OCCUPATIONAL STRESS AND WELL-BEING: EMOTIONAL INTELLIGENCE, SELF-EFFICACY, COPING, NEGATIVE AFFECTIVITY AND SOCIAL SUPPORT AS MODERATORS

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Abstract

This study investigated the relationship between occupational stress and psychological well-being of teachers and the moderator effects of EI, self- efficiency, coping strategies, negative affectivity social support on the relationship. Measures of occupational stress, trait EI, self-efficiency, coping strategies negative affectivity and social support were administered on 420 secondary school teachers randomly selected from Southwest Nigeria. Data were analyzed using hierarchical multiple regression. Occupational stress was negatively related to psychological well-being. The moderator variables served as protective factors for teachers who experienced occupational stress. The clinical implications of providing counselling interventions for teachers who experienced occupational stress were discussed.

Key Words: Occupational Stress, Well-being, Emotional Intelligence, Self-efficacy, Coping, Social Support, Negative Affectivity.

INTRODUCTION

There is ample evidence that unresolved occupational stress results in low job satisfaction, poor work performance, psychological distress, (Morris & Long,2002), poor heath mental and physical well-being, absenteeism, turnover rate and intent to quit (Siu, 2002). One of the most damaging effects of stress is its impact on the economy. It is estimated that US industry loses several million working day annually due to absenteeism and over 50 percent of them are in some way stress-related (Siu, 2002). Similar figures have been reported for UK (Cooper & Cartwright, 1996). Empirical studies of the relationship of occupation stress to psychological adjustment have emphasized the importance of coping strategies (Brief, Burke, George, Robinson & Webster, 1988; Parkes, 1990) and social support (Morris & Long, 2002; Terry, Nielsen & Perchard,1993) in reducing the negative effects of stress. However, little attention has been paid to other mediating and moderating variables such as emotional intelligence, self-efficacy, and negative affectivity that can influence the relationship between stress and psychological well-being (Decker & Borgen,1993;Morris & Long,2002). Therefore, there is need to identify the potential occupational stressors and find variables that have beneficial consequences for the well-being of the employees and the organizations.

The teaching profession in Nigeria is replete with teachers who lack job satisfaction, career commitment and organizational commitment (Salami, 2005). High turnover has been reported among Nigerian teachers due to poor salary, intolerable working conditions, low prospects, motivation and prestige. Many of the teachers are overloaded with work due to high ratio of pupils to teachers and lack of relevant working facilities. These teachers had been reported to be working in stressful environments (Adesoji, 2004; Salami, 2005, 2009). Moreover, a shrinking job market, and the downsizing of organizations also contribute to their distress (Adebayo, 2006). Because the teachers have little direct organizational power or influence

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(Salami,2005), it is important to determine the role stressors and individual differences play in the teachers' ability to ameliorate the impact of work-related stress(psychological well-being) (Long,1998).Although the incidence of stress has been the subject of much research, comparatively, few studies have examined the relationship between stress and well-being and the moderating variables that can influence the relationship in Nigeria (Adeyemo & Ogunyemi, 2006; Salami,2005;Salami, 2001). Yet, it seems that the impact of stress on health and well-being is on the increase (Salami, 2005, 2009). It is, therefore, imperative to conduct a job stress research in Nigeria, to provide empirical data for research-based interventions to take care of the increasing number of clients who seek help for occupational concerns arising from occupational stress. The objective of the present study was to investigate the relationship between occupational stress and well-being among secondary school teachers in Nigeria. The study also examined the moderator roles of emotional intelligence, self-efficacy, coping, negative affectivity and social support in the relationship.

