

**EFFECT OF STRATEGIC STRESS MANAGEMENT ON EMPLOYEES'  
WORK PERFORMANCE:  
A CASE STUDY OF THE PARASTATAL PENSION FUND**

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**A DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL/FULFILLMENT OF THE  
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**CERTIFICATION**

The undersigned certifies that she has read and hereby recommends for acceptance by the Open University of Tanzania, a Dissertation entitled; **Effect of Strategic Stress Management on Employees' Work Performance: A Case Study of the parastatal pension fund: A Case Study of the Parastatal Pension Fund**. In partial fulfillment of the requirements for award of the Degree of Master of Human Resource Management of the Open University of Tanzania.

.....

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**Date**

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I **Florence F. Matalisi**, declare that, the work presented in this dissertation is original. It has never been presented to any other University or Institution. Where other people's works have been used, references have been provided. It is in this regard that I declare this work as originally mine. It is hereby presented in partial fulfillment of the requirement for the Degree of **Masters of Human Resources Management**.

.....

**Signature**

.....

**Date**

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## **DEDICATION**

I dedicate this work to my family, especially my husband Joseph M. Sarota and my sons Ivan, Ince and Igor, for their support and for enduring my absence during my studies. Also, my dedication goes to all members of my family for their tireless support, especially my mother Clementina Matalisi, my young sister Consolata Matalisi and my young brother Rodney Matalisi.

**LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS**

EDS	Entrepreneurs in Displacement Situation
HR	Human Resource
HRD	Human Resource Development
HRM	Human Resource Management
ISA	Integrated Strategic Approach
IT	Information Technology
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Science
PPF	Parastatal Pension Fund
UK	United Kingdom
FYDP II	Five Year Development Plan-Phase 2
POP	Perceived Organizational Support

## ABSTRACT

The study examined the effect of strategic stress management initiatives on employees' work performance using the Parastatal Pension Fund (PPF) as a case study. The specific objectives were to determine the effect of stress management strategies implemented by PPF on employees' work performance and to ascertain the factors contributing to or hindering the success through stress management strategies implemented by PPF. The study adopted a case study design. It used stratified and purposive sampling procedures to select 150 respondents included in the study. Questionnaires, semi-structured interviews and literature review methods were used for data collection. The findings of the study show that stress management strategies implemented by PPF have had positive effects on employees' work performance. These findings highlight a strong relationship between stress management strategies implemented at workplaces and employee work performance. The study further shows that the implementation of strategic stress management initiatives at PPF have contributed to corporate effectiveness by enabling the organization to achieve its key performance targets such as reduction in staff turnover, increased quality and quantity of services, reduction in health care cost of staff, increasing staff performance and morale. The study recommends for the organization to continuously conduct surveys on stress levels to determine the effectiveness of current strategies and craft and implement better ones.

**Keywords:** Stress management, work performance, Strategic Stress Management



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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Background of the Study

Work related stress is a common challenge to many workplaces. Clancy and McVicar (2012) define stress as a bodily or mental tension resulting from factors that tend to alter an existent equilibrium. It relates to both the individuals' perception of the demands being made on them and the perception of their capability to meet those demands. A mismatch will mean that an individual's stress threshold is exceeded, thereby triggering a stress response.

Mustafa *et al.* (2015) define stress as: *“the change in one’s physical or mental state in response to workplace that pose an appraised challenge or threat to that employee”*. *“The change in one’s physical or mental state in response to situations (stressors) that pose challenge or threat”*.

The human body has a natural chemical response to a threat or demand, commonly known as “flight or fight reaction, which includes the release of adrenalin. Once the threat or demand is over, the body can return to its natural state. A stressor is an event or set of conditions that cause a stress response. Stress is the body’s physiological response to the stressor whereas strain is the body’s longer-term reaction to chronic stress. Stress is divided into two categories: eustress also known as good stress and distress which is the stress reactions to those stressors appraised as being negative. In general, individuals will have a cognitive, behavioral, emotional, and physical response to both eustress and distress.



Chen and Silverthorne (2008) define individual employee's stress as the employee's awareness or feeling of personal dysfunction as a result of perceived conditions or happenings at the workplace, and the employee's psychological and physiological reactions caused by these uncomfortable, undesirable, or threats in the employee's immediate work environment. The individual employee's reaction to stress is influenced by many factors including the employee's education, age, religion and psychological state (Davies *et al.*, 2005).

Pandey (2020) insists that poor performance evaluation and appraisal systems, salary pay scale, lack of motivation, job insecurity and work type affect the employees' performance adversely. Employees will feel more stressed and their performance will gradually decrease if they think that the pay and the work parity have not been made, proper evaluation is lacking or if good performers has not been recognized, more work and time is demanded and risky and if the nature of job is risky and challenging. Also, the employment stress is the important predictor of employees' performance. It means the performance of the staff will be estimated considering the extent of stress management within an organization.

Studies on stress cover various factors causes of stress at work places. According to Prasad *et al.* (2015) stress is man's adaptive reaction to an outward situation which would lead to physical, mental and behavioral changes. Stress can be experienced from four basic sources namely; the environment, social stressors, physiological and thoughts. In today's world, the degree of stress increases owing to urbanization, globalization that result into cut-throat competition. Stress is an inescapable part of

modern life as the work place is becoming a volatile stress factory for most employees hence the name, age of anxiety. Though stress harms human beings in several ways, not all the stresses are destructive in nature. Appropriate amount of stress can actually trigger your passion for work, tap your latent abilities and even ignite inspirations. Stress is a dynamic condition in which an individual is confronted with an opportunity, demand, or resource related to what the individual desires and for which the outcome is perceived to be both uncertain and important (Fairbrother & Warn, 2003). Job stress has also been associated with important occupational outcomes of job satisfaction, organizational commitment and employee withdrawal behaviour (Naumann, 1993; Sullivan & Bhagat, 1992; Tett & Meyer, 1993; Williams & Hazer, 1986 as cited in Fairbrother & Warn, 2003). According to Vakola and Nikolaou (2006), stress at work is a well-known factor for low motivation and morale, decrease in performance and high turnover. It is also associated with sick-leave, accidents, low job satisfaction, low quality products and services, poor internal communication and conflicts at workplaces.

While job stress, its causes and consequences have been well researched in other workplaces, they have not been adequately explored in Africa, even though employers use different ways to manage stress-related effects in organizations. Evidence from existing research on stress in organizations in Africa show a significant number of employees presenting with stress-related symptoms falling in the following categories (i) physical, for example, sleeping problems, headache, and upset stomachs (ii) behavioural such as smoking, alcoholism (iii) emotional problems for example fear, sadness and moodiness (Scott *et al.*, 2006).

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Work environment and the factors that drive relationships at work places produce stress which if not well managed may have negative effects on employee and overall organizational performance. Michael *et al.* (2013), and Christopher (2014) conducted studies to examine the causes of stress, its effects on employee work performance and concluded that organizations with effective stress management initiatives tended to achieve high corporate performance in terms of better services to customers, low staff turnover and overall improved staff productivity. They further concluded that organizations that had well established systems of conducting research to identifying stressors and how to address them were better placed to manage the negative effects of stress at their work places.

The Government of Tanzania recognizes stress management as an important factor affecting labor productivity at work places. The government of Tanzania introduced the National Occupational Safety and Health Policy in 2009. The policy highlights an optimal social- mental and physical wellbeing of workers at work places. It also focuses on stress management as one of the tools for improving the wellbeing of employees and consequently their productivity and performance. Despite this government policy on stress management in public institutions, there is missing evidence from existing practices to draw lessons on regarding the effectiveness of stress management initiatives implemented at work places in Tanzania.

PPF is one of the public institutions that took the government policy on stress management at workplace seriously. For instance, since 2009, PPF has set aside an

annual budget for implementing stress management strategies to enable employees cope with stress at the work place. This research examined the effectiveness of PPF stress management initiatives in improving employees' performance, with a view to contributing to the general knowledge on best practices in stress management at work place in general and in public institutions in particular.

### **1.3 Research Objectives**

#### **1.3.1 Main Objective**

The main objective of the study was to examine the effect of strategic stress management on employees' work performance using PPF as a case study.

#### **1.3.2 Specific Objectives**

This study specifically sought to:

- i. Determine the effect of stress management strategies implemented by the Parastatal Pension Fund on employees' work performance.
- ii. Ascertain the factors determining the success of stress management strategies at the Parastatal Pension Fund.

### **1.4 Research Questions**

- i. What is the effect of stress management strategies on employees' work performance at the Parastatal Pension Fund?
- ii. What are the effects of stress management strategies on employees' work performance at the Parastatal Pension Fund?

### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

This research had three main purposes; first is to create awareness on the growing cases of stress at workplaces. The research identifies stress as a vital factor that affects employee performance in organizations. Second is to draw the attention of organizations to continuously assess the effect of their stress management strategies on employees' performance with a view to identifying what works and what does not. Third is to provide lessons to managers and organizations on problems faced by Human Resource Departments in implementing stress management strategies and the necessary measures to take to make them effective. Forth is to contribute to literature and knowledge on the relationship between stress management strategies and organization performance for use by other researchers and human resources practitioners.

### **1.6 Scope of the Study**

The study focused on the effect of strategic stress management in relation to work performance, using the Parastatal Pension Fund (PPF) as a case study. Given limited time and financial resources, the researcher had to make choices to focus on only one institution – i.e., PPF Pension Fund at the headquarters in Dar es Salaam-Tanzania.

### **1.7 Limitation of the Study**

The study used one case study to allow an in depth understanding of the relationship between strategic stress management and employee performance, as well as the factors determining the effectiveness of stress management strategies. While the

findings from the study can inform other researchers, they may not corroborate experiences in other organizations.

### **1.8 Organization of the Study**

This study is organized into five chapters. Chapter one comprises the introduction and background to the study, statement of the problem, research objectives and research questions. It also presents the significance of the study, the scope, limitation and delimitation of the study as well as definition of key terms. Chapter two presents the literature review in relation to the study, including theoretical and empirical reviews and conceptual framework. Chapter three dwells on the research methodology, and covers the research design, sampling methods, data collection methods and data analysis. Also included in the chapter is the description of the validity and reliability of data as well as ethical issues. Chapter four presents and analyses the data, analyzes and discusses the findings as per the objectives of the study. Chapter five offers the summary of the findings, conclusion and recommendations.

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.0 Introduction**

The review of literature is critical in any research work because it enables the researcher to study different theories related to the identified topic and gain clarity of the research topic. It also enables the researcher to know the kind of additional data needed in the study (Kombo and Tromp 2006). This chapter establishes the gap in what has been explained and investigated by other authors theoretically and empirically. The literature review begins with the conceptual overview, followed by the theoretical review and empirical studies.

#### **2.1 Theoretical Review**

The researcher found it convenient to discuss the concepts related to stress, before she could investigate the effect of strategic stress management on work performance. The following terms have been used in this report in the senses explained herein.

##### **2.1.1 Stress**

Little (2011) defines stress as bodily or mental tension resulting from factors that tend to alter an existent equilibrium. As such, stress is any situation that evokes negative thoughts and feelings in a person. The same situation is not evocative or stressful for all people, and all people do not experience the same negative thoughts and feelings when stressed.

Stress occurs under different conditions like adaptation to change, age, and in both natural and artificial circumstances. It is natural when the body responds viscerally to the corporeal discipline of a technological society (Kanfer & Klimoski, RG, Klimoski, and RJ 2012).

### **2.1.2 Stress manifestation**

Stress manifestations are typically grouped into three general categories. These include physiological, psychological and behavioral manifestation. Physiological manifestation includes immune system problems, specifically lessened ability to fight off illness and infection, high blood pressure, heart disease and muscle-skeletal system problems such as tension headaches and backaches (Basson, 2000). Psychological manifestation of stress includes lack of motivation, depression and lower organizational commitment. Job dissatisfaction is the simplest most obvious effect of stress. Job burnout and trauma are also extreme outcomes of stress (Newsroom, 2007). Behavioral manifestations of stress include changes in productivity, eating disorders, increased smoking or consumption of alcohol, violence, fidgeting and sleep disorders.

