

INFLUENCE OF WORKPLACE BULLYING, ROLE OVERLOAD, AND COPING STRATEGIES ON WORKPLACE STRESS AMONG HOTEL WORKERS IN ABUJA MUNICIPAL AREA COUNCIL

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ABSTRACT

Workplace stress has become a serious issue in service-oriented organisations such as hotels, where employees are expected to satisfy customers while working under demanding conditions. This study examined the influence of workplace bullying, role overload, and coping strategies on workplace stress among hotel workers in Abuja Municipal Area Council. The study adopted a survey research design. The population comprised male and female hotel workers from different departments in selected hotels within Abuja Municipal Area Council. A sample of 384 respondents was determined using the Cochran formula. Five hotels were purposively selected, and participants were chosen through convenience sampling. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire containing standardized instruments. Three hypothesis were postulated and tested using regression analysis. Findings indicate that dimensions of workplace bullying jointly have a significant influence on workplace stress ($R^2 = .082$, $p < .001$), with work-related bullying being a significant predictor ($\beta = .222$, $p < .01$), while person-related bullying had no significant influence ($p > .05$). Role overload was also found to significantly influence workplace stress ($R^2 = .041$, $p = .001$). Collectively, coping strategies significantly influenced stress ($R^2 = .041$, $p = .001$); problem-focused coping negatively influences stress ($\beta = -.197$, $p < .01$), dysfunctional coping positively influences it ($\beta = .182$, $p < .01$), while emotion-focused coping showed no significant influence ($\beta = .017$, $p > .05$). The study concluded that bullying, excessive workload, and coping styles are significant determinants of stress among hotel workers. Recommended include that, hotel management should distribute tasks fairly, create realistic work schedules, and employ more staff where necessary to reduce excessive workload.

Introduction

The hospitality industry is characterized by a fast paced and demanding work environment in which employees are often required to respond quickly to changing customer needs while maintaining high standards of service. These conditions can expose hotel workers to considerable occupational stress. Workplace stress occurs when employees perceive that the demands placed on them exceed their ability or available resources to meet those demands, with possible consequences for both employee well being and organizational performance (Souza et al., 2018). In customer facing service organizations such as hotels, prolonged exposure to stressful working conditions may manifest in physical and psychological symptoms and may contribute to absenteeism, reduced morale, poor job performance, and customer dissatisfaction (Sampson & Akyeampong, 2014).

The experience of workplace stress among hotel workers is unlikely to result from a single workplace condition. Rather, it may emerge from the interaction between demanding work conditions and the resources available to employees to manage them. Workplace bullying, role overload, and coping strategies are therefore important factors to consider when examining stress among hotel employees. Workplace bullying refers to repeated exposure to negative acts or mistreatment by one or more individuals over a period of time, particularly where the targeted employee finds it difficult to defend himself or herself (Einarsen et al., 2020). It can take different forms, including assigning unreasonable deadlines, excessive workloads,

meaningless tasks, social exclusion, insulting remarks, persistent criticism, or other behaviours that attack an employee's dignity and personal worth. Continued exposure to such behaviours can undermine psychological well being and contribute to anxiety, emotional exhaustion, and physical complaints (Conway et al., 2021; Høgh et al., 2021).

Another important source of workplace stress is role overload. Role overload occurs when employees are faced with more responsibilities than they can reasonably accomplish within the time, energy, and resources available to them (Srivastava, 2025). Hotel employees may be particularly vulnerable to role overload because hotel operations often involve fluctuating guest numbers, overlapping responsibilities, demanding customers, staff shortages, and extended working hours (Elshaer et al., 2024). Employees may therefore be required to perform several tasks simultaneously while maintaining expected standards of customer service. The JD R Model also provides a strong basis for understanding the relationship between role overload and workplace stress. When job demands remain high over time, employees are required to invest increasing amounts of physical and psychological energy to meet those demands. Where available job resources are insufficient, this sustained effort may result in fatigue, strain, and other indicators of psychological stress (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017).

