

## STRESS MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES AND BUSINESS EDUCATORS' JOB PERFORMANCE IN COLLEGES OF EDUCATION IN EDO AND DELTA STATES.

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### Abstract

*The study investigated stress management strategies and business educators' job performance in colleges of education in Edo and Delta State. Three research questions were raised to guide the study, while three null hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance. The study adopted a correlational survey research design. The population of the study comprised one hundred and eight (108) business educators in colleges of education in Edo and Delta states. The entire population was used as sample for the study, hence census. The instrument for the data collection for the study was a questionnaire titled "stress management strategies and business educators' job performance questionnaire", and it was validated by three experts. To determine the reliability of the instrument, Cronbach alpha statistics was used which yielded a coefficient of 0.86. The research instrument was administered to the respondents by the researcher with the help of three research assistants and was retrieved immediately. The data collected were sorted, coded and analyzed using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMC). The study revealed that time management practices, support system and continuous professional development contribute immensely in enhancing the job performance of business educators in colleges of education in Edo and Delta states. Consequent upon these finding, it was recommended, among others that time management practices be adopted by business educators; and support mechanisms be established for business educator such as mentoring, coaching and wellness programmes, aimed at addressing stressors and promoting overall wellbeing should be established and strengthened by the institutions.*

**Keywords:** Stress Management Strategies, Time Management Practices, Support Networks, Continuous Professional Development, Business Educators

### Introduction

Business education is a branch of education which teaches the skills and operations of the business industry with the main objective of preparing competent, skilled and dynamic business educators, office administrators, managers, businessmen and women who will compete effectively in the world of work. The Nigerian Universities Commission (NUC) (2022) defined business education as a specialized profession designed to provide students with knowledge, skills and competence leading to employability and advancement in office occupations, pedagogical skills in teaching business subjects at different levels of the educational system as well as self-employment or being an employer of labour. As an aspect of vocational education and training, Business Education is designed to fill the gap between knowledge and practice by exposing students to General Education as well as specialized areas in Accounting, Entrepreneurship, Marketing and Office Management.

The objectives of Business Education as outlined by NUC (2022) are to: provide opportunity for practical job preparation or vocational studies in order to make students render effective and efficient services in office, distributive and service occupations; prepare students, based on interest and aptitudes needed to enter into a business occupation, advance and profit in it; provide opportunities for students to develop an understanding of business and economic system of the nation so as to enable them to participate actively as producers and consumers of goods and services; develop in students the basic awareness of the contribution

which business and office employee makes to the nation's economy; develop and improve personal qualities and attitude of students as required in personal and employment situation; serve as a guide for individual student for suitable placement in business and office employment; enable students to have career consciousness and economic understanding of the free enterprise system; prepare student to assume the role of building a future generation through teaching and knowledge impartation; and prepare students for leadership position in both public and private life. The fulfillment of these objectives largely depends on the role of business educators in their various institutions. Specifically, the realization of the objectives of business education hinges significantly upon the unwavering commitment and expertise of business educators, amidst challenging stressors, in colleges of education. Colleges of education are institutions charged with the responsibility of training, teaching, shaping and producing future teachers, leaders and professionals. These institutions house professionals who are specialized and pedagogically trained and qualified to fulfill the institution's goals; amongst which are business educators. Business educators are specifically saddled with the responsibility of effectively equipping students with the requisite knowledge and skills that will enable them to teach business subjects, fit into jobs, pursue careers in the business world and find satisfaction in the labour market. The increasing emphasis on quality education, research, productivity, and the need to adapt to rapidly evolving technological advancements has further intensified the workload and expectations placed on business educators in colleges of education. Due to these diverse job responsibilities, business educators face a myriad of stressors in their professional lives which may consequently affect their job performance.

