development, or even personal life activities. This mirrors the stress-fatigue model discussed in the literature by Ross, Scanes and Locke (2024), which posits that cumulative daily stressors, when unaddressed, reduce energy reserves and increase vulnerability to burnout, absenteeism, and disengagement.

Time Constraints and Performance Pressure

Closely linked to workload was the issue of time pressure. A recurring theme among respondents was the sense of racing against time managing continuous assessment cycles, attending mandatory meetings, preparing lessons, and responding to student queries within tightly scheduled periods.

Several lecturers expressed that there was often "no breathing room" during the semester, with personal time routinely sacrificed to meet institutional demands.

This mirrors findings by Ahmad, Gul, and Kashif (2024), who observed in their multi-campus study that time constraints when institutionalised through unrealistic academic calendars and inflexible deadlines directly undermine lecturers' ability to plan, reflect, or innovate in their teaching practice. Time pressure was also noted to erode intrinsic motivation, with respondents in both their study and the present research reporting feelings of constantly being in "survival mode."

Furthermore, the pressure to meet grading deadlines or finalize student reports before weekly or monthly review meetings led to what one respondent described as "a continuous treadmill with no end." Such sentiments exemplify the time-cost tension that Shen and Slater (2021) describe in their conceptual model of academic labour, where cognitive load, time scarcity, and administrative micromanagement conspire to limit creativity, reduce job satisfaction, and foster workplace anxiety.

Role Ambiguity and Role Conflict

In addition to workload and time constraints, the study revealed a widespread experience of role ambiguity and role conflict among lecturers. Many participants reported unclear job descriptions, shifting institutional expectations, and blurred boundaries between academic and administrative functions. For example, lecturers were expected not only to teach and assess but also to counsel students, coordinate programmes, handle student appeals, and monitor academic integrity all without formal training or clear lines of responsibility.

This confusion and multiplicity of expectations often resulted in internal conflict and psychological strain. One lecturer reported, "I came into this job to teach, but I find myself spending more time managing people, paperwork, and policies than actually engaging with students or research." Such testimonies are consistent with the work of Armstrong (2017), who argued that role conflict particularly in transitional institutions without strong governance structures can be one of the most insidious sources of occupational stress in academic life.

Moreover, the tension between managerial demands and academic integrity was frequently noted. Some lecturers felt pressured to pass students or avoid "causing waves" to maintain high throughput rates or avoid student complaints. This ethical conflict between academic standards and institutional performance targets contributes to what Gomes and Costa (2025) identify as "emotional dissonance"a condition where professionals must routinely suppress their values or emotions to conform to external

expectations. The long-term consequence of such dissonance is emotional exhaustion, reduced motivation, and alienation from one's professional identity.

Emotional Labour and Invisible Stressors

Beyond tangible workload and time demands, lecturers also reported high levels of emotional labour as a hidden yet taxing aspect of their work. Emotional labour refers to the internal regulation of feelings and interpersonal behaviours in order to meet institutional expectations or manage student emotions. Respondents shared that they were often expected to maintain a calm and compassionate demeanour - even when dealing with difficult students, under-resourced conditions, or personal stress.

This aligns with the findings of Rind and Arain (2023), who explored how emotional labour manifests in academia, particularly in contexts with inadequate support systems. Lecturers must routinely "perform care" without receiving any training or recognition for these skills. In doing so, they absorb student stress, institutional inefficiencies, and peer conflict, all while managing their own anxieties.

The cumulative effect of emotional labour is difficult to quantify, yet its consequences are far-reaching. The inability to express frustration or vulnerability in professional settings can result in feelings of isolation, repression, and even depression. As such, future institutional wellness programmes must not only address workload management but also create spaces for emotional expression, community building, and psychosocial support.

Stress as a Systemic and Cultural Issue

A final but critical insight from this study is that occupational stress in private tertiary institutions is not simply a product of individual shortcomings or poor time management but is reflective of systemic, institutional, and cultural dynamics. The study findings indicate that stress has become normalised - part of the "hidden curriculum" of academic life. Many lecturers reported that their stress was expected, accepted, and often dismissed by institutional leadership.

This organisational culture of silence and survival is highly problematic. It suggests that rather than addressing root causes of stress such as poor workload design, inadequate staffing, or underinvestment in academic support institutions have instead cultivated a culture of endurance. This, in turn, prevents lecturers from voicing concerns, seeking help, or advocating for better conditions.

Such normalisation of stress is well-documented in the literature. Camilleri (2021), for example, warns against institutional narratives that glorify overwork or stigmatise mental health concerns.

Similarly, Padyab and Lundgren (2023) argue that sustainable academic systems must move beyond resilience narratives and instead reform structural conditions that generate stress in the first place.

6.1.2 Impact of Stress on Lecturer Performance

One of the central aims of the study was to assess the relationship between occupational stress and lecturer performance. Using Pearson correlation analysis, it was found that overall stress levels were negatively correlated with three major indicators of academic performance: quality of work, productivity, and the ability to meet deadlines. Specifically, the study revealed correlation coefficients of -0.68 (quality of work), -0.72 (productivity), and -0.65 (meeting deadlines), all statistically significant at $p < 0.001$.

These results provide robust empirical support for the hypothesis that elevated occupational stress undermines academic performance. The findings are congruent with those of Ilonze (2024), whose study of Nigerian university lecturers showed similar trends, with high stress levels significantly diminishing effectiveness in teaching, curriculum development, and research output.

Furthermore, the qualitative responses provided deeper insight into how stress manifests in day-to-day academic life. Lecturers reported mental fatigue, demotivation, and a sense of emotional exhaustion - symptoms that mirror those outlined by Shen and Slater (2021) in their study of academic stress during the COVID-19 pandemic. Participants described a vicious cycle where stress reduced their cognitive and emotional resources, which in turn led to delays in grading, reduced classroom engagement, and missed academic deadlines.

A number of respondents also reported feeling disengaged and unappreciated, particularly when their contributions were not acknowledged by institutional leadership. This perceived lack of recognition further eroded job satisfaction and professional motivation. Such responses are consistent with the literature on organisational support theory, which suggests that when employees feel undervalued by their institution, their commitment and performance levels decline sharply (Reynolds, 2022; Szromek & Wolniak, 2020).

6.1.3 Coping Strategies and Institutional Support Mechanisms

In addition to measuring the prevalence and consequences of stress, the study sought to understand how lecturers cope with occupational stress and whether institutional mechanisms are available to support them. The findings indicate that while some lecturers rely on personal strategies - such as

prayer, meditation, and self-isolation with very few reported access to formal institutional support systems.

This reflects the conclusions of Antoni, Moreno, and Penedo (2023), who argue that informal coping mechanisms may provide temporary relief but are insufficient substitutes for structured interventions. The absence of employee assistance programmes, mental health counselling, or stress management workshops was a recurring theme in the data. Participants lamented the lack of attention paid by management to staff well-being, with several lecturers reporting that wellness initiatives, if present at all, were superficial and episodic rather than continuous and strategic.

