

Big-five Personality Traits as Correlate of Employees' Perception of Job Burnout among Industrial Workers of Ewekoro Cement Factory, Nigeria

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Abstract

This study investigated the relationship between personality traits (big-five) and employees' perception of job burnout among workers in Ewekoro Cement Industry, Nigeria. The study also considered the impact of employee's marital status and gender on their perception of job burnout. All these were done with a view to increasing the knowledge of the individual on how to manage themselves in face of job stress within the organization. The study adopted a descriptive survey method and instruments used were psychological scales: Personality Scale and Perceived Job Burnout Scale. A total number of 250 questionnaires were administered to the workers of Ewekoro Cement Industry using stratified random sampling techniques for the study. The respondents in this study were 228 employees comprising 139 males (61.0%) and 89 females (39.0%). Also 73 (32.0%) of the respondents were within the age of 21-30 years, 101 (44.3%) were within the age of 31-40 years while 54 (23.7%) were within the age of 40 years and above. The results of the hypotheses tested revealed that there was no significant relationship between personality traits and employees' perception of job burnout [$t(1.120) = 2.42$, $P\text{-val} > 0.01$]. It was also revealed that there was no significant difference between marital status and employees' perception of job burnout [$r(0.187) = 2.29$, $P\text{-val} > 0.05$]. However, there was a significant gender difference in perception of job burnout among the workers [$t^{\text{cal}} = (3.225)$, $t^{\text{tab}} = (1.658)$, $P\text{-val} < (0.05)$]. The study concluded that employees' personality traits and marital status have no relationship with their perception of job burnout, except gender. The results were discussed with reference to the existing relevant studies. Based on this outcome, implication, conclusions were drawn and recommendations were made.

Keywords: personality traits; job burnout; perception, gender and marital status

INTRODUCTION

Burnout, generally, could be described as a state of emotional, mental, and physical exhaustion caused by excessive and prolonged stress. It occurs when the individual feels overwhelmed and unable to meet constant demands. Specifically, job burnout sets in as the stress continues and when the individual begins to lose the interest or motivation that led him/her to take on a certain role in the first place. Burnout has the potential to reduce one's productivity and saps the individual's energy, leaving somebody to feel increasingly helpless, hopeless, cynical, and resentful. Most people perceived job burnout as both mental and physical exhaustion. People feel bored, overloaded, or unappreciated; when the dozen balls they keep in the air are not noticed, let alone rewarded. If somebody feels like this most of the time, however, he/she may be flirting with job burnout.

Meanwhile, it is increasingly becoming expedient to focus on perceived job burnout instead of actual experience of burnout as well as job stress since the feelings and behaviour attached to job burnout could be subjective in nature. The idea of the individual

difference, which is human's second nature, plays a vital role in the way we comprehend, interpret and react to human environment. Given the differences in the individual understanding and interpretation of the situation he/she finds him/herself, one could not but agree that the individual's report of job burnout is subjective. This may explain why an individual who many people think has a lot of work demands and who is being maltreated or not appreciated could still be performing and still feel he/she is on top of the situation, whereas, somebody whose job demands are not as large and whose work environment is more conducive, compared to the former could be complaining of job burnout. It all depends on the way the individual perceives his/her situation, which will eventually determine his/her interpretation and subsequent feelings or experience. It has often been said that a lot of people usually become aware of being under a lot of stress, while many people do not always notice burnout when it happens.

Perception is a psychological construct, which has been regarded as the process by which an organism receives or extracts certain information about the environment (Robbins, 1996). The way the individual

gains knowledge about his environment in his quest for adaptive behaviour is of prime importance. The gaining of such knowledge necessitates the extraction of information from the vast array of physical energy, which stimulates the organism's senses. The process of perception explains the manner in which information (stimuli) from the environment around us is selected and organized to provide meaning for the individual. Perception thus becomes the mental function of giving significance to stimuli. It gives rise to individual behavioural responses to particular situations (Mullins, 1999). Perception in the context of this study implies that an employee becomes aware, categorizes and organizes information regarding the situation, which depicts on one hand, the feelings of overused, unrecognized, undervalued, unappreciated, negligence, unconcern, on the part of the employer and on the other hand, lack of trust in oneself and the others, betrayer, backbiter, bully/bossy, lack of motivation, exhaustion and insolence from the colleagues and the immediate seniors in preparedness for his/her response(s).