Job performance is the aggregate of employee behaviors that have some expected value, either positive or negative, for the organization. Iie and Edokpolor (2021) see business educators' job performance as the execution of different job activities contributing to the achievement of the goals of the business education programme. It refers to the extent to which business educators carry out their functions as educators, researchers and community developers to meet the goals of the programme (Ukah & Atah, 2021). Research supports the existence of three broad categories of job performance which are task performance, contextual performance, and counterproductive behaviors (Oleksandr & Stephen, 2005). Task performance refers to the behavior of providing products or services directly related to work. This reflects the quality and quantity of the employee's specific job responsibilities. It includes those work results or behaviors that directly meet the organization's goals. Contextual performance, on the other hand, includes behaviors and efforts that are not directly related to their work, including organizational citizenship behavior and pro-social behavior. Counterproductive behavior, as the name suggests, refers to any type of behavior that can hinder an organization's productivity, including slacking, theft, cheating, sexual harassment, bullying, substance abuse, workplace aggression, or vandalism.

In this paper, the focus will be on task performance while addressing job performance. The jobs or tasks of business educators in colleges of education include curriculum development, curriculum planning, classroom instruction, assessment and evaluation, student guidance, research and scholarship, use of technology, professional development, collaboration with colleagues, mentoring, and educational innovation. Due to the demanding nature of their work, the challenges and pressures they face can be significant, potentially leading to high stress levels that can affect their job performance.

Stress is part of the normal fabric of human existence. Melissa (2023) sees stress as a physical, chemical or emotional factor that causes physical or mental disorders and can cause illness. Stress can be acute or chronic in nature (Akinboye, 2022). Lisa (2020) opined that stress is a common feeling we get when we are under pressure, overwhelmed or unable to cope. Odita (2023) submitted that stress is inevitable in a work environment. At a moderate level of stress in the workplace, it can encourage the mastery of new skills and behaviours, increase motivation, help quick response to challenges, motivate people to push their limits, seek growth opportunities, and develop new skills that can contribute to their career development. However, when stress becomes excessive, people feel that the demands or pressure from the work environment is beyond their ability to cope, thus leading to harmful consequences that can damage a person's physiological, emotional, and cognitive functions and ultimately cause health problems; and reduce efficiency. Stress

experienced by business educators in colleges of education come from heavy workloads, time constraints, student engagement, pressure to research and publish, assessment and evaluation, time management, interpersonal conflicts, administrative pressure, and pressure to meet performance target set by the institution and the ever-evolving demands of the educational landscape. Although stress cannot be completely eliminated from the work environment, but can be managed. This is why employees can manage stress through various strategies to increase productivity.

Stress management strategies refer to the use of methods and activities aimed at reducing and coping with stress. Oditia (2023) states that stress management strategies are usually various techniques and psychotherapy aimed at managing people's stress to improve their daily functioning. Manjunatha and Renukamurthy cited in Tojue (2023) stated that stress management is highly dependent on individual organizations and the techniques used are not universally standardized.

Sev (2017) World Health Organization (W.H.O.) (2020); Timothy (2020), Brown (2021), Kendra (2022), and Strobel Education (2023) in their various studies suggested a wide range of strategies that have been proven effective for managing stress. They include time management practices, support networks, continuous professional development (CPD), relaxation techniques, meditation techniques, work-life balance initiatives, emotion-focused coping, and problem-focused strategy. For the purpose of this paper, focus will be on Time management practices, support networks and continuous professional development (CPD).

Time management practices involve planning, organizing structuring, prioritizing and allocation of time to different activities, tasks or projects. Time management helps to make the most productive use of the available time. With effective time management practices, educators can create realistic schedules, and allocate time for teaching, research, professional and personal commitments in order to reduce stress, increase efficiency and maintain productivity. Oditia (2023) in his study on stress management strategies and employee performance in manufacturing firms in Edo State found that time management was the most adopted stress management strategy among workers which positively influences their performance.

Support networks refer to a group of people or systems that one can turn to for encouragement, support, and advice. They provide support to the individual to achieve personal and professional goals (Chung & Yoo, 2021). The presence of support networks in educational institutions, which include organizational support, social support, professional and other support networks, can significantly influence educators' stress management and work performance. In their study, Leiter and Maslach (2009) found that a supportive organizational environment, which includes leadership support, workload management, and job resources, are critical to employee job performance. Other studies by Sev (2017) and the World Health Organization (2020) confirmed that strong social support networks, including colleagues, supervisors and mentors, positively influence educators' ability to manage stress and perform their roles well. Building strong professional networks, both within and outside the institution, offers opportunities to collaborate, share experiences and seek advice.

