

Effect of Job Stress on Employee Burnout: The Moderating Role of Employee Well-Being Among BIPC Workers in Benue State, Nigeria

Nguwasen Kwahar, PhD

Department of Business Administration, Joseph Sarwuan Tarka University, Makurdi
Email: Ngu.kwahar@gmail.com

Abstract

The study examined the moderating role of employee well-being in the effect of job stress on employee burnout among workers of Benue State Investment and Property Commission (BIPC). Cross-sectional survey was adopted for the study. The study population was 178 employees of BIPC, Makurdi from where a sample of sixty (60) respondents was randomly selected. Structured questionnaire was used for data collection. The collected data were analyzed using Hierarchical Multiple regression (HMR). The study found that adequate compensation will positively moderate the effect of role ambiguity on employee burnout in BIPC Makurdi; growth on the job will also positively moderate the effect of information overload on employee burnout; development of capabilities will as well positively moderate the effect of work-life conflict on employee burnout while healthy environment will not moderate the effect of inadequate training on employee burnout. The study concluded that, to a large extent, employee well-being significantly moderates the effect of job stress on employee burnout among workers of Benue State Investment and Property Commission (BIPC) Makurdi. The study recommended that: the management of autonomously operated corporations should ensure that employees are assigned specific and well-defined roles according to their areas of specialization while guiding against role overlap amongst their employees' areas of specialization. However, to boost employee morale and ensure that unforeseen lapses are overcome, adequate financial and non-financial compensations including overtime allowances, bonuses and other rewards are paid promptly; staff training should be prioritized by the management of Benue State Investment and Property Commission (BIPC) in areas of core competencies in line with global best practices.

Keywords: Employee Well-being, Job Stress, Employee Burnout

Introduction

The relationship between job stress and employee burnout is an inextricable issue as employees of both service and manufacturing organizations experience burnouts from time to time due to the demands of stressful job. Such stress could manifest from many sources including role ambiguity, inadequate training, information overload and work - family conflict, among others (Elias (2021). Job stress often occurs when a person feels the demands, he/she is facing in his/her job are beyond his/her abilities and available resources (Kwahar, 2019). Thus, in most conditions, it occurs due to the imbalance between demands and resources for individuals in the workplace (Mansoor, Fida, Nasir & Ahmad, 2011). Scholars such as Arden (2014) and Babakus, Yavas and Ashill (2009) have pointed out that stressful conditions at the workplace may result in employee burnout. Employee burnout is a psychological disorder that employees face due to continuous stress and pressure, Donaldson (2018) divides burnout into three dimensions; emotional exhaustion (involving the feelings of depression, distress and coping ability), depersonalization (viewed as a

coping mechanism) and reduced personal accomplishment (when the individual declines in feelings of competencies and success, which prevents him/her from putting in his/her full potential). These dimensions are aggregated in the present study given that employee burnout featured as dependent variable. Interestingly, scholars such as Iqbal, Nabi, Muneer, and Anuar (2013) and Kwahar (2017) have noted that improving employee well-being can reduce the effect of job stress on employee burnout.

Employee wellbeing is synonymous to the employee's quality of work life, defined by Rose, Beh, Uli and Idris in Kwahar (2016), as the philosophy or set of principles which holds that people are trustworthy, responsible and capable of making valuable contributions to the organization and involves elements like task, the physical work environment, the social environment within the organization, administrative system and a relationship between life on and off the job. Walton (1974) explains employee well-being in terms of eight broad conditions of employment that constitute desirable quality of work life and proposed the same criteria for measuring it. Those conditions/criteria include adequate and fair compensation, safe and healthy environment, growth and security, and development of human capabilities. Others are total life space, constitutionalism, social integration; and social relevance. For the purpose of this study, four criteria have been adapted for use as moderators as follows: adequate financial compensation, healthy environment, growth on the job and development of capabilities.