Occupational stress and well-being

Occupational stress can be defined as the experience of unpleasant, negative emotions such as tension, anxiety, frustration, anger and depression resulting from aspects of work. This study adopts the structure of the occupational stress questionnaire (OSQ) (Salami, 2003) as the theoretical framework of research. This is similar to the occupational stress indicator (OSI) constructed by Cooper, Sloan and Williams (1988). Cooper et al. (1988) demonstrated that stressful transactions are seen as a product of two intervening systems: people both exert impact on and respond to their environments. In short, the process of stress depends on the person's appraisal of the situation which is what determines whether the situation is stressful or not. Stress occurs when the magnitude of the stressor exceeds the individual's capacity to cope.

OSI has six sources of stress namely: factors intrinsic to the job, management role, relationships with others, careers and achievement, organizational structure and climate, and home/work interfaces (Siu et al., 2004). However, seven sources of stress contained in the items of the OSQ (see instrument section) was used in this study because it was based on data collected from workers in different organization in Nigeria which covered the teachers, nurses, civil servants and industrial servants(Salami, 2007). It is believed that seven sources of stress in OSQ namely: workload, interpersonal problems, time pressure, working conditions, leadership problems, inadequate facilities, and personal problems are inadequate facilities, and personal problems are applicable to secondary school teachers in Nigeria.

Psychological well-being is defined as a state that emerges from feeling of satisfaction with one's physical health and oneself as a person and with one's close interpersonal relationships. It is based on Ryff & Keyes' (1995) six key dimensions of well-being which are:(a) self acceptance based on the capacity to see and accept our strengths and weaknesses;(b) personal growth which emerges from realizing our talents and potential over time;(c) having positive, intimate and valued relations with significant others;(d) autonomy;(e) environmental mastery; and (f) finding purpose in life by having goals and objectives that give life meaning and direction. Many studies have shown that occupational stress is negatively related to job satisfaction and psychological well-being (Choi & Ward, 2006; Grau Salanova & Piero, 2001; Morris & Long, 2002; Salami & Awolusi, 2000; Siu et al., 2002). Work stressors have been associated with a variety of adverse health outcomes, including depression and distress (Cole, Ibrahim, Shannon, Scott & Eyles, 2002; Parkes, 1990).

Moderating Roles of Emotional Intelligence, Self-efficacy, Coping Strategies, Negative Affectivity and Social Support.

Trait emotional intelligence (trait EI) refers to the individual differences in the perception, processing, regulation and utilization of emotional information. It is a constellation of emotional-related self-perceived abilities and dispositions located at the lower levels of personality hierarchies (Petrides & Furnham, 2001). Individuals with high trait EI scores believe that they are in touch with their emotions and they can regulate them in a way that promotes well-being (Bar-On, 2005). These individuals should enjoy higher levels of happiness (Furnham & Petrides, 2003; Law, Wong & Song,2004). For example, several empirical studies have provided evidence of the positive relationship between emotional intelligence and life satisfaction (Wong & Law,2002; Wong, Wong & Law, 2002). There are also evidences in the literature that feelings of

powerlessness are related to negative emotions, sadness, fear and emotional intelligence (Roseman, Dhawan, Rettek & Naidu, 1995).

Several studies have found that trait EI was a significant moderator of the relationship between occupational stress and well-being (Ciarrochi, Deane & Anderson, 2001; Mikolajczak, & Luminet,2008;Mikolajczak,Menil&Luminet,2007).For example, Ciarrochi Deane and Anderson (2001) found that stress was associated with greater reported depression, hopelessness and suicidal ideation among people who are high in emotional perception compared to others. On the other hand, Law, Wong and Song (2004) argued that a person with high emotional intelligence should be able to recognize his or her emotions, to facilitate performance. As a result, this person should be happier as a whole in life. Although, there has been a growing interest in the interactive role of emotional intelligence in the stress-well-being link, the findings have not been consistent. Also, to the knowledge of the present author, no studies have examined the possibility that emotional intelligence may buffer the impact of occupational stress on the well-being among teachers. Given that occupational stress can generate anxiety and depression, it is reasonable to expect that teachers with high levels of emotional intelligence may be less prone to experience depression than teachers with low levels of emotional intelligence.

