Emotional Intelligence and Job Satisfaction as Predictors of Burnout among Married Nurses

Ozor, Tobias Obiora and Eze, Petra Nkechinyere

Department of Psychology Faculty of the Social Sciences Enugu State University of Science and Technology (ESUT)

ABSTRACT

This study investigated the role of emotional intelligence and job satisfaction in predicting burnout among married nurses. A total of 104 participants comprising 47 married nurses from one State hospital: Parklane Teaching Hospital, Enugu and 57 married nurses from one Federal hospital: University of Nigeria Teaching Hospital (UNTH), Enugu were drawn and used for this study. They were between the age range of 24 and 60 years with mean age of 45 years. They were drawn using available sampling technique. The participants were administered a 20-item Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire, 33-item Emotional Intelligence Scale, and 22-item Maslach Burnout Inventory. Cross-sectional survey design was used for this study. Regression analysis was applied to analyze the data generated. The results showed that emotional intelligence significantly predicted burnout (β= -.28, p<.001), also, job satisfaction significantly predicted burnout (β = -.28, p<.05), among married nurses. That is, as emotional intelligence and job satisfaction of the married nurses increase, burnout decreases and vice versa. In other words, emotional intelligence and job satisfaction were observed to have negatively predicted burnout among married nurses. In view of the findings, the employers should organize forums that would educate the employees on how to develop their emotional intelligence and be able to cope with different challenges emanating from their job to avert burnout.

Keywords: Emotional intelligence, job satisfaction, married nurses, and burnout.

INTRODUCTION

Literature regarding the medical professions shows that job demands of nurses are major sources of stress which may often lead to work/family interference. As a result of interactions with patients, burnout is very likely to arise in nurses. Burnout is described as a physical, emotional, and mental exhaustion caused by long-term involvement in situations that are

emotionally demanding [1]. Although, early research work on burnout was conducted in professions related to human care and service, it is now recognized that burnout occurs in wide range of human services employee, including nurses [1].

According to them, professionals who are burnout may experience one or more of the three components of the burnout syndrome. Usually, burnout starts with a feeling of being emotionally over extended and drained by the intense contact with patients and colleagues (emotional exhaustion).

[2]pointed out that health workers whose work are very demanding and presuppose high arousal states are more susceptible to emotional exhaustion. In turn, this may lead professionals to negative, dehumanizing attitude and cynical responses toward their patients, such as loss of empathic concern (depresionalization). Finally, it may result in negative self or others' evaluation of performance and achievement in their job, poor professional self-concept and

feeling of inefficiency (reduced sense of personal accomplishment).

The health profession requires frequent interaction with patients, careful analysis of occasionally very complex health issues, high decision latitude and high psychological demands [3]. Also, as the number of nurses increases, competition in the health profession is growing, adding more pressure and stress to those working with the hospitals. Job burnout involves a long period of frustration with work, loss of motivation, lingered physical, mental and emotional exhaustion.

[4] a psychologist, who coined the term "burnout" mentioned that job burnout is a state of fatigue or frustration brought about by devotion to cause, way of life, or relationship that failed to produce the expected reward. According to [5], emotional exhaustion, depression and reduced personal accomplishment are the three dimensions of burnout. It is assumed that workers' burnout is negatively associated with satisfaction with various aspects of their job.

Job satisfaction is an attitude that people, form towards their job or work environment by taking into account their feelings, believe and behaviours, and describe the extent to which they like their job [6]. The level of job satisfaction reflects and is affected by employees' work experiences as well as their present situation and future expectation; job satisfaction is an attitude that is very sensitive to the features of the context in which it is studied. Most relevant theories consider satisfaction and dissatisfaction as the two poles of a continuum, with one increasing as the other diminishes. [7], however argued, they are independent phenomena, because the factors causing satisfaction are different from those causing dissatisfaction. Motivating factors or motivators arise from intrinsic conditions of the job itself, such as achievement, interest about the job, recognition, responsibility, advance, can lead to job satisfaction. Hygiene factors or dissatisfiers refer to extrinsic job characteristics, such as reasonable pay, security, pleasant work conditions,

supervisory practices that if they are present at one's work, prevent one from experiencing dissatisfaction [7].

