Influence of Gender and Number of Children on Burnout among Married Bankers in South Eastern Nigeria

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Abstract: This study investigated the influence of gender and number of children on burnout among married bankers. A total of 100 participants comprising 50 married males and 50 married females. They were selected from bank workers in Enugu and Awka, South Eastern Nigeria. The participants were administered a 22 item Maslach Burnout Inventory designed to measure burnout. A 2 x 2 factorial design was adopted in the study. A two way ANOVA F-test as applied as a statistical test to analyse the data. The findings revealed that there was a significant difference between large number of children and small number of children $F(1, 96)=14.3$ and a significant interaction influence of gender and number of children $F(1,96) = 9.2$ in burnout. The findings were discussed in relation to available literature and recommendations made.

Introduction
Burnout is defined as a commonest psychological reaction to stress (Smith 1998). It is seen as an extreme stress disorder or reaction whose symptoms include tiredness and exhaustion which are a product of overwork, which leads to anxiety fatigue, insomnia, depression and poor outcome in work performance. Stress can be seen as a state of prolonged physiological arousal or mobilization of an organism. Burnout on the other hand can be seen as a consequence of stress, it is what happens to an individual who has been under stress for a fairly long period of time.

Burnout which has been defined by Lee and Ashforth (1990), as a syndrome of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization of others and a feeling of reduced accomplishment also spells out the components or dimensions of burnout. Emotional exhaustion “refers to the feelings of being emotionally over-extended and drained by one’s contact with other people” (Leiter and Maslach 1988). It can manifest itself in overt behaviours which include; waking up just as tired as when you went to bed, it could also include not having enough strength to embark on a task or face an encounter (Maslach and Leiter, 1997). Some key determinants of emotional exhaustion are work conflict and interpersonal interactions. The second component or dimension of burnout is observed after emotional exhaustion and it is rather a direct response to the stressors from the job. This can be said to be an individual’s personal detachment or withdrawal from work. Depersonalization is also regarded as a coping mechanism that is not only an acceptable response, but a professional one as well. The third and final component of burnout, diminished personal accomplishment can be
seen as a decline in one’s feelings of competence and successful achievement. Individuals who have experienced this phase of burnout view themselves negatively, in both their ability to perform the job and their ability to have positive personal interactions.

As Maslach and Leiter (1997) pointed out, individuals experiencing personal accomplishment at a minimal level tend to perform poorly at work; also these feelings of inadequacy directly affect an individual’s self-efficacy.

Research has also shown that the individual as a person, the context and the nature of the task contribute to the experience of burnout. The personal characteristics that cause burnout include the following; Demographics, social support, Hardiness, unrealistic expectations and career progress. Studies or researches have shown gender differences affect burnout in the organization, also married employees and those with children report relatively less job burnout. Social support can act as a moderator of burnout. If affects workers in two different ways, as a buffer between work stress and physical consequences and a direct effect on stress experienced. Social support redefines the threat or stressor. It also promotes the use of adaptive coping behaviours. Research has shown that social support positively correlates to physical health, which reduces burnout. Personal hardiness is a factor in predicting burnout. Workers who have this are less prone to burnout, they have an internal locus of control and view changes in their life as challenges and cope and survive, while those without hardiness are more prone to burnout. Unrealistic expectations is a situation where an individual’s expectation of performance or productivity looses touch with reality. When an individual is unable to meet up with his expectations because they are too high, then he will begin to suffer burnout. Career progress of an individual can cause burnout. This is because there is reduction in frequent and intense client contact. Also if there is increased or advance in career, there is also an increase in perceived personal accomplishment which will reduce the possibility of burnout.

There are also non-work stressors, these are other conditions, factors, variables which are not from the work place but enhance burnout, some include; relationship problems, loss of a loved one, financial difficulties, these and others like marriage, birth of a child, mortgage and other family responsibilities.

The effects of job burnout in both the organization and the employee can be classified under two categories; i) Physical effects ii) Psychological effects.

The individual experiences such negative effects as; Headaches, pimples, stomach upsets (ulcer), High Blood Pressure (BP), chronic fatigue. Individual’s experiences psychological effect such as; Depression, low-self esteem, helplessness and anxiety.

The organization experiences decrease in profit, absenteeism and reduction in productivity. The organization looses in business and there is lower quality and quantity.

Studies have also shown that gender has a role to play in experiencing burnout. Women according to research are more vulnerable to prolonged fatigue and need for recovery. Also that, women were susceptible to inter-role conflict and demands and resources may be valued differently by men and women. Also the number of children may affect the experience of burnout. The energy you spend on a family of 1 and 2 is not the same in family of 8 or 10; this might depend on the age of the children. The reason, be it work related or not are all causes of burnout.

This work is to determine whether there will be a significant influence of gender on burnout among married bankers. To find out whether there will be a significant influence of number of children in burnout among married bankers.