There are other causes and implications of burnout, but burnout stems from the job when somebody feels overworked and undervalued. The people who are at the risk of burnout range from the hardworking office workers who have not had a vacation or a raise in several years to the frazzled 'stay-at-home' mom who struggles with the heavy responsibility of taking care of three kids, the housework, and her aging father. But the perception and experience of burnout may differ from the individuals and this may account for different reactions to it. How we look at the world and what we do in our downtime can play a big role in the way we perform our duties. More so, what an organization expects from the worker is improved performance and increased productivity. However, the individual's performance could be better enhanced with the knowledge and understanding of the probable factors that are responsible for the way an individual employee perceives job burnout.

Moreover, job burnout is not caused solely by stressful work or too many responsibilities. Other factors such as; our lifestyle and social status/roles may also contribute to the experience of job burnout. However, what is of paramount to this study is the determination of the probable factors responsible for the differences in employee's perception of job burnout. Consequently, this study considered the influence of personality traits, employee's gender and marital status on the employee's perception of job burnout. Personality traits which explore individual differences focus on constructing a coherent picture of the individual and his or her major psychological processes. "Personality" can be defined as a dynamic and organized set of characteristics possessed by a person that uniquely influences his or her cognitions, motivations, and behaviours in various situations.

Personality traits can influence employee's perception of job burnout since the traits have the potential to determine and explain the reason why we act and respond to situations in different ways. Traits are neuropsychological properties that lead to behavioural consistency over time and contexts by producing functional similarity in the way each of us interprets and experiences events. Personality researchers have focused on the Big Five personality dimensions (Barrick & Mount, 1991; Hertz & Donovan, 2000). Emotional aspects of extraversion and neuroticism can motivate individuals' behaviour, including behaviours related to burnout.

Employees' gender may influence their perception of job burnout in the sense that within the organization, male and female workers tend to have different types of job descriptions and expected duties to perform and the fact that most senior positions are predominantly occupied by males may determine the way female employees perceive job burnout in relation to their male counterparts. In the same vein, the employment discrimination tendency besetting female employees may aggravate their conditions of service in comparison to their male counterpart. Similarly, the female employees, more than their male counterparts, have a tendency to arrogate to themselves some sex-specific benefits, such as maternity leave and provision of crèche as well as the creation of break interval to attend to their new babies. But many organizations may not well be disposed to all these arrangements and this may affect their perception of the organization as related to their male counterparts (Assaad & Arntz 2003) posit that gender may greatly influence the impact of certain organizational occurrence such as downsizing, job burnout e.t.c. in employees. The rationale for including employees' marital status as one of the variables was based on the belief that employees' home front responsibilities and challenges may affect their comportment, conducts and assimilation of pressure in the place of work.

STATEMENT OF THE RESEARCH PROBLEM

Job burnout is a loss of interest in work and in extreme form; the burnout victim can literally become unable to work. The work skills remain intact, but burnout leaves its victim unable to become involved in the work as it extinguishes motivation. In job burnout, victims' emotional reserves are depleted, the quality of relationship deteriorates and their physical resilience declines. They seem to be in a state of chronic tension or stress. There is a general feeling of being tired and run down. Frustration, feelings of guilt, interpersonal conflicts, and even depression are all increased. All these developments portend some negative consequences for organizational productivity. Organizations, in the face of steep competitions require employees who are very energetic with sound mind to become fully

functioning. Be that as it may be, the employee's reaction to the symptoms of burnout is what can affect the organizational productivity. But this reaction is predicated on their perception and the interpretation given to the symptoms. Thus, an organization could be threatened when the employee interprets the situation as a problem that weighs him/her down, but the organization may not be affected if the situation was perceived otherwise. Therefore, understanding of the factors that can determine whether employees will perceive the symptoms of burnout as aversive stimuli that could break their spirit or as normal life experiences, which pose no problem will be of interest to the organization. Thus, it becomes important to look inward into the individuals' psychosocial makeup to identify the probable factors that can determine how the employees perceived job burnout.

