

The mediating effect of work burnout in the relationships between job demands and job performance of business educators

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Keyword : Business educators; job demands; job performance; public Universities; work burnout.	Abstract Following the postulations of the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) theory and the Conversation of Resources (COR) theory, this study examined the relationships between job demands and job performance of business educators with work burnout as a mediator. A nonexperimental quantitative research design was used to achieve the specific purpose of the study. The participants consisted of 142 business educators (12 HODs and 130 lecturers). The instruments for data collection was a structured questionnaire, adapted from existing psychological scales. The instruments were validated by three experts, two in Business Education and one in Measurement and Evaluation. Cronbach's alpha was used to obtain the reliability values for each scale: job demands ($\alpha = 0.84$), work burnout ($\alpha = 0.73$) and job performance ($\alpha = 0.95$). Data collected were analyzed using Pearson's correlation, linear regression and bias corrected and accelerated regression statistics. The findings revealed that job demands positively predicted work burnout and negatively predicted job performance; work burnout negatively predicted job performance, and work burnout significantly mediated the relationships between job demands and poor job performance. The authors recommended, among others, that university managers and administrators should endeavour to create a conducive, resourceful and motivated working environment as this will provide opportunity for business educators to surmount work burnout, which would eventually lead business educators to perform effectively on the job.			
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INTRODUCTION

Business education is a competency-based programme that is planned and organized to equip students with the skills and knowledge to be engaged in entrepreneurial and lifelong learning tasks upon graduation (Edokpolor & Muritala, 2017; Edokpolor & Agbonkpolo, 2018; Edokpolor, 2018c; Edokpolor & Adeniyi, 2019; Edokpolor, 2019b; Ile & Edokpolor, 2020; Ile & Edokpolor, 2021b; Ile & Edokpolor, 2022). The goals of business education programme are twofold: First, to equip students with the skills and knowledge to secure employment and second, to equip students with the skills and knowledge to progress in professional and occupational sub-disciplines (such as, office management and technology, marketing, and accounting), or in a related field in the industry (Edokpolor & Owenvbiugie, 2017b; Edokpolor & Egbri, 2017; Edokpolor & Enokeran, 2017; Edokpolor & Muritala, 2018; Edokpolor & Oduma, 2018; Edokpolor, 2019a; Ile & Edokpolor, 2022). There is a need for university administrators and managers to recruit competent business educators who will prepare business education students for career advancement in different professional and

occupational sub-disciplines (Ile & Edokpolor, 2021b; Ile & Edokpolor, 2022). The important role of competent business educators in preparing students for career progression in different professional and occupational sub-disciplines can be attained through the experiences of effective job performance (Ile & Edokpolor, 2021b; Ile & Edokpolor, 2022).

Business educators seem to perform their jobs in a demanding (that is, unmotivated and lack of resources) work environment (Ile & Edokpolor, 2022; Edokpolor et al., 2022c). Job performance of business educators refers to the execution and control of different job activities that may lead to the achievement of the goals of business education programme (Edokpolor et al., 2022c). Business educators carry out at least two broad job responsibilities, which include: task performance and contextual performance (Ile & Edokpolor, 2022; Edokpolor et al., 2022c; Edokpolor & Imeokparia, 2022). Task performance of business educators refers to behaviours that directly contribute to the core technical activities (Motowidlo & Van Scotter, 1994; Bang & Reio, 2017). Examples of task performance are teaching, research and administration (Ile & Edokpolor, 2021b; Ile & Edokpolor, 2022; Edokpolor et al., 2022b; Edokpolor & Imeokparia, 2022).

Business educators are expected to perform teaching task in classrooms where modern technologies are utilized for instructional purposes. For instance, teaching tasks vary widely and may include the use of PowerPoint, Internet, Skype, among others and various hands-on approach (Ile & Edokpolor, 2021b; Ile & Edokpolor, 2022). Business educators are expected to also conduct research through which they grow academically or professionally and contribute meaningfully to development worldwide. For instance, the research activities expected to be carried out by business educators include the use of special software packages to develop research models, the use of anti-plagiarism software to check similarities index in research, the use of PROCESS macro and AMOS plugging for SPSS, LISTREL, and GEN STAT, including other statistical packages for data analysis (Ile & Edokpolor, 2021b; Ile & Edokpolor, 2022). Business educators are expected to also carry out administrative activities through which the goals of business education can be achieved in an effective and efficient manner. For instance, administrative activities are usually by appointment, election or primary responsibility, such as heading a unit, department, faculty or institution; functioning as course advisers; involving in admission registration exercises; and planning, organizing, leading and controlling resources (Ile & Edokpolor, 2021b; Ile & Edokpolor, 2022).

