Job Stress and Police Burnout: Moderating Roles of Gender and Marital Status

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Abstract

Previous studies on occupational burnout among police personnel did not pay enough attention to how gender and marital status may influence the connection between job stress and occupational burnout, especially where cultural beliefs direct gender and marital issues in relation to work, such as Nigeria. This study, therefore, investigated the extent to which gender and marital status moderate the relationship between job stress and occupational burnout. Participants were 213 police personnel (male = 120; female = 93) selected from 10 urban and 10 semi-urban police divisions in Nigeria. Their ages ranged between 20 and 54 years (M_{age}=38.15 years; SD =10.0). Results revealed that job stress significantly predicted occupational burnout such that an increase in job stress led to increase in the level of occupational burnout. Gender moderated the effects of job stress on occupational burnout in such a way that job stress tended to result in higher level of occupational burnout in female than in male police personnel. Similarly, marital status moderated the relationship between job stress and occupational burnout in such a way that police personnel who were married tended to report higher level of occupational burnout in the presence of job stress than those who were single. Implications for gender sensitivity and family supportiveness were discussed.

Keywords: job stress, burnout, gender, marriage, police, Nigeria

Occupational burnout, which refers to the extent to which employees experience emotional, physical exhaustion and reduced personal accomplishment (Maslach & Schaufeli, 2001), has been associated with job stress (Iroegbu & Nwaogwugwu, 2012), especially in human service occupations such as police (Wang, Zheng, Hu & Zheng, 2014). Concern about health of police personnel has dominated the focus of research in recent time (Adegoke, 2014; Avdija, 2014; Parsekar, Singh & Bhumika, 2015) probably because policing has been appraised as one of the high-risk occupations (Russell, 2014). The concern may be connected with the fact that occupational burnout is not only injurious to the employees but also the individuals who are recipients of their services (Xie, Wang & Chen, 2011). Occupational burnout may, therefore, adversely affect the functionality of police personnel in investigating, detecting, and managing crime, especially in Nigeria where inadequate facilities hamper effective policing (Brownson, 2012; Chinwokwu, 2012).

In recent times, Nigeria has been confronted with huge security challenges, exacerbated by increasing urbanization, population, inequality, unemployment, terrorism, migration and internal displacement, and criminal activities (Owen, 2014). These security challenges are currently compounded by sectional, religious, ethnic, and political crises, which may have serious implications for the well-being of the citizens and the socio-economic development of the country. For example, the security challenges in Nigeria's oil-rich Niger Delta Region are delivering a debilitating blow to the country's monolithic economy, which relies majorly on oil (Gonzalez, 2016; IMF, 2013). This may not only have an adverse effect on the country's oil production and economy but also on the price of oil in the world market. Since investors may not only be concerned about return on investment but also about the security of their investments, without adequate security of lives, property, and investment, Nigeria may not be able to sufficiently attract and retain local and foreign investments and human capital. Owen (2014) submitted that, despite the existence of other specialized agencies and bodies created to reduce security challenges, the Nigerian society and economy would find it difficult to function effectively and maximally without an effective police force. Therefore, the role of the Nigerian police in fostering internal security and socio-economic development cannot be over-emphasized.

The Nigeria Police Force, which grew from the colonial era, was established in 1930 (with a national outlook) to provide security for lives, property and investments in the country (Alemika, 1997). The level at which Nigeria's police force has met with its obligations has been queried in recent times. The level of functionality of the Nigerian police is being affected by inadequate facilities, training, personnel, and over-centralization of human and material resources (Osuji, 2012; Owen, 2014). In the face of technological constraints and other inadequate facilities, police officers in Nigeria generally rely heavily on their personal crafts to be effective (Owen, 2014). Therefore, as they struggle to meet the increasing security needs of the society, police personnel in Nigeria may be prone to job stress and occupational burnout.