Self-efficacy refers to an individaual's belief in his/her ability to organize and execute the required course of action to achieve a desired result (Bandura, 1997). Research have shown that high levels of general self-efficacy were significantly associated with better psychological adjustment and reduced depressive symptoms (Morris & Long, 2002). Low sense of self-efficacy is associated with depression, anxiety and helplessness (Schwarzer, 1999). Self-efficacy has been found to play a moderating role in the study of stress and well-being (Bandura, 1997; Jex & Bliese, 1999; Schwarzer; 1999).Therefore, it is expected that self-efficacy will be significantly related to well-being of teachers. For example, Jex & Bliese (1999) found that self-efficacy moderates the relationship between certain stressors such as hours worked, work overload or task meaning, and some of their consequences such as satisfaction, physical symptoms, attempts to abandon the job and organizational commitment. However, Jex and Gudanowski(1992) found no empirical evidence of a moderating role of self-efficacy in the processes of occupational stress. The basis for this is found in considering control as a key factor in the stress process. Mere exposure to stressor with control by the subject has no adverse effects. However, exposure to stressors that occurs without control on the part of the subject may lead to undesired or harmful effects (Grau, Salanova & Piero, 2001). It is, therefore, expected that self-efficacy will moderate the relationship between occupational stress and well-being of the teachers. The inconsistent results in the moderating role of coping in the stress well-being link makes this study warranted.

Coping strategy is a response to perceived stress and is defined as constantly changing cognitive and behavioural efforts to manage specific external and / or internal demands appraised as taxing or exceeding the resources of the person (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). There are three forms of coping strategies viz: avoidant (efforts to avoid dealing with the problem), problem-appraisal (efforts to appraise the stressfulness of the event), and active problem-solving coping strategies (efforts to confront the problem).

Empirical research evidence has shown that coping strategies were significantly related to well-being (Balogun, 1997; Dunkley, Blankstein, Halsall, Williams & Winkworth, 2000; Salami, 2007; Siu et al., 2002). Dunkley et al. (2000) and Siu et al. (2002) found that coping was a moderator of stress-well-being link. However, Lu et al. (1999) did not find coping as a moderator of the link between stress and well-being. Given the inconsistent findings in studies that have investigated the moderator role of coping in the stress-well-being relationships, and the frequent theoretical statements about buffering effects of coping, this study examined the moderator role of coping in the relationship between occupational stress and well-being in order to fill the gap in the literature.

Social support is the extent to which individuals feel that provisions of social relationships are available to them. The social relationships maybe in the form of provision of emotional, informational or tangible support from family members, supervisors, peer/co-workers, subordinates and friends outside or in the work place (Allen,2003).Several studies have revealed that social support was positively correlated with psychological well-being (Dunkley et al., 2000; Salami, 2007, 2009; Siu et al., 2002). In contrast to these findings, a number of studies have failed to show may relationship between social support and health outcomes (Snapp,1992), and some studies have even found an inverse relationship (Hobfoll & Vaux, 1993).

Given the inconsistent findings, the present study examined the effects of social support on well being and expected that greater social support would be related to a reduction in depressive symptoms and better psychological well-being. The moderating role of social support in the relationship between work-related stress and psychological well-being has been reported in several studies (Dunkley et al., 2000; Salami, 2007; Siu et al., 2002; Terry, Nielsen & Perchard,1993). Social support serves as a buffer by protecting persons from the potentially pathogenic influence of stressful events. However, Lu, Tseng, and Cooper (1999) did not find any moderating effect of social support in the stress process. It is expected that persons under occupational stress who have higher social support will have a lower distress, depression or better psychological well-being.