Contextual performance of business educators involves the behaviour that is beyond core technical activities that impact the culture and climate of work environment (Motowidlo et al., 2013; Demerouti et al., 2015; Bang & Reio, 2017; Ile & Edokpolor, 2022). Examples of contextual performance include voluntarily helping colleagues to complete their jobs; putting in extra effort and time to complete a job; disclosing illegal activities or activities to those who are authorized to perform sanctions; voluntarily attending corporate meetings of various kinds; endorsing institutional goals; diffusing conflicts; and encouraging interpersonal trust among colleagues (Ile & Edokpolor, 2022; Edokpolor et al., 2022b; Edokpolor et al., 2022c).

It is observed that business educators perform numerous and complex job activities, which may lead to the experiences of work burnout. Work burnout refers to the psychological response to chronic and persistent job stress characterized by three-dimensional symptoms, namely: emotional exhaustion, cynicism and

decreased professional self-efficacy (Maslach & Leiter, 2016). Therefore, business educators who lacked energy and experience decrease in job resources, may be prone to work burnout syndromes and suffer decrements in job performance.

Prior studies have consistently found one major factor that can predict work burnout. For instance, some studies found that poor working conditions, such as the combination of high job demands and low job resources, is a fertile ground for the prevalence of work burnout (Bakker & Demerouti 2017; Shah et al., 2021; Mazzetti et al., 2022). Therefore, this finding suggests that employees who experience job demands are likely to be prone to work burnout which, in turn, perform poorly on the job. Job demands is defined as “those physical, social, or organizational aspects of the job that require sustained physical or mental effort and are therefore associated with certain physiological and psychological costs” (Demerouti et al., 2001, p. 501). Examples of job demands are work-family conflict, work overload and time pressure, among others (Nahrgang et al., 2011). Therefore, it is expected that job demands would negatively predict better job performance of business educators and could be attributed to their persistent experiences of work burnout. However, if job demands can be surmounted adequately, business educators may experience low work burnout which, in turn, may lead to better performance. A significant positive relationship may be found between job demands, work burnout and poor job performance. For instance, prior studies have consistently established that job demands are major predictors of work burnout (Schaufeli & Salanova, 2014; Bakker et al., 2014; Bakker, 2015; Shah et al., 2021; Edokpolor et al., 2022e). Job demands have been consistently found also to be major predictors of poor job performance (Wood et al., 2012; Bolino et al., 2015; Koopman et al., 2016; Edokpolor & Oviawe, 2022a). Work burnout is consistently found also to be major predictor of poor job performance (García et al., 2017; De Moura et al., 2021; Edokpolor et al., 2022c). These findings further suggest that the extent to which job demands can predicts the poor job performance of employees (including business educators) could be a function of their persistent experiences of work burnout.

Despite the fact that previous studies have established significant positive relationships between job demands, work burnout and better job performance, empirical evidence supporting the mechanism (i.e. work burnout) that could mediate the relationships between job demands (i.e. predictor variable) and job performance (i.e. outcome variable) is none existent, especially in developing countries such as Nigeria; a gap the present study has filled. Therefore, this study examined the relationships between job demands and job performance of business educators with work burnout as a mediator. The following research questions guided the study (1) to what extent do job demands predict work burnout among business educators in public universities? (2) to what extent do job demands predict job performance among business educators in public universities? (3) to what extent does work burnout predict job performance among business educators in public universities? (4) to what extent does work burnout mediate the relationship between job demands and job performance among business educators in public universities?

Theoretical Framework

This study is underpinned by two theories, first is the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) theory propounded by Demerouti et al. (2001) and second is the Conservation of Resources (COR) theory propounded by Hobfoll (1989). The JD-R theory explained how job demands can predict the job performance of business educators with work burnout as a mediator. The JD-R theory played an important role in explaining the mediating effect of work burnout in the relationships between job demands and job performance of employees. The JD-R theory by Demerouti et al. (2001) depicted that all occupations and professions have their own specific risk factor such as job demands associated with impaired well-being, such as work burnout. The JD-R theory by Demerouti et al. (2001) depicted that high job demands are experienced as a negative phenomenon, because it consumes energy and depletes resources as its consequences.

