

Predictive Roles of Gender, Self-Efficacy, and Work Experience on Job Burnout among Selected Basic School Teachers in Ogbomoso Metropolis

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ABSTRACT

Job burnout is one of the most serious workplace challenges. Meanwhile, studies focusing on the interplay between socio-demographics, self-efficacy, and job burnout are insufficient, particularly in Nigeria. This study aimed to examine whether self-efficacy, gender, and work experience determine job burnout among school teachers in Ogbomoso, Oyo State, Nigeria. A Cross-sectional design was employed, utilizing questionnaires for data collection. A multistage sampling and convenience sampling technique was used to sample 1,725 teachers in 102 selected schools across the five local government areas of Ogbomoso. Data were collected using the Teachers' Self-Efficacy Scale and the Maslach Burnout Inventory—Teachers' Survey (MBI-ES). The analysis showed no significant gender difference in job burnout among the selected teachers in Ogbomoso metropolis. However, a significant difference was found in job burnout based on years of work experience $F(2,1723) = 6.234$ $p < .05$, with teachers in the 1–7 year category exhibiting significantly higher burnout scores than other groups. Self-efficacy was found to significantly and negatively predict job burnout among the selected teachers ($R = -.479$, $R^2 = .576$ $F = 14.573$; $p < .05$). The study concludes that higher levels of self-efficacy are associated with lower levels of job burnout among school teachers. Teachers with 1–7 years of work experience are particularly susceptible to higher burnout levels. Recognizing the negative predictive role of self-efficacy on job burnout, interventions aimed at enhancing self-efficacy are recommended to mitigate burnout risks. The research recommends that policy makers should prioritize new teachers' self-efficacy training to reduce the job burnout.

Keywords: Job Stress, Educators, Sex, Self-Efficacy, Year of Work Experience

INTRODUCTION

Teachers in basic educational institutions play a crucial role in shaping the educational foundation of every country globally. While they may not be universally recognized as the essential pillars of education, they are still vital to the process of imparting knowledge and skills to students. As a result, an international organization has called for a major transformation in education to repair past injustices and enhance the capacity to act together for a more sustainable and just future (United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization) (UNESCO, 2023). Teachers at basic levels shape children's conceptual development through their services therefore, to ensure that all learners have unhindered access to and participation in education, these population of teachers must be put to a safe and healthy condition as care service personnel within school settings (National Association for the Education of Young Children, 2022).

The teaching profession in Nigeria is demanding due to the presence of numerous job-related stressors (Ajao, 2024). A study showed that, stressors typically arise from the working environment associated with the profession (Olatunji et al., 2021). The teaching profession is very susceptible to both stress and burnout, making it one of the most vulnerable professions in this regard (Williams, 2011). The distressing condition within educational institutions inevitably impacts the learning process, leading to a decline in the performance of teachers and a sense of inability to meet students' requirements. For instance, studies showed that teachers experience symptoms of depression, feelings of hopelessness, disappointment, and a complete sense of helplessness (Adekola, 2010; Aguwa EN, 2015; Chen et al., 2020). Bauer et al. (2005) identified burnout as a leading cause for teachers opting for early retirement due to high levels of stress, extreme fatigue, and depression. Teachers are considered to be a demographic at high risk for burnout because of their frequent and ongoing interactions with individuals such as students, parents, and administrators (Fernet et al., 2010).

The concept of burnout is termed to be a state of physical, emotional, and mental weariness that arises from prolonged engagement in a work environment characterized by high emotional demands (Leiter & Maslach, 2016). Burnout is also defined as a reaction to persistent interpersonal pressures in the workplace, characterized by extreme weariness, cynicism, alienation from work, and a feeling of ineffectiveness and lack of achievement (Leiter & Maslach, 2016). Burnout, also known as job burnout syndrome, is defined as a protracted state of emotional exhaustion characterized by diminished motivation and expectations, resulting in a sense of inadequacy that impacts personal, professional, and social aspects of one's life.

