EMPLOYEE SELF-CARE, OCCUPATIONAL STRESS AND BURNOUT OF SECURITY PERSONNEL

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Abstract
This study interrogated the relationships that exist between self-care practices, occupational stress and employees' burnout amongst security personnel, using Lagos State University, as a reference point. The study utilised the cross-sectional approach of the survey research design, and the convenience sampling technique was adopted to select 118 security personnel for final analyses. Founded on extant literatures, three research hypotheses were stated and tested using the Person’s Product Moment Correlation Coefficient (PPMC), and the Multiple Regression. Whilst one research question was raised and explained using the line graph. The results of the tested hypotheses revealed a significant relationship between self-care practices and burnout. Also, a significant relationship was established between occupational stress and burnout of selected security personnel. While a significant influence of both self-care practices and occupational stress on employees’ burnout was established with an adjusted \(R^2\) of 0.18, which presupposes that 18% of the variance in security’s burnout was as a result of self-care practices and employee stress. Also, it was established through a FSB (fasting blood sugar) test that, there exist variations in the sugar level of security personnel. Consequently, this study concludes that security personnel should ensure they draw up workplace stressors, and acquaint themselves with relevant coping strategies to lessening the stressors. Also, the University Management through its security unit should create an enabling working environment, suitable and flexible work-duty schedules, an employees’ wellness programme, and an appropriate stress reduction awareness.

Keywords: self-care, occupational stress, burnout, university, security

Introduction
Extant literatures of organisational behaviour and occupational health (Bridgeman, Bridgeman, & Barone, 2018; Maslach & Leiter, 1997; Moss, Good, Gozal, Kleinpell, & Sessler, 2016; Noworol, Żarczyński, Fafrowicz, & Marek, 2017; Santos, Sousa, Gonçalves, & Sousa, 2022) suggest that, the declivity in employee’s quality and quantity of work physiologically and psychologically can be said to be an offshoot of burnout. Burnout denote the feelings of being over stretched and washed-out of one’s emotional and physical wherewithal (Santos et al., 2022). For instance, Maslach and Leiter (1997) indicate that the physical indicia of burnout include hypertension, long-lasting feelings of
tiredness, headaches, stomach problems and muscle stiffness. Furthermore, mental health stressors could include sleep disorder and depression, and could also be viewed as symptoms of burnout. These identified symptoms are regularly complained by security personnel (Keinan & Malach-Pines, 2007), which if not nipped in the bud could degenerate to other life-threatening glitches for the employees, and might lead to excessive cost implications for the organisation(s). Kim, Youngs and Frank (2017) note that burnout syndrome prevails among professionals who work in domains of human services (i.e. security personnel working in University campuses), as these persons frequently put the requests of the clientele above their own needs. Thus, these altruism act(s) could lead to excessive occupational stresses on the one hand, and the lack of care for the self which could culminate into employees’ burnout on the other.

Employee self-care refers to sufficient caring by an individual for himself or herself (Underdown, McCabe & McCabe, 2022). Also, self-care could be said to be the array of health-linked decisions and care embark upon by people for their own sake (Fiske, Buyx & Prainsack, 2020). Self-care practices improve employees’ wellbeing (Richards, Campenni, & Muse-Burke, 2010), and might be seen as a precursor to employee’s burnout if it is taken with flippancy. Self-care practices include eating healthy food, using prescribed medication(s) timely, exercising the body and mind regularly, wearing clean clothes, living hygienically and engaging in routine medical check-ups. To this end, if security personnel fail to engage in an adequate self-care practice, there are tendencies that they may begin to experience an emotional, physical and mental enervation triggered by long term involvement in situations that are fervently demanding and very stressful. Thus, these stressors could have serious implications on their health, and consequently, the lives and properties they safeguard.

In the same vein, occupational stress can be said to be an activity that set into action when demands in the work milieu overstretch or surpass an employee’s resources (Said & El-Shafei, 2021). This presupposes that when security personnel are overstretched on the job (i.e. working 24 hours or engaging in a long-time compressed work hours), they might begin to experience occupational stress. Thus, occupational stress now carries within it, an unkind emotional experience connected with components of anxiety, fear, nervousness, frustration, annoyance, unhappiness, heartache, and hopelessness (LePine, Zhang, Crawford & Rich, 2016), which might culminate into employee’s burnout on the job.