Negativity affectivity is possibly the individual difference variable that has the most potential influence on self-report measures of occupational stressors, perceptions of strain and job satisfaction (Decker & Borgen,1993). Watson and Clark (1984) defined negative affectivity as a stable personality disposition that subsumes trait anxiety, depression, and low self –esteem. According to Watson and Kendall(1989) high negative affectivity is composed of terms reflecting a wide range of negative affective states including fear, nervousness, anger, guilt, contempt, disgust, sadness, loneliness and self- dissatisfaction. People who are high in negative affectivity tend to focus on negative aspects of themselves and others and life experiences and are more likely than people who are low in negative affectivity to report psychological distress. Some researchers have found that trait negative affectivity measures were significantly related to self-reports of physical complaints.(Verhoogen, Van den Bergh, Moens & De Wit, 1998; Watson & Pennebaker,1989).

Brief and Atieh (1987) argued that if an individual reports the existence of unfavourable job conditions and is distressed , it is possible that these responses may be indicative of negative affectivity. Watson, Pennebaker and Folger (1987) asserted that negative affectivity is a stable and general disposition with broad implications for stress, health and job satisfaction. Brief, Burke, George, Robinson and Webster (1988) found that the relationships between occupational stress and strain measures were considerably inflated by negative affectivity. Similarly , Bowman and Stern(1995) reported that a measure of negative affectivity was included in their study in order to control its demonstrated tendency to inflate relations between measures of occupational stress and psychological adjustment. Negative affectivity was found to be significantly related to self-reported occupational stress, psychological-well-being, negative affect scale and positive affect scale by some previous researchers (Bowman & Stern, 1995; Burke, Brief & George, 1993; Brief et al.,1988; Morris & Long, 2002; Parkes, 1990). According to Bowman and Stern (1995), Moyle (1995) and Verhoogen et al., (1998), individuals who are high in negative affectivity are likely to have high occupational stress and will tend to respond with high levels of distress and dissatisfaction. They also reported that individuals with low negative affectivity showed lower work stress and demonstrated low distress and higher psychological well-being.

However, empirical studies have not yielded a clear consensus, with some findings concluding negative affectivity contributed to stress-strain/well-being correlations(Burke et al., 1993;Schaubroeck, Ganster & Fox , 1992; Decker & Borgen, 1993) and others showing that the stress-strain /well-being relationship was independent of negative affectivity (e.g. Chen & Specter,1991). Therefore, it is important to measure and control for negative affectivity in the present studies that used self-report measures of both occupational stress and psychological well-being. Based on the inconsistent findings from studies that investigated the moderator role of negative affectivity in the occupational stress-well-being relationship, this study examined the moderating effects of negative affectivity in the occupational stress-well-being relationship among teachers.

The Present Study

Given the paucity of research that investigated the relationship between occupational stress and well-being, and the moderating roles of some psychological variables, and the methodological flaws in earlier studies (especially different conceptualizations of well-being) and contradictions in their findings, there is need to fill the gaps by examining the outcomes of occupational stress. The present study set out to investigate the relationship between occupational stress and psychological well-being among secondary school teachers. This study also examined the moderating roles of emotional intelligence, self-efficacy, coping strategies, negativity affective and social support in the relationship. It was hypothesized that

occupational stress and negative affectivity will be negatively correlated with psychological well-being (H1 and H2). It was further hypothesized that emotional intelligence, self-efficacy, coping strategies and social support will respectively be positive predictors of psychological well-being (H3, H4, H5, and H6). Lastly, it was hypothesized that emotional intelligence, self-efficacy, coping strategies, negative affectivity and social support will moderate the occupational stress-well-being link (H7).

METHOD

Research Design

The study adopted a survey research design to collect data from the teachers.

Participants

In total, 420 secondary school teachers (males=200, females=220) randomly selected from five states in Southwestern Nigeria were the respondents. The mean age for the sample was 36.75yrs (SD= 4.30yrs, range= 21- 55yrs). Levels of education of the teachers include; Nigeria Certificate in Education NCE,B.A.Ed./B.Sc. Ed., B.Ed., B.A./B.Sc., PGDE, M.Ed. The teaching experience of the teachers range from 2 to 26 yrs.

