

**APPRECIATION FUNBLAST: A MITIGATION TO OCCUPATIONAL STRESS IN  
CONSTRUCTION COMPANIES IN SOUTH-SOUTH, NIGERIA**

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**Abstract**

This study was focused on determining the influence of appreciation fun blast on occupational stress. Under occupational stress mental stress, emotional stress and physical stress were considered as the measures for the study in carrying out the investigation in construction companies in construction companies in South-South, Nigeria. The study objective was mainly to determine the extent to which appreciation fun blast, influenced the measures of occupational stress in construction companies in South-South, Nigeria. The research design adopted was a cross-sectional survey design and we utilized a structured questionnaire to collect primary data. The population of the study was 1014 which represented the total number of full-time staff in 5 construction companies and the sample size were 278 study elements who are full time

employees in the construction companies. However, the final analysis in the study was based on data collected from 258 respondents. The Spearman's rank order correlation served as the test statistics, while the zero partial correlation was used to determine the moderating effect of the relationship between the predictor and the criterion variables. The test was carried out at a 0.05 significance level. The study found out that appreciation funblast, have a significant and positive relationship with occupational stress. Consequently, the result showed that employee gender demography strongly moderates the relationship between appreciation funblast and employee occupational stress of construction companies in South-South, Nigeria. The study concluded that appreciation funblast demonstrated degrees of impact on how the organizations decreases the stress they experience as a result of carrying out their job, achieve set corporate goals, acquire resources, adapt to and respond to learning in the face of change. The study suggests the inclusion of appreciation funblast communication style and activities, in the organizational planning in order to increase employee's commitment and performance.

**Key Words:** Appreciation Funblast, Occupational Stress, Mental Stress, Emotional Stress, Physical Stress.

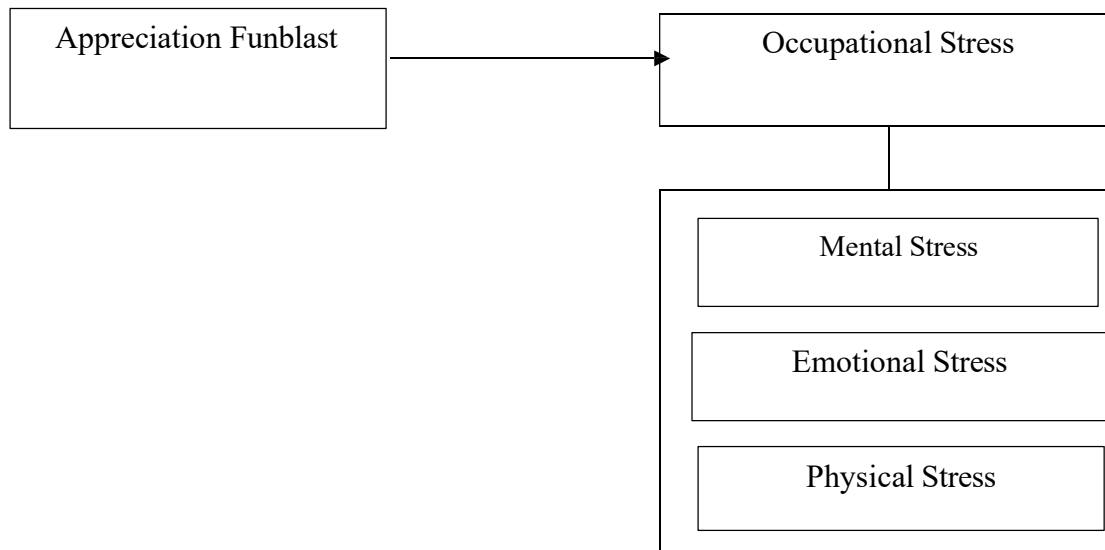
## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Background to the Study