Based on the forgoing line of reasoning, this study opines that employees’ stress if well managed among university security personnel might lead to the brandishing of a healthy employees by the University, and if not, they become unhealthy and as such, it might lead to burnout. Also, if employees’ self-care is encouraged, it might have a positive and significant reduction of employees’ burnout, and thus, go on to igniting a healthy workplace dogma in the University. The current study therefore, examines the interplay between employees’ self-care, occupational stress and burnout drawing research samples from a public University in South-West, Nigeria. Furthermore, there is a dearth of literature that interrogates self-care, occupational stress and burnout within the Nigerian context. Subsequently, this study sets out to fill this identified research gaps by contributing to growing literatures in the areas of organisational behaviour, human resource management and occupational health/medicine.
Theoretical Framework and Hypotheses Development

In interrogating the relationship that exist between the variables of contention, this study is hinged on the theory of burnout (Maslach, Jackson, & Leiter, 1996). The theory holds that when certain stressors have over-stretched the capability of an individual, the individual might develop a declivity in his/her physiological and psychological capabilities. To this end, Previous studies have been done to establish the significance of self-care to the reduction of occupational stress(es) and subsequently, employees’ burnout in the helping professions (Alexander, Rollins, Walker, Wong, & Pennings, 2015; Alkema, Linton, & Davies, 2008; Chacksfield, 2002; Henson, 2018; Hotchkiss, 2018; Lewis, & King, 2019; Lloyd & Campion, 2017; Richards, Campenni, & Muse-Burke, 2010; Sansbury, Graves, & Scott, 2015; Sansó, Galiana, Oliver, Pascual, Sinclair, & Benito, 2015), why rare studies exists using security personnel as a point of reference.

For instance, Alkema, Linton and Davies (2008) examined the relationship between self-care, compassion fatigue, burnout, and compassion satisfaction among 37 hospice care professionals (HCPs), and found that significant negative correlations existed between burnout and all aspects of self-care. As described feelings of burnout increased, self-care activities in all spheres decreased. Also, Chacksfield (2002) in his study observed that lack of self-care caused burnout and vicarious traumatisation. Very recently, Lewis and King (2019) found that incorporating self-care skills, practises and stratagems into daily social work practice becomes crucial to prevent compassion fatigue, burnout, and vicarious trauma among field social work practicum students. Furthermore, a recent study by Papaefstathiou, Tsounis, Papaefstathiou, Malliarou, Sergentanis and Sarafis (2019), found a significant relationship between occupational stress and burnout of Greek medical residents. Also, a growing strand of literature have been trying to interrogate the view that a high level of glucose (diabetes) can serve as a trigger of employees’ burnout. Thus, this study raised the following research hypotheses and research question that:

1. There is a significant relationship between self-care practices and burnout of security personnel.
2. There is a significant relationship between security personnel reported occupational stress and burnout?
3. There is a significant influence of self-care practices and occupational stress on burnout of security personnel in the University?
4. Can burnout be triggered by the level of glucose in security personnel’s blood?

Methodology

Samples and Procedures

This research employed the descriptive survey research design and, utilised its cross-sectional technique. In the course of this study, data were collected from the respondents at Lagos State University, located in South-Western Nigeria. The justification for using selecting this University is premised on the fact that access to site was granted for the research to be conducted, while other Universities did not respond to the series of letters that was written to them. Prior to the data collection, an approval was sought and gotten by the researchers from the Management of the Lagos State University. Rather than sampling, the study utilised the census enumeration technique by administering the research instrument to the entire population of the study which is two hundred and
thirteen (213) as at the time of this research. Of the two hundred and thirteen (213) copies of
questionnaires distributed, 127 (59.6%) copies were retrieved, and 118 (55.4%) copies of the
questionnaires were found fit and used for analyses. In the same vein, the data that was used to
answer the research question were collected from respondents using glucometer and glucometer
strips to measure their glucose level.

Measures
This study adapted three existing scales, and participants gave responses to the measures using the 5-
point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree 1 to strongly agree 5. Self-care practices variable
was measured using a 20-item professional self-care scale (PSS) developed by Dorociak, Rupert,
Bryant, and Zahniser (2017). The researchers submitted that the instrument yielded a reliable index
which is above the benchmark of .70. Furthermore, in the context of this study, the instrument
produced α=.88 As a result, it can be established that the measure is a reliable instrument. Also,
occupational stress of university personnel was measured with a 9-item scale of the perceived stress
scale (PSS), developed by Cohen, Kamarck and Mermelstein (1983). In this study, the scale yielded
a Cronbach Alpha (α) of = .78. Burnout of security personnel was measured using the a 20-item
scale of the burnout scale (BS), developed by Maslach and Jackson (1981), which produced a
Cronbach Alpha (α) of = .83. Lastly, blood samples of security personnel were collected on the
glucometer strips to determine their glucose level.