According to Herzberg's dual factor motivation theory, the presence of gratifying job characteristics such as the previously mentioned motivators, can contribute to job satisfaction. Their absence, however, does appear to lead to unhappiness and job dissatisfaction. On the other hand, dissatisfaction results when a reasonable level of hygiene factor is not met.

Again, abundance of such factors does not lead to higher job satisfaction, consequently, to increase job satisfaction and motivate an employee to higher performance, factors concerned with the nature of work itself (the motivators) should be taken into account, reducing dissatisfaction entails focusing on factors concerned with the job environment [7]. According to [8], lack of job satisfaction is a predictor of quitting a job because according to him, job satisfaction is a reflection of the match between what

workers want from their job and what they actually receive.

Emotional intelligence appears to play a significant role in key organization outcomes including stress and job satisfaction. Empirical evidence suggests that certain components of emotional intelligence influence or predict job satisfaction [8]. Moreover, it is proposed that emotional intelligence has a protective effect regarding occupational stress.

Although the relationship between emotional intelligence, burnout and job satisfaction have been studied in several professions, less research has been carried out in the medical profession [9]. The present research aims at investigating the role of emotional intelligence and job satisfaction in predicting burnout among nurses. Trait emotional intelligence concerns people's self-perceptions of their own emotional abilities and skills, personality characteristics and behavioural dispositions that influence their ability to cope successfully with environmental demands and pressure,

and the construct can alternatively be labeled as trait emotional self-efficacy; it is located at the lower levels of personality hierarchies and it is measured via self-reports [9]. [10] reported that emotional intelligence is related directly or indirectly to better adjustment or success in academic personal, social or occupational setting. The same source also, reported that high emotional intelligence is associated with lower levels of anxiety and depression, occupational stress and burnout and with higher levels of job satisfaction.

Emotional intelligent individuals can cope better with life's challenges and control their emotions more efficiently [11]. Furthermore, [11] defined emotional intelligence as the ability of an individual to perceive, assess and manage emotions of his own and that of others. [12]also holds that emotional intelligence is the driving force behind the factors that affect personal success and everyday interactions with others. [13], defined emotional intelligence as the ability to monitor one's own emotions and other's

emotions, to discriminate among them and to use this information to guide one's thinking and actions.

The health profession demands that nurses, in the process of giving care, have to interact with the patients, the medical fraternity and health care workers constantly. This interaction is not just a conversation, it is a complex process that involves perception, understanding of the patient emotions and utilization of the perceptions to manage the patients' situation towards the goal of effective patient care [11].

The concept of emotional intelligence has grown in popularity among nurses over the last two decades, generating interest both at a social and professional level [14]. Available evidence portrays that in the past, there was nothing like burnout. There was adequate division of labour which helped the workers in different organizations including the health sector, to perform their functions very well. This is because during that time, women were made to handle all domestic works, and that of office work, and other businesses outside home, were for the men only. However, in recent times, women have moved out from doing only domestic works to combining it with other office works and businesses outside the home thereby generating conflict known as "Work/Family Conflict".

Therefore, as a result the problem of burnout is now a common phenomenon in different organizations, especially in human services professions. In most of these evidences, burnout has been identified as one of the major hindrances of performance among workers, of which health workers are not exempted.

Thus, the present research or study is working at variables that may increase or reduce burnout especially among nurses. Therefore, the researcher is working at role job satisfaction and emotional intelligence will play in predicting burnout. The study was burnout of the zeal to predict whether high level of emotional intelligence and job satisfaction will increase or reduce burnout among married nurses.

Therefore, the present study tends to address the following questions, such as (1) will emotional intelligence significant predict burnout among married nurses? And (2) will job satisfaction significantly predict burnout among married nurses? The main aims of this study are (1) to examine whether emotional intelligence will significantly predict burnout among married nurses and (2) whether job satisfaction will significantly predict burnout among married nurses.