Inadequate facilities and operational demands are two of the major sources of stress for police personnel (Amaranto, Steinberg, Castellano & Mitchell, 2003; Shane, 2010). Lazarus and Folkman (1984) defined job stress as a psychological state that results from perceived negative and threatening imbalance between employees' job condition and their psychological resources for dealing with the job conditions. Moon and Jonson (2012) submitted that high physical demands and life-threatening work conditions, compounded by changing socio-economic and technological conditions and high societal expectations (Deschamps, Pagnon-Badiner, Marchand & Merle, 2003), may expose police personnel to high level of job stress. Job stress may be more pronounced among police personnel in Nigeria because of the acute shortage of

police personnel compared with the population of the citizens they serve. According to Human Rights Watch (2010), the estimated 311,675 police personnel in Nigeria, as of 2008, were securing over 160 million citizens. Based on the United Nation's benchmark of 1 police officer to 400 citizens, Osuji (2012) submitted that there was a shortfall of 70,600 police personnel in Nigeria.

According to Roberts and Levenson (2001) and Wang et al. (2014), the negative imbalance in the police-citizen ratio may be a source of job stress to police personnel, especially in Nigeria (Ogungbamila, 2014a), because the shortfall in police personnel may culminate in work over-load and occupational burnout for the remaining employees (Ogungbamila, 2013). Previous studies (e.g. Wiese, Rothmann & Storm, 2003; Wang et al., 2014) reported a strong positive connection between job stress and occupational burnout, especially when such job-related stress is regard as oppressive and inescapable (Shane, 2010). For example, in a study involving 379 police officers, sampled from multiple police departments in the US, Russell (2014, p. 374) reported that "for every 1 percent increase in perceived stress, respondents reported nearly 12 percent increase in perceived burnout".

The strong connection between job stress and occupational burnout may have serious implications for women police officers, especially with the current call for an increase in the number of women in the police (Akinjobi-Babatunde, 2015). For example, based on a cross-national study that involved 23 police locations in America, Europe, Asia, Australia, and Africa, Prenzler and Sinclair (2013) suggested an urgent need to increase and maximize women participation in policing. According to them, apart from providing a stimulating work experience for women, the presence of women police would reduce reliance on force (Corsianos, 2011) and provide an alternative contact point for victims of crime who may feel uncomfortable with male police personnel (National Center for Women and Policing, 2001). Most countries, including Nigeria, are increasing the percentage of females in their police organizations. In Nigeria, as at 1993 (prior to the National Gender Policy), women constituted only 5% of the total population of the Nigeria Police Force (Akinjobi-Babatunde, 2015). However, with the introduction and implementation of and increasing adherence to the National Gender Policy (which targets, at least, 35% females in Nigeria Police Force), the number of women in the Nigeria Police Force increased to 12.40% in 2010 (Akinjobi-Babatunde, 2015; Ehiemua, 2014).

In spite of the increase in the number of females in the Nigeria Police Force, concern about the effects of job stress on female police personnel has not received adequate attention. Despite the increase in the number of women in paid employment in Nigeria, gender-based norms, which put the responsibility of cooking, cleaning, and caring for the children more on women, have not changed remarkably irrespective of whether the woman is in paid employment or not (Akinwale, 2009; Fawole, 2008; NCAA, 2016; Mudiare, 2013). In addition to their professional duties and the challenges of working in a typical male-dominated profession (Ehiemua, 2014; Martin & Barnard, 2013), women police personnel in Nigeria are also expected to adequately perform their roles as wives and mothers. These dual burdens (NCAA, 2016) may compound the level of job stress and adversely affect the functionality of policewomen in Nigeria and put them at higher risk of occupational burnout compared with their men counterparts. Ogungbamila (2014b) reported that the challenges associated with balancing work and family responsibilities culminated in occupational burnout. For example, female police personnel who are married are expected to balance family obligations with their job roles.