Data Analysis Techniques
in this study, collected and collated data were analysed using the statistical package for social
sciences (SPSS) version 21. The first and second hypotheses were tested using the Pearson’s Product
Moment correlation coefficient, while the third hypothesis was tested using the multiple regression.
The raised research question was answered using graphical analysis.

Results
This section presents statistical results of the demographic variables and of the tested hypotheses.
Table 1: Descriptive Analysis of Demographic Variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Results (Count and Percentage%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sex</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Male</td>
<td>98 (83.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Female</td>
<td>20 (16.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Age</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18-30 Years</td>
<td>5 (4.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-40 Years</td>
<td>63 (53.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>41-50 Years</td>
<td>38 (33.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>51-60 Years</td>
<td>11 (9.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Education</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FSLC</td>
<td>43 (36.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSCE</td>
<td>41 (34.7%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NCE/OND</td>
<td>13 (11%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HND/BSc</td>
<td>21 (17.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Marital Status</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Single</td>
<td>12 (10.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Married</td>
<td>106 (89.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Work Experience</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1-4 Years</td>
<td>16 (13.6%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5-10 Years</td>
<td>17 (14.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11-15 Years</td>
<td>70 (59.3%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16-20 Years</td>
<td>15 (12.7%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The descriptive analysis in Table 1 shows that 83.1% of the participants were male, while 16.9% were female. Correspondingly, 4.2% of the participants are between the ages of 18-30 years; 53.4% are between 31-40 years; 33.1% are between 41-50 years; while 9.3% are between 51-60 years. In the same vein, 36.4% of the respondents are holders of the first school leaving certificate; 34.7% are senior secondary school certificate holder; 11% are holders of the national certificate of education/national diploma; while 18.8% holds the higher national diploma or bachelor of science degree. Additionally, result shows that 10.2% of the respondents are single, while 89.8% are married. Also, 13.6% of the participants have between 1-4 years’ work experience; 14.4% have between 5-10 years; 59.3% have 11-15 years; and 12.7% have between 16 and 20 years of experience.

**Hypothesis 1:** There is a significant relationship between self-care practices and burnout of security personnel.

Table 2: Results of bi-variate correlation between self-care practices and burnout of security personnel with descriptive analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Means</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>r</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Self Care Practices</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>3.90</td>
<td>.50</td>
<td>.36</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Burnout</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>3.86</td>
<td>.49</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** **p is significant at 0.05 level (2-tailed)
Results in Table 2 above brings to the fore the relationship between self-care practices and burnout of security personnel working in the university. The result shows that the relationship was positive and statistically significant \( (r=.36, \ p<.05) \). Therefore, the alternate hypothesis was accepted that, there is a significant relationship between self-care practices and burnout of security personnel working in the university.

**Hypothesis 2:** There is a significant relationship between security personnel reported occupational stress and burnout?

Table 3: Results of bi-variate correlation between occupational stress and burnout of security personnel with descriptive analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Means</th>
<th>Std. Deviation</th>
<th>r</th>
<th>p</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Occupational Stress</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>3.86</td>
<td>.57</td>
<td>.41</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 Burnout</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>3.86</td>
<td>.49</td>
<td>.41</td>
<td>.00</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**p** is significant at 0.05 level (2-tailed)

Table 3 above shows the result of the bivariate correlation between occupational stress and burnout of security personnel working in the university. The result showed that the relationship was positive and statistically significant \( (r=.41, \ p<.05) \). Based on this result, the alternate hypothesis was accepted that, there is a significant relationship between occupational stress and burnout of security personnel working in the university.

**Hypothesis 3:** There is a significant influence of self-care practices and occupational stress on burnout of security personnel in the University.

Tables 4, 5, 6: Results of multiple linear regression analysis on the influence of self-care practices and occupational stress on burnout of security personnel

Table 4: Model summary of regression analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>R Square</th>
<th>Adjusted R Square</th>
<th>Std. Error of the Estimate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>.44(^a)</td>
<td>.20</td>
<td>.18</td>
<td>.44</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^a\) Predictors: (Constant), Self_Care_Practices, Occupational_Stress

\(^b\) Dependent Variable: Burnout

Table 5: ANOVA of regression analysis

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>Df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Regression</td>
<td>5.54</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>2.77</td>
<td>14.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Residual</td>
<td>22.67</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>.20</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>28.20</td>
<td>117</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^a\) Predictors: (Constant), Self_Care_Practices, Occupational_Stress

