Occupational Stress Intervention and Performance of Academic Staff in Selected Universities in Kenya

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ABSTRACT

The performance of university academic staff has become an issue of concern as different governments continue to push for quality higher education globally. It is expected that universities contribute to national development by offering first-class professionals in various fields. This study sought to investigate the effect of occupational stress interventions on the performance of academic staff in selected public universities. The study was guided by: the person-environment fit theory, cognitive dissonance theory as well as broaden and build theory. Moreover, the study was anchored on the philosophical approach of positivism. The study adopted an explanatory design and a cross-sectional survey. Inferential and descriptive statistics were then used to analyze the data. Descriptive statistics were given in terms of percentages, frequencies, and measures of central tendency. Inferential statistics were used to gauge the nature and extent of relationships between variables by using regression analysis at a 0.05 level of significance. The findings show a positive and significant relationship between occupational stress intervention and the performance of academic staff.

Key Words: *Performance of university academic staff, occupational stress interventions, social primary occupational interventions, secondary occupational intervention, tertiary occupational interventions*

I. BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Academic staff performance in universities has become an issue of concern as different governments continue to push for quality higher education globally. Moreover, universities have now adopted a consumerism approach where the lecturer is seen as a performer, and the student is seen as a consumer. Management of the lecturer's performance which has often been characterized by role ambiguity is of concern if the universities are to reach their mandate. When measuring the performance of academic staff in universities, their core duties and responsibilities are considered. Based on these, the key performance indicators (KPIs) for lecturers include teaching and supervision, research and innovation, consultancy, and services (Molefe, 2010; Wong & Chu, 2018; Suryaman, 2018).

Previously, the teaching profession was attractive due to light workloads, tenure, and other perks, such as overseas trips to conferences. However, new studies have revealed that university teaching staff experience high-stress levels, qualifying them among the most stressed professionals. The strain is the product of the ever-increasing workload, the pressure to publish papers, and the fact that most lecturers are now untenured (Suryaman, 2018). Studies carried out in Europe have revealed that some of the causes of occupational stress among academic staff include time constraints, work overload, inadequate resources and funding, insufficient recognition, inadequate salary, inadequate participation in management, and changing job roles (Dandona, 2014).

According to Mwenda, Kiffleman, and Kimani (2019), faculty members in Kenyan universities are not exempt from occupational stress. There have been sporadic changes in universities in the recent past, and these changes have increased the job demands on lecturers, which causes a lot of strain. For instance, an academic year was split into two semesters, giving the lecturers enough time to engage in research and service. Today, the academic year is divided into three semesters affecting the lecturers' work-life balance and causing strain.

According to Holman, Johnson, and O'Connor (2018), occupational stress interventions are several techniques that organizations apply to advance individual employee well-being and reduce stress by dealing with the cause of the

stress (preventing) or reducing the impact of the individual's stress (coping) or rehabilitating an individual who has already been affected by stress. Occupational stress can be defined as the progressive strain that an employee experiences due to conditions, responsibilities, environment, and other workplace conditions (Nielson & Nielson, 2017).

Holman and O'Connor (2018) used a typology to classify stress management interventions into three groups: primary, secondary and tertiary interventions. In addition to the classification, they assert that the primary, secondary, and tertiary interventions can either be individual or organizational. Primary interventions are preventive and aim at preventing employees from getting stressed in the first place. Such interventions are proactively avoiding the emergence of harmful effects. They are also mainly applied at the organizational instead of the individual employee level. They are designed to mitigate management, work design, and organizations employees perceive as stressors. They include but are not limited to management training, job redesign, pre-employment medical exam, work-life balance, and increasing worker autonomy. Primary interventions at an individual level include pre-employment medical examination and selection and assessment. They consist of management training, working schedule, job redesign, and mentoring at the organizational level (Nielson & Nielson, 2017).

Secondary interventions targeted at reducing the severity of stress at the individual level include mindfulness training, relaxation techniques, psychosocial intervention, health promotion, and personal and interpersonal skills training. Intervention includes improving communication and decision-making, career planning, coaching, and conflict management at the organizational level. At the tertiary level, individual interventions include post-traumatic stress assistance, counseling, employee assistance programs (EAPs), and disability management (Pignata *et al*., 2017). At the organizational level, tertiary interventions include outplacement and vocational rehabilitation.

