



*Effect of Behaviour Activation Counselling Technique on ... Sulaiman, M. M., Et. al. (2026)*

## Effect of Behaviour Activation Counselling Technique on Job Stress among Female Teachers in Post Basic Schools in Kano Municipal Zonal Education Directorate

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### Abstract

*Job stress remains a pervasive occupational threat, particularly within the teaching profession, where female teachers in Nigeria's post basic schools face compounded pressures from excessive workloads, inadequate resources, administrative demands and family responsibilities. This research investigated the effects of Behaviour Activation Counselling Technique on job stress among female teachers in post basic schools in Kano Municipal Zonal Education Directorate. The main objective of the study is to assess the effects of both Behaviour Activation Counselling Technique on social, emotional and time management dimensions of job stress. Three research questions with corresponding null hypotheses were raised and tested. It was a pre-test post-tests design in form of quasi-experimental design. Population of the study consist of one hundred and nine (109) female teachers identified with job stress. After the identification, one school with highest number of identified female teachers with job stress symptoms was selected, making a sample of 15 female teachers. Two data collection instruments were used for the study; Validated Job Stress Checklist which was used for identification with a reliability index of 0.813, indicating a high degree of stability and making the Job Stress Checklist (JSC) a suitable tool for research in the study area. The second instrument was validated Job Stress Questionnaire (JSQ) and its reliability of 0.807 was obtained. Parametric statistics specifically paired sample t-test and t-test for independent samples were used in arriving at conclusions. Paired sample t-test was used to compare the pre-test and post-test results. The hypotheses of the study were tested at 0.05 level of significance. The study contributes empirical evidence to job stress management literature and offers practical implications for counsellors, researchers, educational administrators, and policy-makers in designing evidence-based programmes to enhance teacher resilience, job satisfaction and educational quality. findings of the study indicate a significant effect of Behaviour Activation Counselling Technique on social, emotional and time management dimensions of Job Stress among Female Teachers in Post Basic Schools in Kano Municipal Zonal Education Directorate. The study recommends the use of Behaviour Activation counselling techniques in addressing job stress of female teachers.*

**Keywords:** Behaviour activation counselling technique, Job Stress, Female Teachers

### INTRODUCTION

Job stress is a global issue, it signifies physical, emotional and psychological tension resulting from job-related demands. Teaching job is one of the most stressful professions due to its high demands and pressure to meet the expectations. Teaching is increasingly stressful job particularly for women teachers facing multiple societal and professional pressures. Job Stress negatively impacts teacher's mental and physical, emotional and psychological well-being, affecting job performance and student outcomes. In Nigeria, numerous studies revealed that female teachers in post basic schools experience stress from different angles including excessive workload, poor working conditions, lack or insufficient instructional materials and poor organisational support. Therefore, the major stressors in teaching job include excessive workloads, student behaviours and inadequate support. On the other hand, Female teachers frequently face additional stressors in addition to that of their profession, because they are battling with family responsibilities and their job demands, complicating their ability to cope with stress. Within post-basic schools, teachers face multiple stressors including heavy workload, large class sizes, administrative pressure, student indiscipline, limited teaching resources, curriculum overload



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and the constant demand to meet performance benchmarks. Female teachers, however, often navigate additional layers of stress arising from societal expectations, gender roles, work-family balance challenges and in some cases, workplace discrimination or limited opportunities for advancement. The formal office work is increasingly characterised by job stress, which do not only affect employee's professional life, but their overall well-being, Job stress is instigated by an incompatibility between workloads and individual capacities to deal with such loads. This is because enormous volume of work and long working hours generates work life imbalance and increase the stress level of employees. Job stress reduces employee's performance, divert their attention and cause lack of motivation for their total growth and development. Some stressful conditions could be positive and certain degree of stress can also be useful from time to time in order to stay alert and attentive. This is because it motivates an employee to perform better. Recurrent interaction with stressful conditions can also have a negative effect on both physical and mental health of such employee, which could be harmful, both personally and professionally. Job stress can upset an individual's family life, the relationship at work and life situation in general. It has significant effects on the performance of employees and organisations. Employee's health is also affected by stress in various ways. Stress can take place when there is inconsistency between the requests of the working environment and a person's competence to complete the demands. Job related stress is a universal problem and inimical to productivity, while the most predominant risk factor was increased workload followed by shortage of resources.