Benue State Investment and Property Commission (BIPC) is an investment entity that requires technical expertise in investment decisions and implementation, analysis of trends in the stock market and general understanding of the legal framework surrounding physical and portfolio investments. The need for training and retraining of employees of BIPC to adapt to such sophistication cannot be over-emphasized. However, it is noted that the organization does not impact the required requisite skills in their employees, yet the demands for optimal performance is high, resulting to strain on the employees that lead to stress. The danger posed in the unfortunate scenario which portends imminent employee burnout, given the continuous pressure on BIPC employees to meet organizational goals, calls for urgent redress. The need therefore, arises to provide veritable tools and strategies that could reduce the effect of job stress on employee burnout among BIPC employees; one of which is the enhancement of employee well-being. It is therefore, pertinent to find out whether employee well-being can moderate the effect of job stress on employee burnout among BIPC employees. To achieve this aim, the study formulates the following hypotheses:

HO₁: Adequate financial compensation will not moderate the effect of ambiguity on employee burnout among employees of Benue State Investment and Property Commission Makurdi;

HO₂: Healthy environment will not moderate the effect of inadequate training on employee burnout among employees of Benue State Investment and Property Commission Makurdi;

HO₃: Growth on the job will not moderate the effect of information overload on employee burnout among employees of Benue State Investment and Property Commission Makurdi; and

HO₄: Development of capabilities will not moderate the effect of work-family conflict and employee burnout among employees of Benue State Investment and Property Commission Makurdi.

Theoretical Framework

The study is anchored on Demand Control Support Model propounded by Karasek in 1979. The model is the most influential model of stress in the workplace (Cox, Griffiths, Barlowe, Randall, Thomson & Rial – Gonzale, 2018). which focuses on the structural features of an individual’s interactions with their environment (as opposed to the process of what is occurring in this interaction). Karasek (1979) hypothesized an interaction effect, whereby high levels of demand, when combined with low levels of control would cause high strain and negative health outcomes, whereas, high levels of control would buffer the negative effect of demands to result in active learning and normal or even positive health outcomes. A high control and low demands situation were therefore, proposed by the theorist to be a low-strain scenario, and a low demands and low control situation as a passive scenario.

This theory suggests that job demands at BIPC induce work-related pressures on the employees, whereas, there is no adequate job control, resulting to stressful situations that subject employees to burnout. This is capable of causing hiccups at the workplace unless the resultant job stress is moderated by ensuring high quality of work life, harnessed by improving employee well-being. This is depicted in the theoretical model presented in this study as shown in Figure 1.

