

Emotional Intelligence as Predictor to Burnout Syndrome Among Teachers in Delta State

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ABSTRACT

The study was conducted using a correlational research design. A total of 752 teachers in the 20 government-owned senior secondary schools in Delta State's Ika South Local Government Area were included in the study (Source: Post Primary Education Schools Board, Asaba, Delta State, 2021). The study used a sample size of 398 teachers who were chosen at random and independently from 20 government-owned secondary schools in the Ika South Local Government Area of Delta State, Nigeria, using the purposive sampling technique. The purposive sample technique is appropriate for selecting teachers who exhibit the traits that are being examined, namely, Burnout Syndrome. This was accomplished by giving each teacher a copy of the Burnout Syndrome Screening Scale (BSSS). Data was collected using the Emotional intelligence inventory (EI) by Akinboye (2005), and Maslach Burnout Scale (MBS). The Cronbach alpha method of internal consistency was used to assess the instruments' dependability. The reliability coefficients were Maslach Burnout Scale (MBS) 0.87, and Emotional Intelligence Inventory (EI) 0.79, which are high enough to demonstrate the instrument's reliability. Linear regression and multiple regression were used to evaluate the hypotheses, along with independent sample t-test statistics. The result revealed that emotional intelligence such as self-awareness, self-management, self-motivation, social awareness, and relationship management all predict teacher burnout syndrome in a favorable and substantial way. School boards should recruit more professional counsellors to reduce post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) among teachers.

Keywords: Emotional Intelligence, burnout syndrome and teachers.

INTRODUCTION

Burnout syndrome has been often mistaken for stress. Although the symptoms of stress and burnout may be quite similar, it is important to note there are distinctions between Burisch (2006) explained that stress can intensify burnout but it is not the main cause of burnout. Although employees experience stress because of long work schedules, shift work or general workload, they may not experience burnout. In addition, stress symptoms may be more physical rather than emotional. The opposite holds true for burnout. Stress produced 'urgency and hyperactivity. Burnout, on the other hand, produced helplessness and frustration. Emotions associated with stress are over-reactive; those associated with burnout are more blunted (Moore, 2000).

Burnout has also similar symptoms as specific mood disorders. However, some differences do exist. Depression, for instance, may extend over every life domain (e.g., work, family, leisure).

Burnout, however, is specific to work context (Maslach, 2001). Another somewhat related, but different disorder, is the post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD). PTSD is caused by the exposure to a traumatic event or extreme stressor that is responded to with fear, helplessness, or horror (Mealer, Burnham, Goode, Rothbaum & Moss, 2009). Burnout, on the other hand, is caused mainly by interpersonal and emotional stressors in the workplace and is characterized by different reactions (e.g., emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and reduced personal accomplishment). Freudenberg as cited in Ekechukwu (2009) described burnout as a debilitating psychological condition, brought about by unrelieved work stress resulting in depleted energy and emotional exhaustion. Lowered resistance to illness, increased depersonalization in interpersonal relationships; increased dissatisfaction and pessimism; increased absenteeism and work inefficiency. Burnout is a chronic effective state comprised of emotional exhaustion, physical fatigue and cognitive weariness, it is an outcome of chronic depletion of the individuals coping resources resulting from prolonged exposure to stress, particularly work-related stress (Shiron as cited in Ekechukwu, 2009). Ekechukwu (2009) further stressed that job burnout could be called job depression. Some people wonder how to determine if the problem is one of general depression that affects one's, work or if it is job depression that affects one's life. Whether the source of burnout is in one's job or one's personal life, in either cases burnout is a trap because the process wears an individual down until it becomes too painful to act or work.

Burnout is a specific kind of occupational stress among human service professionals, as a result of the demanding and emotionally charged relationships between caregivers and their recipients (Maslach, 2011). Teachers are considered to be particularly susceptible to the risk of burnout syndrome due to the very stressful nature of their work which has negative impact on their mental and physical health, teaching efficacy and productivity (Johnson, Cooper, Cartwright, Donald, Taylor and Millet as cited in Irena, 2017). A teacher's job is predominantly demanding, strenuous and exhausting, it requires paying attention to the needs of the students, marking of scripts, managing the classroom, setting and vetting of examination scripts and ensuring that the goals of education are achieved (Kamenetz, 2015). Issues like the increase in students' bad behaviours, students' apathy, overcrowding in class, increasing administrative loads, lack of infrastructural support, and the public's negative opinion have led to job stresses when working as a teacher (Przybylska, 2014).

