

The Workplace Stress Factors among Part-Time Lecturers in Lesotho

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to examine the workplace stress factors among part-time lecturers in Lesotho. A qualitative research design method was used where thirty face-to-face semi-structured interviews were used to collect data in lecturers working in public, private and religious higher education institutions. The findings reveal the following workplace stress factors in part-time lecturers: heavy workload, working hours, job insecurity, office space, resources and facilities, delay in payment and student behaviour. The findings of this study further add to the existing literature on workplace stress in the context of Lesotho. Therefore, future studies may use other methods and also focus on full time lecturers of all higher education institutions in Lesotho, to get more insights on the issue of workplace stress.

INTRODUCTION

Managing the demands of academia is often considered to be devastating and academics endure the pressures and stress that come with working in higher education (The Continents State University, 2024). Workplace stress is one of the big issues facing employees especially in higher education (Gunbayi, 2014). When pressure becomes excessive, it leads to stress in employees (Zeinolabedini, Heidarnia, Shakerinejad and Mothagh, 2022). In mid-1980's, higher education institutions were not places where employees experienced stress. Since then employees in higher education institutions seem to be also experiencing workplace stress factors at higher levels (Gunbayi, 2014; Mark and Smith, 2018). These include poor government policies in education, increasing workload, lack of independence as well as decreased quality of standards in academia (Fisher, 1994). In academia, workplace stress factors affect academic staff through job dissatisfaction, low work motivation and low emotional and physical health (Gunbayi, 2014). Lesotho's academic setting is also filled with challenges and opportunities. While the country faces restrictions in terms of infrastructure gaps, resources, and funding limitations, there are also several opportunities for growth, partnerships and innovation (The Continents State University, 2024). The degree at which high education institutions are established in Lesotho by religious bodies, individuals and government, shows that education is viewed as the key to individual and national growth and development. This has forced institutions into devising means to make their existence known of having skilled staff and also capable of producing industry ready graduates needed by the country. All these have caused pressure in scholars while performing their duties.

Lesotho is among the developing countries which is recently also experiencing tragic events such as political and economic instability, poorly maintained roads, insecurity and high profile crimes. The part-time lecturers in higher education institutions as citizens of the country live through all these situations that affect their jobs as they end up with lack of basic facilities and resources. Traditionally, higher education teaching was regarded as a low stress profession (Omoniyi, 2013). Although not well paid, academics have been envied because they benefitted from less work load, tenure, flexibility, 'perk' which included overseas trips for study and/or conference and to freely pursue their own research interests (Omoniyi, 2013). Nonetheless, these advantages seem to have died out in most countries such as Nigeria and the same situation exists in Lesotho. Currently, salaries in academia seem to be low with respect to the current economic crises, there is an increase in the number of untenured academic positions and workloads. Also, academics are pressured to invite external funding for their research and to either 'publish or perish' (Omoniyi, 2013). All the mentioned issues greatly result in high stress levels in lecturers such that they may move away from normal functioning. Hence, this study aims to study the workplace stress factors among part-time lecturers in Lesotho.

The disparities in findings from different studies emphasise the need to conduct studies on workplace stress factors among part-time lecturers in Lesotho as there is a dearth of studies in this domain. Also, the findings obtained by prior

studies in other countries might differ and not be applicable in the context of Lesotho. Consequently, by examining in-depth the experiences of part-time lecturers in Lesotho, the present study will not only enhance the existing literature by providing information from a new context but will also unearth some of these disparities on studies conducted on workplace stress factors among lecturers. The findings of the study will be vital in shedding light on how to improve the higher education learning institutions in Lesotho and similar economies. This is particularly important as improving lecturers and enhancing their work environment is important for attaining and maintaining high quality of education. Hence, this study aims to study the workplace stress factors among part-time lecturers in Lesotho.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Workplace Stress

Stress is described as a relationship between the person and the environment that is considered as personally important and as challenging or exceeding resources for surviving (Folkman, 2013). Researchers (Wadhera and Bano, 2020; Awang, Mohamed, Ahmad and Nasir, 2021) defined workplace stress as a mental reaction to hazardous effects of workplace environment. Bhargava and Triveli (2018) emphasized that workplace stress can cause harm if not treated in its early stage. Also, an imbalance between the job demands and competencies and resources of an individual causes workplace stress (Amad, Gui and Kashif, 2022). However, workplace stressors also differ with organisations.