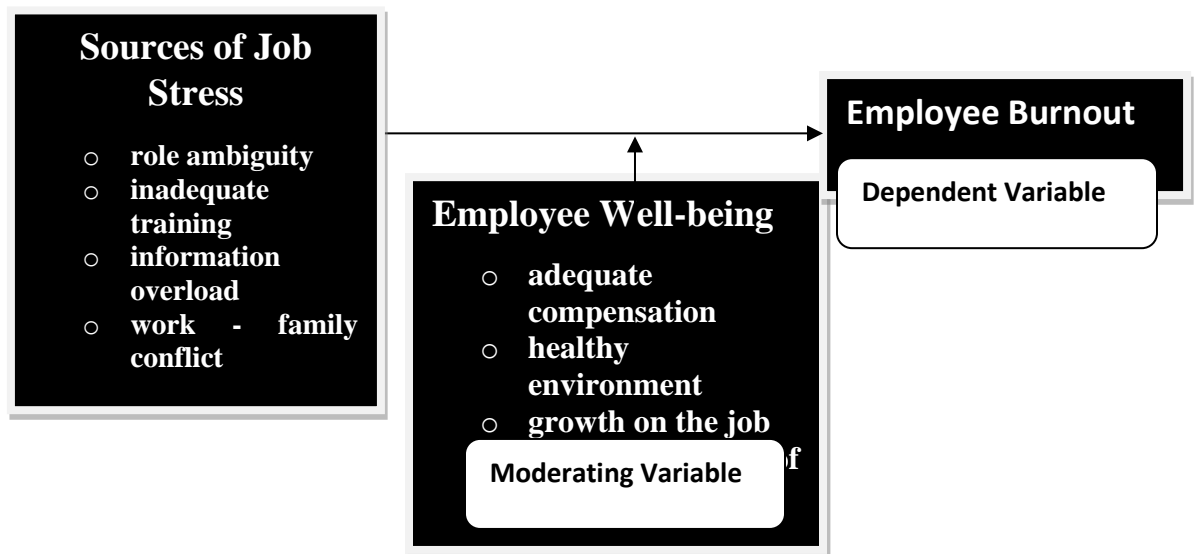


Figure 1: Theoretical Model showing the Moderating Role of Employee Well-being in the Effect of Job Stress on Employee Burnout

Source: Author’s Construction

The theoretical model presented in Figure I shows that job stress emanating from role ambiguity, inadequate training, information overload and work-family conflict results in burnout. However the effect of job stress on employee burnout could be moderated by employee well-being through the provision of adequate compensation, healthy environment, total life space, growth on the job and development of human capabilities

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework comprises key concepts used in the study. These include the concepts of job stress, employee burnout and employee well-being.

Job Stress

Chen (2008) defined job stress as a confessional response to the job descriptions of employees. According to Chen, job stress is a psychological pressure that is related to work and the ability of employees to respond to the particular situation at the workplace by using his/her skills. Brewer (2003) asserted that stress results because of incompatible fit between individuals and environment and the mismatch between objectives (reality of work environment), subjectives (individual perception about work environment) and lack of fit among demands and abilities or to fulfill these demands. Thus, lack of organizational support and job pressures causes job stress.

According to Khan (2014), the different types of stressors include role overload, high job demands, noise, lack of sleep and time pressure, among others. To Gillespie (2001), the five major sources of stress are; insufficient funding and resources, work overload, poor management policies, job insecurity and insufficient reward while for Adiatawi (2013), the causes of job stress are role conflict and role ambiguity (most employees lack the special training and their awareness level about their role is not clear). Reddy and Vijiya in Anuradha (2013) therefore, stated that the remedial coping strategies for job-related stressors include improving self-esteem or building self-confidence and working on building emotional intelligence competencies.

Employee Burnout

Generally speaking, burnout is a response to chronic work stressors, in which individuals feel depleted and unable to further cope with work demands. Subsequent research on burnout has identified two relevant dimensions of burnout, namely, exhaustion and disengagement (Demerouti, Bakker, Vardakou, & Kantas, 2003). While Maslach's (1982) initial conceptualization of burnout had important psychometric and theoretical limitations (Kalliath, 2001).

Demerouti and colleagues' (2003) revised conceptualization of burnout was not only applicable to a wide range of occupations, but had stronger theoretical and psychometric properties (e.g., Halbesleben & Demerouti, 2005). According to Demerouti and colleagues (2003), exhaustion is a reaction to prolonged exposure to work stressors, and in this context refers to emotional, physical, and cognitive forms of exhaustion. This definition of exhaustion is similarly applicable to employees who engage in prolonged physical labour or information processing. Disengagement is a physical and emotional response that can manifest itself as distancing oneself from one's work, or having negative feelings towards one's work. However, these dimensions of burnout have been collapsed into a single and featured as the study's dependent variable.

Employee Well-being

Employee well-being has been described as a term sometimes referred to as employee quality of work life (QWL), captured by Danna and Griffin (2009) as a hierarchy of concept that includes non-work domains such as life satisfaction, job satisfaction and more work-specific facets of job satisfaction including such things as pay, co-workers and supervisor. While working on the concept of QWL, Walton (1974) explains employee well-being in terms of eight broad conditions

of employment that constitute desirable quality of work life and proposed the eight criteria for measuring it. Those conditions/criteria include: adequate and fair compensation; safe and healthy environment; growth and security; development of human capabilities; the total life space; constitutionalism; social integration; and social relevance. Four of these criteria used in the present study have been adapted as follows: financial compensation, healthy environment, growth on the job and development of capabilities.