Tertiary interventions are meant for rehabilitating people who are already suffering from stress through counseling programs and consulting mental health professionals. They include but are not limited to employee assistance programs, recreational activities, disability management, and vocational rehabilitation (Ongori & Agolla, 2016).

This study adopted a composite of individual and organizational level intervention but categorized them into primary, secondary, and tertiary levels. Most of the empirical studies previously conducted in this area applied randomized control trials in measuring the impact of stress intervention on an individual. In randomized control trials, employees are deliberately subjected to occupational stress interventions, and their stress levels are measured before and after the interventions through self-reporting (Pignata *et al*., 2017, Holman & O'Connor, 2018). This study on the other hand applied cross-sectional research design where academic staff self-reported on the effect of existing occupational stress interventions on their performance.

1.1 Research Problem

It is expected that university institutions contribute to national development by offering first-class professionals in various fields. The academic staff in universities is critical in achieving this goal as they have been central in accomplishing these institutions' core mandates, including teaching and supervision, research and innovation, service, and consultancy. However, Kenyan Universities face some problems that act as barriers to realizing these goals (Mbirithi, 2013; Muindi, Obonyo & Pokhariyal, 2018; Mwenda, Kifleman & Kimani, 2019).

The inadequacies in Kenyan public universities such as high lecturer-to-student ratio, low funding, and high workloads coupled with pressure from the university to publish and demands from their personal lives, burden the lecturers, resulting in occupational stress that is suggested to harm how they execute their tasks (Mwenda, Kifleman & Kimani, 2019). A study carried out by Bowen, Rose, and Pilkilton (2016) showed that university stress levels had become a source of concern in universities in different countries around the globe. Further, in their study, Leiyan and Kamaara (2017) observed that 84.3% of lecturers in JKUAT reported having experienced work stress, which is relatively high and needs to be addressed.

Extant literature shows that several studies have been done to determine how occupational stress intervention is related to how employees execute their tasks in different industries and countries worldwide. Hua and Dai (2015) researched the effectiveness of workplace interventions based on six types of interventions. The study's findings were that stress interventions reduce employees' stress and improve individual employee effectiveness. The study applied a longitudinal design and used secondary data obtained from 12 developed countries. The findings from the survey cannot be generalized to the Kenyan context since it is a developing country, unlike the target population of this study. This study expanded on Hua and Dai (2015) analysis by including more OSI at primary and tertiary levels and the individual and organizational levels. The applied OSIs included leadership development, job redesign, pre-employment medical exam, health promotion exercise, conflict management, career planning, employee assistance programs, disability management, and vocational rehabilitation. Teaching and supervision, research and innovation,

and consultancy and service were applied as performance indicators None of the studies reviewed had considered the effect of occupational stress interventions on academic staff performance in selected universities in Kenya. Thus, this study sought to fill this gap by answering the study question: What is the effect of primary occupational stress interventions on the performance of academic staff in the context of selected public universities in Kenya?

1.2 Objectives

i. To determine the effect of primary occupational stress interventions on the performance of academic staff in selected public universities in Kenya
ii. To establish the impact of secondary occupational stress interventions on the performance of academic staff in selected public universities in Kenya
iii. To determine the effect of tertiary occupational stress interventions on the performance of academic staff in selected public universities in Kenya

1.3 Research Hypothesis

H_{01} There is no significant relationship between primary occupational stress interventions and the performance of academic staff in selected public universities in Kenya
H_{02} There is no significant relationship between secondary occupational stress interventions and the performance of academic staff in selected public universities in Kenya
H_{03} There is no significant relationship between tertiary occupational stress interventions and the performance of academic staff in selected public universities in Kenya

II. METHODOLOGY

The study targeted public universities, which formed the unit of analysis. The staff category focused on the teaching staff ranging from the tutorial fellows to the professors. The teaching staff was selected because they are responsible for carrying out the universities' primary mandate of teaching, supervision, research, publication, service, and consultancy. The study adopted a purposive sampling design in selecting three public universities out of the 31 chartered public universities in Kenya. Due to time and budget limitations, a sample of academic staff was selected from three public universities of the existing 31 chartered public universities. The study used multistage sampling. The first stage involved purposefully selecting public universities where three universities, i.e., Maseno University, Kenyatta University, and Egerton University, were established.