Teachers' burnout has received significant attention in the educational sector, as evidenced by the extensive research conducted by Nayernia & Babayan (2019). This outcome is somewhat foreseeable due to the multitude of stresses and pressures that teachers encounter (McCarthy et al., 2016). Teacher burnout has been associated with reduced work capacity, absenteeism, and ultimately, students' poor academic achievement (Chang, 2009). Teacher burnout significantly impacts teacher effectiveness and contributes to a shortage of highly trained teachers (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2020). Burnout occurs most times as a result of prolonged stress in the workplace or emotional strain related to one's employment (Schwarzer & Hallum, 2008). It has gained significance in recent years due to its correlation with reduced productivity, employee turnover, frequent absences, emotional disengagement, and waning enthusiasm in work (Tikkanen et al., 2022). The challenge of burnout can have significant negative implications for education, potentially affecting student achievement and performance, as well as the health and well-being of teachers. Teachers in the higher education context are susceptible to burnout due to various factors, including bureaucracy, publishing demands, financing concerns, changes in teaching methods, interpersonal connections, and contract insecurity (Filha & Morais, 2018).

In addition to the environmental elements that contribute to burnout, it is also necessary to examine individual characteristics that operate as valuable resources in enabling coping. Some of these personal characteristics are locus of control, optimism, and self-efficacy (Alarcon et al., 2009). Teachers' self-efficacy refers to the assessments teachers make on their competence in teaching, conducting research, fulfilling extension assignments, and performing management activities at a level that meets their institution's requirements (Fischer et al.,

2020). Self-efficacy beliefs have a significant impact on various aspects of human behaviour, such as establishing objectives, the choice of suitable locations, the determination of actions to attain objectives, and even the degrees of physiological arousal experienced in stressful situations (Bandura, 2011). Hence, self-efficacy has a direct impact on the teachers and overall well-being. Self-efficacy is a crucial factor in predicting the level of effort, persistence, and resilience that an individual would demonstrate when faced with a particular activity. According to Ojewumi et al. (2018), a stronger sense of efficacy leads to increased effort, tenacity, and resilience. Self efficacy pertains to a person's ideas regarding their ability to learn or perform activities at specific levels. It is believed to exert influence over a person's thoughts, emotions, and actions (Llorca-Pellicer et al., 2021). Within the field of education, numerous researches have linked self-efficacy to teacher burnout, suggesting that it has a protective function in maintaining good health (García & Gambarte, 2020; Llorca-Pellicer et al., 2021). Burnout is a commonly studied consequence of workplace stress, and self-efficacy is thought to shield workers from negative job stress outcomes by influencing their beliefs (Shoji et al., 2015).

Empirical research has shown that an intervention aimed at increasing self-efficacy resulted in a decrease in employees' tension, as evidenced by studies conducted by Unsworth & Mason (2012). According to Brown (2012) self-efficacy beliefs are important cognitive factors that can help workers mitigate the adverse effects of workplace stress. In their study, Ghasemzadeh et al. (2019) discovered a significant correlation between self-efficacy and teacher burnout in Iranian educational settings. The inverse correlation between self-efficacy and burnout is conceptually predictable, as burnout can be seen as a result of a failure to cope with environmental demands and the demands of workload. People with high self-efficacy beliefs are better equipped to handle work-related challenges. Teachers who possess a stronger sense of self-efficacy than their peers tend to experience greater fulfilment and satisfaction in their work (Morris et al., 2017). Additionally, they are less likely to experience exhaustion and depersonalization.

Multiple studies have examined the correlation between burnout and self-efficacy, utilizing assessments of overall self-efficacy (Alarcon et al., 2009; Shoji et al., 2015). The aforementioned research demonstrated that persons who had greater self-efficacy beliefs in their capacity to regulate negative emotions have reduced levels of negative affect, anxiety, and depression (Alessandri et al., 2018). Matos et al. (2022) discovered that over 33% of lecturers in their research conducted in Brazil displayed signs of burnout. In the United States, this percentage rose to a staggering 40% (Ender et al., 2018). Burnout is also associated with a decline in the reported standard of work and has a substantial adverse effect on teachers' overall quality of life and contentment with their health (Ender et al., 2018). This paper presents a comprehensive analysis of the evidence regarding the connections between burnout and self-efficacy.

Furthermore, researchers have investigated the impact of several demographic characteristics on teacher burnout. Gillani et al. (2022) discovered a noteworthy association between personalized factors such as gender, years of experience, marital status, and burnout. Jamaludin & You (2019) found that there were strong correlations between experience, educational level, and emotional weariness, depersonalization, and diminished personal performance in both males and females. Several research have examined the correlation

between teacher burnout, a negative emotional state, and teachers' positive emotions, including self-efficacy, wellbeing, and resilience. In a study conducted by Sak (2018), it was found that male teachers exhibit greater degrees of organizational distrust and burnout determined by emotional weariness, depersonalization, and individual accomplishments.