Empirical review

Ishaq and Mahmood (2017) examined the relationship between job stress and employee burnout-the moderating role of self-efficacy for University Teachers. The aim was to find out the relationship of job stress (JS) and employee burnout (EB) of university teachers and how self-efficacy (SI) moderates the relationship among psychological disorder of teachers in Pakistan, characterized by poor physical resources, inappropriate salaries, indiscipline, managerial issues, lack of well-equipped resources, among others. Data were collected from university teachers of Pakistan. Using SPSS and Warp PLS to process data, the study adopted analysis of variance (ANOVA) to test the hypotheses of study. Findings revealed that self-efficacy (SI) significantly moderated the relationship of job stress (JS) and employee burnout (EB) of university teachers among psychological disorder of teachers in Pakistan.

Demsky (2012) examined the moderating role of recovery experiences in the relationship between workplace interpersonal conflict and employee well-being. Specifically, it was hypothesized that recovery experiences (psychological detachment, mastery, control, relaxation, negative work reflection, positive work reflection, and social activities) would moderate the relationship between interpersonal conflict and employee well-being (job satisfaction, burnout, life satisfaction, and general health complaints). The study consisted of 299 participants that were recruited, 172 returned surveys (57% response rate), 65 of which were left out of the analyses due to missing data or missing significant other or coworker reports. The study sample consisted of 107 participants who were administrative assistants, coordinators of programs, directors, web developers and library associates. Questionnaire was used for data collection while Hierarchical Regression was used to test hypotheses. Relaxation was found to be a significant moderator of the relationship between self-reported interpersonal conflict and employee exhaustion. Additional analyses found mastery experiences to be a significant moderator of the relationship between coworker reported interpersonal conflict and both dimensions of burnout (exhaustion and disengagement). Several main relationships between recovery experiences and employee well-being were found that support and extend earlier research on recovery from work.

On the relationship between workplace stress, job characteristics, individual differences, and mental health, Mark (2013) adopted the cross-section design. Self-report questionnaire was used to gather quantitative data from approximately 1500 participants on a variety of job features, individual characteristics, and mental health and job satisfaction outcomes. Sample populations included nurses, university employees, and members of the general public in the South Wales area. Semi-structured interviews were also carried out on a small sample of university employees on the topic of stress at work, to provide an extra qualitative dimension to the data collection. The selection of the factors used in this study was made by referring to the occupational stress literature, and considering a range of variables from the most popular work-stress models, as well as important personal and coping variables in predicting mental health outcomes from the clinical

and social psychology literature. Independent variables included job demands, social support, job control, job rewards, intrinsic efforts (over-commitment), individual coping behaviours, and individual attributions for the causes of events, age, and gender. Dependent variables included anxiety, depression, stress-related illness, job satisfaction, and self-rated job stress. Descriptive statistics, ANOVA, correlation and regression were used for data analysis. The study found that work place demands were significantly related to increases in negative mental health and lower job satisfaction. Thus, 45% of Nurses reported that job stress worsened their sicknesses.

Methodology

The cross-sectional research design was adopted for the study. The study population was 178 employees of Benue State Investment and Property Commission (BIPC), Makurd, Benue State-Nigeria. Sixty (60) respondents were randomly selected while method questionnaire was used for data collection. Hierarchical Multiple Regression (HMR) was used for data analysis of the effect job stress on employee burnout with and without employee well-being in the estimated model. The study assumed that employee burnout is a function of job stress. This functional relationship stems from Freuden Berger, a psychiatrist who in 1974 stressed that “people faced exhaustion and fatigue as result of working too long, too much and too intensively”.

The relationship is stated mathematically as follows:

$$EBO = \beta_0 + \beta_1RAM + \beta_2 INT + \beta_3IMO + \beta_4 WFC + U \dots \tag{3}$$

Where EBO = employee burnout when the sources of job stress such as role ambiguity (RAM), inadequate training (INT), information overload (IMO) and work - family conflict (WFC) are used as independent variables.