The concept of burnout has been conceptualized in many different ways. However, the most cited definition is a syndrome of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization of others, and a feeling of reduced personal accomplishment. Burnout was traditionally seen as occurring solely within the "helping" professions such as nursing, however, it is now seen as a widespread issue. Some theories were also used to explain the concept, burnout such as:

Stress Appraisal Strain Coping Theory.

This theory propounded by [15] emphasized that it is not the stressor itself that causes stress but a person's perception of the stressor, and that when people are confronted with a potentially stressful event, they engage in a cognitive process that involves an evaluation of the meaning and significance of a potential stressful event and how it will affect one's well-being which can be positive or negative stress that could involve harm, threat or challenge.

Process Theory of Burnout

This theory propounded by [16] suggests that the three subsides of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and reduced sense of personal accomplishments are linked together. Emotional exhaustion which seems to be the most important of the three components which is "a chronic state of physical and emotional depletion" can result from excessive job demands and continuous hassles.

According to [17], emotional exhaustion leads to physical fatigue and sense of feeling psychologically and emotionally drained. This theory suggests that emotional exhaustion mediates the

impact of the stressors or various outcomes, and one of which is depersonalization [16]. In the sense, depersonalization is characterized by a detached and an emotional callousness. Employee at this stage of burnout will take work cool, distant attitude towards work and the people on the job [16].

Karasek Demand Control Theory

The demand control theory (DC-theory) relates to the content of work and proposed that psychological strain does not result from a single aspect of work environment, but from joint effects of the job demands placed on the worker and the discretion permitted to the workers on how to meet the demand (i.e job control). The core of the theory is set of combination of job demands and job control, resulting in different types of jobs with different effects on health and well-being of the worker [18]. However, this theory lacks merit in the sense that it is not sufficient in explaining emotional exhaustion and depersonalization in human service work. It also failed to demonstrate the predicted interaction effect of high job demands and low control measures of strain.

Though various researches have been conducted on burnout, little or no attention has been given to the influence of variables such as emotional intelligence, job satisfaction, especially from the African society.

[19] carried out a study which developed and empirically evaluated a model that delineated the process whereby clinical social workers experience burnout and job dissatisfaction in their workplaces, on the basis of an array of relevant variables as stress-strain (burnout), outcome (job satisfaction), the proposed model specified interrelationships among work stressors and burnout, the intervening factors between burnout and job satisfaction and the final outcome variable, job satisfaction. A sample of 165 clinical social workers in Florida were used in this study, and the results of analysis of components fit indicated that role conflict did intensify the amount of burnout and job dissatisfaction, also, social support acted as an intervening and

moderating factor between burnout and job dissatisfaction.

[20] analyzed the effects of burnout in a sample of social workers from Malaga, Spain. The results obtained confirmed that burnout had a negative influence on workplace. Support, job satisfaction and life satisfaction and that workplace support acts as mediator variable between burnout and job satisfaction and buffers the negative effects of burnout on job satisfaction and life satisfaction among social workers.

[21] studied the relationship between burnout and job satisfaction among two groups of nurses in Nigeria, and it was found that a relationship existed between job satisfaction and burnout as measured by the Maslach Burnout Inventory.

Among the theories reviewed in this study, Process Theory of Burnout is considered the theoretical framework of this study following its connection or link to the variables of study.

Hypotheses:

1. There will be no significant difference between married nurses who have high job satisfaction and those with low job satisfaction on manifestation of burnout.

2. There will be no significant difference between married nurses who have high emotional intelligence and those with low emotional intelligence on manifestation of burnout.

METHODS

Participants:

A total of 104 married nurses comprising 74 females and 30 males were drawn and used in this study. They were randomly drawn from one State and one Federal hospitals in Enugu State: Parklane Teaching Hospital, Enugu, 47 (13 male and 34 female) married nurses, and University of Nigeria Teaching Hospital (UNTH) Enugu, 57 (17 male and 40 female) married nurses using available sampling technique. The participants were between the ages of 24 and 60 years with the mean age of 45 years. The

participants were all married, and none of the participants had worked below 4 years.

