

CAUSES OF OCCUPATIONAL STRESS AMONG PUBLIC OFFICERS IN IMMIGRATION DEPARTMENT, NAIROBI COUNTY, KENYA

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Abstract: This study sought to examine the causes of occupational stress among public officers in the department of immigration. The study adopted Person – Environment Fit and Cognitive theories of stress. The study used cross – sectional survey design. The target population of the study was 194 public officers from five work stations within the department of immigration in Nairobi County. Systematic random sampling was employed to select 127 public officers to be included in the study. Purposive sampling was used to select Section heads and administrators. A questionnaire was used to gather information from the public officers while interview guide was used for key informants' who included sections heads and administrators. The data obtained was analyzed using descriptive statistics where statistical techniques like frequencies, mean, standard deviation and percentages were utilized. Validity of the research instrument and reliability were enhanced through a pilot study in two regional offices. The presentation was done through charts and tables and other figures. The Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 22 helped in data analysis. The study established that the major causes of occupational stress included inadequate salary, low participation in decision making process, heavy workloads, lack of staff welfare policies, favoritism, biasness and nepotisms in deployment and transfers, stagnation in one job group for a long period of time (lack of career growth), working under pressure with tight deadlines and poor working conditions. The study also recommended change of organizational policies to give individuals more control over their work activities, develop support system, shared goals and directions, inclusion in decision making, team work and respect for personal needs.

Keywords: Job Description, Job Security, Occupational Stress, Reduced Motivation, Staff Turnover, Workload.

I. INTRODUCTION

McGrath, Reid, & Boore (2003) state that when management pressure and organizational pressure occurs at work occupational pressure is the end result. Some stressors at work include perceived lack of support by the organization, inadequate or lack of resource to perform assigned task, lack of autonomy, low-confidence level and incompetence, poor or lack communication and guidance at work, as well as low and inconsistent salaries or absent reward systems at work. All these, are organizational and management issues that affect the individual negatively. A study conducted by Lee and Wang (2002) established other sources of stress at work as personal responsibility and inadequate guidance and support at work. They also reported that lack of communication and limited avenues of consultations as well as lack of resources or limited materials increases mental tension. Their report also revealed that employees become stressed when there is inadequate manpower at work or when they are forced to take risks to complete an assigned task. All these issues results in institutional stress. Several studies that have been conducted in area has found that Organizations structure and climate to a great deal hamper job performance among workers. A study conducted by Gichohi (2009) wanted to find out the effect of stress on job satisfaction among employees at the Government press and found out that there was stress among staff due to ambiguity, poor communication, unfair promotions, poor policies and poor pay. Similarly, a study by Gitongo

(2011) on the correlation between job satisfaction and occupational stress at Kenya customs Administration and found out that working for longer hours and handling of multiple tasks at once stressed employees. The concerns of career development, working in shifts, insecurity concerns at work, unexpected overtime, workload, denied holidays, job promotion, and job security characterizes the professional life in Immigration Department. Therefore, the current study seeks to examine the factors influencing occupational stress in the department.

Colligan and Higgins (2005), in their study concluded that a number of factors contribute to workplace stress. Factors such as having a toxic work environment, negative workload, isolation, role conflict, role ambiguity, lack of autonomy, career development barriers, difficult relationships with supervisors or co-workers, managerial bullying, harassment, and organizational climate. Ongori & Agolla (2008) in their research in Botswana found out that work overload, uncertainty about the future, poor communication in organizations, insufficient resources and conflicts as the major stressors. The study also revealed that these stressors could adversely affect the efficiency of organizations, increase employee turnover, lower motivation and increased expenditure in health care cost, which in turn has a negative effect on corporate performance. Other interesting sources of occupational stress are the work environment and institutional settings. Sveinsdottir *et al.*, (2006) noted that organizational and management attributes influenced stress related to work especially among public servants (2006). They identified institutional setting and work environment as some of the organizational and management attributes. Roberts (2005) observed that health workers perceived their responsibilities when it comes to handling the anaesthetic patients as one of their major source of stress.

Kenya Immigration Department is faced with a lot of challenges that can in essence jeopardize job performance such as, inadequate human resource capacity and relevant and up-to-date facilities to meet the increasing demands for Immigration services. Kenya is surrounded by neighbouring countries that are often involved in crime armed conflicts like Uganda, South Sudan, and Somalia. Also, the terrain along most parts along the border is not only unmanned and insecure but also porous and difficult to patrol and control effectively. Therefore, the immigration department has to be vigilant with the entry and exit of persons, document fraud, human trafficking smuggling, and organized crime using the available human resources and facilities – it puts the staff under pressure as far as their performance is concerned (CBMM, 2011). There is no inter-state connectedness along the border for immigration control and monitoring. Also, the integrated alien management system is lacking in most facilities. There is also a lot of difficulties experienced by staff on the issuance of entry permits to foreigners because they lack of a skills inventory to guide. Besides, there are inadequate legislation as well as policy frameworks coupled with weak enforcement of the set policies and regulations that pose a lot of challenges to immigration officers hence negatively affecting their operations (STM, 2008).

