

Workplace Stressors and Organizational Performance in Nigeria: The Moderating Role of Organizational Policy

¹vincent Iywichrevero Oruwevwiruohwo Odiri

²henry Osahon Osazevbaru

³garba Hassan, Yahaya

^{1&2}Department of Business Administration, Faculty of the Social Sciences, Delta State University, Abraka

³ Department of Business Administration, Faculty of the Social Sciences, Delta State University, Abraka

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Abstract

This study investigated the moderating role of organizational policy between workplace stressors and organizational performance with evidence from consumer goods companies in Nigeria. The survey design was adopted and the questionnaire was the major instrument of data collection administered to three hundred and sixty-seven (367) employees of two (2) consumer goods companies. Three (3) workplace stressors (workload,

role ambiguity and role conflict), moderating (organizational policy) and organizational performance (quality of products) dimensions were employed. Data obtained in the field survey were analyzed via descriptive (Cronbach Alpha, Mean, Standard Deviation and Correlation) and inferential (Structural Equation Modeling) statistical techniques. Findings indicated that while workplace stressors of workload and role ambiguity significantly and positively

affect organizational performance, however, role conflict insignificantly affects the performance of the organization. Again, the organizational policy was found to moderate the link between workplace stressors and organizational performance. Given the findings, the study recommends that employee stress audits need to be conducted regularly to determine whether stress levels are getting out of control and leading to chronic stress, which affects organizational performance. There is a need for organizations to engage in Employee Assistance Programme (EAP) to checkmate workloads and role conflict now and in other future cases; EAP can be applied not only by Nigeria organizations but on a global scale.

Keywords: Organizational performance; Workplace Stressors; Role ambiguity; Role conflict; Workload; Organizational policy; Structural equation modelling

JEL Classification: M12; M19; L25;

1. Introduction

The stress faced by diverse occupation types and job roles has been extensively discussed in the literature with several diverse occupations being described as facing over average levels of stress, which perhaps tend to affect the level of organizational performance. Organizational performance regardless of the industry or occupation largely depends on the physical and emotional wellbeing of employees. Organizational

performance according to Adim, Ibekwe, and Odunayo (2018); Harry (2020), is habitually driven by the physical and emotional state of minds of employees, thus affecting the level of relaxedness and concentration in the workplace. Noteworthy is the fact that how employees receive, analyze, synthesize and evaluate stress, is contingent on the frame of mind under which employees operate (Kihara, & Mugambi, 2018; and Sahni, 2020). Hence, the perceived stimuli emanating from stress-related outcomes in the workplace has become a challenging task for organizations management.

Predominantly, workplace stressors and the management of them has emerged as an increasingly challenging task for organizations. Adeoye, Aliu and Soladerin (2012); Sikuku, Wamalwa and Katiba (2017) asserted that the work environment where employees carry out their tasks is characterized by stressful work-related activities. These stress-related work activities according to Plattner and Mberengwa (2015); Kachi, Inoue, Eguchi, Kawakami, Shimazu and Tsutsumi (2020) have undulating inverse

effects, since bad stress may negatively affect organizational performance while good stressors may positively affect organizational performance. Remarkably, some organizations' employees encounter more stress than others in diverse and similar industries. This view is supported by Traverse and Cooper (1993) who opined that employees in the healthcare, manufacturing and educational sector undergo significant stress compared to other employees.

Notwithstanding, Manabete, John, Makinde and Duwa (2016) captured the pervasive nature of employee stress thus: 'a worker heads to work to perform his sole duties and as such tries to go about it; when such employee discovers that he is unable to sleep or have some good rest, their performance declines. Manabete *et.al* (2016) reiterated that this situation disturbs and unsettles employee, thus leading to employee stress. Given the presumed negative import of workplace stressors on organizational performance, Akomolafe and Ogunmakin (2014); Rasool, Wang, Zhang and Samma (2020) demand the effective management of stress faced by employees.

Chowwen (2013); Awino, Ogutu and Musyoka (2018) see workplace stressors as pressures or strains affecting the emotional and/or physical state of minds of employees within an organization, which makes them nervous and mentally unstable. Workplace stressors can emanate from the business environment as well as home (Akomolafe & Ogunma-kin 2014, and Awino, *et al* 2018). Workplace stressors affect both physical and emotional wellbeing, which result in behavioural modification and the performance of employees (Obiora & Iwuoha, 2013, Chemdhok & Monga, 2013). The main cause of workplace stressors as opined by Sun and Chiou (2014); Harry, (2020); emanates from workload, role conflict and ambiguity, management style, and non-work dynamics such as relationships with family and workplace associates.

Bizarrely, rather than focusing on the positive outcome of workplace stressors on the performance of organizations, considerable attention has been on the negative outcome of workplace stressors on organizational performance, even though workplace stressors could equally

stimulate people to improve performance (Raddy & Anuradha, 2013, Igharo, 2013; Rasool, *et al*, 2020; and Kachi, 2020). Consequently, the inability of organizations to engage in effective workplace stressors management has made employees exhibit some forms of depression, job dissatisfaction, and anxiety and in some cases, severe physical and mental disorders (Akomolafe & Ogunmakin, 2014, Manabete *et al*, 2016; Kihara & Mugambi, 2018; and Sahni, 2020).

