

THE LEVEL OF BURNOUT AND ADULT LITERACY INSTRUCTORS EFFECTIVENESS IN BORNO STATE AGENCY FOR MASS LITERACY

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ABSTRACT

The study determined the level of burnout and adult literacy instructor's effectiveness in Borno State Agency for mass literacy. The objectives of the study are to determine the level of burnout among adult literacy instructors, determine adult literacy instructor's effectiveness. Two research questions guided the study, what is the level of burnout among adult literacy instructors? How effective are the adult literacy instructors? The sample of the study covered two hundred and eighteen (218) adult literacy instructors and two hundred and eighteen adult learners were selected in some literacy centres across the six administrative zone of the Agency. Fifteen (15) items questionnaire tagged questionnaires for adult instructor's burnout subscale on emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and personal accomplishment was administered to the respondent and Researcher Made Test (RMT) in English and Mathematic was also conducted on adult learners. Descriptive statistics of frequency counts and percentages, to answer research questions 1 and 2. The data collected presented in tables and analyzed using frequency count and percentages. The findings showed that there is a high level of burnout among adult literacy instructors in Borno state. Another finding also shows the poor performance of the adult learners in the researcher made test (RMT). Based on the above findings, the following recommendations were made: (i) That adult literacy instructors should have good condition of service so that they can be effective. (ii) Adult education administrators should provide conducive environment to avoid emotional exhaustion and depersonalization and personal accomplishment. (iii) The government should ensure that they recruit experience instructors because experience is important for effective teaching and learning in the literacy centres. (iv). Interactive session based on gender is important for effective instruction in the literacy centres.

Keywords: Level of Burnout, Adult Literacy Instructor's effectiveness, Borno State, Agency for mass literacy

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Introduction

Burnout is a syndrome of physical, emotional and cognitive exhaustion that develops from sustained exposure to situations that are emotionally demanding and stressful. The phenomenon burnout is associated with adverse health implications for the instructors and adverse influence on his/her effectiveness in the adult literacy delivery. It is assumed that the absence of enabling environment such as poor

facilities and poor conditions of service could enable poor performance and engender literacy instructor's burnout. The condition of the instructor is exacerbated by the high demand placed on them as the class size is large albeit inadequate facilities.

Theoretical Framework

The study was guided by conservation of Resource Theory (COR) developed by Hobfoll, (1989); and Person-Environment fit model proposed by French, Caplan & Harrison (1982). The Hobfoll theory covers a general perspective of stress with relevance to burnout in organisations. The conservation resources theory suggests that individual's have access to four main categories of resources such as condition of service, personal characteristics forms of energy and the object. The potential loss of these resources, and the failure to regain resources adequately will subsequently result in stress which may lead to burnout. The theory further proposes that burnout can develop when resources are lost or when they are inadequate to meet the burden the individual faces. Burnout will result where a continuous loss of resources is evident. The Conservation of Resource (COR) theory (Hobfoll, 1989, 1998) sets out to explain psychological mechanism that regulates how the balance or imbalance between demand and resources is perceived by the individual. In burnout research, the Hobfoll, (1989) theory which is a general theory of stress has been adjusted, by the job Demand Resource (JD-R) model (Demerouti, Nachreiner, Bakker & Schaufelei 2001) which parsimoniously illustrate the basic tenets of COR and places them within the specific framework of work characteristics, burnout and work-engagement. (Demerouti *et al*, 2001) described how job demands result in exhaustion where as lack of job resource results in disengagement from work. However, Schaufeli and Bakker (2004) found that resources are negatively associated with burnout and burnout are negatively associated with commitment. They further pointed out that energy depletion draws the assumptions that demands situation at work requires emotional compensation efforts. Hockey, (1983) stated that if the demands prevail for extended periods, sustaining compensation effort will result in exhaustion.

Burned out people suffer from emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation and a reduced sense of personal accomplishment. Emotional exhaustion refers to feelings of being emotionally over extended and having depleted ones emotional resources and depersonalisation. On the other hand it is a negative callous and detached attitude towards the people one work with and this negative self evaluation reduce personal accomplished in relation to one's level of job performances. Freudenberger (1975) stated that human services workers particular teachers appear to run a great risk of falling victim to the burnout syndrome because teachers/instructors experience many stressful events in their career. According to (Johnson, Cooper, Cartwright, Donald, Taylor & Millet, 2005), employees faces a number of other

