

AGE, MARITAL STATUS AND GENDER AS CORRELATES OF JOB BURNOUT AMONG NURSES IN OSUN STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study investigated demographic factors as correlates of burnout among nurses in Osun State, Nigeria. Descriptive survey design was adopted for the study. The study population consisted of all nurses in Osun State. A sample of 122 respondents was selected through the use of multi-stage sampling procedure. The instrument used for the study is a structured questionnaire adapted from Maslach Burnout Inventory-General Survey. Hypotheses were formulated and tested. Demographic data were analysed with descriptive statistics while two of the hypotheses were tested with Pearson Moment Product Correlation and the other was tested with T-test. Findings indicated that marital status [$r(120) = -0.27, p < 0.01$] and age [$df(120) r = -0.430, p < 0.01$] have negative relationship with burnout among nurses and that gender $t = 1.247, df 120, p > 0.05$ has no effect on burnout. Recommendations include that hospitals and healthcare facilities utilizing the services of nurses must work out policies to preclude or reduce job burnout among them.

Keywords: Socio-Demographic Factors, Burnout, Age, Marital Status, Gender

Introduction

Burnout, as a concept, has attracted large scale research interests for over four decades. The interchangeable concept is the noun phrase 'job burnout' not only because it is jobs that wear workers out but more importantly because it is only in the workplace that job burnout takes place. Burnout was described by Maslach, Schaufeli, Leiter, and Jackson (1996) as a syndrome of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and

reduced personal accomplishment that can occur among workers who work with 'people' rather than with 'things'. Maslach (1982a, 1982b) later defined burnout as a psychological syndrome involving emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and a diminished sense of personal accomplishment that occur among various professionals who work with other people in challenging situations. Pines and Aronson (1988) described job burnout as a condition of physical, emotional and mental exhaustion caused by consistent and prolonged immersion in emotionally pressurizing situations. Wallace and Brinkerhoff (1991) defined job burnout as the failure of employees to react comfortably to perceived demands of their tasks or clients and the sensitivity of the workers accompanying negative consequences of burdens arising from work. For Gerstein, Topp and Correll (1987), job burnout is described as a situation in which persons at work exude anger, hostility, frustration and other negative emotions and sort of direct these emotions at co-workers, supervisors or customers. Stohr, Lovrich and Wilson (1994) explained job burnout as manifesting in workers who withdraw, become unlively, alienate themselves and exude appearances of depression as they trudge on, on the job, as if they work because they just have to or because it is the only way to survive.

Maslach and Jackson (1986) identified three burnout dimensions namely emotional exhaustion, depersonalization or dehumanisation; and a reduced sense of personal accomplishment. The first dimension, emotional exhaustion, is characterized by drained energy and a feeling that one's emotional resources have been over-extended and depleted (Corde and Dougherty 2012). Other problems associated with emotional exhaustion are feelings of frustration, tension, frets and perceived fear of going to work. The emotional exhaustion dimension represents the stress component of burnout. The second dimension tagged depersonalization refers to the unconscious development in a worker of negative, wicked and cynical attitudes towards people who are recipients of their services (Schaufeli and Enzmann 1998). Employees who are susceptible to emotional exhaustion may begin to display detachment, callousness and cynicism to colleagues, superordinates and clients of their organization. The symptoms of depersonalization include use of invectives, insults, jargons, observation of long break/lunch periods and or elongated chats with co-workers. The third dimension of burnout, being the

feeling of reduced personal accomplishment syndrome, is characterized by the worker's inability to rate his efficacy on the job positively. The worker feels he is not doing well and cannot possibly do better. This phenomenon may be the result of accumulated feeling of not being appreciated for his contribution hitherto. A number of scholars (Nnamuchi, 2007; Chankova, Nguyen, Chipanta, Kombe, Onoja, and Ogungbemi, 2007) have confirmed that healthcare professionals are susceptible to experiencing burnout among other health risks. Adekola (2010) , in his study of 1,040 staff of universities in the South West of Nigeria found that gender is implicated on the mean score on the dimensions of reduced personal accomplishment and that female staff experienced higher level of reduced personal accomplishment. The scholar discovered that male staff experienced higher level of depersonalization than the female staff. It was, however, found that there was no significant gender difference in the levels of emotional exhaustion.