Occupational stress is a common phenomenon that affects a large number of individuals in various professions and industries. It is crucial to understand the importance of addressing occupational stress as it can have significant negative impacts on individuals' mental and physical health, work performance, and overall quality of life. A study by Taris, and Schreurs, (2009), explored the relationship between job characteristics and employee occupational stress, finding that job demands and job resources play a significant role in the development of stress in the workplace. The researchers highlighted the importance of identifying and addressing factors that contribute to occupational stress to prevent negative outcomes such as burnout and reduced job satisfaction. Another study by Koeske, and Koeske, (1990), examined the effects of employee occupational stress on social workers, finding that high levels of stress were associated with increased feelings of burnout and emotional exhaustion. The researchers emphasized the importance of providing support and resources to help individuals cope with employee occupational stress and prevent negative consequences on their mental health and well-being. A meta-analysis by Leka *et. al.*, (2008), investigated the impact of occupational stress on physical health outcomes, finding a significant relationship between work-related stress and the development of chronic health conditions such as cardiovascular diseases and musculoskeletal disorders. Researchers underscored the importance of implementing interventions to reduce occupational stress and promote a healthier work environment. Based on the foregoing statement, we defined occupational stress as the perception of a discrepancy between environmental demands (stressor) and individual capacity to fill these demands (Topper. 2007, Vermut & Steensma, 2005; Ornels & Kleiner, 2003; Varca, 1999). Christo & Pienaar, (2006). As an instrument to mitigating occupational stress in construction companies in South-South, we deemed it necessary to refer to the strength and willingness in understanding funblast. Appreciating funblast it responds to the jokes of the individual by laughing. Funblast, is as an anti-dote for managing stress in an organization. The impact of organizational related stress is higher than job & individual related stress. Despite these studies, conducted to resolve employee occupational stress, there seems to pose some problems to which this study, have added

knowledge and been able to minimize occupational stress in construction companies in South-South, Nigeria. Through appreciation funblast.

**Fig: 1 Conceptual Framework**



### **Research Questions**

**H<sub>1</sub>:** What is the relationship between appreciation funblast and mental stress in construction company in South-South, Nigeria?

**H<sub>2</sub>:** What is the relationship between appreciation funblast and emotional stress in construction company in South-South, Nigeria?

**H<sub>3</sub>:** What is the relationship between appreciation funblast and physical stress in construction company in South-South, Nigeria?

### **Literature Review**

#### **Incongruity Theory**

If we are to seriously consider incongruity theory's potential to explain, we must understand what exactly is being referred to by the word incongruity. Morreall, (2011) & Robert, (1999), among others have pointed out that many incongruity theories are plagued by confusion and disagreement over the use of the terms. This theory of funblast was first mentioned by a German

Philosopher, Emmanuel Kant, (1724-1824), The initial development of incongruity theory is most often attributed to the work of Emmanuel Kant, who briefly addresses the issue of funblast and, more precisely, laughter, in his seminal Critique of the Power of Judgment (1724-1824). Kant's work on laughter and amusement is clearly in the business of describing the kind of dynamic at play in incongruity-based. In spite of the frustratingly small amount of space devoted to his theories of, the handful of passages Emmanuel Kant, (1724-1824) dedicates to examining the cause of laughter seem to suggest that he understood the amusement-reaction to comedy as an intellectual, cognitive process. We cannot be amused by anything that is not, at least somewhat, absurd. In order for the amusement reaction to take place.