Teaching occupies a conspicuous position among the professions that have been identified as the most stressful and vulnerable burnout syndrome to worldwide (Jan, Arnold & Wilmar, 2006). Kalimo and Hakanen (2000) maintained that teachers have the highest burnout levels compared to workers in all other human services and white collars jobs. For example, it has been estimated that between 5% and 20% of all U.S. teachers are burned out at any given time (Farber, 1991). However, there exists widespread acknowledgement in literature that teachers do burnout due to stress related to their job, that burnout is both real and a problem, that there is significant associated attrition rate, and that the need to deal effectively with teachers' personal/professional frustration related to their position is very important (Adesina, 1990; Ajayi, 1997; Ejiogu, 1997). The reality of burnout among teachers as a very important problem which needs to be recognized and treated. In view of this, Priscilla (2004) argued that burnout may develop as a result of low emotional intelligence or the inability to regulate and manage one's emotions. Grezt cited in Akpan (2011) also revealed that individuals with low emotional

intelligence do not possess the ability to create social relationships that help their day-to-day activity as such they are at-risk of burnout syndrome.

Emotional intelligence is another variable that may be linked to burnout syndrome among teachers. Emotional intelligence is the capability of individuals to recognize their own emotions and those of others, establish relations with other individuals, discern between different feelings and label them appropriately, use emotional information to guide thinking and behaviour, and manage or adjust emotions to adapt to surrounding environment and achieve one's goal (Coleman, 2008). It is generally said that emotional intelligence is made up of five components, they are; self-awareness, self-management, self-motivation, and social-awareness and relationship management (Goleman, 1995).

Self-awareness is the first component of emotional intelligence which indicates knowing ones Feeling and emotions or recognizing a feeling as it happens. It is the ability to monitor feeling from moment to moment. Goleman (1995) observed that handling feeling in an appropriate way help to build self-awareness and that people who are low in this ability are prone to feeling of distress and may shy away from performing a task assigned to them or avoid certain situation whereas, those who are high are more resilient to life's setbacks and upsets, and are more confident in challenging situations.

The second component is self-management. This is otherwise known as managing one's emotion. It is the ability to regulate distressing affects like anxiety and anger and to inhibit emotional impulsivity.

Self-motivation is the third emotional intelligence component. which is marshaling emotion in pursuit of a goal, people who have this ability tend to be more productive and effective in whatever they undertake.

Social awareness, the fourth emotional intelligence component, encompasses the competency of empathy, and is the fundamental of people skill which makes them well suited for the caring professions such as nurses and social workers like teachers (Arvey, Renz, and Watson, 1998).

Finally, the fifth component of emotional intelligence is relationship management as a social skill that poses the ability to manage emotions, in others. Several studies have suggested that these components of emotional intelligence may relate to burnout syndrome (Laschinger, Shamian, & Thomson, 2001; Gamlan, Corrigan, & Morris. 2002). Grezt cited in Akpan (2011) revealed that individuals with low emotional intelligence do not possess the ability to create social relationships that help their day-to-day activity. Budnik (2003) stressed that emotional intelligence has a significant relationship with burnout among teachers. This apt description indicates that, teachers experiencing burnout syndrome usually have impaired mental health functioning as well as poor physical health (Zayfart. 2002). Sequel to this, it is imperative that this study investigate psycho-demographic variables as correlates of burnout syndrome among teachers in Delta State.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Teaching profession has showed a high work overload that led to work burnout. Some stressors present among teachers include poor working conditions, difficulties with students and

families, and work organizational factors. In the educational workforce, teachers must organize their work and allot extra hours for tending to parents and guardians, preparing materials, and planning, which is mostly done at home. On top of this, teachers have reported various epidemic problems, such as high rates of chronic non-transmissible diseases, high prevalence of obesity and low physical activity (associated with post-work fatigue and very late work hours), high rates of musculoskeletal disorders, burnout syndrome, depression, and anxiety. Emotional intelligence is another variable that may be linked to burnout syndrome among teachers.

It is observed that handling feeling in an appropriate way help to build self-awareness and that people who are low in this ability are prone to feeling of distress and may shy away from performing a task assigned to them or avoid certain situation whereas, those who are high are more resilient to life's setbacks and upsets, and are more confident in challenging situations. Thus, this study tends to investigate the link between emotional intelligence and burnout syndrome among teachers in Delta State.

Specifically, the study intends to achieve the following:

1. Determine the extent to which emotional intelligence dimensions (self-awareness, self-management, self-motivation, social awareness and relationship management) independently relate to burnout syndrome among teachers in Delta State.
2. Ascertain the extent to which emotional intelligence dimensions (self-awareness, self-management, self-motivation, social awareness, and relationship management) jointly relate to burnout syndrome among teachers in Delta State.