Additionally, respondents highlighted the need for peer support groups, mentorship programmes, and access to professional development opportunities as possible avenues for reducing stress. This supports the findings of Raveh, Morad, and Shacham (2023), who observed that institutions that invest in emotional infrastructure and faculty development tend to report lower levels of burnout and higher job satisfaction.

However, the study also found that coping strategies are influenced by personal, cultural, and spiritual factors. For example, several lecturers mentioned relying on religious faith or prayer during stressful periods. While such strategies can offer psychological comfort, their efficacy in addressing structural sources of stress remains limited. As such, the study concluded that coping strategies must be supported by robust institutional policies and management practices to produce meaningful change.

6.1.4 Sector-Specific Stressors and Organisational Climate

An important contribution of this study was its exclusive focus on private tertiary institutions, which are often underrepresented in stress-related academic research. The data suggest that these institutions face unique stressors related to funding constraints, unstable student enrolments, and commercial pressures to deliver results. These factors often translate into job insecurity, unpredictable work schedules, and performance-driven management cultures that exacerbate stress.

Participants frequently described a "corporate" organisational culture characterised by high expectations, low flexibility, and minimal empathy for personal challenges. Such an environment often marginalises the emotional and psychological needs of academic staff. This finding is supported by the work of Camilleri (2021), who noted that neoliberal reforms in higher education have transformed academic institutions into performance-oriented spaces that prioritise outcomes over employee well-being.

Moreover, lecturers in these institutions reported limited career progression opportunities and unclear promotion criteria, which contributed to long-term professional dissatisfaction and anxiety. These conditions are especially detrimental in contexts where staff retention and morale are already low. Hence, the study concludes that the organisational climate in private tertiary institutions is a critical factor influencing both the experience and impact of occupational stress.

6.2 Conclusions

The conclusions presented in this section are drawn directly from the empirical findings of the study and are substantiated by both quantitative data and qualitative insights. They are framed in relation to the original research objectives and hypotheses, and grounded exclusively in the validated academic literature presented throughout the thesis.

6.2.1 Conclusion 1: Occupational Stress is Widespread, Multidimensional, and Systemic

The findings of this study demonstrate that occupational stress is widespread among academic lecturers in private tertiary institutions located in Gaborone, Botswana. Both the quantitative and qualitative findings indicate that lecturers experience moderate to high levels of occupational stress arising from multiple organisational and work-related factors. The most significant stressors identified include excessive workload, administrative responsibilities, role ambiguity, time pressures, inadequate institutional support, resource constraints, and challenges in balancing professional and personal responsibilities.

The study further concludes that occupational stress is multidimensional and cannot be attributed to a single cause. Rather, it results from the interaction of organisational, managerial, and individual factors that collectively influence lecturers' work experiences. The evidence suggests that institutional practices, leadership approaches, organisational culture, and resource availability play a significant role in shaping lecturers' stress levels. Consequently, occupational stress should be viewed as an organisational and management issue rather than solely an individual challenge requiring personal coping strategies.

These findings support the Transactional Model of Stress and Coping proposed by Lazarus and Folkman (1984), which suggests that stress occurs when individuals perceive that workplace demands exceed the resources available to meet those demands. Similarly, the findings are consistent with

previous studies conducted within higher education, which have identified excessive workload, role ambiguity, inadequate organisational support, and increasing performance expectations as significant contributors to occupational stress among academic staff.

6.2.2 Conclusion 2: Occupational Stress Has a Statistically Significant Negative Impact on Lecturer Performance

The second core conclusion of this study is that there exists a strong and statistically significant negative relationship between occupational stress and key dimensions of academic lecturer performance. This was evidenced by the Pearson correlation coefficients between overall stress levels and performance indicators: quality of work (-0.68), productivity (-0.72), and the ability to meet deadlines (-0.65), all significant at $p < 0.001$.

These findings are consistent with theoretical models of stress-performance relationships, including the inverted U-shaped stress-performance curve (Yerkes & Dodson, 1908), which suggests that while moderate stress may enhance performance, excessive stress severely impairs it. In this study, the levels of stress reported clearly surpassed the optimal zone and entered a domain where stress functions as a debilitating force, undermining concentration, creativity, energy levels, and overall productivity.

The qualitative data also support this conclusion, with lecturers reporting symptoms of burnout, mental fatigue, disengagement, and emotional exhaustion. The narratives captured through the open-ended questionnaire responses paint a vivid picture of lecturers who, although professionally committed and passionate about education, feel overwhelmed, undervalued, and unsupported in their roles. These symptoms are classic indicators of chronic occupational stress and align with the stress burnout-performance framework articulated by Ross, Scanes, and Locke (2024) and Shen and Slater (2021).

Consequently, the study confirms Hypothesis 1 (H1): There is a significant negative relationship between occupational stress and lecturer performance. Stress not only impairs day-to-day performance but also reduces long-term professional sustainability, leading to absenteeism, poor engagement, and potentially, staff attrition.

6.2.3 Conclusion 3: Institutional Support Structures are Largely Absent or Ineffective

Another important conclusion is that institutional mechanisms intended to manage stress and support staff well-being are either entirely absent or poorly implemented in most private tertiary institutions studied. While individual lecturers resort to coping mechanisms such as prayer, isolation, and family

support, the absence of structured wellness programmes, counselling services, or professional support channels means that these personal strategies often prove inadequate.

Several lecturers indicated that wellness sessions, if held at all, were infrequent and superficial often carried out more as a compliance ritual than a sincere attempt to engage with the psychological wellbeing of staff. This resonates with the critiques presented by Reynolds (2022) and Camilleri (2021), who have argued that many higher education institutions adopt a reactive rather than proactive approach to managing workplace stress.

Moreover, the data suggest that many lecturers do not even feel safe voicing concerns about stress or mental health, fearing that such disclosures might be interpreted as professional weakness or incompetence. This lack of psychological safety is alarming, as it undermines open communication, trust, and mutual respect between staff and management. Without genuine engagement from institutional leadership, stress cannot be adequately acknowledged or addressed.

Therefore, the study concludes that coping with occupational stress in private higher education is currently framed as an individual burden rather than a shared institutional responsibility. This gap represents a major structural weakness in the current organisational design and culture of many private tertiary institutions.

6.2.4 Conclusion 4: The Organisational Culture of Private Institutions Exacerbates Stress

A further conclusion drawn from this study is that the prevailing organisational culture within private tertiary institutions in Botswana contributes significantly to the levels and types of stress experienced by lecturers. Unlike public institutions, which are typically more bureaucratic but offer greater job security, private institutions operate under market-driven logics that prioritise cost efficiency, performance metrics, and enrolment targets over staff well-being.