Instrument:

Three instruments were used in the study for the collection of data. Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire (MSQ) developed by [22]. The items are scored directly by adding together the values of the numbers shaded in each of the three components.

[22] provided the psychometrics properties for American samples, while [23] provided the properties for Nigerian samples.

Scores higher than the norms indicate adequate job satisfaction in the particular components of the measure, while scores lower than the norms indicate dissatisfaction.

Emotional Intelligence Scale (EIS) developed by [24] for use in Nigeria by the researcher Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) developed by Maslach (1984), and validated for use in Nigeria by [23]. Minnesota Satisfaction Questionnaire is a 20-item questionnaire designed to examine certain prevailing situation in workplace. Three components of the fulfillment were obtained with the inventory, such as: the intrinsic satisfaction (1), extrinsic satisfaction (E) and General Satisfaction (G). The items were scored 1 – very dissatisfied, 2 – dissatisfied, 3- I am not sure, 4 – satisfied, 5 – very satisfied. Any given participant gets at least score of 30, and or a highest score of 89. It measures job satisfaction of worker's drives from his/her input into the job environment, provides him/her.

Emotional Intelligence Scale (EIS)

The Emotional Intelligence Scale (EIS) developed by [24]. This is a unidimensional scale that assesses emotional intelligence based on self report responses to 33 items tapping the appraisal; and expression of emotions in self and others, regulations of emotions in self and others, and activations of emotion in solving problems. Participants responded by indicating their agreement to each of the 33 statements using a five-point-scale ranging from strongly disagree -1, to strongly agree – 5. This

shows that the lowest score for each participant is 33, while 165 is the highest score. [21] reported a high internal consistency of the scale, reporting a Cronbach Alpha ranging from 0.87 to 0.90, and reliability coefficient of 0.93. The researcher conducted a pilot study using 100 nurses and other health personnel at Bishop Shannahan Hospital, Nsukka in Enugu State. The scale yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.79.

Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) (1984) has the purpose of assessing, burnout syndrome, mental fatigue and physical exhaustion. This 22-item inventory was designed to assess burnout syndrome (BOS), which is a state of physical emotional depletion resulting from the conditions of work. There is direct and reverse scoring systems of the items. The psychometric properties of .56 was provided by [5], while [23] provided that of Nigeria as .86.

Procedure

The researcher first asked for permission from the authorities of the hospitals visited. A total of 120 (one hundred and twenty) copies of the questionnaires were randomly administered to participants in the two hospitals to fill and submit on the spot. Out of the 120 copies administered, 100 copies were recovered. Out of the 108 copies recovered, only 104 copies were correctly filled and used for the data analysis, while the wrongly filled copies were discarded.

Design/Statistics

The design for this study was cross-sectional survey, while regression analyses were used to analyze the data generated.

RESULTS

Table 1: Descriptive statistics and inter-correlations among the study variables: Independent variables (Emotional Intelligence and Job Satisfaction) and dependent variable (Burnout). Variables

Variables	Mean	Standard Deviation	1	2	3
Burnout	53.44	9.52	1		
Emotional Intelligence	112.65	12.60	-.56	1	

Job Satisfaction	63.51	11.48	-.50	.62	1

Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2 tailed)

The correlation table reveals that the predictor variable emotional intelligence significantly correlated with burnout (r = -.56, p<.01). The second predictor variable, job satisfaction, also significantly correlated with burnout r = -.50, p<.01).

In other words, all the predictor variables (emotional intelligence and job satisfaction) showed significant negative correlation with burnout.

Table II: Summary Table of Emotional Intelligence, Job Satisfaction and Burnout

Model	R	R	Adjusted R Square	Std. error of the estimate
1	.518	.285	.267	7.42061

R square change	F change	df 1	df 2	Sig
.365	32.813	2	112	.000

The result of the regression analysis shown in table II shows that the predictor variables accounted for 36.5% (R²change)

variance on burnout which is significant (F change (2, 112) = 32.81, p<.001).