The following null hypotheses were tested at 0.05 level of significance will guide this study;

1. Emotional intelligence dimensions (self-awareness, self-management, self-motivation, social awareness, and relationship management) do not independently relate to burnout syndrome among teachers in Delta State.
2. Emotional intelligence dimensions (self-awareness, self-management, self-motivation, social awareness, and relationship management) do not jointly relate to burnout syndrome among teachers in Delta State.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

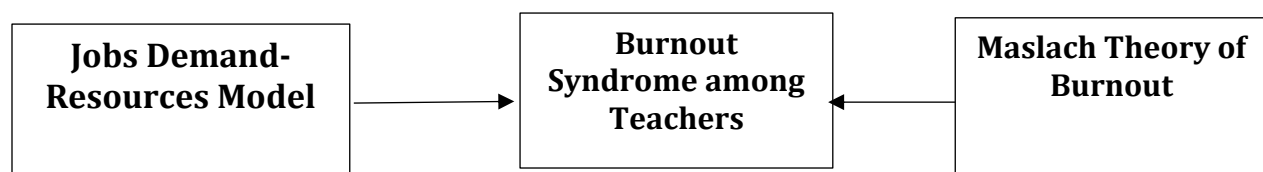


Fig. 1: Theoretical Framework of Burnout Syndrome among Teachers

Job resources may reverse negative impact of job strains for instance good supervision, leadership and relationship with a supervisor can help reduce strain from work insecurity or workload. This model stresses the importance of creating a balance between job resources and job demands. These two factors rely on each other in order to create a successful working environment. Also, when employees feel 'heard', understood, get rewards for good performance. positive feedback, all these aspects can influence the wellbeing of workers (Bakker & Evangelia 2006).

According to Maslach theory of burnout, burnout is as a result of a mismatch between the person doing the job and the job demands. The theory assumes that for burnout not to occur, a person doing the job and the job demands have to match. According to this theory, burnout is comprised of three dimensions which are emotional exhaustion, cynicism or depersonalization and inefficacy characterized by emotional stress related symptoms such as moodiness, frustration, agitation which may later cause the inability to cope with the emotional and physical aspects of the job (Maslach et al, 2001). Emotional incompetence negatively influences physical competence. This causes individuals to act in a manner that is not in line with their work and sufferers are unable to cope with the demands of the job.

METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted using a correlational research design. A total of 752 teachers in the 20 government-owned senior secondary schools in Delta State's Ika South Local Government Area were included in the study (Source: Post Primary Education Schools Board, Asaba, Delta State, 2021). The study used a sample size of 398 teachers who were chosen at random and independently from 20 government-owned secondary schools in the Ika South Local Government Area of Delta State, Nigeria, using the purposive sampling technique. The purposive sample technique is appropriate for selecting teachers who exhibit the traits that are being examined, namely, Burnout Syndrome. This was accomplished by giving each teacher a copy of the Burnout Syndrome Screening Scale (BSSS). The Burnout Syndrome Screening Scale (BSSS) scores of the respondents were analyzed, and those who scored high on the scale were recognized as teachers with burnout syndrome and used as the study's sample. Any score above the mean of 51.3 was considered a high score.

Data was collected using the Maslach Burnout Scale (MBS), Fear of COVID-19, and a modified Maslach Burnout Scale (MBS) created by Maslach (1996). The Maslach Burnout Scale (MBS) was used to assess the level of burnout among respondents. It contains 13 items and is based on a four-point likert scale with Strongly Agree (SA) =4, Agree (A) =3, Disagree (D) =2, and Strongly Disagree (SD) =1 as the maximum and minimum scores, respectively. The Cronbach alpha method of internal consistency was used to assess the instruments' dependability. The reliability coefficients were Maslach Burnout Scale (MBS) 0.87, dread of COVID 0.82, and Technology Anxiety 0.83, all of which are high enough to demonstrate the instrument's reliability. Linear regression and multiple regression were used to evaluate the hypotheses, along with independent sample t-test statistics.

RESULTS

Hypothesis 1: Emotional intelligence dimensions (self-awareness, self-management, self-motivation, social awareness, and relationship management) do not jointly relate to burnout syndrome among teachers in Delta State

Table 1: T-test associated with multiple Regression Analysis on the Extent to which emotional intelligence dimensions (self-awareness, self-management, self- motivation, social awareness, and relationship management) jointly relate to burnout syndrome

ANOVA ^a						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	2944.573	5	588.915	204.731	.000 ^b
	Residual	1127.601	392	2.877		
	Total	4072.173	397			

		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
Model		B	Std. Error	Beta	T	Sig.
1	(Constant)	1.753	.720		2.436	.015
	Selfawareness	-.005	.072	-.003	-.071	.943
	Selfmanagemnt	.774	.044	.671	17.758	.000
	Selfmotivation	.160	.042	.146	3.848	.000
	Socialawareness	-.171	.038	-.125	-4.484	.000
	relationshipmanagement	.102	.074	.063	1.373	.171

a. Dependent Variable: burnout, $Y = 1.753 + -0.005 (SA) + 0.774 (SM) + 0.160(SMO) + -0.171 (SOA) + 0.102(RM)$

Data on table 1 reveal that the standardized beta coefficient of self-awareness, self-management, self-motivation, social-awareness and relationship management for the prediction of teachers' burnout syndrome is -0.005, 0.774, 0.160, -0.171, and 0.102 respectively. It also shows the sum of squares as 2944.573 and 1127.601 while mean squares are 588.915 and 2.877.

