

INFLUENCE OF BURNOUT ON EMOTIONAL LABOUR AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS IN THE MAKURDI METROPOLIS

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ABSTRACT: Due to the enormous job demands of a teacher, there is bound to be emotional labour associated with the work. If properly handled it would impact positively on the lives of students and lead to better teaching and learning. This study examines the influence of burnout on emotional labour among Secondary school teachers in the Makurdi metropolis. The cross-sectional research design was employed for the study. Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI, 1983) and Emotional Labour Scales were used. Participants were selected through simple random sampling technique. The participants were made up of 237 (48.0%) males and 257(52.0%) females. The study has two main objectives, namely, to examine the influence of burnout on emotional labour among secondary school teachers in Makurdi metropolis and to explore gender differences in emotional labour among secondary school teachers in Makurdi metropolis. Multiple linear regression analysis and independent t-test were used to analyse data. Findings from the results revealed that overall burnout significantly and positively influenced emotional labour among secondary school teachers in Makurdi metropolis [$F(3,490) = 4652.728; P < .01$; Finding also revealed that there were no significant gender differences in emotional labour among secondary school teachers in Makurdi metropolis $t(df, 492) = .336; P > .05$. The study concluded that burnout is a determinant of emotional labour. The higher the level of burnout by teachers, the higher the level of emotional labour. Gender differences were not a predictor of emotional labour among teachers. The study recommended, amongst others, that the Benue State Government, through the Ministry of Education, should design policies and programmes such as training on coping strategies and an increase in motivation that would add value to teachers' welfare and productivity. More so, more teachers should be hired to complement the efforts of the existing ones to reduce heavy workloads, burnout and emotional labour. Training on coping strategies should be carried out to give teachers the resiliency training they needed to overcome psychological strain and emotional labour at work. This would increase efficiency and productivity among teachers in the state.

Keywords: Burnout, Emotional Labour, Gender Differences, Teachers, Makurdi

INTRODUCTION

The management of feelings to create a publicly observable facial and bodily display by workers has gained considerable importance in research (Hochschild, 1983; Miller & Koesten, 2008). Studies by Huihua et al. (2020) express emotional labour as an aspect of job demands that employees are required to modify their effective display while at work. Part of the reason for this renewed interest is due to the fact that emotional labour is found to have been associated with job performance, motivation and job satisfaction (Hargreaves, 1998; Ghalander & Jogh, 2012; Yang & Chen, 2020). It has been observed that teacher's emotional resources while at

work are very important. This emotional display at the workplace led to feelings of lack of authenticity and exhaustion.

According to Hochschild (1982), emotional labour is labour sold for a wage and, therefore, has exchange value. Emotional labour has, therefore, become necessary in any work environment, including teaching, because of its multidimensional constructs, such as emotional display rules (feeling rules), internal processes and emotional regulation felt and express emotions at work. The expression of emotional labour in the long term has an association with job burnout because of the high emotional and physical demands of work and the work environment. Hochschild (1983) distinguished between two ways of managing expressions and feelings: surface acting and deep acting. Surface acting refers to the expression of emotions that are not actually felt. Deep acting consists of actively inducing, suppressing or shaping the desired emotions.

Hochschild (1983) defines emotional labour as face-to-face or voice-to-voice interaction. Ashforth and Humphrey (1993) defined emotional labour as expressing socially desired emotions during service transactions. This definition implies that emotion has both positive and negative displays. They viewed the expression of genuine emotion (positive emotions as spontaneous and genuine experiences, while the negative emotions were viewed as counterproductive work behaviour among employees.

Burnout is a predictive variable of interest to this research. Burnout refers to the emotional, physical, and mental exhaustion that generally accompanies prolonged job-related stress. Three dimensions of burnout have been identified (Maslach, 1983): emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation, and personal accomplishment.

Emotional exhaustion is thought to be the most important factor in burnout. It is usually the first reaction to set in. It refers to feelings of emotional depletion and extreme tiredness in which the individual does not have the resources to cope with the emotional demands of the work (Visser & Rothmann, 2009). Schaufeli and Enzmann (1998) identified exhaustion as a core indicator of burnout. Chronic exhaustion can lead teachers to perform poorly in the act of teaching and learning to students. Emotional exhaustion could lead teachers to distance themselves emotionally and cognitively from their work so that they are less involved with or responsive to the needs of students and other people or the demands of the task (Maslach, 1998, cited in Visser & Rothmann, 2009).