The dimensions of the moderator, employee well-being (EWB) captured Walton (1964) in the Quality of Work life (QWL) as modified by Kwahar (2017) include adequate compensation (ADC), healthy environment (HEN), total life space (TLS), growth on the job (GOJ) and development of human capabilities (DHC). While introducing the moderator variables, the moderator model is specified as follows:

$$EBO = \beta_0 + \beta_1ADC + \beta_2 HEN + \beta_3GOJ + \beta_4DHC + U \dots \tag{4}$$

With the a-priori expectations: $b_i, >0$

Results of the Findings

Table 1: Hierarchical Multiple Regression Results of the Moderation Role of Adequate Compensation in the Effect of Role Ambiguity on Employee Burnout
Predicted Variable: EBO

Predictor Variables	Model 1(β)		Model 2 (β)	
		T		T
Role ambiguity (RAM)	34*	5.1	-39*	-1.4
Adequate compensation (ADC)			-.5.5*	-6.8
R²	.14		.26	
Δ R²	.14		.12	
F Δ	17.1		13.6	
Sig F Δ	17.1		-3.6	

Source: Computed using SPSS (V.21).NB: *indicates significance at 0.05 Level

Result of hierarchical regression presented in Table 1 shows that in Model 1, role ambiguity has significant independent prediction of employee burnout ($\beta = .34, p < .05$) with joint prediction of 0.14 ($R^2 = .14, F = 17.1, p < .05$). This means that role ambiguity accounted for 14.0 percent variation of employee burnout. With the inclusion of adequate compensation in Model 2, the variance for employee burnout was 26 percent ($R^2 = .26, F = 13.6, p < .05$) which accounted for .12 percent variance change in employee burnout ($\Delta R^2 = .12$). This means that adequate compensation will positively moderate the effect of role ambiguity on employee burnout in BIPC Makurdi. This finding is consistent with that of Ishaq and Mahmood (2017) who found out that self-efficacy (SI) significantly moderated the relationship of job stress (JS) and employee burnout (EB) of university teachers among psychological disorder of teachers in Pakistan.

Table 2: Hierarchical Multiple Regression Results of the Moderation Role of Healthy Environment in the Effect of Inadequate Training on Employee Burnout
 Predicted Variable: EBO

Predictor Variables	Model 1 (β)		Model 2 (β)	
		T		T
Inadequate Training (INT)	.20	4.0	.29*	4.4
Healthy Environment (HEN)			-.21	2.1
R²	.11		.16	
ΔR^2	.12		.18	
F Δ	8.5		7.6	
Sig F Δ	9.1		1.2	

Source: Computed using SPSS (V.21). NB: *indicates significance at 0.05 Level

Table 2 shows the result of hierarchical regression on the moderating role of healthy environment in the effect of inadequate training on employee burnout. The shows no evidence of the moderating role of healthy environment in the relationship as the moderator accounted for 16 percent effect ($\Delta R^2 = .16$) compared to the predictor ($\Delta R^2 = .11$), resulting in 5 percent variance change in employee burnout. This means that healthy environment will not moderate the effect of inadequate training on employee burnout in BIPC Makurdi. This finding contradicts that of Demsky (2012) who found mastery experiences to be a significant moderator of the relationship between coworker reported interpersonal conflict and both dimensions of burnout (exhaustion and disengagement).