In the consumer goods sector, workplace stressors and the predominant role played by the organizational policy is becoming the major area of interest in management literature given that the sector is very sensitive and pivotal in most economies of the world where employees perform their tasks almost all days. Raddy and Anuradha (2013); Manabete, *et al* (2016); Harry (2020); Kachi (2020) acknowledged that workplace stressors in moderate dose are desirable as it gives an impetus to increase organizational performance.

Given that the lives of employees could be adversely affected by futile stress management and unsound organizational policy, which may lead to decreased organizational performance, there is a compelling need to conduct an assessment of the moderating effect of organizational policy between workplace stressors and organizational performance. In this study, three (3) dimensions of workplace stressors were used employed, namely workload, role ambiguity and conflict while organizational performance is measured via the quality of products.

2. Statement of The Problem

One of the most confronting problems facing management of organizations is how to enhance organizational performance, notwithstanding the surmounting work-related stress faced by employees in the environment. The performance of some organization is very downcast and this has become so worrisome to organizations management. In the viewpoints of Sikuku, *et al* (2017); Awino(2018); Kachi *et al*(2020), the poor performance of these organizations could be traceable to the workforce as well as the implementation of organizational policy. Again, when employee stress is

inadequately managed, it homogeneously affects the attainment of organizational goals and objectives, which then transcends into the disheartened performance of organizations.

Consequently, there is the tendency that organizational policy can moderate the relationship between workplace stressors and organizational performance. Furthermore, while there are robust studies on workplace stressors and organizational performance in both developed and developing nations; sadly, there is a dearth of studies on the moderating effect of organizational policy between workplace stressors and organizational performance, particularly in Nigeria. Amazingly, most studies had focused on workplace stress management and productivity, employee commitment, work efficiency, and job performance (Sikuku, Wamalwa & Katiba, 2017; Adim, *et al*, 2018; Kihara & Mugambi, 2018; Awino, *et al*, 2018; Kachi, *et al*, 2020; Harry, 2020; and Sahni, 2020). Hence this study was carried out with the view to examining the moderating effect of organizational policy between workplace stressors and organizational

performance; this call for an inquiry, which this study attempts to satisfy

3. Review of Related Literature

3.1 Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of the study encompassed a conceptualization of workplace stress and its dimensions, organizational performance and organizational policy.

3.1.1 Workplace Stressors

Workplace stressors have been broadly defined in management literature; it is used to portray an emotional discomfort complemented by feelings of not being able to cope and control work-related activities or outcomes. Generally, stress refers to the human body preparing itself for activities, without the activities following, resulting in an imbalance in the body system. In the context of this study, employee stress is seen as the imbalance in employees' feelings and emotions, which tends to alter work behaviour.

Maharaj, Lee and Lal(2019); Harry(2020) opined workplace stress ensues when the interaction between an employee and work environment produces emotional

strain affecting the physical and mental wellbeing of such an employee; the emotional, physical and mental discomfort results in a state of disequilibrium both at work and home. Prior studies (Adim, *et al.* 2018; Maharaj, *et al.*, 2019; Kachi, *et al.*, 2020; Harry, 2020; and Sahni, 2020) have shown that workplace stress is responsible for organizational outcomes such as decreased performance, frustration, lack of motivation and commitment, and increased absenteeism and turnover.

According to Blumenthal (2014), an inverted u-type curve has been employed to portray the effect workplace stress has on organizational performance. The axiom is that as workplace stress increases, organizational performance will peak and start declining. This is suggestive that workplace stress is indispensable to augmenting organizational performance; however, when employee stress reaches a level of grave discomfort, it is detrimental to organizational performance.

Stress management refers to intervention intended to lessen the impact of

workplace stressors in the work environment (Adim, *et al.*, 2018). In the viewpoint of Skikuku, *et al.* (2017), workplace stress management is the wide spectrum of practices and psychotherapies targeted at directing employees' level of stress, particularly chronic stress; the goal of which is to provide coping strategies for improving everyday functioning in the workplace. In this paper, workplace stressors were measured using dimensions of workload, role ambiguity and role conflict; these dimensions are briefly discussed:

- **Workload**

The term 'workload' implies the intensity and/or extent of responsibilities and tasks assigned to employees in the workplace (Ali, Raheem, Nawaz, & Imamuddin, 2014). Idris and Dollard, (2011) see it as the magnitude of stress faced by employees as a result of the notion that they are unable to adapt to the degree of work assigned to them. Workload has two components – work-overload and lower-load. Work-overload is when employees are expected to carry out their responsibilities and tasks above work hours, resources (Trayambak, Abbasi & Janjua,

2016). However, most employees do not experience work lower-load due to the high costs of hiring a workforce.