In addition, workplace stress is caused by two key factors: the job characteristics (work content) and the surrounding condition and environment where the work is executed (work context) (Bakker and Demerouti, 2014). Stress in work content is defined as the type of the job demands and responsibilities in a specific job. It includes the following issues: complexity of tasks, workload, time pressures and the level of independence or control an employee has in performing their duties. Stress caused by work content is caused by factors such as too many job demands, tight deadlines, challenging assignments, or a lack of power to make decisions. For example, a lecturer might encounter stress caused by the overwhelming number of classes to prepare for and deliver or the need to fulfil the strict research targets. In the work context, stress includes the surroundings in which the work is performed. It includes factors beyond the specific job role, such as interpersonal relationships, workplace culture, organizational policies and the physical conditions of the work environment. Stress related to the work context is caused by factors such as inadequate support from superiors, conflicts with colleagues, organizational changes or even issues like insufficient facilities or infrastructure. For instance, a lecturer may encounter stress caused by lack of administrative support or old-fashioned teaching facilities (Barnabas, 2023).

Moreover, stress is classified into the following dimensions: personal, role-related, social, physical/environmental and organizational sources (Barnabas, 2023). This grouping emphasizes the complex nature of stress, admitting that stress factors may come from various facets of an individual's life and work environment. However, the common workplace stress factors include

job dissatisfaction career progress requirement, organizational climate, workload, lack of support from spouse and family. Others include poor facilities to work, poor relationship with colleagues, poor performance and individual beliefs and values and pay and benefits (Barnabas, 2023).

Causes of Workplace Stress

Longer working hours lead to job stress because people struggle to manage work and family demands, especially in communities where family life is most valued (Alam, 2010). Wallace (2005) found that long working hours, working evenings and weekends, and inflexible schedules increase the tension between the work and family roles. In addition, most employees and business owners experience emotional exhaustion because they fail to manage the pressures from their family and work roles (Karatepe, 2013). Other studies (Grzywacz, Arcury, Marín, Carrillo, Burke, Coates & Quandt, 2007; Frone, 2000) also revealed that job demands such as work role ambiguity, work role conflict, shift work, and physical and psychological effort cause job strain which then leads to feeling overwhelmed and a role overload. Furthermore, Abbasi (2015) indicated that work overload can lead to stress which in turn results in job dissatisfaction. Picincu (2020) indicated that job dissatisfaction can lead to a high employee turnover rate and can also reduce employee work performance. Judge and Higgins (1999) indicated that individuals who are dissatisfied with their jobs do not consider their careers to be successful. Moreover, burnout causes disappointment and lack of motivation in people dedicated to their work (Sarianti, Fitria & Engriani, 2018). Kollmann, Stöeckmann, Kensbock, & Peschl, (2019) mentioned that when people come across extensive job stressors, they struggle to recover and detach from their work even though in that situation they are in a particular need to recover. A lack of recovery in turn results in the decreased well-being and increased strain reactions (Kollmann, Stöeckmann, Kensbock, & Peschl, 2019). Researchers (Syrek, Weigelt, Peifer & Antoni, 2017; Hülshager, Lang, Depenbrock, Fehrmann, Zijlstra & Alberts, 2014) indicated that not being able to detach from work during non-work times can lead to continued psychophysiological activation and a high level of arousal which can cause individuals to struggle to fall asleep. The inability to achieve the expected requirements can lead to high levels of stress (Syrek, Weigelt, Peifer & Antoni, 2017; Smith & Mcelwee, 2011).

In addition, Letam (2023) emphasized that lecturers working in state-owned institutions in River State, Nigeria come across lots of challenges like heavy workloads, resource limitations, and insufficient wages. These challenges have the high probability of causing workplace stress in lecturers which can in turn affect their performance and general well-being. The effects of workplace stress on higher education institution lecturers can be very extreme. Osibanjo et al. (2016) also found that workplace stress can result in depression, burnout and other mental health issues in lecturers. The study also found that workplace stress has the negative effect on job satisfaction and commitment and the quality of teaching.