Table 3: Hierarchical Multiple Regression Results of the Moderation Role of Growth on the Job in the Effect of Information Overload on Employee Burnout
 Predicted Variable: EBO

Predictor Variables	Model 1 (β)		Model 2 (β)	
		T		T
Information Overload (IMO)	.35*	5.3	.37*	6.0
Growth on the Job (GOJ)			.42*	
R²	.58		.61	
ΔR^2	.66		.68	
F Δ	22.5		27.0	
Sig F Δ	21.0		23.6	

Source: Computed using SPSS (V.21). NB: *indicates significance at 0.05 Level

Result of Table 3 shows that in Model 1, information overload has significant independent prediction of employee burnout ($\beta = .35, p < .05$) with joint prediction of 0.58 ($R^2 = .58, F = 22.5, p < .05$). This means that information overload accounted for 58.0 percent variation in employee burnout. With the inclusion of growth on the job in Model 2, the variance for employee burnout was 61 percent ($R^2 = .61, F = 27.0, p < .05$) which accounted for 3 percent variance change in employee burnout ($\Delta R^2 = .03$). This means that growth on the job will positively moderate the effect of information overload on employee burnout in BIPC Makurdi. This finding is similar to that of Golparvar (2012) whose study found that job stress moderates the relationship between emotional exhaustion and deviant behaviours.

Table 4: Hierarchical Multiple Regression Results of the Moderation Role of Development of Capabilities in the Effect of Work-life Conflict on Employee Burnout

Predicted Variable:				
Dependent Variable: EBO	Model 1(β)		Model 2 (β)	
		T		T
Work-life Conflict (WFC)	.45*	.47	.33*	8.2
Development of Capabilities (DHC)			.58*	
R²	31		.57	
ΔR^2	.39		.60	
F Δ	26.5		28.6	
Sig F Δ	18.1		23.8	

Source: Computed using SPSS (V.21).NB: *indicates significance at 0.05 Level

Table 4 shows the result of hierarchical regression on the moderating role of development of capabilities in the effect of work-life conflict on employee burnout. There evidence of significant moderating role of development of capabilities in the relationship ($\beta = -.45, p < .05$), accounting for 31 percent variation in employee burnout. The moderator however, accounted for 57 percent effect, resulting in 26 percent variance change in employee burnout ($\Delta R^2 = .60$). This means that development of capabilities will positively moderate the effect of work-life conflict on employee burnout in BIPC Makurdi. This finding agrees with that of Mark (2013) who fund that place demands are significantly related to increases in negative mental health and lower job satisfaction which could be improved by developing employee capabilities

Conclusion

The study was prompted out of the desire to find out the moderating role of employee well-being in the effect of job stress on employee burnout among employees of Benue State Investment and Property Commission (BIPC) Makurdi. The study concludes that employee well-being significantly moderates the effect of job stress on employee burnout among employees of BIPC Makurdi. Specifically, the study concludes that while adequate compensation significantly moderates the effect of role ambiguity on employee burnout, healthy environment does not significantly moderate the effect of inadequate training on employee burnout. Also, growth on the job significantly moderates the effect of information overload on employee burnout; and in the same vein, development of capabilities significantly moderates the effect of work-life conflict on employee burnout.

Recommendations

In view of this conclusion, the following recommendations are suggested:

1. The management of autonomous-operated corporations should ensure that employees are assigned specific and well-defined roles according to their areas of specialization while guiding against role overlap amongst employees of these areas of specialization. In addition, adequate financial and non-financial compensations including overtime allowances, bonuses and other rewards should be paid promptly to boost employee morale and ensure that unforeseen lapses are overcome.
2. While BIPC employee working environment is important, the organization should also ensure staff training is prioritized in areas of core competencies in line with global best practices. This should be done regularly to reduce incapability and job stress, and consequently prevent employee burnout.
3. Although employees should be assigned challenging workloads to enhance their optimum productivity, the management of public and private organizations should watch out against information overload since it could lead to employee burnout. The tight work schedules in workplaces require high workload, thus, employees should be motivated by promoting them regularly, guided by key performance indicators (KPIs).
4. Benue State Government should adopt the use of new technological devices like Telecast to provide employees the opportunity to work from home so as to resolve the work-life conflict imminent among employees of many organizations. To reduce the negative effects of work-life conflict, human resource development programmes should be organized by revenue generating organizations to reduce job stress and eliminate employee burnout.