Furthermore, organizations that have an efficient organizational policy may not experience too much work overloads for employees. This paper builds on the first component of overload – work-overload. Prior studies (Adim, *et al*, 2018; Maharaj, *et al*, 2019; Harry, 2020) have shown that workload (work overload) has a significant and negative impact on organizational performance. Consequently, the level of stress resulting from workload may have a significant effect on the performance of the organization; given this view, we used workload as one of the workplace stressors in this study and hypothesized as follows:

H₀₁: Organizational policy moderates the link between workload and organizational performance

- Role Conflict

Role conflict is a fundamental part of the workplace and a factual phenomenon related to employees working in an organization daily. Practically, when role conflict occurs in the workplace, the

commitment levels of employees towards the organization seem to decline (Chung, 2018). Harry (2020) showed that the larger the role conflict among employees in an organizational setting the less efficient is the organization and the less gratified are employees.

Predominantly, role conflict is a cause of job dissatisfaction and thus a vital factor resulting in poor productivity and dwindling organizational performance (Sikuku, *et al*, 2017; Chung, 2018; and Kachi, *et al*, 2020). Studies (Adim, *et al*, 2018; Maharaj, *et al*, 2019; Harry, 2020) suggest that role conflict has a significant and negative effect on organizational performance due to decreased commitment and increased absenteeism by employees, thus resulting in poor quality of products.

Perrewé, Rosen and Maslach (2012) defined role conflict as mismatched prerequisites and expectations employees get from supervisors or colleagues. However, Kahn and Wolfe (1978); showed that the outcome of role conflict embodied low job satisfaction, increased level of tensions and ineptness, tendency

to leave the organization, emotional fatigue and burnout. More so, multiple roles performed by employees may lead to role conflict, which might be stressful for them. Consequently, the level of stress emanating from role conflict may have a significant effect on organizational performance; given the above viewpoints, we employed role conflict as one of the dimensions of workplace stressors in this study and hypothesized as follows:

H_{o2}: Organizational policy moderates the link between role conflict and organizational performance

- Role Ambiguity

The term role ambiguity refers to the absence of clarity of the role given to an employee in the workplace. According to Malik (2011), the fact that employees become uncertain to envisage their supervisor's reaction to their responsibilities and tasks as either 'success' or 'failure', poses a foremost problem, which becomes a stressor for employees. Beehr and Bhagat (1992) opine that role ambiguity leads to employee job stress because employees' expectations, tasks and responsibilities have not been lucidly designed by the employer.

More importantly is the fact that when there is a coherently designed organizational policy, there is the likelihood that role ambiguity and conflict may diminish. Prior researches (Yun, Takeuchi & Marginson, 2006; Mohsen & Reza, 2011; and Harry, 2020) found role ambiguity to be connected with organizational performance. Again, Bray and Whaley (2001) found that the inability of employees to effectively perform a role affects organizational performance negatively and significantly. Thus, we employed role ambiguity as one of the dimensions of workplace stressors in this study and hypothesized as follows:

H_{o3}. Organizational policy moderates the link between role ambiguity and organizational performance.

3.1.2 Organizational Performance

In reality, organizations set performance goals in hopes that their operations offer good value to shareholders and consumers. According to Khattak (2011) employee stress puts a drastic strain on organizational performance. In management literature, organizational performance has been broadly defined. Performance is seen as a measure of quantity and quality of work done putting

into consideration, the cost of resource it took the organization to accomplish the work.

In the views of Yusuf, Muhammed and Kazeem (2014), organizational performance is the ability of an organization to realize its targeted goals and objectives within expected timelines and parameters. Organizational performance can be viewed as the ability of organizations to realize targets, goals and benchmarks. According to Hubbard(2009), measuring organizational performance can be cumbersome. Notwithstanding the cumbersomeness of measuring organizational performance, numerous pieces of literature exist on organizational performance.

Consequently, numerous parameters have been employed to measure organizational performance to include quality of products, turnover, profitability, productivity, market share, etc. Agreeing with the shareholders' paradigm, organizational performance encompasses three specific aspects of firm outcomes: financial, market share and shareholders

returns. However, this paper adopts one measure – the quality of products of the organization (market share).

3.1.3 Organizational Policy

In this study, the organizational policy is the moderating variable in the link between workplace stressors and organizational performance. In modern organizations, there is a policy for the management of employees' health and wellbeing; this policy refers to work stress faced by employees. According to Kihara and Mugambi (2018), the organizational policy ensures that appropriate measures are put in place to address issues relating to the assessment of risk, timely reaction and employee rehabilitation.

The organizational policy recognizes the value of maintaining a healthy and safe environment and allows duty of care about both the physical and mental wellbeing of employees at work. However, in most organizations, this policy is feeble and not well implemented to moderate the stress faced by employees in the workplace. A recent study by Harry (2020) found that organizational policy moderates the link

between workplace stressors and the performance of organizations.