### **Appreciation Funblast**

This refers to the strength and willingness in understanding funblast (Ziv,1984). Appreciating funblast it responds to the jokes of the individual by laughing. Using funblast as the coping and adaptive mechanism means funblast is able to help individual to relax when dealing with difficult situations (Thorson & Powell, 1993). This implies acknowledging something, person's or action's and in most cases, people would want to do that through kind gestures or words. However, in the case of appreciation funblast, Emmanuel Kant, (1724-1824) is of the opinion that you laugh as your way of appreciation through that jokes that was made or funny stories. He suggests that for something to be funny or exciting it has to be too nonsensical and absurd for it to make one laugh and the effort that was put in place to make that happen by the player should be appreciated through laughter as a means of appreciation towards that effort. Research on funblast appreciation has shown that funblast can have a positive impact on individuals' well-being and relationships. According to Martin and Ford (2018), individuals who appreciate funblast tend to have higher levels of well-being and better coping strategies when faced with stress. Another study by Kuiper and Grimshaw, (2018) found that funblast appreciation is positively correlated with social relationships, as individuals who appreciate funblast are more likely to have stronger interpersonal connections.

### **Occupational Stress**

Beehr and Newman (1978), defined occupational stress as "A condition arising from the interaction of people and their jobs and characterized by changes within people that force them to deviate from their normal functioning." Employee occupational stress affects directly

organizational commitment as well as physical health and psychological wellbeing of individuals. According to the American Institute of Stress (AIS), common causes of workplace stress include long working hours, feelings of being treated unfairly, insufficient acknowledgement or reward for a job well done, lack of job security, office politics, and most importantly, increased demands to accomplish assignments without sufficient authority and/or resources.

### **Mental stress**

Mental stress refers to the psychological and emotional strain or pressure that individuals experience as a result of challenging or demanding situations. It can arise from various sources such as work-related issues, interpersonal conflicts, financial pressures, academic demands, and major life changes. Mental stress can have a significant impact on an individual's mental health, well-being, and overall quality of life (McEwen, 2007). One key aspect of mental stress is its effect on cognitive function and emotional well-being. Prolonged or intense mental stress can impair concentration, memory, decision-making abilities, and problem-solving skills. It can also lead to feelings of anxiety, irritability, mood swings, and depression, making it difficult for individuals to cope with daily tasks and responsibilities (Lazarus, Folkman, 1984). Additionally, mental stress can also manifest physically in the form of headaches, muscle tension, fatigue, insomnia, gastrointestinal issues, and other physical symptoms. Chronic mental stress has been linked to an increased risk of developing mental health disorders such as anxiety disorders, depression, and burnout. Managing mental stress is crucial for promoting mental well-being and overall health. Strategies for coping with mental stress include practicing relaxation techniques, engaging in mindfulness and meditation, getting regular exercise, maintaining a balanced diet, seeking support from friends, family, or mental health professionals, and setting boundaries to protect one's mental and emotional health (American Psychological relationship, 2021).

### **Emotional stress**

Emotional stress is a psychological response to events or situations that are perceived as threatening, challenging, or overwhelming. It can manifest in a variety of ways, including feelings of anxiety, frustration, anger, sadness, and overwhelm. Emotional stress can have a significant impact on an individual's mental and physical well-being, leading to a range of negative consequences if not managed effectively (Lazarus, & Folkman, 1984). Emotional stress

involves the experience of negative affect, such as anxiety, in the context of a physiological stress response that includes cardiovascular and hormonal changes. Emotional stress commonly occurs when an individual perceives that he or she does not have adequate personal resources to meet situational demands effectively (Lazarus, 1966). Early conceptions of stress characterized its physical properties, with a focus on the disruption of homeostasis in an organism (Selye, 1956). The stress concept subsequently evolved to include a greater emphasis on the influence of psychological factors on the stress process. The term “emotional stress” reflects the fact that the stress process in humans involves a substantial affective component.

### **Physical stress**

Physical stress refers to the strain or pressure placed on the body as a result of physical exertion, environmental factors, or other external stressors. It can have a variety of negative effects on the body, including fatigue, muscle soreness, reduced immune function, and increased risk of injury (McEwen, & Stellar, 1993; Selye, 1956). One key aspect of physical stress is the body's response to strenuous physical activity. When the body is subjected to intense exercise or physical labor, it must adapt to the increased demands placed on it. This adaptation process can lead to improvements in strength, endurance, and overall physical fitness. However, if the body is subjected to excessive or prolonged physical stress without adequate rest and recovery, it can lead to negative consequences such as over training, burnout, and increased risk of injury (Kivimäki, Nyberg, Batty, Fransson, Heikkilä, Alfredsson, & Virtanen, 2012).