Despite the increasing number of female officers in the Nigeria Police Force and without a corresponding decrease in the socio-cultural responsibilities associated with gender and marriage in Nigeria, less research attention has focused on the roles of gender and marital status in the connection between job stress and police burnout. Therefore, investigating occupational burnout in the context of the professional and socio-cultural responsibilities associated with gender and marriage in Nigeria may present an interesting finding and add to the literature of women policing. The aim of the present study was to determine the extent to which gender and marital status moderate the relationship between job stress and occupational burnout.

Gender differences in job stress have been documented (He, Zhao & Ren, 2005) with mixed results. Some studies (e.g. Russell, 2014) found no significant gender differences in job stress among police personnel. Other studies (e.g. Kurtz, 2012) reported that women police officers generally reported higher levels of job stress than male police officers. In a study involving 1,104 police personnel, He et al. (2005) found that female police officers reported higher levels of job-related stress than male officers. Gächter, Savage and Torgler (2011) found that female police officers reported higher level of physical strain than their male counterparts. They added that though no gender differences in psychological strain, trust and interactional fairness at work significantly reduced the impact of physical strain in males but not in females. Results of other studies that investigated gender differences in stress indicators (such as organizational bureaucracy, community relationships, task identity, and autonomy) generally showed that job stress culminates in higher psychological (Kim, Wells, Vardalis, Johnson & Lim, 2016) and other health challenges for female police officers (Hussain, Sajjad & Rehman, 2014).

As pointed out in Liu, Spector and Shi (2008), gender differences in the perception of job stress may be connected with cultural and social construction of gender role expectations and responsibilities, especially in Nigeria; where gender-related socio-cultural norms still dictate social relations at work and home (Akinjobi-Babatunde, 2015). For example, in Nigeria and other patriarchal or male-dominated societies, gender relations and stereotypes are defined in such a way that women are socialized to be less competitive with low ability to cope with and withstand stress than men (Akinwale, 2009; Fawole, 2008; Mudiare, 2013). This implies that socialization leads to internalization and expression of socially and culturally determined social role of gender, which may not necessarily reflect the biological gender of the individual. Studies have shown that social role of gender was a stronger determinant of job stress than the biological role (Gianakos, 2000). Yu-Chi and Keng-Yu (2010) reported that masculinity and feminity characteristics were not more important than biological sex in employees' perception of job-related stress. They found that employees who showed masculine characteristics reported less job stress than those with feminine characteristics.

Apart from gender, studies have shown that marital status also exerts a strong influence on job stress, with policewomen being more affected than policemen (Kurtz, 2012). This may be because "family life … presents a unique stressor for women officers who are required to manage traditional roles as caregivers and wives" (Kurtz, 2012, p. 73). Since working mothers in Nigeria are still expected to perform their traditional roles alongside their professional duties, policewomen who are married may experience higher levels of job stress than their male counterparts. He et al. (2005) reported that work-family interference was a strong predictor of job-related stress among police personnel. Spill-over of work-family interference may be more pronounced among police personnel who are married than those who are single. In spite of job-related stress and negative work-family interference, female police personnel who have access to adequate social support may not experience adverse effects of job stress that emanate from job demands compared with those who do not have such opportunities (Rivera-Torres, Araque-

Padilla & Montero-Simó, 2013). Studies among police personnel suggest that negative interface between work and family demands increased job stress (Bazana & Dodd, 2013; Louw & Viviers, 2010). In a study involving 533 Polish citizens, Merecz and Andysz (2014) reported that negative interface of work and family demands compounded job stress and culminated in more incidence of occupational burnout.