However, employees exposed to similar workplace demands may not experience or respond to stress in exactly the same way. One factor that may account for these differences is coping. Coping refers to the cognitive and behavioural efforts individuals use to manage internal and external demands that are perceived as stressful (Folkman & Moskowitz, 2004). Lazarus and Folkman (1984) distinguish between problem focused coping, which involves taking direct action to address or resolve a stressful situation, and emotion focused coping, which involves efforts to regulate the emotional responses associated with the stressor. Other approaches to coping may be considered dysfunctional or maladaptive when they do not effectively address the source of stress and may instead maintain or intensify psychological difficulties. The Transactional Model of Stress and Coping provides a useful framework for understanding the role of coping in workplace stress. According to Lazarus and Folkman (1984), stress does not result simply from the presence of an environmental demand. Rather, it develops through an ongoing transaction between the individual and the environment, particularly through the individual's appraisal of the situation and perceived ability to cope with it. Employees who perceive workplace demands as manageable and possess effective coping resources may experience less psychological strain, whereas employees who perceive demands as overwhelming or rely on ineffective coping responses may experience greater stress. In this sense, problem focused, emotion focused, and dysfunctional coping may be associated with different experiences of workplace stress.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The growth and increasing demands of the hospitality sector in Abuja, Federal Capital Territory, have placed considerable pressure on hotel workers to provide efficient and satisfactory services to diverse categories of customers. Hotel employees may be expected to work for extended periods, handle fluctuating customer demands, perform multiple tasks, and maintain service standards even when organizational resources are limited. These conditions may increase their vulnerability to workplace stress.

Workplace bullying may further aggravate this situation by exposing employees to repeated negative behaviours from colleagues or supervisors, while role overload may make employees feel unable to meet the demands associated with their jobs. At the same time, the coping strategies adopted by employees may influence how they respond to these stressful workplace

experiences. Although previous studies have examined workplace stress and its associated factors, there is still limited empirical evidence on the relative contribution of work related and person related bullying, role overload, and different coping strategies to workplace stress among hotel workers in Abuja Municipal Area Council. This gap provides the basis for examining the influence of these factors among hotel workers in the area.

RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

H1: Workplace bullying, comprising work related and person related bullying, will significantly influence workplace stress among hotel workers in Abuja Municipal Area Council.

H2: Role overload will significantly influence workplace stress among hotel workers in Abuja Municipal Area Council.

H3: Coping strategies, comprising problem focused, emotion focused, and dysfunctional coping, will significantly influence workplace stress among hotel workers in Abuja Municipal Area Council.

EMPIRICAL REVIEW

Workplace Bullying and Workplace Stress

Previous studies have consistently shown that workplace bullying is associated with increased stress among employees. For instance, Chukwunoso et al. (2022) examined the relationship between workplace bullying and occupational stress among workers in manufacturing firms in Southeast Nigeria. The study involved 259 respondents drawn from 25 firms. The findings showed a strong and significant positive relationship between workplace bullying and occupational stress ($r = .918, p < .05$). This finding suggests that employees who experience higher levels of bullying are more likely to report higher levels of occupational stress.

Berglund et al. (2024) also examined workplace bullying, stress, burnout and perceived social support among more than 15,000 employees from higher education institutions in Sweden. The findings showed that workplace bullying was positively associated with stress and burnout. The study further reported that social support could reduce some of the negative effects of bullying, particularly when the level of bullying was low or moderate.

Similarly, Malika and Björkqvist (2019) investigated workplace bullying and occupational stress among university teachers in Pakistan and Finland. Using data from 610 lecturers, the researchers found that exposure to workplace bullying significantly predicted occupational stress symptoms. The study also showed that family relationships played an important role in explaining the relationship between bullying and stress.