In another study of 496 non- teaching staff of universities in Nigeria, Adekola (2012) found that there was no significant differences in the levels of emotional exhaustion and reduced personal accomplishment of both male and female. He, however, found that men experience higher level of depersonalization than women. In a study of burnout empowerment and job satisfaction in human services among women, Nwabuoku and Adebayo (2010) submitted that inability of some professionals to meet up with unrealistic expectations is a sure cause of burnout. The scholars identified frustrating daily hassles, lack of institutional support and helplessness due to the absence of authority on the job as three major factors leading to burnout among nurses they investigated. Adebayo and Ezeanya (2010) investigated the contribution of job characteristics among 136 health workers in two public hospitals in Jos, Nigeria and found that task identity and job autonomy had negative significant correlation with nurses' experience of burnout.

While there have been quite a lot of studies on burnout manifestations among service- providing professionals and in particular, among healthcare professionals, those dedicated to nurses in Nigeria are few. The few (Lasebikan and Oyetunde, 2012; Adebayo and Ezeanya, 2011) are largely done in urban centres of Lagos and Jos respectively and not focused on the contribution of demographic

variables, except, of course Adebayo and Osagu (2013) which investigated only the influence on gender on burnout. Even then, the scholars investigated various hospital professionals, of which the nurses merely formed a stratum. Adebayo and Ezeanya (2011) investigated task identity and job autonomy as correlates of burnout among nurses. Adekola (2010 and 2012) investigated burnout among various categories of university staff.

The purpose of this study is to determine the relationship between nurses' demographic variables of age, gender and marital status with job burnout rating of nurses in Osun State Nigeria. Nurses perform people-oriented jobs where they provide services to patients who patronize hospitals and healthcare facilities.

Statement of the Problem

The fact that the problem of job attrition among nurses has the capacity of jeopardizing the sustainability of the emergent Sustainable Development Goals serves as inspiration for this study. Scholars have observed that some areas of the nurses' 'working lives contribute to burnout thereby causing them to contemplate leaving the profession. Implications of the foregoing include shortage of nurses which could lead to emotional exhaustion for the remaining few because of work overload, unfavourable nurse-patient ratio which is linked to adverse outcomes such as high infection rates and mortality rate of patients as variable of burnout and job satisfaction.

Researches have reported that burnout in nurses are implicated in causes of intention to leave jobs and turnover. Despite the level of research work carried out on occupational burnout in Nigeria, it has been observed that there was no holistic attempt to investigate the correlations of demographic variables with burnout of nurses by previous researchers. The situation of the nurses at the time of this study seemed apt as public servants in Osun State, Nigeria (including nurses) were faced with the problem of ineffective collective bargaining mechanism and poor payment regimes. This study investigated the challenges of job burnout among Osun State nurses using demographic indicators such as age, gender and marital status. The study examined whether age, gender and marital status have any relationship with job burnout among nurses in Osun State..

Literature Review

Research works on the interactions of the demographic variables of age, marital status and gender with job burnout are considerable. In a research conducted by Aksu and Temeloglu (2015) on the effect of burnout on employees' satisfaction at 3, 4, and 5 stars hotels in Canakkale City Center, Turkey, they found that a significant difference exists between subscales of burnout and age ($P < 0.05$).

Garrosa, Moreno-Jimenez, Liang and Gonzalez (2008) examined the relationship between Socio-demographic variables, job stressors, burnout and hardy personality in nurses in Madrid, Spain. They found that burnout's significant predictors include age, job status, job stressors (such as work load, experiences with pain, role ambiguity and conflict interaction) and hardy personality (challenges, work commitment and control). Also, Brewer and Shapard (2004) did a meta analysis of employees' burnout in the United States vis-à-vis the relationship between age or years of experience of the workers. They reported that practical significance problems persist, in that the appropriateness of approaches to address employees' burnout may depend on whether age or years of work experiences is related to burnout and that a negative correlation exists between employees' age and emotional exhaustion. Ebrinc (2002) and Sinat and Kutlu (2009) concluded that younger workers score higher in personal accomplishment component of burnout than older ones. Aytekin, Yilmaz and Kuguoglu (2013), also, found that age has effect on reduced personal accomplishment dimension of burnout. Kaya (2010); Kocabiyik and Cakici (2008) and Taycan (2006) confirmed equally that nurses became more competent in their job with increasing age and that age is a correlate of burnout. Conversely, Matin, Kalali and Anvari (2012) showed that the variable of age, among others, does not have influence on job burnout and job satisfaction. Alpaslan and Doganer (2009), also, found that age did not have an effect on burnout.