Lecturers described their institutions as operating under "corporate" models that undervalue emotional labour, de-emphasise collaboration, and reward output over process. Many lecturers felt that they were treated as replaceable labour rather than valued professionals. This experience of depersonalisation and reduced autonomy is closely linked to the concept of "emotional dissonance" discussed in the stress literature (Gomes & Costa, 2025; Rind & Arain, 2023).

Furthermore, the study found that the absence of clear career progression pathways, limited access to professional development, and performance appraisal systems that focus narrowly on student pass rates or financial returns contributed to long-term disillusionment. This has been confirmed in

previous studies such as that by Bhatti and Isayev (2023), who noted that organisational injustice and lack of career clarity are major contributors to workplace dissatisfaction in academic settings.

Thus, it is concluded that institutional culture and the values it implicitly and explicitly promotes - has a direct impact on the levels of occupational stress experienced by lecturers. A competitive, transactional, and non-inclusive culture amplifies stress and diminishes both performance and job satisfaction.

6.2.5 Conclusion 5: Stress Management is a Professional Development and Strategic Priority

Finally, this study concludes that managing occupational stress should be elevated from a peripheral welfare issue to a central strategic and professional development concern. Given the strong link between stress and lecturer performance, any effort to improve academic quality, student outcomes, or institutional rankings must begin with improving the work conditions and psychological well-being of academic staff.

Lecturers are the intellectual backbone of any higher education institution. Their cognitive, emotional, and professional health directly impacts teaching quality, research output, and student engagement. Institutions that fail to invest in stress reduction and well-being risk undermining their academic mission and long-term sustainability.

Drawing from the work of Padyab and Lundgren (2023) and Yadewani et al. (2021), this study asserts that workplace mental health is no longer an optional add on but a core dimension of academic governance. Stress management should be embedded into human resource policies, leadership training, workload planning, and institutional development frameworks.

This conclusion also affirms the need for future models of academic professionalism that incorporate emotional resilience, collaborative practices, and psychological safety as indicators of institutional maturity.

6.3 Recommendations

Based on the empirical findings and conclusions of this study, several strategic and operational recommendations are proposed. These are directed at various stakeholders - namely institutional leaders, academic managers, policymakers, and regulatory authorities - in order to mitigate the effects of occupational stress and promote sustainable academic performance in private tertiary institutions in Gaborone, Botswana.

Each recommendation is grounded in the themes that emerged from the data, supported by verified literature used in the study, and designed with practical feasibility in mind. They reflect both short-term remedial interventions and longer-term structural transformations necessary for addressing the systemic nature of occupational stress.

6.3.1 Establish Comprehensive Institutional Wellness Programmes

One of the most urgent recommendations is the institutionalisation of structured wellness programmes in private tertiary institutions. The absence of formal psychological support systems was a recurrent concern in this study, with lecturers frequently indicating that mental health was neither prioritised nor sufficiently resourced.

Institutions should develop fully integrated wellness departments that offer professional counselling, stress management workshops, regular wellness checks, and access to mental health professionals. These wellness programmes must be ongoing, well-funded, and designed with the participation of lecturers to ensure that they are contextually appropriate and non-tokenistic.

The effectiveness of such interventions has been demonstrated by Antoni, Moreno and Penedo (2023), who argue that structured psychological services in higher education significantly reduce stress, absenteeism, and staff turnover. Investing in wellness infrastructure is not only an ethical imperative but a strategic asset that enhances staff morale, productivity, and institutional reputation.

6.3.2 Revise Workload Policies and Teaching Allocations

The study found that excessive and poorly structured workloads are among the most significant contributors to occupational stress. Lecturers reported being overwhelmed by large teaching volumes, unrealistic performance expectations, and non-teaching responsibilities that eroded preparation and research time.

Institutions should adopt transparent and equitable workload allocation policies that factor in teaching, research, administrative duties, and community engagement. Time should be formally allocated for research and professional development, and class sizes should be capped based on pedagogical best practice rather than enrolment or revenue targets.

Bezuidenhout (2015) and Ngirande (2021) have both emphasized the value of rationalising academic workloads to reduce stress and improve performance. Without appropriate workload reforms, any efforts to enhance lecturer well-being are likely to be short-lived.

6.3.3 Embed Emotional Intelligence and Stress Management in Professional Development

This study found that most lecturers lacked access to formal training in stress management, time planning, or emotional intelligence. As a result, many relied on informal or reactive coping strategies, which although helpful in the short term, were ineffective in addressing long-term stressors.

Institutions should therefore embed stress resilience training, emotional regulation, and psychological literacy into their professional development offerings. Training in mindfulness, cognitive restructuring, and assertive communication can equip lecturers with tools to manage both internal and external stressors more effectively.

Raveh, Morad and Shacham (2023) support this recommendation by demonstrating that lecturers who receive such training experience lower stress levels and report improved performance outcomes. These skills are increasingly recognised as core competencies in academic life and should be included in orientation programmes for new staff, annual retreats, and continuing professional education.

6.3.4 Improve Communication, Feedback, and Recognition Systems

Poor vertical communication, lack of staff involvement in decision-making, and the absence of recognition systems were widely cited as sources of frustration and stress among lecturers in the study. Staff frequently expressed feeling marginalised or treated as operational tools rather than valued contributors.

To address this, institutional leaders should establish structured communication channels such as regular staff town halls, anonymous feedback platforms, and joint task forces to allow academic staff to voice concerns, suggest improvements, and co-create institutional policies. Staff input should be treated seriously, and institutional responses should be transparent and timely.

Recognition systems should also be enhanced to celebrate teaching excellence, research innovation, mentorship, and administrative contributions. Non-monetary recognition such as certificates, public acknowledgment, and internal awards can significantly boost morale.

Reynolds (2022) and Camilleri (2021) both underline the importance of recognition and communication in reducing occupational stress and enhancing institutional cohesion. A culture of appreciation and open dialogue is foundational to a healthy academic work environment.

6.3.5 Institutionalise Psychological Safety and Open-Door Policies

The data indicated that many lecturers feared that disclosing stress or mental health struggles could be perceived as a sign of incompetence or weakness. This fear suppresses open conversations about well-being and undermines efforts to build a culture of care.

Institutional leadership must therefore prioritise the creation of psychologically safe environments. This includes training managers to be empathetic, approachable, and non-punitive in their response to staff stress disclosures. Anonymous grievance procedures should be available, and confidentiality in mental health support must be guaranteed.

The concept of psychological safety, as discussed by Shen and Slater (2021), is essential in academic settings where high cognitive and emotional labour is required. When staff feel safe to speak up, they are more likely to seek help, propose innovative solutions, and engage meaningfully in institutional life.

6.3.6 Align Performance Appraisal Systems with Academic Realities

The performance appraisal systems in private tertiary institutions often focus narrowly on student pass rates or administrative compliance. This creates pressure to "produce results" without regard to the contextual and emotional dimensions of academic work. Several lecturers reported that they felt reduced to numbers rather than being evaluated holistically.