In another study, Omrani (2022) examined workplace bullying, job stress and task performance among healthcare administrators in Saudi Arabia. The study involved 130 administrators and found a significant relationship between workplace bullying and increased job stress. The findings indicate that bullying is not only an interpersonal problem but can also affect employees' psychological functioning and work performance.

Grynderup et al. (2016) examined whether perceived stress mediated the relationship between workplace bullying and long term sickness absence using data from 4,114 employees. Employees who experienced workplace bullying reported higher perceived stress and were more likely to experience long term sickness absence. The findings further suggested that stress partly explained the relationship between bullying and sickness absence.

Taniguchi et al. (2016) conducted a two year study among 543 workers in elderly care facilities in Japan. The researchers found that workers who newly experienced or continuously experienced person related bullying reported higher psychological stress. The findings further showed that the onset of workplace harassment was associated with increased physical stress reactions.

A meta analysis by Galanis et al. (2024), involving nine studies and 3,730 nurses, also found a moderate positive relationship between workplace bullying and job stress ($r = .34$). Workplace bullying was also associated with burnout and secondary traumatic stress. The findings provide further evidence that repeated negative treatment at work can have serious psychological consequences for employees.

Coping Strategies and Workplace Stress

Coping strategies have also received considerable attention in studies examining workplace and occupational stress. Babakhani et al. (2024) examined perceived stress and coping strategies among 374 pre hospital emergency technicians. The researchers found that problem focused coping was frequently used by participants, while self distraction and emotion focused coping were among the stronger predictors of perceived stress.

Paudel et al. (2024) examined perceived stress and coping strategies among medical students in Nepal. More than half of the participants reported experiencing stress. Active coping, planning, acceptance, self distraction and instrumental support were among the commonly used coping strategies. However, students experiencing higher stress were more likely to report maladaptive strategies such as behavioural disengagement, venting and self blame.

Goldman (2021) investigated coping mechanisms and perceived stress among 231 members of the Portland State University community during the COVID 19 pandemic. The study found that adaptive coping strategies such as active coping, acceptance and planning were negatively related to stress, whereas avoidant coping strategies were positively associated with stress.

Abdelaal et al. (2021) examined perceived stress and coping strategies among nurses working in a burn unit. The findings showed that active coping, planning, emotional support and positive reframing were associated with lower stress, while dysfunctional strategies such as behavioural disengagement and self blame were positively associated with stress.

Huang et al. (2018) examined coping strategies, occupational stress and turnover intentions among 455 hotel employees in China. The study found that problem solving coping was effective in reducing stress, while some other coping strategies, including avoidance, were associated with higher stress. This finding is particularly relevant to the present study because both studies focus on hotel employees.

Jang et al. (2019) examined the mediating role of coping styles in the relationship between work stress and psychological well being among 399 clinical nurses in South Korea. The findings showed that coping played different roles depending on the experience level of the nurses. Emotion focused and problem focused coping were found to mediate the relationship between work stress and psychological well being among more experienced nurses.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

Job Demands Resources Model

The Job Demands Resources model was developed by Demerouti et al. (2001) and further developed by Bakker and Demerouti (2017). The model explains employee well being by distinguishing between job demands and job resources. Job demands refer to physical, psychological, social or organisational aspects of work that require sustained physical or mental effort. Job resources are aspects of the job that help employees achieve work goals, reduce job demands and support personal development.

The model is relevant to the present study because workplace bullying and role overload can be understood as job demands. Workplace bullying requires employees to spend additional emotional and mental resources dealing with negative treatment, while role overload requires employees to invest more physical and psychological energy in completing excessive duties. When these demands continue without adequate resources, employees may experience exhaustion and workplace stress.

The JD R model also explains that different job demands may combine to produce greater strain. For example, a hotel worker may simultaneously experience excessive workload, difficult customers and bullying from a supervisor. The combined demands may place greater pressure on the employee than any single demand alone. The model therefore provides a useful explanation for why workplace conditions may contribute to increased stress among hotel workers.