### **2.1.3 Corporate performance**

Stress has negative effects on both corporate and employees' performance. The impact of occupational stress on employees' performance include physical and mental health of the employees that in turn affect their performance on job. Individual employees' reaction to stress has effect on corporate performance. Sutherland,et al (1995). Stress contributes to decreased organizational performance,



decreased employee overall performance, high error rate and poor quality of work, high staff turnover, and absenteeism due to health problems such as anxiety, emotional disorder; work life imbalance; depression and other forms of ailments such as frequent Ajayi, (2004).

Most Health and Safety executives (HSE) define stress as an 'adverse reaction people have to excessive pressures or other types of demand placed on them'. Work-related stress is thus understood to occur when there is a mismatch between the demands of the job and the resources and capabilities of the individual worker to meet those demands. This definition emphasises the relationship between individuals and their working environment, and helps to explain why a situation that one person regards as a stimulating challenge may cause another to experience a damaging degree of stress. The degree of stress an individual experience is, to an extent, dependent upon his/her own appraisal of the demands of their work. Such a subjective appraisal will in turn be affected by a range of socio-economic factors, many of which may not be directly work-related. For example, gender, race and age all play a part, as do geographic location, housing, health, number of children, family arrangements and community networks. Kahneman, (1973).

Studies by (Staw, 1986, Kaplan and Norton, 1996) show close relationship between corporate performance and stress. They argue that even though individual employees are negatively affected by stress, understanding effects of stress on corporate performance also helps understand effects on individual employees. The researchers suggest that stress has negative effects on corporate performance measured through

productivity and service quality; financial accounting outcomes - judged by return on assets and profitability and finally use of capital market outcomes- measured by stock price and market growth (Dyer and Reeves, 1995). Other corporate performance measures likely to be negatively affected by stress include include criteria such as customer satisfaction and retention; and internal business processes such as best practices and innovativeness. Empirical studies in this area show that stress may directly affect corporate performance. The study further noted that stress is among the major factors contributing to corporate inefficiency, high staff turnover, absenteeism, decreased quality and quantity output and increased cost of health care (Salami, Ojokuku and Ilesnami, 2010). Robbins (2003) specifically concurs and reports that stress costs USA employers \$200 billion annually in terms of absenteeism, reduced productivity, employee turnover, accidents, worker's compensation and direct medical, legal and insurance fees.

#### **2.1.4 Stress management**

Stress management refers to the process or action of optimizing positive results and/or mitigating negative effects of stress in the organization. Researchers and academics have documented different stress management models that have been implemented by different organizations. Health psychologists have paid great attention to developing biofeedback and other volitional self-control techniques as integral parts of health-related strategic stress management programmes (Sonnentag, 2002). According to these researchers, the direct control of physiological response can have significant implications for the modification of many psychological and physical disorders Besides the direct effects on physiological functioning that these

different methods of volitional control and stress management techniques produce in general, there has also been an interest in delineating important concomitant psychological factors that contribute to therapeutic efficacy (Baum, Revenson & Singer 2001).

Stress can be effectively managed in many different ways. The best stress management plans usually include a mix of stress relievers that address stress physically and psychologically and help to develop resilience and coping skills

According to Cooper and Marshall (1978), This focus relates to the belief that stress can be caused by too much or too little work, time pressures and deadlines, having too many decisions, fatigue from physical strains, excessive travel, long hours, having to cope with changes at work and the expenses of making mistakes. Every job description includes factors, which will result in stress for some people at some point in time. Two factors appear to have received the major focus of the research effort in this area, namely working conditions and work overload (Cooper & Marshall, 1978; Sharit & Salvendy, 1982).

Life in organizations can be a source of stress for employees and managers. According to Cooper and Marshall (1978), managers are suffering extreme physiological symptoms from stress at work. Physical and psychological effects, including coronary heart disease, ulcers, substance abuse and anxiety, are potential sources of disturbance in the quality of life of individuals and of their families. The mental and physical effects of job stress are not only disruptive to the individual but

are also associated with a “real” cost to the organizations for which they work. Until recently, organizations rarely considered this cost either in human or financial terms, even though it is one they incur daily on an operational basis example The role of the industrial psychologist, specifically within the arena of human resource or personnel management and development, organizational development, mental health and counselling, is to ensure that the workforce can function optimally in the light of present and future demands, thus maintaining a productive organization. The goal of the industrial psychologist is to strengthen the individual’s contributions to organizational effectiveness, by increasing productivity, lowering turnover, raising quality of outputs and improving levels of cooperation among individuals (Schneider, 1991).

Consequently, the industrial psychologist has a vital role to play in measuring stress, monitoring and facilitating the process of stress management and awareness in organizations. Employee assistance programme (EAP) staff provide counselling and referral for employees with drug, alcohol and relationship problems. Training and development personnel may provide seminars on managing stress and training in assertiveness and communication techniques, while consultants may assist with job redesign and enrichment efforts (Sperry, 1991).

Edworthy (2000) examined stress management models that focus on the preventive intervention and treatment components of the stress management. The preventive component of the stress management model has three stages primary, secondary, and tertiary prevention. Primary prevention aims to change the environment and manage

organizational demands as stressors. Secondary prevention aims to change the employees and alter their responses to necessary and inevitable demands in the work environment. Tertiary prevention, on the other hand, aims to heal individuals and/or organizations in distress. The stages of prevention afford organizations a platform for leadership and management action and intervention for creating healthy, high performance organizations. The greatest challenge for the future of preventive stress management lies in establishing and maintaining an effective dialogue between researchers and practitioners (Cooper & Williams, 2002).

According to Melinda et. al (2010), the efficacy of stress management models is dependent on organization and individual employees' motivation. In their opinion, individual employees affected by stress have a role to play in making strategic stress management programmes work. In this regard, stress management is about taking charge of one's thoughts, emotions, schedule, environment and the way one deals with problems. The ultimate goal is a balanced life, with time for work, relationships, relaxation and fun. In some instances, in coping with stress, individuals adopt strategies that while they may reduce stress temporarily, they cause more damage in the long run. Some of these future damaging stress coping strategies include smoking, drinking too much, over eating or under eating, zoning out hours in front of the television or computer, withdrawing from friends, family and activities, using pills or drugs to relax, sleeping too much, procrastinating, filling up every hour of the day to avoid facing problems, taking out stress on others such as lashing out, angry out bursts, physical violence Muscio,1920)

### **2.1.5 Stress Management and Corporate Performance**

Both organizations and individuals are highly concerned about stress management, its impact on the stress and corporate performance. Corporations continually seek to improve managerial communication skills, empower employees through participation, and redesign jobs to be more fulfilling in order to enhance performance. Research studies conducted by Saundlund and Norlander (2004) revealed that senior adults who had undergone *tai chi*, a form of yoga and exercise noted that there was an improvement in their overall psychological wellbeing, which is associated with positive effects on performance. Furthermore, empirical research conducted by Konrad and Mangel (2000) examined the impact of work life programmes on firm productivity in a national sample of 658 USA organizations. They measured work life programmes as a composite work life index, which included onsite day care, extended maternity leaves and sick child care programmes. Productivity was measured in terms of algorithms of sales per employees. They found that organizations that had extensive work – life programmes reported higher productivity levels.

Studies conducted by Wang and Walumbwa (2007) found that flexible work schedules were positively related to organizational commitment, reduced turnover and increased productivity. According to Cole (2005), stress management programmes are important strategies for coping with stress and are likely to be found in any well managed organization that sees its employees as its biggest single investment as well as one of its principal stakeholders.

Studies by Day and Bedian (1991) reveal that supportive work environments are associated with improved workplace performance and higher corporate performance. Empirical studies conducted in Turkey by Babin and Boles (1996) found that an increased perception of a supportive management team reduces role stress and increases job satisfaction. Studies conducted in the USA by Philips *et al.*, (2000) also reveal that male employees who got more spousal support in their careers performed better. Research conducted by Marcinkus *et al.*, (2007) also found that work based social support was positively associated with job satisfaction and organizational commitment.

#### **2.1.6 Stress Characteristic of Life and Work**

Stress is an unavoidable characteristic of life and work. At the workplace, there is a wide variety of potential causes of stress, some of which are common to both men and women, and others are specific to each group. Occupational stress describes physical, mental and emotional wear and tear brought about by incongruence between the requirement of job and capabilities, resources and needs of the employee to cope with job demands (Akinboye et al., 2002). Researches document several major factors of occupational stress such as pressure originating from the workload, numerous meetings, lack of personal growth, lack of facilities, monotonous nature of work, and loads of responsibility especially for managers (Al Aameri, 2003, Triveni et al., 2006).

According to Malik (2011) "The responsibility load creates severe stress among workers and managers." If the individual manager cannot cope with the increased

responsibilities it may lead to several physical and psychological disorders among them. As Brook (1973) reported that qualitative changes in the job create adjustment problem among employees. The interpersonal relationships within the department and between the departments create qualitative difficulties within the organisation to a great extent

Also, according to Miller and Phipps, (2011) Stress is a condition of physical and psychological mental disorder which occurs in a situation of pressure, when resources are unable to fulfill the demand of an individual. Most of time of our lives spent at work, job stress is widely experienced and so pervasive, that it's been found to effect people in every sector. Example Employees' in health sector spend most of their time at work, that's why they are directly affected by stress; due to this their productivity at workplace decreases greatly. Nowadays, stress is considered as an important factor, which is rapidly increasing the absenteeism rate of employers and employees.

Kendal *et al.* (2000) shows that, given the value of work in this society, the amount of time spent at work and the current changes that are affecting the nature of work, it is not surprising that work stress appears to be increasing. For instance, as a result of the rapidly changing global economy, organizations now operate in cultures of increased speed, efficiency and competition. Consequently, economic imperatives and the need to retain competitive advantage have resulted in restructuring and uncertainty. For instance, workforces are constantly being downsized, small



organizations are merging or being subsumed by larger more competitive organizations thus, change is the only constant factor in today's world.

This has been found to be one of the important factors influencing job stress in their work (Cahn et al., 2000). A study in the UK indicated that the majority of the workers were unhappy with the current culture where they were required to work extended hours and cope with large workloads while simultaneously meeting production targets and deadlines (Townley, 2000). Stress at the workplace can as well be caused by work pressure and work-life imbalance, it is advised that the organization should support and encourage its employees to take up roles that help them to balance work and family. In addition to that, the productivity of the workforce is the most decisive factor as far as the success of an organization is concerned. Furthermore, the productivity, in turn, is dependent on the psychosocial wellbeing of the employees (Kishori and Vinothini, 2016). Interpersonal conflicts and negative interpersonal relations are other sources of stress and are associated with negative mood, depression and symptoms of ill health.

Occupational stress is an increasingly important occupational health problem and a significant cause of economic loss. Occupational stress may produce both psychological and physiological disabilities. However, it may also cause slight symptoms of morbidity that can affect personal well-being and productivity in an organization (Orman, 1992).

Job stressed individuals are likely to have greater job dissatisfaction, increased absenteeism, increased frequency of drinking and smoking, increased negative psychological symptoms and reduced aspirations and self-esteem; and this might affect organization performance (Jick and Payne, 1980).

A poor psychosocial working environment and work-related stress can have both a direct and indirect impact on workers' physical health and mental well-being. It is estimated that stress-related diseases are responsible for the loss of 6.5 million working days each year in the United Kingdom; costing employers around €571 million and society as much as €5.7 billion (Leka & Jain, 2010).

Stress management at workplace requires organizational level interventions because it is among the factors in the organization that create stress. Organizational level interventions on stress are effective if they focus on both responses to those already experiencing stress and on preventing staff against stress. Quite often, many organizational interventions on stress are focused on those who have already experienced stress rather than preventing it from occurring. An approach that is limited to helping those already experiencing stress is analogous to administering sticking plaster on wounds, rather than dealing with the causes of the damage. Organizational interventions can range from structural, for example, staffing levels, work schedules, physical environment; to psychological, for example, social support, control over work and participation. The emphasis on the organization, rather than on the individual, creates healthy and safe working environments for all employees and employers (Michie, 2002).