Table 1
Teaching Staff of Selected Universities

University	Targeted Population	Sample
Kenyatta University	1500	158
Maseno	846	90
Egerton University	931	98
Totals	**3277**	**346**

Secondary data was collected from data collected by other people for other purposes. The secondary data sources include peer-reviewed journal articles, textbooks, published theses, and reports. Secondary data was used in a study to validate the primary data in selecting variables, developing data collection instruments, and discussing the findings. Primary data was collected through questionnaires which were self-administered using a drop-and-pick method.

III. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Primary occupational stress interventions were measured in leadership development, job redesign, and work-life balance initiative. The measures of dispersion for every indicator are given and deliberated below. The responses were provided on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 meant strongly disagree, and 5 strongly agree.

Table 2
Descriptive Statistics for Primary Occupational Stress Interventions and Academic Staff Performance

Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	Std Dev
My university funds leadership development seminars	9.1%	9.6%	22.8%	50.2%	8.2%	3.39	1.07
The university's leadership development program is really important to me	8.7%	12.8%	31.5%	30.1%	16.9%	3.34	1.16
My leadership development needs are met by the existing leadership development programs.	6.8%	11.4%	18.7%	46.6%	16.4%	3.54	1.11
The present job design meets my needs.	5.9%	10.0%	16.0%	47.0%	21.0%	3.67	1.10
I deem job design exceedingly important to me.	4.6%	13.7%	22.8%	41.6%	17.4%	3.53	1.07
In my business, I believe work-life balance programs are vital to job effectiveness.	4.6%	19.6%	34.2%	32.0%	9.6%	3.22	1.02
Work-life balance initiatives already in place are appropriate.	5.5%	11.9%	37.9%	26.0%	18.7%	3.41	1.09
My employer's existing work-life balance programs are appropriate.	7.3%	8.7%	28.8%	45.7%	9.6%	3.42	1.03
Overall Mean Score						3.44	

The table above shows item one, leadership development, has an aggregate score of 3.42 which can be rounded down to a Likert scale score of 3 (somewhat agree). This implies that lecturers in the selected universities concur on the importance and usefulness of leadership development programs offered by the respective universities. The universities have adequate leadership development programs with a score of 3.54, which can be rounded up to a Likert score of 4 (agree) with a low predictable error of 1.12. The low predictable error in all the indicators shows that the responses are populated around the collective mean; hence the value obtained is stable, and a good estimator of the actual mean in the population. This implies the respondents feel that their respective universities have adequate leadership development programs.

Job design was measured by the next two items had an aggregate score of 3.62, rounded down to a Likert score of 4 (agree) with an SD of 1.04. The low standard deviation in all the indicators shows that the responses are populated around the collective mean; hence the value obtained is stable, and a good estimator of the actual mean in the population. This means that most respondents agree on the criticality and adequacy of job design in their institutions. Most of the respondents also cite that the job design at the respective institution is adequate, with a score of 3.66.

The work-life balance initiative was measured by the next three items and had the lowest score with an aggregate score of 3.35, which translates to a score of 3(somewhat agree) on the Likert scale with a mean standard SD of 1.07. The individual and aggregate standard deviations were low. The low standard deviation shows limited variability in the responses since they are clustered around the mean. The cumulative mean is thus a reliable and stable reckoner. Most respondents felt that the university's work-life initiatives were critical, relevant, and adequate, denoted by a score of 3.22, 3.41, and 3.42, correspondingly.