Job stress encompasses a complex interplay of physical, social, behavioral, emotional, cognitive and organisational dimensions. There are also relationships between time management and organisational efficiency. Stress at work usually have negative effects on the performance of individual and each stress level decreases work performance by exhausting strength, devotion, while time of individual physical changes occur as a result of stressors which harm performance Mata et al, (2021). Research on job stress among female teachers in post-basic education schools is critical because female teachers are frequently exposed to high levels of job stress arising from heavy workloads, administrative demands, limited resources and the challenge of balancing job responsibilities with personal and family roles. This can negatively affect their social, psychological and mental health, as well as their emotional well-being, job satisfaction, and teaching effectiveness. Prolonged job stress may lead to burnout, anxiety, reduced productivity, increase absenteeism and attrition, thereby undermining educational quality and student outcomes. To address the challenges related to job stress effectively among female teachers in post basic schools in Kano Municipal Zonal Education Directorate, Behaviour Activation counseling technique was employed. Behaviour activation (BA) is a counselling technique used in Cognitive Behaviour Therapy (CBT) to help individuals overcome depression and other mood disorders. It helps in combating inactive and helps individual to become more active. It includes identifying avoidance behaviours, setting meaningful goals, planning activities and monitoring mood. It is a technique to mental health that involve individuals using activities to influence their expressive state.

Behaviour Activation (BA) encourages people to engage in anti-depressant behaviours. It is based on behaviourism which is a branch of psychology that focuses on how people's environment shapes their actions, emotions and entire mental health. It is used to help individual to stay practice and focused and by deliberately practicing certain behaviours, people can initiate a helpful positive and encouraging emotional state. Behaviour Activation (BA) is design to help individuals to have control over their lives and develop positive expertise. Job is principally a social endeavour and therefore a number of stressful experiences at job are social in nature. Social stressors are challenges and pressures individuals experience in occupations that involve significant interpersonal interactions. Social stressors are behaviours and situations that are related to physical and psychological pressures. It also includes aggression, rudeness, insulting supervision, unjust treatment, organisational politics, verbal aggression from subordinate or tyrannical conducts of superiors, poor social interactions with direct supervisors which may also emanate from conditions at work, emotional demands, communication gap difficulties, conflicts and high expectations. Social workers have been recognised as being at risk of experiencing stress and burnout, being involved in complex social situations which greatly lead to experiencing many of the conflicts that are obvious in human service work. Studies consistently indicated burnout to be injurious to individuals in the field of social work, in which devastating outcome could occur, which also wedged turnover intent, occupational functioning and organisational commitment (Powell & Mayfield, 2024). Societal and political changes have impacted on the role of workers and the responsibilities they are expected to assume. Employees who feel stressful may detect a deteriorating of