Continuous professional development (CPD) is the deliberate maintenance and development of knowledge and skills necessary to perform in a professional setting. It may mean strengthening current skills, developing those skills to a new level that will allow an employee's job to expand or prepare them for potential promotion (Amanda, Barnaby, & Annie, 2023). CPD plays an important role in providing educators with the skills to manage stress and improve job performance. Ingersoll and Strong (2011) emphasized the importance of professional development programmes for educators. Such interventions can help educators improve coping abilities, boost self-efficacy, and improve job performance. Chandra and Sudesh (2022), in their study on the effect of workplace stress and management techniques on employees' efficiency in the Nigerian banking industry, found that stress programme interventions, training and development programmes have a significant influence on employees' efficiency. Hence the need for continuous professional development.

The role of educators within the field of business education is pivotal, as they are tasked with shaping and nurturing the minds of future business professionals. Within colleges of education, it is expected that business educators be able to perform their duties effectively, fostering a positive and engaging learning environment for their students. They are expected to possess the necessary knowledge, skills, and expertise to maximally impart relevant business concepts and nurture the intellectual growth of their students, producing capable and well-prepared graduates ready to excel in the corporate world.

### Statement of the Problem

It appears that business educators are not achieving as much, as they are expected to achieve, but faced with significant stress and challenges in their roles, potentially leading to elevated stress levels. It is observed that business educators' job performance has been affected by stress. What is responsible for this is not immediately known. Could it be heavy workloads, time constraints, administrative pressures, student-related issues, and constant need for professional development? If this is allowed to continue, it could lead to diminished teaching quality, poor motivation, and potentially, burnout. This can also impair the overall educational experience of students, thereby compromising the quality of business education within the colleges of education

### Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study was to investigate stress management strategies and business educators' job performance in colleges of education in Edo and Delta states. The study specifically determined:

1. The relationship between time management practices and business educators' job performance in colleges of education in Edo and Delta State.
2. The relationship between support networks and business educators' job performance in colleges of education in Edo and Delta States.
3. The relationship between continuous professional development and business educators' job performance in colleges of education in Edo and Delta States.

### Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What is the relationship between time management practices and business educators' job performance in colleges of education in Edo and Delta States?
2. What is the relationship between support networks and business educators' job performance in colleges of education in Edo and Delta States?
3. What is the relationship between continuous professional development and business educators' job performance in colleges of education in Edo and Delta States?

### Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses were formulated and tested at 0.05 level of significance:

1. There is no significant relationship between time management practices and the job performance of business educators in colleges of education in Edo and Delta States.
2. There is no significant relationship between support networks and the job performance of business educators in colleges of education in Edo and Delta States.

3. There is no significant relationship between continuous professional development and the job performance of business educators in colleges of education in Edo and Delta States.

### Significance of the Study

The research findings will be of immense benefit to business educators, business education students, government, educational institutions and management of colleges of education.

Business educators will understand the specific factors that contribute to stress, and gain a deeper understanding of their own experiences which will help them identify areas of improvement and take proactive measures to manage stress effectively. With effective stress management strategies at their disposal, business educators are more likely to be engaged, motivated, emotionally and physically available for their students and productive in their teaching roles. This, in turn, can result in improved student outcomes and a more positive learning experience for students in colleges of education in Edo and Delta States. The government and educational institutions management may utilize the findings of this study in the development of supportive policies and guidelines; design of targeted professional development programmes and interventions that promote the mental health and well-being of educators and mitigate stressfactors in educational settings.

