

Occupation And Self-Esteem As Predictors Of Work Related Conflict Among Career Nigerian Women: An Empirical Study Of Nassarawa Hospital, Kano

Idris Hamza Adamu

Principal Lecturer, Kano State Polytechnic,
PhD (Social Statistics) Student, The University of Bakht Al-Ruda Sudan

Abstract: Conflict exists in every organization and to a certain extent indicates a healthy exchange of ideas and creativity. However, counter-productive conflict can result in employee dissatisfaction, reduced productivity, poor service to clients, absenteeism and increased employee turnover, increased work-related stress or, worse case scenario, litigation based on claims of harassment or a hostile work environment. This study tends to examine this type of conflict; how such conflict create dissatisfaction in workplace; and explore if counter-productive conflict result in poor service to clients. This research is a social statistics research designed and aimed at determining relationship between occupation-type and work related conflict (WRC) in one hand and self-esteem (SE) and WRC on the other hand. Survey method was adopted for this study. The population of study was made up of female medical and paramedical staff. 16-item questionnaire were administered. A multiple regression analysis showed that occupation significantly predicted work related conflict (WRC) among Nigerian health workers. The result revealed that self-esteem significantly predicted WRC as well. It was concluded that shared values and beliefs about occupation-type, as well as immediate socio-cultural circumstances, shape the potential for individuals to experience work-related conflict, and its effective resolution heavily depended on these.

Keywords: Occupation-type, Self-Esteem, Work Related Conflict, Medical Staff, Para-medical Staff, Effective Conflict Resolution

I. INTRODUCTION

Research work in work-related-conflict (henceforth WRC) and its effective resolution are well research areas in North America, Europe and many of the emerging Asian countries (Amazue and Ugwu, 2015). But in many African countries these areas are rather untapped and only scantily explored. The lack of serious research work on WRC and its resolution is even less carried out in many parts of Northern Nigeria, including Kano state that constitutes one of the most densely populated parts of the country and the continent.

The current literature arising from this research work has revealed a growing awareness of people's and the authorities' desire to achieve a minimum conflict (WRC) at the working place that greatly reflects on their family lives, and a corresponding effort by organizations to acknowledge this

need and adopt measures to satisfy it to a greater extent (Epie, 2010 in (Amazue and Ugwu, 2015)). Work, Self-esteem and the associated conflict issues are only beginning to gain attention in developing societies such as Nigeria. A few studies have attempted to examine the antecedents and the consequences of WRC in Nigeria (e.g. Adekola, 2010 as cited in Amazue and Ugwu, 2015)).

The current research is to determine the correlates and their extent among the three variables namely, WRC as the dependent variable and how it is determined by Self-esteem (Se) independently, or in conjunction with occupational type. The target population is made up of all female, medical (doctors) and paramedical (Nurses and P.H.Cs) staff. Fifty (50) females were sampled out using a quota and opportunity methods of non-probability sampling, by allocation of 10 and 40 questionnaire to each group respectively. Within the

paramedical group, a further classification is to be made to include nurses/ midwives and public health officers.

II. STUDY BACKGROUND

Social identity theory posits that an individual's identification with a group (in this case occupational group) is linked to some behavioural indicators and attitude at work. These attitudes directly, or indirectly predict outcomes, such as job satisfaction, performance, employee turnover and cordiality both at home and in the workplace (Joshi, Liao, & Jackson, 2006; Slattery, & Selvarajan, 2005). Thus, due to the influence of interactions shaped by social identity, individuals from diverse occupational background are expected to express different levels of WRC.

Work demands appear to have intruded into other domains of the life of Nigerian workers.

More so, the widespread influence of a number of conflict within the Nigerian society, and nowadays more so in Northern Nigeria. The emergence of mega national and regional conflict (such as the Boko Haram, Fulani-farmer, religio-tribal etc) has appeared to affect peace both at home and in the workplace.

The use of handsets, the internet and other e-means at work as well as households has blurred the boundaries between work and personal or family life. Nigeria has also, traditionally been characterized by a marked gender-based division of labour both inside and outside the family (Adekola, 2006 as cited in Adekola, 2010). This has also in recent times served as a major source of conflict for the Nigerian woman, who struggles to satisfy both household and workplace demands. This may be why Adekola (2010) suggested that Nigeria represents an interesting case to examine the issue of work conflict because of the rapid socioeconomic changes in the past few decades. More so, the socio-cultural characteristics of Kano people may provide a very rich and diverse background to understand WRC and the means of minimizing it. This study therefore, was aimed at examining the relationship between occupation, self-esteem and the experience of work-related conflict of Nigerian employees, with emphasis on women employees.