The aggregate average mean score for primary interventions is 3.44. This is approximately 3 (somewhat agree). The aggregate standard deviation is 1.07 showing a relatively low variability in the response, meaning that most respondents feel that the primary interventions applied by the universities are adequate and critical to job performance. Among the indicators of primary intervention, job design has the highest score at 3.62, meaning that university lecturers view job design as an essential primary occupational intervention. The work-life initiative scored the least with 3.35, implying that the university's work-life balance was somewhat critical, adequate, or relevant to the respondents. The low standard deviation in all the indicators shows that the feedback is clustered about the cumulative mean; hence the value obtained is stable, and a good estimator of the actual mean in the population. Since the respondents feel that primary occupational stress interventions are critical to job performance, universities should consider enhancing the existing primary interventions for better academic staff performance.

These findings supported those of Dadona, (2014) who argued that primary interventions are preventive and aim at preventing employees from getting stressed in the first place. They include leadership development, job redesign, pre-employment medical exam, and work-life balance. Similarly, the finding agreed with Pignata, Boyd, Winefield, and Provis (2017) that concluded that some of the interventions to reduce occupational stress include changing work and job-related roles (job redesign), new departmental heads or supervisors, organizational level interventions that include leadership development, counseling services, family-friendly policies, personal resources and policies, and increased staffing systems.

Secondary occupational stress interventions were investigated using health promotion exercises, conflict management, and career planning as indicators. The measures of dispersion for individual indicators are given and deliberated below. The responses were provided on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means strongly disagree, and 5 strongly agrees.

Table 3

Secondary Occupational Stress Interventions and Academic Staff Performance

Statement	SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	Std Dev
Exercises for health promotion are sponsored by my university	13.2%	17.8%	33.3%	27.9%	7.8%	2.99	1.14
Exercises that promote health are vital to me	5.5%	10.0%	22.8%	43.8%	17.8%	3.58	1.06
At the university, there are suitable health promotion exercise programs	5.0%	33.3%	27.9%	19.6%	14.2%	3.05	1.14
The university's current dispute-resolution techniques are adequate	5.0%	33.8%	28.3%	27.4%	5.5%	2.95	1.02
For me, conflict resolution is critical	1.4%	12.8%	20.1%	39.7%	26.0%	3.76	1.02
My university provides funding for career preparation	16.%	14.6%	32.4%	32.9%	4.1%	2.95	1.13
The current career planning programs are sufficient	7.8%	16.0%	40.2%	20.5%	15.5%	3.20	1.12
The university's career preparation programs are beneficial to me	6.4%	11.9%	28.3%	42.5%	11.0%	3.40	1.04
Overall mean score						3.23	1.09

From the table above, the aggregate score for health promotion exercise which was gauged by the first three items is 3.21 with a standard deviation of 1.11. When rounded up, the score is around 3. The individual and aggregate standard deviations were low. The low standard deviation shows limited variability in the responses since it is concentrated on the mean. The aggregate mean score is thus a reliable and stable predictor. A Likert score of 3 implies that the respondents agree that health promotion exercise is a necessary intervention and that the existing health promotion offered by the various universities is relevant Universities should that continue offering health promotion exercises and expand them for better performance outcomes.

The aggregate score for conflict management which was measured by the next two items was 3.22, with a mean prediction error of 1.06. The individual and aggregate standard deviations were low. The low standard deviation shows limited variability in the responses since they are concentrated around the mean. The cumulative mean is thus a reliable and stable reckoner. This implies that conflict management is critical to the employee. The universities should thus consider employing effective conflict management strategies since they affect the employee's performance.

Career planning has a mean and predictable error of 3.18 and 1.10, correspondingly. It can be inferred that the respondents agree that career planning is adequate and relevant among the three universities since the mean corresponds to a Likert value of 3 that they agree that career planning is adequate and relevant. This implies that universities should continue with the existing career planning strategies and enhance them for better performance.

The cumulative score and the prediction error for secondary OSI are 3.235. The overall mean score is approximately 3 on the 5-point Likert scale, which implies that the respondents somewhat agree that the occupational stress interventions offered by the institutions are adequate and relevant. The individual and aggregate standard deviations were low. The low standard deviation shows limited variability in the responses since they are concentrated around the mean. The total mean score is thus a reliable and stable estimator. Since the existing occupational stress interventions

are relevant, universities should continue offering the interventions and even expand them for better performance outcomes.