The JD-R theory is relevant to this study because it proposes a psychological process, known as a health-impairment process in which job demands represent the antecedents of work burnout, in turn leading to poor job performance. For instance, the JD-R theory by Demerouti et al. (2001) depicted that health-impairment process, which can be attributed to job demands can lead to work burnout and poor job performance among employees. Therefore, it is expected that if business educators experience job demands, they will equally experience work burnout, in turn, they will experience poor job performance. Similarly, if business educators experience work burnout, it will bring into existence the relationships between job demands and poor job performance.

The second theory underpinning this study is the COR theory propounded by Hobfoll (1989), representing a significant contributor to the research on job demands or stressors, work burnout and performance as variables or constructs. The COR is used to explain the existence of the demands-impaired performance relationships through strain (i.e., work burnout). The COR theory propounded by Hobfoll (1989) depicted that high work burnout represents a state where resources are critically low, that is, the reservoir of resources is “empty” and employees with high work burnout have a critical shortage of resources. Hence, these set of employees who experience high work burnout may become fragile and seek ways to minimize the drain on resources. Specifically, detaching themselves from their job to escape the resource loss condition. Hobfoll (1989) argued that the COR theory primarily constitutes two critical concepts that predict demanding job situations. By applying the COR theory, Meijerink et al. (2020) found that lack of job resources or high job demands are negatively related to work burnout. Similarly, this research found that high job demands are associated with work burnout.

The Proposed Model

The authors supported the research with a proposed model (see Figure 1) to establish the interplay between job demands and job performance of business educators in public universities in South-South Geopolitical Region of Nigeria with work burnout as a mediator. The authors developed a proposed model in order to further propose some testable hypotheses.

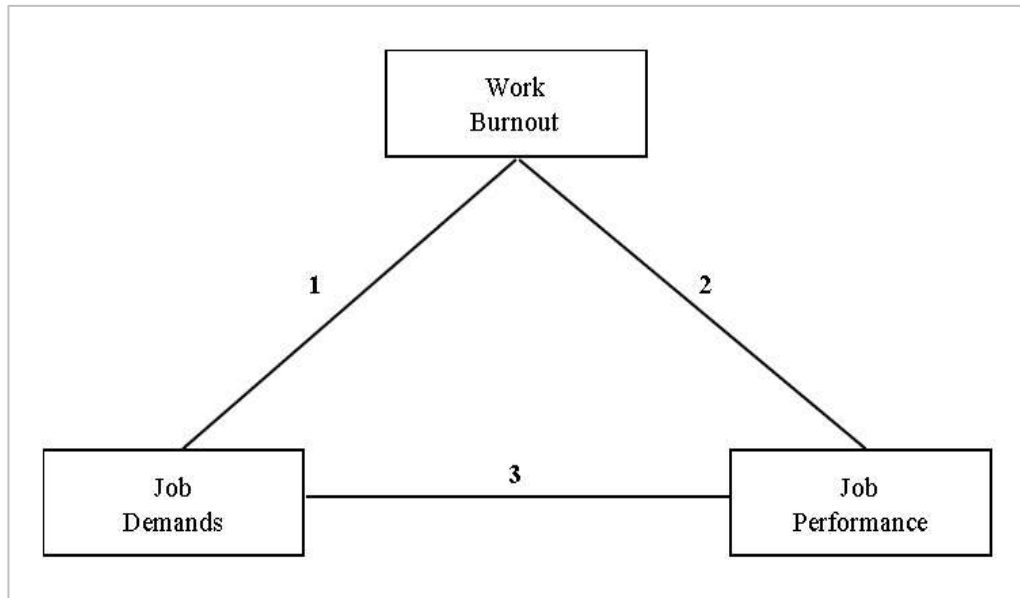


Figure 1: A Proposed Hypothesized Model

The underlying testable hypotheses includes: (1) when business educators are prone to job demands, they will experience work burnout and perform poorly on the job; (2) when business educators also experience work burnout, they will perform poorly on the job; and (3) when business educators experience work burnout, it will mediate the relationships between job demands and poor job performance. However, these underlying testable hypothetical propositions have been supported by the JD-R and the COR theories. As a result, the following hypotheses were formed.

Research Hypothesis 1: Job demands will significantly predict work burnout.

Research Hypothesis 2: Job demands will significantly predict poor job performance.