The Nassarawa Hospital, Kano was established in August 1978. It was latter named for the former military governor of the state (Kano), it has a truly national outlook, even though owned by the state government most of the workers both males and females come from all backgrounds; ethnically, geographically and ideologically. It is an ideal place that will provide adequate representation for all these different background that make up the entity Nigeria

III. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

Work-related conflict (WRC) generally refers to the extent to which work related responsibilities interfere with each other. According to Greenhaus and Beutell (1985), WRC is defined as the extent to which inter-role disturbances occur within the employees' functions in such a way that the demands of their work roles interfere with the fulfillment of

their daily or otherwise periodic work schedules. Research over the past several decades has convincingly demonstrated that self-esteem (SE) and occupational roles are often interdependent, sometimes positively and sometimes negatively and that these interdependencies flow in both directions interfering with SE and from occupation, occupation interfering with SE (Frone, 2003).

According to Frone, Yardley and Markel (1997), work interfering with SE occurs when demands and obligation of work are deleterious to SE life. SE interfering with work, on the other hand, arises when SE obligation disturbs one's work. Researchers have demonstrated that work-to-family conflict or work interfering with SE and SE-to-work conflict or SE interfering with work is positively correlated with each other (Beutell & Witting-Berman, 1999). Researchers have further demonstrated that the experience of WRC is stressful for many employees and is associated with emotional responses such as anxiety, tension, discontentment, confusion and frustration (Brough & O'Driscoll, 2005). In addition, the experience of WRC, for many employees, has also been shown to result in increases in role strain, absenteeism, and turnover, and decrease in health, psychological well-being, job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Amazue & Uzoka, 2009).

The present study is anchored on the emerging models that highlight the influence of self-esteem on individuals' experiences of WRC and its consequences (Korabik, Lero, & Ayman, 2003). The basic premise of these models is that shared values and beliefs about work and family, as well as immediate socio-contextual circumstances, shape the potential for individuals to experience WRC as well as individuals' interpretations of WRC (Grzwacz, et al. 2007).

On the other hand, Peoples' SE can affect their personality, making them not able to cope with life factors such as stress and other disturbances in the workplace. According to Hobfoll (1989), individual differences as found in SE are treated as a resource that may lessen work conflict and stress. Thus, the differences in levels of resources may affect how individuals react to stress. For example, those who have high SE may have a "reserve" of self-worth and confidence upon which they can draw in problematic situations (Hobfoll, 1989). In other words, people with high self-esteem may not be as bothered by potential loss of time and energy because they know they can cope with such loss.

The current literature suggests that there is minimal information on the relationship between SE and WRC. However, the existing studies suggest that general SE mitigates (minimize) role stress. For instance, Mossholder, Bedeian, and Armenakis (1981) reported that when nurses experience role conflict, those low in SE exhibited lower job performance than those high in SE. These authors further reported that nurses experiencing role ambiguity reported less job satisfaction if they were lower in SE. Granster and Schaubroeck (1991) reported that low SE fire fighters who experienced role conflict had higher levels of somatic symptoms. Similarly, Grandy and Cropanzano (1999) tested the effects of SE on WRC and found that SE is an important variable to consider in the work environment. According to Grandy and Cropanzano (1999) SE is related directly to all work and life outcomes. Little is known about ethnicity, SE and WRC (Grzywacz et al., 2007).

IV. THE RESEARCH SIGNIFICANCE AND GOAL

Conflict is inevitable among humans. When two or more social entities (i.e., individuals, groups, organizations, and nations) come in contact with one another in attaining their objectives, their relationships may become incompatible or inconsistent. Relationships among such entities may become inconsistent when two or more of them desire a similar resource that is in short supply; when they have partially exclusive behavioral preferences regarding their joint action; or when they have different attitudes, values, beliefs, and skills. The significance of this study is to explore WRC and provide solution to it. In similar studies in more advanced and more research oriented organizations, it was found that workplace related conflict in whatever forms it may occur, it costs the organization, the worker (and his family) and the authorities (in terms of tax revenues) a huge amount of resources, that could be otherwise useful. It is therefore always of paramount importance for all the three parties involved (as mentioned above), to find ways to understand the phenomenon WRC, and then find the ways to minimize it at the minimum cost. It is these kind of study that will provide these means. Thus, the goal of the present study was to extend the understanding of how occupational type as a culture of its own, contributes to the experience of WRC. To achieve this, the researcher investigated whether or not the differences in the occupation-type, socio-political structure, and other differences (such as family size, ethnicity and seniority) will impact on the hospital employees and will be related to their experience of WRC.

V. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The main objective of this study as earlier mentioned, is to scientifically study relationship between and among occupational type, self-esteem and work related conflict, following the well-known procedures and simple statistical analysis. In this way a system can developed where by organization of any size will be able to mitigate conflict and therefore enhance productivity.

In addition, the researcher looked at whether individual differences as is reflected in self-esteem will be related to the experience of WRC of Nigerian employees.

VI. QUESTIONS / HYPOTHESES

This research proposed the following research questions/hypothesis:

- ✓ Will Occupation-type predict the experience of WRC of the Nigerian health workers?
- ✓ Will self-esteem significantly predict the experience of WRC of Nigerian health workers?

HYPOTHESIS

It was hypothesized as follows

- ✓ Occupation-type will significantly predict the experience of WRC among the health workers.

- ✓ Self-esteem will significantly predict the experience of WRC among Nigerian health workers.

VII. METHODOLOGY AND DATA

A cross-sectional (as opposed to longitudinal) design was used (due to inadequacy of time and other resources) to facilitate the data collection within a few days. And the data were primary collected through the use of questionnaire as the information gathering instrument. Because the study focuses on three main variables; occupation-type, self-esteem (both independent) and work related conflict (and its resolution, as sub-variable), the questionnaire was designed to collect information on all these four items. Therefore, three sources were used to obtain relevant information on the questionnaire design, these were; the Rosenberg's Self-Esteem Scale, Conflict Management Questionnaire, conflict at work (Sourced from: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, USA. (2005)). A hybrid type of questionnaire with sixteen (16) items was formulated, and included personal information (age, education etc). Ten questions were devoted to SE, WRC and ECR (e.g: 'my current work has been my childhood ambition, I am now fulfilled'). The last two questions were made open and the respondent was asked to think and in few words write what she thinks constitute conflict in her working place. The last question (16th) also open, asked the respondent to write about best way to resolve conflict in her working place.

The questionnaire were analyzed in sections based on the three main variables in them. There were direct scoring and reverse scoring of the items. In case of the self-esteem section, to ascertain the overall score of a respondent, the products of the direct and the reverse score items are added together and 5 (where 5 is the number of questions dealing with self esteem) subtracted from the overall score to obtain the participant's ISE (Index of Self Esteem) score. The ISE is scored in the direction of low self-esteem. The lower a score below the norm, the higher the respondent's self-esteem. Similar procedure were used to obtain scores for WRC of the units of analysis (the respondents).

A total of 50 questionnaire were distributed to the staff, based on 10 units (for medical staff), 20 units each to Nursing officers and Public Health officers that make up the Paramedical staff. Within the stipulated time, a total of 47 (94%) correctly filled questionnaire were returned. The paramedicals returned just two questionnaires shortage, the medicals were only one short. All the returned questionnaires were found correctly filled. And so the analysis began.

VIII. DESIGN AND STATISTICS

The design of the study was a cross-sectional survey type, and a multiple regression analysis was used to analyze the data. This is used to address the multiple nature of the variables, made up of two independent (Occupation & Self-esteem) and the WRC the dependent variable. The adopted level of significance was chosen as 0.05 respectively for both occupation and conflict and self-esteem for conflict. For the

test of linear relationship between SE and WRC 0.01 is chosen.

IX. RESULTS

Variables	Means	SD	1	2	3
1 WRC	45.71	12.55	1		
2 Occupation	1.63	.49	-.087*	1.000	-.030*
3 Self-esteem	1.60	.49	.211***		1.00

Table 1: Descriptive statistics and the result of the inter-correlation of the predictor variables (Occupation and self-esteem) on criterion variable (WRC)

The result presented in the correlation matrix above showed that occupation is negatively related to WRC (because, $r = -.087, p < .05$). Also Occupation was shown to be negatively related to self-esteem (since, $r = -.030, p < .05$). The result further showed that self-esteem had a significant linear relationship with WRC (because, $r = .211, p < .001$).