### Methodology

The study adopted a correlational survey research design. It measures two or more relevant variables and assesses the relationship between or among the variables. It allows for the prediction of future events. The design is suitable for this study, in that it will help to establish the relationship between the independent variable (stress management strategies) and the dependent variable (job performance) that is, how time management practices, support networks and continuous professional development (CPD) are related to job performance of business educators in Edo and Delta States. The population of the study comprised all the one hundred and eight (108) business educators in the five Colleges of education in Edo and Delta states. The population distribution is shown in the Table below:

**Table 1: The population distribution of business educators in colleges of education in Edo and Delta states**

S/N	Schools	Population of business Educators
1	Federal College of Education Technical, Ekiadolor	9
2	College of Education, Igueben	2
3	Federal College of Education Technical, Asaba	72
4	College of Education, Mosogar	10
5	College of Education, Warri	15
<b>Total</b>		<b>108</b>

**Source:** Office of the Head of Department of the various tertiary institutions, 2023.

The entire population of 108 business educators was used for the study because the population is small and manageable, hence census.

### Instrument of the study

The instrument used for data collection is a structured questionnaire titled Stress Management Strategies and Business Educators' Job Performance Questionnaire (SMSBEJPQ). The instrument was segmented into two sections: A and B. Section A contains 23 item statements made up of 3 clusters that measured time management and practices, support networks, and continuous professional development, while Section B contains 9 item statements that measured job performance. Responses to each item were weighed on a modified four-point Likert rating scale; Very High Extent (VHE) 4 points, High Extent (HE) 3 points, Low Extent (LE) 2 points, Very Low Extent (VLE) 1 point.

The instrument was validated by three experts. Their opinions, suggestions and corrections were used to produce the final instrument. In order to ensure the reliability of the instrument, a trial test was carried out on fifteen (15) business educators who were not part of the study population. The data generated were

analyzed and Cronbach alpha statistics was used to determine the internal consistency of the instrument. The reliability coefficient of 0.86 was obtained.

### Method of Data Collection

The instrument was administered and data collected by the researchers with the help of three research assistants, who were well-briefed by the researchers, on how to administer and retrieve the completed questionnaire. A total of 108 copies of the questionnaire were administered and retrieved from the respondents within a period of two weeks.

### Method of Data Analysis

The data collected were analyzed using SPSS, Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMC). PPMC was used to test the Hypothesis at 0.05 level of significance. The decision rule for the hypothesis was based on p-value; when the p-value was greater than 0.05 the hypothesis was accepted, and when the p-value was less than 0.05 the hypothesis was rejected.

### Presentation of Results

The data analyses for testing the hypotheses were carried out using Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient. The results of the hypotheses are presented in Tables 2-4.

#### Hypothesis 1

There is no significant relationship between time management practices and business educators' job performance in colleges of education.

**Table 2: Pearson r showing the significant relationship between time management practices and business educator's job performance in colleges of education**

Variables	N	$\bar{x}$	SD	r	p-value	Decision
Time Management Practices		2.73	0.60			
	108			0.81	0.00	Significant
Business Educators' Job Performance		2.79	0.52			

The analysis in Table 2 showed the significant relationship between time management practices and business educator's job performance in colleges of education in Edo and Delta State. The data analysis indicated that mean of 2.73 and 2.79, as well as standard deviation of 0.60 and 0.52 were obtained for time management practices and business educator' job performance respectively. The Table also showed that the correlation coefficient of 0.81 is positive and high. Since the p-value of .00 is less than 0.05, hence the null hypothesis was rejected. This therefore connotes that there is a significant relationship between time management practices and business educator's job performance in colleges of education in Edo and Delta State.

#### Hypothesis 2

There is no significant relationship between support networks and business educator's job performance in colleges of education in Edo and Delta States.

**Table 3: Pearson r showing the significant relationship between support system and business educator’s job performance in colleges of education**

Variables	N	$\bar{x}$	SD	r	p-value	Decision
Support Networks		2.42	0.54			
	108			0.65	0.00	Significant
Business Educators’ Job Performance		2.79	0.52			

In response to hypothesis two, Table 2 showed the significant relationship between support networks and business educator’s job performance in colleges of education in Edo and Delta States. The data analysis indicated that mean of 2.42 and 2.79, as well as standard deviation of 0.54 and 0.52 were obtained for support networks and business educator’ job performance respectively. The Table also showed that the correlation coefficient of 0.65 is positive and high. Since the p-value of 0.00 is less than 0.05, hence the null hypothesis was rejected. To this end, there is a significant relationship between support networks and business educator’s job performance in colleges of education in Edo and Delta States.