Institutions should review and redesign performance appraisal systems to align with the complex realities of academic labour. Criteria should reflect not only teaching outcomes but also research efforts, student engagement, curriculum development, and staff mentorship.

Appraisals should include qualitative feedback, be forward-looking (developmental), and allow for staff self-assessment and goal setting. According to Bhatti and Isayev (2023), such holistic appraisal systems are associated with higher job satisfaction and reduced stress in academic settings.

6.3.7 Establish Career Progression and Mentorship Pathways

This study found that a lack of clear career progression frameworks contributed significantly to lecturer demotivation and occupational stress. Many participants expressed uncertainty about promotion criteria, opportunities for growth, or recognition of professional development efforts.

To address this, institutions should create and communicate transparent career pathways, including timelines, performance expectations, and capacity-building milestones. Formal mentorship

programmes should be introduced to pair junior lecturers with experienced academics who can guide them through institutional norms, pedagogical skills, and research development.

The work of Ross, Scanes and Locke (2024) supports this recommendation, noting that mentorship reduces workplace anxiety, enhances academic identity, and improves performance outcomes. Institutions that invest in talent development are more likely to retain competent staff and sustain long-term excellence.

6.3.8 Strengthen Policy Engagement with Regulatory Bodies

Private tertiary institutions operate within a policy environment that is often less structured than their public counterparts. However, this flexibility can result in inconsistent employment practices, variable stress conditions, and limited staff protections.

Institutional leadership should therefore engage more proactively with regulatory bodies such as the Botswana Qualifications Authority (BQA), the Human Resource Development Council (HRDC), and relevant ministries to advocate for sector-specific policy frameworks. These should include minimum standards for lecturer-student ratios, workload thresholds, grievance resolution mechanisms, and mental health service provisions.

Such engagement ensures that institutional reforms are not left to chance or individual initiative but are backed by policy, compliance mechanisms, and sector-wide accountability. As highlighted by Almaqtari et al. (2022), effective regulation can serve as both a deterrent against poor labour practices and a catalyst for strategic institutional improvement.

6.3.9 Tailor Interventions to Gender, Age, and Life-Cycle Factors

While this study did not conduct deep demographic sub-group analysis, there is evidence in the literature that stressors may vary based on gender, age, family responsibilities, and career stage. For example, younger lecturers may experience stress due to uncertainty, while older lecturers may struggle with digital transitions or health concerns.

Institutions should therefore disaggregate wellness interventions to cater to specific staff profiles. Female lecturers, especially those balancing teaching with caregiving roles, may require flexible scheduling, child-care support, or targeted mentoring. Early-career lecturers may benefit more from skill-building workshops and workload support.

By adopting a differentiated approach to well-being, institutions demonstrate inclusivity, increase intervention effectiveness, and foster a culture of mutual respect. This aligns with the diversity-sensitive models promoted by authors such as Ahmad, Gul, and Kashif (2024).

6.3.10 Promote a Culture of Collegiality, Empathy, and Academic Citizenship

Finally, this study recommends that institutions make intentional efforts to cultivate a culture of collegiality and empathy. While policies and programmes are vital, it is the daily interpersonal environment that shapes staff morale, belonging, and resilience.

Institutions should invest in community-building initiatives such as academic retreats, research seminars, team-building events, and interdisciplinary collaboration platforms. Celebrating academic citizenship acts of service, mentorship, knowledge sharing should be embedded into institutional values.

Gomes and Costa (2025) assert that environments marked by collegial trust, emotional intelligence, and shared mission experience lower stress levels and higher academic output. Institutions that treat lecturers not just as workers but as partners in education create lasting foundations for academic excellence and institutional legitimacy.

6.4 Recommendations for Further Studies

While this study has yielded substantial insights into the prevalence, causes, and consequences of occupational stress among academic lecturers in private tertiary institutions in Gaborone, Botswana, it has also revealed a series of limitations and opportunities for future research. These limitations, far from undermining the study's contribution, serve to open up multiple scholarly avenues for more nuanced, longitudinal, and comparative investigations in this vital area of higher education research.

This section systematically outlines key directions in which future research can be expanded, enriched, or newly undertaken. It does so by addressing specific gaps in the current study, emergent themes that warrant deeper academic scrutiny, and theoretical or methodological innovations that could add substantial value to the existing body of literature. Each sub-section below offers a rationale, suggested methodology, and academic value for the proposed future inquiry.

6.4.1 Comparative Studies Between Public and Private Institutions

A core limitation of this study is its focus on private tertiary institutions, which while methodologically justifiable, restricts the generalisability of findings to the wider higher education

sector. Public institutions in Botswana and across the SADC region often operate under different legislative, funding, and governance frameworks, which may mitigate or exacerbate stress in distinct ways. For example, public institutions may offer more job security but suffer from bureaucratic inefficiencies or politicised governance structures that introduce different types of pressure.

Future research should thus adopt a comparative approach that examines occupational stress and lecturer performance across both public and private tertiary institutions. A mixed-methods comparative design combining surveys, focus group discussions, and institutional document analysis could illuminate sectoral differences in stress drivers, coping strategies, and performance outcomes. Such research could also explore whether public institutions, despite offering perceived employment stability, generate their own unique stressors such as bureaucratic inertia, outdated promotion policies, or delayed salaries.

This line of inquiry is crucial for informing policy interventions at the national level, where a one-size-fits-all approach to lecturer well-being may fail to account for institutional diversity. Comparative studies could also assist regulatory bodies in benchmarking institutional health indicators across the spectrum of higher education providers.

6.4.2 Longitudinal and Life-Cycle Analysis of Occupational Stress

The present study employed a cross-sectional design, offering a valuable but time-bound snapshot of lecturer stress and performance. However, occupational stress is a dynamic phenomenon that evolves over time in response to personal life changes, institutional transitions, and broader socio-political shifts. A lecturer's experience of stress may be significantly different at the entry-level stage compared to mid-career or pre-retirement.

Future research should therefore consider longitudinal designs that follow a cohort of academic staff over multiple years to map how stress accumulates, fluctuates, or diminishes over time. Such designs could capture key life-cycle transitions such as promotions, parenting, health changes, or leadership roles and assess their impact on stress resilience and performance trajectories. Moreover, longitudinal data could clarify causal relationships between stress and performance, going beyond the correlational inferences permissible in this study.

This form of research would be particularly valuable in identifying tipping points for burnout, the delayed effects of chronic stress, and the institutional interventions that provide the greatest long-term returns. Tracking life-cycle effects could also enable institutions to tailor support structures

according to staff age, rank, and personal circumstances, thereby enhancing institutional responsiveness and academic staff retention.

6.4.3 Gender, Family Roles, and Intersectionality

While gender and marital status were included as demographic variables in this study, a deeper intersectional analysis was beyond the scope of the current work. Existing literature suggests that occupational stress is often mediated by intersecting factors such as gender, family roles, caregiving responsibilities, and social expectations.