Research Hypothesis 3: Work burnout will significantly predict poor job performance.

Research Hypothesis 4: Work burnout will significantly mediate the relationships between job demands and poor job performance.

METHOD

A nonexperimental quantitative research design was employed to achieve the purpose of the study. This type of research design is suitable for this study because it helps to determine the degree of interplay between job demands, work burnout and job performance of business educators. As a result, the degree of interplay between job demands, work burnout and job performance were established with an r-value in the case of correlation and a p-value in the case of regression.

The participants comprised of 142 business educators (12 HODs and 130 lecturers) in 12 public Universities in South-South Nigeria, out of which five are managed by the Federal Government and seven are managed by the State Government. Data were obtained from office of the HODs of Business Education in the respective institutions, except in University of Port-Harcourt, where business education programme is housed

by department of educational management. A convenience sampling technique was used to select the 142 business educators as the study participants. A convenience sampling technique was used because the participants were available to the authors as at the time the research was conducted (Creswell & Poth, 2018).

The instrument for data collection were two structured questionnaire adapted from existing psychological scales, one for lecturers and one for HODs. The instrument for lecturers is titled: "Questionnaire on Job Demands and Work Burnout" and the instrument for HODs is titled: "Questionnaire on Job Performance". The instrument for lecturers comprised of 20 items in line with the variables covered. Lecturers rated their own experiences of job demands and work burnout on a 4-point scale ranging from 4=Always; 3=Sometimes; 2=Rarely; 1=Never. The instrument for HODs comprised of 30 items, measuring job performance. The HODs rated their own experiences of lecturers' job performance on a 4-point scale ranging from 4=Always, 3=Rarely, 2=Sometimes, and 1=Not at All. Job demands scale developed by Karasek (1985) was adapted to measure excess workload. An example of excess workload item includes: "My work requires intense concentration". Work-home conflict was measured by three items selected from a questionnaire of five items developed by Netemeyer et al. (1996). An example of work-home conflict item includes: "The time I spend at work detracts me from paying attention to my family". Work burnout sub-scales, which include emotional exhaustion, cynicism and decreased professional self-efficacy, were measured using a scale constructed by Maslach et al. (1996). An example of emotional exhaustion item includes: "I feel frustrated by my job". An example of cynicism item includes: "In my workplace, I don't really care what happens to people". An example of decreased professional self-efficacy item includes: "In my workplace, I deal with emotional problems very calmly". Task performance was measured using 25 items, covering teaching, research and administration and constructed by the authors. An example of task performance item includes: "To what extent does use software package to analyze qualitative research data". Finally, contextual performance was measured using a scale developed by Goodman and Svyantek (1999). An example of task performance item includes: "To what extent does voluntarily help colleagues to perform their job activities".

The instruments for data collection were subjected to face validity by three experts, two in Business Education and one in Measurement and Evaluation. The face validity was done with respect to relevance, sentence structure and adequacy. The suggested comments by these experts were effected in the final copies of the instruments and were reproduced for answering the research questions and testing the research hypotheses at a 0.05 level of significance. To establish the internal consistency of the items, 20 copies of the first instrument were administered on lecturers who were not part of the sample of the study. Similarly, 20 copies of the second instrument were administered on HODs, who were not part of the sample of the study. Thereafter, Cronbach's alpha was used to calculate the internal consistency of the items in both instruments, which provided coefficient alpha values of 0.84 for job demands, 0.72 for work burnout and 0.95 for job performance. Therefore, the alpha values obtained were greater than 0.70, which established adequate reliability measures for all the scales (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). This indicated that both instruments are profoundly and exceptionally reliable and can be utilized in any setting to measure the same items and variables at any given points of time.

Instruments for data collection were administered personally on the participants, with the help of six research assistants who were briefed on the procedures to follow. The participants were contacted via letters before the instruments were administered on them using a direct contact mode. The participants were allowed to complete the instruments and were given the chance to return them in two weeks later. Copies of the instrument on job demands and work burnout were administered on lecturers because the instrument measuring both variables were self-report in nature. Conversely, copies of the instrument on job performance were administered on HODs to respond about their experiences of job performance because the instrument measuring the variable were alternate-report in nature. In all, for approximate matching, the instrument for job performance were assigned codes. Such codes in a particular instrument correspond with the one HODs filled about their experiences of job performance. For instance, the coding for a particular instrument must be the same with the coding for the instrument of job performance that were filled by HODs. The purpose was to match the instrument for a particular lecturer side-by-side with the instrument that was filled by HODs for appropriate data analyses. The coding process was done by working closely with the respective HODs using the staff list of the department.