The finding of this study supported Siengthai and Pila-Ngarm (2016) who examined job redesign's impact on employee satisfaction and productivity in two industries in Thailand and established that job remodeling is substantially and inversely correlated to the ability to execute tasks during the initial implementation stage. The study outcome was that job satisfaction is substantially related to job performance. They concluded that the organization should promote employee satisfaction during job redesign to improve performance. As such, job redesign should only be conducted if it improves employee satisfaction.

3.1 Tertiary Occupational Stress Interventions and Academic Staff Performance

Tertiary occupational stress interventions were investigated using employee assistance programs, disability management, and vocational rehabilitation as indicators. The measures of dispersion for individual indicators are given and deliberated below. The responses were provided on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 means strongly disagree, and 5 strongly agrees.

Table 4

Tertiary Occupational Stress Interventions and academic staff performance

Statements	SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	Std Dev
The importance of an employee support program to work success cannot be overstated	1.40%	9.60%	19.60%	58.90%	10.50%	3.68	0.84
The university's existing EAP offerings are adequate	5.00%	15.10%	21.90%	45.20%	12.80%	3.46	1.05
For me, disability management is critical	8.20%	10.00%	20.50%	42.50%	18.70%	3.53	1.15
My university's disability management is crucial to work success	9.10%	15.10%	21.00%	36.50%	18.30%	3.40	1.21
Existing vocational rehabilitation programs are adequate in my opinion	2.70%	21.00%	36.50%	26.50%	13.20%	3.26	1.02
The university's vocational rehabilitation programs are beneficial	4.60%	15.10%	25.60%	41.10%	13.70%	3.44	1.05
Overall Mean Score						3.46	1.05

From the table above, the aggregate score for the employee assistance program that is measured by the first two items is 3.57, which can be rounded up to 4 on the 5-point Likert scale, which implies that the employees agree on the adequacy and criticality of employee assistance programs offered at the university. The items have a low standard deviation of 0.84 and 1.054 respectively. This shows that is a relatively low variability in the response, meaning that most respondents feel that the employee assistance programs applied by the universities are adequate and critical to job performance.

The aggregate means score for disability management that was measured by the next two items was 3.47, indicating that the respondents agreed on the importance of disability management interventions in various institutions. The standard deviation of the two items is 1.15 and 1.209 respectively showing a relatively low variability in the response, meaning that most respondents felt that the disability management interventions applied by the universities were adequate and critical to job performance.

Vocational rehabilitation, the third indicator of tertiary intervention, has an aggregate mean score of 3.35 and a mean of 1.01. This is equivalent to an aggregate score of 3 on the 5-point Likert scale, which implies that the respondents agreed on the relevance and importance of vocational rehabilitation to performance. Moreover, the low cluster predictable error shows that the aggregate means obtained a dependable predictor. The standard deviations of the two items are 1.024 and 1.049 respectively showing a relatively low variability in the response, meaning that most respondents feel that the vocational rehabilitation interventions applied by the universities are adequate and critical to job performance.

The average aggregate mean score for tertiary occupational stress was 3.46. The overall mean score is approximately 3 on the 5-point Likert scale, which implies that the respondents somewhat agree that the tertiary occupational stress interventions offered by the institutions are adequate, critical, and relevant to the respondents. The individual and

aggregate standard deviations were low. The low standard deviation shows limited variability in the responses since they are clustered around the mean. The cumulative mean score is thus a reliable and stable predictor. Following the relevance of the existing tertiary occupational stress intervention, universities should continue offering the interventions and even expand them for better performance outcomes.

The finding of this study agreed with Hua and Dai (2015) who concluded that OSI could significantly improve occupational stress and desirable work outcomes. However, the interventions' effectiveness depended on the subject's level of stress before the intervention. The intervention's effectiveness was also higher at the personal level than at the corporate level. The findings further concurred with Kihara and Mugambi's (2018) study that concluded that all these variables substantially and positively correspond to staff performance. However, organizations should increase the awareness of occupational stress interventions among employees.

IV. REGRESSION RESULTS FOR THE HYPOTHESIS

The first study objective sought to determine the effect of primary occupational stress interventions on the performance of academic staff in selected public universities in Kenya. A null hypothesis H_{O1} was formulated with the assumption that there is no relationship between primary occupational stress interventions and academic staff performance in selected public universities in Kenya.