Measures

Occupational Stress Questionnaire (OSQ, Salami, 2003). This is a 50-item questionnaire that measures occupational stress factors viz: Workload, interpersonal problems, time pressure, working condition, leadership problems, inadequate facilities, and personal problems. Items are respondents to on a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from strongly disagree 1, to strongly agree 5. Range of scores is 50 – 250. The co-efficient of internal consistency Cronbach's alpha of the scale $\alpha=.85$. The OSQ has impressive norms and correlate highly (r=0.75) with the stress scale by Cooper, Cooper, and Eaker (1988).

Trait Emotional Intelligence Scale by Law, Wong, and Song (2004) known as Wong and Law EI scale (WLEIS). This is a 16 item scale consisting of 4 sections: Self emotions appraisal, Others Emotions Appraisal, Use of emotions, and regulations of emotions. Its adopted a 5- point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree 1, to strongly agree 5. The Cronbach's alphas of the sections range from .72 to .89.

Generalized Self Efficacy Scale GSES developed by Schwarzer and Jerusalem (1995). GSES is a 10-item scale that assessed self-efficacy based on personality disposition. It is measured on a 4-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = Not at all true to 4 = Exactly true. The Cronbach's alpha of GSES range from .75 to .90 for this study.

Social Support Scale: This is a modified version of the multi-dimensional scale of perceived social support developed by Zimet, Dahlem, Zimet and Farley (1988). It measured the degree to which the respondents felt satisfied with available social support. It is a 12-item Likert type scale scored on a 5-point scale ranging from 1= Strongly Disagree to 5= Strongly Agree. For this study, the Cronbach's alpha coefficient for the scale was 0.74. Negative affectivity –Negative affectivity was measured by the 14-item (true-false) Negative Emotionality (NEM) scale of Tellegen's (1982) Multidimensional Personality Questionnaire. The scale focuses specifically on the experience of negative effect. High NEM scorers report that they suffer from nervousness, that they are often irritated by small annoyances and that their feelings are easily hurt. Watson and Pennebaker (1989) reported adequate internal consistency (Coefficient alpha=.82) and high test-retest reliability (12-week retest, r=.72). Factor analyses of the NEM items reveal a single general factor. Watson (1988) reported a significant correlation between the NEM scale and perceived stress (r=.44). For the present study, the Cronbach's coefficient alpha for Negative affectivity was found to be r=.78 with the present study's sample.

Coping strategies were measured by using avoidant and active problem-solving coping items from the Ways of Coping Checklist (WCC, Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). WCC is a 42 item scale that measures coping strategies relevant to the work environment. WCC has 3 sub-scales viz: Avoidance, Problem – reappraisal and Active problem-solving strategies. Avoidance (17items) and active coping strategies (11

items) were used in this study. Respondents were to focus on the primary work-related stressors that had occurred during the previous weeks and respond to each coping strategy according to the degree to which it was used to deal with the stressors. The scale adopted a 4-point scale ranging from not at all (0) to use a great deal (3). Range of scores for avoidant coping is 0 – 51 and for active coping the range is 0 – 33. Cronbach's alpha for the sub-scales used in this study were: avoidance, α=0.84, active problem-solving, α=0.78.

Psychological well-being was assessed with a 42-item scale which comprises 6 sub-dimensions of well-being viz: autonomy, environmental mastery, positive relations with others purpose in life, personal growth and self acceptance (Ryff & Keyes, 1995). Respondents were asked to indicate there level of agreement with 42-self-discriptive statements based on a six-point Likert scale ranging from 1=strongly disagree to 6= strongly agree. Twenty items were reverse-coded. Higher scores imply higher psychological well-being Cronbach's alpha for the total scale was α=0.93.

Procedure

Prospective respondents were administered the questionnaires in their secondary schools by the researcher and some research assistants who were three undergraduates and three post-graduate students. Informed consents of the teachers and the school authorities were obtained. Of the 500 questionnaires distributed, 450 were returned given a return rate of 90%. However, only 420 (84%) questionnaires were properly filled and used for the data analysis while 30 were incompletely filled and were discarded. The confidentiality of the information obtained from the respondents was guaranteed.