challenges such as greater work load increasing job insecurity, and lack of role clarity affect the performance and commitment of the employees. Similarly, Beehr, 1995, Kahn & Byosiere, 1992) stated that the increasing demands in the work place as well as the overall increasing dependence in lives of individuals such as family pressure, dual career, job insecurity contribute to increase the level of stress experienced by individuals. The prolonged or intense stress can have a negative impact of the individuals mental and physical health and ultimately, excessive exposure to stressors could result in the development of burnout (Maslach & Goldberg 1998). Lack of commitment among instructors teaching literacy education is one of the major problems that facing adult literacy programmes in Nigeria (Adeyemi, Aremu, 1999; Adeyemo; Osahon, 2001). As important as teaching profession is to the national development and technological advancement, its human resources have demonstrated lack of job satisfaction, career commitment and organisational commitment (Salami, 2007). There is high turnover syndrome among literacy instructors (Nwagwu & Salami, 1999). The instructors performance is grossly inadequate.

Effective operation in any organisation depends to a large extent on the human resources, the management and the instructors employed to carry out the teaching of literacy education and these instructors must be adequate to carryout the assignment effectively. In a study conducted by Shuwa (2005), indicates that effective teaching is one of the determinant factor of academic achievement, in order to make an instructor to be effective there must be incentives and enabling teaching environment. He further maintained that attractive pay package, promotion, and supply of instructional materials such as relevant primers reduced absenteeism. If these instructors are well paid and promoted like their counterparts in other organisations they will perform well and they will not experience burnout.

A study conducted by Emeruwa, (1988), indicates that promotion is an important incentive and it affects every one's ability propelling ambitious workers to work. These sort of people become frustrated after staying long on the job with out promotion and with high work demands and this makes them to change their jobs and lead them to resign from the job because of frustration. This assertion was similar to the findings of Nwanchukwu (1988), which revealed that organisation that have poor promotion policies or limited promotion opportunities create such dysfunctional factors as low morale anxiety and frustration in employee; for literacy centres to be effective, teaching load, class size need to be investigated and incentive is however linked with to performance and effectiveness of adult literacy instructors. Adult learners performance can be observed from invisible process (Fenwick, 2001).

Statement of the Problem

It is widely recognised that instructors' effectiveness and commitment are influential factors in determining the performance of adult learners. The researcher has also observed that many adult learners cannot read, write and compute very well if the morale of the instructors is low. It appears that, adult literacy instructors in Borno State work under poor conditions of service which may affect their performance and commitment. This is evidenced in the fact that Borno State ranked 31 out of 36 States in Nigeria on the literacy ladder. It is against this background that the study intends to determine the relationship between burnout and adult literacy instructors' effectiveness in Borno State.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study were to determine the:

- a. Level of burnout among adult literacy instructors in Borno state;
- b. Adult literacy instructors effectiveness in the literacy centre;

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study;

1. What is the level of burnout among adult literacy instructors in Borno state?
2. How effective are the adult literacy instructors in Borno state?

Significance of the Study

The findings from the study will help the management of adult education, the executive secretary to organise literacy programme and will also appreciate the importance of stress management in the course of improving instructor's effectiveness. The study will also assist the stakeholders involved in adult education such as NGOs, administrators of adult education to acknowledge that working conditions are necessary for effectiveness of literacy instructors. It will also provide information to adult education policy makers on the policies needed for effective implementation of adult education programmes in Nigeria. The document would also be of vital importance for further research especially in the areas of personnel administration in adult education. The result of the research will be useful to those who will like to undertake research in the same area. It will serve as a feedback to the Borno State Agency for Mass Literacy.

Scope of the Study

The study was limited on six administrative zones of Borno State Agency for Mass Literacy which comprises of Bama, Askira/Uba, Biu, Kukawa, Monguno and Maiduguri Metropolitan Council (MMC) some selected literacy centres was considered in the study. The study dwelled on burnout and effectiveness of adult literacy instructors in terms of level of burnout, interactive effects of burnout and

gender of instructors and also interactive effect of burnout and experience of instructors on effectiveness.

Methodology

The study adopted a correlation research design. The study dwells on the relationship between burnout and adult literacy instructors' effectiveness. The study covers all the 218 adult literacy instructors in Borno State Agency for Mass literacy, teaching in 2011/2012 academic session, which comprises male instructors and female instructors' adult literacy instructors. Two instruments was used to collect the data, a questionnaire for instructors' burnout which comprises 15 items on emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and personal accomplishment and a researcher made test (RMT), with items in English and Mathematics, for adult learners to test their performance, using their syllabus. The researcher collected an introductory letter from the Department of Continuing Education and Extension Services University of Maiduguri which will be addressed to the Executive Secretary, Borno State Agency for Mass Literacy, seeking permission to conduct a study. The help of two research assistants who will be trained by the researcher for two days will be sought and employed. It will take the researcher and her assistants 4 weeks to administer the questionnaire and the RMT. Data collected will be analysed and presented in tables using frequency count and percentages to answer the research questions.