Future studies should explicitly adopt an intersectional analytical framework to investigate how multiple identities such as being a woman, a parent, or a young academic interact to shape unique stress experiences and coping needs. For instance, female lecturers may experience ‘double shifts’, juggling academic responsibilities with domestic care, while young male lecturers may struggle with proving competence in highly competitive environments.

Such research could employ feminist qualitative methodologies, life-history interviews, and participatory observation to uncover the lived realities of stress among different social groups within academia. Insights from this line of inquiry would inform the design of more inclusive wellness policies that address not only general stress but gender-specific burdens, structural biases, and hidden forms of institutional exclusion.

6.4.4 Digital Pedagogy, Techno-Stress, and the New Academic Normal

In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, tertiary education institutions globally have transitioned to hybrid or fully digital modes of learning and administration. This shift has introduced a new domain of occupational stress commonly referred to as "techno-stress." It encompasses anxiety related to technological adoption, digital surveillance, lack of digital skills, and the blurring of work-life boundaries due to constant connectivity.

Future research should explore the extent to which digital transitions have exacerbated stress among lecturers in Botswana’s private institutions. Are digital demands being matched with adequate training and support? How do different age groups or disciplines experience techno-stress? What boundaries or protections can be put in place to prevent digital overreach and preserve lecturer well-being?

Such studies could use surveys with validated techno-stress scales, digital ethnography, or institutional case studies to assess digital infrastructure readiness, staff digital confidence, and the

emotional toll of digital labour. Findings would be useful for guiding ICT investment, e-learning policy design, and digital wellness strategies in academic settings.

6.4.5 Organisational Culture, Leadership Styles, and Psychological Climate

An emergent theme in the current study was the critical role of organisational culture and leadership style in either mitigating or intensifying occupational stress. However, these factors were not the central focus and merit deeper investigation in future research.

Studies could examine how different leadership styles such as transformational, authoritarian, participatory, or transactional shape the psychological climate of academic departments. They could also explore whether cultures of inclusivity, collegiality, and emotional intelligence are associated with lower stress levels and higher performance outcomes.

Organisational ethnography, 360-degree feedback instruments, and multi-level modelling techniques could be employed to capture the relationship between leadership behaviours and lecturer stress. This stream of research would have immense practical utility in guiding leadership training, succession planning, and institutional culture reform in tertiary education.

6.4.6 Institutional Resilience and Preventative Wellness Strategies

Much of the literature, including this study, has focused on stress management as a reactive process. However, a growing body of research advocates for proactive, systemic approaches that build institutional resilience against stress.

Future scholars could investigate what organisational structures, values, and policies contribute to 'stress-resilient institutions'. For example, how do institutions with low staff turnover and high lecturer satisfaction operationalise wellness? What are the key indicators of institutional readiness to address psychological risks in the workplace? Can an index of institutional wellness maturity be developed and validated for benchmarking across the sector?

Action research, appreciative inquiry, and resilience audits could be employed to uncover best practices, measure resilience capacities, and co-create intervention roadmaps. This research could underpin national or regional wellness certification frameworks for tertiary institutions.

6.4.7 Role of Student Expectations and Emotional Labour in Lecturer Stress

A largely unexplored area is the influence of student expectations, attitudes, and behaviours on lecturer stress. The increasing commodification of education has shifted students into consumer roles, potentially distorting the pedagogical contract and placing additional emotional labour on lecturers.

Future research could explore how student complaints, entitlement, social media activism, or feedback mechanisms affect lecturer morale and well-being. Are lecturers feeling pressured to inflate grades, be permanently available, or suppress disciplinary standards in the face of student dissatisfaction? Such pressures may compromise academic integrity and increase lecturer burnout.

Focus groups with lecturers, discourse analysis of student feedback platforms, and surveys of student attitudes could form part of a critical investigation into the shifting power dynamics of academic life.

6.4.8 Stress, Academic Identity, and Career Commitment

A final recommendation is for studies that explore the long-term identity and career impacts of chronic occupational stress. How does prolonged exposure to high stress affect lecturers' sense of purpose, professional pride, or commitment to academia as a career?

Narrative research, identity mapping, and psychological inventories could be employed to understand whether stress contributes to career withdrawal, detachment, or shifts into non-academic roles. These studies would help institutions understand the cost of neglecting staff well-being, not just in operational terms but in lost human capital, institutional memory, and academic community.

6.5 Limitations of the Study

This study was subject to several limitations that should be considered when interpreting the findings. First, the study focused exclusively on private tertiary institutions located in Gaborone, Botswana. Although Gaborone hosts the majority of registered private tertiary institutions in the country, the findings may not be fully generalizable to public universities, technical colleges, or institutions located in other regions of Botswana. Consequently, caution should be exercised when extending the results beyond the study context.

Secondly, the study employed a cross-sectional research design, whereby data were collected at a single point in time. While this design was appropriate for examining the relationships between occupational stress and academic lecturer performance, it does not permit conclusions regarding causal relationships or changes in stress levels over time. Longitudinal studies would provide a more comprehensive understanding of how occupational stress evolves throughout lecturers' careers and across changing institutional environments.

Another limitation relates to the use of self-administered questionnaires. The study relied primarily on respondents' self-reported perceptions of occupational stress, institutional support, and academic

performance. As with most survey-based research, there is a possibility of response bias arising from social desirability, recall bias, or respondents' subjective interpretations of their experiences. To minimize these risks, respondents were assured of anonymity and confidentiality, encouraging honest and unbiased responses.

Furthermore, although the study achieved a high response rate, it was not possible to include lecturers who had already resigned or left private tertiary institutions as a result of occupational stress. These former employees may have provided valuable insights into the long-term effects of occupational stress and the factors contributing to staff turnover. Similar challenges have been reported by Glossop (2001), who observed that former employees are often difficult to trace and are generally less likely to participate in survey research.

The study also focused primarily on academic lecturers and managers within private tertiary institutions. Other important stakeholders, such as students, institutional owners, governing councils, and policymakers, were not included in the data collection process. Their perspectives may have provided additional insights into organizational practices, institutional culture, and strategies for managing occupational stress within higher education.

Despite these limitations, several measures were implemented to enhance the credibility and trustworthiness of the findings. The study employed a convergent parallel mixed-methods design, allowing quantitative findings to be corroborated through qualitative evidence. Established measurement instruments were adapted to suit the Botswana context, and appropriate validity and reliability procedures were followed. Consequently, while the findings should be interpreted within the stated limitations, they provide a robust and meaningful contribution to understanding occupational stress and academic lecturer performance in private tertiary institutions in Botswana.

6.6 Contribution to Knowledge

This study makes a number of important contributions to knowledge in the field of occupational stress, higher education management, and employee performance, particularly within the context of Botswana’s private tertiary education sector.