The IBM SPSS v. 23.0 and PROCESS Macro plugging for SPSS v. 3.4.1 developed by Hayes (2018) were used as statistical packages for data analyses. Statistics used in performing data analyses were correlation, linear regression and bias corrected and accelerated regression. Correlation was performed to answer the research questions. Linear regression was performed to test the unmediated effects. Model 4 of bias corrected and accelerated confidence interval was performed to test the mediation effect.

The decision rule for correlation statistic were based on a range of r -value. For instance, r -value between $\pm .8$ and ± 1.0 implied a very high correlation; $\pm .6$ and $\pm .8$ implied a high correlation; $\pm .4$ and $\pm .6$ implied a moderate correlation; $\pm .2$ and $\pm .4$ implied a low correlation; $\pm .0$ and $\pm .2$ implied a very low correlation; ± 1.0 implied a perfect correlation; and r -value of 0 implied a no correlation. When an r -value is negative, it implied a negative correlation; meaning that as one variable increases, the other decreases. Similarly, when an r -value is positive, it implied a positive correlation, meaning that as one variable increases, the other increases. For linear regression, when a p -value is less than or equal to 0.05 it implied significant (i.e. accept H_0). Similarly, when a p -value is greater than 0.05 it implied not significant (i.e. reject H_0). In order to perform the mediation analysis for Research Hypothesis 4, the authors adopted Baron and Kenny's (1986) approach, according to which there are four steps in establishing a significant mediation effect. First, there must be a significant relationship between the predictor variable and the outcome variable. Second, the predictor variable must be significantly related to the mediator variable. Third, the mediator variable should be significantly related to the outcome variable. Finally, a significant mediation effect shall be established when the relationship between the predictor variable and the outcome variable becomes significantly weaker (i.e. partial mediation) or nonsignificant (i.e. full mediation), after the inclusion of the mediator variable.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Table 1. Correlation between Job Demands, Work Burnout and Job Performance
 5000 Resample Bootstrapping Iterations

S/N	Pathways	<i>r</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>Bias</i>	<i>SE</i>	95%CI	
						<i>Lower</i>	<i>Upper</i>
1.	JD → WB	.275**	.001	-.003	.084	.100	.427
2.	JD → JP	-.251**	.003	.003	.098	-.436	-.046
3.	WB → JP	-.353**	.000	-.001	.086	-.520	-.187

Note. **. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed), *. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed), Unless otherwise noted, bootstrap results are based on 5000 bootstrap samples, *N* = 142, JD = Job Demands, WB = Work Burnout, JP = Job Performance, CI = Confidence Interval.

Data presented in Table 1 showed the correlation coefficients of association between job demands, work burnout and job performance of business educators in public universities in South-South Nigeria. The Table establishes a positive correlation between job demands and work burnout among business educators ($\beta = .275, p = .001$). All in all, job demands positively correlated with work burnout in public universities in South-South Nigeria. The Table also establishes a negative correlation between job demands and job performance ($\beta = -.251, p = .003$). All in all, job demands negatively correlated with job performance in public universities in South-South Nigeria. The Table also depicts a negative correlation between work burnout and job performance ($\beta = -.353, p = .000$). All in all, work burnout negatively correlated with job performance in public universities in South-South Nigeria.

Table 2: Linear Regression Estimates of the Relationship between Job Demands, Work Burnout and Job Performance

Pathways	<i>SE</i> (β)	<i>t</i>	<i>Bias</i>	<i>R</i> ²	<i>Adj. R</i> ²	<i>p</i>	95% CI	
							<i>LL</i>	<i>UL</i>
JD → WB	.269 (.275)	3.374	-.008	.076	.069	.000	.348	1.413
JD → JP	.654 (-.251)	-3.057	.047	.063	.056	.011	-2.961	-.395
WB → JP	.229 (-.353)	-4.435	-.010	.125	.118	.002	-1.223	-.327

Note. *N* = 142, *p* < 0.05, JD = Job Demands → WB = Work Burnout (*F*=11.386), JD = Job Demands → JP = Job Performance (*F*=6.347), WB = Work Burnout → JP = Job Performance (*F*=19.671), BCa = Bias-Corrected and Accelerated Estimates, CI = Confidence Interval.