Depersonalisation is the interpersonal context dimension that entails negative, callous, and cynical attitudes or excessively detached responses to the students or recipients of service and care, reducing the recipient to an impersonal object. These dimensions are generally considered to be the core symptoms of burnout (Pienaar & Sieberhagen, 2005). Depersonalisation is most times termed cynicism (Milner et al., 2007), comprises an uncaring and distant approach to work as well as a lack of enthusiasm for work and a detachment from involvement with others, resulting in coldness and disregard for others' feelings (Milner et al., 2007). Teachers who exhibit this kind of behaviour will affect students learning and performance.

Personal Accomplishment entails looking back and assessing yourself in terms of life achievement. The lack of personal accomplishment represents the self-evaluation dimension of burnout and refers to feelings of insufficiency, incompetence and lack of achievement, as well as feelings of unproductiveness (Maslach, Schaufeli, & Leiter, 2001; Pienaar & Sieberhagen, 2005). Reduced personal accomplishment refers to a diminished sense of

competence and accomplishment in one's work and a general sense of inadequacy, especially in the work setting (Pienaar & Sieberhagen, 2005). Teachers who lack personal accomplishment will lament and regret things in life that he/she is unable to accomplish, which is detrimental to academic performance among students.

Overwhelming emotional exhaustion from chronic interpersonal stress, feelings of cynicism and depersonalisation with regard to the job and clients, and a sense of ineffectiveness and lack of personal accomplishment at work (Maslach et al., 1986) would lead to emotional labour. Teachers with high levels of burnout in the form of emotional exhaustion would have high levels of emotional labour and will, in turn, negatively impact the quality of teaching and learning among students. Burnout is associated with mental health problems such as depression, anxiety, and intense stress. It is also associated with physical health problems such as lack of concentration, restiveness, and a feeling of hopelessness. Therefore, the teaching profession needs people with good emotional stability (Demerouti et al., 2008).

Statement of the Problem

Over the years, the teaching profession has suffered an influx of career movement, job turnover, absenteeism, truancy, and the like. This trend has continued unabated, and the consequence of this is poor academic performance by the students. When teachers are not well motivated with commensurate poor compensation and a poor working environment and are overburdened by workloads, they usually have high levels of burnout and emotional labour. Over the years, teachers in Makurdi metropolis have not completely been exonerated from these problems. Ultimately, many teachers are leaving their jobs due to burnout and emotional labour, which is a source of concern to researchers and the educational sector. Those leaving the profession usually complained of high emotional demands such as stress, fatigue, lack of motivation and insensitivity to issues relating to the teaching profession.

In the last few decades, there has been some progress in research in identifying some significant emotional aspects in relation to teaching and learning. Yet, little or no attention is given to the emotional demands of teachers in preparation for and in relation to their being stressed up, fatigued and depressed. In Makurdi Local Government, where this work is carried out, it is observed that teachers complained about policies and reforms enacted in education in most cases by non-professionals. This explains why most teachers are frustrated, depressed, exhausted and sometimes are faced with psychological and other health issues. In light of the above, emotional labour is influenced by teachers at various levels. Situational variables such as frequency and duration are a variety of emotional labour. They are capable of influencing the thoughts, actions and behaviour of teachers. Thus, situations are capable of dictating the kind of emotion to exhibit. This is common and typical of a teacher. In the study, emotional labour is perceived to be influenced by burnout, exhaustion, and stress on the job. These have posed a problem as to why emotional labour among teachers. It is on this background that the following objectives are born in mind.

Aim and Objectives

The aim is to examine the influence of burnout on emotional labour among teachers in the Makurdi metropolis. Specifically, the study has the following objectives:

- i. to explore the influence of burnout on emotional labour among teachers in the Makurdi metropolis.

- ii. to investigate the influence of gender differences on emotional labour among teachers in the Makurdi metropolis.