Table III: Regression coefficient Table of Emotional Intelligence and Job Satisfaction on Burnout

Model	Unstandardized Coefficient		Standardized Coefficient	t	sig
	B	Std error	Beta		
Constant	112.326	6.362		18.300	.000
Emotional Intelligence	- .282	-.382	-3.816	-3.816	.000
Job satisfaction	- .192	.075	-.281	-2.811	.023

Table III reveals that emotional intelligence significantly predicted burnout (β = -.28, p<.001), and as a result, the alternative hypothesis for emotional intelligence was accepted. Also, job

satisfaction significantly predicted burnout (β = -.28, p<.05), and as a result, the alternative hypothesis for job satisfaction was also accepted. Both predictor variables have negative

predictions of burnout. This implies that as emotional intelligence and job satisfaction of employees' increase,

burnout decreases, also as both emotional intelligence and job satisfaction of employees, decrease, burnout increases.

DISCUSSION

The result of this study show that the two hypotheses tested in relation to emotional intelligence and job satisfaction as predictors of burnout among married nurses, were accepted. The first hypothesis tested which stated that "there will be no significant difference between married nurses who have high job satisfaction and those with low job satisfaction on manifestation of burnout syndrome" was rejected. This means that significant difference was observed between married nurses who have high job satisfaction from those who have low job satisfaction on manifestation of burnout syndrome. That is, workers who are satisfied with their work environments will enjoy the job and also experience little or no burnout and vice versa. Therefore, as job satisfaction increases, burnout reduces and as job satisfaction reduces, burnout increases.

Thus, job satisfaction is negatively correlated with burnout.

Dolan (2006) agrees with this finding. Dolan carried out a similar study on nurses, and reported an inverse relationship between job satisfaction and burnout, and thus confirmed that high job satisfaction is associated with low burnout. Also, [16] study on teachers yielded similar result. It was reported that teachers' burnout was negatively associated with job satisfaction. [20] study also found that job satisfaction has a significant direct negative effect on emotional exhaustion among heath workers.

The second hypothesis which stated that "there will be no significant difference between married nurses who have high emotional intelligence and those with low emotional intelligence on manifestation of burnout syndrome" was rejected. Thus, a significant difference was observed between married nurses who have emotional intelligence and other married nurses with low emotional intelligence on

26

manifestation of burn out syndrome. This means that when an employee or worker has high emotional intelligence, the individual is able to manage his emotions and emotions of others, he or she will be able to cope with life's challenges including challenges from workplace, thus the individual will experience little or no burnout and vice versa. It was therefore observed that as emotional intelligence increases, burnout reduces and as such, emotional intelligence is negatively correlated to burnout.

[17] study on relationship between emotional intelligence and burnout among managers, indicated that emotional intelligence was significantly and negatively related to emotional exhaustion and personal accomplishment. [24] in his study also confirmed that emotional intelligence became more negatively associated with emotional exhaustion and depersonalization as introversion increased.

Implications of the findings

The outcome of this study would help to understand the nature of burnout and other factors like emotional intelligence and job satisfaction which can contribute to either increase or decrease burnout. It would serve as a usual contribution to understand the relationship between burnout and emotional intelligence, as well as the relationship between burnout and job satisfaction among married nurses.

Therefore, in view of the findings, the researcher hereby recommends that burnout can be prevented or managed in the following ways:

- The emphasises should be paid at the appropriate time and the job should worth the salary they are being paid in order to make them satisfied with their job so that burnout will not manifest.

- The employers should also organize forums and lectures that would possibly educate the employees in order to develop their emotional intelligence and be able to cope with different challenges to avert burnout.

- The employers should make the work environment comfortable for the employees so that work will be done smoothly and less burn out will be experienced because when the

employees are comfortable, they will be satisfied with their job.