Data presented in Table 2 showed the estimates of coefficient of relationship between job demands and work burnout among business educators in public universities. The Table shows the significant coefficients (*F* = 11.386, $\beta = .275, t = 3.374, p < 0.05$), which confirmed the result obtained. The corresponding adjusted *r*-square (.069) shows that 6.9% of variances in work burnout is determined by experiences of job demands. All in all, job demands significantly predicted work burnout experienced by business educators in public universities in South-South Nigeria. Hence, hypothesis 1 is accepted in the study.

Data presented in Table 2 showed the estimates of coefficient of relationship between job demands and job performance of business educators in public universities. The Table shows the significant coefficients (*F* = 9.347, $\beta = -.251, t = -3.057, p < 0.05$), which confirmed the result obtained. The corresponding adjusted *r*-

square (.056) shows that 5.6% of variances in poor job performance of business educators is determined by experiences of job demands. All in all, job demands significantly predicted poor job performance experienced by business educators in public universities in South-South Nigeria. Hence, hypothesis 2 is accepted in the study.

Data presented in Table 2 showed the estimates of coefficient of the relationship between work burnout and job performance of business educators in public universities. The Table shows the significant coefficients ($F = 19.671, \beta = -.353, t = 4.435, p < 0.05$), which confirmed the result obtained. The corresponding adjusted r-square (.118) shows that 11.8% of the variation in poor job performance is determined by the experiences of work burnout. All in all, work burnout significantly predicted poor job performance experienced by business educators in public universities in South-South Nigeria. Hence, hypothesis 3 is accepted in the study.

Table 3. Bias-Corrected and Accelerated Regression Estimates for Mediating Role of Work Burnout on the Relationship between Job Demands and Job Performance

Variables	Effects	Pathways	Beta (β)	SE	p	Job Performance	
						95% CI	
						LLCI	ULCI
Job Demands	Total	JD → JP	-1.748	.574	.0028	-2.882	-.614
	Direct	JD → JP	-1.152	.571	.0457	-2.281	-.023
	Indirect	JD → WB → JP	-.596	.294	<i>Sig.</i>	-1.281	-.148

Note. $N = 142, p < 0.05$, JD = Job Demands, JP = Job Performance, WB = Work Burnout, BCa = Bias-Corrected and Accelerated Estimates, CI = Confidence Interval.

Data in Table 3 depicts the mediating role of work burnout on the relationship between job demands and the job performance of business educators in public universities in South-South Nigeria. The Table revealed that the specific indirect effect of job demands through work burnout is statistically significant. The total effect of job demands on job performance is found to be statistically significant ($\beta = -1.748, p < 0.05$, LLCI = -2.882, ULCI = -.614). Conversely, the Table showed that the direct effect of job demands on job performance ($\beta = -1.152, p < 0.05$, LLCI = -2.281, ULCI = -.023) is found to be statistically significant. Since the specific indirect effect of job demands on job performance ($\beta = -.596, p < 0.05$, LLCI = -1.281, ULCI = -.148) through work burnout is statistically significant, work burnout is found to partially mediated the relationship. By and large, work burnout mediated the relationships between job demands and poor job performance experienced by business educators in South-South Nigeria. Hence, hypothesis 4 is accepted in the study.

The result from the correlation analysis showed that job demands associated with the work burnout experienced by business educators in public universities in South-South Nigeria. The result of the corresponding linear regression analysis indicated that job demands significantly predicted work burnout experienced by business educators, as job demands accounted for 6.9% of variances in work burnout. Therefore, job demands were found to be a significant predictor of work burnout among business educators in public universities in South-South Nigeria. This finding implied that as job demands experienced by business

educators' increases, their experiences of work burnout increases. That is, the higher the experiences of job demand by business educators, the higher they experience work burnout. This finding largely agreed with the JD-R theory by Schaufeli and Bakker (2004) and Schaufeli and Taris (2014), Bakker and Demerouti (2017) who depicted that high job demands are potential predictors of work burnout. The finding also corroborated the research by Aronsson et al., (2017) who found a significant positive relationship between job demands and work burnout among employees. This finding also supported the research of Leiter and Maslach (2016) and Mäkikangasa et al. (2021) who reported that job demands experienced by employees are associated with work burnout. This finding is also aligned with the the research of Zhang and Feng (2011), Lu and Gursoy (2016) and Edokpolor et al. (2022e) who found a significant positive relationship between job demands and work burnout.