References

- Adiatawi, F. (2013). Attitudinal disposition as a correlate to job stress. Concordia St. Paul Arden, H. (2014). A cultural-historical approach to distributed cognition on job stress and employee performance. In Salomon G (ed): *Distributed Cognitions: Psychological and Educational Considerations* Cambridge University Press, New York.
- Babakus, E., Yavas, U., & Ashill, N.J. (2009). The role of customer orientation as a moderator of the job demand burnout-performance relationship: A surface-level trait *Journal of Health Management*, 3(3), 1 - 26
- Chen, J.C (2008), The impact of locus of control on job stress, job performance, job satisfaction in Taiwan. *Leadership and Organizational Development Journal*, 29(7) 572-582.
- Cox, T., Griffiths, A., Barlowe, C., Randall, K., Thomson L. & Rial – Gonzale, E. (2018). *Organizational Interventions for work stress: A risk management approach*. Sudbury; HSE books
- Danna, D & Griffin, J. (2009). Effect of job demand and work schedule on employee satisfaction. *Journal of Occupational Behaviour*, 19(6), 739-774
- Demerouti, O., Bakker, S., Vardakou, F & Kantas, A. (2003). Job stress and employee burnout: The mediating role of financial compensation. *International Journal of Industrial Mental Health Education*, 4(2), 113 - 140
- Demsky, D. (2012). Moderating role of recovery experiences in the relationship between

- workplace interpersonal conflict and employee well-being. *Global Journal of Industrial Psychology*, 4(2), 59 - 76
- Golparvar, M., & Hosseinzadeh, K.H. (2011). Model of relation between person – job none fit with emotional exhaustion and desire to leave work: Evidence for the stress –non equilibrium – compensation model. *Quarterly Journal of Applied Psychology*, 20(1/17), 41-56.
- Govievski, M. & Hobfall, S. (2008). Work can burn us out or fire us up: conservation of resources in burnout and engagement. In Jonathan, and B Hallbielseben (Eds.): *Handbook of Stress and Burnout in Healthcare..* Nova Science Publishers 12, 7-22
- Halbesleben, P. & Demerouti, G. (2005). Correlates of workloads and employee burnout in Monrovia. *Global Journal of Industrial Psychology*, 4(2), 185 - 206
- Ishaq and Mahmood (2017). The relationship between job stress and employee burnout-the moderating role of self-efficacy for University teachers. *Leadership and Organizational Development Journal*, 29(7), 728-750.
- Kalliath, T. (2001). Job stress and employee satisfaction among factory workers in Taiwan. *Global Journal of Industrial Psychology*, 5(4), 126 - 163
- Karasek, R. A. (1979). Job demands, job decision latitude, and mental strain: Implications for job redesign. *Administrative science quarterly*, 24(2), 285-308.
<http://dx.doi.org/10.2307/2392498>
- Khan, N. (2011). *Compensation a tool for organizational effectiveness*. New Delhi: India.
- Kwahar, N. (2016). Effect of quality of work life on organizational effectiveness of Five Star hotels in Nigeria. PhD Thesis submitted to Postgraduate School, Benue State University, Makurdi.
- Kwahar, N. & Onov, P. (2019). The mediating role of stress tolerance between work stress management and employee service delivery among health workers of Federal Medical Center Makurdi, Benue State -Nigeria. *Journal of Sciences and Multidisciplinary Research*, 11(3), 29- 40.
- Kwahar, N. & Onov, P. (2017). *Design and analysis of Social and Management Research Studies: A practical guide*. Makurdi: Barden Publishers
- Mark, J. (2013). The relationship between workplace stress, job characteristics, individual differences, and mental health. *Journal of Mental Health Studies*, 2(1), 79 - 98
- Maslach, C., & Jackson, S. E. (1981). The measurement of experienced burnout. *Journal of Occupational Behavior*, 1(2,) 99-113. <https://doi.org/10.1002/job.4030020205>
- Sirgy, A. (2010). *Human Resource Management*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall.
- Walton, R. E. (1974). Improving the quality of work life, *Harvard Business Review* (Summer), 33 – 39.