The current study underscores the critical yet often underappreciated role of teachers, particularly those in early childhood education cadre, as indispensable contributors to the foundational structure of education on a global scale. Despite not receiving universal recognition as the fundamental pillars of nation-building, teachers, especially in primary and nursery schools, bear the unique responsibility of shaping the educational journey of young students. Recognizing the need to prioritize the well-being of early childhood teachers, it becomes imperative to establish research-based policies aimed at elucidating and addressing the array of emotional challenges such as burn out faced by professionals in this vital sector (Grassini, 2023). The purpose of this study is to explore the influence of gender, work experience, and self-efficacy on burnout among nursery and primary school teachers. To achieve this, the researchers developed three guiding hypotheses. The first hypothesis proposes that there will be a gender-based difference in the levels of burnout experienced by the selected teachers in Ogbomosho metropolis. The second hypothesis suggests that years of work experience will have a significant effect on job burnout among these teachers. Lastly, the third hypothesis posits that self-efficacy will serve as a significant predictor of burnout among the selected school teachers in the area.

METHODS OF RESEARCH

Design, Population and Setting

This study employed a descriptive survey design, utilizing questionnaires as the primary data collection tool. The study purposefully focused on teachers in selected nursery and primary schools. This target population consists of teachers from basic schools across the five local governments in Ogbomosho North, Ogbomosho South, Orire, Surulere, and Ogo-Oluwa, situated in Ogbomosho, Oyo State, Nigeria.

Sampling Technique

A multistage sampling technique was implemented. At first, stratified sampling technique was used to identify 102 secondary schools from the five local government areas in Ogbomosho. Secondly, convenience sampling technique was used to collect data from a cohort of 1,725 nursery and primary school teachers who completed the administered questionnaire.

Instruments

The instrument consists of the participant's socio-demographic information and Teachers' Self-Efficacy Scale (Caprara et al., 2008), and Maslach Burnout Inventory–Educators' Survey (Maslach et al., 1997). The following are the details of the scales:

The Teachers' Self-Efficacy Scale (TSES) is a 12-item scale developed to assess teachers' self-efficacy (Caprara et al., 2008). It consists of a 7-point Likert response format ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 7 (strongly agree). A sample item is: "In my role as a teacher, I possess the ability to receive acknowledgment and gratitude from my students." The scale has been used and validated in various studies to assess the self-efficacy of teachers in different

countries, including Nigeria (Barni et al., 2019; Okoro et al., 2022). We calculated a single mean index to assess teachers' confidence in their capacity to proficiently manage a range of activities, responsibilities, and obstacles associated with their professional role. For this study, an internal reliability coefficient of 0.82 was reported.

The Maslach Burnout Inventory–Educators' Survey (MBI-ES) 22-item scale is structured around three dimensions: personal accomplishment/professional efficacy (PE), depersonalization (DE) or cynicism (CY), and emotional exhaustion (EE) (Maslach & Jackson, 1979). This scale includes items such as "I experience emotional exhaustion from my work," "I question the importance of my work due to depersonalization and cynicism," and "I consider myself proficient in my job" (pertaining to personal efficacy). Respondents rate each item on a seven-point scale, ranging from zero (indicating never) to six (indicating daily or every day). Burnout is identified by high scores on EE and CY/DE, coupled with low scores on personal accomplishment (PA) (with PA items evaluated in the opposite direction) as suggested by Maslach et al. (1997). In Nigerian research, the MBI-GS has been utilized and validated (Ozoemena et al., 2021). Teachers were considered to be experiencing exhaustion if their scores reached at least 24 points on EE, 9 points on CY/DE, or 19 points on PA. Participants were then categorized as either "with burnout" or "without burnout" based on the cut-off points established for the EE and DE scales. The alpha coefficients for the overall scale was 0.81 and the EE, CY, and PA subscales of Cronbach were 0.53, 0.52, and 0.94, respectively.

Procedure

After receiving official approval, the researcher trained four research assistants for the instrument administration, so the researchers trained four research assistants on the essence and ethical issues guiding the study. At first, introductions were normally made and the study's purpose was explained to potential participants. The volunteers were provided with questionnaires, informed about the study, and encouraged to lead the researchers to others willing to participate.