Studies on gender and marital differences in occupational burnout have presented mixed results (Pines, Neal, Hammer & Icekson, 2011). Merecz and Andysz (2014) found no gender differences in occupational burnout among Polish employees. However, in a cross-cultural study, involving American and Israeli samples, Pines et al. (2011) reported that women reported a significantly higher level of occupational burnout than men. They also found that American employees were the more burned-out compared with Israeli employees. Among police personnel, the situation may not be totally different. This is because Kurtz (2012) found that women police officers reported higher level of job stress than male officers. He reported that marital status exerted a stronger influence on job stress in policewomen, but it had little or no effect on policemen. Since job stress is a strong predictor of occupational burnout in police (Russell, 2014; Shane, 2010; Wang et al., 2014; Wiese et al., 2003), it may not be out of place to assume that female police would experience higher level of occupational burnout than male police. Indeed, Elliot, Garg, Kuehl, DeFrancesco and Sleigh (2015) reported that women law enforcement officers were significantly more burned out than male law enforcement officers, even after adjusting for the effects of marital status and number of children.

In a study conducted among police personnel in Ibadan, Nigeria, Odedokun (2015) reported that police personnel who were married experienced lower level of occupational burnout than those who were not married. This finding may be more applicable to married police officers who have access to adequate social support, which might have helped them to cope with stressful situations including those emanating from the job (Rivera-Torres, 2013). For example, Gächter, Savage and Torgler (2010) reported that social capital (both at work and at home) significantly reduced occupational burnout among police personnel. Hu, Schaufeli and Taris (2016) found that work resources (social and task) were negatively related with occupational burnout in police officers. This implies that though marriage may be a source of stress for women police personnel in Nigeria, it can also be a veritable source of social capital, which may help ameliorate the effects job stress and reduce occupational burnout (Odedokun, 2015).

The job demands-resources model (Bakker, Demerouti & Euwema, 2005; Demerouti, Bakker, Nachreiner & Schaufeli, 2001) indicates that specific risk and demands, which are embedded in each job, culminate in job stress. However, the level of job stress is balanced out if the job resources, which Bakker et al. (2005) referred to as the physical, social and organizational aspects of the job that enhance personal growth and development, are adequate. Gächter et al. (2010) and Hu et al. (2016) submitted that social and job resources were associated with reduced occupational burnout among police personnel. However, in the case of Nigerian police, the socio-cultural roles of gender and marital status may interact with job stress to increase occupational burnout among police personnel, especially if there are no adequate social and family-supportive organizational resources that could mitigate the negative effects of work-family interference (Burke & Richardson, 2000; Ogungbamila, 2014b). This is because policewomen in Nigeria are usually expected to perform the socio-cultural roles of wife and mother in addition to their professional roles as police officers, irrespective of whether or not they enjoy adequate social support from their spouses (Ehiemua, 2014).

Therefore, contrary to the submissions of Odedokun (2015), if the marriages of policewomen in Nigeria are not situated within adequate social support from their spouses and family-supportive organizational resources, the buffering roles of marriage on the relationship between job stress and occupational burnout may not be guaranteed, especially in situations where married policewomen still perform the social and traditional roles of wives and mothers in addition to the professional police job. In this regard, marriage may be a source of social stress (Mudiare, 2013) instead of being a source of social support. Marital status may, therefore, compound the effects of job stress on police burnout (Elliot et al., 2015). Against this background, it is hypothesized as follows:

1. Gender will increase the relationship between job stress and occupational burnout of police personnel; with females reporting higher level of occupational burnout than males.
2. Marital status will increase the relationship between job stress and occupational burnout of police personnel; with those who are married reporting higher level of occupational burnout than those who are single.

Study setting

The structure of the Nigeria Police Force can be evaluated from 3 angles (command, administration, and organization), which are patterned to meet the constitutional expectations of the police (Obi-Anike, Ekwe & Ogbo, 2014). The command structure of the Nigeria Police Force reflects the hierarchical and regimental nature of its operations and directives, which implies that orders, directives and instructions are handed down from the Inspector-General of Police (who heads the Nigeria Police Force) down to the constable (the lowest rank). For administrative convenience, the Nigeria Police Force is divided into 7 administrative departments (structures): administration (Department A), operations (Department B), logistics and supply (Department C), investigation and intelligence (Department D), training and command (Department E), Research (Department F), and Information and Telecommunication Technology (Department G).