Management of stress at workplace is important because of its negative effects on individual employees and organizational performance. Stress may lead to apathy, boredom and loss of interests and cause rust out as the other pole of burnout (Cunningham 1997; Le Fevre et al., 2003).

Workplace stress management strategies can be categorized into (i) controlling internal and external factors causing stress and (ii) programmes focusing on empowering employees to manage stress such as workshops on stress management, workshops on relaxing methods, etc. Stress management strategies focusing on stress causing factors in the organization aim at creating favorable organizational environment involving setting strategies for planning and developing careers, as well as motivating employees. In employing these strategies, some organizations have given employees support to make positive interpretations of their environment. Where these strategies have been deployed, they have entailed investment in coaching and a variety of related personal development interventions (Le Fevre et al., 2003). Yet other organizations have employed strategies that create a work environment that increase a sense of ownership of workplace among employees. These strategies entail providing timely feedback to employees' performance in non-threatening manner; coaching and mentoring; promoting openness and exchange of communication which are powerful in encouraging employees to contribute their ideas on the running of the organization; and management promoting exchange of information (Bruce 2006; Feilder et al., 2008; Ivancevich et al., 2008).

Wyk (2010) conducted a research to examine the effects of staff support on stress management strategies focusing on assisting them in coping with work stress, preventing burnout, and improving job satisfaction among healthcare workers who were primarily nurses. The study examined three preventive interventions: (1) support groups; (2) stress management training; and (3) management interventions provided to support staff. The authors concluded that most of the 10 primary studies were methodologically weak and of low quality. Overall, the study found insufficient evidence to show that stress management interventions reduced work stress, prevented burnout, or reduced staff absenteeism. Yet, limited evidence showed that stress management interventions improved staff morale and job satisfaction. The authors suggest that more rigorous studies are needed.

Babatunde (2013) reveals that, relationships among supervisors and their subordinates at work places lead to detrimental and stressful outcomes which are not healthy for productivity. Furthermore, intimidations and harassments, threats of violence, favoritism, unsupportive climate, and lack of assistance by leadership, social and physical isolation in the workplace and other deviant behaviors, most often cause social disruption and generate outcomes ranging from aggressive behaviors, animosity, and disrespect. Organizational culture, uncooperative, and unhealthy climate are frightening to employees and deters them from wanting to go to work. Work performance has two dimensions, namely observable behaviours that people do in their jobs that are relevant to the goals of the organization and outcomes and work performance (Campbell, McHenry, & Wise, 1990). Work performance is of interest to organizations because of the importance of high productivity in the

workplace (Hunter & Hunter, 1984). Due to that also, Different stressors in work can be categorized to be caused by job content, working conditions, employment conditions and social relations at work (Sabir et al., 2003).

According to Jain *et al.*, (2012) the study of work place stress is significant to business leaders as it helps them strategize and set realistic goals and expectations while avoiding unpleasant consequences to job performance. To improve economic productivity, and increase stakeholder values and profitability, business leaders must improve employees' retention and job satisfaction. Individuals in a stressful work environment manifest real physical symptom from minor complaints of illness to serious ailments such as heart disease, or social problems like alcoholism and drug abuse, or family problems (WHO, 2012). WHO (2012) estimated that stress cost American businesses \$300 billion a year from increased absenteeism; decreased commitment to work; increased staff turnover; impaired performance and low productivity; increased unsafe work practices and accident rates. It also caused increased complaints from clients and customers, adverse staff recruitment and increased liability to legal claims by stressed workers. When an imbalance exists between job content, workload, work pace, and work schedule, productivity is affected, morale goes down, and profitability suffers.

Many business entities, profit and nonprofit organizations, experience stress of a different kind. During recessions, companies lay off employees, put them on part-time employment, cut their salaries, and put them on serious strain. The same stress is true for both the federal and local governments at all levels as they experience

budget shortfalls and cuts to programs important to adequate running of the nation (Never & de Leon, 2014). Businesses possess unique industry-specific stressors.

Conflicts with co-workers, problems with peers and supervisors, and discrimination are stressors at work which endanger functionality, promote fear, and cause stress. Developing personal relationship at work is necessary for the prevention of stress among colleagues. In the 21st century, the structure of social network accounts for the strength of two types of supportive acts: instrumental support and informational support which primarily are from management support and co-workers support (Shin and Lee, 2016).

Singh (2017) shows that job-related stressors are because of the changing business structure which has forced organization to modify or alter their perspective on their functions and roles. Stressed employees become unhappy and produce nominally. Factors related to jobs affect the behavior of the employees and result to normal life disturbances. Table 2 identifies categories of job-related stressors listing a myriad of stressors from various work-related conditions. Classifications yielding the most stressors on the job include: (a) job content, (b) working conditions, (c) employment conditions, and (d) social relations at work.

Kushwaha (2014) outlined various ways that work place stress could manifest in an individual. These physiological signs and symptoms spill over into a work place. Many people think that stress is a mental or emotional experience that remains mutually exclusive from the signs and symptoms that might show up at the work

place when an individual has serious health issues. Table 3 shows the effects of stress manifest at a workplace in various forms. The manifestations or consequences, not to be overemphasized, are indicators that are real and debilitating in many circumstances. Each manifestation affects job performance and productivity, whereas managers and employees manipulate their tolerance levels to get the job done or find endurance or comfort levels. Many of the workers, unfortunately, will end up in hospital something which starts as a chain reaction as managers must find a replacement for the worker, overtime for whoever agrees to work, and cost of hospital stay for a sick employee.

### **2.1.7 Demographic Factors and Stress**

Evidence suggests a strong relationship between demographic variables and stress as well as stress management strategies. The most significant demographic variables in question are age, gender, education, occupation, experience and type of family. The relationship is reviewed below.

#### **2.1.7.1 Age**

Age in particular older age is associated with workplace stress. Studies by Virk et al. (2001) and Hsu (2018) show close relation between age and stress. According Hsu the older the person gets, the more he/she experience job related stress. Older workers can face more barriers and stressors at work, such as physical strength limitations and health concerns, gaps related to using new technology and the engagement in working. Health concerns physical and mental triggering stress among older employees are related to retirement or exit from labor force.

Work stress can be best explained by the two internationally established theoretical models: the demand–control model and the effort–reward–imbalance model. The first model, also known as the job strain model, identifies stressful work in terms of high demands in combination with low control. Different studies have shown that the control dimension seems to be more important than occupational demands for retirement intentions and disability retirement. The second model claims that an imbalance between high efforts and low rewards affects health and retirement decisions. Rewards can be financial, e.g. promotion prospects, including job security, or emotional through recognition and appreciation. The two models complement each other, with the first one focusing on work content, and the second highlighting violations of reciprocity exchanges. The latter implies that high efforts are perceived as not being adequately rewarded and a gratification crisis arising. Both models predict higher risks of several stress-related health outcomes and retirement intentions, e.g. early retirement and disability pension Niedhammer I, et al. (2004)

Rastogi and Kashyap (2003) conducted a study on “age and occupational stress and work adjustment among working women”, that involved a sample of 150 nurses, clerks, and teachers. It was revealed that the average age of the sample was quite matured and experienced, which helped them to ignore stress and maintain the smooth adjustment in the organization.

According to Geriatr, 2002 stress is associated with old age those with old age are denied to access some of the works because of their age which result to stress also in the work place old age despite of having enough experience to work still face several



stress since that aged people need to be protected in term of access to health services also old age people some situational causes of stress in older adults include: Retirement. For change over time in depression, a number of researchers have examined the relationship between age and depression, Some researchers found a curvilinear relationship between age and depression, showing that the youngest age groups and the oldest age group reported greater depressive symptoms than other age groups (Gatz and Hurwicz 1990; Kessler et al. 1992; Newmann 1989). Including only older adults, Haynie and colleagues (2001) found that depressive symptoms were negatively associated with age in very late life. By contrast, other research found that the old-old tended to have higher levels of depressive symptoms than the young-old (Blazer et al. 1991; Stallones, Marx, and Garrity 1990), indicating that depressive symptoms are positively associated with age in later life

Bhatia and Kumar (2005) studied age, occupational stress and burn out in industrial employees. The sample consisted of 100 employees belonging to a supervisor and below supervisor level. Their chronological age ranged from 22-32 years and from 33-42 years. The findings suggested that the industrial employees at supervisor rank and below supervisor rank belonging to higher age group experienced more occupational stress.

Devi (2007) examined age and the degree of life stress and role stress experienced by professional women. A total sample of 180 women professionals belonging to six occupations were chosen for the study. The results revealed that the older person experienced lower life stress and role stress than did younger people. It was thus

concluded that the greater the numbers of years of service, the greater life and role stress. According to Cavanaugh et al., 2000 and Bhatti et al. 2010, an employee who is exposed to occupational stress cannot feel satisfied with the work, and stressed employees are more likely to leave the company.

#### **2.1.7.2 Gender**

Calvarese, (2015) Females and Males have different ways to react to and deal with stress. When dealing with stress, females experience high level of depression, frustration and anxiety than males. Furthermore, females are more likely to express anger than males when dealing with stress. These studies confirm that even though both men and women experience workplace stress they react differently to stress with women experiencing negative consequences from stress than men.

#### **2.1.7.3 Education**

Lunau *et al* (2015) People with lower educational qualifications are more likely to experience work-related stress, there is a consistent association between lower education and higher levels of work stress in various countries. The legal and policy framework of a given country may help or contribute to a reduction of the social gradient of stressful work in respective countries. Because of the negative consequences of work-related stress on mental and physical health, it is advised there should be apolitical intervention towards reducing social inequalities in the health of working populations. Paulse (2005) lack of proper training on how to deal with stress at work place seems to be one of the causes of stress.

#### **2.1.7.4 Occupation and position**

Skakon *et al.* (2009) posit that there is evidence that staff in higher position experience low stress than staff in lower position. The preventive psychosocial factors explain parts of the managers' lower stress level. These results contradict the lay perception of managers being under higher pressure and experiencing more stress than lower level employees. Interventions aiming at reducing employee stress levels, especially regarding behavioral and cognitive stress, could benefit from focusing on psychosocial work environment exposures such as skill discretion, meaning of work, psychological demands, information flow and management quality.

There is evidence that occupation and position have significant effect on stress. For example, Ryhal and Singh (1996) studied the correlates of occupation position and job stress among university faculties. The sample involved 100 faculty members, 30 professors, 31 associate professors and 39 assistant professors. Results revealed that assistant professors experienced higher job stress than associate professors and professors. Orpen (1996) examined the moderating effects of cognitive failure on the relationship between work stress and personal strain. He compared the work stress among 136 nurses and 12 college lecturers. The results found that nurses experienced more stress than lecturers. The research further revealed that the university had a stress management programme but still there was an escalation of stress among college lecturers. This confirms the argument that certain occupations produce more stress than others.

Ansari and Singh (1997) made an attempt to explore the contribution of demographic variables to the nature of stress experienced by teachers in an agriculture university; and studied the stress management programme of the university. The study comprised a sample of 235 faculty members (23 professors, 74 associate and 138 assistant professors). The findings showed that professors were either in moderate or in high stress categories as compared to associate and assistant professors.

Upadhyay and Singh (1999) studied the level of occupational stress experienced by 20 college teachers and 20 executives. The executives showed a significantly higher level of stress than college teachers on role overload, role ambiguity and role conflicts factor. Gaur and Dhawan (2000) examined the relationship between work-related stressors and adaptation pattern among women professionals. A sample of 120 women professionals (30 teachers, 30 doctors, 30 bank officers and 30 bureaucrats) participated in the study. It was shown that the four professionals groups shared an almost similar level of stress except in the categories of career development and stressors specific to working women.

Pandey and Srivastava (2000) conducted a study on occupational stress among railway employees. A sample of 96 females, 16 subjects in each professional area were taken. The study revealed that respondents among all the three dimensions, clerks of bank and railway experienced more work stress as compared to teachers. Aminabhavi and Triveni (2000) revealed that managers experience significantly higher occupational stress than clerks. The fact is that managers have greater responsibilities by virtue of their positions than the clerks. Devi (2007) aimed at

identifying the degree of life stress and role stress experienced by professional women.