### **Methodology**

Methodology is concerned with the method, the researcher, intends to use in carrying out his study. For the purpose of this study, the research designed adopted was cross sectional survey. This is to give the respondents an equal opportunity to be chosen.

The population of the study was one thousand and fourteen (1014) people operating in five (5), construction companies in South-South, Nigeria. As contained in the Corporate Affairs Commission (CAC), 2024. While the sample size was two hundred and seventy eighty (278) full time workers.

The analysis was carried out, using Spearman’s Rank Order Correlation Coefficient to test the relationship between the two instruments, used. The reliability and validity test were 0.930 at 0.01 significant level. Which implies that the study is replicable and reliable elsewhere.

**Response Rate**

Two hundred and seventy-eight (278) questionnaires were distributed to the respondents in construction companies in South-South, Nigeria. Two hundred and fifty eighty (258) were returned representing 92.8%. two hundred and thirteen (213) representing 82.6% are male while, forty-four (44), representing 17.1% are female. It implies more male are given opportunity than the female in construction companies in South-South, Nigeria.

**Results and analysis**

Table 1. was used to answer research question 1. It shows a Spearman Rank Order Correlation Coefficient (rho) as  $r = 0.233$  at  $p < 0.01$  on the relationship between appreciation funblast and mental stress,  $r = 0.193$  at  $p < 0.01$  on the relationship between appreciation funblast and emotional stress,  $r = 0.264$  at  $p < 0.01$  on the relationship between appreciation funblast and physical stress. This value implies that there is a weak/very weak relationship that exist between the variables. Also, the strong stars reflected in the Table, indicates the gravity level of weakness that exist between appreciation funblast and mental stress, emotional stress and physical stress. That is to say that the weakness between the trio variables, is very strong. The direction of the relationship, indicates that the correlations is positive, also implying that a very low decrease in mental stress, emotional stress and physical stress, was as result of the adoption of appreciation funblast. Therefore, there is a weak positive correlation between appreciation funblast and mental stress, emotional stress and physical stress of construction workers in South-South, Nigeria.

**Table 1. Appreciation Funblast and Measures of Employee occupational stress**

<b>Correlations</b>						
			<b>APF</b>	<b>MS</b>	<b>ES</b>	<b>PS</b>
Spearman's rho	AP F	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.233**	.193**	.264**

		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000	.002	.000
		N	258	258	258	258
MS		Correlation Coefficient	.233**	1.000	.747**	.521**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.	.000	.000
		N	258	258	258	258
		Correlation Coefficient	.193**	.747**	1.000	.406**
ES		Sig. (2-tailed)	.002	.000	.	.000
		N	258	258	258	258
		Correlation Coefficient	.264**	.521**	.406**	1.000
PS		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.
		N	258	258	258	258
		Correlation Coefficient	.264**	.521**	.406**	1.000
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).						

To enable us accept or reject hypotheses 1, 2, and 3 as well as generalize our findings to the study population, the p-value was used as shown below:

**H<sub>01</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between appreciation funblast and mental stress in construction companies in South-South, Nigeria.

Displayed in the Table 1 is the statistical test of significance (p-value) which makes possible, the generalization of our findings to the study population. From the result obtained from Table 1, the sig-calculated is less than significant level ( $p = 0.233 < 0.01$ ). therefore, based on this finding, the null hypothesis earlier stated, is hereby rejected and the alternate upheld. Hence, there is a weak and significant relationship between appreciation funblast and mental stress of construction company workers in South-South, Nigeria.

**H<sub>02</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between appreciation funblast and emotional stress in construction companies in South-South, Nigeria.