In order to enhance the supervisory formations of the police force, the Nigeria Police Force is further divided into 6 zones (organizational structure) in line with the geo-political structure of the country. The organizational structure starts with the Force Headquarters, which controls the Zonal Headquarters. State Commands Headquarters are under the supervisory commands of Zonal Headquarters. Under each State Command are the Divisional Police Headquarters, which supervise the Police Stations, Police Posts, and Village Police Posts (Obi-Anike et al., 2014).

The participants in this study were selected from the Ondo State Police Command. The Ondo State Command was selected because its structure was a reflection of the structure of the police organization in other states in Nigeria. The Command had 3 Commands (Owo, Ondo, and Akure) with 43 Police Divisions. Since police personnel in Nigeria are centrally controlled, the Ondo State Police Command would be home to individuals from the various ethnic and religious backgrounds in Nigeria (Amos, 2016). Therefore, the police in Ondo State may not be totally immune to the socio-cultural beliefs and practices that direct and guide gender and marital roles and expectations at work and home.

Method

Design and participants

This was a cross-sectional survey. Participants were 213 police personnel (male=120; female=93) sampled from 20 police divisions in Ondo State, Nigeria. Their ages ranged between 20 and 54 years (M_{age}=38.15; SD=10.00). In terms of job location, 125 (58.7%) were serving in 10 police stations in urban centres and 88 (41.3%) were serving in 10 police stations in semi-urban centres. Concerning marital status, 65 (30.5%) of the participants were single, 147 (69.5%) were married, and 1 (0.5%) of the participants did not indicate his/her marital status. Concerning academic qualification, 32 (15%) had up to Secondary School education, 64 (30.1%) had up to National Certificate in Education /National Diploma (which is higher than secondary school but lower than first degree), 88 (41.3%) had first degree or its equivalent, 19 (8.9%) had postgraduate degree, and 10 (4.7%) of them did not indicate their academic qualification. In the case of job status, 72 (33.8%) were at the junior cadre, 136 (63.9%) were at the senior cadre, and 5(2.3%) of them did not indicate their job status.

Measures

Job stress was measured using Occupational Stress Index (OSI) developed by Srivastav and Singh (1981). It was designed to measure the level of stress employees perceive from various constituents and conditions of their job (role overload, role ambiguity, role conflict, group and political pressure, responsibility for persons, powerlessness, under participation, poor peer relations, strenuous working condition, low status, unprofitability, and intrinsic impoverishment). It was a 46-item scale rated on a 4-point scale (1 = Strongly Disagree; 4 = Strongly Agree).

Sample items include: "I have to do a lot of work in this job" (role overload), "The available information relating to my job-role and its outcomes are vague and insufficient" (role ambiguity), "My different officers often give contradictory instructions regarding my works" (role conflict), "Sometimes it becomes complicated problem for me to make adjustment between political/group pressures and formal rules and instructions" (group and political pressure), "The responsibility for the efficiency and productivity of many employees is thrust upon me" (responsibility for persons), "Most of my suggestions are heeded and implemented here" (reverse-scored - under participation), "My decisions and instructions concerning distribution of assignments among employees are properly followed" (reverse-scored - powerlessness), "I have to work with persons whom I like" (reverse-scored - poor peer relations), "My assignments are of monotonous nature" (intrinsic impoverishment), "Higher authorities do care for myself respect" (reverse-scored - low status), "I do my work under tense circumstances" (strenuous working conditions), and "I get less salary in comparison to the quantum of my labor / work" (unprofitability).

Srivastav and Singh (1981) obtained .90 Cronbach's alpha for the overall scale. In the present study, OSI had a Cronbach's alpha of .84. In this study, job stress was measured as a composite psychological condition based on the overall score on OSI. High score on the measure of job stress indicated the participants were experiencing high job stress and vice versa.