Research questions

This study sought to answer the following questions:

- i. To what extent does burnout influence emotional labour among teachers in Makurdi metropolis?
- ii. Will there be gender differences in emotional labour among teachers in the Makurdi metropolis?

Hypotheses

- i. There will be a significant influence on burnout and emotional labour among teachers in Makurdi Local Government Area.
- ii. Gender differences will have a significant influence on emotional labour among teachers in the Makurdi metropolis.

Conceptual Literature Review

Emotional Labour

A consensus regarding the definition and conceptualisation of emotional labour has yet to be reached (Bono & Vey 2005; Ye & Chen 2015). Several studies involving emotional labour have different opinions of the definition; this means that emotional labour is a multi-dimensional construct where feelings and actions work together for a common goal. According to Zhang (2013), emotional labour is showing real emotion, pretending to act, and suppressing one's mood and emotions. According to Hochschild (1983), emotional labour is defined as an "exchange value of work which is sold for a wage". It involves "the management of feelings to create a publicity observable facial and bodily display". Morgan (2024) views emotional labour as a quiet way of managing feelings. Following this assertion, many theorists believe the latter was the best definition because expressive behaviour" is what is considered "organizationally desired and is relevant" in the study of emotional labour among teachers. Wharton (2014), in the managed heart theory, revealed that emotion management is very important for workers; the way employees interact with customers or clients in a work setting matters most in enhancing productivity.

Emotions are inner feelings that people exhibit, possess, reflect on, express, and manage (Mills & Kleinman, 1988; Thoits, 1989) and (Martin, 1999). In many situations in our daily lives, we often find ourselves suppressing feelings and displaying a more socially accepted emotion that is deemed more appropriate. For example, showing excitement about a colleague's promotion or suppressing anger when being cut off by someone in a waiting line. Regulating one's emotions to comply with social norms is referred to as "emotion work" (Hochschild, 1990). Emotion work plays a vital role in the life of the organisation. Organisational aims and objectives are sometimes met simply because someone is able to suppress emotion. Emotion works, therefore, becomes crucial in many organisations, including teaching.

The emotional management perspective of emotional labour is based on the "acting" service teachers perform. Based on Goffman's (1959) dramaturgical perspective of social interactions,

Hochschild theorised that service is a show “show” where the service provider is an “actor,” the customer is the “audience,” and the work starting is the stage (Grandey 1999). The workplace (school) provides the settings and context that allow actors (teachers) to perform for the audience (students). The interactor between actors and audience is based on their mutual definitions, which can be interpreted as occupational or organisational norms or display rules.

Burnout

Scott (2006) states that burnout was first coined in 1974 by Herbert Freudenberger. Freudenberger (1974) originally defined ‘burnout’ as “the extinction of motivation or incentive, especially where one’s devotion to a cause or relationship fails to produce the desired results.” According to Schaufeli (2003), the term “burnout” was first used as a colloquial term by professionals such as poor lawyers, social workers, teachers and hospital counsellors. It was used to denote gradual energy depletion and loss of motivation and commitment that was often associated with a wide array of other physical and mental symptoms. According to Maru (2002), burnout is a condition that is on the rise among workers today and is even seen as an occupational hazard for various people-oriented professions (Maslach, 1998) as it is most commonly found among individuals who have intense contact and involvement with others during their workday (Maru, 2002). Burnout is, therefore, a common problem amongst teachers in South Nigeria. Couper (2005) states that exposure to excessive and prolonged stress is the main cause of burnout. Burnout should be distinguished from concepts such as stress, as burnout is a result of chronic, ongoing stress (Storm & Rothmann, 2003).

Theoretical Framework

Leiter and Maslach’s Model

This study is anchored on Leiter and Maslach’s Model (1988). This theory is an alternative to Golembiewski’s conceptualisation of burnout development, which is the perspective initially proposed by Leiter and Maslach (1988) and later modified by Leiter (1993). Leiter and Maslach (1998) argue that emotional exhaustion is a critical element in the burnout process. Stressors from jobs that have high interpersonal contact with clients and individuals with significant problems lead to emotional exhaustion on the part of the human service worker. This emotional exhaustion then induces depersonalisation as workers attempt to cope or deal with feelings of exhaustion. Depersonalisation is essentially a coping response that is called upon when other coping forms have not alleviated the strain experienced. When depersonalisation occurs, the individual begins to lose a sense of accomplishment on the job because the act of depersonalising clients undermines the practitioner’s values and goals. Depersonalisation explains the relationship between emotional exhaustion and reduced personal accomplishment.