Evans (2002) identified six major stressors among public officers such as, job image, human resource system, intrinsic job features, organizational control, reward systems, and leadership. He also recommended that there is need for organizations to develop policies that focus on encouraging socialization and communications at workplace. On the other hand, Robert Karasek (2002) conducted a study on job stress and revealed that most stressful jobs are those that rarely gives the employees a chance to be involved in making decisions in the organization. As a consequence, these jobs place a high psychological demand on the employee. There are several aspects that lead to occupational stress. However, this stress is often complicated when workers feel that the organization, supervisors, and their colleagues is doing very little to support them. Also, the situation is made worse when they perceive to be helpless or with little influence at work or when they feel incapable of handling pressure and demands that comes with their work. According to ILO (2006), work stress is recognized as one of the major challenges that influence not only the health of an employee but also that of the organization in the world.

Additionally, Giga and Hoel (2003), found that the high rates of mergers, acquisitions, increasing economic inter dependence among countries due to globalization, technological development and restructuring have changed the organizational work over the last few decades, have resulted in time pressure, excessive work demand, role conflicts, ergonomic insufficiencies and problematic customer relationships are all causes of stress. Currently, at the Immigration department most of the services offered are online and since the launch of e- passports, e-visa, this systems requires high standards of adherence of advanced technological devices which the public officers if not well trained on their use can experience occupational stress especially due to the services they offer that are in high demand like a passport, visa, permits among others. Even though most studies have paid attention on the relationship between the performance of an individual at work and stress, many researchers have proposed a relationship between occupational performance and

various measures of performance in the organization like efficient use of organizational resources, organizational productivity, employee turnover, customer satisfaction, and quality objectives as well as attainment of goals at work (Sayeed, 2001). An unhealthy organizational climate reduces the commitment and involvement of employees thus affecting their performance negatively both at the individual and organizational level. In Kenya, work and stress experience is not a new phenomenon.

Extreme levels of poverty, poor working conditions, political surprises and instability, and poor environmental conditions expose Kenyans to experiences that result in stress (Musyoka, 2012). Ngeno (2007) notes that limited options force employees in Kenya to contend with few opportunities when it comes to job promotions, heavy workload at work, denied a seat at the decision-making table, and low and sometimes inconsistent salaries. The public sector in Kenya is characterized by bureaucratic, hierarchical decision-making process, political influence, low acceptance rate of performance contracts, and mismatch between resource allocation and need (Mutiga, 2006). In recent years, agencies in the public sector in Kenya have undergone several reforms as well as undertaken drastic environmental changes. Some of the popular reforms include the adoption of Rapid Result Initiative (RRI), Performance Appraisal System (PAS), managerial reforms emphasizing performance improvement, external accountability, and cost-containment (Noblet & Rodwell, 2009). These reforms, among others, continue to expose employees to unsurmountable pressure at work. The need for organizations to be customer-oriented also piles a lot of pressure on employees as far as satisfying their customers is concerned. Many organizations are adopting Information Communication Technology (ICT) as a means of speeding up business transaction and efficiency. This ICT demands new skills and knowledge for efficient proactivity. Studies show that ICT in places of work will increase efficiency, effectiveness, and productivity and it is the right approach in the dynamic global world. However, it is also important to acknowledge that the adoption of information technology in places of work also continue to accelerate pressure on the workforce (KNBS, 2007).

Kenya Immigration Department is one of the law enforcement agencies in the country mandated with controlling the entry and exit of persons, issuance of travel documents, regulating residency and employment of non-Kenyans, Enforcing Immigration and Citizenship Act and allied legislations, maintaining safe custody and retrieving of records and carrying out research, collecting and analyzing data on various issues (SM,2013). The staffs of Immigration Department are exposed to traumatic events as part of their occupation roles and what makes it unique with regard to stress is the hazardous and stressful environment of investigations and arrests of Immigration offenders as well as manning porous borders, and dealing with fraudulently acquired documents, the organizations work stressors, the perception of the public and weak criminal justice system (SM, 2003). In Nairobi County, workload, working in shifts, unexpected overtime, denied holidays, anxieties about insecurities at work, job security, career growth and development, and job promotion characterizes the professional life in Immigration Department. The progression in service is neither structured nor linked to training or corporate targets. The slow progression leads to stagnation of officers at one grade for many years (BBCM, 2005). Regardless of the causes of pressure, anxiety, and stress, they continue to negatively affect the employees' efficiency. For instance, decreased job satisfaction, depression, and illness – the effects of stress – affect the employees' performance and productivity, and ultimately, the department.