RESULTS

Data Analysis

The data collected were analyzed using hierarchical multiple regression analysis in order to establish the relationship of the independent variables (occupational stress) and moderator variables (emotional intelligence, self efficacy, coping strategies, negative affectivity, and social support) to the dependent variable (psychological well-being). Following the recommendations of Cohen and Cohen (1983) the interaction between occupational stress and each moderator variable in predicting psychological well-being were tested.

Table 1 summarizes the zero-order Pearson correlations between psychological well-being and other measures in the study. The results show that significant correlations were obtained between psychological well-being and each of Negative affectivity($r=-.46$, $p<0.05$), Occupational stress ($r = -.28$, $p< 0.05$), Trait emotional intelligence ($r = .34$, $p< 0.05$), Self-efficacy ($r = .20$ $p< 0.05$), Avoidance coping and Social support ($r = .36$, $p< 0.05$). Correlations among the predictors vary from .09 to .31. None of the demographic variables correlated significantly with psychological well-being.

Table 1: Means, standard deviations and intercorrelation matrix of the demographic and predictor variables and psychological well-being (N = 420)

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
1. OS	1.00										
2. EI	.12	1.00									
3. SEF	.10	.24*	1.00								
4. AC	.15	.16	.17	1.00							
5. APS	.17	.22*	.31*	.09	1.00						
6. SS	.14	.18	.21*	.13	.26*	1.00					
7. PWB	-.28*	.34*	.20*	.15	.23*	.36*	1.00				
8. NA	-.27*	.21*	-.19*	.24*	-.20*	-.17	-.46*	1.00			
9. Age	.11	.09	.03	.01	.05	.02	.03	.15	1.00		
10. Gender.02	.10	.05	.05	.10	.08	.06	.17	.03		1.00	
11. MS	.07	.03	.06	.10	.08	.09	.07	.10	.05	.08	1.00
Mean	114.40	58.20	32.40	32.42	23.50	36.30	34.21	6.00	36.75	-	-
S.D.	3.75	4.23	3.20	2.80	3.81	4.50	2.50	2.80	3.40	-	-

Note: EI = Emotional Intelligence, PWB = Psychological well-being, OS= Occupational Stress, SEF= Self-Efficacy, AC=Avoidant Coping, APS= Active Problem Solving, SS=Social Support, NA= Negative Affectivity, MS=Marital Status, S.D. = Standard deviation, - = magnitude nil, * = p< 0.05(2-tailed).

Table 2: Hierarchical multiple regression analyses predicting psychological well-being from occupational stress, trait EI, self-efficacy, coping strategies, negative affectivity and social support.

Predictors	R	R^2	ΔR^2	ΔF	Df	ß	T
Step 1	.45	.20	-	18.50*	1,418		
Negative Affectivity						-.32	4.42*
Step 2	.48	.23	.03	12.70*	1,417		
Occupational stress(OS)						-.28	4.75*
Step 3	.55	.30	.07	13.40*	5,413		
Trait EI						.32	5.60*
Self-Efficacy						.25	4.50*
Avoidant coping						-.26	3.85*
Active coping						.30	6.75*
Social support						.28	7.20*
Step 4	.60	.36	.05	7.58*	5,408		
Interaction terms						-.20	3.84*
OS x NA						.25	4.30*
OS x Trait EI						.21	5.86*
OS x Self-efficacy						-.09	1.35
OS x Avoidant coping						.28	2.96*
OS x Active coping						.36	3.07*
OS x Social support							

Note: N = 420, EI = Emotional intelligence, OS = Occupational stress, * = p< 0.05 (2-tailed tests).
NA=Negative Affectivity.