#### **2.1.7.5 Experience**

It has been established that experience, and in particular longevity in service in an occupation, has effect on stress. For example, Blix et al. (1994) conducted a study on occupational stress among university teachers and found that faculty having less than 10 years of experience had higher stress than faculty with more than 20 years of experience; despite having a programme in place for stress management. A similar study was done by Ryhal and Singh (1996), which involved university faculty members; with the sample comprising 100 faculty members; 30 professors, 31 associate professors and 39 assistant professors. Results revealed that faculties with 26-35 years' experience had higher job stress than those with teaching experience of 16-25 years and 5-15 years. Likewise, those with 16-25 years' experience had higher job stress than those with teaching experience of 5-15 years. The findings suggested that industrial employees at supervisor rank and below supervisor rank with more experience of service had more occupational stress due to more feeling of depersonalization and more emotional exhaustion. From the above studies, it can be concluded that the length of service has a negative and positive relationship with stress. However, more studies have revealed that individuals with less experience experienced more stress as compared to individuals with more experience.

### **2.1.7.6 Type of family**

Some studies suggest that nuclear families create more stress as compared to extended families. Pandey and Srivastava (2000) studied the female personnel working in railway, bank and teaching institutions. A sample of 96 females, 16 subjects in each professional area both from nuclear and joint family were taken. The study showed that respondents belonging to nuclear families had experienced more interpersonal work stress than employees from extended families. Because support from extended families acted as a buffer against stress. This is supported by Abrol (1990), who examined the strains experienced and coping strategies used by 27 male and 27 female teachers based on their family type. Results indicated that subjects reported that social support from the family, co-workers, supervisors and other people helped in minimizing stress among the employees (Vashisha and Mishra, 1998).

## **2.2 Empirical Review**

This section presents empirical literature on similar studies conducted in Tanzania and the world at large.

Tae and Kelly (2015) examined work-related stress factors and health management among Korean workers with diabetes. The purpose of this study was to test a model in which emotional and work-related conflicts associated with diabetes contribute to health management efficacy and behaviour. Results from their study also revealed a need for support of longitudinal mediation, such that more diabetes-related distress at Time 1 predicted lower health management efficacy one year later (at Time 2),

which was associated with less health management behaviour at Time 2. Results supported the importance of applying the bio-psychosocial perspective to diabetes management through the use of subjective measures of demand and control. Suggestions are provided for occupational programmes for workers with the disease, including on-site education, health-management training, and flexible job redesign such as telecommuting.

Elin (2015) carried out a study that determined whether stress management is a matter of proactivity or trust or a thematic study of female-and male-dominated Swedish work settings. Given the parallel processes of stress development and organisational changes towards increased managerialism, the purpose of this study was to understand the way in which employees' stress is perceived and managed in female-dominated and male-dominated sectors, characterised by new management-oriented steering methods. The main finding is that a logic emphasizing proactivity was more prevalent at the female-dominated workplace, while a logic emphasizing trust was most prevalent in the male-dominated workplace. Both logics perceive self-management and self-realization as ways to manage stress, but in the proactive regime, self-management and tend to turn into new modes of exploitation. Approaches to stress management in the proactive regime, in fact, seem to further diminish levels of discretion and control, which, according to a previous research, are typically already low in female-dominated work.

Christopher (2014) examined religion and spirituality as factors that influence occupational stress and well-being. This study explored religion and spirituality as a

form and source of demographic differences relevant to the study of occupational stress and well-being. The purpose of the study was to provide a resource and starting point to occupational health and stress researchers who may be interested in spirituality. A review of critical spirituality concepts is provided, along with a discussion of how spirituality can be integrated into common occupational stress theories and reconciled with commonly studied variables within this domain. A series of future research directions involving spirituality and occupational health and stress is ultimately presented.

Judith and William, (2007) examined stress within the police forces paying particular attention to history, contributing factors, symptoms and interventions. The purpose of this study was to highlight the stressors involved in an occupation at potential risk – the profession of law enforcement. It described prevention and treatment programmes that have unfortunately not been sufficiently utilized because of the police culture. The documented symptoms of stress include digestive disorders, cardiovascular diseases, alcoholism, domestic violence, post-traumatic stress disorder, depression and suicide. While some police officers start their careers in excellent physical health, some retire early or even die from job-related stress disorders if the cumulative impact of stress exacts its toll. The study offered a description of a confidential hotline for officers and their families. The hotline service was operated by retired officers and licensed professionals which had positive effect on the use of the service by employees.



Smith *et al.* (2011) analyzed a project manager's optimism and stress management and IT project success. The purpose of this study was to determine how the soft competencies of an information technology (IT) project manager, specifically optimism and stress, can affect project success. The research was exploratory. Results from this study concluded that IT project success was both positively and negatively influenced by stress. To improve their chances of project success, it was suggested that, IT project managers should have a positive but realistic degree of optimism based on a well-accepted project plan. Whilst the project team should expect and embrace stress during the project, this should be carefully managed.

Hettie *et al.* (2008) explored the perceived organizational support's role in stressor-strain relationships. The purpose of this study was to examine when perceived organizational support (POS) may be more likely to play a mediator versus moderator role in stressor and strain relationships by considering POS relative to challenge and hindrance stressors, cognitive/emotional and physical strains. As hypothesized, results indicated POS mediates relationships between hindrance stressors and cognitive/emotional strains but does not mediate relationships between challenge stressors and physical strains. POS does not moderate any of the relationships examined.

Liz and Judith (2012) examined workplace stress in libraries to analyze the results of a case study conducted in 2008/2009 investigating workplace stress in a further education college library service. Results from questionnaires and a series of semi-structured interviews held with library staff were analyzed and discussed.

Librarians reported that interaction with students can be stressful or enjoyable, depending on context. The need to control noise levels, modify student behaviour and balance the needs of different user groups are cited as stressors. The results also show that the library staff exhibit a degree of humour and self-awareness in their work and employ a range of methods to cope with stress. However, repeating the study more widely amongst a range of differing library services would add credibility to the findings. This study showed that positive stress may motivate librarians to engage actively with students and thus create job satisfaction. Negative stress may be managed by measures such as zoning and flexible governance. The study contributed to knowledge and understanding of stress in the library profession by contributing a case study of stress in the college sector.

Michael *et al.* (2013) examined the stress and coping process of mega-event employees. The purpose of this study was to examine specific stressors present in mega-event work and the coping strategies used by long-term mega-event employees. Using a general inductive approach to analyze the data and identify themes, semi-structured interviews with six employees from organizing committees of subsequent National Football League (NFL) Super Bowls, and four employees from the Special Olympics in Greece helped to assess the presence of specific stressors and the corresponding coping strategies. Moreover, the findings suggested that organizing committee employees appraise and cope with stress differently than in more traditional contexts.

Ali (2014) examined occupational stress and its consequences: Implications for health policy and management. This study aimed to identify the status of occupational stress among a sample of hospital employees in Iran. It further intended to reveal the harmful effects of occupational stress on employees' health and well-being. The study used a cross-sectional research design. A validated questionnaire was used to collect data from hospital employees. Job-related, working environment, interpersonal and organizational factors were related to occupational stress. One-fourth of employees rated their occupational stress high. The major sources of occupational stress were inadequate pay, inequality at work, too much work, staff shortage, poor recognition and promotion, time pressure, job insecurity and lack of management support. High levels of occupational stress have been linked to an increased risk of physical injuries, cardiovascular disease, high blood pressure, depression and increases in negative personal behaviours such as anger, anxiety and irritability. Occupational stress was positively associated with employees' turnover intentions. However, the findings of this study are not generalizable to the wider population of hospital employees in Iran due to the small sample size. Thus, future research should involve additional samples. The study has practical relevance for designing and implementing strategies to decrease occupational stress among hospital employees. This study contributed to health care theory and practice by identifying factors contributing to employees' occupational stress and examining the association between occupational stress and two important employee outcomes- health status and turnover intention.

Ilhon, (2013) studied police stressors, coping strategies, and somatization symptoms among South Korean frontline police officers. The purpose of this study was to examine whether police stressors revealed in the western literature are also applicable in the South Korean context. Officers stationed at 16 frontline substations in a large metropolitan city reported the frequency with which they had been exposed to seven classes of police stressors and perceived somatization symptoms. Work-family conflict and victimization at the hands of citizens were revealed as the significant predictors of officers' stress-related somatization symptoms. Unlike western studies, the present study did not reveal the moderating effects of coping strategies and social support. Stressors' effects on somatization symptoms, however, were mediated by destructive coping strategies. This study contributed to the comparative literature on police stress.

### **2.3 Conceptual Framework**

Figure 2.1 shows the conceptual framework that gives a clear indication of the independent variables: factors contributing to stress management, strategies imposed to redress stress management and impacts of stress management. The dependent variable is work performance which is critical to an organization achieving its operations. From the conceptual framework, the following research hypotheses were examined:

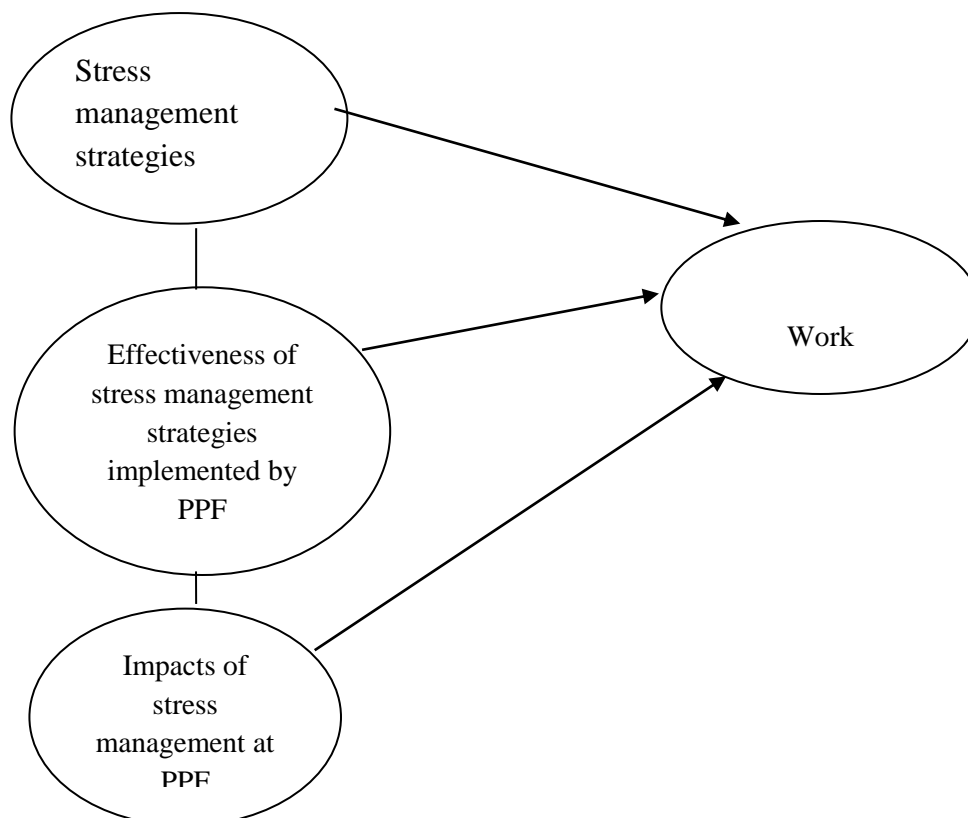
1. Work performance has positive relationship with stress management strategies implemented at the workplace. This means the content of stress management strategies implemented at the workplace have effect on work

performance. The study examined the content (of PPF stress management strategies and their effect on employee and organization work performance.

2. Effectiveness of stress management strategies implemented at the workplace has positive relationship with employee work performance. This means the quality of stress management interventions implemented by organizations matter in terms of causing change on employee and organization work performance. The study examined how effective are PPF stress management strategies on employee and organization performance.
3. Stress management strategies have positive impacts on employee and organization work performance. This hypothesis is closely related to two but differs in that it measures the contribution of stress management in changing the consequences of stress on employee work and organization performance including turnover, productivity and conflicts.