Immigration department is one of the law enforcement agencies charged with responsibility of monitoring and controlling the movement of people in and outside the country, issuing travel documents, and regulating residence of foreign nationals. Rotating shifts, long working hours, porous borders and exposure to life tragedies exert a heavy toll on public officers and their families. Of late, the department of immigration is experiencing a lot of challenges amongst its staff such as high divorce rates, suicide, high staff turnover, absenteeism, domestic violence, depression, Drug and substance abuse, terminal illnesses such as cancer, diabetes, high blood pressure among others. Mugwere (2012) conducted a study to establish the factors that led to occupational stress and its management at Colgate Palmolive and found out that occupational stress is prevalent in the company. The study revealed that workers between the age of 25 and 35 years were the most stressed while females were more stressed than males. For managers, Mugwere (2012) established that the major cause of stress was time pressure and deadlines, responsibility without autonomy and thwarted ambition. However, there is limited literature on the causes of occupational among public officers in the department of immigration and its influence on job performance. It's against this backdrop that the study sought to find out the causes of occupational stress among employees in the immigration department so as to mitigate them and enhance service delivery in the department of immigration.

II. METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a cross – sectional survey design. Groves (2010) and Kothari (2004) all agree that a cross-sectional survey is a research design in which a set of questions, for a set of issues being examined, (usually imbedded in an instrument) are administered to a population (or a sample of the population) at one point in time. The study was carried out at Immigration offices in Nairobi County since most of the functions of the department of immigration are centralized and secondly Nairobi being the capital city of Kenya and the economic hub in East Africa region endeavours a lot of challenges which Immigration staff has to deal with on a daily basis thus the need to document the causes of occupational stress and their effects on job performance. The target population of this study was the public officers working in the Department of Immigration in Nairobi County. The target population was 194 public officers which comprised of administrators, head of sections, immigration officers, clerical and support staff. The administrators were chosen because they are better suited to provide information on occupational stress affecting public officers working under them, and their work performance as well as strategies required to address the stress-related challenges. The head of sections were included in the sample since they not only assign but also supervise duties in their departments on a daily basis; they are also responsible for evaluation of work performance. Immigration officers, clerical officers and support staff were selected because they are the ones who carry out the activities of the department. Table 1 provides a summary of the target population which was 194.

Table 1: Distribution of Target Population

Section	Number
Administration	5
Foreign National Management	26
Passports	53
Border Management	103
Training and Research	7
Total	194

Stratified sampling technique was used in order to ensure that all the sections and cadres are represented. Systematic sampling procedure was then be used to draw respective respondents/public officers from sections register. The Administrators and head of sections were selected purposively. According to Mugenda and Mugenda (2007), purposive sampling gives the researcher an opportunity of getting the required information from the relevant people. The administrators and head of sections are suitable individuals to offer data on job performance of public officers as well as approaches employed to address occupational stress in their respective sections. The number of public officers used in the study was arrived at by the use of Krejcie and Morgan (1970) table for determination of sample size. In this respect the goal was to obtain a representative sample in which the sample research data correspond to particulars, characteristics and experiences of the entire population (Scott Smith 2013, Groves 2010 and Krejcie and Morgan 1970).

The table of Krejcie and Morgan (1970), Annex 1, provide a range of sample sizes of the population at precision (error level) of 0.05%, with the target population of 194, the required sample size was 127. This study used questionnaires to collect required data. Interview guide was also used to complement the process of data collection. Interview schedules were used to collect more in depth information from key Informants. Before data collection, the questionnaires were administered to a selected sample. This selected sample was similar to the actual sample which was not included in the study. This helped the researcher in improving the quality of the questionnaire since incorporated the remarks as well as recommendations from respondents resulting from the pre-testing.

Content validity focused on the degree at which the instrument adequately covers the research questions (Hair *et al*, 2006). Also, validity checks make sure that the research instrument is not bias as far as the lay out, format, and language of the tool of collecting data is concerned (Kasomo, 2006). The team of experts from the department of Counselling Psychology, Mount Kenya University authenticated the instruments. The internal consistency was measured using the Cronbach Alpha method. The threshold for acceptance of the Cronbach Alpha coefficient was 0.7. Data was analysed quantitatively and qualitatively. Quantitative data analysis included computation of descriptive statistics such as mean,

percentages, and frequencies to describe characteristics of respondents, causes and effects of occupational stress among public officers in the department of Immigration.