Moreover, several studies (Etzion, 1984; Brief and Atieh, 1987; Maslach and Jackson, 1986) have raised the question of the vagueness of the term burnout as well as of job stress, while most of the recent studies (Bettina, 2006; Alarcon, Eschleman, & Bowling, 2009; Talachi and Gorji, 2013; Lin 2013) have focused on actual job burnout experience in relation to different variables such as personality traits, mental health, job satisfaction/commitment. There are little or no studies that specifically focus on the employee's perception of job burnout in relation to any of these variables, hence this study.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Over the last two decades, the Big-Five factors have become the most prominent model for describing the structure of personality traits (Rammstedt, Goldberg & Borg, 2010). The Big Five frameworks are a hierarchical model of personality traits with five broad factors, which represent personality at the broadest level of abstraction (Gosling, Rentfrow, & Swann, 2003). It consisted of neuroticism, extraversion, openness (openness to experience), conscientiousness and agreeableness variables. Each bipolar factor (e.g., Extraversion vs. Introversion) summarizes several more specific Facets (e.g., Sociability), which, in turn, subsume a large number of even more specific traits (e.g., talkative, outgoing) (Gosling et al., 2003). Extraversion refers to individuals' tendency to conversableness, sociability and assertiveness. According to probes, it has a negative relationship with job burnout (Alarcon et al., 2009; Costa & McCrae, 1992). Agreeableness refers to individuals' tendency to rely on others and concern them. It has a negative relationship with job burnout (Alarcon et al., 2009; Costa & McCrae, 1992; Bowling et al., 2004). Conscientiousness refers to individuals' diligence, tendency toward planning and organizing, work ethic, self-regulation and assiduousness. It has a negative relationship with job

burnout (Alarcon et al., 2009; Costa & McCrae, 1992).

Given this development, it is not surprising that a significant number of studies in burnout and coping have focused on the affective traits of neuroticism and extraversion, given their relationship with negative emotionality and positive emotionality, respectively (Watson, David, & Suls, 1999). Emotional aspects of extraversion and neuroticism can motivate individuals' behaviours, including behaviours related to burnout (Zellars, Perrewe, & Hochwarter, 2000). According to Peterson (2000), the optimism frequently exhibited by extraverts "leads to desirable outcomes because it predisposes specific actions that are adaptive in concrete situations". The ability to adapt may explain in part the positive correlation between optimism and burnout among working college students (Chang, Rand, & Strunk, 2000). In general, individuals higher in neuroticism possess more negative views of themselves and of others (Watson & Clark, 1984). One explanation for the effects of neuroticism is that it may increase one's susceptibility or exposure to stimuli that generate negative emotions (Bolger & Schilling, 1991).

Neuroticism refers to individuals' capability to endure such feelings as fear, sin and failure. It has a positive relationship with job burnout (Alarcon et al., 2009; Costa, & McCrae, 1992; Bono, & Judge, 2003). Openness to experience refers to individuals' propensity to various experiences and ideas. In previous research, a significant relationship has not been found between openness and job burnout (Alarcon et al., 2009; Costa, & McCrae, 1992; Piedmont, 1993). In 2007, Kim et al conducted a research in hotel industry using the Big-Five Personality model. The results show that extraversion has a negative relationship with job burnout; agreeableness has a negative relationship with pessimism; conscientiousness and agreeableness have a positive relationship with efficiency; and neuroticism has a positive relationship with job exhaustion and pessimism.

The distinction between neuroticism and extroversion as a trait, and positive and negative affect as a state (i.e., a mood), is critical in attempting to examine the roles of personality and moods in burnout. Positive affectivity and negative affectivity (traits) represent stable personality differences in affect levels and have been discussed previously as part of the extraversion and neuroticism dimensions. Unlike affective personality differences, positive affect and negative affect as states capture how an individual feels at a given point in time (Watson & Pennebaker, 1989) or in a specific situation. Furthermore, some have suggested that it is the affective nature of some personality characteristics that influence moods at

work, which in turn influence job satisfaction and other work behaviours (Weiss, Nicholas, & Daus, 1993). Several studies have reported that individuals higher in neuroticism tend to react more negatively and experience more stress to daily problems e.g., interpersonal conflicts; (Bolger & Schilling, 1991; Bolger & Zuckerman, 1995; Suls, Martin & David, 1998). Many findings of the research on extroversion and neuroticism are homogenous to previous researches; however, no relationship was determined between agreeableness and job performance/job burnout (Kim et al, 2007). Alarcon et al (2009) mentioned that structured studies on the relationship between personality variables and burnout are rare. Since authors confirmed the death of structured researches in this area, coupled with the fact that no study has really considered the concept of perception in investigating issues relating to job burnout, present study addresses the impact of personality factors (big five personality model) on employee's perceived job burnout.