Kim (2008) discovered that there was no connection between marital status, department, operation and burnout. Aytekin et al. (2013) found no statistical significance when the burnout scores of nurses were compared according to their marital status. Kaya (2010) also discovered that marital status did not affect burnout level. Matin et al (2012) reported that variables of marital status and educational level had no influence on the relationship between job burnout and

organizational commitment, job satisfaction and intention to leave. Şahin (2008) and Taycan (2006) found that marital status had an effect on the level of burnout. Vandal and Haghghi (2015) found that there is a significant difference between single and married employees in terms of occupational burnout, and that its average is higher among the married ones. Maslach et al. (2001) stated that the burnout levels were higher in unmarried and younger people in particular. Alpaslan and Doganer (2009) found that age, marital status and number of children did not have an effect on burnout.

Norlund, Renterwall, Hoog, Lindahl, Janlett and Birgander (2010) found that gender difference of burnout became non-significant when other factors were taken into account. Also, Aksu and Temeloglu (2015) found no connection between gender and burnout. A scholar who indicated the correlation of gender with burnout is Kim (2008) who reported that women experience burnout more than men while Adebayo and Osagu (2013) did not find any significant gender difference in burnout among health workers.

Research Hypotheses

- H₀₁:** Marital status has no significant influence on job burnout among nurses in Osun state, Nigeria
- H₀₂:** Age has no significant relationship with job burnout among nurses in Osun state, Nigeria
- H₀₃:** Gender has no significant relationship with job burnout among nurses in Osun state, Nigeria

Methodology

The descriptive survey research design was adopted for this study. The independent variables are age, marital status and gender while the dependent variable is job burnout. The study population consisted of 1,015 nurses in the three senatorial zones of Osun State made up of 500 under the Hospital Management Board, 300 from LAUTECH Teaching Hospital, Osogbo and 215 in the Local Governments. The multi-stage sampling procedure was adopted to select 122 respondents at different stages of the sampling process using purposive, stratified and simple random sampling techniques. The instrument used for data collection is a structured questionnaire adapted from Maslach Burnout Inventory – General Survey (MBI-GS). Part A of the instrument is

designed to capture respondents' bio-data and demographic characteristics while Part B is the Maslach Burnout scale. The reliability of the instrument was tested through Cronbach's Alpha with coefficient of 0.89.

The data collected in th study was subjected to both Descriptive and inferential statistics. Specifically, Pearson Product Moment Correlation and t-test were used to test the hypotheses at $p < 0.05$ level of significance

Results

The results of the study are divided into two parts, the first part of the results showing the descriptive statistics on the socio-demographic characteristics of the respondents and the second part which shows the results of tested hypotheses. The results are shown below:

Descriptive Analyses

Table 1: Frequency distribution of demographic characteristics of the respondents

Variable	Class	F	%
Age	21-30	12	9.8
	31-40	30	24.6
	41-50	46	37.7
	51-60	31	25.4
	61-70	3	2.5
Total		122	100
Gender	Male	21	17.2
	Female	101	82.8
Total		122	100
Marital Status	Single	23	18.9
	Married	87	71.3
	Separated	2	1.6
	Widowed	10	8.2
Total		122	100
Working Experience	0-5	15	12.4
	6-10	01	0.8
	11-15	7	5.7

	16-20	42	34.4
	21-25	25	20.5
	Above 25	32	26.2
Total		122	100

Source: Authors' Fieldwork, 2016

The various frequencies of the respondents' age were revealed in Table 1. This study has 12 (9.8%) respondents aged 30 years or below, 30 (24.6%) respondents aged 31 - 40 years, 46 (37.7%) respondents aged between 41 and 50 years, 31 (25.4%) respondents' aged between 51 and 60 years while the remaining 3 (2.5%) respondents were aged between 61 and 70 years of age. The respondent's gender shows that 21(17.2%) were male and 101 (82.8%) were female. The marital status shows that 23 (18.9%) of the respondents are singles, 87 (71.3 %) are married, 10 (8.2%) are widow(er) and 2 (1.6%) are separated. The above table shows that 15 (12.34%) of the respondents have less than five years' work experience. 01 (0.8%) have 6-10 years of work experience. 07(5.7%) have 11-15 years of work experience, 42 (34.4%) have 16-20 years of work experience .25 (20.5%) have 21-25 years of work experience and 32 (26.2%) have above 25 years of work experience.