The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 22 also helped in analysing quantitative data. Qualitative data was collected through excerpts which were thereafter analysed using themes and subject contents. The researcher sought a research permit from the National Commission of Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) to conduct the study after approval of the topic by the university. Principles of confidentiality and privacy of information and identity were observed. Participant’s rights of free will, was not be interfered with including the right to withdraw from the research at will.

III. FINDINGS

The study revealed that a majority of the respondents, 60.7% always liked working for the department of immigration, 35.9% indicated that they sometimes like working for the department, 0.9% indicated seldom while 2.6% indicated that they do not like working for the department. The findings of the study implies that majority of the respondents were comfortable working for the department of immigration. However, a substansive number of the respondents indicated that they sometimes like working for the department or do not like working for the department an indication that there exist some level of occupational stress. The study found out that Work environments contributed substantively to occupational stress. Inzofu (2016), indicated that poor working conditions affected the productivity of the employees in an organization. Table 2 presents the participants response when asked about their work environment.

Table 2: Work Environment

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Always	29	24.2	24.4	24.4
Sometimes	70	58.3	58.8	83.2
Seldom	6	5.0	5.0	88.2
Not at all	14	11.7	11.8	100.0
Total	119	99.2	100.0	
Not Responded	1			

Table 2 above reveales that 58.8% are sometimes happy with their work environment while 24.4% are always happy with their working environment. 11.8% are not happy at all with their working environment and only 5% are seldom happy with their working environment. Its important to note that work enviroment is very important to an organization in realising its vision and missio. For instance, for an employee to be efficient and productive in today’s job environment means equipping employees with the right gear. This can be confirmed by the findings of a study by Lee, Eyraud, & International Labour Office, 2008 which concluded that companies that don’t upgrade or ignore the necessity for tech tools run the risk of diminished employee productivity. The parcipants asked were whether the department cared for its employees, the response of participants is illustrated in Table 3 below.

Table 3: Department’s Care for Employees

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	46	38.3	39.7	39.7
No	44	36.7	37.9	77.6
Not sure	26	21.7	22.4	100.0
Total	116	96.7	100.0	
Missing	4			

From table 3 above it can be observed that 39.7% of the respondents indicated that the department cares for its employees, while 37.9% indicated that the department does not care for its employees and 22.4% were not sure whether the department cares for its employees. Cummulatively 60.3% indicated that the department never cares for its employees an indication that occupational stress is prevalent in the department. From the study findings, it can be deduced that the department of immigration do not care about their employees welfare, this is detrimental to the organizations productivity since employees cannot be able to function properly if their needs and expectations are not met to their satisfaction. The study sought the opinions of participants as to why they thought that the department never cared for its employees. The findings are presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Department’s Care for Employees

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Career growth	14	11.7	11.7	11.7
Family separations due to deployment to hardship areas	10	8.3	8.3	20.0
Favoritism, Biasness, Nepotism	23	19.2	19.2	39.2
High workload	12	10.0	10.0	49.2
Lack of clear policies or staff welfare policies	16	13.3	13.3	62.5
Meagre salary	16	13.3	13.3	75.8
Not involved in decision making	14	11.7	11.7	87.5
Poor working conditions	15	12.5	12.5	100.0
Total	120	100.0	100.0	

Table 4 illustrates that 19.2% of the respondents feels there is a lot of favoritism, biasness and nepotism when it comes to transfers and deployments, 13.3% reported lack of clear policies on staff welfare, 13.3% reported meager salary, 12.5% reported poor working conditions 11.7% indicated lack of involvement in decision making process with a similar percentage (11.7%) indicating lack of career growth, 10% indicated high workload while 8.3% indicated family separations due to deployment in hardship areas. The study sought to establish whether the respondents had control over their job performance, this is illustrated in Table 5.

Table 5: Control over Job Performance

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	35	29.2	30.2	30.2
No	81	67.5	69.8	100.0
Total	116	96.7	100.0	
Missing	4			

From table 5 above, majority of the respondents 69.8% indicated that they did not have control over their job with 30.2% indicating that they had control over their job performance. However, its important to note that people might not have control over their job performance all the time since the demand for delivery changes over time. For instance, in the department of immigration, most of the services they offer are crucial to the public and their production is majorly dependent on the number of applications recieved for example the number of passports issued and the time frame. Table 12 shows the response of participants when requested to indicate whether they work under pressure.