Given the viewpoints above, we used the organizational policy as a moderating variable more especially that there is the absence of empirical studies on the moderating effect of organizational policy in the relationship between workplace stressors and organizational performance, particularly in the Nigeria context; this is to fill the gap in the literature.

3.2 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of this study is anchored on Occupational Stress Management Theory. The occupational stress management theory propounded by Bowin and Harvey and Karasek and French is composed of two components - *person-environment fit* and *demand-control*; the theory focuses on the structural characteristics of an employee's interaction in the work environment. *First*, the person-environment fit by Karasek and French explained the goodness of fit of an employee's behaviour in the work environment (Raheem, Nawaz &

Imamuddin, 2014). According to Ekundayo (2014), person-environment fit emphasizes that stress is likely to occur in the work environment and the wellbeing of the employee may be affected, particularly when there is the absence of fit in either or both respect.

Practically, two clear distinctions are enunciated in the person-environment fit paradigm -first, between objective reality and subjective perceptions; and second, between environmental variables (E) and person variables (P). Thus, given the simple 2x2 configuration of PxE interaction, lack of fit can manifest in diverse ways and each seems to affect worker's health. More so, there can be a lack of fit between the objective environment (reality) and the subjective environment (hence, lack of contact with reality), and also a lack of fit between the objective and subjective persons (hence, poor self-assessment) leads to stress. In particular, the lack of fit between employee and work environment results in decreased organizational performance.

Second, the demand-control paradigm by Bowin and Harvey drew attention to the

likelihood that work characteristics are linearly correlated with employees stress. Initially, Bowin and Harvey demonstrated this paradigm via secondary analyses of data from the United States and Sweden, showing that employees in jobs are perceived to have both low and high job demands due to stress in the workplace which result in poor health and low satisfaction. For instance, employees whose jobs are characterized by heavy workload and role ambiguity combined with little conflict were found to affect organizational performance.

The occupational stress management theory has been criticized for its failure to explain the individual differences in areas of susceptibility and coping potential. For instance, while a stressed employee may consider the work environment as healthy, the same may not be true for others to stimulate organizational performance. The theory underscores the fact that organizational policy can moderate the relationship between workplace stressors and the performance of organizations as some policies of the organization might be favourable for an

employee and the same may not be true for others.

Again, when employees realize that they are having difficulty coping with work demands, it decreases their performance and this becomes a threat to their wellbeing. The effects of such stress when improperly managed might cause impairment of organizational performance. The relevance of the occupational stress management theory to this study is that for the performance of organizations to be maintained, management must engage employees with the right mental, emotional capacity and skills that can help them cope with stress when they surface in the work environment. In addition, the theory supports the proposition of the current study that when workplace stressors are effectively managed, organizational performance can be improved.

3.3 Empirical Studies

In management literature, there is an avalanche of empirical studies on the relationship between workplace stress management and the performance of organizations in both developed and

developing countries; however, there is a dearth of empirical studies on the moderating effect of organizational policy in the link between workplace stressors and organizational performance, particularly in Nigeria. Remarkably, most studies in this area had focused on workplace stress management and productivity, job performance, commitment (Ali, Raheem, Nawaz & Imamuddin, 2014; Olusegen, Oluwasayo & Olawoyin, 2014; Sun & Chiou, 2014; Omolara, 2014; Olulana, 2015; Sikuku, Wamalwa & Katiba, 2017; Adim, Ibekwe & Odunayo, 2018; Kihara & Mugambi, 2018; Awino, Ogutu & Musyoka, 2018; Kachi *et al*, 2020; Harry, 2020; and Sahni, 2020).

For instance, Ali, *et al*(2014) determined the effect of workplace stress on the job performance of employees in Karachi. A quantitative research design was employed and data was collected via primary data (questionnaires). The multiple regression results revealed that workload, role conflict and inadequate rewards are the prime reasons causing workplace stress and this stress reduces their efficiency in the work environment.

Olusegen, *et al* (2014) assessed job stressors and performance of employees in Nigeria using a mixed research design involving the use of both primary and secondary data (questionnaires, interviews and information extracted from relevant journals and statistical bulletins). Both descriptive and inferential methods were employed to analyze the data and findings showed that work-overload, career development and work/family conflicts are considered to affect performance.

Sun and Chiou (2014) examined the link among a variety of occupational stress, coping strategies and workers performance in China using structural equation modelling. The survey design was employed and a structured questionnaire was the major data collection instrument. The result established that occupational stress hurt performance, and coping strategies were the mediators between work-induced stress and performance.

Omolara (2014) evaluated the influence of work-related stress on organizational commitment in Nigeria using a survey

design. Primary data was employed and the regression result revealed that work-related stress negatively affects employee commitment. Similarly, Olulana (2015) ascertained the effect of organizational culture and stress on employee commitment in Nigeria via survey design. Primary data was the major data collection instrument and the Pearson correlation statistical tool was used. Findings indicated that employees' organizational culture and stress significantly influence employee commitment.