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relationships and social support, while those employees who feel lack of support may likely not experience job engagement. Time management is highly related to job stress, being a procedure in which individuals organise their schedules to carry out tasks or activities within a specific limit of time. Even though, time is the most significant resource which every individual has in equality. A number of individuals fail in utilising their time appropriately due to lack of time management techniques, which reduces high level of stress. Proper and proficient utilisation of time management skills by individual workers could easily mitigate the level of stress, resulting in less stress at work with improve performance and productivity. Workers in Nigeria generally suffered greatly due to meagre remunerations, incessant inflation and general economic hardship and women were left with a great portion of their family's financial responsibilities, teachers inclusive. The fact that these issues are amassed and not abetting and they lead to enormous social, physical, emotional, psychological and medical problems informs the need to address the issue of job stress among female teachers of post basic schools in Kano Municipal Zonal Education Directorate. This is with a view to easing their tension and support them to cope with job stress efficiently, in order to have peaceful mind and healthy body capable of producing productive citizens that will contribute greatly to nation building and humanity at large. Post basic stage is the later stage of secondary education, where most of the students are teenagers or at their adolescence stage, being the most problematic stage during which they prepare for life into adulthood. It is a stage of preparation for higher education or vocational training, when the curriculum is specialised and focused on subjects based on interest and future career goals at the end of the programme. Teachers in this kind of situation needs to work in an environment that promote respect, fairness and continuous professional growth and development. The environment that promotes mentoring, training and work life balance with policies that recognise the diverse responsibilities they may have outside their working environment. A place with flexible working arrangement that promote and contribute to a healthier work life balance and help the teachers to enhance their skills and contribute effectively to teaching and learning. In view of this, it is important to note that post basic studies are considered to be very important educational stage, due to its significance as the bridge linking the lower basic and tertiary or advance level. For effective teaching and learning to take place there is need for conducive atmosphere for learning and competent professional and stress-free teachers inclusive. It is against this background this research investigated the effect of Behaviour Activation Counselling Technique on Job stress of female teachers in Post Basic Schools in Kano Municipal Zonal Education Directorate. Female teachers in Nigeria are facing numerous challenges, leading to job stress which include excessive work load and responsibilities, professional responsibilities, inadequate educational facilities and other needed infrastructure, limited and insufficient access to opportunities for professional growth and development. Balancing professional responsibilities with personal and family commitments is another challenge for Nigerian female teachers, which indicates great need for useful and practical interventions that could reduce stress and enhance the job performance. The need to address the work life balance and work overload to find out the techniques that will address the female teacher's stress, is to create supportive and conducive working environment that will improve the overall educational system. Thus, a great need for useful, practical workplace interventions that could reduce stress and enhance work engagement. Ideally, the practice of teaching profession ought to be given adequate consideration and concern in order to achieve standard educational delivery. It is a known fact that the current practice in teaching job is considered unfavourable due to the presence of hostile conditions, the classes in public schools are over populated with students in urban areas from basic, upper and post basic schools especially in Kano State. The ideal ratio of teacher per student in class in post basic schools varies and depend on the country and educational level. In Nigeria, the ideal population of students per class as provided in the National Policy on Education is specified, thus: "The teacher-pupils ratio at the post-basic education level shall be 1:40." (NPE, 2014). Inadequate attention and absence of childcare support for nursing mothers, absence of public transportation system to support female staff, decay in teaching and learning infrastructure, underfunding and poor remuneration, as well as workover load and the overpopulated classes will affect both the teacher and the students. There should be the provision of child care support for nursing mothers, provision of public transport system to reduce the burden befallen particularly on female teachers due to additional home management responsibilities. Adequate infrastructures should also be put in place in order to ease the difficulties in teaching, while adequate funding and adequate remuneration should serve as the motivational factor and lastly flexible working hours. Persistent stress causes mental health issues like depression and anxiety, which also affect the daily life societal activities, causing irritability, difficult to concentrate, loss of appetite or over eating, stomach upset, headache, body pains and trouble sleeping. Similarly, female teachers have other peculiar domestic responsibilities, while in teaching profession stress has a destructive impact on the health and well-being



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of individual teachers. Job related stress is higher in female teachers than their male counterpart, due to their additional domestic responsibilities. They are battling with balancing work and family life, classroom behaviour and discipline, managing work load and responsibilities, limited resources and sometimes lack of support from their spouse. All these could have impacted their health, overall wellbeing and job satisfaction. Job stress frequently resulted in reduced job satisfaction and lessened classroom performance that is why creating a stress-free teaching environment is essential for improving teachers' effectiveness and well-being. These and many more raise the alarm of conducting studies on the issue of job stress, as it affects the female teachers in post basic schools of Kano Municipal Zonal Education Directorate.