Also displayed in the Table 1. is the statistical test of significance (p-value) which makes possible the generalization of our findings to the study population. From the result obtained from

Table 1, the significant-calculated is less than significant level ( $p = 0.193 < 0.01$ ). therefore, based on this finding, the null hypothesis earlier stated, is hereby rejected and the alternate upheld. Hence, there is a very weak and significant relationship between appreciation funblast and emotional stress of construction company workers in South-South, Nigeria.

**H<sub>03</sub>:** There is no significant relationship between appreciation funblast and physical stress in construction companies in South-South, Nigeria.

Further displayed in the Table 1. is the statistical test of significance (p-value) which makes possible, the generalization of our findings to the study population. From the result obtained from Table 4.15, the significance-calculated is less than significant level ( $p = 0.264 < 0.01$ ). therefore, based on this finding, the null hypothesis earlier stated, is hereby rejected and the alternate accepted. Thus, there is a weak significant relationship between appreciation funblast and physical stress of construction company workers in South-South, Nigeria.

### **Discussion of findings**

The result of the findings based on reviewed literature, showed that there is a significant relationship between appreciation funblast and mental stress in construction companies. Also a significant relationship between appreciation funblast and emotional stress. and finally, there is a significant relationship between appreciation funblast and physical stress in construction companies in South-South, Nigeria. The findings substantiate the earlier result of the study of Martin & Ford (2018), opined that individual who appreciate funblast tend to have higher levels of well-being and better coping strategies when faced with stress. Another study by Kuiper & Grimshaw, (2018) found that funblast appreciation is positively correlated with social relationships, as individuals who appreciate funblast are more likely to have stronger interpersonal connections. In addition, funblast appreciation has been linked to various health benefits. For example, research by Berk *et. al.*, (2017), suggests that funblast can have a positive effect on cardiovascular health by reducing stress and improving blood flow. Similarly, Maes *et. al.*, (2019) found that funblast appreciation is associated with lower levels of inflammation in the body, which can help reduce the risk of chronic diseases. Furthermore, studies have shown that funblast appreciation can enhance creativity and problem-solving skills. For example, Galloway *et. al.*, (2016) found that individuals who appreciate funblast are more likely to think outside the box and come up with innovative solutions to challenges.

This can be particularly beneficial in work settings, where creativity and adaptability are highly valued. Overall, the research on funblast appreciation suggests that incorporating funblast into daily life can have a range of positive effects on individuals' well-being, relationships, and overall health. By appreciating humor and cultivating a sense of playfulness, individuals can enhance their quality of life and build stronger connections with others. The current findings of this research study align with the studies of Maes *et. al.*, (2019) who found that funblast appreciation is associated with lower levels of inflammation in the body, which can help reduce the risk of chronic diseases. As a result of adopt appreciation funblast, we found a high very high amount of decrease in employee occupational stress in construction companies in South-South, Nigeria.

### **Conclusion**

This study concluded that appreciation funblast, decreases the impact of occupational stress in construction companies in South-South, Nigeria. This implies that when appreciation funblast is applied to employee occupational stress, there is a drastic improvement on the gravity of stress felt by workers in the establishment. This was evidence in the correlational result between the variables.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings and conclusion, the study recommends thus:

1. Management should train and educate its members (staff) on managerial funblast. Because through the training and education, the strength and willingness to understand and reciprocate it when it is being demonstrated, becomes unconsciously part of them.
2. Management of imbibe the culture of amusing communication style during their work interaction or tool box meeting with their subordinates. This would help them feel relaxed and more at home with their job. It will give them a sense of belonging.
3. Employees should be encouraged to use their inner strength, past positive events or pictures to elevate their mood and stress. Sometimes, the job positioning, maybe in such that it requires working alone, and the employee happens to be going through stress as at the

time while at work, it is the obligation of such an individual to elevate his feelings by himself.

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