Sikuku, *et al*, (2017) examined the influence of workplace stress on performance in Kenya using a questionnaire. The correlation result showed that workplace stress affects performance and productivity negatively and that of the organization. In the same vein, Adim, *et al* (2018) assessed the relationship between workplace stress management and employee performance of deposit money banks in Nigeria using a questionnaire. The Spearman rank correlation result showed that workplace stress management has a significant link

with employee efficiency and effectiveness.

Kihara and Mugambi (2018) evaluated the effect of workplace stress management strategies on the performance of employees in Kenya using a questionnaire. The regression result showed that workplace stress management strategies significantly affect employees' performance and the relationship is positive. Awino, *et al* (2018) evaluated the moderating effect of work culture in the link between workplace stress management and organizational performance in Kenya via a questionnaire. The regression result revealed that the use of certain workplace stress management techniques had a positive effect on organizational performance.

Likewise, Kachi, *et al* (2020) assessed the role of occupational stress and the risk of employee turnover in Japan via a questionnaire. Cox's proportional hazard regression result revealed that job stressors, workplace social support, psychological/physical stress response and job strain (combination of low job

control and high job demands) were significantly related to employee turnover.

Harry, (2020) examined the relationship between workplace stress management (workload, role ambiguity, role conflict, effectiveness, efficiency and commitment) on the performance of the employee in Nigeria. The study established that workplace stress management had a positive and significant effect on employee performance. Sahni (2020) ascertained the impact of COVID-19 on employee behaviour and stress coping mechanism during work from home in Saudi Arabia. The study established that

COVID-19 significantly impact employee behaviour and stress coping strategies.

3.4 Conceptual Model of the Study

Given the review of related literature, Figure 1 captures the conceptual model for assessing the link between workplace stressors and organizational performance as moderated by organizational policy. Within this framework, the independent variables of the study include workplace stressors (workload, role conflict and role ambiguity); the dependent variable is organizational performance while the moderating variable, organizational policy.

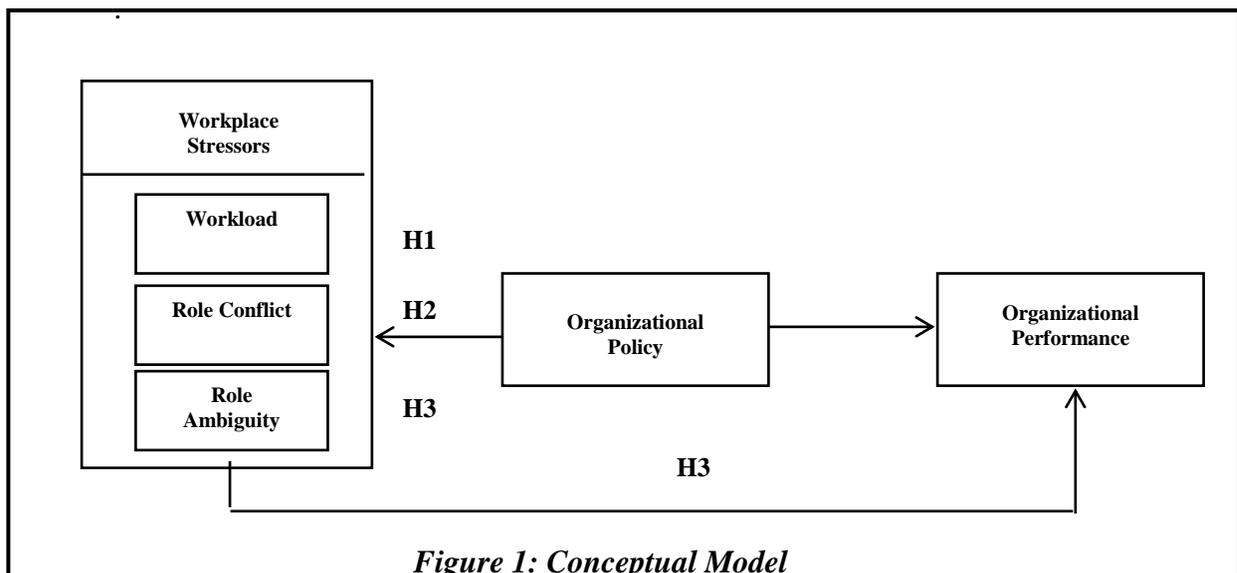


Figure 1: Conceptual Model

4. Methodology

The study adopts the survey research design and the dataset emanates from a questionnaire administered to three hundred and eighty-two (382) employees of two (2) selected consumer goods companies - Nigeria Brewery Plc. and Guinness Nigeria Plc. with immense presence in the south-south region of Nigeria, out of which, three hundred and sixty-seven (367) were fully retrieved and completed; the sample size was arrived at via probabilistic sampling (Taro-Yamane sample size determination formula) as shown below:

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

Where n = sample size; N = population size; I = constant; e = error limit margin of error of level of significant (accepted error at 5% i.e. 0.05)

$$\begin{aligned} n &= \frac{8,700}{1 + \{8,700 (0.05)^2\}} \\ &= 382 \end{aligned}$$

The survey was carried out to examine the moderating effect of organizational policy in the relationship between workplace stressors and organizational performance. In specifics, workplace stressors were measured using three dimensions - workload, role conflict and

role ambiguity, while organizational performance by the quality of products. The questionnaire draws on a long tradition of workplace stress management and organizational performance research and those extensively employed in prior studies (Awino, *et al*, 2018; Kachi, *et al*, 2020; and Harry, 2020) to assess complementarities between diverse dimensions of workplace stressors.