Theoretical Framework

This study draws on the theory that will provide an understanding of part-lecturers' experiences of workplace stress factors. This theory is the Person-Environment Fit (P-E Fit) theory which was developed by French and Caplan in 1972. This theory is built on the premise that stress is caused by a misfit between an individual and the environment. Stress can happen if there is an incompatibility between an individual's demands and the abilities to fulfil those demands. The incompatibility between demands and abilities lead to the strategies used to handle and protect which in turn affect the objective and subjective representations of the environment (Edwards, Caplan and Harrison, 1998). The incompatibility between the objective reality of the work surroundings and an individual's subjective views of the work setting also lead to stress. In this given, the two definitions were given: first is between objective reality and subjective opinions. Second is between environmental variables and person variables. For instance, if one encounters a simple 2x2 configuration of Px E interaction, lack of fit can defy the employee's health.

In light of this theory, individuals can realize that there is an incompatibility between the workplace demands of part-time lecturers and their abilities to fulfil them. In Lesotho, part-time lecturing is not an easy job due to numerous family and work reasons which need 100% attention. Part-time lecturers are often burdened by the job demands such as academic and administrative as well as family issues. It becomes important to clearly state that there is a limit to what an individual can take at a certain time, and if the demand surpasses this limit, the individual involved will make use of a defense strategy which is a form of a coping strategy which is in no way good for any organization.

METHODOLOGY

This study used a qualitative case study design. The population for this study was the part-time lecturers in three higher education institutions in Lesotho and the sample for this study was selected through the stratified random sampling technique. The three higher education institutions selected consisted of one religious institution, one public institution and one private institution. A total of 30 participants consisting of 13 male and 17 female part-time lecturers were used as a sample for the study. Semi structured face-to-face interviews were used to collect data in this study and for those who could not meet the researcher in person because of their work schedules and engagements, the researcher resorted to interviewing them telephonically. The researcher targeted part-time lecturers from religious, public and private higher education institutions in order to get several views on the subject of workplace stress factors. Before data collection, permission was obtained from the lecturers where the researcher briefed them about the study aim. Before the interviews took place, different places to meet were identified by both the researcher and participants and the researcher ensured that they were also conducive for the participants. Also, the date and time of the interviews were chosen based on the availability of respondents. The duration of the interviews was mostly 50 minutes to one hour depending on how detailed each respondent was. Interviews were held until no

further new information was obtained and this happened after interviewing 22 participants. Data in this study was analyzed through the thematic analysis. The different steps involved in thematic analysis were used during analysis of the data. The researcher started by learning and understanding the data collected where the collected transcriptions were read and re-read two to three times. After that, the codes were generated where important information was highlighted and classified. The themes were identified by grouping the same concepts together and describing them at the end, major themes were considered as various workplace factors.

RESEARCH RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Table 1 Lecturers' characteristics (n=30)

No	Gender	Type of institution	Level of education	Lecturing experience
1	Female	Public	Doctorate	3 years
2	Male	Religious	Masters	5 years
3	Female	Public	Masters	2 years
4	Female	Public	Doctorate	3 years
5	Male	Private	Masters	1 year
6	Male	Religious	Masters	2 years
7	Male	Religious	Masters	4 years
8	Male	Private	Masters	More than 6 years
9	Male	Public	Doctorate	5 years
10	Female	Public	Doctorate	More than 6 years
11	Female	Religious	Masters	More than 6 years
12	Female	Public	Doctorate	More than 6 years
13	Male	Religious	Masters	2 years
14	Female	Private	Masters	3 years
15	Female	Public	Masters	More than 6 years
16	Female	Religious	Doctorate	More than 6 years
17	Male	Private	Masters	6 years
18	Female	Private	Masters	More than 6 years
19	Female	Public	Doctorate	More than 6 years
20	Male	Religious	Masters	More than 6 years
21	Female	Private	Masters	3 years
22	Female	Public	Doctorate	4 years
23	Male	Private	Masters	1 year
24	Female	Religious	Masters	6 years
25	Male	Public	Doctorate	2 years
26	Female	Private	Masters	4 years
27	Male	Religious	Doctorate	1 year
28	Female	Private	Masters	5 years
29	Female	Private	Masters	1 year
30	Male	Religious	Masters	More than 6 years