#### Independent Variables

#### Dependent Variable



**Figure 2.1: Conceptual Framework****2.4 Research Gap**

While several studies have been conducted on stress at work places and coping mechanisms and their effectiveness, these studies have been at global scale. There is limited knowledge on causes of stress at workplace, its effects and the effectiveness of stress management initiatives in Tanzania. This study on the effects of strategic stress management on employee work performance contributes to reducing the knowledge gap on stress management in Tanzania. The findings from this study will help researchers intending to conduct similar or related studies. It will also help other workplaces in designing and implementing stress management initiatives.

**2.5 Chapter Summary**

The literature review was purposely conducted to cover and gain sufficient and useful insights on all issues relating to the research topic and pertaining to objectives for addressing the research problem. From the reviewed literature, the researcher managed to identify a research topic that helped in avoiding duplication of work, gain clarity and a better understanding of the subject matter. It also helped in delimiting the research problem and proved to be useful in developing a basis for analyzing and interpreting the data. Literature review was completed before the study started. It informed data collection, data analysis and report writing. In addition to that, by reviewing various literatures on the subject matter, the researcher found out that there were still little done on stress management in public parastatal in Tanzania.

The research methodology chapter that follows could not have been well organized without the literature review.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.0 Introduction**

This chapter attempts a detailed description of the methodology and approaches that used in conducting this study. Kothari (1990) defined research methodology as a way of systematically solving a research problem. This chapter covers the following aspects: design of the study, area where the study was conducted, selection of study population, and sampling techniques that were applied to obtain the sample size by which representativeness of the population was guaranteed. The chapter also covers the methods of data collection and analysis and the way in which the findings were presented.

#### **3.1 Research Design**

Kothari (1990) defines research design as the detailed description of process and procedure for the collection and analysis of data in a manner that achieves both the study objectives and cost effectiveness. Research design is informed by the purpose of the study. This study used a case study design focusing on a single organization because it was less expensive and data collection was more manageable compared to other research designs. In addition, a case study design was selected because of its viability and flexibility in terms of data collection methods and analysis. A case study method allowed the researcher to carry out an in-depth assessment of multiple variables using a limited context that is PPF and specifically the head office in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania.



### **3.2 Area of the Study**

The study was conducted at the Parastatal Pension Fund (PPF) head office in Dar es Salaam, Tanzania. PPF was selected because it is among the few companies in Tanzania that have complied with the Government Policy requiring employers to implement stress management strategies.

### **3.3 Population Size**

PPF has 342 employees of which 255 (75%) are at the head office. Due to limited time available for data collection, it was not possible for the researcher to access and collect data from all the 342 employees of PPF. Thus, the researcher selected 255 employees at the PPF headquarters. Therefore, the 255 employees constituted the population size for the study.

### **3.4 Sampling Procedure**

A two-stage sampling procedure was used for sampling/selection of study respondents:

**3.4.1 Stage 1: This involved selection of the study sample from the population of PPF headquarters staff.** The researcher randomly selected 150 (58.8%) staff from among the population of 255 staff at PPF headquarters. According to Saunders et al. (2005), random sampling involves selecting the sample from the population using random number table or computer or using an online random number generator. For the case of this study, the researcher decided to create a list of staff from all departments at the PPF headquarters and then assigned numbers between 1 to 225

with a sampling interval of 2. Numbers were randomly picked until all 150 respondents were selected. The respondents sample included Human Resources Officers, Administrative services personnel, Operations officers, Marketing officers, and Project implementation officers, Line managers, Heads of Departments and junior staff/officers at the Headquarters. The stratified sample of 150 (58.8%) employees was considered acceptable for drawing a conclusion about the entire targeted population. Table 3.1 below shows number and percentage of respondents per department.

**Table 3. 1** Study and respondents

S/NO	Sample department	Number of Respondents	Percentage from Total Population
1	Marketing	4	7%
2	Administrative services and Human Resources	40	14%
3	Operations	46	17%
4	Compliance	18	7%
5	Research and Planning	25	9%
6	Management and Line Managers	17	6%
Total		150	58.8%%

**Source: Field Data, (2017)**

**3.4.2 Stage 2:** Involved sampling of respondents from management levels.

Purposively sampling procedure was used to select staff in management levels that the researcher believed had valuable information for this study. Departments were identified and head of departments were interviewed.

### **3.5 Data Collection Methods**

The researcher used both primary and secondary data collection methods. Kothari (1990) defined primary data as those which are collected afresh and for the first time, and thus happen to be original in character. In that way, the researcher used interview, observation, and questionnaire as primary data collection methods. In addition, the researcher reviewed existing documents as secondary data collection method. According to Kothari (1990), secondary data are those which have already been collected by someone else and which have already been passed through the statistical process (Kothari 1990).

#### **3.5.1 Interviews**

The researcher used interviews method to collect additional information on the effect of stress management on work performance at PPF head office. Kothari (2004) defined interview as the method of collecting data that involves the presentation of oral-verbal stimuli and reply in terms of oral-verbal responses. This method can be used through personal interviews and if possible, through telephone interviews. This method helped the researcher to learn more about the study through observing respondent's gestures and facial expressions. The interview method was mainly applied to the seventeen (17) head of departments and line managers since they had a

very busy schedule and had very limited time to respond to the questionnaire; it also gave them an opportunity to give all detailed information on the topic.

### **3.5.2 Questionnaires**

The researcher used the questionnaire method because the method helped to gather large amounts of the desired information within a short time. A questionnaire consisted of a number of questions printed or typed in the definite order on a form or set of forms (Kothari 2004). Saunders and Thornhill, (2009) pointed out that this technique does not exert pressure on the respondents and thus respondents were free and comfortable. The questionnaires were provided to 133 respondents including all officers sampled for the study, except the heads of departments who due to busy schedule do not have enough time to fill them.

The questionnaire comprised both open ended and close-ended questions. This method was selected because it allows for collection of large amounts of data with limited researcher bias.

### **3.5.3 Documentary Sources**

The researcher used documentary sources to complement information gathered from other data collection techniques. Ndunguru (2009) defines a review of documentary sources as a method of gathering data from the secondary source. The documentary sources of data for this research included manuscripts, journals, research reports, newspapers and other unpublished literary works. Some of the documents that were reviewed include policies that guide the implementation of stress management

strategies such as the PPF staff and administrative policy, PPF annual staff reports, monthly departmental reports and other reports that explain the use of stress management strategies and its effects to organizations performance in Tanzania.

### **3.6 Data Analysis**

For this study, quantitative data were analyzed using SPSS programme version 20.0 and qualitative data were descriptively presented. Before the detailed data analysis, questionnaires were thoroughly examined, variables coded (arranging data in categories of similar information and then imported into the SPSS software package). This process was applied to all questionnaires that were used during the research. This meant the information in the questionnaires was coded and converted into numerical codes and organized in a systematic, 'machine-readable' manner. Therefore, the coding process helped to analyze the data into more details. The study used statistical techniques such as graphs and charts to present the data.

### **3.7 Validity and Reliability of the Data**

This section describes the validity and reliability of data collected from respondents in the study area.

#### **3.7.1 Validity of the Data**

In this study, interview questions were designed to ensure they aligned with the study objectives. This ensured that the interview guides focused on the topic under investigation and the purpose of the study was clearly explained to the respondents and issues of concern were resolved satisfactorily. The procedures for the interviews

were explained to the respondents. Lastly, respondents were assured of anonymity and confidentiality. This encouraged frankness during the interviews.

The above steps ensured that the multiple sources of data collection such as literature review, interviews and questionnaires were conducted in an environment that is acceptable to the respondents. This, therefore, ensured that the process and findings were trustworthy and valid.

### **3.7.2 Reliability of Data**

Babbie (2005) described reliability as a condition in which the same results are achieved whenever the same technique is repeated for the same study. In this study, reliability was achieved by the following means.

The anonymity and confidentiality of the respondents were ensured so that they were able to provide information strictly for the purpose of the study. A rapport with the respondents was successfully established during the preliminary fieldwork study. The relationship of trust with the respondents was built and the credibility of the study was reinforced. Also, pre-testing of the instrument like the questionnaires was done during the field study just to observe whether it yielded the same results. The use of trained fieldworker ensured that the discussion level was high where necessary and relevant to the study. In addition, triangulation of information obtained from different data collection methods helped the researcher in establishing the reliability of data. Where the researcher noted contradictions in data for similar questions

included in different data collection methods, efforts were taken to explore further explanation from respondents especially during interviews.

### **3.8 Ethical Considerations**

Confidentiality of the respondent's information was protected by the researcher. Sullivan (2001) argues that social researchers are bound to ethical considerations in their studies. The researcher observed the rights of all respondents including the information given by respondent were kept confidential to prevent respondents from any form of harm. Permission to conduct the study was granted by the Director General and Head of the Directorate of Human Capital Management and Administration at PPF. Further ethical issues were considered through consent forms provided to potential respondents seeking their consent to participate in the research study.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

The literature reviewed in chapter 2 shows that there are many factors contributing to workplace stress. These factors include a demanding boss, annoying co-workers, angry customers, hazardous conditions, long commutes and a never-ending workload. Staff work performance can as well be affected by various types of stress sources such as family relationships, finances and lack of sleep stemming from fears and anxieties about the future. Staff handling of the effects of stress depends on whether it is easier to change the situation or change the attitude towards it.

This chapter presents the findings obtained from the analysis of the collected data. The analysis of the results was guided by three research questions: to determine the effect(s) on work performance of stress management strategies implemented by PPF, to assess the factors determining the success of stress management strategies implemented by the Parastatal Pension Fund and to determine the impact of stress management on the work performance of the Parastatal Pension Fund employees. The researcher began the analysis by evaluating the demographic characteristics of the respondents.

#### **4.2 Respondents' Demographic Profile**

This section presents the respondents' demographic profile in the study area. This includes sex, age, marital status, level of education, work experience and hierarchical position of staff of PPF headquarters. These demographic factors were analyzed



because the literature review highlighted their importance in explaining the relationships between stress and employees' performance, and between stress management strategies and employees' performance.

#### 4.2.1 Age

Respondents were also asked to indicate their age. Table 4.1 presents the responses.

**Table 4. 1 Age of Respondents**

	Number	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
18 – 25	28	18.7	18.7	18.7
26 – 35	46	30.7	30.7	49.3
36 – 45	34	22.7	22.7	72.0
46 – 55	27	18.0	18.0	90.0
Over 56	15	10.0	10.0	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Source: Field data, (2017)**

Table 4.1 indicates that 28 (18.7%) of the respondents were aged between 18-25 years, 46 (30.7%) were aged between 26-35 years, 34 (22.7%) were aged between 36-45 years, 27 (18%) were aged between 46-55 years while the rest 15 (10%) were aged 56 years and above. The findings established that the majority of the selected respondents were aged between 26-35 years representing a fairly young work population among staff at the PPF headquarters.

#### 4.2.2 Gender

Respondents were asked to indicate their sex. Table 4.2 shows sex distribution of the respondents.

**Table 4. 2 Gender of Respondents**

	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Valid Percent</b>	<b>Cumulative Percent</b>
Male	59	39.3	39.3	39.3
Female	91	60.7	60.7	60.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Source: Field data, (2017)**

Table 4.2 indicates that male respondents were 59, constituting 39.3% of all respondents, while female respondents were 91 (60.7%), representing 60.7% of the respondents. Results further indicated that, the number of female respondents was higher than the male respondents. The finding is not surprising as Tanzania has implemented policies geared towards improving women participation in formal employment. For example, 1970s policies on education promoted girl's entry into secondary and post-secondary education thus allowing them to gain necessary qualifications for entry into formal employment. The increase in the proportion of women accessing higher education can also be viewed as one of the contributing factors towards the large number of women in formal employment. The 2000 Gender Development Policy among others, promoted equal employment for women and men in Tanzania. In addition, the Five Year Development (FYDP II) aims at making sure

that women access new employment opportunities in higher productivity areas (Fox, 2016). On the other hand, the Tanzania National Development Vision 2025 emphasizes gender equality and the empowerment of women in all areas of social and economic development. Moreover, women comprise 52% of the total population and hence where possible and with policies encouraging equal employment opportunities women are likely to be more than men. In addition, much of PPF work is clerical; which in most cases, it is associated more with a typical employment for women than men.