Conservation of Resources Theory

The Conservation of Resources theory was proposed by Hobfoll (1989) to explain the relationship between resource loss and psychological stress. The theory proposes that people are motivated to obtain, maintain and protect resources that they value. Stress occurs when valued resources are threatened with loss, actually lost or when individuals fail to obtain expected gains after investing resources.

The theory is relevant to workplace bullying and role overload because both experiences can threaten important psychological resources. For example, repeated bullying may threaten an employee's sense of dignity, security, self esteem and emotional stability. Similarly, excessive workload may drain physical energy, time and emotional resources. Continued resource loss may eventually produce psychological strain and workplace stress.

COR theory also suggests that people with fewer resources may be more vulnerable to further resource loss. A hotel employee who is already physically exhausted may have fewer resources available to cope with bullying or additional work demands. This may create a cycle in which stress reduces available resources and reduced resources make subsequent workplace demands more difficult to manage.

The theory also provides a useful explanation for coping. Employees invest resources in an attempt to protect themselves from further loss and recover from previous losses. Problem focused coping can therefore be viewed as an attempt to regain control and protect available resources, whereas dysfunctional coping may consume additional resources without effectively resolving the source of stress.

Transactional Model of Stress and Coping

The Transactional Model of Stress and Coping was developed by Lazarus and Folkman (1984). The model explains stress as a dynamic process involving the interaction between individuals and their environment. According to the model, people first appraise a situation to determine

whether it represents a threat, challenge or harm. They then assess whether they have sufficient resources to manage the situation.

The model is particularly relevant to the coping component of the present study because it explains why employees exposed to similar workplace conditions may experience different levels of stress. A hotel worker who sees a difficult work situation as manageable may respond by planning and solving the problem, while another employee may feel helpless and respond through avoidance, denial or self blame.

Problem focused coping involves efforts to address the source of the stress directly, while emotion focused coping involves efforts to manage the emotional response to the stressor. Dysfunctional coping represents responses that may provide temporary relief but do not effectively address the underlying problem. The model therefore provides a useful framework for explaining why problem focused coping may be associated with lower stress while dysfunctional coping may be associated with higher stress.

Among the theories reviewed, the Job Demands Resources model provides the broader framework for understanding how workplace bullying and role overload create demands that may increase stress, while the Conservation of Resources theory explains how these demands may result in the loss and depletion of valued resources. The Transactional Model complements these explanations by showing how workers' coping responses may influence their experience of stress.

METHOD

Research Design and Population

A cross sectional survey research design was adopted for the study. The target population comprised male and female hotel workers across different functional departments, including front desk, housekeeping, food and beverage, and administration, in selected hotels within Abuja Municipal Area Council (AMAC).

Sample and Sampling Technique

The minimum required sample size of 384 respondents was determined using Cochran's sample size formula at a 95% confidence level. The calculation was based on $Z = 1.96$, $p = 0.50$, $q = 0.50$, and $d = 0.05$ as the acceptable margin of error.

A multi stage sampling approach was adopted. Five hotels in Abuja Municipal Area Council were purposively selected based on their operational capacity and accessibility. The selected hotels were Chida International Hotel, NAF Conference Centre and Suites, Grand Cubana Hotels, Bolton White Hotel, and Royalton Hotel. Following the selection of the hotels, convenience sampling was used to recruit individual participants across the relevant departments based on their availability and willingness to participate in the study.

Instruments

Data were collected using standardized self report instruments measuring workplace bullying, role overload, coping strategies, and workplace stress.

Workplace bullying was assessed using the Negative Acts Questionnaire Revised (NAQ R), developed by Einarsen et al. (2009). The instrument contains 22 items measuring work related

and person related bullying. Responses are rated on a 5 point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Never) to 5 (Daily), with higher scores indicating greater exposure to negative workplace behaviours.

Role overload was measured using the Reilly Role Overload Scale developed by Reilly (1982). The scale consists of 13 items assessing employees' perceptions of workload pressure. Items are rated on a 5 point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree), with higher scores indicating greater perceived role overload.