Table 1 above show the demographics of part-time lecturers that took part in this study. The demographics include the participant's gender, type of institution, level of education as well as the lecturing experience. This information enabled the researcher to demonstrate the context of the workplace stress factors of part-time lecturers that took part in this study.

Presentation of Themes

The following themes emerged from the analysis of data on workplace stress in this study: heavy workload, working hours, job insecurity, office space, resources and facilities, delay in payment and student behaviour.

Heavy Workload

Heavy workload is one of the workplace stressors that the participants raised. They mentioned that they had to teach huge classes as well as teach many different subjects among others.

Participant 3 said:

I teach huge classes. That in itself says I have a lot of marking to do which also takes time to complete. So marking a lot of scripts especially for individual assignments or exams is very stressful for me.

Participant 5 added:

Sometime, I'm given a lot of subjects to teach. This means I prepare a lot before I go to such classes. So sometimes if I don't manage to fully understand what I want to teach I become stressed and end not even enjoying that kind of class.

Participant 9 explained

We know that lecturing is our main duty here, but if the subjects we teach were fairly allocated, none of us would have the stress from this job. So the unclear allocation of subjects is also part of what causes stress for us especially when the coordinator and management are not easily approachable on the matter. Because you find that part-time lecturers have more subjects to teach than others and that says they have more workload and still expected to meet the same deadline and also still perform the same way as those who have less subjects. So when the number of subjects we teach increases, you find yourself burdened with work and end up experiencing the burnout because of the duties that we're expected to perform.

Participants in this study have identified heavy workload as one of the workplace stressors they experience. From the results, participants mentioned that the lecturing duties have a lot of weight for them. Participant 5 has a lot of subjects to teach and is forced to do a lot preparations for those subjects. If they fail to do thorough preparations for the classes, that causes stress. In a similar manner, participant 3 teaches classes with lots of students, so they are overburdened by the marking of many students which also causes stress. Being overburdened with lots of students and subjects to teach does not only affect their lecturing duties but also stressed them a lot. Participant 9 revealed that sometimes, when the workload increases, they feel hopeless and experience

burnout. They also said that workload increases when there is lack of academic and supportive staff. They further explained that if the work is distributed evenly among employees, then it may help them to manage their work and cope with stress. The findings of this study are similar to the findings of Sharmilee et al. (2017), who found that when the employees are assigned lots of job assignments and are expected to complete them within the limited given timeline, they experience a high level of job stress and dissatisfaction. Other studies (Wadhera and Bano, 2020; Der Feltz-Cornelius et al., 2020; Awang, et al. (2021; Gul et al., 2021b) also found that the teaching job demands which include being researchers, administrators and supervisor, teaching the extra classes, attending meetings lead to job-related stress in university teachers. Gupta et al. (2015) also found that work overload results in high stress levels which physically and emotionally affects teachers. Therefore, the demanding nature of teachers' job in higher education is becoming more demanding because of the following factors: increased research demands, slow career growth or fewer opportunities for timely promotions, extra responsibilities, less support from management and bigger gap between the professional and personal requirements (Ahmsd, Gul and Kashif, 2022).

Job insecurity

Participants in this study identified job insecurity as one of the workplace stress factors that they encounter in their workplaces. They narrated this situation as follows:

Participant 10 said:

This job is a part time contract. So I always worry what will happen to me if the institution does not renew my contract because I have a family to support with the little that I earn here. The stress I have about being a part time lecturer also affects my attitude towards the work itself. I always feel that I'm not being treated the same way as permanent employees. I sometimes feel an element of discrimination which is caused by the fact that I work part time here. Or I'd say I feel undervalued or under utilised.

