

# **WORK-FAMILY CONFLICT AND EMOTION REGULATION AS DETERMINANTS OF BURNOUT AMONG EMPLOYEES OF SELECTED BANKS IN IBADAN, NIGERIA**

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## **ABSTRACT**

*The developments in mergers and acquisitions in the banking industry have spiraled into layoffs and a decrease in the staff strength of most banks in Nigeria. Coupled with this increase in work-load, bank employees are also tasked with working for long and strenuous hours. This structure of the Nigerian banking sector is therefore embedded with accumulated stress related activities which can result in burnout. This study therefore examined the influence of work-family conflict and emotion regulation on burnout among bank employees.*

*This study adopted cross-sectional design to carry-out survey on bank workers. The research was conducted within bank organizations in Oyo state. One branch of each of the selected banks was utilized. A sample size of 152 employees was enlisted for the study. Purposive sampling techniques were employed in the selection of the participants of the study from the selected banks in the study area. Three standardized instruments were utilized in eliciting relevant information relating to the participants of the study. Four hypotheses were formulated and tested using appropriate statistics.*

*Results showed that work-family conflict had a significant influence on burnout among bank employees [ $t(150)=9.073$ ;  $p<.05$ ]. Emotion regulation also had a significant influence on burnout among bank employees [ $t(150)=7.383$ ;  $p<.05$ ]. Further results showed that age ( $\beta=-.244$ ;  $t=-2.717$ ;  $p<.05$ ), educational qualification ( $\beta=.332$ ;  $t=4.034$ ;  $P<.05$ ) and job status ( $\beta=-.283$ ;  $t=-3.440$ ;  $p<.01$ ) had significant independent influence on levels of burnout among bank employees. Finally, sex had a significant influence on levels of burnout among bank employees [ $t(150)=-2.270$ ;  $p<.05$ ].*

*The outcomes of the analysis showed that work family conflict and emotion regulation have significant implications for stress and burnout syndromes among bank employees. Based on the outcomes of this study, it was recommended that more flexible work schedules should be introduced to produce positive benefits for employees and a stress management training programme should be introduced into workplace policies. There should also be regular training and development programmes for bank employees aimed at developing social skills and emotional competencies of bankers. Since the role of cordial social interactions and adequate intelligence is required for frontline bank employees in enhancing productivity, it is necessary for these training programmes to be incorporated in the routine training and development schemes for bankers.*

**Key Words:** work-family, conflict, emotion regulation, burnout, merger, acquisition, determinants, banking, employees.

## **INTRODUCTION**

‘Burnout’ is a state of fatigue or frustration brought about by devotion to a cause, way of life, activity or relationship that failed to produce the expected reward. According to Pines and Aronson (2008), burnout is a state of physical, emotional and mental exhaustion caused by long term involvement in situations that are emotionally demanding.

Work-family conflict refers to situations in which the demands and responsibilities of work and family roles are incompatible in some respect. Work and family represent two of the most important aspects of adult life. Each of these variables contributes uniquely to our understanding of human behaviour. Although researchers have examined both variables theoretically and empirically, traditionally the examinations of these two crucial domains have been conducted independently of each other. However, researchers have long speculated that these two variables are related, and have since found that this relationship has emerged in the form of conflict.

Emotion regulation is the ability to be aware of one's emotion and still engages in goal directed behaviour though experiencing unpleasant emotion.

### **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

- To highlight the relationship among work-family conflict, emotion regulation and burnout among bankers
- To investigate the predictive roles of work-family conflict and emotion regulation on burnout among bankers
- To determine the impacts of age, marital status and job experience on burnout among bankers
- To examine the influence of gender differences on burnout among bankers

### **RELEVANCE OF THE STUDY**

This study would add to the existing knowledge in the literature of work-family conflict, emotion regulation and burnout for documentation, reference purposes and further research.

It would also help bank managements as well as the management of other organizations to be sensitive towards issues of work-family conflict. In this wise, necessary precautions can be put in place in order to protect the family interest of employees while ensuring reduced burnout levels and effectiveness at work. The results and recommendations from this study could initiate the implementation and incorporation of policies to cater for work-family conflicts in the banking sector.

### **RELATED EMPIRICAL STUDIES**

**Emotion Regulation and Burnout** Zammuner, Lotto and Galli (2002) examined variables that mediate emotional regulation. Italian men and women (N=180) working at a hospital as nurses, doctors, or in other technical roles, were administered a questionnaire comprising several scales, plus questions on socio-demographic and work-related variables. Results showed the regulation of felt emotions is a relevant variable of such jobs

### **STATEMENT OF HYPOTHESES**

1. Bankers who experience high levels of work-family conflict will report high levels of burnout than their counterparts who experience low levels of work-family conflict.
2. Bankers who exhibit high levels of emotion regulation will report low levels of burnout than their counterparts who exhibit low levels of emotion regulation.
3. Age, educational qualification, job status and job experience on will independently and jointly predict burnout among bankers
4. Female bankers will report higher levels of burnout than their male counterparts.