#### 4.2.3 Level of Education

Respondents were asked to indicate their education levels. Table 4.3 illustrates the findings.

**Table 4. 3 Level of Education of the Respondents**

	Number	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
College Diploma	17	11.3	11.3	11.3
Bachelor's Degree	93	62.0	62.0	73.3
Master's Degree	39	26.0	26.0	99.3
PHD	1	0.7	0.7	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	

**Source: Field data, (2017)**

Table 4.3 indicates that 93 (62%) of respondents had bachelor degree, 39 (26%) were master`s degree holders, 17 (11.3%) had attained diploma while one of them (0.7%) had a PhD. Therefore, the findings indicate that majority of the respondents had attained a university level of education. This level of education indicates that

respondents had a reasonable level of education to understand the discussion on stress management and performance at work place. It is the researcher`s belief that the respondents were well conversant with the research topic and, therefore, gave accurate and relevant information needed for the study.

#### 4.2.4 Work Experience

Respondents were asked to indicate the number of years they have worked with PPF. Tables 4.4 indicate their responses.

**Table 4. 4 Working Experience**

<b>Years</b>	<b>Frequency (N=150)</b>	<b>Percent (%)</b>
1-5 years	41	27
6-10 years	72	48
11-15 years	22	15
Over 16 years	15	10

**Source: Field data, (2017)**

According to results shown in Table 4.4 above, at the time of this study, 72 (48%) of the respondents had worked with PPF for a period of 6-10 years, 41 (27%) had worked for 1-5 years, 22(15%) had worked for 11-15 years while 15 (10%) had worked for over 16 years. The analysis shows that, majority of the respondents had an experience of 6 years and above. This however leaves the researcher with enough evidence that, the respondents were aware of the benefits or challenges of stress management strategies implemented by the PPF. This finding confirms that data were collected from the respondents who were well informed on the effects of

strategic stress management in relation to work performance at the PPF. The researcher thus, strongly believes that they gave the correct and accurate information needed to respond to the study questions.

#### 4.2.5 Marital Status

Respondents were asked to indicate their marital status; and the findings are summarized in Table 4.5 below.

**Table 4. 5 Marital status of the respondents: Marital Status**

	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percent</b>	<b>Valid Percent</b>	<b>Cumulative Percent</b>
Married	90	60.0	60.0	60.0
Single	52	34.7	34.7	<b>94.7</b>
Widow	8	5.3	5.3	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>	

**Source: Field data, (2017)**

Table 4.5 indicates that majority (90) of the respondents (60%) were married, 52 (34.7%) were single, and only 8 (5.3%) were widows.

#### 4.3 Factors Contributing to Stress in Workplaces

The first objective of the study aimed at determining the factors contributing to stress at workplaces. To achieve this objective, respondents were asked to indicate factors contributing to employee stress the findings are summarized in Table 4.6 below.

**Table 4. 6** Factors Contributing to Employee Stress at Workplace

<b>Sources</b>	<b>(N=150)</b>	<b>Percent (%)</b>
Poor relations with the boss	17	11
Role assigned	19	13
Time pressure	45	30
Direct reports	15	10
Peers	12	8
Work deadlines	28	19
Lack of recognition	9	6
Job security	5	3

**Source: Field data, (2017)**

Table 4.6 indicates that 45 (30%) of the respondents mentioned time pressure as one of the causes of stress, while 28 (19%) said the cause of stress was work deadlines, and 17 (11%) of them indicated poor relations with the boss. Another 19 (13%) of the respondents mentioned assigned roles in the work organization and 15 (10%) and 12 (8%) mentioned direct reports and peer groups respectively as among the sources of stress. Moreover, 9 (6%) and 5 (3%) of them indicated lack of recognition and job security respectively as the sources of stress at the work place. The findings correspond with the study done by Mugwere (2002) on the determinants of work stress and its management, which found that the most common cause of stress for the managers was time pressure and work deadlines.

### 4.3.1 Framework for Interpretation of the Score on Factors Contributing to Employees' Stress at Workplace

The score was set to measure the level of respondents' awareness on the significance of strategic stress management to work performance. Table 4.7 presents the interpretation.

**Table 4. 7 Scores for Level of Awareness**

<b>Score</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
1	Strongly Agree
2	Agree
3	Neutral
4	Disagree
5	Strongly Disagree

**Source: Field data, (2017)**

Table 4.7 presents the score of the frequency for level of awareness on significance of stress management on employee performance among various employees. A five-point Likert scale was used to interpret the respondents' responses. According to the scale, if the respondent ticked that item to be strongly agreed, a score of 1 was given; and if they ticked strongly disagreed, a score of 5 was given on the Likert scale. Within the continuum are 2 for agree, 3 for neutral and 4 for disagree. The scores for each question from all respondents were analyzed for the mean. Table 4.8 indicated the criterion used to interpret the mean scores.

**Table 4. 8 Interpretation of the Mean Scores**

<b>Mean Scores</b>	<b>Interpretation</b>
Below 2	Agree
Between 2 and 3	Neutral
Above 3	Disagree

**Source: Field data, (2017)**

Table 4.8 indicated that if the score of the mean for a particular factor was below 2, the interpretation was that the respondents agreed with the statement; and if the score of the mean for a particular factor was between 2 and 3, the interpretation was that the respondents were neutral with the statement. On the other hand, if the score of the mean for a particular factor was above 3, the interpretation was that the respondents disagreed with the statement.

Correspondingly, respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they agree/disagree with the statements with regards to causes contributing to stress management at PPF. This was done by using a point 5 Likert scale. Table 4.9 shows the findings.



**Table 4. 9 Responses on Factors Contributing to Stress at Workplace**

<b>Statements</b>	<b>Mean score</b>
Time pressure causes stress	1.24
Deadlines cause stress to employees	1.40
Role in work causes stress	1.41
Poor relations with the boss cause stress	1.45
Direct reports lead to stress	1.56
Peers lead to stress	1.70
Lack of recognition lead to employee stress	3.21
Job security cause stress to employees	3.33

**Source: Field data, (2017)**

Table 4.9 indicates that majority of respondents agreed that time pressure causes stress with the mean score of 1.24. The second factor causing stress is deadlines with a mean score of 1.40; followed by role given to employees with a mean score of 1.41. Respondents specified poor relations with the boss as another factor causing stress with the mean score of 1.45. Respondents also indicated that direct reports lead to stress with the mean score of 1.56. Respondents further indicated that peer groups lead to stress as represented by a mean of 1.70. Similarly, respondents mentioned lack of recognition and job security had minimal impact on stress as affirmed by 3.21 and 3.33 mean scores respectively.

For the purpose of further understanding, the researcher wanted to understand the differences between female and male staff in terms of views that time pressure is the

main cause for stress at work place; cross tabulation was conducted to come out with results as indicated in Table 4.10 below.

**Table 4. 10 Gender \* Time pressures Cross tabulation**

	Time pressures				Total
	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	
Gender Male	1	3	24	31	59
Female	7	4	49	31	91
Total	8	7	73	62	150

**Source, Field data (2017)**

The results in Table 4.10 show that both women and men perceived (31% strongly agreed) time pressure is a source of stress at work place with women scoring higher (80%) if scores for agree and strongly agree are combined. The study findings confirm findings from other studies, whereby women in formal employment face challenges of time poverty as they have to combine both paid and unpaid care work at home and in the community.

From Table 4.10 above, to a large extent, both males and females strongly agreed that time pressures cause stress at workplace. For example, amongst the 59 male respondents, 31(52.5%) strongly agreed and 24 (40.6%) agreed. As for female respondents, who were 91 in total, 31(34.06%) of them strongly agreed and 49 (53.8%) agreed.

Again, as is indicated in Table 4.11, age was cross tabulated against time pressure to find out how time pressure may cause stress amongst the different age groups. After the tabulation, the results showed that 135 respondents agreed and strongly agreed that time pressure causes stress at workplace.

**Table 4. 11 Age \* Time pressures Cross tabulation**

	Time pressures				Total
	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	
Age 18 – 25	2	2	14	10	28
26 – 35	2	2	23	19	46
36 – 45	1	1	17	15	34
46 – 55	3	1	10	13	27
Over 56	0	1	9	5	15
<b>Total</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>62</b>	<b>150</b>

**Source: Field data (2017)**

#### **4.4. Impacts of Stress Management Strategies at PPF**

The first objective of this study was to explore the effects of stress at workplaces, with a focus on PPF. To realize this objective, respondents were asked to explore the effects of stress at workplace the findings of the study identified different impacts of stress at the PPF as presented in Table 4.12 below.

**Table 4. 12 Impacts of Stress Management**

<b>Impacts</b>	<b>Frequency (N=150)</b>	<b>Percent (%)</b>
Corporate inefficiency	33	23
High staff turnover	27	18
Absenteeism	16	11
Decreased quality and quantity output	14	9
Increased health care cost	10	6
Reduced profit	21	14
Reduced staff performance	18	12
Reduced staff morale	11	7

**Source: Field data, (2017)**

Table 4.12 indicates that most of the respondents (23%) said that stress leads to corporate inefficiency while 18% of them said there is high staff turnover caused by stress in work performance. Also, 14% indicated that profit is reduced as a result of employees stress, and another 12% said there is a reduction in staff performance. Similarly, 11% and 9% said stress caused employee absenteeism and decreased quality and quantity of output respectively in the staff performance. In addition, only 7% and 6% of respondents indicated that there was a reduction in staff morale and increased health care cost respectively. The findings correspond with the study done by Salami, *et al* (2010), which indicated that stress may directly affect corporate performance. Stress is a major contributing factor to corporate inefficiency as it leads to high staff turnover, absenteeism, decreased quality and quantity output and increased health care cost.

#### 4.4.1 Corporate Inefficiency

The findings have revealed that workplace stress contributes to corporate inefficiency, along with other factors such as lack of skills and training among workers. Specifically, workplace stress prolongs discomfort, causes mismanagement and lessens work capacity thus negatively affecting corporate efficiency in terms of employees becoming less productive or spending more time on one task. As shown in Table 4.13, the majority of the respondents agreed that workplace stress brings about corporate inefficiency, and this is backed up by a large percentage of the respondents (65.3% of 150 staff) who agreed, followed by 44 (29.3%) who strongly agreed. On the other hand, 7 (4.7%) of the respondents were neutral and one of them (0.7) strongly disagreed. Stress brings about discomfort and lessens work capacity which in turn affects the worker, and in long run causes corporate inefficiency (Bacaltos, 2015). The results are further illustrated in Table 4.13 below.

**Table 4. 13 Workplace Stress as Related to Corporate Inefficiency**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Strongly Disagree	1	.7	.7
Neutral	7	4.7	4.7
Agree	98	65.3	65.3
Strongly Agree	44	29.3	29.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Field data, (2017)

#### 4.4.2 High Staff Turnover

Table 4.14 below presents responses from the respondents on how high staff turnover can be related to workplace stress. Results indicate that 3.3 % of the respondents were neutral on this statement while 51.3% strongly agreed and the remaining 45.3% strongly agreed. Basing on this analysis, it can, therefore, be concluded that respondents see a close relationship between work place stress and staff turnover. Literature shows that unfriendly working condition brings about stress which in turn may compel a staff to resign from work (Ahanian et al, 2016).

**Table 4. 14 High Staff Turnover in Relation to Workplace Stress**

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent
Neutral	5	3.3	3.3
Agree	77	51.3	51.3
Strongly	68	45.3	45.3
Agree			
<b>Total</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100.0</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Field data, (2017)

#### 4.4.3 Absenteeism

Table 4.15 shows the relationship between workplace stress and absenteeism. The respondents were required to indicate the rate of their agreement or disagreement with the statement. After analysis of the data, it was shown that; 2% of the respondents strongly disagreed, 4% disagreed, 3.3 remained neutral, 44.7 % agreed and the remaining 46% strongly agreed. From these results, it can be concluded that

workplace stress contributes to staff absenteeism. Literature also shows that an employee who has experienced some kind of stress is more likely to be absent from work than an employee who has not experienced any sort of stress (Leontaridi & Ward, 2002).