- Finally, the employees should also undergo training programmes which will help them develop emotional intelligence and be able to manage their emotions and emotions of others.

Application of the above recommendations will go a long way in helping to reduce or prevent burnout among married nurses.

In summary, the result of this study showed that both job satisfaction and emotional intelligence have negative relationship with burnout syndrome among married nurses.

Conclusively, the findings of this study showed that emotional intelligence and job satisfaction are significant predictors of burnout among married nurses. This is because, emotional intelligence and job satisfaction were observed to correlate negatively with burnout among married nurses

REFERENCES

1. Pine, A. C. and Aronson, H. (2012). Stress and job satisfaction: A study of Cosoa Farmers. *Journal of Occupational Psychology,* 12, 11 – 17.
2. Brown, S. and Brien, F. B. (2001). Emotional intelligence as a standard intelligence. *Personality and Individual Differences,* 2, 32 – 42.
3. Anne, J. N. (2004). *Stress Appraised aid Coping,* New York: Springer.
4. Herbert 91973). Relationship between emotional intelligence and job attitudes: *Journal ofManagement Psychology, 12*, 88 – 98.
5. Maslach, C. (1984). *Maslach Burnout Inventory Manuel.* CA: Consulting Psychologist Press.
6. Specter, P. E. (1997). *Job Satisfaction: Application, Assessment, Causes and Consequences.*Thousand Oaks CA: Sage Publications Inc.
7. Herzberg, F. (1987). *Work and Nature of Man.* Cleveland: World Publishing Co.
8. Alexander, C. and Hellmann, H. (1992). Job Satisfaction as a determinant of employee's job commitment. *Journal of Organizational Analysis, 2,* 217-229.
9. Petrides, M. and Pita, O. (2011). Relationship between emotional intelligence and self-efficacy. *Annual Review, 4,* 273 – 288.
10. Zeider, H and Robert, N (2006). Role of emotional intelligence in self control. *Journal of Annual Review, 5,* 72 – 85
11. Sharma, R. (2011). Role of emotional intelligence competencies in mental well-being. *Journal of Business Perspectives, 15, (2),* 177 – 191.

12. Shutte, D. C. (1998). Role of emotional intelligence in the management of stress. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 5, (6), 271 – 289.

13. Salovey, B. (1990). *Emotional intelligence: A trait factor*. NY./CA: Balon Publishing Inc.

14. Dawn, H. (2004). *Work and Motivation*. New York: USA. Wale Publishing Inc.

15. Lazarus, R. L. and Folkman, S. (1984). *Stress Coping Strategies and Management*. New York. Spring Publishing.

16. Leiter, M. 91991). Burn out and personality factor space. *Journal of Clinical Psychology, 3,* (2), 72 – 89.

17. Zehar, N. (1997). Role of emotional intelligence in workers' attitude toward their jobs. Seminar paper presented in the annual congress of clinicians, Uganda.

18. Karasek, J. and Theorell, H. (2016). Work demands and the use of emotional intelligence *Journal of Management Review,* 3, 27 – 32.

19. Harrison, F. M. and Young, J. I. (2015). Role of Stress in work role output. *Journal of Human Resources Management,7,(6)* 212 – 221.

20. Cosano-Rivas, I. (2013). Stress, a bane of job satisfaction. *Journal of Clinical Psychology, 24 (7),* 217– 228.

21. Dolan, J. (2006). Deconstructing job satisfaction: Evaluation and affective experiences. *Human Resources Management Review,* 10, (3), 73-94.

22. Weiss, J. I., Davis, H. C. & England, M. (2014). Relationship between job stress and work overload. *Journal of Organizational Analysis, 4,* (5), 312 – 322.

23. Mogaji, A. (1997). Emotional Intelligence: A standard for intelligence. *Journal of Personality Psychology,* 3, (2), 73 – 87.

24. Golden, F. and Donheim, P. (1998). *Emotional Intelligence Scale Manual,* New York. US Publishing Coy.