TYPE A BEHAVIOUR AND BURNOUT AMONG BANK MANAGERS IN NIGERIA

Sunday Erhabor Idemudia*, Ayodele Samuel Jegede**, Ntomchukwu Sylvester Madu***, and Folashade Arowolo*

*Department of Psychology, Faculty of the Social Sciences, University of Ibadan, Ibadan, Nigeria.
**Department of Sociology, University of Ibadan
***Department of Psychology, University of the North

Abstract

This study examines the relationship between Type A behaviour and burnout. Data were gathered from 200 bank managers of four banks in Nigeria, with a mean age of 35.5 years (Age range: 20-65 years, SD=5.70) using a Type A behaviour scale.

Results revealed that Type A employees reported more symptoms of burnout than Type B personalities on all measures of burnout: emotional exhaustion, depersonalisation, and sense of personal accomplishment. The observed relationship between burnout and Type A behaviour remains significant for job related stress, environmental and personality factors. The need to cope and manage stress and burnout in enhancing employee overall wellbeing is suggested.

Key words: Type A behaviour, burnout, bank managers, Nigeria

Sommaire

Cette étude examine la relation entre le comportement de Type A et l’épuisement. Les données ont été recueillies auprès de 200 gérants de quatre banques au Nigéria, avec une moyenne d’âge de 35,5 ans (la portée de l’âge : 20-65 ans, DS=5.70) en utilisant une échelle de comportements de Type A. Les résultats ont révélé que les employés de Type A ont rapporté plus de symptômes d’épuisement que les personnalités de Type B sur toutes les mesures d’épuisement : la fatigue émotionnelle, la dâpersonnali-
sation et le sens d’accomplissement personnel. La relation observée entre l’épuisement et le comportement de Type A reste significative pour la tension nerveuse due au travail, aux facteurs ayant trait à l’environnement et à la personnalité. La nécessité de gérer et de venir à bout de la tension nerveuse et l’épuisement en améliorant le bien-être des employés est suggérée.

Mots-clé : Comportement de Type A; épuisement; gérants de banque; Nigéria.

INTRODUCTION

Burnout has been investigated in a variety of service occupations and settings and it has been recognized as a serious threat, particularly for workers (Schaufeli, Maslach & Marek, 1993). The construct has been linked to job stress, (Cordes & Dougherty 1993). According to Lee and Ashforth (1993), burnout has been the most widely studied correlate of job stress. Professional burnout is, in general, viewed as a syndrome consisting of three dimensions: emotional exhaustion (i.e., the depletion or draining of emotional resources), depersonalisation (i.e., a negative, callous and cynical attitude toward the recipients of ones care) and reduced personal accomplishment (i.e., the tendency to evaluate one self negatively with regard to one’s accomplishment at work, (Maslach 1993; Maslach & Jackson, 1986).

The authors could not find any documented literature on burnout among bank managers in Africa. However, more cases of burnout have been identified in South Africa among senior registered military nurses (van Wijk, 1997), Anglican clergymen (Struempfer & Bands, 1996), childcare social workers (Bhana & Haffejee, 1996) and university faculty members (educators) (Pretorius, 1993, 1994) than among other categories of workers. (Ebigbo, 1993, 1996) has also observed that somatic complaints among Africans are cultural ways of communicating idioms of distress.

Research on burnout has also shown that the concept is related to negative outcomes for the individual, such as, depression, a sense of failure, fatigue and loss of motivation, and also, a negative outcome for the organization such as absenteeism, turnover rates, and lowered productivity (Dougherty, 1993; Dierendonck, Schaufeli, & Buunk 1998; Schaufeli & Buunk, 1996). As a result, burnout has been considered as a special sort of stress and has been linked to adverse health and wellbeing measures. In the United Kingdom (Lane, 1993) and in Japan (Iwata and Suziki, 1997; Motohashi and Takano, 1995) researchers have reported of high level of stress among bank employees. However, the relationship between burnout and personality have not been fully researched, especially in Nigeria, where the
banking infrastructures and facilities are not as adequate as they are in most of the western countries; and in spite of that, the employees are under pressure to satisfy their clients and to perform well for promotion. (Ebigbo, 1993, 1996) has also observed that somatic complaints are wide spread in Africa (and Asia). He viewed somatization among Africans to be a kind of cultural way of communicating idioms of distress.