Ethical Considerations

The research strictly adheres to ethical standards established for psychological research and evaluation, aligning with the foundational principles outlined in the ethics code of the International Review Board and pertinent local regulations. These principles encompass obtaining informed consent and providing participants with essential information, safeguarding personal data, and ensuring confidentiality. It is crucial to note that the information and data collected were exclusively used for research purposes, reinforcing the commitment to ethical research practices.

Data Analysis

The data was analyzed using descriptive statistics such as the mean, standard deviation, and frequency for the demographic data of the participants. The T-test for independent samples, linear regression and One-way ANOVA were used to test the formulated hypothesis using.

Demographic Characteristics of Participants

The descriptive statistics, presented in Table 1, illustrate the demographic composition of the study participants. The male respondents accounted for 899 (52%), while females constituted 826 (48%). Regarding age distribution, 752 (44%) of the teachers were below the age of 30, and 973 (56%) were aged 30 and above. In terms of religion, participants indicated that 873 (50%) identified as Christians, 847 (49.5%) as Muslims, and 2 (0.5%) selected other religions. Additionally, with respect to ethnicity, 1680 (98%) identified as Yorubas, 28 (1.3%) as Igbos, and 17 (.7%) as Hausas (see Table 1).

Table 1 Socio-demographic Characteristics of Respondents (n= 1725)

Variables	Frequency	Percent(%)
Gender		
Male	899	52%
Female	826	48%
Age		
Less than 30	752	44%
30 and above	973	56%
Religion		
Christianity	873	50%
Islam	847	49.5%
Others	5	0.5%
Tribe		
Yoruba	1680	97%
Igbo	28	2%
Hausa	17	1%

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Statistical Analysis

Hypothesis One

There will be a gender difference in the measure of burnout among the selected school teachers in Ogbomoso metropolis.

Table 2 Independent t-test showing the difference in burnout between male and female teachers

	Gender	N	Mean	SD	df	t	p
Burnout	Male	899	25.36	6.04	1723	13.021	0.61
	Female	826	24.83	5.76			

The results in Table 2.0 shows that there was no significant gender difference in burnout among the selected school teachers in Ogbomoso metropolis ($t(1723) = 13.021, p > .05$). Male teachers had ($M = 25.36; SD = 6.04$) in burnout while female teachers had ($M = 24.83; SD = 5.76$). Therefore, the hypothesis is rejected for this study.

This aligns with previous studies by Olatunji et al. (2021), which also found no discernible gender differences in job burnout. However, contrasting results, such as those from Al Asadi et al. (2018), indicated higher burnout scores among males. Despite conflicting findings on gender differences, the consistent prevalence of burnout in the human services and social welfare professions was acknowledged. Considering the indifference in the prevalence

between male and female, this result implies that the two genders report burnout at almost the same rate.

Hypothesis Two

There will be significant difference of years of work experience on job burnout among the selected school teachers in Ogbomoso metropolis.

Table 3 One One-way ANOVA showing significant difference of years of work experience on job burnout among the selected school teachers in Ogbomoso metropolis

Groups	SS	df	MS	F	p
Between groups	6203.363121281.056	2	3101.69	6.234	.03
Within groups	127484.419	1723	368.6		
Total		1725			

Note: SS=Sums of squares while MS= Mean squares

As shown in table 3 above, a one-way ANOVA conducted to test whether there was a statistically significant difference in job burnout regarding the years of work experience of the teacher. The results of the ANOVA showed a significant difference between years of work experience (1-7years, 8-14years and 15 and above years) on job burnout $F(2, 1723) = 6.234, p < .05$.

This corroborates the findings of Al Asadi et al. (2018), Singh et al. (2015), and Amini Faskhodi & Siyyari (2018), showing that younger and less experienced teachers exhibited higher burnout rates. In contrast, Turtulla (2017) and Thomas et al. (2012) reported inconclusive results on the impact of experience on burnout levels. The study observed that teachers with 1–7 years of experience reported higher burnout, emphasizing the potential influence of early-career challenges associated with settling in a new work environment. Therefore, the job demand and the need to cope with it is associated with the high level of burnout among this category of people.

Table 4 Showing the summary of Tukey post hoc test on different years of work experience on job burnout among the selected school teachers in Ogbomoso metropolis

Groups	1	2	3	X	SD	N
1-7years	-			40.1	17.2	460
8-14years	11.81*	-		30.3	14.5	544
15 and above years	03.74	04.33*	-	28.2	13.8	721

Note: ** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$.