A four step hierarchical regression was performed, whereby psychological well-being was regressed on negative affectivity, (step 1), occupational stress (step2), moderator variables (trait emotional intelligence, self efficacy, coping strategies, and social support) (step 3), and interaction terms (step 4). Since none of the demographic variables correlated significantly with psychological well-being, they were excluded from the regression analysis. These results are summarized in Table 2 and showed that negative affectivity accounted for a significant variance in psychological well-being accounting for 20% of the total variance. Occupational stress accounted for 23% of the total variance in psychological well-being. The higher the occupational stress and negative affectivity, the lower the psychological well-being. These results confirm Hypotheses 1 and 2. The results on Table 2 also demonstrated that all the moderator variables significantly predicted psychological well-being in step 3 (ΔR^2 =.07, $\Delta F_{(5,413)}$ = 13.40, p< 0.05).

Trait EI (ß=.32, p<0.05), Self-efficacy (ß=.25, p<0.05), Avoidant coping (ß=-.26, p<0.05), Active problem-solving coping (ß=.30,p<0.05), and social support (ß=.28,p<0.05) made separate significant contributions to the prediction of psychological well-being. These results revealed that Hypotheses 3, 4, 5 "and" 6 are confirmed as the entire moderator variables separately and significantly predicted psychological well-being.

Entering all the six interaction terms as a block in step four accounted for a significant increment of explained variance in psychological well-being((ΔR^2 =..05, $\Delta F_{(5,408)}$= 7.58, p< 0.05). Interaction terms OSxNA, OS x Trait EI, OS x Self- efficacy, OS x Active coping and OS x Social support except OS x Avoidant coping made independent and significant contributions to psychological well-being. Hypothesis 7 is therefore accepted.

These results indicate that the relationship between occupational stress and psychological well-being is influenced by the levels of negative negativity, trait EI, self-efficacy, coping strategies and social support. The occupational stress-well-being link becomes weaker for teachers having higher self-efficacy, emotional

intelligence, coping and social support and weaker for teachers having lower negative affectivity. Teachers who have higher levels of trait EI, self-efficacy, active problem solving, coping strategy, social support and high occupational stress reported higher psychological well-being. Teachers with high occupational stress who had higher negative affectivity had lower psychological well-being. However, teachers with high occupational stress who had lower negative affectivity had high psychological well-being.

DISCUSSION

This study investigated the relationship between occupational stress and psychological well-being and the moderator roles of trait EI, self-efficacy, coping strategies, negative affectivity and social support in the relationship. The results from this study show that occupational stress was negatively related to psychological well-being. These results are consistent with other studies that have found significant negative relationships between work stressors and well-being (Choi & Ward, 2006; Cole et al., 2002; Grau et al., 2001; Siu et al., 2002). These results might be due to the fact that occupational stress has negative effects on the individuals' physical and psychological health.

The results of this study provide strong support for hypothesis 2 which proposed that negative affectivity will be negatively related to psychological well-being. These results indicate that the greater the negative affectivity the lower the psychological well-being. These results support the findings of previous researchers who found that negative affectivity was strongly correlated with psychological distress and dissatisfaction (Bowman & Stern,1995; Brief et al.,1988; Burke et al.,1993; Decker & Borgen,1993; Morris & Long,2002; Parkes,1990). Results of this study also revealed that negative affectivity moderated the occupational stress-well-being relationship. Lower negative affectivity resulted in weaker relationship between occupational stress and psychological well-being. These results support the work of Burke et al., (1993); Parkes (1990), Schaubroeck, Ganster and Fax (1992) and Decker and Borgen (1993) who found that negative affectivity contributed to stress-well being correlations but contradicted the findings of Chen and Spector (1991) who reported that stress –well-being relation ship was independent of negative affectivity.

Reasons for these findings was that negative affectivity reflects a wide range of negative affective states that include fear, nervousness, range, guilt, contempt, disgust, sadness, loneliness, self-dissatisfaction and psychological distress. As such, negative affectivity can be said to influence the perception of occupational stress and psychological well-being in such a way that individuals with high stress and high negative affectivity demonstrate low psychological well-being Burke, Brief and George(1993) summarized characteristics of high negative affectivity individuals contrasted to lows as (a) more likely to experience distress and dissatisfaction; (b) more introspective and dwell more on their failures and short comings; (c) tending to focus on the negative side of the world generally; and therefore, (d) have a less favourable self-view and more dissatisfied with themselves and their lives.