Many researchers, (for example, Arsenault & Dolan, 1983; Nagy, 1982) have associated stress with personality characteristics. For instance, there seems to be a positive association between stress in a sample of strivers-achievers that has similar characteristics with Type A personality, and a relationship between ‘workaholism’ and burnout. However, a direct association between Type A personality and burnout has not been documented. Lazarus, (1963) have described personality as the stable psychological structures and processes that organise human experiences and shape a person's actions and attitude to his environment.

In a Nigerian (Lagos) study, Mogaji (1990) argued that if people perceive job outcome as a challenge to feelings of self-concept; then people with Type A and B personalities will react differently to job outcome. Interests in Type A and Type B difference have stemmed from the positive association between Type A behaviour and susceptibility to various forms of heart diseases (Friedman and Rosenman 1974), Type A and smoking (Oyefeso, 1991). People with Type A pattern tend to be competitive, hard driving, aggressive, hyper-alert, and impatient with people and situation that hinder accomplishment, and are achievement oriented and continually under pressure. They often react to stressor with hostility and anger.

In a study by Keeman & McBain (1979) using a sample of 90 middle bank managers, role stress was associated with low job satisfaction and high level of tension at work, but this relationship was moderated by personality. The result indicated a stronger relationship between role ambiguity and psychological strain for Type A than Type B. Caplan & Jones (1975) found in their study that the relationship between workload and anxiety was greater for Type A than Type B, supporting the common notion that overload generate more psychological strain in Type A people than in Type B. A similar relationship of work overload and Type A was found in a study by Van, Peter, and Schalk, (1997). Considering the reported relationship between Type A behaviour and work overload, and stress, one can then hypothesise that Type A people would experience psychological burnout more than non Type A (or Type B) people.
METHOD

Participants:
Two hundred and twenty-two (222) employees (middle and top level managers) of four leading banks located in the South-western part of Nigeria participated in this study. The managers were chosen for the study since most of the clients’ complaints and requests are directed to them and they are also under pressure to perform well for personal growth in the company. Among the participants, 125 were males and 97 were females. They have the mean age of 35.5 (age range: 20-65 years, SD = 5.70). The participants were all the managers (middle and top level managers) from First bank of Nigeria Plc, Lagos, Union Bank of Nigeria, Plc., Ibadan, United Bank of Nigeria Plc., Lagos and Afrik bank Plc., Ibadan and Lagos, who agreed to participate in the study. These four banks in Nigeria have the highest workload (in term of clients) on employees in the banking sector. Participants were then stratified according to their score on the Type A behaviour scale (Bortner & Rosenman 1967). One hundred and fifteen (115) and eighty-five (85) participants fell into the Type A and Type B categories respectively. The remaining participants (22) fell within the moderate region and are therefore not clearly classifiable. They were thus eliminated from the study. Scores on the Bortner & Rosenman’s (1967) scale range from 15 to 75. Participants who scored 67\textsuperscript{th} percentile (P_{67}) and above were classified as Type A, while those who scored 33\textsuperscript{rd} percentile (P_{33}) and below were classified as Type B. The researchers have observed a test retest reliability (Cronbach alpha) of 0.79, (P < 0.01, N = 90) and a convergent validity of 0.35 (P < 0.05, N = 90) with respondent self-description as criterion, using a sample of employees of the University of Ibadan.

Burnout was measured using the widely utilised Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) (Maslach, and Jackson, 1986) scale. The scale measures emotional exhaustion (items 1 – 8), depersonalisation (items 9 – 13), and personal accomplishment (items 14 – 22). The MBI has been validated for a Nigerian (Yoruba) culture by Ayasi (1994). It yielded a Cronbach alpha of .72. A test retest, after two weeks and among 30 bank managers not included in this study, yielded Cronbach Alpha of .88. The items were measured on a forced-choice 4-Likert format with a range of strongly agree (4), agree (3), disagree (2), to strongly disagree (1). Thus the higher the score the more burnout experienced.
RESULT

Table 1 shows the group means for the personality types and burnout components.