Implication of Learning Helplessness Theory to this Study

Learned helplessness theory is the view that clinical depression and related mental illnesses may result from a perceived absence of control over the outcome of a situation (Seligman, 1975). Learned helplessness is the condition of a human or animal that has learned to behave helplessly, failing to respond even though there are opportunities for it to help itself by avoiding unpleasant circumstances or by gaining positive rewards. Organisms that have been ineffective and less sensitive in determining the consequences of their behaviour are defined as having acquired Learned Helplessness (Carlson, 2010). The US psychologist Martin Seligman's foundational experiments and theory of learned helplessness began in 1967, as an extension of his interest in depression. Quite by accident, Seligman and colleagues discovered that the conditioning of dogs led to outcomes that opposed the predictions of B.F. Skinner's behaviourism. (Seligman & Maier, 1967). In the learned helplessness experiment an animal is repeatedly hurt by an adverse stimulus which it cannot escape. Eventually the animal will stop trying to avoid the pain and behave as if it is utterly helpless to change the situation. Finally, when opportunities to escape are presented, this learned helplessness prevents any action. The only coping mechanism the animal uses is to be stoical and put up with the discomfort, not expending energy getting worked up about the adverse stimulus.

Meanwhile, other experiments were performed with different animals with similar results. In all cases, the strongest predictor of a depressive response was lack of control over the aversive stimulus. A similar experiment was done with people who performed mental tasks in the presence of distracting noise.

People who could use a switch to turn off the noise had improved performance, even though they rarely bothered to do so. Simply being aware of this option was enough to substantially counteract its distracting effect (Hiroto & Seligman, 1975). In 2011, an animal study (Varela, Wang, Varnell & Donald, 2011) found that animals with control over stress exhibited changes in the excitability of specific neurons within the prefrontal cortex, and modeled this phenomenon in a conductance-based neural simulation. Animals that lacked control failed to exhibit an increase in excitability and showed signs consistent with learned helplessness and social anxiety.

The present study focuses on the employees' perception of job burnout based on their personality traits. Therefore, application of the learning helplessness theory to the study centres on employees' perception of aversive stimuli in all activities related to work conditions and perception of sense of control. The direct implication of this is that an employee who perceives adverse conditions of work with little or no sense of control, meaning that he/she is learned helplessness, will definitely perceive job burnout, while on the other hand, an employee perceives adverse conditions of work with sense of control may not perceive job burnout. Abramson, Seligman, Teasdale, (1978) opine that although a group of people may experience the same or similar negative events, how each person privately interprets or explains the event will determine the likelihood of acquiring learned helplessness and subsequent depression. This development by extension will accommodate job burnout. Peterson, and Seligman (1984) posit that people with a pessimistic explanatory style—which sees negative events as permanent ("it will never change"), personal ("it's my fault"), and pervasive ("I can't do anything correctly")—are most likely to suffer from learned helplessness and depression.

A clear explanation of learning helplessness depicts the distinction between extroversion and neuroticism dimensions of personality traits as they affect employees' perception of job burnout. Consequently, the present study posits that employees' who are highly inclined toward extroversion personality trait will perceive job burnout as less aversive stimulus than employees who are highly inclined toward neuroticism personality trait.

METHODOLOGY

This research work adopted a descriptive research design to establish a pattern between the variables of interest and to provide a numeric description of the sample of the population. This was applied because the research seeks to discover the relationship between personality traits, employee's gender and marital status (independent variables) and perceived job burnout (dependent variable).

Study Population, Sampling and Sampling Procedure

The target population for this study includes the totality of industrial workers (930) of Ewekoro cement industry, Ewekoro, where a total number of 250 (26.88%) respondents were drawn from population of workers from different departments which includes; operations, administrative, management, logistics and marketing departments. The stratified sampling technique was used in the process of the selection of the respondents for the study. The organization was first stratified into five departments listed earlier from which respondents were drawn randomly.