Coping strategies were assessed using the Brief COPE Inventory developed by Carver (1997). The instrument contains 28 items designed to assess different coping responses, which were grouped in the present study into problem focused, emotion focused, and dysfunctional coping. Responses are rated on a 4 point scale ranging from 1 (I haven't been doing this at all) to 4 (I've been doing this a lot).

Workplace stress was measured using Parker's Job Stress Scale developed by Parker and DeCotiis (1983). The scale contains 13 items measuring two major dimensions of job stress, namely time stress and job anxiety. Responses are rated on a 5 point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Strongly Disagree) to 5 (Strongly Agree), with higher scores indicating greater workplace stress.

A pilot study was conducted among 30 hotel workers at Sawalino Hotel, Keffi, to assess the suitability and reliability of the instruments before the main study. The data obtained from the pilot study were analysed using Cronbach's alpha reliability analysis. The Negative Acts Questionnaire Revised produced a reliability coefficient of .722, the Reilly Role Overload Scale produced .741, the Brief COPE produced .838, while the Parker Job Stress Scale produced .693. These coefficients were considered adequate for proceeding with the main study.

Data Analysis

The data obtained from the study were analysed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences. Frequencies, percentages, mean and standard deviation were used to describe the characteristics of the respondents. Regression analysis was used to test the three hypotheses. All hypotheses were tested at the .05 level of significance.

RESULTS

Total 384 questionnaires were administered to the hotel staff that participated in the study across selected hotels in Abuja Municipal Area Council. However, after accounting for non-returns and poorly filled ones, 372 questionnaires were finally analysed. Table 1 shows the descriptive characteristics of the 372 respondents showing their distribution based on age, gender, marital status, educational qualification, and religion

Table 1: Descriptive Characteristics of the Respondents (N=372)

Variable	Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Age (Mean = 28.7 years, SD = 6.9)	18 – 23 years	98	26.3
	24 – 29 years	156	41.9
	30 years and above	118	31.8
	Total	372	100
Gender	Male	210	56.5

	Female	162	43.5
	Total	372	100
Marital status	Single	214	57.5
	Married	158	42.5
	Total	372	100
Educational Qualification	SSCE	104	28
	OND	82	22
	HND/NCE	96	25.8
	First Degree	74	19.9
	Postgraduate	16	4.3
	Total	372	100
Religion	Christianity	244	65.6
	Islam	128	34.4
	Total	372	100

The mean age of the respondents was 28.7 years with a standard deviation of 6.9 years. Respondents aged 24 to 29 years constituted the largest group with 156 participants representing 41.9%. Those aged 30 years and above accounted for 31.8%, while respondents aged 18 to 23 years represented 26.3%. Regarding gender, 210 respondents representing 56.5% were male, while 162 representing 43.5% were female. In terms of marital status, 214 respondents representing 57.5% were single, while 158 representing 42.5% were married. The educational distribution showed that 104 respondents representing 28.0% had SSCE qualifications, 82 representing 22.0% had OND qualifications, 96 representing 25.8% had HND or NCE qualifications, 74 representing 19.9% had first degrees, while 16 representing 4.3% had postgraduate qualifications. Regarding religion, 244 respondents representing 65.6% were Christians, while 128 representing 34.4% were Muslims.

Table 2: Summary of Multiple Regression Analysis Showing the Influence of Workplace Bullying on Workplace Stress

Variables	β	t	df	R	R ²	F	Sig.
(Constant)		7.632					
Person-related bullying	.100	1.773	2, 369	.286	.082	16.821	.000
Work-related bullying	.222**	3.930					

Note * = $p < .05$, ** = $p < .01$

The results presented in Table 2 show that the dimensions of workplace bullying jointly had a significant influence on workplace stress among hotel workers, $R = .286$, $R^2 = .082$, $F(2, 369) = 16.821$, $p < .001$. The two dimensions of workplace bullying jointly explained 8.2% of the variance in workplace stress. Further examination showed that work related bullying significantly predicted workplace stress, $\beta = .222$, $t = 3.930$, $p < .01$. However, person related bullying did not significantly predict workplace stress, $\beta = .100$, $t = 1.773$, $p > .05$. The hypothesis was therefore supported at the overall model level.