Results

Research Question 1

What is the level of burnout among adult literacy instructors in Borno state?

Table 4.1.1: Frequency and percentages of the respondents of the level on burnout on Emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and personal accomplishment

Table 4.1.1: Distribution table of instructors level of burnout

S/N	Variables	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Frequently	Always
1.	I feel emotionally drained from my work.	17 (7.8%)	20 (9.2%)	70 (32.1%)	65 (29.8%)	46 (24.1%)
2.	I have worked long hours to complete the adult learners work.	29 (13.3%)	94 (9.4%)	34 (15.6%)	39 (17.4%)	59 (27.1%)
3.	I feel used up at the end of the day.	23 (10.6%)	12 (5.5%)	65 (29.8%)	61 (28.0%)	57 (26.1%)
4.	I feel fatigue and frustrated I get up in the morning to face another day at my work.	9 (4.1%)	12 (5.5%)	73 (33.5%)	71 (32.6%)	53 (24.3%)
5.	Over population of adult learners makes me to be stress up.	36 (16.5%)	7 (3.2%)	82 (37.6%)	67 (30.0%)	67 (30.0%)
6.	I worked beyond what should normally be expected of me.	23 (10.6%)	34 (15.6%)	61 (28.6%)	35 (16.1%)	65 (29.0%)
7.	I don't really care what happen to some adult learners.	42 (19.3%)	10 (4.6%)	28 (12.8%)	52 (23.9%)	26 (11.9%)
8.	Adult learners blame me for their problems.	27(12.4%)	25(11.9%)	38(17.4%)	55(25.2%)	73(33.5%)
9.	It is very difficult to satisfy the demand of the adult learners.	43(19.7%)	29(13.3%)	27(12.4%)	48(22.0%)	83(38.1%)
10.	The way some instructors treat adult learners make them to be scared of asking questions.	73(33.5%)	9(4.1%)	22(10.1%)	34(15.6%)	71(32.6%)
11.	I can easily understand how adult learner's feel about my behavior.	35(16.1%)	28(12.8%)	62(28.4%)	16(7.3%)	77(35.3%)
12.	I deal effectively with the problems of the adult learners.	7(3.2%)	60(27.5%)	44(20.2%)	24(11.0%)	80(36.7%)
13.	I feel I am positively influencing other people's lives through my work	40(18.3%)	7(3.2%)	60(27.5%)	51(20.4%)	60(27.5%)
14.	I create a relaxed atmosphere with adult learners.	24(11.0%)	36(16.5%)	46(21.1%)	44(20.2%)	68(31.2%)
15.	I have accomplished worthwhile things in teaching adult learners	73(33.5%)	25(11.5%)	38(17.4%)	55(25.2%)	27(12.4%)
	Total weighted mean	6.25	10.71	4.68	4.89	3.57
Grand total of weighted mean				6.024		

Source: 2013/2014 Field work

Table 4.1.1 An adopted Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) for teachers which was modified by the researcher to suit this study to measure burnout with fifteen items which were divided into three sub-scale (1) emotional exhaustion 6 items with the maximum score of 82 (37.6%), (2) depersonalization (four) 4 items with maximum frequency of 80 (36.7%) (3) Personal accomplishment with (five) 5 items with maximum frequency of 77 (35.3%).

Based on the above findings emotional exhaustion and depersonalization has the highest frequency and percentage while personal accomplishment has the lowest frequency among the three mentioned sub-scale. This indicates that the level of burnout among adult literacy instructors in Borno state is high.

Research Question 2

How effective are the adult literacy instructors in Borno State?

Table 4.1.2: Performance of adult learners in a Researcher Made Test (RMT)

Table 4.1.2: Mean and Standard Deviation scores of adult learners in the test in English and Mathematics

Centres	Subjects	N	Mean Scores	SD
Literacy centre A	English	26	31.62	0.084
	Mathematics		25.18	0.016
Literacy centre B	English	28	36.15	0.832
	Mathematics		32.42	0.067
Literacy centre C	English	14	25.16	0.754
	Mathematics		26.29	0.217
Literacy centre D	English	19	28.39	0.691
	Mathematics		25.87	0.542
Literacy centre E	English	30	39.10	1.024
	Mathematics		33.48	0.081
Literacy centre F	English	31	41.25	0.947
	Mathematics		38.78	0.461
Literacy centre G	English	15	21.90	1.081
	Mathematics		22.01	0.614
Literacy centre H	English	16	29.37	0.027
	Mathematics		26.06	0.051
Literacy centre I	English	19	36.67	0.832
	Mathematics		35.25	0.014
Literacy centre J	English	20	37.02	0.472
	Mathematics		35.21	0.012
Total		218	6278.19	8.819
Average	English	32.66		
	Maths	30.06		