Occupational burnout was measured using Maslach's Burnout Inventory (MBI) developed by Maslach and Jackson (1986) to assess the extent to which employees feel exhausted, callous, and underachieving as a result of daily work pressure. MBI was a 22-item inventory, which had 3 subscales rated on a 6-point scale (1=A few times a year; 6=Everyday).

Sample items include: "I feel used up at the end of the day's work" (emotional exhaustion), "I have become more callous towards people since I took up this job" (depersonalization), and "I have accomplished many worthwhile things in this job" (reverse-scored - reduced personal accomplishment). Cronbach's alphas ranging from .71 to .90 were obtained for emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment subscales (Maslach & Jackson, 1986).

In a study involving police personnel in Nigeria, Ogungbamila (2013) obtained a Cronbach's alpha of .81 for the overall scale. The overall score on MBI was used in the present study because the study was not designed to assess the components of burnout; but it focused on occupational burnout as a syndrome. The Cronbach's alpha of MBI, based on the present sample, was .84. A high score on MBI indicated that the respondents were emotionally drained from, were less responsive toward others, and felt incompetent or underachieving and vice versa.

Procedure
Out of the 43 police divisions in Ondo State, Nigeria (Ondo Command = 17 divisions; Owo Command = 14 divisions; Akure Command = 12 divisions), 20 police divisions were selected (10 from Ondo Command, 6 from Owo Command, and 4 from Akure Command). In selecting the divisions, all the police divisions in urban and semi-urban centers were arranged, separately, in alphabetical order and a Table of Random Numbers was used to select 10 divisions from the urban centers and 10 divisions from the semi-urban centers. The police personnel in the selected police divisions were given adequate information about the purpose of the study.

They were also informed that participation in the study was voluntary and that there were no known physical and psychological harms attached to the study. They were assured that they were free to discontinue with the study if they felt highly uncomfortable at any point in the course of participating in the study. Active randomization process could not be used in selecting the participants because of the nature of their job and the security situation in the country. Therefore, questionnaires were distributed to those who were available and willing to participate in the study. In all, 250 questionnaires (urban=150; semi-urban=100) were distributed. Out of the 250 questionnaires distributed, 213 were duly completed and found usable (urban=123; semi-urban=90). This yielded a response rate of 87.6%. Data collection spanned 5 weeks.

Results

Hypotheses 1 and 2 were tested with a 4-step hierarchical regression. In step 1 of the analysis, the socio-demographic variables were entered. Job stress was entered in step 2 of the analysis. The interaction effects of job stress and gender were added to the model in step 3. In step 4 of the analysis, the interaction effects of job stress and marital status were added to the model. The results are presented in Table 1.

Model	β	t	R	R^2	ΔR^2	F	ΔF
Model 1			.11	.01	.01	3.37*	3.37*
Age	.06	.54					
Educational qualification	-.20	-6.53**					
Job status	-.09	-.39					
Job location	.19	5.26**					
Model 2			.28	.08	.07	5.89**	2.52*
Age	.05	.35					
Educational qualification	-.19	-5.30**					
Job status	-.06	-.16					
Job location	.18	4.06**					
Job stress	.37	9.85**					
Model 3			.41	.17	.09	13.76***	5.08**
Age	.03	.26					
Educational qualification	-.17	-3.31*					
Job status	-.03	-.24					
Job location	.17	3.99*					
Job stress	.39	10.09***					
Job stress x gender	.59	14.50***					
Model 4			.39	.16	.08	12.82***	6.93**
Age	.02	.25					
Educational qualification	-.16	-3.25*					
Job status	-.02	-.22					
Job location	.16	3.24*					
Job stress	.40	11.22***					
Job stress x marital status	.42	13.01***					

Note: ** $p < .01$, * $p < .05$, N=213. Gender was coded male 0; female 1. Marital status was coded single 0; married 1. Educational qualification was coded: Less than first degree 0; At least first degree 1. Job status was coded: junior cadre 0; senior cadre 1. Job location was coded: urban 1; semi-urban 0.