First, the study contributes context-specific empirical knowledge by being one of the first known studies to examine occupational stress and academic lecturer performance specifically within private tertiary institutions in Gaborone, Botswana. While occupational stress has been widely studied in other countries and in other sectors, there has been limited empirical evidence focusing specifically

on academic staff in Botswana's private tertiary education environment. This study therefore fills an important contextual and geographical gap in the literature by generating evidence from a sector that has remained under-researched despite its growing importance in national skills development, higher education delivery, and labour market preparation.

Second, the study contributes to knowledge by providing mixed-methods evidence on the relationship between occupational stress and lecturer performance in private tertiary institutions. By combining quantitative and qualitative data within a convergent parallel mixed-methods design, the study moves beyond purely descriptive accounts of workplace stress and demonstrates, using empirical evidence, that occupational stress is not only present but also significantly associated with lecturer performance outcomes. The qualitative findings enrich the statistical results by showing how lecturers experience workload pressure, role ambiguity, managerial strain, emotional exhaustion and work-life imbalance in their day-to-day academic responsibilities. In this way, the study contributes methodological value by showing how quantitative patterns of stress-performance relationships can be interpreted alongside the lived experiences of academic staff.

Third, the study contributes to knowledge by identifying specific predictors of occupational stress and employee performance within Botswana's private tertiary institutions. The study demonstrates that work-related factors such as workload, time pressure, role conflict, work-life imbalance, managerial practices, and organisational conditions are important determinants of occupational stress among academic staff. More importantly, the quantitative results show that occupational stress predictors collectively explained a substantial proportion of the variation in lecturer performance, with the regression model accounting for 58% of the variance in employee performance. This finding adds empirical depth to the literature by showing that occupational stress is not merely a background human resource concern, but a measurable and significant factor in understanding performance outcomes in the academic workplace.

Fourth, the study contributes to knowledge by highlighting the role of organizational culture and managerial practices in shaping stress experiences and performance outcomes in private tertiary institutions. The findings suggest that occupational stress among lecturers is not solely an individual psychological problem, but is embedded within broader institutional realities such as management style, role allocation, communication practices, resource constraints, and organizational politics. By demonstrating the influence of managerial behaviour and organizational culture on lecturer stress and

performance, the study extends the conversation beyond individual coping mechanisms and places greater emphasis on institutional responsibility in stress prevention and performance support.

Fifth, the study contributes to knowledge by revealing the importance of institutional support structures in academic staff well-being and performance. The findings show that weak support systems, limited wellness interventions, inadequate communication, insufficient recognition, and poorly managed workloads can intensify stress and undermine lecturer motivation, initiative and work quality. This contribution is important because it shifts the understanding of occupational stress from a purely personal or behavioural issue to one that is strongly connected to institutional systems, policies and support mechanisms. In doing so, the study provides evidence that staff welfare structures, supportive supervision, and organizational responsiveness are central to sustaining lecturer performance in private tertiary institutions.

Sixth, the study contributes theoretically by reinforcing the relevance of occupational stress theories, particularly the Job Demands–Resources (JD-R) model and related stress-performance frameworks, within the context of Botswana's private tertiary education sector. The findings support the view that high job demands, when not matched by adequate institutional and managerial resources, are associated with increased occupational stress and reduced employee performance. By applying these theoretical ideas to a Botswana private tertiary institution setting, the study extends the contextual applicability of occupational stress theory and demonstrates its usefulness in understanding academic work environments in emerging higher education systems.

Overall, this study contributes new knowledge by generating empirical, contextual, and practical insight into how occupational stress operates within Botswana's private tertiary institutions and how it affects lecturer performance. It adds to the higher education and human resource management literature by showing that occupational stress in academic institutions should be understood as both an individual and organizational phenomenon, requiring responses that address workload, management practices, institutional support, and employee well-being in an integrated manner.

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APPENDICES

Research Instruments

LECTURER QUESTIONNAIRE

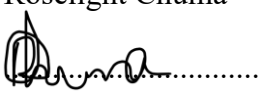
My name is Roselight Chuma Pepukai a student pursuing a PHD in Management at University of Lusaka Zambia. One of the requirements of my studies is to carry out research hence this questionnaire which I am kindly asking you to fill.

My research topic is entitled "**Occupational Stress and Academic Lecturer Performance in Private Tertiary Institutions: Gaborone, Botswana."** I kindly request you to take part in the survey. Your responses will be handled with utmost confidentiality. You are not required to indicate

your name. You are free to stop at any point if you are not comfortable. The questionnaire will only be employed for the purposes of the study. Thank you for sparing your time and your cooperation.

Yours Faithfully

Roselight Chuma



SECTION A: Lecturer General Information

(Tick the corresponding /appropriate answer)

1. What is your age?

a) 21-22
b) 23-25
c) 26-30
d) 31-40
e) 41 and above

2.What is your gender?

a) Female
b) Male

3. Please indicate which category you belong to,

a) Lecturer
b) Management or Supervisory

4.Which of the following Faculties do you belong to at your Institution?

a) Applied Science and health
b) Marketing, Business and Entrepreneurship
c) Communication & Information Science
d) Built Environment and Engineering
e) Science &Technology
f) Tourism and Logistics
g) Accounting and Finance

5.Which part of the modules do you find to be difficulty to monitor in students?

a) Theory related modules
b) Mathematical or financial related modules
c) Practical and Presentations
d) All the Above

6. Which mode of study do you lecture with?

a) Parallel
b) Conventional
c) Block release
d) Distance
e) All the above

7. Why did you choose the Institution you are working for?

a. Social or physical environment of relatives and friends
b. Social or physical environment on campus
c. Reputation of academic programs and image
d. Convenience
e. Last resort following regrets from other Universities and colleges

8. How do responsibilities outside of University affect your success at work?

a. They don't ever affect my success at work
b. They occasionally affect my success at work
c. They often affect my success at work
d. They always affect my success at work

9.How often do you abscond work?

a. Less than 50%
b. 51-74%
c. 75-94%
d. 95-100%
e. Never

10.How academically prepared were you for classes at the beginning of the semester?

a) Not prepared
b) Somewhat prepared, but lacking some important skills or knowledge
c) Prepared

11.How do you regularly prepare for team or group assigned work?

a) Reading the text or assigned readings by group leader
b) Do not like group work because it is boring
c) I don't do anything to prepare

SECTION B: To understand the sources of occupational stress on academic staff in Private Tertiary Institutions in Botswana.

(Tick the correct box/answer that gives you maximum satisfaction).