**Table 4. 15 Workplace Stress and Absenteeism**

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Disagree	3	2.0
Disagree	6	4.0
Neutral	5	3.3
Agree	67	44.7
Strongly Agree	69	46.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Field data, (2017)

#### 4.4.4 Low Quality of work

Respondents were required to rate how low quality of work can be caused by work-related stress, and the results showed that 2% strongly disagreed, 4.7% disagreed, 5.3% were neutral, 38.7% agreed and the remaining 49.3% strongly agreed. Basing on the fact that majority of the respondents strongly agreed and agreed, it can be said that respondents were of the opinion that work-related stress contributes to low quality staff performance. This is also backed up by literature which shows that

environment may contribute to stress which may affect employee performance (Khuong & Yen, 2016). The findings are summarized in Table 4.16 below.

**Table 4. 16 Stress and Low Quality of Work**

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Disagree	3	2.0
Disagree	7	4.7
Neutral	8	5.3
Agree	58	38.7
Strongly Agree	74	49.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Source: Field data, (2017)**

#### **4.4.5 Increased Health Care Cost**

It was as well the interest of the researcher to understand whether stress at work place can lead to increased health care cost. The results presented in Table 4.17 show that 12% of respondents strongly disagreed with the statement that work related stress increased health care costs. Another 22% of the respondents disagreed, and 20.7% of them were neutral. Moreover, 24.7% of the respondents agreed and the remaining 20.7% strongly agreed that stress at workplace increases health care costs. The reason why stress at workplace is associated with an increase in health care costs can be justified by the fact that stress affects the physical and mental health of an



employee as a result, an employee will need to seek medical attention, which may increase health care costs (Sohail & Rehman, 2015).

**Table 4. 17 Increased Health Care Costs**

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Disagree	18	12.0
Disagree	33	22.0
Neutral	31	20.7
Agree	37	24.7
Strongly Agree	31	20.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Source: Field data, (2017)**

#### **4.4.6 Reduced Profit**

Profit is probably the core objective of any organization for it to remain financially viable and sustainable. The researcher sought to understand how respondents at PPF view stress as a cause for shrinking organization profit. Table 4.18 indicates that 1.3% strongly disagreed, 8.7% disagreed, 12% were neutral, 36.7% agreed and the remaining 41.3% strongly agreed. Based on these findings, it can be concluded that stressful work environment has a negative effect on the profitability of the company. This is because a stressful work environment hinders employees from performing to their fullest potential and capacity. This may sometimes lead to poor services and response to clients' needs with potential of losing business to competitors, which in some organizations may reduce profit levels. This is because stress at work place reduces organizational performance (Agolla, 2008)

**Table 4. 18 Reduced Profit**

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Disagree	2	1.3
Disagree	13	8.7
Neutral	18	12.0
Agree	55	36.7
Strongly Agree	62	41.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Source: Field data, (2017)**

#### **4.4.7. Reduced Staff Morale**

It is important for staff to have an environment that professionally challenges them to deliver as per the agreed targets. Table 4.19 indicates that 54.7% of respondents at PPF strongly agreed, and 33.3% agreed that work related stress reduces staff morale. Another 5.3% were neutral, 4% disagreed and the remaining 2.7% strongly disagreed. These results imply that in order for employees to be productive, stress management strategies especially those geared towards identifying and dealing with causes of stress are paramount for creating a stress free work environment and automatically increasing staff morale and eventually their productivity (Subramaniam, 2017).

**Table 4. 19 Stress and Reduction of Staff Morale**

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Disagree	4	2.7
Disagree	6	4
Neutral	8	5.3
Agree	50	33.3
Strongly Agree	82	54.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Field data, (2017)

**Table 4. 20 Stress and Reduction of Staff Morale**

	Frequency	Percent
Strongly Disagree	4	2.7
Disagree	6	4
Neutral	8	5.3
Agree	50	33.3
Strongly Agree	82	54.7
<b>Total</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Field data, (2017)

#### 4.4.8. Reduced Staff Performance

This study partly aimed at finding out whether or not stress at work may contribute in reducing employee performance. Table 4.20 below shows that 1.3% of the respondents strongly disagreed with this statement, 5.3% maintained neutrality, 40% agreed, and the remaining 53.3% strongly agreed. From the analysis of data, we see that more than 90% of the respondents agreed and strongly agreed with the statement that stress at work reduce staff performance. Stressed employees may fail to deliver as per the required standards mainly because stress may put an employee into a

situation where she/he feels undervalued; and this causes an employee to lose commitment to work (Dar et al, 2011). Adding on to that, pressure from management to maintain high quality work may lead to employees work overload, which may lead to their performance being negatively affected (Karunanithy & Ponnampalam, 2013).

**Table 4. 21 Staff Performance in Relation to Workplace Stresses**

	Frequency	Percent
Disagree	2	1.3
Neutral	8	5.3
Agree	60	40.0
Strongly Agree	80	53.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>150</b>	<b>100.0</b>

**Source: Field data, (2017)**

#### **Impact of Work-Related Stress on PPF Performance**

The researcher asked respondents questions to ascertain their views regarding the effect of stress on PPF performance. Using a Likert score, the researcher asked respondents to give a score to the 7 statements presented in Table 4.21.

**Table 4. 22 Responses on Impact of Stress at Workplace (PPF)**

<b>Statements</b>	<b>Mean score</b>
Corporate inefficiency	1.22
High staff turnover	1.30
Absenteeism	1.41
Decreased quality and quantity output	1.44
Increased health care cost	1.57
Reduced profit	1.33
Reduces staff performance	1.35
Reduced staff morale	1.71

**Source: Field data, (2017)**

Table 4.21 indicates that the majority of respondents agreed that stress at PPF organization affects work performance as there was corporate inefficiency recording a mean score of 1.22. Also, respondents agreed that there was a high staff turnover with a mean score of 1.30. Respondents confirmed that there was employees' absenteeism recording a mean score of 1.41. Respondents stated that there was decreased quality and quantity of output (i.e a mean score of 1.44). Respondents held the view that there were increased health care costs (a mean score of 1.57). Respondents also established that there was reduced profit (a mean score of 1.33). Correspondingly, stress reduced PPF staff performance (a mean score of 1.35) was achieved. Lastly, respondents revealed that stress reduced staff morale (a mean score of 1.71).

It was as well the interests of this study to find out about the impact of stress management strategies on work performance at workplaces. Specifically, the study

sought to find out if the strategies for stress management implemented by PPF were effective in reducing stress, and hence improved employees and organization's performance. The findings of this study identified a number of strategies that are being implemented to address stress at workplaces. These include brief evening meetings, selecting people who can work under pressure, training on stress management, involving employees in decision making and flexible work schedules. Others include setting smart targets, reviewing organizational structure and design, clarifying roles, doing staff appraisals once per year and guiding and counselling of staff by immediate supervisors. Results are presented in Table 4.22.

**Table 4. 23 Strategies Imposed to Manage Stress at Workplaces**

<b>Strategies</b>	<b>Frequency (N=150)</b>	<b>Percent (%)</b>
Brief evening meetings	30	20
Selecting people who can work under pressure	18	12
Training on stress management	10	7
Involving employees in decision making	9	6
Flexible work schedules	25	16
Setting smart targets	4	3
Reviewing organizational structure and design	6	4
Clarifying roles	21	14
Doing staff appraisals once per year	15	10
Guiding and counseling by immediate supervisors	12	8

**Source: Field data, (2017)**

Table 4.22 indicates that most of the respondents (20%) said brief evening meetings were conducted to cope with stress while 16% of respondents identified flexible

work schedules. Similarly, 14% indicated that roles clarification helped them cope with stress, and 12% identified selecting people who can work under pressure as another strategy for mitigating stress at workplace. Likewise, 10% and 8% of the respondents identified staff appraisals once per year and guiding and counselling by immediate supervisors respectively as strategies that helped in coping with stress. Correspondingly, only 7% and 6% of the respondents identified training in stress management and involving employees in decision making respectively. Lastly, only 4% and 3% of the respondents indicated that organizational reviewed its structure and design and setting smart targets were done respectively. The findings correspond with the study done by Mwangandi (2010) on the stress management in the transport department which found out that stress management comprises stress reduction, resilience and recuperating strategies. Stress could emanate from outside the organization, within the organization, groups or individual characteristics.

Consistently, respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed/disagreed with the statements with regard to strategies imposed to redress stress management at PPF. This was done by using a point 5 Likert scale. Table 4.23 illustrated the findings.

**Table 4. 24 Responses on Strategies Imposed to address Stress at PPF**

<b>Statements</b>	<b>Mean score</b>
Brief evening meetings	1.20
Selecting people who can work under pressure	1.33
Training on stress management	1.50
Involving employees in decision making	1.56
Flexible work schedules	1.25
Setting smart targets	4.71
Reviewing organizational structure and design	1.65
Clarifying roles	1.30
Doing appraisals once per year	1.41
Guiding and counseling by immediate supervisors	1.45

**Source: Field data, (2017)**

Table 4.23 indicates that majority of respondents showed that in coping with stress, PPF implements a number of strategies. The strategies include brief evening meetings with the mean score of 1.20. Similarly, others indicated that flexible work schedules were the best strategy for coping with stress achieved a mean score of 1.25. Respondents identified selection of people who work under pressure as another strategy for stress reduction employed by PPF, with a mean score of 1.33. Respondents identified other stress management strategies employed by PPF as training, with a mean score of 1.50; involvement of employees in decision making, with a mean score of 1.56; reviewing organizational structure and design (mean score 1.65) clarifying roles (mean score 1.30), staff appraisals (mean score 1.41). Other



strategies mentioned were providing guided counsel by immediate supervisors (mean score 1.45) and setting of smart targets, with a mean score of 1.45.

Furthermore, the researcher cross-tabulated sex and brief evening meetings to see if there was any statistical relationships between the two variables. The results showed that amongst the 59 male respondents, 24 (40.6%) and 50 out of 91 female respondents agreed that brief evening meetings are a way to manage stress at the workplace. In addition, 30 (50.8%) male respondents out of 59 and 34 (37.3%) out of 91 of the female respondents strongly agreed that brief evening meetings are the best way to manage stress at workplace. This might be because it is during these meetings where team meet and discuss all the challenges and opportunities that the staff encountered during the day, and hopefully it is during these meetings when roles are clarified. Work place is an important source of pressure causing stress. It is therefore important for organization to address so as to create a friendly working environment (Michie, 2002).

**Table 4. 25 Gender \* Brief Evening Meetings Cross tabulation**

	Brief evening meetings					Total
	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	
Gender Male	2	0	3	24	30	59
Female	0	1	6	50	34	91
Total	2	1	9	74	64	150

Source: field data (2017)

#### 4.5 Strategies Implemented to Manage Stress at Workplaces

It was as well the interests of this study to find out the impact of stress management strategies on work performance at workplaces. Specifically, the study wanted to find out if the strategies for stress management implemented by PPF were effective in reducing stress and hence improving employee and organization performance. Findings of this study identified a number of strategies that are being implemented to address stress at workplaces. They include brief evening meetings, selecting people who can work under pressure, training on stress management, involving employees in decision making and flexible work schedules. Other strategies are setting smart targets, reviewing organizational structure and design, clarifying roles, doing staff appraisals once per year and guiding and counselling of staff by immediate supervisors. Results are further presented in Table 4.25

**Table 4. 26 Strategies Imposed to Manage Stress at Workplaces**

<b>Strategies</b>	<b>Frequency (N=150)</b>	<b>Percent (%)</b>
Brief evening meetings	30	20
Selecting people who can work under pressure	18	12
Training on stress management	10	7
Involving employees in decision making	9	6
Flexible work schedules	25	16
Setting smart targets	4	3
Reviewing organizational structure and design	6	4
Clarifying roles	21	14
Doing staff appraisals once per year	15	10
Guiding and counseling by immediate supervisors	12	8

**Source: Field data, (2017)**

Table 4.25 indicates that most of the respondents (20%) said brief evening meetings were conducted to cope with stress while 16% of respondents identified flexible work schedules. Similarly, 14% indicated that clarifying roles helped them cope with stress, 12% identified selecting people who can work under pressure as another strategy for mitigating stress at workplace. Likewise, 10% and 8% identified staff appraisals once per year and guiding and counselling by immediate supervisors

respectively as strategies that helped in coping with their stress. Correspondingly, only 7% and 6% of respondents identified training in stress management and involving employees in decision making respectively. Lastly, only 4% and 3% of respondents indicated that organizational review of its structure and design and setting smart targets were done respectively. The findings correspond with the study done by Mwangi (2010) on the stress management in the transport department, which found out that stress management comprises stress reduction, resilience and recuperating strategies. Stress could emanate from outside the organization, within the organization, groups or individual characteristics.