The relationship between personal accomplishment and emotional exhaustion and depersonalisation may be better explained by the adequacy of resources available to the person in the work environment, such as social support and skill utilisation (Leiter, 1993). Reflecting on these findings, Leiter (1993) reformulates the relationship between personal accomplishment and other factors. He depicts depersonalisation as a direct function of emotional exhaustion and suggests that reduced personal accomplishment may develop independently of both emotional exhaustion and depersonalisation.

Dramaturgical Theory

This theory also supports this study; the dramaturgical theory of emotional labour was used as the basic theoretical explanation in studying how burnout affects emotional labour. The essence of this perspective rests on viewing employers as audiences, teachers as actors, and the workplace as theatres. Therefore, by utilising different acting techniques (surface acting, deep acting or genuine acting), teachers alter their outward appearances, behaviour or inner emotional state to control emotional expression according to situational dictates or display rules. Teachers' burnout will help them exhibit surface acting, deep acting, or genuine acting facets of emotional labour. This model emphasises the different degrees of effort teachers' burnout influence their emotional state and behaviour as different types of acting require different degrees of burnout (self-exhaustion, personal- accomplishment, depersonalisation).

Empirical Review

Burnout and Emotional labour

Choi and Kim (2015) conducted a study on the influence of emotional labour on burnout, Centred on the Stress Coping Strategy and Moderating Effect of Social Support. The study selected employees engaged in service organizations of hotels and department stores, The employees were working at five-star hotels and department stores located in Daegu, Korea. With a total participant of 333 were used for analyses. Results from the study revealed that there was a significant influence of burnout on emotional labour. organizational members with higher academic background had a higher level of emotional exhaustion and high level of emotional labour. More so, there was a high level of depersonalization of emotional labour. The results also revealed that there was a high level of personal accomplishment in emotional labour. Among the three dimensions of burnout, the study reported that emotional exhaustion was the most fundamental dimension of burnout influencing emotional labour. among organizational members. Gender differences were not significant on emotional labour among employees of the five-star hotel, in Daegu, Korea.

Fischer (2019) conducted a study on the impact of emotional labour on burnout over time: How emotional work impacts well-being in the Department of Psychological Sciences, Purdue University Indianapolis, India. The study adopted a cross-sectional survey method with 127 clinicians completing all four time points: baseline, 3 months, 6 months, and 12 months. Findings revealed that out of the two dimensions of emotional labour-surface acting and deep acting were found to be statistically significant on burnout among 127 clinicians. Surface acting was significantly associated with all three dimensions of burnout (emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and personal accomplishment. Deep acting was found to be significant with all three dimensions of burnout – emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and personal accomplishment. Thus, the study established a correlation between emotional labour and burnout.

Bouskill et al. (2022) examined burnout, its prevalence, definition, and risk factors. They revealed that burnout is prevalent in many work contexts, including the educational sector, such as secondary school teachers, due to heavy workloads.

METHOD

Research Design

The study employed the cross-sectional survey design to investigate the influence of burnout on emotional labour among teachers in Makurdi metropolis. This design is used because the study cuts across sections in the Local Government Area. Specifically, the study is a cross-section of teachers in Makurdi metropolis. The advantage of adopting this design is that it allows data collection for a large population at one point in time (Ucho, 2024).

Participants

A total number of 494 teachers in public schools participated in the study. 15 secondary school teachers were randomly selected in Makurdi Metropolis to participate in the study. The ages ranged between 25- and 58 years, with an average age of 38. The results indicated that 237(48.0%) were males while 257(52.0%) were females. In terms of educational qualification, those with SSCE/TC11 were 7(1.4%), and NCE/OND were 25 (5.1%). Also, 50 (10.1%) had HND as their qualification. 212(42.9) had a degree, while 26 (5.3%) had an MSc/PhD as their qualification.