### **METHODOLOGY**

#### **RESEARCH DESIGN**

This study adopted an ex-post facto design via a cross-sectional survey. The rationale behind this option was based on the special features of the population under study using questionnaires for data collection.

#### **RESEARCH SETTING**

The research was conducted within bank organizations in Oyo state. The banks of interest were FCMB, GTBank, Access Bank, Diamond Bank, Wema Bank, UBA, Skye Bank, First Bank and Mainstream Bank. This preference was based on the proximity and accessibility to the researcher. One branch of each of the selected banks was utilized.

**SELECTION OF THE PARTICIPANTS:**

The potential participants for this study were bank employees within the selected banks in the study. A sample size of 152 employees was used for the study. Purposive sampling was employed in the selection of the participants of the study from the selected banks in the study area.

**RESEARCH INSTRUMENTS:** Three standardized instruments were utilized in eliciting relevant information relating to the participants of the study:

**Work Family Conflict:** Work family conflict was measured using a 12 item scale developed by Kopelman, Greenhaus and Connolly (1983).

**Emotion Regulation:** The Emotion Regulation Questionnaire (ERQ) by Gross & John (2003) is a ten-item questionnaire for which respondents indicated how much they agree with each statement on a seven-point likert scale

**Burnout:** The Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) developed by Maslach and Jackson (1997) was used to measure burnout.

**PROCEDURE:** The researcher made pre-arranged visits to the banks of interest. Employees were approached individually and intimated about the study. Questionnaires were distributed individually among consenting employees. Respondents were encouraged to ask clarification questions during the giving of instructions and completion of the instruments

**RESULTS AND INTERPRETATION OF DATA****Hypothesis One**

**Summary of t-test for independent samples showing the influence of work family conflict on burnout**

Work family conflict		N	$\bar{X}$	SD	df	t-test	P
Burnout	High	79	68.70	8.97	150	9.073	<.05
	Low	73	53.01	11.34			

Results from the table shows that work-family conflict has a significant influence on burnout among bank employees [t(150)=9.073; p<.05]

**Hypothesis Two**

**Summary of t-test for independent samples showing the influence of emotion regulation on burnout**

Emotion Regulation		N	Mean	SD	df	t-test	P
Burnout	Low	90	66.90	9.35	150	7.383	<.05
	High	62	53.67	12.71			

Results from the table show that emotion regulation has a significant influence on burnout among bank employees [t(150)=7.383; p<.05].

### Hypothesis Three

**Summary of Multiple Regressions showing the influence of age, marital status, work experience, qualification and job status on job performance**

Variable	R	R <sup>2</sup>	F	P	$\beta$	t	Sig.
Age					-.244	-2.717	<.05
Marital status					.116	1.284	>.01
Work experience	.465	.216	6.670	<.01	-.019	-.231	>.01
Edu. Qualification					.332	4.034	<.01
Job status					-.283	-3.440	<.01

**Dependent variable: Burnout**

Results from the table shows that age, marital status, work experience, educational qualification and job status had a joint influence on burnout levels among bank

### Hypothesis Four

**Summary of t-test for independent samples showing the influence of sex on burnout**

Emotion Regulation	N	Mean	SD	df	t-test	P
Burnout Male	61	53.70	13.27	150	-2.270	<.05
Burnout Female	91	63.38	11.88			

Results from the able shows that sex had a significant influence on levels of burnout among bank employees [ $t(150)=-2.270$ ;  $p<.05$ ].

## DISCUSSION

This study set out to examine work-family conflict and emotion regulation as determinants of burnout among employees in the banking sector. The outcomes of the analysis showed that work family conflict and emotion regulation have significant implications for stress and burnout syndromes among bank employees. Based on the results employees who experienced low levels of work family conflict reported low levels of burnout. The study also showed that emotion regulation had significant influence on burnout levels among bankers as highly emotionally intelligent people experienced low levels of burnout. Finally, age, educational qualification and job status emerged as a significant predictor of burnout among bank employees. These results have practical implications for workplace policy formation and management.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the outcomes of this study, the following recommendations are proposed.

- The introduction of more flexible work schedules produced positive benefits for employees and a stress management training programme should be introduced into workplace policies. It is believed that once the employees are happy in their work environment their job satisfaction will increase.
- There should be regular training and development programs for bank employees aimed at developing social skills and emotional competencies of bankers
- Management of organizations should implement practical policies that would cater for work and family interference. By ensuring that employees are not faced with conflicts from home due to their jobs, there would be higher levels of employee productivity.
- Management of organizations should also implement policies that would compensate employees in form of allowances or bonuses to cater for the cost work and family related conflicts.

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