Test of Hypotheses

The results of the study on the basis of the hypotheses generated for the study are shown below

Hypothesis 1

Marital status has no significant influence on job burnout among nurses in Osun state, Nigeria

Table 2: Summary Table of PPMC (Marital Status and Job Burnout)

	N	\bar{x}	S D	df	r	p
Marital Status	122	1.85	0.810	120	-0.269**	0.001
Burnout	122	33.20	5.865			

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).

The result in table 4.8 above revealed that marital status was significantly and negatively related to burnout [$r(120) = -0.27$, $p < 0.01$]. Therefore, hypothesis one was not supported by the result of the study, and it is subsequently rejected. Thus it is concluded that marital status has negative significant relationship with burnout.

Hypothesis 2

Age has no significant relationship with job burnout among nurses in Osun State, Nigeria

Table 3 : PPMC Table (Nurses Age and Job Burnout)

Variables	N	\bar{X}	S.D	df	r	
Age	122	1.93	0.981	120	-0.430**	0.001
Burnout	122	33.20	5.865			

$p < 0.01$

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed).

The result in table 4.9 above revealed that age was significantly and negatively related to burnout [$r(120) = -0.43$, $p < 0.01$]. Therefore, hypothesis two was not supported by the result of the study, and it is subsequently rejected. Thus it is concluded that age has negative significant relationship with burnout.

Hypothesis 3

Gender has no significant relationship with job burnout among nurses in Osun state, Nigeria

Table 4: T-test Analysis (Gender on Burnout)

	Gender	N	Mean	S D	Std. Error Mean	F	Sig	Remark
BURNOUT	Male	32	34.31	7.119	1.258	2.146	0.146	$p > 0.05$ (H_0 accepted)
	Female	90	32.81	5.340	0.563			

The result in table 4 above revealed that there was no significant difference between male nurses and female nurses on burnout [$t(120)=1.25, p>0.05$]. Therefore, hypothesis three was supported. The results shows further that men reported higher score (34.31) on burnout than women (32.81). This reveals that the male nurses experience higher form of global burnout than the female nurses.

Discussion

This study investigated the influence of demographic factors as correlates of job burnout among nurses in Osun State, Nigeria. The hypotheses were tested with Pearson Moment Product correlation.

The first hypothesis which stated that marital status has no significant influence on burnout among nurses in Osun state was not supported by the result of the study which shows that marital status was significantly and negatively related to burnout. Thus, it is concluded that marital status has negative significant relationship with burnout. This finding disagrees with the findings of some researchers. Kim (2008) discovered no connection between marital status, department, operation and burnout. Aytekin et al. (2013) found no statistical significance when the burnout scores of the nurses were compared according to their education level, marital status. Kaya et al. (2010) also discovered that marital status did not affect burnout level. Martin et al (2012) reported that variables of age, gender, marital status and educational level do not influence (moderate) the relationship between job burnout, organizational commitment, job satisfaction and intention to leave.

The findings of this study concur with the reports of some other scholars. Şahin (2008) and Taycan (2006) found that marital status had an effect on the level of burnout. Vandal and Haghghi (2015) found that there is a significant difference between single and married employees in terms of occupational burnout and that its average is higher among the married ones.

The second hypothesis which states that age has no significant relationship with burnout among nurses was not supported by the result of the study, and it is subsequently rejected. Thus it is concluded that age has negative significant relationship with burnout. This result corroborates those of some earlier researchers who concluded that age has implication on the degree and nature of burnout. Aksu and

Temeloglu (2015) found that a significant difference exists between subscales of burnout and age. Garrosa et al. (2008) found that age and job status (among other variables) are significant predictors of burnout. They concluded, also, that younger nurses reported higher levels of burnout than older nurses. Brewer and Shapard (2004) reported that practical significance problems persist but confirmed, however, that a negative correlation exists between employees' age and emotional exhaustion which is a major dimension of burnout. Ebrinc et al. (2002) and Sinat and Kutlu (2009) concluded that younger workers score higher in personal accomplishment than older ones. Aytekin et al. (2013), also, found that age has effect on reduced personal accomplishment dimension of burnout. Though confirming, conversely, that nurses became more competent in their job with increasing age, three sets of researchers namely, Kaya (2010), Kocabiyik and Cakici (2008), and Taycan et al. (2006) shows that age is a correlate of burnout. In contrast, the result of this study disagrees with that of Martin et al (2012) which showed that the variable of age, among others, does not have influence on the relationship between job burnout and job satisfaction. Alpaslan and Doganer (2009) found that age, marital status and number of children did not have effect on burnout.