The study intends to find answers to the below questions or problems; Will there will a significant influence of gender on burnout
among married bankers? Will there is a significant influence of number of children on burnout among married bankers.

Theoretical Perspective
Burnout was seen as occurring solely within the “helping” professions such as nursing and education but now it has become a wilder spread issue.

Hobfoll (1989) proposed two important principles of the COR-model. The first posits that “Resource loss is disproportionately more salient than resources gain”. It was based on psychological findings that negative events appear to elicit more physiological, affective, cognitive and behavioural responses than neutral or positive events. Secondly, Hobfoll (2001) proposed that people must invest resources in order to protect against resource loss receive from losses and gain resources”. Also those with greater resources are more capable of resources gain and those with limited or smaller resources are more susceptible to resource loss. According to Hobfoll (2001), job demands threaten one’s resource and overtime, consistent exposure to such demands will result to strain in the form of emotional conclusion, this is an important dimension of burnout. In a work setting, the rate at which work demands or tasks use up employees resources is more than the rate resources are replenished.

Lazarus and Folkman (1984) see strain in terms of individual’s perceptions of their environments as stressful. They posit that it is not the stressor itself that causes stress but a person’s perception of the stressor. According to them, the responses people give to stress depend on the outcome of the primary appraisals; whether the person’s coping resources are adequate to cope with the threat. People when faced with stressful events engage in a cognitive process that involves primary and secondary appraisals. A primary appraisal is an evaluation of the meaning and significance of a potential stressful event according to how it will affect one’s well being which can be positive, negative or irrelevant. While secondary appraisal is evaluating one’s coping resources and deciding how to deal with a stressful event.

Grandey and Cropanzano (1999) applied their theory of Conservation of Resources (COR-MODEL) to work family relationship. They found out that chronic work and family stress drains resources over time. People with increased distress, poor physical health, have increased thoughts about quitting their job. Rosebaum and Cohen (1999) used COR to examine the effect of individual resources on work/family conflict (WFC) and found out working women and discovered that women who have one kind of resource were less distressed than those with more. It went further to portray that women who possessed resources are more capable or liable to gaining additional resources, which supports the second principle of “COR” theory “gain begets gain”.

Further more, women are more vulnerable to prolonged fatigue and need for recovery. These views back up the postulation that women may be more susceptible to enter role conflict and suggest that demands and resources may be valued differently by men and women.

Hypotheses
1. There will be no significant influence of gender on burnout among married bankers.
2. There will be no significant influence of number of children on burnout among married bankers.

Methods
Participants
A total of 100 participants comprising 50 female and 50 male married bank workers were selected. The participants were selected from Bank in Enugu and Awka which includes: Intercontinental bank UBA Bank, Zenith Bank, Union Bank, FCMB (First Monument Bank), First Bank, Diamond Bank and Oceanic Bank they are between the ages of 23-50years.

Measures
Section a comprised demographic information like gender, number of children,
name of establishment, age, etc. Section b, comprised a 22 item Maslach Burnout inventory designed to measure burnout. It is a most widely used instrument for measuring burnout. It has various response formats. The frequency scale ranges from 1-6; 1=A few times a year, 2 many times a year, 3=A few times every month, 4=many times every month 5 – A few times every week, 6= Every day. To score the questionnaire, the responses given by the participants were summed up across items to obtain a total score for each. The intensity scale ranges from 1 meaning “very mild, barely noticeable” to 7 meaning a very strong, major. However, a pilot study was carried out using 25 participants to obtain a test-retest reliability coefficient of 0.34 using Pearson Product Moment Correlation coefficient and a corrected value of 0.51 using Spearman Brown Formula which shows an appreciable degree of reliability.

Procedure
A total of 130 copies of research questionnaire were administered within a period of 4 weeks among married bankers. Out of 130, 110 were collected back and 100 correctly filled out and scored based on the responses of the participants. The scores were analyzed to test the hypotheses.

Design/Statistics
This work investigated gender and number of children as factors. Gender has two levels, large and small number of children. Based on this 2 x 2 factorial design was adopted. Hence two-way ANOVA F-test was applied as a statistic to analyze the data.
RESULTS

Table I
Summary table of means influence of gender and number of children on burnout among married bankers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Female</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>X</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of children</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large number of children</td>
<td>91.88</td>
<td>63.08</td>
<td>104.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Small number of children</td>
<td>69.52</td>
<td>60.64</td>
<td>130.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>X = 161.4</td>
<td>x = 123.72</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From table I female with large Number of children obtained the highest mean of (91.88) followed by female with small number of children (69.52), males with large family (63.08) and males with small number of children (60.64).

In general, female participants obtained a higher group mean of 161.4 than male participants (123.72); while large number of children obtained a higher group mean of 154.96 than participants with small number of children.