The questionnaire was designed on a 4-point scale of strongly agree(SA), Agree(A), undecided (UD), disagree (D) and strongly disagree (SD). The questionnaire was administered on a face-to-face basis to employees of the sampled firms. Respondents had a time limit of 7days to complete the survey and were required to provide true and faithful information. An integrated data collection method was carried out consisting of coding and filtering of information obtained in the survey.

The data obtained were analysed using descriptive (Cronbach alpha, mean, standard deviation and correlation) and inferential (structural equation modelling) statistical techniques. Thus, workplace

stressors and organizational policy dimensions were modelled against a dimension of organizational performance (quality of product) as indicated in the following models:

$$Orgperf = f(rlamg, rconf, wklod) \quad -$$

eq. 1a

$$Orgperf = f(rlamg, rconf, wklod, orgpy) \quad -$$

eq. 1b

Equations 1a-b are the implicit form of the functional relationships between organizational performance and workplace stressors, moderated by organizational policy. Equation 2a -b are the explicit empirical models of the study:

$$Orgperf = \alpha_0 + \beta_1rlamg + \beta_2rconf + \beta_3wklod + \mu_t \quad -$$

eq. 2a

$$Orgperf = \alpha_0 + \beta_{11}rlamg + \beta_2rconf + \beta_3wklod + \beta_4orgpy + \mu_t \quad - eq. 2b$$

Equation 2b was used to validate the formulated hypotheses to ascertain the moderating role of organizational policy in the relationship between workplace stressors and organizational performance.

Variables Description

Orgperf=organizational performance(measured via quality of product);*rlamg*=role ambiguity; *rconf* = role conflict; *wklod* = workload (dimensions of workplace stressors); *orgpy* = organizational policy; α_0 & β =regression coefficients. The statistical analysis was carried out by means of STATA 13.0 version.

5. DATA PRESENTATION AND ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

Table 1: Demographic Variables of the Respondents

Ranks	Variables	Respondents	Frequency N=367	Per cent (%)
1	Gender	Male	241	65.67%
		Female	126	34.33%
		Total	367	100%
2	Age	21-25years	51	13.90%
		26-30years	214	58.31%
		31-35years	86	23.43%
		36years and above	16	4.36%
		Total	367	100%
3	Marital Status	Single	96	26.16%
		Married	268	73.02%
		Others	3	0.82%
		Total	367	100%
4	Respondent Type	Managers	12	3.27%
		Accountants	4	1.09%
		Sales Rep.	295	80.38%
		Others	56	15.26%
		Total	367	100%

Source: Field Survey, 2021

Table 1 shows that 241(65.67%) of the respondents are males while 126(34.33%) are females. 51(13.90%) of the respondents were within the age brackets of 21-25years, 214(58.31%) 26-30years, 86(23.43%) 31-35years while 16(4.36%) 36years and above. Also, it was revealed that 96(26.16%) and 268(73.02%) of the respondents are single and married respectively. 3(0.82%) represents other categories of marital status like divorced/separated. In addition, it was found that 12(3.27%) and 4(1.09%) of the respondents are managers and accountants of the studied firms respectively while 295(80.38%)

and 56(15.26%) are sales representatives and other respondent types.

Table 2: Reliability Results

Variables	Cronbach's Alpha
Workload	0.87
Role Conflict	0.81
Role Ambiguity	0.81
Organizational Policy	0.86
Organizational Performance	0.81

Source: Researchers' Computation, 2021 via STATA 13.0

In Table 2, the Cronbach alpha values were all above 0.7 (exceeded the minimum threshold), which is considered reliable (Fornell & Larcker 1981).

Consequently, the research instrument is considered reliable for the investigation.

Table 3: Means, Standard Deviation and Correlation Results

Variables	Mean	SD	1	2	3	4	5
1. Organizational Performance(Dependent Variable)	3.23	0.68	1				
2. Workload	2.13	0.65	.14	1			
3. Role Conflict	3.53	0.75	.15	.43	1		
4. Role Ambiguity	2.07	0.68	-.25	-.04	.12	1	
5. Organizational Policy (Moderating Variable)	2.33	0.63	.11	.11	.05	.53	1

Source: Researchers' Computation, 2020 via STATA 13.0

The mean and standard deviation values (Table 3) showed that the respondents' perception of workplace stressors (workload, role conflict and ambiguity) and organizational performance are similar; maximum mean value (role conflict =3.53) and minimum mean value (role ambiguity = 2.07), which is below all the standard deviation values.