Participant 15 also said:

Being on contract is a very stressful thing for me because I'm uncertain about what the future holds for me in this job. How I wish I was a permanent employee, maybe my stress levels would be lower because there is a lot of unemployment out there.... So working here is an opportunity but at the same time I worry about being a parttime employee because there are some issues that I cannot manage to do with this contract. It restricts me on some issues of my life and that also is very stressful because we sometimes work without contracts. We sign contracts after the semester has ended so you can imagine going through that.

Another participant added:

We work on part time contract here. Sometimes they delay to renew our contracts. We find ourselves working without any recent contracts and that makes us always worry if management really takes us serious or they take us for granted. Not knowing where you stand is a very unpleasant feeling let alone when the concerned management does not

even communicate properly with us. All they do is to tell us to continue working and say the contracts issue will be sorted out in the middle of the semester (Participant 1).

From the results above it seems that participants are employees working on contract basis as they are all worried about the issue of their contract renewal. Participant 15 mentioned that being on contracts has restrictions on their personal life and that is what causes stress. Participant 1 said that the delay in renewing contracts causes stress as they sometimes work without renewing contracts. That also causes stress as they feel that they are taken for granted by management. In addition, participant 1 pointed out that as part-time lecturers they worry about the future of the job whether their job is safe or not. From the views above, participants seem to be always in fear of losing their jobs especially when considering the fact of contracts taking a long time before being renewed. They have mentioned that although they are working on the part-time basis, but they worried about what the future holds for them as they depended on the job for survival. They said that their job insecurity highly affected their working attitude and also put them in constant fear and stress. They said that due to the contractual renewal barriers, they felt that they were not valued for their duty and service merely being a contractual or daily wages employee. These results are similar to the finding of Batool et al. (2021) who found that teachers encountered numerous challenges such as delay in their bill payment, limited resources, heavy workload and role ambiguity. All these challenges were caused by their contracts. Other studies (Tytherjeighs et al., 2005; Christo and Piernaar, 2006; Sahiszada and Bano, 2012) also found job insecurity as a source of stress for the staff of higher education.

Delay in payment

Respondents in this study also identified delay in payment as one of their workplace stressors they experienced.

Participant 11 said:

It's been two years since I worked here. In the first year, I spent the second semester that year without any payment. That was very stressful because I struggled to pay my rent and transport.

Participant 19 also said:

We work so hard here but when it comes to getting paid it's as if management forgets that we are also human beings with needs. They never pay us on time. We always have to do follow-ups on our payments and that causes stress and sometimes feel like quitting the job or not even showing up for classes because of that.

Participant 4 said

Money here is the problem. I remember when I first joined the institution, one of our colleagues even had to quit the job just because of not getting paid on time. She ended up holding all student marks because nothing was paid to her and us. We remained because we had nowhere to go. So payment here is the biggest problem here.

Results above show the delay in payment as one of the workplace stressors that participants. They indicated that they were always in state of stress because of slow payment processes. They indicated that not getting paid on time hindered some of their personal needs. They added, sometimes it took a long time to pay and that exposed them to serious stress. For instance, participant 11 showed that they spent the whole semester without getting paid and that affected the means to pay their rent and transport. Participant 4 mentioned that while they could not quit the job because of lack of other employment options, one of their colleagues ended up quitting the job due to not getting paid on time.

Working Hours

Participants in this study mentioned that their working hours contributed to the workplace stress they experienced. They shared their stories in the following manner:

Participant 12 said:

Unlike the permanent employees, we part-timers only get to teach evening classes, both in winter and summer. Permanent employees teach during the day only and we teach only in the evening during the week. Another sad part is that we also come to work on weekends while permanent employees do not. That feels very unfair and stressful especially for those of us who do not own any cars because in winter it is sometimes dark and unsafe to walk just outside the gate to the bus stop. Let alone in rainy days, those are the worst days. Even those who own cars may be hijacked because classes end at 7pm so you can imagine.