Table II
Summary table of two way ANOVA on influence of gender and number of children in burnout among married bankers.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of variation</th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>DF</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rows (number of children)</td>
<td>3844</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3844</td>
<td>14.3</td>
<td>&lt;.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Columns (gender)</td>
<td>8873.66</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>8873.66</td>
<td>33.1</td>
<td>&lt;.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interaction (Gender Vs number of children )</td>
<td>2580.02</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2480.02</td>
<td>9.24</td>
<td>&lt;.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within cells</td>
<td>25774.48</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>268.48</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>40972.16</td>
<td>99</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

From table II above, F- calculated value of 14.3 is greater than f–critical value at .05 level of significance. Thus, hypothesis I which stated that there will be no significant influence of number of children was disconfirmed. This means that the number of children married bankers had a significant influence on burnout.

Also, f-calculated value of 33.1 is greater than F-critical value of 3.92 which shows that there is a significant outcome of P less than .05. Hypothesis 2 which stated that there will be no significant influence of gender on burnout among married bankers is rejected. This shows that gender is observed to have an influence in
the experience of burnout among married bankers.

Beside, f-calculated value of 9.24 is greater than f-critical value of 3.92, showing a significant outcome at p less than .05 level of significance this also shows that a significant interaction of gender and number of children is observed to exist burnout tendency among married bankers. Number of children as a factor yielded a significant influence on burnout tendency among married bankers at p less than .05 level of significance. Gender, (male or female) as a factor too yielded a significant influence on burnout tendency among married bankers at p less than .05 level of significance. Number of children and gender yielded a significant interaction influence on burnout tendency among married bankers (F (1,96) = 9.24, P < 0.5)

Discussion

The result of this study revealed that the hypotheses tested were rejected or disconfirmed. The first hypothesis which states that there will be no significant influence of number of children on burnout among married bankers was rejected. This means that a significant influence was observed to exist in the experience of burnout among married bankers i.e. between the participants with large and small family. Married bankers with large number of children experiences more burnout (X = 91.88). This might be as a result of time and energy spent in combining family and work. (work-family interference). The stress an individual passes through in a family of 5 – 10 cannot be the same with that of 1or 2, though this might depend on the age of the children.

Grandey and Cropanzano (1999) revealed in their findings that as chronic work and family stressors drained resources over time, participants experienced increased stress reactions.

Second hypothesis which states that “there will be no significant influence of gender on burnout tendency among married bankers” was rejected. It means that a significant influence was observed to exist between the male and female participants in experience of burnout. In other words, females were observed to have a higher degree of influence (X = 161.4). This might be as a result of their physiological features and the combining of their family responsibilities and office work. This is most especially for those that have large number of children. Before keeping that family in order, like preparing the children, especially younger ones everyday and rushing to work the person will be down at the end of the day.

Jansen, Kant, Kristensen and Nijhuis (2003) revealed in their findings that women may be more susceptible to inter-role conflict which results to stress or burnout and suggest that demands and resources may be valued differently by men and women. Further, as a result of this women were more vulnerable to prolonged fatigue and need for recovery from stress.

In COR Model (Conservation of Resources) applied to the study of work/family relationship by Grandey and Cropanzano (1999) reveals that inter-role conflict leads to stress because resources are lost in the process of juggling both work and family roles. As we have observed, it is mostly experienced by women.

This study also reveals the interaction of gender and number of children on burnout among married bankers. A significant interaction was observed which shows that the number of children you have and your gender interact or influence each other to determine the experience of burnout among married bankers.

In summary, the result of this study has shown that there is a significant influence of gender and number of children among the participants i.e. between male and female, large number and small number of children in burnout.

Conclusion

In view of the above findings, the researcher hereby recommends that burnout can be prevented or managed in the following ways:
1. Withdrawing from the Stressor: Women mostly especially should transfer or seek for job that will give them chance to take care of their family and still have time to rest or relax. E.g. teaching.

2. They should also seek the services of house helps or nannies to help them in domestic work only, not in looking after their children because leaving the children at the mercy of the house helps or nannies alone affects the child psychologically. This will help the women not to breakdown while juggling for family and work since they are susceptible to stress.

Generally, burnout can be prevented or managed by re-assessing the time you have for leisure, this is because when an individual engages in all these social, physical or low-effort activities like sports or regular exercise, dancing and watching TV after work, helps to ameliorate the effect of stress. (Sonnentag, 2001). Also time management and goal settling will help a great deal. When you set your goal and plan your activities for the day to give you time to relax, it helps to resolve role conflict and uncertainty which is a major source of stress. This therefore helps in controlling stress levels. Stress can be reduced by changing perceptions of the situation. This does not mean that stressors should be ignored, but it will help to strengthen our self-efficacy and self-esteem so that jobs are not perceived as threatening. Positive self talk can potentially change stress perceptions, because a person’s optimism can minimize the effects of stressors.

Besides, further investigations can also be carried most especially age influence and in another field of work. And finally, application of the above recommendations will go a long way in helping to reduce or prevent burnout.

REFERENCES