The Correlation result showed that the link between workplace stressors

(workload and role conflict), and organizational performance, moderated by the organizational policy were positive except for the workplace stressors dimension of role ambiguity that is negatively related to organizational performance. In addition, none of the correlation coefficients exceeded the 0.8 benchmarks; thus, there is non-existence of multi-collinearity among pairs of independent variables. The results of mean, standard deviation and correlation indicate that the dataset is good enough in conducting further statistical analysis.

Table 3: Fit Indicators of Workplace Stressors, Organizational Performance and Organizational Policy

Fit Indicator(s)	Coefficients	Remark
The goodness of Fit Statistics (GFI)	0.98	Significant
Adjusted Goodness of Fit Statistic (AGFI)	0.96	Significant
Comparative Fit Index (CFI)	0.96	Significant

Root Mean Square Residual (RMR)	0.03	Significant
Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA)	0.07	Significant

Source: Researchers' Computation, 2020 via STATA 13.0

We applied Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) to establish the path relationship among the studied constructs (workplace stressors, organizational policy and organizational policy). The results indicated that the measurement model provides an absolute fit to data with the goodness of fit statistic(*GFI*)=.98; adjusted goodness of fit statistic(*AGFI*)=.96; comparative fit index(*CFI*)=.96, root mean residual(*RMR*)=.03, root mean square error of approximation (*RMSEA*)= .07.

The *GFI*, *AGFI* and *CFI* beat the suggested benchmark of 0.90, and the *RMSEA* value is below the benchmark value of 0.08. Impliedly, the approach employed for modelling the moderating role of organizational policy between workplace stressors and organizational performance fits properly; moreover, the path results are presented in Figure 2:

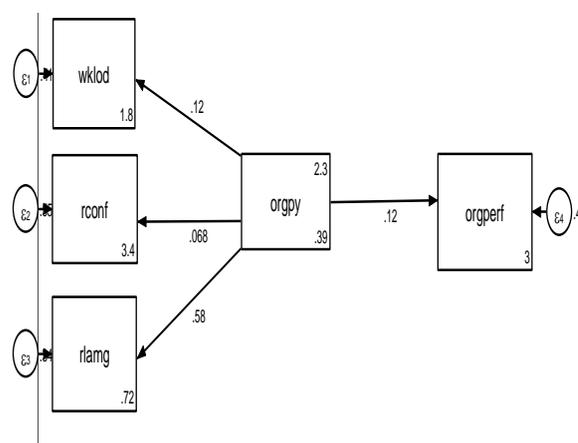


Figure 2: Results of the Hypothesized Model. **p*<0.05; ****p*<0.001.

Given the SEM result, hypotheses H₁-H₃ were supported implying that organizational policy moderates the relationship and workplace stressors significantly and positively related with organizational performance. In terms of pathway coefficients, workload is 0.12 (*p*<0.001), role conflict = 0.068(*p*<0.001) and role ambiguity=0.56(*p*<0.001) respectively. These findings suggest that organizational policy and workplace stressors are vital in enhancing the performance of an organization for consumer goods companies. As for levels of support, role ambiguity is the greatest, accompanied by workload and lastly, role conflict.

Table: 4 Test of Models

	Coef.	OIM Std. Err.	z	P>/z/	[95% Conf. Interval]	
Structural						
wkload <-						
orgpy	.1210605	.0535315	2.26	0.024	.0161406	.2259804
_cons	1.849168	.1292138	14.31	0.000	1.595914	2.102423
rconf <-						
orgpy	.0678663	.0618369	1.10	0.272	-.053318	.1890643
_cons	3.379148	.1492612	22.64	0.000	3.086601	3.671694
rlamg <-						
orgpy	.5786145	.0482747	11.99	0.000	.4839978	.6732311
_cons	.7184011	.1164605	6.17	0.000	.4900165	.9467856
orgperf <-						
orgpy	.1209911	.0565337	2.14	0.032	.010187	0
_cons	2.952872	.1364605	21.64	0.000	.2317952	
					2.685415	3.220330

Source: Researchers' Computation, 2020 via STATA 13.0; LR test of model vs. sat.: $\chi^2(6)=17517$; Prob. $>\chi^2=0.000$

Besides, hypotheses H_1 (workload and $orgpy=2.26$; $p>/z/=0.024<0.05$); H_3 (roaming and $orgpy = 11.99$; $p>/z/=0.000<0.05$) are supported; indicating that consumer goods organizational policy positively moderates the association between workload and role ambiguity and organizational performance. Moreover,

hypothesis H_2 ($rconf$ and $orgpy=1.10$; $p>/z/=0.272>0.05$) shows that consumer goods organizational policy does not moderate the association between role conflict and organizational performance; however, the association is positive. This implies that when workplace stressors (workload and role ambiguity) are adequately regulated by the policies of organizations, performance is positively affected.