Table 1: Hierarchical multiple regression on the moderating effects of gender and marital status on the relationship between job stress and occupational burnout

Results in Table 1 reveal that job stress significantly predicted occupational burnout such that increase in job stress led to increase in the level of occupational burnout ($\beta = .37$, $p < .001$). Gender increased the effect of job stress on occupational burnout in such a way that job stress tended to result in higher level of occupational burnout in female than in male police personnel [$\Delta R^2 = .08$, $F(10, 211) = 13.76$, $p < .001$]. Job stress alone accounted for 13% changes in occupational burnout, whereas its interaction with gender led to 35% changes in the level of occupational burnout among police personnel. Therefore, hypothesis 1 was supported.

Marital status moderated the relationship between job stress and occupational burnout. Marital status increased the extent to which job stress led to occupational burnout, especially among police personnel who were married than those who were single [$\Delta R^2 = .09$, $F(11, 210) = 12.82$, $p < .001$]. When the interaction effects of job stress and marital status were added to the model connecting job stress to occupational burnout the *beta* value increased from .37 (job stress alone) to .42 (job stress x marital status). The moderation effects of marital status accounted for 18% of occupational burnout, whereas job stress alone contributed 13% changes in the level of occupational burnout. The results in Table 1, therefore, supported hypothesis 2.

Additional analysis

Gender and marital differences in job stress might have accounted for the moderating roles of gender and marital status on the relationship between job stress and occupational burnout among police personnel (Bazana & Dodd, 2013; Louw & Viviers, 2010; Meško *et al.,* 2010). In order to ascertain whether differences existed in the level of perceived job stress of male and female police personnel, a t-test for independent samples was conducted. Another t-test for independent samples was also conducted to compare the level of perceived job stress between police personnel who were married and those who were single. The results of the analyses are presented in Table 2.

Variables	Groups	N	M	SD	t	p
Gender	Male	120	131.44	15.06	5.10	<. 01
	Female	93	145.88	15.08		
Marital status	Married	147	143.03	14.86	5.06	<.01
	Single	65	130.86	15.44		

Table 2: Summary of T test on gender and marital differences in perceived job stress among police personnel

As indicated in Table 2, gender differences existed in the level of perceived job stress among police personnel with female police personnel perceiving higher level of job stress than male police personnel [t(211), 5.10, p <.01]. Marital status had a significant influence on the level of perceived job stress among police personnel [t (211), 5.06, p <.01]. Police personnel, who were married, perceived higher level of job stress compared with those who were single.

Discussion and conclusion

A lacuna that has not been adequately addressed in burnout literature is how gender and marital status moderate the relationship between job stress and occupational burnout, especially among police personnel in Nigeria, where cultural and social expectations may direct how employees balance work and family obligations. Results show that gender moderated the effects of job stress on occupational burnout. Job stress increased the level of occupational burnout among police personnel. The findings of Wiese et al. (2003), Wang et al. (2014), Iroegbu and Nwaogwugwu (2012), and Russell (2014) that job stress increased occupational burnout, were supported by the results of the present study. This may be because of the negative imbalance in the police-citizen ratio in Nigeria (Osuji, 2012), which might have culminated in additional workload for the police personnel (Roberts & Levenson, 2001; Ogungbamila, 2014a; Wang et al. (2014). The results of the present study also corroborated the findings of Elliot et al. (2015), Pines et al. (2011), and Kurtz (2012) that female police officers tended to report higher level of occupational burnout than male police officers. The results of the present study on the independent effects of job stress and gender on occupational burnout might have prepared a suitable ground for the moderation effects of gender on the relationship between job stress and occupational burnout. Job stress alone accounted for 13 percent changes in police burnout. The addition of the interaction effects of gender to the model increased it to 35 percent.