Another one added:

I don't mind coming to work on weekends because it is during the day, what stresses me most is the evening classes that I take especially in winter and rainy days. They sometimes make me want to quit this job. I sometimes do not show up because I feel demotivated to come to work between 5 and 7 pm. I always wonder how they expect us to spend the whole day away from campus and only come during those weird hours. I'm here because I have no choice otherwise I wouldn't stand this situation (Participant 8)

Participant 17 said:

Coming to working in the evening hours is challenge because this area is said to be unsafe. Also, we come here running to conduct classes and you find that only few students came to attend classes. They choose to catch up on the weekend classes or from their classmates. So that is also stressful to risk your life for the few. But then again what can we do, that is life I guess.

The results above show the working hours as one of the workplace stressors that part-time lecturers experienced in their workplaces. For instance, participants 8, 12 and 17 mentioned that what stresses them is having to conduct the evening classes. Participants 8 and 12 indicated that what makes them even more stressed are the rainy days on top of going to work in the evening. Participant also mentioned that only part time lecturers conduct weekend classes, permanent employees do not and that makes it unfair and stresses them.

Although participants seem stressed by the working hours, they indicated that they do not quit their jobs because they have no other place to run to. In this study, participants complained about strange working hours and not necessarily long working hours. However, studies such as that of Gupta et al. (2015) found that three quarters of teachers reported working more than 40 hours a week and almost 40% of teachers worked more than 50 hours a week, which also caused stress for them.

Office Space

Not having an office space was one of the stress factors of part-time lecturers and they shared their views as follows:

I always find myself having to do all the preparations at home before coming to campus because there is no working space for us part time lecturers. Otherwise, you find yourself squeezing with students in the lab and that is not good when you want to finish marking before class starts. It also makes me feel unappreciated by the institution (Participant 9)

The only person assigned the office space is our coordinator and permanent employees. The part-time lecturers do not have any office space. It's either you squeeze yourself in the coordinator's office or if you own a car just sit in there and do your work. If you don't have a car like myself you are in serious trouble. It makes you feel undervalued and these students sometimes also take us for granted because of that (Participant 12).

I sometimes sit in my car and complete all that I wish to do before classes begin. And in days when I come to work using public transport I find myself just sitting in one of the vacant classes and that is also not comfortable because these students sometimes also come to use the same venue for revision or to wait for classes. On the other hand, the coordinator's office is very small so it's not always the best place to run to (Participant 3).

Not having an office space was identified as one of the workplace stressors of participants in this study. Participant 12 mentioned that it is a big concern because it makes them look undervalued and also makes students to also disrespect them. From the views of participants 3 and 12, the coordinator is the only one with the office space while part-time lecturers are not given any office to work from. They indicate that cars serve as office spaces for those who own them, while those who do not own them struggle to find the comfortable space to work in and that causes stress for them. The results of this study are similar to the findings of prior studies. For example, Ahmsd, Gul and Kashif (2022) found that teachers in higher education in Pakistan did not have proper office space to smoothly conduct their daily activities and that affected their performance at work. Peretomode (2012), also found that lack of a proper office space was a key stress factor for teachers in higher education. Bukhari et al. (2021a) emphasized the fact that lecturers in higher education must be given a comfortable office space in order to smoothly perform their daily duties.

Lack of resources and facilities

Lack of resources was one of the workplace stressors identified by participants in this study. They shared their stories as follows:

Participant 1 shared:

As a lecturer of a practical subject like accounting it is expected that I do most of the writing during class, but that is not easy because markers and dusters are usually not available. We get 1 marker for the whole semester. Sometimes you find that the marker given to you is dried up yet it is believed to be new. With dusters we also just get one duster and if you happen to forget it at home or lose it then you do not get a replacement. You will have to buy yourself a new one out of your pocket.

Another participant said:

I teach most of the theory subjects where I give students assignments that require them to do a lot of reading that is not easy for me to achieve my goal because the institution does not have a proper or updated library facilities. The internet is also a problem (Participant 2)

Participant 5 shared:

Easy to find resources like stationery (a pen (either red or any color), notepads, duster and marker) are a big problem for us. I will touch other issues like the library and other resources. So that makes life difficult for us and students. Even the writing boards we use need a serious replacement because coming to work and not having resources to use is a serious turnoff and causes stress. The painful part is that when we report these issues management just tells to find way to manage with the little that the institution has. And the question is always how because they never tell us how to manage with the little.