Table 5: Model's Standardized Regression Weights, t-Values and Hypothesis

Path	Standardized Weight	Regression	Z-Value	Hypothesis
Direct Effect of the Integrative Model				
Workload→ Organizational Policy (γ_1)		0.054	2.26	H_1^{***}
Role Conflict → Organizational Policy (γ_2)		0.062	1.10	H_1
Role Ambiguity→ Organizational Policy (γ_3)		0.048	11.99	H_1^{***}
Organizational Performance → Organizational Policy(γ_4)		0.057	2.14	H^{***}
Indirect Effect of the Integrative Model				

Workload →Organizational Policy	-	No path
Role Conflict →Organizational Policy	-	No path
Role Ambiguity →Organizational Policy	-	No path
Organizational Performance →Organizational Policy	-	No path

Source: Researchers' Computation, 2020 via STATA 13.0; ***indicates the hypothesis was supported

Table 5 showed that the direct and indirect effects of the integrative model of workplace stressors and organizational

performance, as moderated by organizational policy. The result revealed a direct effect of the integrative model for workload and role ambiguity while no direct effect was found for role conflict.

Table 6: Hierarchical Regression Results

Organizational Policy of Consumer Goods Companies			
Variables	Model 1(workload)	Model 2(rconf)	Model 3(rlamg)
Step 1: Independent Variable			
Workplace Stressors	0.826	0.281	0.150
Step 2: Moderator Variable			
Organizational Policy		0.691***	0.401***
Step 3: Dependent Variable			
Organizational Performance			
R ²	0.524	0.246	0.678
F	6.09***	1.58	11.44***

Source: Researchers' Computation, 2020 via STATA 13.0; ***indicates supported model

The hierarchical interactive effect of organizational policy, workplace stressors and organizational performance of consumer goods companies in Nigeria are presented in Table 6. The hierarchy regression model revealed that role ambiguity(R²=.678) predicts organizational performance the most with about 67.8%, followed by

workload(52.4%) and role conflict (24.6%). Besides, the f-value showed that workplace stressors (wklod=6.09; rlamg=11.44) x organizational policy increased organizational performance while feeble workplace stress management(rconf=1.58)x organizational policy decreased organizational performance.

6. DISCUSSION

Fundamentally, the interests of organizations (whether large, medium-sized or small-sized) are geared towards enhancing performance and sustainability notwithstanding competition in its industry. In Nigeria, the management of consumer goods companies has made concerted efforts towards this via the use of workplace stress management and organizational policy, which are deemed vital mechanisms for organization survival and attainment of going concern dogma.

There are widespread views that when workplace stress is well managed together with well-positioned organizational policy, organizational performance is enhanced (Harry, 2020; and Kihara & Mugambi, 2018). While the above views abound in management literature, there are other claims that workplace stress management negatively affects organizational performance (Sikuku, *et al*, 2017; and Sun & Chiou, 2014).

Given the views of prior studies, this paper established the SEM effects of

workplace stressors (particularly, workload and role ambiguity) on organizational performance, as moderated by organizational policy. The results of the study are quite novel given the dearth of empirical research on the subject, particularly in the Nigeria context. Remarkably, the finding revealed that while direct effects for workload and role ambiguity were established, no direct effect was found in the case of role conflict).

Again, we found via the hierarchical regression model that role ambiguity predicts more of organizational performance. Likewise, hierarchical regression results showed that workplace stressors (workload and role ambiguity) and organizational policy increased organizational performance while feeble workplace stressor (role conflict) and organizational policy reduces organizational performance.

Noteworthy is the fact that when workplace stressors increase autonomously, organizational performance is affected significantly. However, the effect is felt as a result of the moderating role of organizational

policy. Consequently, organizational policy plays a vital moderating role between workplace stressors and organizational performance.

7. Conclusion and Recommendations

In this paper, we examined the moderating effect of organizational policy between workplace stressors and organizational performance of consumer goods companies in Nigeria. Given SEM results, the study showed that workplace stressors (workload and role ambiguity) significantly and positively affect organizational performance, particularly with the moderating role of organizational policy while no moderating effect was found between role conflict and organizational performance.

Given the results, the study recommends that employee stress audits need to be conducted regularly by management to determine whether stress levels are getting out of control and leading to chronic stress, which affects organizational performance. More so, there is a need for organizations to engage in Employee Assistance

Programme (EAP) to checkmate workload and role conflict now and in other future cases; EAP can be applied not only by Nigeria organizations but on a global scale.

This study contributes to knowledge by establishing that organizational policy moderates the relationship between workplace stressors and organizational performance. Again, this study affirms that while workload and role ambiguity positively and significantly affect organizational performance, the same is not true for workplace conflict. This study fills the gap in management literature on the moderating effect of organizational policy in the relationship between workplace stressors and organizational performance in the Nigerian context.

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