Model	Standardized Coefficient A	T	Significance
1 Constant		15.322	.000
2 Ethnicity	-.047	-1.889	.05
3 Self-esteem	.221	4.785	.001

Dependent Variable: WRC (Work-Related-Conflict).

Table 2: The standardized Coefficient of the predictor variables (Occupation and self-esteem) on WRC

From the table 2 above, the results of the regression analysis revealed that occupation-type was a significant predictor of WRC (because, $\beta = -.047, p < .05$). at the same time, it was moderately negatively related to the criterion variable (WRC). It explained 1% of the total variance in the experience of WRC of Nigerian hospital services workers. However, the ANOVA (Analysis of Variance) model summary shows that the effect of occupation on WRC is significant. The coefficient table also showed that self-esteem (SE) was a significant predictor of WRC (since $\beta = .221, p < .001$). The result further showed that there is a strong positive relationship between self-esteem and WRC of the Nigerian workers. Self-esteem contributed 5% of the variations in the WRC of Nigerian medical workers. Finally, the ANOVA model summary shows that the effect of self-esteem on WRC is also significant.

X. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The present study looked at the relationship between occupation-type (among medical and paramedical staff), self-esteem and work related conflict (WRC). The result of a multiple regression analysis revealed that occupation-type was a predictor of WRC among Nigerian health workers. Based on this result, the first hypothesis was accepted. This result indicates that occupational differences in terms of traditional perceptions among the bearers of that occupation and related beliefs and practices are related to Nigerian health workers' experiences of WRC. These findings provide support for the models that suggest that shared values and beliefs about work and occupation, as well as immediate socio-cultural

circumstances, do influence the potential for individuals to experience WRC (Grzwacz et al., 2007). People in the same occupational groups seem to share common cultural values which tend to influence their lives in very many ways such as work and even family activities. This particular finding is consistent with Smith and colleagues (2005) who found an association between ethnicity and work stress. It also agrees with the findings of Amazue, L.O. and Ugwu, F.O. (2014), who found similar association between ethnicity and work-family related conflict. This implies that the broad occupational differences found among the health workers in Nigeria predicted their experience of WRC.

Table I, shows that occupation-type was negatively related to WRC. This suggests that para-medical cadre employees experienced greater WRC than their medical cadre counterparts. This finding may be explained from the point of the culturally based perception of the para-medicals, within themselves and in the community as a whole. The result suggests that the stricter and more adherent persons are to the dictates of their training and practice based values, the less likely they would experience conflict in their work domains. Since the medical workers seemed more training-oriented in their attitude to working roles, they were more likely to be guided by well defined rules and therefore have lesser experience of conflict for the same situation as their paramedical counterparts.

The present finding also supports the social identity theory which suggests that strong ethnic and similar (eg occupational/professional) identification strongly predict experience of WRC (Joshi, et al., 2006). Social identification with the cultural behavior dispositions which usually occur through interaction may influence attitude to work, and to family. This further implicates the socialization process which ensures that cultural values and practices are transmitted from one occupational generation to another. These value transmissions are opportunities to implant behaviours required in future statuses, mainly work roles and to some extent family and community roles.

By way of conclusion, we have seen that the results of this study revealed that occupation-type difference is a significant factor in the experience of WRC among Nigerian health workers. It further provided support for the proposition that people within a single culture could differ on different behavioural indicators as a result of some important variables differences, and occupation is one of them (Aziz, & Chang, 2013). As noted in the introduction, Nigeria has been experiencing some rapid economic transformation and development. This situation has given rise to an increased number of women in the labour force, consequently these women have to cope with African way of house management as well as modern outdoor career. It has therefore become pertinent for Nigerian government and other employers of labour to be familiar with work conflict issues, especially as it affects women in the labour force. It is the responsibility of the government and employers to establish policies that will take care of the differential professional attitudes to work roles, if they want to achieve a workforce that have manageable WRC and are highly committed. Finally, the present study has provided additional information on the relationship between self-esteem and WRC. The results

suggest that self-esteem is a predictor of WRC. Nigerian workers are therefore encouraged to imbibe the attributes of high self-esteem which has been suggested to generally mitigate WRC.

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