Research Instruments

The research instrument used for the collection of data in this study was divided into three-section comprising two standardized scales and section 'A' was self-designed. The first section tapped information on the respondents' socio-demographic data. Section 'B' contains the scale of personality (independent variable) using the big-five model to measure the respondents' personality traits which are extroversion, conscientiousness, openness to experience, neuroticism and agreeableness. Section 'C' contains the scale adapted from the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI; Maslach & Jackson, 1986) to measure the perceived job burnout. It concentrates on Emotional Exhaustion (measuring feelings of being emotionally overextended and exhausted by one's work), Depersonalization (measuring an unfeeling and impersonal response toward recipients of one's service, care, treatment or instruction) Personal Accomplishment (measuring feelings of competence and successful achievement in one's work).

Section A: Socio-Demographic Data

This section contains a six-item scale, which seeks information on the respondents' demographic characteristics. This includes age, gender, marital status, job status, job title and years of service. Information on these variables will help give a better understanding of how they contribute to employees' perception of job burnout.

Section B: BIG Five Personality Traits

This section contains a twelve-item scale which adapted the big five model of personality traits which consists of extroversion, conscientiousness, openness to experience, neuroticism and agreeableness. NEO five-factor inventory (NEO-FFI) which was developed by Costa and McCrae 1992 which consists of 12 items for five dimensions of personality which respondent will use a 5-point scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree) to indicate the degree to which the item describes them.

Section C: Perceived Job Burnout

This section contains a fourteen-item scale, which seeks information about the respondent's perception or feelings the individual might have on the kind of job they do in their workplace that causes burnout turnover intention. The instrument is also a close-ended questionnaire adapted from Maslach burnout inventory (MBI). The MBI is an invaluable tool for: Assessing professional burnout in human service, education, business, and government professions, Assessing and validating the three-dimensional structure of burnout, Understand the nature of burnout for developing effective interventions.

Psychometric Properties of Research Instrument

The reliability of the research instrument was determined through test-re-test method. In order to test for vagueness and clarity of the items, the instruments were administered twice within two weeks on the same group of ten workers. The Pearson Product Moment correlation was used to find the reliability coefficient of the two scores where test-re-test reliability coefficient was 0.77 and that of job burnout was 0.90.

Administration of Research Instruments

The research questionnaire was administered to 250 workers in Ewekoro cement industry, with instructions on how to fill the questionnaire provided. Confidential treatment of information was assured. In order to have an adequate representation of each department the researcher painstakingly adhered to simple random sampling method after the sampling units have been determined. A total number of 250 questionnaire was administered where 242 were returned out of which 228 were found to be completely filled and useful for analysis, 8 questionnaires were not found while 14 were not completely filled and thus rejected. Altogether, a response rate of 90% was recorded.

TREATMENT OF DATA

Descriptive and inferential statistics were used for the analysis of the data collected from the respondents. The descriptive statistic was used to analyze the demographic variable while the inferential statistic such as One way ANNOVA and T-test were used to test the hypotheses generated for this study.

RESULT ANALYSIS

Descriptive Analysis

Two hundred and twenty eight (228) employees comprising 139 (61%) males and 89 (39%) females, in five different departments responded to the research instrument. They were mostly between 30 – 40 (44.3%) years of age. 145 (63.6%) were married, and 76 (33.3%) of the employees were single, while 7 (3.1%) of them were divorcees. 139 (61%) were in the junior cadre category, while 89 (39%) were within the senior cadre. A good number of employees

(133: 58.3%) have put 6 – 15 years of service, while 44 (19. %) of employees have spent 15 years above in the organization. It is also interesting to note that 126 (55.3%) of the employees spend more than ten hours daily on the job, while 88 (38.6%) of them committed ten hours daily to the job.

Hypotheses Testing

Hypothesis One: There will be a significant relationship between personality traits and employees' perception job burnout.

In testing this hypothesis data collected on big-five personality traits and employee's perceived job burnout from respondents were subjected to one - way ANOVA. The table below presents the summary of results.

Table 1: One –way ANOVA on Personality Traits and Employee's Perceived Job Burnout.