The second objective sought to establish the effect of secondary occupational stress interventions on the performance of academic staff in selected public universities in Kenya. A null hypothesis of H_{O2} was formulated with the assumption of no relationship between secondary occupational stress interventions and the performance of academic staff in selected public universities in Kenya.

The third objective sought to establish the effect of tertiary occupational stress interventions on the performance of academic staff in selected public universities in Kenya. A null hypothesis of H_{O2} was formulated with the assumption of no relationship between tertiary occupational stress interventions and the performance of academic staff in selected public universities in Kenya.

Hypothesis testing was done by regression primary, secondary and tertiary occupational stress interventions against performance, as shown below.

Table 6

Regression Results for Direct Relationship

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients			95.0% Confidence Interval for B	
	B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.	Lower Bound	Upper Bound
(Constant)	0.949	0.137		6.943	0.000	0.68	1.218
Primary Interventions	0.168	0.043	0.204	3.934	0.000	0.084	0.252
Secondary Interventions	0.184	0.054	0.209	3.428	0.001	0.078	0.29
Tertiary Interventions	0.457	0.054	0.502	8.393	0.000	0.35	0.565

ANOVA		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	56.927	3	18.976	141.82	.000b
	Residual	28.767	215	0.134		
	Total	85.694	218			

Model Summary	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. The error in the Estimate
1	.815a	0.664	0.66	0.36579

a Dependent Variable: Staff Performance

b Predictors: (Constant), Tertiary Interventions, Primary Interventions, Secondary Interventions

The regression model for the direct relationship estimated in the table above can be presented below:
*Performance of academic staff = 0.949+ (0.168 * primary occupational stress intervention) + (0.184 * secondary occupational stress interventions) + (0.457 *tertiary stress interventions)*

H_{O1} There is no relationship between primary occupational stress interventions and the performance of academic staff in selected public universities in Kenya

From the table above, the coefficient for primary intervention was 0.168, which implies that an increase in primary occupational stress interventions by one unit would increase academic staff performance by 16.8% in a direct relationship between the two variables. The t-value for this relation and the P-value and sig-value were 3.394 and 0.000, respectively. Therefore, at a P <0.005 level of significance, the null hypothesis means that primary occupational interventions significantly affect the performance of academic staff. The study thus concludes that there is a significant positive association between primary occupational stress interventions and academic staff performance in selected public universities in Kenya.

The conclusion that primary occupational intervention positively impacts performance is consistent with previous studies (Hua & Dai 2015; Ongori & Ogolla, 2016; Siengthai & Pila-Ngarm, 2016; Pignata, Boyd, Winefield, and Provis, 2017; Kihara & Mugambi, 2018). The implication is that the primary interventions offered in the selected public universities are relevant to academic staff. Hua *et al.* (2015) posit that occupational stress interventions could significantly reduce depressive symptoms, improve occupational stress, and impact work-related outcomes. Further, when employees can effectively control their stress, their performance and commitment levels are greatly enhanced (Soegoto & Narimawati, 2018).

The findings also agree with the cognitive dissonance theory, which proposes that inconsistencies in individuals' beliefs, ethics, and values cause stress among employees, and employees may engage in negative behavior such as a high level of absenteeism, sabotage, and aggression to regain harmony. Organizations can minimize the occurrence of cognitive dissonance by applying primary occupational stress interventions such as a pre-employment medical exam, leadership development, and job redesign. These interventions are believed to remove dissonance, promote positive behavior, and improve employee performance.

H_{O2} There is no relationship between secondary occupational stress interventions and the performance of academic staff in selected public universities in Kenya

From the table above, the coefficient for secondary intervention is 0.184, which implies that an increase in secondary occupational stress interventions by one unit would increase academic staff performance by 18.4% in a direct relationship between the two variables. The t-value for this relation and the P-value and sig-value were 3.428 and 0.001, respectively. Therefore, at a P <0.005 level of significance, the null hypothesis means that secondary occupational interventions significantly affect the performance of academic staff. The study thus concludes that there is a significant positive association between secondary occupational stress interventions and academic staff performance in selected public universities in Kenya.