Table 3: Summary of Linear Regression Analysis Showing the Influence of Role Overload on Workplace stress

Variables	β	t	df	R	R ²	F	Sig.
(Constant)		9.153					
Role overload	.272	5.507	1, 370	.202	.041	5.364	.001

The result in Table 3 indicated that role overload significantly predicted workplace stress, $R = .202$, $R^2 = .041$, $F(1, 370) = 5.364$, $p = .001$. Role overload accounted for 4.1% of the variance in workplace stress. The regression coefficient further showed that role overload had a positive and significant relationship with workplace stress, $\beta = .272$, $t = 5.507$, $p = .001$. This indicates that higher levels of perceived role overload were associated with higher levels of workplace stress. Therefore, the second hypothesis was supported.

Table 4: Summary Results of Multiple Regression Analysis Showing the Influence of Coping Strategies on Workplace stress

Variables	β	t	df	R	R ²	F	Sig.
(Constant)		4.830					
Emotion	.017	.238					
Problem	-.197	-3.075	3, 368	.202	.041	5.364	.001
Dysfunctional	.182	2.879					

Note * = $p < .05$, ** = $p < .01$

The results of the multiple linear regression analysis presented in Table 4 show that coping strategies jointly had a significant influence on workplace stress, $R = .202$, $R^2 = .041$, $F(3, 368) = 5.364$, $p = .001$. The three coping dimensions jointly explained 4.1% of the variance in workplace stress. At the individual level, emotion focused coping did not significantly predict workplace stress, $\beta = .017$, $t = .238$, $p > .05$. Problem focused coping significantly and negatively predicted workplace stress, $\beta = -.197$, $t = -3.075$, $p < .01$. Dysfunctional coping significantly and positively predicted workplace stress, $\beta = .182$, $t = 2.879$, $p < .01$. The hypothesis was therefore supported at the overall model level

DISCUSSION

The findings of this study provide useful empirical evidence on the factors associated with workplace stress among hotel workers in Abuja Municipal Area Council (AMAC). Specifically, the study examined the influence of workplace bullying, role overload, and coping strategies on workplace stress. The study found that workplace bullying, considered jointly through its work related and person related dimensions, significantly predicted workplace stress. However, examination of the individual dimensions showed that work related bullying was a significant predictor of workplace stress, whereas person related bullying did not make a statistically significant independent contribution. The overall finding is consistent with previous empirical evidence showing that persistent mistreatment and negative experiences within the workplace can increase employee distress (Berglund et al., 2024; Chukwunoso et al., 2022). The significant effect of work related bullying suggests that negative behaviours directly connected to employees' work activities may be particularly stressful for hotel workers. Behaviours such as unreasonable deadlines, persistent criticism of work performance, excessive work demands, or withholding information needed to perform assigned duties can interfere directly with

employees' ability to carry out their responsibilities. This finding can be explained by the Job Demands Resources (JD R) Model. The model proposes that job demands require sustained physical or psychological effort and can lead to strain when employees do not have sufficient resources to meet those demands (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). Work related bullying may constitute an additional psychological job demand because affected employees must expend further cognitive and emotional energy dealing with unfair treatment while simultaneously attempting to complete their normal duties. The resulting depletion of personal resources may increase stress and contribute to emotional exhaustion. The nonsignificant effect of person related bullying is also noteworthy. Although behaviours such as social exclusion, insults, and persistent personal criticism can be distressing, their independent contribution to workplace stress was not statistically significant in this study. One possible explanation is that hotel workers may perceive work related negative acts as more directly consequential to their employment because these behaviours interfere with their immediate responsibilities, performance, and ability to satisfy customers.