Variables	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean square	F-cal	F-value	P-val
Between groups	2078.13	53	39.210	1.120	2.42	.005
Within groups	6089.428	174	34.997			
Total	8167.561	227				

Statistically significant; $p > 0.05$

From table 1 (see Appendix), using analysis of variance to test differences between big-five personality trait and job burnout the F-calculated value is 1.120. However the tabulated F-value is 2.42. Since the calculated F is less than the tabulated F-value, the alternate hypothesis is rejected and the null hypothesis is accepted [$r(1.120) = 2.42, P > 0.05$]. Thus, there is no significant relationship between personality traits and employees' perception of job burnout.

Hypothesis Two: There will be a significant gender difference in employees' perception of job burnout.

To test this hypothesis data collected on gender and job burnout from respondents were subjected to t-test analysis. In testing this hypothesis, subjects were classified into two groups: male and female status. The two groups' scores were subjected to t- test analysis. The Table below presents the summary of the result.

Table 2: T- test analysis on the difference between male and female employee's perceived job burnout.

Group	N	Mean	SD	Df	t ^{cal}	t ^{tab}	P-val
Male	139	91.59	14.86				
				225	3.225	1.658	0.05
Female	89	83.66	22.19				

Statistically significant; $p > 0.05$

From table 2 (see Appendix), the mean and standard deviation for the group, i.e male and female on job burnout shows that the mean effect on male is greater than the mean effect on female workers. For instance while male (n=139) have a mean score of 91.59 and a standard deviation of 14.86, the corresponding mean score of female (n= 88) was 83.66 with a standard deviation of 22.19. These results were subjected to t-test analysis which yielded [$t^{cal} = (3.225), t^{tab} = (1.658), P^{val} < (0.05)$] at P 0.05 level (2 tailed). Since the t- calculated is greater than the t-tabulated the null hypothesis is rejected the alternative hypothesis is accepted. Therefore there is a

significant gender difference in employees' perception of job burnout.

Hypothesis Three: There Will Be a Significant Relationship between Marital Status and Employee's Perception of Job Burnout

In testing this hypothesis, respondents were classified into three groups namely; single, married, divorced. The three groups' scores on perception of job burnout were subjected to one- way analysis of variance. The result of analysis as presented in the table below shows that there is no significant difference in the means of the groups on perception of job burnout [$r(0.187) = 2.29, P > 0.05$].

Variable	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean square	F-cal	F-value	P-val
Between groups	127.672	2	63.836	0.187	2.29	>0.05
Within groups	76722.206	225	340.988			
Total	76849.877	227				

From table 3 (see Appendix), using analysis of variance to determine if there is a significant difference between marital status and employees' perception of job burnout. The F-calculated value is 0.187. However, the tabulated F-value is 2.29. Since the calculated F is less than the tabulated F-value, we accept the null hypothesis and reject the alternative

hypothesis. [$r(0.187) = 2.29, P > 0.05$]. Thus, it implies that there is no significant relationship between marital status and perception of job burnout.

DISCUSSION

The primary focus of the present study is to contribute to knowledge in the area of understanding the influence of personality traits on the employee's

perception of job burnout with a view to increasing the knowledge of the individuals on how to manage themselves and how the organization can sustain their workers for good performance. The results of the analysis provide an interesting development for the hypothesized relationship among all the variables of interest in this study. With regard to the hypotheses formulated to guide this study, the result of the first hypothesis which sought to assess the direction and strength of the relationship between personality traits and employees' perception of job burnout among workers, reveals that there is no significant relationship between personality traits and employees' perception of job burnout among workers of Ewekoro Cement Industry.

Furthermore, the independent analysis of components of Big-Five personality traits and employees' perceived job burnout shows that all (extroversion, openness; conscientiousness and agreeableness) but one (neuroticism) have no significant relationship with perceived job burnout. These findings suggest that employees' perception of job burnout has nothing to do with their personality make up. The finding is corroborated by the finding of Watson, David, & Suls, (1999) who found that extroversion has no significant relationship between job burnout and coping. The study focused on the affective relationship with negative emotionality and positive emotionality respectively. Thus, this implies that coping with job burnout affects individual emotions negatively and positively. Alarcon et al (2009) also reported a negative relationship between extraversion and job burnout.