### Hypothesis 3

There is no significant relationship between continuous professional development and business educator’s job performance in colleges of education.

**Table 4: Pearson r showing the significant relationship between continuous professional development and business educator’s job satisfaction in colleges of education**

Variables	N	$\bar{x}$	SD	r	p-value	Decision
Continuous Professional Development		2.77	0.54			
	108			0.98	0.00	Significant
Business Educators’ Job Performance		2.79	0.52			

The data analysis in Table 3 showed the significant relationship between continuous professional development of business educator’s job performance in colleges of education in Edo and Delta State. The data analysis indicated that mean of 2.77 and 2.79, as well as standard deviation of 0.54 and 0.52 were obtained for continuous professional development and business educator’ job performance respectively. The Table also showed that the correlation coefficient of 0.98 is positive and high. Since the p-value of 0.00 is less than 0.05, hence the null hypothesis was rejected. Consequently, there is a significant relationship between continuous professional development and business educator’s job performance in colleges of education.

### Discussion of Findings

The study investigated stress management strategies and business educators’ job performance in colleges of education in Edo and Delta states. The findings from hypothesis one revealed that there is a significant relationship between time management practices and the job performance of business educators in colleges of education in Edo and Delta States, with a correlation coefficient of 0.81 which is positive and high. Engaging in time management practices, reduces the likelihood of feeling overwhelmed by multiple responsibilities, leading to decreased stress levels. As stress decreases, business educators can focus more on delivering high-quality performance. The findings agree with Odita (2023) who submitted that time management was the most adopted stress management strategy among workers which influences their performance positively.

The findings from hypothesis two depicted that there is a significant relationship between support networks and the job performance of business educators in colleges of education in Edo and Delta States, having a correlation coefficient of 0.65 which is positive and high. This shows that, support networks play a vital role in enhancing business educators job performance by promoting emotional well-being, reducing burnout, offering diverse perspectives and providing motivation. The findings agree with Sev (2017) and World Health Organization (2020) affirmed that strong social support networks including: colleagues; supervisors; and mentors positively impact educators' ability to manage stress and perform well in their roles.

Hypothesis three findings indicated that there is a significant relationship between Continuous professional development and the job performance of business educators in colleges of education in Edo and Delta states, with a correlation coefficient is 0.98 which is positive and high. Business educator's engagement in continuous learning and skill development, keep them up-to-date with latest teaching methods, technologies and research findings that make them proactive in addressing job related challenges and feel more confident and competent in their roles and enhancing their job performance. The findings agree with Chandra and Sudesh (2022) who revealed that stress programme interventions such as training and development have a significant influence on employees' job efficiency.

### **Conclusion**

Based on the findings, it was concluded that stress management strategies variables such as time management practices, support networks and continuous professional development are fundamental in promoting business educators job performance in colleges of education in Edo and Delta States. In other words, proper time management, access to support networks and continuous participation and involvement in professional development programmes will help business educators manage stress effectively while carrying out their job, thus enhancing their job performance and ultimately improving the quality of education imparted to students.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

- Institution management should encourage educators to adopt time management practices: they should always prioritize tasks; plan and prepare for the day and week ahead and set specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and time bound (SMART) goals.
- Educational institutions should strengthen and establish more support mechanisms for educators such as mentoring, coaching and wellness programmes aimed at addressing stressors and promoting overall wellbeing.
- Institution management should invest in professional development programmes for educators as this will empower them with the skills needed to navigate the demands of their roles while maintaining maximum performance. In the same vein, Business educators should invest time in their own professional development, join relevant professional associations and involve in cross-disciplinary connections.

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