* Standard score set 40 marks

Source: 2013 field work

Table 4.1.2 above shows the performance of adult learners in a test in the following literacy centres. The total score of individual students in each of the two subjects were cumulatively added together for each centre, and the mean score were obtained. The minimum standard mean score for this RMT was 40.0%. From the total mean score for all literacy the average score was found out to be 38.78 in Maths and

41.25 in English, which is far below the expected mean score set. From the results of the above, it could be seen that none of the adult learners in the agency for mass literacy centre has at least the pass mark of 40.02 but most of the centres have score below the pass mark. The performance of the adult learners in English and Mathematics was very poor compare to the set standard. The results show the effect of burnout of adult literacy instructors based on the adult learner's performance shown above. This means that he adult literacy instructors are in ineffective in the literacy centres due to burnout syndrome.

The result above have clearly shown that the model constructed from comparing the performance of adult from the research made test and the instructor performance, is statistically significant at $P < 0.05$ and also have a strong correlation at 0.0842433 with the highest P-value on the independent variables is 0.0345, belonging to x5. The R-squared statistic indicates that the model as fitted explains 11.1932% of the variability in Y. The adjusted R-squared statistic, which is more suitable for comparing models with different numbers of independent various, is 6.700802%. The standard error of the estimate shows the standard deviation of the residuals to be 0.478853. This value can be used to construct prediction limits for new observations. The mean absolute error (MAE) of 0.432394 is the average value of the residuals. The Durbin-Watson (DW) statistics tests the residual to determine if there is any significant correlation based on the order in which they occur in the data. Since the P-value is less than 0.05, there is an indication of possible serial correlation.

Summary of the Findings

The study determined the relationship between burnout and adult literacy instructors effectiveness in Borno State agency for mass literacy. The following are the findings of this study:

- The adult literacy instructors burnout level was high, as shown on items on emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and personal accomplishment.
- The performance of the adult learners performance in the Research Made Test (RMT).

Summary

The study was designed to determine the level of burnout and adult literacy instructors effectiveness in Borno State, Nigeria. This was in terms of level of burnout among adult literacy instructors, adult instructors effectiveness, the interactive effect of gender on instructors effectiveness and interactive effect of experience on adult instructors effectiveness. The population was 221 adult literacy instructors which all used because the numbers was manageable for the study in the six administrative zone of the agency. A researcher made test (RMT) was conducted out in some selected literacy centres to determine the effectiveness of the literacy centres through the performance of the adult learners using their syllabus. A demographic

characteristics of the respondents and fifteen (15) items questionnaire for instructors on their level of burnout, on emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and personal accomplishment and was the RMT in English and mathematics. Having obtained the permission, the researcher administered 221 questionnaire to instructors and RMT to 218 adult learners, the questionnaire and the researcher made test respectively with the help of three research assistants. The researcher was able to collect 218 adequately filled and returned questionnaire and also the scripts of the test RMT.

The finding revealed that;

- There is a high level of burnout among adult literacy instructors with highest frequency 82(37.6%) emotional exhaustion 80(36.7%) depersonalization and 77 (35.3%) on personal accomplishment.
- Generally the performance of adult learners was very poor based on their researcher made test (RMT).

Conclusion

The study which determined the relationship between burnout and adult literacy instructors effectiveness in Borno state. Based on the finding of this study, the study concluded that emotional exhaustion and depersonalization and personal accomplishment affect the affect the level of adult literacy instructors effectiveness and also the results revealed that adult learners in the selected centres covered perform poorly. However this study revealed that interactive effects of experience significantly contribute to adult instructors effectiveness, while the interactive effect of gender has no significant relationship on adult instruments effectiveness.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

- Adult literacy instructors should share subjects in the literacy centres to avoid fatigue to reduce the level of burnout
- Adequate and qualified adult literacy instructors should be employ in the literacy centres to avoid over population of the adult learners in the class
- Conducive environment for adult learning should be provided by the government
- Gender bias should be discourage when employing adult literacy instructors
- There is need to employ an experienced adult literacy instructors

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Aminchi Daniel

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