1. **What factors contribute to your workload?**

a) Teaching responsibilities
b) Research requirements
c) Administrative tasks
d) Other (please specify): _____

2. **How often do you experience conflicts with colleagues or superiors**?

a) Almost never
b) Rarely
c) Sometimes
d) Often

3. **What is your workload like during peak periods (e.g. exams, deadlines)?**

a) Manageable
b) Challenging but manageable
c) Overwhelming

4. **How much control do you have over your work schedule and tasks?**

a) Complete control
b) Some control

c) Little control

d) No control

5. Have you received adequate training and support to perform your job duties?

a) Yes, definitely

b) Somewhat

c) No, not at all

	NOT USED	***BAD***	***VERY BAD***	***NEUTRAL***	***GOOD***	***VERY GOOD***
1. Workload rating scale						
2. College/university resources						
3. University Lecturer support						
4. University /college creativity and innovation						
5. Sports and Recreation department						
6. University/College Clinic						
7. Your own faculty hospitality						
8. Administration &Academic synergy						
9. Computer services and IT support						
10. Does College/University offer Academia teaching preferences						
11. How do you rate, overall, lecturers in your institution						

12. How do you rate, overall, your Institution administration						

Question 16(tick appropriately) *(Please note that SA= strongly agree, A= Agree, N= Neutral, D = Disagree, SD= Strongly Disagree)*

	SA	A	N	DA	SD
1.Did you get a clear picture on the choices of the modules you wanted					
2.Did you get any inspiration in choosing your career					
3.Does University offer extrinsic Motivation					
4.Do University offer assistance in moral, financial and social support					
5.Do you enjoy the library facilities					
6.Are the resources on campus adequate for your work					
7.Do you enjoy classroom infrastructure (furniture, air conditioners, internet ,projectors ,comfortability)					

SECTION C:

Objective 3: To Identify the effects of occupational stress on academic staff performance in Private Tertiary Institutions in Botswana

(Tick the correct box/answer that gives you maximum satisfaction).

1.How often do you feel tired or exhausted during the workday?

a) Almost never

b) Rarely

c) Sometimes

d) Often

2.How often do you make mistakes or experience difficulty concentrating due to stress?

a) Almost never

b) Rarely

c) Sometimes

d) Often

3.How often do you feel motivated to perform your job duties?

a) Almost always

b) Frequently

c) Sometimes

d) Rarely

4.How often do you feel emotionally drained as a result of job stress?

a) Almost always

b) Frequently

c) Sometimes

d) Rarely

Question 4 (tick appropriately*(Please note that SA= strongly agree, A= Agree, N= Neutral, D = Disagree, SD= Strongly Disagree)*

(Please tick the box that gives you maximum satisfaction)	**SA**	**A**	**N**	**DA**	**SD**
1.Are you often tired at work					
2.Are there equal opportunities between male and female lecturers					
3.Do you often feel physical or emotional symptoms of stress					
4.Is lecturer resignation due to stressors					
5.Will your Institution lose irreplaceable talent due to resignations					
6.Does high labour turnover affect your institution					
7.Are the number of lecturers you started with still the same					
8.Does your Institution treat you as valued assets					
9.Does stress normally drain you and affect your performance					

5. Do economic or money issues contribute to high stress level of lecturers?…… if so how?…….....

6. What do you suggest could be done to resolve the above problems on stress?

…… …….....

SECTION D:

Objective 2: To understand the challenges experienced by managers when supervising stressed academic staff in the Private Tertiary Institutions in Botswana

(Tick the correct box/answer that gives you maximum satisfaction).

1.Have you ever discussed your stress levels with your manager?

- Yes
- **No**

2. If yes, did you feel supported by your manager?

- Yes
- No

3.Do you feel comfortable discussing job-related stress with your manager?

- Yes
- No

4.Do you feel your manager understands the demands of your job?

- Yes
- No

5.In your opinion, what can managers do to support employees who are experiencing job-related stress?----------.

SECTION E:

Objective 4: To measure the relationship between occupational stress and academic staff performance in Private Tertiary Institutions in Botswana.

(Tick the correct box/answer that gives you maximum satisfaction).

1.On a scale of 1-10, how much do you believe job stress impacts your job performance? ----------

2.How often do you feel that your job performance is affected by job-related stress?

a) Almost never
b) Rarely
c) Sometimes
d) Often

3.Do you feel that your job performance would improve if your stress levels were reduced?

a) Yes
b) No

4.How often do you miss work due to stress-related illness?

a) Almost never
b) Rarely
c) Sometimes
d) Often

5.How often do you work beyond normal working hours to cope with job demands?

a) Almost never
b) Rarely
c) Sometimes
d) Often

6.Have you experienced job-related stress in the past 12 months?

a) Yes
b) No

7.How often do you experience job-related stress?

a) Almost never
b) Rarely
c) Sometimes
d) Often

8.Do you feel that stress is a common issue among your colleagues?

a) Yes
b) No

9.How would you rate the level of support provided by the institution for employees experiencing job-related stress?

a) Excellent
b) Good
c) Fair
d) Poor

Objective 6: (Tick appropriately on the answer)

To recommend the strategies needed to alleviate occupational stress in the Private Tertiary Institutions.

1.Which of the following stress-management strategies have you used in the past?

a) Exercise
b) Counselling
c) Unpaid time off
d) Half day sporting at work

2.How often do you take breaks during the workday to manage your stress?

a) Never
b) Rarely
c) Sometimes
d) Often
e) Always

3.Have you ever sought help or support for your occupational stress?

a) Yes

b) No

4.If yes, where did you seek help or support for your occupational stress?

a) Human resources department

b) Professional counseling services

c) Friends or family

d) Other (please specify)

5.How do you feel about the support provided by the institution to help manage occupational stress?

a) Very satisfied

b) Satisfied

c) Neutral

d) Dissatisfied

e) Very dissatisfied

6.How do you feel about the workload allocated to you?

a) Very manageable

b) Manageable

c) Neutral

d) Overwhelming

e) Very overwhelming

7.Does your institution have any programs or initiatives in place to support employees dealing with occupational stress?

a) Yes

b) No

8.If yes, please specify what kind of programs or initiatives are in place.

a) Employee assistance programs

b) Stress management training

c) Flexible work arrangements

d) Other (please specify)

9.Have you noticed any changes in your performance due to occupational stress?

a) Yes

b) No

10.If yes, please specify the changes you have noticed.

a) Decreased productivity

b) Decreased quality of work

c) Missed deadlines

d) Other (please specify)

11.How would you rate the level of support from your direct supervisor in dealing with occupational stress?

a) Very supportive

b) Supportive

c) Neutral

d) Not very supportive

- Not at all supportive

12.How would you rate the level of support from your colleagues in dealing with occupational stress?

a) Very supportive

b) Supportive

c) Neutral

d) Not very supportive

e) Not at all supportive

13.What kind of support do you think would be most helpful in managing occupational stress in your workplace?

a) More resources and support from the institution

b) More support from colleagues

c) More support from supervisors

d) More training on stress management techniques

e) Other (please specify)

14.Have you ever taken time off work due to sickness related to occupational stress?

a) Yes

b) No

15.If yes, how many days or weeks of work have you missed due to occupational stress in the past year?

a) Less than 1 week

b) 1-2 weeks

c) 2-4 weeks

d) More than 4 weeks

16. The resources necessary for success in your line of work are

a) Not available

b) Available, but very difficult or inconvenient to use

c) Available, but a bit difficult or inconvenient to use

d) Readily available and easy to use

17. The primary motivation you are pursuing a professional qualification is to:

a) Be financially successful

b) Pursue a career I love

c) Satisfy a personal interest or goal

d) Follow the advice of a parent or guardian

e) Interact socially with other college students

18. What personal factors do you think contribute most high levels of stress at your Institution?.....

19. What motivational strategies do you think Ministry of Education and Tertiary can put in place to avoid stress in Lecturers:

1. …….