\(^b\) Dependent Variable: Burnout
Tables 4, 5, and 6 shows the result of a multiple regression that was estimated to predict burnout based on self-care practices and occupational stress. A significant regression coefficient was found (F(2, 115)= 14.04, \( p<.05 \)), with adjusted \( R^2 \) of .18. The adjusted \( R^2 \) presupposes that 18% of the variance in burnout is as a result of self-care practices and occupational stress. Furthermore, it can be inferred from Table 6, the standardised beta coefficients show that occupational stress is the highest contributor to the change in the dependent variable (\( \beta=.30, \ p=.05 \)), while self-care practices contributes (\( \beta=.20, \ p<.05 \)). Based on this, the stated hypothesis was accepted that, self-care practices and occupational stress significantly influence the burnout of security working in the university.

Can burnout be triggered by the level of glucose in security personnel’s blood?

The result above brought to the fore that, there exist a significant variation in the level of glucose (between 72 and 202) found in the blood of the sampled security personnel. If this glucose level is not properly managed, it could serve as a trigger of diabetics and by extension, it would lead to burnout. Therefore, a high level of glucose which is greater than 115mg/dl might cause diabetes and subsequently, burnout.

Discussion of Findings
The first hypothesis which states that self-care practices have a relationship with burnout of security personnel shows a significant, positive but weak relationship, which suggest that, security personnel have not been engaging in an adequate self-care practice. Though the relationship is weak, but one
will expect the relationship to be negatively correlated because if self-care practices increase burnout should decrease, and vice versa. The findings of this result corroborate negate earlier study of Alkema, et al. (2008), who found a negative relationship between aspects of self-care practices and burnout among 37 hospice care professionals (HCPs). The second hypothesis which established that, there exist a relationship between occupational stress and burnout submits that an increase in occupational stress of university security personnel will increase their level of burnout. Consequently, the more stressors they are confronted with at their place of work, the more they will lose their physiological and psychological wherewithal. In reality, when an employee’s mental capacities and capabilities are over-stretched, they tend to perform below par and expectation. Thus, this study is in tandem with earlier studies such as Papaefstathiou et al. (2019), who reported a significant and positive relationship between occupational stress and burnout of Greek medical residents. Equally, the results in tables four, five and six confirms the third hypothesis that self-care practices and occupational stress have significant influence on burnout of university security personnel. As advocated by the burnout theory, workers who do not put into practice, an adequate self-care practice or, who has been stressed tends to beginning to feel a sign of emotional exhaustion and physical fatigue. Therefore, security personnel who engages in self-care practices and, does not perceive an occupational stress will likely not to experience a job burnout.

**Conclusion and Recommendations**

This study evaluated the interplay between employees’ self-care practices, occupational stress and burnout of university security personnel. The study concludes that, security personnel should ensure they draw up workplace stressors, and acquaint themselves with relevant coping strategies to lessening the stressors since there exists, an influence of both independent variables on burnout. Likewise, there is a significant and positive relationship between self-care practices and burnout and, a significant and positive relationship was established between occupational stress and burnout of security personnel. Also, there exist a significant variation in the sugar level of participants which might lead to high burnout amongst them. The implication of these research outcomes remains that, an increment in the self-care practices of university security personnel will lessen their burnout level. Also, if their stress level is decreased, their burnout level will decrease and vice versa. Furthermore, if they work on their sugar level to fall between the accepted benchmark of between 75-115mg/dl, there is a tendency that their burnout level would reduce significantly.

Based on the results, the study recommends that the University Management through the security unit should design a monthly orientation exercise for the security personnel on the need, and ways to ensure an effective self-care practice, and techniques of stress reduction. Also, a monthly sugar level test should be shepherded by the University Management through its security and health units, for all security personnel with a view to checking and regulating their glucose level since a significant variation exist in the results of the tests. Additionally, a counselling sub-unit is recommended to be established within the security unit, as a proactive measure to support psychological distress security personnel. Lastly, the University Management through its security unit should create an enabling working environment, suitable and flexible work-duty schedules, an employees’ wellness programme, and an appropriate stress reduction awareness.
As suggestion for further studies; the outcomes reported in this study is limited to self-care practices, occupational stress and burnout of security personnel in a university in South-West, Nigeria. Future studies could collect data from other universities or established organisations to replicate this study. Also, since the data reported in this study was collected using the cross-sectional approach, future studies should collect data using the longitudinal approach with a view to recording changes, and observed variations in the self-care practices, stress levels, sugar levels and burnout levels over a period of time.

References