Table 6: Working under Pressure

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	71	59.2	60.7	60.7
No	46	38.3	39.3	100.0
Total	117	97.5	100.0	
Missing	3	2.5		

Table 6 indicates that 60.7% of the respondents works under pressure while 39.3% do not work under pressure. From the analysis above, it can be concluded that majority of public officers in the department of immigration works under pressure which in essence is detrimental to their health and productivity. These study findings are similar to Mukama and Omondi (2010) who revealed that with excessive pressures, the job demands cannot be met, relaxation turns to exhaustion and a sense of satisfaction replaces with the feelings of stress, motivation sheds away and the workers start losing interest in the work and hence performance chart shows a negative trend which in turn affects the organizational productivity. Thus study aimed to find out whether mismatch between organization demands and one’s abilities to meet these demands increases stress levels at workplace. The findings are presented in Table 7.

Table 7: Employees Ability

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	33	27.5	28.9	28.9
No	78	65.0	68.4	97.4
Sometimes	3	2.5	2.7	100.0
Total	114	95.0	100.0	
Missing	6	5.0		

Table 7 clearly observes that 68.4% of the respondents reported that they are not asked to do more than their abilities permit whereas 28.9% responded to being asked to do more than their ability permits while a paltry 2.7% of the respondents indicated that sometimes they are being asked to do more than their ability permits.

It's worthy to note that occupational stress can occur when an individual is asked to do more than their ability permits. This is in line with the study that was carried out by Abdi (2001) which observed that performance of individuals is decreased when stress is caused by inability of individual to maintain a reasonable balance between family life and work life as he/she has to spend a lot of time in his/her working. The study also sought to establish whether the participants skills are utilized to their satisfaction. The findings are illustrated in Table 8.

Table 8: Skills Utilization

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	45	37.5	38.5	38.5
No	72	60.0	61.5	100.0
Total	117	97.5	100.0	
Missing	3	2.5		

It can be observed from Table 8 that 61.5% of the respondents indicated that their skills were not utilized to their satisfaction while 38.5% responded that their skills are utilized to their satisfaction. The study also sought to find out participants involvement in decision making process within the department of immigration. The findings are shown in Table 9.

Table 9: Participation in Decision Making

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	27	22.5	23.3	23.3
No	82	68.3	70.7	94.0
Sometimes	7	5.8	6.0	100.0
Total	116	96.7	100.0	
Missing	4	3.3		

Table 9 reveals that majority of the respondents 70.7% never participated in decision making process, 23.3% participated while 6.0% sometimes participated in decision making. From the analysis above it can be interpreted that decision making at the department of immigration is not inclusive or rather it is more of a top bottom approach and therefore, the employees are not adequately involved in decision making. This findings is similar to a research by Ngeno (2007) which pointed out that employees in Kenya have to contend with low salaries, lack of involvement in decision making, heavy workload, and few opportunities for promotion.

The study sought to find out the causes of occupational stress among public officers in the department of immigration. Results are presented in Table 10 below. The study shows that majority of the respondents (18.3%) of the respondents reported that stagnation in one job group caused occupational stress among public officers working at the department of immigration, 16.7% reported biasness in transfers, 11.7% reported heavy workload, 10.8% reported deployment to hardship areas, 9.2% reported meager salary with a similar number (9.2%) reporting depression resulting from work environment, 7.5% indicated work pressure, 6.7% indicated poor working conditions and lack of staff welfare policies, 5.8% reported lack of career growth while 4.2% reported wrongful dismissals as a cause of occupational stress.

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These findings on Table 10 are similar to a research study conducted by Gichohi (2009) which found out that deployment of human resource, routine work, poor relationship between employees, nepotism, job ambiguity, unfair promotion policies, manager’s leadership styles, work pressures and poor working conditions contributed to occupational stress.

Table 10: Causes of Occupation Stress among Public Officers

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Heavy workload	14	11.7	11.7	11.7
Lack of career growth	7	5.8	5.8	17.5
Wrongful termination	5	4.2	4.2	21.7
Work pressure	9	7.5	7.5	29.2
Depression	11	9.2	9.2	38.3
Biasness in transfers	20	16.7	16.7	55.0
Family breakups/separation due to deployment to harsh areas	13	10.8	10.8	65.8
Meager salary	11	9.2	9.2	75.0
Stagnation in one job group	22	18.3	18.3	93.3
Poor working conditions/lack of staff policies	8	6.7	6.7	100.0
Total	120	100.0	100.0	

According to Manu (2016) causes of stress are numerous including work load, cuts in staff, change at work, long work hours, lack of supervision, insufficient training, improper working conditions, too heavy responsibilities and poor relations with colleagues. The study established that interpersonal relationships, insufficient resources, lower salaries, heavy work, insecurity of job, high workload, time pressure, little control over job, insufficient job resources and under staffing as the major sources of occupational stress in the department of immigration, this is similar to a study that was conducted by Rehman et al., (2010). Table 11 captures the response of participants when asked whether inadequate salary contributed to occupational stress.