### Objectives of the Study

Objectives of this study were to determine:

1. The effect of Behaviour Activation (BA) counselling technique on social dimension of job stress among female teachers of Post Basic schools in Kano Municipal Zonal Education Directorate.
2. The effect of Behaviour Activation (BA) counselling technique on time management dimension of job stress among female teachers of Post Basic schools in Kano Municipal Zonal Education Directorate.
3. The effect of Behaviour Activation (BA) counselling technique on emotional dimension of job stress among female teachers of Post Basic schools in Kano Municipal Zonal Education Directorate.

### Research Questions:

The following research questions were raised in this study:

1. What is the effect of Behaviour Activation (BA) counselling technique on social dimension of job stress among female teachers of Post Basic schools in Kano Municipal Zonal Education Directorate of Kano State?
2. What is the effect of Behaviour Activation (BA) counselling technique on time management dimension of job stress among female teachers of Post Basic schools in Kano Municipal Zonal Education Directorate of Kano State?
3. What is the effect of Behaviour Activation (BA) counselling technique on emotional dimension of job stress among female teachers of Post Basic schools in Kano Municipal Zonal Education Directorate of Kano State?

### Hypotheses:

The following Hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significant in the study:

- Ho<sub>1</sub>:** There is no significant effect of Behaviour Activation (BA) counselling technique on social dimension of job stress among female teachers of Post Basic Education schools in Kano Municipal Zonal Education Directorate of Kano State.
- Ho<sub>2</sub>:** There is no significant effect of Behaviour Activation (BA) counselling technique on time management dimension of job stress among female teachers in Post Basic Education schools in Kano Municipal Zonal Education Directorate of Kano State.
- Ho<sub>3</sub>:** There is no significant effect of Behaviour Activation (BA) counselling technique on emotional dimension of job stress among female teachers in Post Basic Education schools in Kano Municipal Zonal Education Directorate of Kano State.

### Methodology

The study adopted Quasi Experimental method in form of pretest post-test design. The population of this study comprised of female teachers in post-basic schools of Kano Municipal Zonal Education Directorate identified with job stress.. Hence, the population of this study stands as 109 female teachers identified with job stress in post- basic public schools in Kano Municipal Zonal Education Directorate. After the identification, school with highest number of identified female teachers with job stress was selected as sample.

### Presentation of Results

The three null hypotheses formulated to guide the study were tested below in tabular form at 0.05 level of significance:

- Ho<sub>1</sub>:** There is no significant effect of Behaviour Activation Counselling Technique on Social dimension of Job Stress of Female Teachers in Post Basic Schools in Kano Municipal Zonal Education Directorate.

**Table 1: t-test for pre-test and post-test Social Dimension of Job Stress**

Variables	N	Mean	S.D	Df	t	P
Pre-test B.A. Soc.	15	37.00	3.208			
Post-test B.A. Soc	15	28.20	3.278	14	11.720	000



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*Source: Field Data, 2025*

Table 1 above shows the analysis for pre-test and post-test social mean scores of Female Teachers exposed to Behaviour Activation Counselling Technique treatment. The analysis shows that the t value is 11.720 with 14 as degree of freedom, P-value is 0.000 at 0.05 level of significance, as such, the P-value is less than level of significance. This revealed that, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant effect of Behaviour Activation Counselling Technique on social dimension of Job Stress of Female Teachers in Post Basic Schools in Kano Municipal Zonal Education Directorate is rejected and maintained that, there is significant effect of Behaviour Activation Counselling Technique on social dimension of Job Stress of Female Teachers in Post Basic Schools in Kano Municipal Zonal Education Directorate.

**H0<sub>2</sub>:** There is no significant effect of Behaviour Activation Counselling Technique on Time Management dimension of Job Stress of Female Teachers in Post Basic Schools in Kano Municipal Zonal Education Directorate.