The findings from this study are consistent with results from prior studies that secondary occupational stress interventions promote performance (Pignata, Boyd, Winefield, and Provis, 2017). Pignata, Boyd, Winefield, and Provis (2017) conducted a study to understand employee perception of stress reduction interventions employed in three Australian universities. The study concluded that some of the interventions to reduce occupational stress include changing work and job-related roles (job redesign), new departmental heads or supervisors, organizational-level interventions that include leadership development, counseling services, family-friendly policies, personal resources and policies, and increased staffing systems (Pignata, Boyd, Winefield & Provis, 2017).

A study by Siengthai and Pila-Ngarm (2016) examined job redesign's impact on employee satisfaction and productivity in two industries in Thailand: The banking industry and the hotel resort industry. The findings were that redesigning the job is meaningfully and inversely correlated to task execution at the initial implementation stage. The finding from the research study was that work satisfaction is notably related to job performance (Kiragu & Marwa, 2022). They concluded that the organization should promote employee satisfaction during job redesign to improve performance. Hua and Dai (2015) carried out a systematic review of OSI's effects in the workplace abroad. The study was not restricted to any industry. The interventions included cognitive-behavior therapy, relaxation techniques, exercise, interventions aimed at the organization (job redesign, leadership development), combined interventions, and multi-level interventions. They concluded that OSI could significantly improve occupational stress and desirable work outcomes. However, the interventions' effectiveness depended on the subject's level of stress before the intervention. The effectiveness of the interventions was also higher when based on individuals than on the organization. The study

recommendation for the focus of prospective studies was on cost-benefit analysis of the interventions and used a broad-based methodology.

The person-environment theory anchored the findings on the second hypothesis. Lack of fit between an individual and their environment negatively affects performance. Secondary occupational stress interventions such as health promotion exercises, conflict management, and career planning eradicate the misfits between the individual and their environment by equipping them with the abilities, skills, and resources they need to perform well. Such fit promotes the optimal performance of the employee.

H_{O3} There is no relationship between tertiary occupational stress interventions and the performance of academic staff in selected public universities in Kenya

From the table above, the coefficient for tertiary intervention is 0.457, which implies that an increase in primary occupational stress interventions by one unit would increase academic staff performance by 45.7% in a direct relationship between the two variables. The t-value for this relation and the P-value and sig value were 8.393 and 0.000, respectively. Therefore, at a P <0.005 level of significance, the null hypothesis means that tertiary occupational interventions significantly affect the performance of academic staff. The study thus concludes a significant positive association between tertiary occupational stress interventions and the performance of academic staff in selected public universities in Kenya. The findings from this study are consistent with results from prior studies that tertiary occupational stress interventions promote performance (Ongori & Ogolla, 2016; Siengthai & Pila-Ngarm, 2016; Pignata et al., 2017; Kihara & Mugambi, 2018). Kihara and Mugambi (2018) researched the impact of the strategies used to manage stress on the task execution of Kenyan public servants. Stress management strategies included relaxation techniques, flexi-time, meditation, and counseling. The study concluded that all these variables are significantly positively correlated to employee performance. This aligns partially with a study by Kinuthia and Kiragu (2022) that underlines the importance of time in employee satisfaction and performance.

However, organizations should increase the awareness of occupational stress interventions among employees.

The study of this hypothesis was also anchored by the theory of person-environment fit precisely person job-fit. According to this theory, the employees' perceptions of their work environment and the interaction between the employee and their environment affect their performance. When an organization makes an effort to provide employee assistance programs, vocational rehabilitation services, and strategies to manage disabilities, the employee perceives that the employer has their best interest at heart and honors their psychological contract. Moreover, tertiary occupational stress interventions also equip the employees with the abilities and resources to perform various tasks optimizing their performance. Given the positive impact of occupational stress interventions on academic staff performance in Kenyan public universities, the universities should consider implementing more interventions to promote even more excellent lecturer performance.

V. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

From the findings in the current study, it can be concluded that occupational stress interventions have a direct effect on the performance of academic staff. Consequently, HR managers should consider implementing more occupational stress interventions at the primary level.

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