That trait EI was a significant predictor of psychological well-being and moderator of the stress-well-being link supported the work of previous researchers who found that trait EI was a positive predictor of psychological well-being (Bar-On, 2005; Ciarrochi, Deane & Anderson, 2001; Mikolajczak, Luminet, 2008; Mikolajczak, Menil & Luminet, 2007). This result is due to the fact that individuals with high trait EI are aware of their emotions and can regulate them in ways that can assist them in dealing with occupational stress and promote their psychological well being.

Self-efficacy was found from this study to be a significant predictor of psychological well-being and moderator of the occupational stress-well-being nexus. These findings are in agreement with the work of previous researchers who find similar results (Bandura, 1999; Jex & Bliese,1999). However, these results contradicted that of Jex and Gudanowski (1992) who found that self-efficacy did not moderate the stress-well-being link. An explanation for these findings is that the teachers who experience occupational stress and also believed that they have the capability to cope effectively with stress, utilized available resources at their disposal to reduce it.

The results of this study further revealed that active problem-solving coping, avoidant coping strategies and social support were significant predictors of psychological well-being. These results supported

the work of previous researchers who found that coping strategies and social support were significantly related to psychological well-being (Balogun, 1997; Dunkley, et al., 2000; Salami, 2007,2009; Siu et al., 2002, Terry et al.,1993). That coping strategies and social support moderated the occupational stress-well-being relationship corroborated the work of Dunkey et al. (2000) Siu et al. (2002) and Terry et al.,(1993). Reasons for these finding derived from the fact that the teachers who experienced occupational stress used active coping strategies and had high social support from friends, family members and co-workers and supervisors to face the challenges arising from their work which consequently enhanced their psychological well-being.

Results from this study have implications for the provision of counselling interventions in clinical or organizational settings to the growing number of individuals who experience significant work-related stress and are at risk for psychological distress, burnout or physical illness. Although the results of this study did not warrant causal conclusions, they suggest that cognitive-behavioural techniques could be used by counselling or personnel psychologists to enhance trait EI, self-efficacy, coping strategies and social network and reduce negative affectivity of the teachers so as to reduce their distress and increase their enthusiasm in the work setting and their psychological well-being.

Results from this study showed that there was a clear occupational stress-well-being relationship after controlling for negative affectivity. This is an indication that while researchers need to acknowledge the importance of negative affectivity in stress–psychological well-being relationship studies, counselling interventions that are person-workplace (environment) focused rather than a more workplace focused approach should be adopted. Therefore, workers should be assisted by counselling or organizational psychologists in gaining a clear understanding of not only their organizational climate but also those of their personal issues. As such, interventions with components that aimed at reducing negative affectivity and facilitating, emotional intelligence, self efficacy, coping strategies and supportive work environments should be employed in reducing stress and dissatisfaction in the workplace. It is recommended that as much as possible, employers should remove all factors that could generate stress among workers from the work environment so as to enhance the well-being of the teachers.

A limitation of this study was that self-report measures were used in collecting data. It was not possible to have environmental assessment of the participants' stressors in their workplaces. Also only correlational study could be done, as such, no causal relationship could be drawn from the study. Future researchers could conduct longitudinal study and strive to obtain environmental assessment of the workers' stressors in order to have behavioural assessment of the participants' lives at work and the stresses that they have been subjected to. In conclusion, this study has demonstrated that occupational stress is a predictor of psychological well-being. The moderator roles of trait EI, self-efficacy, coping strategies, negative affectivity and social support have also been demonstrated in this study. It is suggested that future researchers could conduct this type of study with different occupational groups to provide more evidence for the generalizability of the findings from this study.

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