2. …….

3. …….

Thank you for your participation. Your responses will be kept confidential and will only be used for research purposes

The end –Thank you

Appendices B

Management Staff Questionnaire

My name is Roselight Chuma Pepukai a student pursuing a PHD in Management at University of Lusaka Zambia. One of the requirements of my studies is to carry out a research hence this questionnaire which I am kindly asking you to fill.

My research topic is entitled "**Occupational Stress and Academic Lecturer Performance in Private Tertiary Institutions: Gaborone Botswana."** I kindly request you to take part in the survey. Your responses will be handled with utmost confidentiality. You are not required to indicate your name. You are free to stop at any point if you are not comfortable. The questionnaire will only be employed for the purposes of the study. Thank you for sparing your time and your cooperation.

Yours Faithfully

Roselight Chuma

.....

SECTION A: To Identify Causes for stress among lecturers

(Tick the correct box that gives you maximum satisfaction).

Question 1(Table below)

	NOT USED	*BAD*	*VERY BAD*	*NEUT RAL*	*GOOD*	*VERY GOOD*
13. Employee representatives committees						
14. Enough library resources for teaching						
15. University staff clinic						
16. Do lecturers have complain platform						
17. Sports and Recreation department						
18. University/college staff affiliations						
19. Faculty or department affiliations						
20. Academic and nonacademic relationship						
21. Computer services department &laboratory resources						
22. Does Institution offer flexi time						
23. How do you rate, overall, all your lecturers						
24. How do you rate, overall, all your administration						

<u>SECTION B: To determine effects of occupational stress:</u>

Question 2 (tick appropriately*(Please note that SA= strongly agree, A= Agree, N= Neutral, D = Disagree, SD= Strongly Disagree)*

(Please tick the box that gives you maximum satisfaction)	**SA**	**A**	**N**	**DA**	**SD**

1.Is burn out affected by stress					
2.Are there equal opportunities available female to male gender					
3.Does lecturer stress affect performance					
4.Does lecturer stress affect students performance					
5.Will your institution lose credibility if one lecturer attrite					
6.Does stress of lecturers affect you as management					
7.Are the number of lecturers still the same for the past five years					
8.Does your institution have an ear to lecturers					
9.Does your institution treat your employees as value assets					

3. Do economic or money issues contribute to high stress ?…… if so how?…….....

4. What do you suggest could be done to resolve the above problems on stress?

9. Does your Institution provide enough non-financial incentives ……..,if so how many have benefitted this semester……..,kindly list some of them…….

10. What personal factors do you think contribute most to high level of stress among lecturers?.....

11. What motivational strategies do you think your institution can put in place to curb stress

1. ……

2. ……

3. ……

12. How effective is your relationship in terms of employment relations?.....,if so what such committees or unions done……..

Management and Online Questionnaire Google form

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSdn5KkzOpbugGdwW59m9kPaU-LLSnzZhuhwYJv-BwrVNs6oHQ/viewform

Occupational Stress and Academic Lecturer Performance in Private Tertiary Institutions: Gaborone Botswana Questionnaire.

Management Staff Questionnaire

My name is Roselight Chuma Pepukai a student pursuing a PHD in Management at University of Lusaka Zambia. One of the requirements of my studies is to carry out research hence this questionnaire which I am kindly asking you to fill Section A, B and C of this interview guide, or I can fill for you as we discuss depending on your flexibility and availability to allow for interview session. Fill free to participate as permission has been granted from the Ministry of Higher Education, MoHE 1/18/1(7)

My research topic is entitled "**Occupational Stress and Academic Lecturer Performance in Private Tertiary Institutions: Gaborone Botswana."** I kindly request you to take part in the survey. Your responses will be handled with utmost confidentiality. You are not required to indicate your name. You are free to stop at any point if you are not comfortable. The questionnaire will only be employed for the purposes of the study. Thank you for sparing your time and your cooperation.

Yours Faithfully

Roselight Chuma Pepukai

.....

Authorization/Permission Letters

SCHOOL OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES

Plot No. 37413, Off Alick Nkhata Mass Media. P. O Box 36711, Lusaka.

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E-mail:unilus@zamnet.zm,ictar@zamnet.zm

UNILUS-RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE

Ref No.: FWA00033228-00203/25

Date: 31st March 2025

STUDENT NAME: ROSELIGHT CHUMA PEPUKAI

OCCUPATIONAL STRESS AND ACADEMIC LECTURER PERFORMANCE IN PRIVATE TERTIARY INSTITUTIONS: GABORONE, BOTSWANA.

The above research was submitted to the research ethics committee for review. The study has no major ethical problems and is approved subject to the following:

1. The study cannot be changed without express permission of the UNILUS research ethics committee.

2. Approval from the necessary authority should be sought.

Congratulations and the committee wishes you success in your work.



Professor Kasonde Bowa
MSc(Glasgow),M.Med(UNZA),FRCS(Glasgow),FACS,FCS,DPH(LSTMH),MPH(UCL)
Chairman- UNILUS REC
Professor of Urology and Consultant Urologist Deputy Vice-
Chancellor – Research and Innovation
Executive Dean - School of Medicine and Health Sciences

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REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA

MINISTRY OF HIGHER EDUCATION

PRIVATE BAG 00517
GABORONE, BOTSWANA

REF: MoHE 1/18/1 I (7)

2nd May 2025

Roselight Chuma Pepukai
P.O. Box 2822
Gaborone

Dear **Ms Pepukai**

REQUEST FOR RESEARCH PERMIT

Reference is made to your letter dated **28th April 2025**, of which you were requesting for research permit.

Kindly be informed that your request has been acceded to. However, you are required to consider the attached comments prior to carrying out your research study.

Additionally, you are advised to deposit a copy of your research findings with the Ministry of Higher Education within two (2) months of publication.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully

O. Rankosha
For/PERMANENT SECRETARY

Table1.1 Private Tertiary Institutions of higher education learning in Botswana

Tertiary Name	Founded date
Botho University	1997
Gaborone University College of Law(GUC)	2009
New Era College	2006
Ba Isago University	2006
London College of International. Studies	1990
ABM University College	1990
Imperial School of Business and Science	2003
Boitekanelo College	2007
Logan Business College	2017
Mega Size College	1993
Limkokwing University of Creative Technology	2007
Gaborone Institute of Professional Studies GIPS	2006
Botswana Open University	2017
Arthur Portland	2015

Source: Field source(marketingcomms@hrdc.org.bw)

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