**Table 2 t-test for pre-test and post-test Time Management Dimension of Job Stress mean scores:**

Variables	N	Mean	S.D	Df	t	P
Pre-test B.A. T.M	15	37.60	2.720			
				14	11.44	.000
Post-test B.A. T.M.	15	25.87	3.204			

*Source: Field Data, 2025*

Table 2 above shows the analysis for pre-test and post-test time management mean scores of female teachers exposed to Behaviour Activations Counselling Technique treatment. The analysis shows that the t value is 11.544 with 14 as degree of freedom, P-value is 0.000 at 0.05 level of significance, as such, the P-value is less than level of significance. This revealed that, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant effect of Behaviour Activation Counselling Technique on Time Management dimension of Job Stress of Female Teachers in Post Basic Schools in Kano Municipal Zonal Education Directorate is rejected and maintained that, there is significant effect of Behaviour Activation counselling technique on Time Management dimension of Job Stress of Female Teachers in Post Basic Schools in Kano Municipal Zonal Education Directorate.

**H0<sub>3</sub>:** There is no significant effect of Behaviour Activation Counselling Technique on Emotional dimension of Job Stress of Female Teachers in Post Basic Schools in Kano Municipal Zonal Education Directorate.

**Table 3 t-test for pre-test and post-test Emotional Dimension of Job Stress**

Variables	N	Mean	S.D	Df	t	P
Pre-test B.A. Emo.	15	35.13	4.068			
				14	10.332	.000
Post-test B.A. Emo.	15	27.27	2.764			

*Source: Field Data, 2025*

Table 3 above shows the analysis for pre-test and post-test emotional mean scores of Female Teachers exposed to Behaviour Activations Counselling Technique treatment. The analysis shows that the t value is 10.332 with 14 as degree of freedom, P-value is 0.000 at 0.05 level of significance, as such, the P-value is less than level of significance. This revealed that, the null hypothesis which states that there is no significant effect of Behaviour Activation Counselling Technique on emotional dimension of Job Stress of Female Teachers in Post Basic Schools in Kano Municipal Zonal Education Directorate is rejected and maintained that, there is significant effect of Behaviour Activation Counselling Technique on emotional dimension of Job Stress of female teachers in Post Basic Schools in Kano Municipal Zonal Education Directorate.

### Summary of Findings

The major findings of this study are summarised as follows:

1. There is significant effect of Behaviour Activation counselling technique on time management dimension of Job Stress of female teachers in Post Basic Schools in Kano Municipal Zonal Education Directorate.
2. There is significant effect of Behaviour Activation counselling technique on social dimension of job stress of female teachers in Post Basic schools in Kano Municipal Zonal Education Directorate.
3. There is significant effect of Behaviour Activation counselling technique on emotional dimension of job stress of female teachers in Post Basic schools in Kano Municipal Zonal Education Directorate.



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## **Discussion of Results**