Table 11: Inadequate Salaries

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly agree	58	48.3	48.3	48.3
Agree	41	34.2	34.2	82.5
Not sure	13	10.8	10.8	93.3
Disagree	4	3.3	3.3	96.7
Strongly disagree	4	3.3	3.3	100.0
Total	120	100.0	100.0	

The findings as illustrated in Table 11 observes that 48.3% strongly agreed that inadequate salary contributes to occupational stress, 34.2% agreed with the statement, 10.8% were not sure while 3.3% disagreed with the statement and a similar number of respondents (3.3%) strongly disagreeing with the statement. Table 12 presents the response of participants to the statement that rigid rules and regulations causes occupational stress among public officers.

Table 12: Rigid Rules and Regulations

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly agree	25	20.8	20.8	20.8
Agree	34	28.3	28.3	49.2
Not sure	37	30.8	30.8	80.0
Disagree	17	14.2	14.2	94.2
Strongly disagree	7	5.8	5.8	100.0
Total	120	100.0	100.0	

Table 12 illustrates that 20.8% of the respondents strongly agreed that rigid rules and regulations caused occupational stress, 28.3% agreed to the statement, 30.8% were not sure whether rigid rules and regulations is a cause of occupational stress while 14.2% disagreed that rigid rules and regulations is a cause of stress.

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5.8% strongly disagreed that rigid rules and regulations is a cause of stress. Participants were asked to indicate their level of agreement with the statement whether heavy workload contributed to occupational stress. The findings are as shown in Table 13 below.

Table 13: Heavy workload

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly agree	46	38.3	38.3	38.3
Agree	41	34.2	34.2	72.5
Not sure	16	13.3	13.3	85.8
Disagree	11	9.2	9.2	95.0
Strongly disagree	6	5.0	5.0	100.0
Total	120	100.0	100.0	

Table 13 indicates that most of the respondents 38.3% strongly agreed that heavy workload is a major cause of stress at the department of immigration while 34.2% agreed. 13.3% were not sure if heavy workload is a cause of stress. 9.2% disagreed that heavy workload is a cause of stress and 5% strongly disagreed. Heavy workload would trigger anxiety or frustration that might further interfere with employees job performance. This was confirmed by one of the key informant. When asked the amount of workload and number of officers in his section, one of the key informants intimated that they receive a lot of applications in a day, they open the offices very early in the morning, the applicants are very many and they may not be able to receive the applications for all the applicants who turns up in a day. Furthermore, they serve a very big region and they have very few officers who are overwhelmed due to the number of applications and tight deadlines. Respondents were requested to state whether low participation in decision making contributed to occupational stress. The results are illustrated in Table 14.

Table 14: Low Participation in Decision Making

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly agree	46	38.3	38.3	38.3
Agree	35	29.2	29.2	67.5
Not sure	22	18.3	18.3	85.8
Disagree	15	12.5	12.5	98.3
Strongly disagree	2	1.7	1.7	100.0
Total	120	100.0	100.0	

Table 14 shows that majority of the respondents (38.3%), strongly agreed that low participation in decision making, 29.2% agreed with the statement, 18.3% were not sure, 12.5% disagreed with the statement while 1.7% strongly disagreed. The study sought to find out whether uncertainty in promotion caused occupational stress among public officers in the department of immigration. This is shown in table 15.

Table 15: Uncertainty in Promotions

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly agree	60	50.0	50.0	50.0
Agree	32	26.7	26.7	76.7
Not sure	14	11.7	11.7	88.3
Disagree	7	5.8	5.8	94.2
Strongly disagree	7	5.8	5.8	100.0
Total	120	100.0	100.0	

The findings in Table 15 indicates that 50% of the respondents strongly agreed that uncertainty in promotion is a cause of stress and 26.7% agreed. 11.7% of the respondents were not sure while 5.8% disagreed and another 5.8% strongly disagreed that uncertainty in promotion is a cause of stress at the department. According Youngkang et al, (2014) role ambiguity has been established to be an aspect of job dissatisfaction, influence of employee creativity and tendency to cause stress. Role ambiguity occurs when an individual has inadequate information about his role at work.

This may reflect on clarity about work objectives, colleagues’ expectations and level of authority. Individuals may also experience role ambiguity when they enter new situations such as, joining the organization or taking foreign assignments (McShane et al. 2008).