The third hypothesis which stated that gender has no significant relationship with burnout among nurses was accepted as there was no significant difference between male and female respondents' on burnout, though men record a slightly higher score (34.31) over the women (32.81). The result of this study agrees with that of Norlund et al. (2010) which concluded that the gender difference of burnout became non-significant when other factors were taken into account. Also, Aksu and Temeloglu (2015) found no connection between gender and burnout. The finding, in a way, corroborates the discovery of Adekola (2012) who found that there was no significant differences in the levels of emotional exhaustion and reduced personal accomplishment of both male and female. However, it disagrees with the finding of Adekola (2010) that female staff experienced higher level of reduced personal accomplishment and that male staff experienced higher level of depersonalization than the female staff. The finding of the study disagrees with those of Kim (2008) which asserted that women experience burnout more than men and

the Nigerian study by Adebayo and Osagu (2013) and Adekola (2010 and 2012) in which significant gender differences in burnout was confirmed.

Summary

The study investigated the correlation between demographic variables of age, marital status and gender with job burnout among nurses in Osun State of Nigeria.

In an era of economic recession that Nigeria has found itself coupled with prevalence of poverty among the population, nurses are critical to the provision of health services. This group of professionals are not only needed in commensurate number, there is increasing need for them to be healthy enough to be able to provide the expected services. Nigeria is one of the nations which did not meet the target of the Millenium Development Goals and there are signs that the nation might not be able to accomplish the on-going Sustainable Development Goals, if the workers in the health sector do not have job satisfaction, to which burnout is diametrically opposed.

The findings of this study indicated that there is negative significant relationship between age and burnout among nurses in Osun State, which means the older a nurse is, the less the likelihood that he or she will experience job burnout. Also, it was found that marital status has influence on job burnout. This could be because Osun State is in the heart of the Yoruba land and the culture of the people places high premium on family and marriage. Men have responsibility to care for their wives even when such wives are gainfully employed. It is therefore not a surprise that the issue of whether one has a spouse or not could be implicated in the possibility that a nurse would experience job burnout.

Payment of salaries of Government workers including nurses have been irregular in virtually all the Southern States of Nigeria,. A corollary to the problem is that appointment of new nurses have been far between, such that junior nurses are few relative to older ones. For instance, about 58 % of the respondents are above 40 years of age and over 81% of the respondents had worked for over 15 years while 26.2% have put in above 25 years in service. The implication of this is that the younger and new entrant nurses who should be bubbling on

the job are much fewer and again less productive due to easy susceptibility to exhaustion.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it is hereby concluded that the demographic factors of marital status and age have negative significant relationship with manifestation of job burnout among nurses in Osun State in Nigeria. It is further concluded that demographic variable of gender does not have effect on job burnout among nurses in Osun State.

The findings confirmed the existence of job burnout in the Nigerian nurses based in Osun State with the possibility of attendant negative consequences on human resources, their organizations and the society. In a study conducted by Adali and Priami (2002) in Greek hospitals involving 233 nurses, it was found that several environmental factors contributed to burnout among nurses. The irregular payment of salary in Osun State at the time of this study must have influenced the results especially the finding that men score higher in global burnout. This is probably due to the multiplicity of pressures they are being faced with, the chief of which could have been financial. In the current Nigerian economic hard times, it will be inconceivable that nurses might be disengaging from jobs due to burnout but what is certain is that, as long as the workers are at war psychologically with their human systems, their job tasks and their patients, they could not provide acceptable services in the hospitals. Such nurses could harm themselves by getting susceptible to emotional and physical illness. They could harm their organization through cynical behavior to clients and through reduced efficacy at work with the possibility of making fatal mistakes on patient's care. (Cordes and Dougherty, 1993; Maslach and Leiter, 1997; Shirom, 2003;).

Recommendations

In view of the foregoing, it is being recommended that hospitals and healthcare facilities utilizing the services of nurses must work out policies to mitigate the effects of occupational stressors that could ignite job burnout. Job role conflicts particularly in terms of relationship between nurses and other professionals in the healthcare industry should be minimized. There should be periodic retreat organized to

help nurses loosen out and freshen up. In such fora, the phenomena of job burnout and occupational stress should be discussed vis-à-vis the panacea. Also, it should be a deliberate policy to ensure that all nurses go on their leave as and when due. On the part of the nurses, they should be encouraged to engage in recreation and regular exercises.

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