Instruments

A questionnaire form was used as a tool for data collection. Demographic information form and two standardised instruments, namely, the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) and the Teachers Emotional Labour Scale (TELS), were used as tools for data collection. The demographic questionnaire contains personal information about the participants, such as gender, age, and educational qualification. The Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) was developed and validated by Maslach & Jackson (1981). This consists of 22 items and is on a seven-point Likert scale where responses range from '1 to 7'. The questionnaire consists of three subscales, namely, Emotional Exhaustion, depersonalisation and personal accomplishment. The emotional exhaustion subscale consists of 9 items describing feelings of being emotionally exhausted by one's work. The item with the highest factor loading (0.84 on frequency and 0.81 on intensity) refers directly to 'I feel burned out from work.' The depersonalised subscale consists of 5 items describing an unfeeling and impersonal response towards the recipient in one's care or service. Sample item is 'I have become more callous towards people since I took this job.' The personal accomplishment subscale consists of 8 items that describe feelings of competence and achievement in one's work.

In determining the scale's validity, Maslach and Jackson (1981) reported convergent validity for three subscales with high internal validity, yielding coefficients of 0.89 (emotional exhaustion), 0.81 (depersonalisation), and 0.77 (personal accomplishment) (Schaefer et al. 2001).

The reliability coefficients for the subscale were 0.89 (frequency) and 0.86 (intensity); emotional exhaustion, 0.74 (frequency) and 0.74 (intensity); and personal accomplishment, 0.77 (frequency) and 0.72 (intensity) for depersonalisation.

Teacher Emotional Labour Scale (TELS)

This scale was developed by Cukur (2009) to measure the emotional labour of teachers with an emphasis on emotional regulatory strategies during critical work events. It was a 20-item scale whose validity and reliability were tested by high school teachers. Confirmatory factor analysis results supported the four-dimensional structure of emotional labour separating surface acting, deep acting, automatic emotion regulation and emotional deviance in the current teacher's sample. Cukur provided initial evidence for the construct validity, criterion validity and internal consistency of the subscales. (ranged from .70 to .81) of teachers' emotional scale (TELS). The scale uses Likert-scale responses ranging from (1) strongly disagree to (5) strongly agree, and higher numbers indicate increasing use of related emotional labour strategies.

The 20-item emotional labour scale was subjected to reliability analysis, and a Cronbach alpha of .67 was obtained. The same Cronbach alpha of .67 was obtained for standardised items. Cronbach alpha level of the teachers' emotional labour shows that automatic emotion regulation has .63 and .83 based on standardised items; surface acting has a Cronbach alpha of .85 and .96 based on standardised items, while emotional deviance has a Cronbach alpha of .57 and .52 based on standardised items. Finally, the acting subscale of teachers' emotional labour has a Cronbach alpha reliability of .64 and .63 based on standardised items.

RESULTS

Testing of Hypotheses

In testing the research hypotheses for the study, multiple linear regression analysis and independent t-test were used, and the results were presented as follows:

Hypothesis one stated that burnout will significantly influence emotional labour among teachers in Makurdi metropolis. This hypothesis was tested using multiple linear regression analysis, and the results are presented in Table 1 below.

Table 1: Multiple linear regression summary scores showing the influence of burnout on emotional labour among teachers in Makurdi metropolis

Predictor variable	R	R ²	df	F	β	t	Sig
Constant	.894	.889	3 490	4652.728		13.113	.001**
Emotional Exhaustion					.342	9.300	.015*
Depersonalisation					.125	3.637	.001**
Personal Accomplishment					.421	113.407	.003**

**P<.01; *P<.05

The findings from Table 1 above revealed that overall burnout positively and significantly influenced emotional labour among teachers in the Makurdi metropolis [F (3, 490) =4652.728.; P<.01]. This result implies that burnout is a determinant of emotional labour. Thus, as teachers' level of burnout increases, emotional labour also increases significantly. More so, on the individual dimensions of burnout, all three dimensions – emotional exhaustion ($\beta = .342$;

$P < .01$), depersonalisation ($\beta = .125$; $P < .05$), and personal accomplishment ($\beta = .421$; $P < .01$) all positively and significantly influence emotional labour. Furthermore, results from above revealed that burnout accounted for 88.9 % ($R^2 = .889$) variance in explaining emotional labour among teachers in Makurdi metropolis. Following the results, therefore, hypothesis one was confirmed.