Consistently, respondents were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed/disagreed with the statements with regards to strategies imposed to redress stress management at PPF. This was done by using a point 5 Likert scale. Table 4.26) illustrated the findings.

**Table 4. 27 Responses on Strategies Imposed to address Stress at PPF**

<b>Statements</b>	<b>Mean score</b>
Brief evening meetings	1.20
Selecting people who can work under pressure	1.33
Training on stress management	1.50
Involving employees in decision making	1.56
Flexible work schedules	1.25
Setting smart targets	4.71
Reviewing organizational structure and design	1.65
Clarifying roles	1.30
Doing appraisals once per year	1.41
Guiding and counseling by immediate supervisors	1.45

**Source: Field data, (2017)**

Table 4.26 indicates that majority of respondents agreed that in coping with stress; a number of strategies are implemented by PPF. The strategies include brief evening meetings, with the mean score of 1.20. Similarly, others agreed that flexible work schedules were the best strategy for coping with stress, and this had a mean score of 1.25. Respondents further identified selection of people who work under pressure as another strategy for stress reduction employed by PPF, with a mean score of 1.33. Respondents identified other stress management strategies employed by PPF as training, with a mean score of 1.50; involvement of employees in decision making, with a mean score of 1.56, reviewing organizational structure and design (mean score 1.65) and clarifying roles (mean score 1.30). Other strategies included staff appraisals (mean score 1.41), and providing guided counsel by immediate supervisors (mean score 1.45). Respondents disagreed that (mean score 4.71) setting of smart targets had influence on helping staff cope with stress at PPF. Furthermore, the researcher cross-tabulated sex and brief evening meetings to see if there were any statistical relationships between the two variables. The results showed that amongst the 59 male respondents 24 (40.6%) and 50 out of 91 female respondents agreed that brief evening meetings are a way to manage stress at the workplace. In addition, 30 (50.8%) male respondents out of 59 and 34 (37.3%) out of 91 of the female respondents strongly agreed that brief evening meetings are the best way to manage stress at workplace.

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter presents the summary, conclusions and recommendations based on the findings of the study. The main objective of this study was to examine the effect of strategic stress management on work performance. The specific objectives were to; determine the effect(s) of stress on work performance; determine the factors contributing to or hindering the success of stress management strategies implemented by the PPF and explore the impacts on stress of strategies implemented by PPF. The study involved 150 respondents and combined both qualitative and quantitative data. This study employed both interviews and questionnaires as methodology for data collection. The findings from both methods correlate.

The literature reviewed in chapter 2 shows that there are many factors contributing to workplace stress. These factors include a demanding boss, annoying co-workers, angry customers, hazardous work conditions, long commutes, time pressure from deadlines and a never-ending workload. Staff work performance can as well be affected by various types of stress sources such as family relationships, finances and lack of sleep stemming from fears and anxieties about the future. Staff handling of the effects of stress depends on whether it is easier to change the situation or change the attitude towards it.

## **5.2 Summary of Findings**

The study findings show that work related stress negatively impact employee performance. The study established that stress is a major contributing factor for corporate inefficiency, high staff turnover, absenteeism, decreased quality and quantity of output, increased health care costs, reduced staff performance and reduced staff morale in the organization. Regarding the causes of stress, the researcher found out that, most common causes of stress for the employees were time pressure and deadlines. The next important sources of stress were lack of clarity of roles in the work organization and poor relations with the management. Other common stress factors were direct reports, peer groups, lack of recognition and job security.

Regarding the impacts of stress management strategies implemented by PPF, the study found out that PPF adapted and implemented a number of strategies. These were brief evening meetings (to give update and feedback on day to day activities), assigning/hiring staff who can work under pressure, training on stress management, flexible work schedules, and involving employees in decision making. Other strategies include setting smart targets, reviewing organizational structure and design, clarifying roles, conducting appraisals once per year, and guiding and counselling by immediate supervisors. The study showed that these strategies are effective in reducing work related stress as demonstrated by improved staff and corporate performance.

### **5.3 Conclusions**

From the findings, the study concludes that understanding the dynamics of stress and developing the ability to recognize and help others cope with stress are essential management skills for current and future workplaces. Though measuring stress is not easy, its measurement is nevertheless important for it may help an organization put in place measures to help it lower the stress levels. Stress in organizations must be continually maintained at optimal levels in order to ensure survival, and more so, sustained organizational success.

From the findings, it is evident that despite the effectiveness of the strategies employed, the study concludes that stress is still experienced in the organization. There is, therefore, a need for the organization to continuously conduct a survey of stress levels in order to determine the effectiveness of current strategies and also craft and implement better ones.

The study further concludes that tackling stress successfully requires practical solutions. This may include discussing with employees about what is stressing them, by providing them with a forum where they are able to express their honest opinions. It is also important to record employees' opinions and set out how one will tackle issues that are stressing them. Human resource managers need to have competencies to handle traumatic incidents and to mediate conflict situations at work. Getting in touch with employees brings the important aspect of social support which helps employees improve their perception and realize that they are valued, and in turn enhances their self-esteem and confidence at the workplace. This translates to higher



job performance among employees, which is reflected in the improvement of the measures of work performance such as customer satisfaction, employee creativity, productivity, higher market shares and profitability. Critical to an organization's supportive culture is sensitizing supervisors to be sympathetic to employees' desire to seek a balance between work and family needs. Finally, managers should organize seminars for employees to educate them on time management, financial management, teamwork enhancing programmes and healthy living seminars in order to manage their own stress.

#### **5.4 Recommendations**

From the conclusions, the following recommendations are put forward:

PPF management needs to put in place mechanisms to recognize workplace stress and reduce the problem by identifying common stressors and taking steps to mitigate them.

PPF should follow up the stress management strategies interventions with counselling sessions for employees affected by stress. The sessions may be given at the departmental level so as to take care of employees' needs and address the root cause of the problem. All heads of departments should undergo guidance and counselling seminars to equip them with skills that will help to support their immediate subordinates at the very onset of manifestation of stress symptoms.

There is, therefore, the need for the PPF to continuously do a survey on stress levels among employees in order to determine the effectiveness of current strategies and also craft and implement better ones.

The government of Tanzania is responsible for all workers at the Parastatal Pension Fund (PPF). It has the duty to continuously assess the effect of its policies and regulations on work related stress. Some of the stressors may emerge from government policies in particular those related to pay, health and safety. It is, therefore, the duty of the government in consultation with PPF management to improve on policies and regulations to address stressors.

### **5.5 Areas for Further Study**

The study has examined the effect of strategic stress management on work performance. This warrants the need for additional case studies which would provide the basis for generalization of findings to a body of knowledge to guide future practices on strategies for stress management at workplaces in Tanzania. The study, therefore, recommends a similar study to be carried out in other pension funds in Tanzania in order to get the general perspective on the significance of stress management strategies in public institutions.

### **5.6. Implication of the study**

The findings of this study are significant in the following ways:

- i.* The recommendations and suggestions will be useful for other researchers to further understand the problem profile and look at various ways of managing stress at workplaces in Tanzania and the world at large.
- ii.* The findings from this study will help policy makers to come up with a national debate and subsequently, a National Policy on how stress need to be managed at workplaces. This is because, throughout the literature reviewed by the researcher, it is without a doubt that stress at workplace has either a negative or positive on workers performance basing on how it is managed.
- iii.* The study will also be useful by employers on how to manage stress at workplaces

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## APPENDICES

### APPENDIX I: QUESTIONNAIRE

This is a questionnaire submitted to you to assist in a study on the effect of strategic stress management to employees work performance. The information given will be used only for the purpose of the study.

#### **PART A: Demographic profile**

1. Gender Male ( ) Female ( )

2. Age

*(Tick where appropriate)*

18 - 25 years ( ); 26 - 35 years ( ); 36 – 45 years ( ); 46 – 55 years ( ); Over 56 years ( )

3. Marital status

*(Tick where appropriate)*

Single ( ); Married ( ); Widow ( )

4. Education level

*(Tick where appropriate)*

College/University Diploma ( ); Bachelor's Degree ( ); Master's Degree ( ); PHD ( );

Other (Specify).....

5. How many years have you worked for the organization?

*(Tick where appropriate)*

1-5 years ( ); 6-10 years ( ); 11-15 years ( ); Over 16 years ( )

**PART B: Causes Contributing to Stress**

6. What is the source contributing to stress in your work?

- 1= Poor relations with the boss ( )
- 2= Role ( )
- 3= Time pressures ( )
- 4= Direct reports ( )
- 5= Peers ( )
- 6= Deadlines ( )
- 7= Lack of recognition ( )
- 8= Job security ( )

7. Causes contributing to stress management in the study area.

(Please indicate the extent to which you agree/disagree with the following statements with regards to sources contributing to stress in PPF):

	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
<b>The following causes contributing to stress in your work</b>					
Poor relations with the boss					
Role					
Time pressures					
Direct reports					
Peers					
Deadlines					
Lack of recognition					
Job security					
Family Nucleus/Joint					
Occupation and position					
Experience					
Any others (please mention)					

**PART C: Strategies Imposed to address Stress Management**

8. What is the strategy imposed to address stress in your work?

1= Brief evening meetings ( )

2= Selecting people who can work under pressure ( )

3= Training on stress management ( )

4= Involving employees in decision making ( )

5= Flexible work schedules ( )

6= Setting smart targets ( )

7= Reviewing organizational structure and design ( )

8= Clarifying roles ( )

9= Doing appraisals once per year ( )

10= Guiding and counseling by immediate supervisors ( )

Others (please mention)

9. Strategies imposed to address stress management in the study area.

(Please indicate the extent to which you agree/disagree with the following statements with regards to strategies imposed to readdress stress management in PPF)

	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
<b>The following strategies are imposed to address stress management in your work</b>					
Brief evening meetings					
Selecting people who can work under pressure					
Training on stress management					
Involving employees in decision making (supportive work environment)					
Flexible work schedules					
Setting smart targets					
Reviewing organizational structure and design					
Clarifying roles					
Doing appraisals once per year					
Guiding and counseling by immediate supervisors					

**PART D: Effects of Stress Management**

10. What is the impact of stress in your work?

- 1= Corporate inefficiency ( )
- 2= High staff turnover ( )
- 3= Absenteeism ( )
- 4= Decreased quality and quantity output ( )
- 5= Increased health care cost ( )
- 6= Reduced profit ( )
- 7= Reduces staff performance ( )
- 8= Reduced staff morale ( )

11. Impacts of stress management in the study area.

(Please indicate the extent to which you agree/disagree with the following statements with regards to impacts of stress management in PPF):

	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Neutral</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>
<b>The following impacts of stress management affect work performance.</b>					
Corporate inefficiency					
High staff turnover					
Absenteeism					
Decreased quality and quantity output					
Increased health care cost					
Reduced profit					
Reduces staff performance					
Reduced staff morale					

**THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION**

**APPENDIX II: INTERVIEW GUIDE**

1. What are the sources of stress in your work organization?

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.....  
.....

a. What are the strategies imposed to readdress stress in your work organization?

.....  
.....  
.....

2. What are the impacts of stress management in your work organization?

.....  
.....  
.....