From the results above, lack of resources and facilities is what causes stress for part-time lecturers. For example, participants 1 and 5 talked about finding it difficult to even get resources such stationery saying that makes their job difficult hence causing stress for them. Participant 2 and 5 touched on the library and internet facilities indicating that they also experience stress because they are not up to date and makes them fail to achieve their goals at work and that is what causes stress for them. The findings of this study are similar to the findings of prior studies. For instance, Gillespie et al. (2001) found that workplace stress was caused by insufficient resources, inadequate funding and facilities. Gul et al. (2021a) classified diverse workplace stress factors based on public and private universities. They indicated that employees of the public sector universities experienced less workplace stress than employees of private sector universities because of the availability of research grants and other facilities to the employees of the public sector universities. Gul et al. (2021a) also emphasized that university teachers ought to have a proper office space in order to smoothly conduct all the academic duties assigned to them.

Student Behavior

Student behavior is also one of the workplace stressors identified by participants in this study.

As a young female lecturer, dealing with students is very stressful because they sometimes disrespect me because of my age. They make noise during class time and having to reprimand them several times causes stress because you find they intentionally make noise to challenge me (Participant 4).

I sometimes teach a class of naughty students who are not easy to control. So whenever I go to such classes I'm always stressed because I always wonder what I'm going to come across during class time. I sometimes even feel like not attending such classes (Participant 9).

When you are assigned a class of students who are known to misbehave in class it feels like one is being tested so much that I sometimes even feel like quitting the job just for that semester when those students attend classes. It is very painful to be verbally challenged by the students especially the older students who misuse their age to bully lecturers to make fun of them in front of everyone else in class. That is the worst experience that I do not wish on anyone (Participant 20).

In as much as I enjoy lecturing, one of the things I hate about my job is dealing with students who are naughty and out of control. You know some of these students forget that they are no longer in primary or high school. And that you will see in their unruly behavior (Participant 13).

The views of participants show that students' unpleasant behavior in classes is one of the factors that cause stress for lecturers. Participant 9 and 13 mentioned that teaching naughty students stresses them and makes them to always have thoughts of not attending such classes. Participant 20 said they sometimes feel like quitting until the students have finished attending classes and only come back to work after the students have left. Participant 4 pointed out that students take advantage of her young age and they disrespect her. So all these views show the unpleasant experiences that lecturers come across when conducting classes. The findings of this study are similar to the findings of Ferguson et al. (2017) who also found that teachers experience stress from students' unpleasant behavior in classrooms and that made them vulnerable in their jobs.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The focus of this study was to study the workplace stress factors among part-time lecturers in Lesotho. These included: heavy workload, working hours, job insecurity, office space, resources and facilities, delay in payment and student behaviour. These factors cause stress in the part-time lecturers in numerous degrees. Therefore, this study concludes that should these factors remain unanswered, the level of alleged stress among part-time lecturers will remain an everlasting issue. This may be very harmful not only to the part-time lecturers but to the country as a whole.

Based on the results of this study, the following is recommended:

- a. Higher education institutions in Lesotho should implement measures that will help to reduce stress in part-time lecturers as that will also help to improve their performance in the workplace.
- b. Higher education institutions in Lesotho should prioritise improving their facilities and resources as that will lead to increased job commitment and engagement in lecturers.
- c. The government of Lesotho should provide the higher education institutions with funding and other resources needed in the higher institution environment as that will enable them to acquire tools necessary to make the lecturing job satisfactory and reduce the stress factors in lecturers.

ADVANCED RESEARCH

Majority of the studies conducted on workplace stress in higher education employees have been quantitative and this study has used a qualitative method to gain more understanding on part-time lecturers' views of workplace stress factors in Lesotho. This may have affected the generalization of the results. Therefore, future studies may use other methods and also focus on full time lecturers of all higher education institutions in Lesotho, to get more insights on the issue of workplace stress. Also, the findings of this study further add to the existing literature on workplace stress in the context of Lesotho.

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