Hypothesis two stated that gender differences would have a significant influence on emotional labour among teachers in the Makurdi metropolis. This hypothesis was tested using an independent t-test, and results are presented in Table 2. below:

Table 2: Independent t-test summary scores showing gender differences in emotional labour among teachers in Makurdi metropolis

Predictor	Gender	N	Mean	SD	df	t	P	Remarks
Burnout	Male	237	24.12	4.966	492	.336	.737	Not Sig.
	Female	257	23.96	5.387				

$P > .05$

The results of the independent t-test indicated that there were no significant gender differences in emotional labour among teachers in Makurdi metropolis [$t(492=df) = .336$; $P > .05$]. This implies that being male or female does not account for any significant difference in terms of emotional labour among teachers in Makurdi metropolis. More so, findings from Table 2 above indicated that males had a mean difference of 24.12 and a standard deviation of 4.966. In contrast, their female counterpart had a mean difference of 23.96 and a standard deviation of 5.387. In other words, this result implies that gender differences are not a factor in emotional labour. That is, gender is not a determinant of emotional labour among teachers. Following the result, therefore, hypothesis two was not confirmed.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This study examined the influence of burnout on emotional labour among teachers in Makurdi Metropolis. Two hypotheses were set and tested using multiple regression and independent t-tests. In hypothesis one, burnout positively and significantly predicted emotional labour among teachers in Makurdi metropolis. This result is not a surprise due to the fact that teachers are going through a lot of intense stress, anxiety, and depression due to heavy workloads but poor motivation. Therefore, in that scenario, burnout is bound to happen, and emotional labour will be high as a result of poor motivation and poor workplace conditions. This result supported the work of Choi and Kim (2015), who conducted a study on the influence of emotional labour on burnout, centred on the stress coping strategy and moderating effect of social support using 333 staff of Five-Star hotels and department stores located in Daegu, Korea. Results from the study indicated that emotional labour influences or determines burnout. Staff with higher academic backgrounds had a higher level of emotional exhaustion and a high level of emotional labour. More so, the finding is in line with that of Fischer (2019), who conducted a study on the impact of emotional labour on burnout over time in the Department of Psychological Sciences, Purdue University Indianapolis, Indiana. The study reported that the two dimensions of emotional labour- surface acting and deep acting- were found to be statistically significant in terms of burnout among 127 clinicians. Surface acting was significantly associated with all

three dimensions of burnout (emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation and personal accomplishment).

The second hypothesis opined that there would be a significant gender difference in emotional labour among teachers in the Makurdi metropolis. This hypothesis was tested with the aid of an independent t-test, and the result was not significant. Thus, the results show that gender is not a contributory factor to emotional labour. Whether you are male or female, it does not account for any significant difference in terms of emotional labour. This finding is in support of the study done by Choi and Kim (2015) on the influence of emotional labour on burnout, centred on the stress coping strategy and moderating effect of social support, which reported that there were no significant gender differences in emotional labour.

Conclusion

Based on the findings of the study, it was concluded as follows:

- i. Burnout is a significant determinant of emotional labour among teachers in Makurdi metropolis. The higher the level of burnout, the higher the level of emotional labour among teachers.
- ii. Gender differences are not a predictor of emotional labour among teachers in Makurdi metropolis. Being a male or female teacher does not matter in terms of emotional labour. Both have the same feelings and attitudes towards burnout and emotional labour.

Recommendations

The study recommended as follows:

- i. Benue State Government, through the Ministry of Education, should design policies and programmes such as training on coping strategies and increase in motivation in the forms of salaries and other fringe benefits to teachers. that would add value to their welfare and productivity. This would, in turn, ease burnout and emotional labour. More so, more teachers should be hired to complement the efforts of the existing ones to reduce heavy work burdens, which result in burnout and emotional labour. If these are done, they would improve the number of teachers and increase productivity in the state.
- ii. Teachers should not be discriminated against on the basis of gender. Both males and females have equal chances of service delivery to students and equal conditions of service and other fringe benefits.

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