The study further found that role overload significantly predicted workplace stress, with higher levels of perceived workload associated with higher levels of stress among hotel workers. This finding is consistent with previous research conducted across service oriented and other high demand occupational settings, which has linked excessive work demands with increased employee stress (Karimi et al., 2014; Ojha, 2025; Tastan, 2014). The finding is particularly relevant to the hotel industry, where employees may have to manage several responsibilities simultaneously while responding to fluctuating customer demands. Hotel workers may be required to attend to guests, handle complaints, complete administrative tasks, meet operational deadlines, and sometimes work extended hours, depending on staffing levels and business demands (Elshaer et al., 2024). The finding is also consistent with the JD R Model, which identifies excessive job demands as an important source of the health impairment process (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). Role overload represents a particularly relevant job demand because employees must continuously invest effort to keep up with competing responsibilities. Where adequate job resources, including sufficient staffing, supervisory support, and realistic work schedules, are unavailable, continued exposure to excessive demands may gradually deplete employees' physical and psychological resources..

The findings also showed that coping strategies collectively had a significant influence on workplace stress. However, the individual coping dimensions produced different results. Problem focused coping significantly predicted lower workplace stress, dysfunctional coping significantly predicted higher workplace stress, while emotion focused coping did not significantly predict workplace stress. The significant negative relationship between problem focused coping and workplace stress suggests that employees who actively attempt to address the sources of workplace difficulties may experience lower levels of stress. Problem focused coping involves taking practical steps to manage or resolve stressful situations. In a hotel environment, this may include identifying the source of a work problem, planning how to address it, seeking relevant information, or taking direct action to improve a difficult situation. Such responses may increase employees' sense of control and reduce the perception that workplace demands are beyond their ability to manage. This finding is consistent with previous evidence linking constructive coping responses with better management of stressful experiences (Abdelaal et al., 2021; Goldman, 2021). The finding also supports the Transactional Model of Stress and Coping proposed by Lazarus and Folkman (1984). The model suggests that stress is influenced not only by the presence of environmental demands but also by how individuals appraise those demands and the coping resources they use in response. From this perspective, problem focused coping may reduce stress because it enables employees to engage directly with the source of the problem rather than merely reacting to its

emotional consequences. In contrast, dysfunctional coping was positively associated with workplace stress. Employees who relied more heavily on dysfunctional coping reported higher levels of workplace stress. Dysfunctional responses such as denial, behavioural disengagement, and self blame may provide temporary psychological relief, but they may not resolve the conditions responsible for the stress. As a result, the underlying workplace problem may persist while the employee continues to experience psychological strain. This finding is consistent with previous studies suggesting that maladaptive coping responses may contribute to poorer psychological outcomes and greater distress (Babakhani et al., 2024; Paudel et al., 2024).

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

The findings of the study lead to the conclusion that workplace bullying significantly influences workplace stress among hotel workers in Abuja, particularly when the bullying is work related. Also, the study concludes that role overload is a significant contributor to workplace stress among hotel workers in Abuja. Lastly, the study concludes that coping strategies play a significant role in influence employees' stress levels. Problem focused coping strategies help to reduce stress, while dysfunctional coping strategies increase stress..

Recommendations

Based on the findings the study makes the following recommendations:

Hotel management should avoid giving workers too many duties at the same time. Tasks should be shared fairly among staff and work schedules should be realistic. When there are not enough workers, more staff should be employed instead of overworking the existing ones.

Supervisors and managers should not use harsh language, threats, or unfair criticism when assigning tasks. Clear rules should be made against bullying, especially bullying related to work duties such as unreasonable deadlines or humiliation over mistakes.

Hotels should organise simple training sessions or workshops to teach workers how to solve work problems calmly, plan their duties better, and ask for help when needed.

Employees should be guided away from harmful ways of dealing with stress such as avoidance, denial, or emotional withdrawal.

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