Table 1: Summary Table Showing Group Means for Personality Type and Burnout Components

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variables</th>
<th>Burnout Components</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Mean Scores</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Type B</td>
<td>Emotional Exhaustion</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>16.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Depersonalisation</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>10.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sense of Personal Accomplishment</td>
<td>115</td>
<td>21.64</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type A</td>
<td>Emotional Exhaustion</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>25.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Depersonalisation</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>14.93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sense of Personal Accomplishment</td>
<td>85</td>
<td>24.82</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A comparison of means (table 1) revealed that Type A people ($X = 25.02$) experienced more emotional exhaustion than people with Type B ($X = 16.65$); persons with Type A also experienced more depersonalisation than people with Type B ($X = 10.53$) and employees with Type A ($X = 24.02$) experienced more sense of personal accomplishment than Type B ($X = 21.64$).

Table 2 presents a 3-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVAR) for Type A and Type B Personality Types and Burnout components.

Table 2: ANOVAR Table for Personality Types and Burnout Components.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>P</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Type A</td>
<td>3908.042</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3908.042</td>
<td>170.199</td>
<td>&lt; .05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type A</td>
<td>983.338</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>983.338</td>
<td>95.322</td>
<td>&lt; .05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Type A</td>
<td>507.019</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>507.019</td>
<td>58.287</td>
<td>&lt; .05</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The hypothesis that Type A people would experience more burnout than Type B was tested the a 3-way ANOVAR and the result was confirmed on all three components of burnout: ($F$ (1,192) = 170.199, $P < .05$, (emotional exhaustion), $F$ (1,192) = 95.322, $P < .05$, (depersonalisation), and on personal accomplishment, ($F$, (1,192) = 58.287, $P < .05$, (See table 2).
DISCUSSION

The result of this study appeared to have established a direct relationship between Type A and burnout. These findings appear to support other studies (Van, Peter, and Schalk, 1997) that has attempted to link Type A personality and stress, and Type A and burnout (Nagy 1997). These researchers believed that people who have Type A personality are more prone to experienced stress with greater intensity than Type B, which leads to a heightened stress response resulting in health consequences.

Cases of burnout have been identified in South Africa among senior registered military nurses (van Wijk, 1997), Anglican clergymen (Struemper & Bands, 1996), child-care social workers (Bhana & Haffejee, 1996) and university faculty members (educators) (Pretorius, 1993, 1994). The above categories of workers in South Africa and the bank managers in Nigeria may have certain common factors that make them prone to experience burnout. These may be task overload, personal-role conflicts, and high responsibility especially in decision-making. According to Ebigbo (1993, 1996), somatic complaints among Africans are cultural ways of communicating idioms of distress.

One implication of the findings of this research is the exposure of a rather complex inter-relationship between Type A behaviour, job stress, burnout and psychological wellbeing. If as revealed, Type A people experiences more burnout than Type B, then Type A people will also experience more stress and are more likely to develop job related psychopathological symptoms than Type B. This may then suggest that job related stress might not be explained completely by organisation – environment factors per se. Rather, there might be a need to investigate the interplay of personality factors, organisational and environmental predispositions. And the role of personality, which is also known to be a significant factor affecting health, may yet to be underestimated. However, one clinical implication of this study is that work may be a significant source of burnout with serious consequence for physical ill health. As a result organisational focus intervention at the macro level should be designed to reduce stress by reviewing selection and training procedures, developing more flexible and ‘employee friendly’ system and personal policy that more closely meet the needs and demands of the work place. Also formal burnout prevention programmes in addition to stress management programme could also be helpful. Stress inducing firms, should utilise Employee Assistant Programme (EAP) as practised in the United States of America which is a contracted agreement with a local mental health centre that can deal with psychological problems of burnout by prioritising goals, limiting objectives, establishing a realistic schedule for accomplishment and engaging in respite services.
Some limitations of the data should be recognised. The sample size was small from the banking sectors in Nigeria. There is the need to exercise caution in generalising the findings of the study to the whole of Nigeria. It is also possible that the relationship between Type A and burnout may not simply be linear as assumed in this study.

REFERENCES