The fact that gender moderated the relationship between job stress and occupational burnout may be associated with gender differences in perceived job stress. Female police officers might have perceived higher job stress than male officers (He et al., 2005; Kurtz, 2012; Meško et al., 2010; Russell, 2014) because female officers tend to use emotion-focused strategies to

managing job stress more than male officers do (Gächter et al., 2011; Greenglass, 2002). This may be because females in Nigeria are usually less socialized to withstand stress compared with their male counterparts who are more socialized to withstand stress in order to enhance their level of competitiveness (Akinwale, 2009; Fawole, 2008; Mudiare, 2013). Previous studies (e.g. Gianakos, 2000; Liu et al., 2008; Yu-Chi & Keng-Yu, 2010) have shown that gender roles were more associated with perceived job stress than biological roles. This implies that female police personnel in Nigeria might have reported higher level of job stress than their male counterpart because they had been socialized to belief that policing is meant for men and that women are not designed to withstand stress (Akinjobi-Babatunde, 2015).

In line with the expectations of hypothesis 2, marital status moderated the relationship between job stress and occupational burnout in such a way that marital status increased the extent to which job stress resulted in occupational burnout. The results of the present study might be associated with the negative interface between work and family demands, which compounded the level of job stress and culminated in high level of occupational burnout (Merecz & Andysz, 2014). Marital status might have moderated the relationship between job stress and occupational burnout because of the negative interference between work and family demands among police personnel who were married (Bazana & Dodd, 2013; Louw & Viviers, 2010). Marital status might have increased the extent to which job stress led to occupational burnout in married police personnel because of inadequate social support from the home front (Burke & Richardson, 2000; Rivera-Torres et al., 2013). This implies that marriage, which could have been a social resource (Gächter et al., 2010; Hu et al., 2016; Odedokun, 2015) compounded the level of job stress in police personnel and led to an increased level of occupational burnout.

The results of the present study extended the job demands-resources model (Bakker et al., 2005; Demerouti et al., 2001). The results of the present study have suggested that married employees, especially females, who might not have access to adequate family-supportive resources (which might help to buffer the effects of job stress), reported high level of occupational burnout (Burke & Richardson, 2000; Ogungbamila, 2014a). The results of the present study, therefore, suggest that family-supportive job resources should be provided by police organizations in order to reduce the effects of job stress and occupational burnout on police personnel. This is particularly important going by call for and the increasing number of women in policing. The family-supportive job resources may reduce the negative interface of job and family obligations; thereby reducing occupational burnout and enhancing the functionality, especially of women police officers.

A unique gap in knowledge that the present study has been able to fill is underscored in the fact that previous studies have not adequately documented the moderating roles of gender and marital status on the connection between job stress and occupational burnout among police personnel in Nigeria. Police personnel in Nigeria may be prone to occupational burnout when the effects of job stress interact with gender and marital obligations because gender and marital obligations are dictated more by social and cultural expectations rather than biological characteristics (Liu et al., 2008; Yu-Chi & Keng-Yu, 2010). In order to reduce the negative interface between job stress and gender, police organizations, especially where socio-cultural norms dictate gender roles and direct social relations, should evolve gender-sensitive procedures in police recruitment, training, promotion, and operations.

The present study has implicated work-family interference in the moderating roles of gender and marital status on the relationship between job stress and occupational burnout. The findings of the present study have made a unique contribution to literature on burnout in married police

officers. Its findings have pointed to the fact that family-supportive job resources may be important aspects that should be considered when applying the job demands-resources model (Bakker et al. 2005) to explaining occupational burnout, especially among policewomen.

In spite of the contributions of the present study, there is the need to investigate how perceived dimensions of family-supportive job resources moderate the moderated effects of gender and marital status on the relationship between job stress and occupational burnout of police personnel. This may help direct the focus of intervention on occupational burnout, especially among female police personnel who are married. This study did not investigate how rank of police officers may moderate the relationship between job stress and occupational burnout. Therefore, future study should include rank as one of the moderating variables in the connection between job stress and police burnout.

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