With degrees of freedom (5, 392), F-statistic value of 204.731 associated with multiple regression is significant at 0.000, when subjected to the alpha level of 0.05.

Therefore, the null hypothesis is rejected. This implies that emotional intelligence dimensions (self-awareness, self-management, self- motivation, social awareness, and relationship management) significantly jointly relate to burnout syndrome among teachers in Delta State.

Hypothesis 2: Emotional intelligence dimensions (self-awareness, self-management, self-motivation, social awareness, and relationship management) do not independently relate to burnout syndrome among teachers in Delta State.

Table 2: T-test associated with Simple Regression Analysis on the Extent to which Emotional intelligence dimensions (self-awareness, self-management, self- motivation, social awareness, and relationship management) do not independently relate to burnout syndrome among teachers

		Coefficients ^a			
		Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
Model		B	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.753		2.436	.015
	selfawareness	-.005	-.003	-.071	.943
	selfmanagemnt	.774	.671	17.758	.000
	selfmotivation	.160	.146	3.848	.000
	socialawareness	-.171	-.125	-4.484	.000
	relationshipmanageme nt	.102	.063	1.373	.171

a. Dependent Variable: burnout

Data on table 2 showed that the Beta weight and t-statistics for self-management (.671, t= 17.758, p<.05), self-motivation -.146, t= 3.848, p<.05) and social awareness (-.125, t=-4.484, p<.05) variables was found significant independently related to burnout syndrome among teachers. On the other hand, the Beta weight and t-statistics for self-awareness (-.003, t= -0.071, p>.05), and relationship management (.063, t=1.373, p>.05) was not significant and independently relate to burnout syndrome among teachers in Delta State.

Summary of Findings

1. Emotional intelligence dimensions (self-awareness, self-management, self- motivation, social awareness, and relationship management) significantly jointly relate to burnout syndrome among teachers in Delta State.
2. Self-management (.671, t= 17.758, p<.05), self-motivation -.146, t= 3.848, p<.05) and social awareness (-.125, t=-4.484, p<.05) variables was found significant independently related to burnout syndrome among teachers except self-awareness (-.003, t = -0.071, p>.05), and relationship management (.063, t=1.373, p>.05).

DISCUSSION

The findings revealed that emotional intelligence characteristics (self-awareness, self-management, self-motivation, social awareness, and relationship management) predict burnout syndrome 72.0 percent of the time. Also, emotional intelligence characteristics (self-awareness, self-management, self-motivation, social awareness, and relationship management) predict burnout syndrome in a significant way.

These findings are supported by Goleman, as cited in Alexandra (2010), who noted that appropriately handling feelings helps to build self-awareness and that people who are low in this ability are prone to feelings of distress and may shy away from performing a task assigned to them or avoid certain situations, which increases the risk of burnout, whereas those who are high on the self-awareness component of emotional intelligence are more resilient to life.

Furthermore, according to Bissoli (2007), self-management allows a person to comprehend his emotions, focus his attention, and prioritize how he will express himself in a sensible and calm manner. Self-managers are more likely to be adaptable, adapt effectively to change, manage conflict, diffuse tense or unpleasant circumstances, and are less likely to experience burnout. People who are emotionally intelligent are also motivated by factors other than simply external incentives such as fame, money, recognition, and admiration, according to Alexandra (2010). Instead, they are driven by a desire to meet their own personal demands and objectives. They are drawn to things that provide internal pleasures, such as experiencing flow from being completely immersed in an activity and pursuing peak experiences.

CONCLUSION

Teaching is one of the occupations that has been classified as the most demanding and sensitive to burnout syndrome around the world. As a result, it is critical to address the high level of teacher burnout syndrome from every possible and connected perspective in order to ameliorate the broader difficulties. Deductively, emotional intelligence such as self-awareness, self-management, self-motivation, social awareness, and relationship management all predict teacher burnout syndrome in a favorable and substantial way. As a result, these characteristics must be investigated in order to improve the Delta State school system in terms of educational quality and outcomes.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are aptly considered:

1. Teachers should be encouraged to work in teams as it will help them grow individually and professionally, by being responsive, creative and innovative.
2. School boards should recruit more professional counsellors to reduce post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) among teachers.

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