A further post hoc comparisons in table 4 with the Tukey HSD as presented in table 7 showed that teachers in 1-7 years of work experience ($M=40.1$ $SD= 17.2$) has significantly higher score on job burnout than both teachers on 8-14 years of work experience ($M=30.3$ $SD= 14.5$) and teachers on 15 and above years of work experience ($M=28.2$ $SD= 13.8$). Teachers on 8-14 years of work experience and teachers on 15 and above years of work experience are not significantly different from each other. Therefore, the hypothesis was confirmed and accepted.

Hypothesis Three

Self efficacy will significantly predict burnout among the selected school teachers in Ogbomoso metropolis.

Table 5 A Summary Table of Simple Linear Regression Showing prediction of self efficacy on burnout among selected school teachers in Ogbomoso metropolis

Variables	R	R ²	F	Sig.	Beta	t	p
Self efficacy	- .479	.576	14.573	.000	.689	7.192	<.05

Dependent variable: Burnout

The results in Table 5 showed that self efficacy has 57% significant prediction on burnout among the selected school teachers in Ogbomoso metropolis ($R = -.479$, $R^2 = .576$, $F = 14.573$; $p < .05$). Similarly, the analysis of the independent prediction showed that self efficacy has a significant prediction on burnout among the selected school teachers in Ogbomoso metropolis ($\beta = .689$, $t = 7.192$, $p < .05$). The research hypothesis is therefore accepted for this study.

This aligns with studies by Bing et al. (2022), Weißenfels et al. (2021), Smetackova (2017), and Nassani et al. (2021), indicating a negative correlation between self-efficacy and burnout. The study affirms that teachers with higher self-efficacy are less prone to burnout, emphasizing the importance of self-efficacy in mitigating workplace stress. This shows that people with a high level of self-efficacy perform better while bouncing back from stressful events at the workplace, which prevents the organization from inefficiency as a result of burnout among workers.

To further examine the role of self-efficacy, this construct was measured in the present study using the Teacher Self-Efficacy Scale (TSES) developed by Caprara et al. (2008), which encompasses three primary dimensions: Positive Affect (POS), Despondency/Distress (DES), and Anger/Irritation Affects (ANG). Table 6 below presents the descriptive statistics that illustrate the distribution of scores across each dimension, thereby facilitating the identification of the most dominant dimension and enriching the overall findings of the study.

Tabel 6 Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Personal Accomplishment	1725	21.00	50.00	34.9266	5.52449
Depersonalization	1725	11.00	35.00	27.1367	5.81714
Emotional Exhaustion	1725	16.00	56.00	43.4456	6.94130

The Emotional Exhaustion dimension recorded the highest average score, indicating that emotional exhaustion is the most prominent aspect of burnout among teachers in this study. Conversely, Personal Accomplishment showed a lower average score, suggesting that most teachers still feel satisfied with their achievements despite facing emotional challenges. These findings highlight the importance of interventions focused on managing emotional exhaustion to enhance teachers' well-being and work effectiveness. This data provides additional context to support the hypothesis that self-efficacy plays a significant role in influencing burnout levels.

CONCLUSIONS

The study concludes that teachers' self-efficacy negatively predicts burnout, highlighting an inverse relationship between self-efficacy levels and burnout. Teachers with 1–

7 years of experience exhibited higher burnout, emphasizing the need for targeted support during the early stages of their careers. No significant gender differences in burnout were found. To mitigate burnout, human resources should regularly assess employees' self-efficacy, and school management should actively bolster this trait through various interventions. Given the study's findings, it is recommended to implement self-improvement courses during the first training orientations activities to enhance self-efficacy among school teachers. Administrative authorities should promote self-care programs to mitigate burnout symptoms.

The study's limitations include concerns on reliance on self-report measures, a cross-sectional design, and a focus which is prone to bias. Also, cultural context and potential social desirability bias may impact generalizability of a study like this. However, future research should explore additional approaches to measuring and enhancing self-efficacy, utilizing both qualitative and quantitative methodologies. It is also recommended to conduct research in larger geographical regions sample for more universally applicable conclusions. Future study may utilize longitudinal designs, explore additional demographic variables, incorporate qualitative methods, and consider broader cultural contexts to enhance the understanding of teacher burnout and self-efficacy.

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