Table 16: Role Ambiguity

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly agree	25	20.8	20.8	20.8
Agree	26	21.7	21.7	42.5
Not sure	45	37.5	37.5	80.0
Disagree	16	13.3	13.3	93.3
Strongly disagree	8	6.7	6.7	100.0
Total	120	100.0	100.0	

Table 16 indicates that majority of the respondents (37.5%) were not sure if role ambiguity is a cause of stress followed by 21.7% of the respondents who agreed that role ambiguity is a cause of stress while 20.8% strongly agreed that role ambiguity is a cause of stress. 13.3% disagreed that role ambiguity is a cause of stress while 6.7% strongly disagreed. Table 17 shows the responses of participants to the statement that lack of clear job description contributes to occupational stress among immigration staff.

Table 17: Clear Job Description

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly agree	17	14.2	14.2	14.2
Agree	28	23.3	23.3	37.5
Not sure	20	16.7	16.7	54.2
Strongly disagree	16	13.3	13.3	67.5
Disagree	39	32.5	32.5	100.0
Total	120	100.0	100.0	

Table 17 indicates that 14.2% of the participants strongly agreed that lack of clear job description at the department of immigration contributes to occupational stress, 23.3% agreed with the statement, 16.7% were not sure whether lack of clear job description is a cause of occupational stress, 13.3 strongly disagreed with the statement with a majority of participants (32.5%) disagreeing with the statement. The study also revealed that majority of the public officers in the department of immigration are allocated tasks that do not match their skills, this is shown in Table 18.

Table 18: My Job Matches my Skills

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly agree	15	12.5	12.5	12.5
Agree	33	27.5	27.5	40.0
Not sure	26	21.7	21.7	61.7
Disagree	13	10.8	10.8	72.5
Strongly disagree	33	27.5	27.5	100.0
Total	120	100.0	100.0	

Table 18 shows that 12.5% strongly agreed that the tasks allocated to them do not match their skills, 27.5% agreed with the statement, 21.7% were not sure whether tasks allocated to them match their skills where as 10.8% disagreed with the statement and 27.5% strongly disagreed that tasks allocated to them do not match their skills. In summary, majority of respondents indicated that they have the necessary knowledge and skills to perform their job proficiently, however, jobs allocated to them didn’t match their skills which in turn affected their productivity. Nonetheless, these skills helped them to comply with job procedures, build a reputation for total customer satisfaction, complete quality work on time, use modern information technology, handle multiple responsibilities effectively and use working hours optimally. The study was also interested in finding out whether job security contributed to occupational stress among public officers working in the department of immigration. The finding is illustrated in Table 19.

Table 19: Job Security

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly agree	14	11.7	11.7	11.7
Agree	22	18.3	18.3	30.0
Not sure	19	15.8	15.8	45.8
Strongly disagree	24	20.0	20.0	65.8
Disagree	41	34.2	34.2	100.0
Total	120	100.0	100.0	

From Table 19, it can be concluded that 11.7% of the participants strongly agreed that lack of job security contributed to occupational stress among public officers, 18.3% agreed with the statement, 15.8% were not sure while 20% of the participants strongly disagreed with the statement and 34.2% disagreed with the statement. This is an indication that public officers in the department of immigration are assured of their tenure bearing in mind that majority are permanent and pensionable. The participants were asked whether they were comfortable with the promotion policies. Table 20 presents the findings.

Table 20: Promotion Policies

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly agree	6	5.0	5.0	5.0
Agree	6	5.0	5.0	10.0
Not sure	25	20.8	20.8	30.8
Strongly disagree	42	35.0	35.0	65.8
Disagree	41	34.2	34.2	100.0
Total	120	100.0	100.0	

Table 20 indicates that 5% of the participants strongly agreed that they are comfortable with the promotion policies with a similar number of participants (5%) agreeing with the statement. 20.8% of the participants were not sure whether they were comfortable with the promotion policies, 35% strongly disagreed and 43.2% equally disagreed with the statement. Cumulatively, 69.2% of the participants this is a substantive number an indication that there is need by the department of immigration to review their promotional policies. The participants were also asked whether inconsistency in leadership and lack of recognition also contributed to occupational stress, findings are presented in Table 21.

Table 21: Inconsistent Leadership and lack of recognition for achievement

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly agree	42	35.0	35.0	35.0
Agree	39	32.5	32.5	67.5
Not sure	18	15.0	15.0	82.5
Strongly disagree	7	5.8	5.8	88.3
Disagree	14	11.7	11.7	100.0
Total	120	100.0	100.0	

It can be concluded from Table 21 that inconsistent leadership and lack of recognition for achievement contributes to occupational stress amongst immigration staff. This is so because 35% of the study participants strongly agreed with the statement, 32.5% agreed, 15% were not sure whether it contributed to occupational stress, 5.8% strongly disagrees while 11.7% disagreed that inconsistent leadership and lack of recognition contributed to occupational stress among immigration staff. Table 22 presents the responses of participants when asked whether they can quit working for the department of immigration if they had another option.