This study set out to determine the effects of Behaviour Activation counselling technique on the three dimensions of job stress. The first finding revealed that Behaviour Activation counselling technique is significantly effective in the treatment of social dimension of job stress. The mean score decreased from 37.00 to 28.20 showing a notable reduction of 8.8. This effect was statistically significant ( $p = 0.000$ ), leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis. This significant reduction in the social dimension after Behaviour Activation is consistent with a study conducted by Jones (2021) on the impact of behavioural activation on teacher stress and burnout: a multiple probe single case design. The study used a multiple probe single-case approach to examine the practicability, impact, and acceptability of Behaviour Activation counselling technique on the perceived stress, emotional experiences, and well-being of early career teachers. The population of the study comprised early career, K-12 teachers of public-school districts in Eastern North Carolina, and a purposive, convenience sampling technique was used. Behaviour Activation counselling technique was used as an intervention. The scales used included The Short Form Perceived Stress Scale (PSS-4), the Behavioural Activation Depression Scale-Short Form, and the Patient Health Questionnaire (PHQ-9), and the Final Evaluation Questionnaire was used to assess its effectiveness. It was conducted for two weeks in 45-minute sessions per week, and the statistical technique used was a combination of descriptive and inferential statistics. All consent forms and screening questionnaires were administered through Qualtrics, an online survey management tool. The intervention was conducted online via Zoom after school hours, and it proved effective in reducing teachers' stress and burnout. The second finding of this study revealed that Behaviour Activation is significantly effective in the treatment of time management dimension of job stress. The mean score decreased from 37.60 to 25.87 reflecting a substantial reduction of 11.8. This effect was statistically significant ( $p = .000$ ), leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis. The third finding revealed that Behaviour Activation counselling technique is significantly effective in the treatment of emotional dimension of job stress. The mean score decreased from 35.13 to 27.27 showing a notable reduction of 7.86. This effect was statistically significant ( $p = 0.000$ ), leading to the rejection of the null hypothesis. This significant reduction in the emotional dimension after Behaviour Activation is consistent with a study conducted by Barekat et al (2021) on effectiveness of Behaviour Activation and Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction interventions on emotional balance and cognitive avoidance in female students with depressive symptoms. The population of the study comprised female students at Isfahan State University Iran, who exhibited depressive symptoms during the 2022-2023 academic year, and were referred to the university's Counselling Centre. Forty-five (45) students were selected as sample and randomly assigned to three groups (for behaviour activation, for mindfulness-based intervention and control group). It was a pre-test post-test quasi experimental design. The data collection instruments include Scale of Positive and Negative Experience (SPANE) and the Cognitive Avoidance Questionnaire (CAQ) which were administered to all participants. ANOVA and Bonferroni post-hoc test in SPSS were used for data analysis. Findings of the study revealed that both Behaviour Activation and Mindfulness-Based Stress Reduction interventions are effective in improving emotional balance.

## **Conclusions**

Based on the outcomes of this study, the conclusions were drawn that Behaviour Activation Counselling Technique is significantly effective on social dimension of Job Stress of Female Teachers in Post Basic Schools in Kano Municipal Zonal Education Directorate. This was when the analysis of pre-test and post-test results of Female Teachers of Post-Basic Schools in Kano Municipal Zonal Education Directorate exposed to Behaviour Activation treatment was conducted. It was also concluded that Behaviour Activation Counselling Technique is significantly effective on time management dimension of Job Stress of Female Teachers in Post Basic Schools in Kano Municipal Zonal Education Directorate. This was when the analysis of pre-test and post-test results of Female Teachers of Post-Basic Schools in Kano Municipal Zonal Education Directorate exposed to Behaviour Activation treatment was conducted. The study also concluded that Behaviour Activation Counselling Technique is significantly effective on emotional dimension of Job Stress of Female Teachers in Post Basic Schools in Kano Municipal Zonal Education Directorate. This was when the analysis of pre-test and post-test results of Female Teachers of Post-Basic Schools in Kano Municipal Zonal Education Directorate exposed to Behaviour Activation treatment was conducted.

## **Recommendations**

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were made:



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1. Since Behaviour Activation Counselling Technique significantly reduced the social dimension of Job Stress, it is recommended that Behaviour Activation-based counselling sessions be organised to improve social support and interactions among female teachers in Post Basic Schools in Kano Municipal Zonal Education Directorate.
2. Since Behaviour Activation Counselling Technique significantly improved the Time Management dimension of Job Stress, it is recommended that school counsellors incorporate Behaviour Activation strategies focused on enhancing time management skills among female teachers in Post Basic Schools in Kano Municipal Zonal Education Directorate.
3. Since Behaviour Activation Counselling Technique significantly reduced the Emotional dimension of Job Stress, it is recommended that counselling interventions using Behaviour Activation incorporate emotional regulation and coping skills training for female teachers in Post Basic Schools in Kano Municipal Zonal Education Directorate.

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