The finding, however, is in contrast with the work of Bolger & Schilling (1991) who posited that personality may influence psychological well-being through its impact on how individuals react to job burnout, that is, through ineffective coping when under job burnout. Zellars, Perrewé & Hochwarter, (2000) also found that the emotional aspects of extraversion and neuroticism can motivate individuals' behaviours, including behaviours related to burnout. Other scholars who have established a significant relationship between neuroticism and job burnout include; Costa, & McCrae (1992); Bono, & Judge (2003). A plausible reason for this development is that workers that are higher in extraversion perceived more personal accomplishments in their jobs, possibly because their inherent sociability provides them with more opportunities to work with others who reinforce their personal accomplishments through feedback or support. This may simply be translated into social capital that can affect how employees perceive job burnout.

Hypothesis two which states that gender will be a significant gender difference in the employees'

perception of job burnout among the workers of Ewekoro Cement Industry was confirmed. The result indicates that male workers are different from their female counterparts in their perception of job burnout. This result is in line with the works of Assaad & Arntz (2003) who posit that gender may greatly influence the impact of certain organizational occurrence such as downsizing, job burnout etc. in employees. They hinged their submission on the fact that women compared to men perceive that they suffer greater losses when things rear their ugly head in the organization. The reason for this finding may not be unconnected with the fact that the male workers seem to attach more importance to their work more than female workers. i.e. male workers see their job as the second nature compared to their female counterparts and this may influence the interpretations given to the symptoms of burnout or different organizational activities that contribute to job burnout. Thus, both male and female workers of Ewekoro Cement Industry differently, perceived and interpreted the conditions of their work as job burnout. In addition, many organizations offer different sex-specific benefits, such as maternity leave for female employees and in most cases higher wages for male employees. This may also account for the discrepancies in their perception of job burnout. Hypothesis three which states that marital status will significantly relate to employees' perception of job burnout among workers of Ewekoro Cement Industry was not confirmed. The direct implication of this finding is that employees' perception of job burnout is not affected by their marital status, in spite of likely differences in home front responsibilities. This finding finds support in the work of House, Shane, & Herold (1996), who found that marital status does not have any affectivity on job burnout i.e. marital status has no significant relationship on job burnout.

LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

There were number of limitations to this study. Firstly, any research conducted within a specific environment usually has the problem of generalization, this study inclusive. The findings of this study therefore may be argued to be relevant only within the scope of the setting of this study. This is because the participants used for the study were only drawn from a selected private organization. Thus, the generalizability of the findings of this study research to all employees of governments and the private establishments in Nigeria may be nearly impossible.

Secondly, the general attitude of the employees to research instruments (i.e. questionnaire) and bureaucracy involved in getting approval to administer the research instrument were serious limitations that the researcher experienced in the field. It took several efforts and weeks of traveling to gain access to all the units and departments used in this study. It was also discovered that some of the

questionnaire was not returned, while a good number of them were not filled. Another limitation experienced was the dearth of literature in the area of psychosocial factors, especially, as they relate to perception and interpretation of job burnout. In a nutshell, the research of this nature should be extended to all public sector workers in Nigeria and across the world for valid and reliable generalization.

CONCLUSION

In view of the findings of this study, one can easily conclude that job burnout and its deleterious effects are real and that the individual's personality does not affect the employee's perception of job burnout. Meanwhile, it was discovered that employees are not different on the basis of marital status, in the way they perceive job burnout. However, employees' gender played an important role in their perception of job burnout. The effect of job burnout cannot be overemphasized. Job burnout is being considered a safety and health problem in many societies of the world, but job burnout itself may not affect the organizational productivity until it is perceived. It is the individual's perception of job burnout and attendant reactions that can wreck havoc and this is what the organization should guide against. Consequently, organization and employers of labour must work on an educational intervention programme that can enlighten the individuals on the subject of job burnout. This means that they should consistently train and retrain workers in the area of job burnout management. If possible, there should be some psychological intervention programmes, which can improve workers' ability to resist pressure and prepare them for eventualities.

In practical terms, Organizations should embark on developing the job schedules that have breaks and early closing time and address the issues of job burnout as safety and health issues. Organizations should improve on their effort in creation of sex-specific benefits tailoring towards male workers like paternity even if it is two weeks and to ensure it is taken as at when due. They should broaden the scope of rewards for outstanding performance and granting of soft loans should be inculcated. All these will serve as a buffer and greatly cushion the adverse conditions of work as well as colouring their perception of workplace activities in the long run. In a nutshell, a research of this nature should be extended to all public sector workers in Nigeria and across the world for valid and reliable generalization.

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