Table 22: Staff Turn Over

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly agree	22	18.3	18.3	18.3
Agree	19	15.8	15.8	34.2
Not sure	41	34.2	34.2	68.3
Strongly disagree	18	15.0	15.0	83.3
Disagree	20	16.7	16.7	100.0
Total	120	100.0	100.0	

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Table 22 revealed that 18.3% strongly agreed that they can quit working for department of immigration when they are given a chance, 15.8% agreed, 34.2% were not sure, 15% strongly disagreed while 16.7% disagreed with the statement. From the analysis it can be confirmed that there is likely to be high staff turnover at the department of immigration because cumulatively, 68.3% either strongly agreed, agreed or were not sure as to quitting their employment when given an option. This is similar to the 2008 CIPD annual Recruitment, Retention and Turnover survey which cited stress of the job or role as a key reason for employee turnover. In addition to the above costs of stress, it can also lead to higher rates of accident and injury; this may be due to poor concentration, forgetfulness, reduced motivation or other stress related mechanisms which in turn jeopardizes organizational productivity. Table 23 represents the participants' response as to whether occupational stress affects their motivation.

Table 23: Reduced Motivation

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Strongly agree	47	39.2	39.2	39.2
Agree	40	33.3	33.3	72.5
Not sure	21	17.5	17.5	90.0
Strongly disagree	2	1.7	1.7	91.7
Disagree	10	8.3	8.3	100.0
Total	120	100.0	100.0	

From Table 23, it can be deduced that immigration staff suffers reduced motivation as a result of occupational stress. Majority of the respondents (39.2%) strongly agreed that there is reduced motivation at the department of immigration followed by 33.3% of the respondents agreeing with the statement, this is a strong indicator that occupational stress exists in the department which in turn leads to poor performance. Moreover, 17.5% of the participants indicated that they are not sure, 8.3% disagreed and 1.7% strongly disagreed to the statement.

IV. DISCUSSIONS

The respondents were made up of males (43%) and females (57%). Majority of the respondents 80% were married, 15% were single and the remaining 5% were either divorced or separated. The study revealed that majority of the respondents (39.2%) were between 41-50 years which is an indication that most of the employees are mature enough to decipher the issues of stress and performance of their work. 37.5% of the respondents were between the age 31-40 years and 22.5% were above 50 years of age.

The study established that inadequate salary caused occupational stress among public officers, this is because majority (48.3%) reported it as a cause of stress while 34.2% reported it not to be a cause of occupational stress. Some of the causes of occupational stress reported were, rigid rules and regulations where 49.1% of the respondents agreed with the statement while only 5.8% disagreed and another 20.6% were not sure whether it contributed to occupational stress. Heavy workload was also reported by the majority (72.5%) as a cause of occupational stress, low participation in decision making process was also reported as a cause of occupational stress whereby 67.5% of the respondents agreed. Uncertainty in promotion was also reported by majority 76.7% to contribute to occupational stress, no clear job description also caused stress in the department of immigration where 37.5% respondents agreed with the statement. 40% of the respondents indicated that the jobs allocated to them did not match their skills, inconsistent leadership and lack of recognition for achievement also caused stress in the department. When asked whether when given a chance they would quit their jobs, 67.5% reported that they would quit given a chance.

V. CONCLUSIONS

The study revealed that some of the causes of occupational stress among public officers in the department include inadequate salaries, rigid rules and regulations, low participation in decision making process, heavy workloads, lack of staff welfare policies, favouritism, biasness and nepotisms in deployment and transfers, stagnation in one job group for a long period of time (lack of career growth), working under pressure with tight deadlines, poor working conditions and allocating them tasks that do not match their skills.

VI. RECOMMENDATION AND SUGGESTIONS

The department of immigration can also change or remove the stress by redesigning jobs to reduce feeling of being undervalued at workplace, unclear job roles, underutilized skills, work-home interface and job insecurity. They can also change organizational policies to give individuals more control over their work activities, develop support system, shared goals and directions, inclusion in decision making, team work and respect for personal needs. The department of immigration should also come up with clear policies on deployments, transfers and promotion of her staff; this will help in alleviating biasness, nepotism and favoritism that was reported by majority of respondents. A comparative study can also be done among public officers working for the department of immigration in Urban Areas and their counter parts in Rural Areas to bring out the different aspects and challenges being faced at various levels for better formulation of an all-inclusive staff welfare policies.

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