The result from the correlation analysis showed that job demands associated with the job performance experienced by business educators in public universities in South-South Nigeria. The result of the corresponding linear regression analysis showed that job demands significantly predicted poor job performance experienced by business educators, as job demands accounted for 5.6% of variances in job performance. Therefore, job demands were found to be significant predictors of poor job performance experienced by business educators in public universities in South-South Nigeria. This finding implied that as job demands experienced by business educators' increases, their experiences of poor job performance increases. That is, the higher the experiences of job demand by business educators, the higher they experience poor job performance. This finding supported the study of Wu et al. (2019) who found that job demands have a non-significant role on job performance. The finding also supported the research by Edokpolor and Oviawe (2022a) who found that job demands is a significant predictor of poor job performance. The finding also agreed with the view of Van den Broeck et al. (2010) who suggested that job demands will consistently have a negative impact on job performance.

The result of the correlation analysis showed that work burnout associated with poor job performance experienced by business educators in public universities in South-South Nigeria. The result of the corresponding linear regression analysis indicated that work burnout is a significant predictor of the poor job performance experienced by business educators, as the work burnout accounted for 11.8% of variances in poor job performance. Therefore, work burnout is found to be a significant predictor of poor job performance experienced by business educators in public universities in South-South Nigeria. This finding implied that as the work burnout experienced by business educators' increases, their experiences of poor job performance increases. That is, the higher the experiences of work burnout by business educators, the higher they experience poor job performance. This finding agreed with the research of Wu, Hu and Zheng (2019) who found that work burnout has a significant negative impact on job performance of employees. The result also agreed with the research of Maslach et al. (2001) and Edokpolor et al. (2022c) who found a significant negative interplay between work burnout and job performance. The result also agreed with the JD-R theory by Demerouti et al., (2001) who depicted that work burnout will negatively predict performance of employees on the job.

The result of hypothesis 4 indicated that work burnout mediated the relationships between job demands and poor job performance in public universities in South-South Nigeria. In all, work burnout is found to be a significant mediator of the relationship between job demands and poor job performance of business educators in public universities in South-South Nigeria. This implied that job demands predicted work burnout and, in turn, increases poor job performance among business educators in public universities in South-South Nigeria. That is, the experiences of work burnout accounted for the relationships between job demands and poor job performance among business educators in public universities in South-South Nigeria. This finding supported the assertion of Sabagh et al. (2018) who opined that work burnout is a syndrome that fully or partially mediates the relations between job demands and impaired behavioural outcomes, such as job performance. The finding also agreed with the study of Crawford et al. (2010) who found that job demands are positively linked to work burnout which further leads to poor job performance. The finding also supported the assumption of the earlier version of the JD-R theory by Schaufeli and Bakker (2004) who proposed a mediated pathway of work burnout on the relationship between job demands and job performance. The finding also supported the empirical research of Schaufeli and Ahola (2008) who reported that work burnout mediated the relationship between job demands and impaired job performance.

CONCLUSION

The study focused on the degree to which job demands associated with job performance of business educators with work burnout as a mediator, which is relatively an area that have not received much empirical support, especially in the context of developing countries such as Nigeria. The study contributed to the JD-R and COR theories by providing a framework that examined the degree of interplay between job demands and job performance with work burnout as a mediator. For instance, the JD-R theory proposed a health-impairment process, suggesting that a job that is chronically demanding exhaust employees' resources, in turn, reduces energy (a state of burnout) and lead to poor job performance. Therefore, job demands are part of health impairment process that can foster work burnout and, in turn, leading to poor job performance. As a result, future studies should deeply focus on these interplay, by investigating the different dimensions that can be used in measuring job demands, work burnout and job performance.

The findings of this study provided practical implications for university managers and administrators. University managers and administrators can surmount the experiences of work burnout and increase job performance of business educators by fostering a resourceful working environment. Therefore, university managers and administrators can sustain job resources by ensuring that working environment are resourceful which will foster better job performance. Resourceful working environment should be created so that business educators can continually surmount work burnout and poor job performance. Therefore, devising strategies of creating resourceful working environment has become a salient priority for university managers and administrators. Based on the findings of the study, the authors concluded that the experiences of work burnout and poor job performance by business educators is a function of their exposure to job demands. The authors also concluded that the experiences of poor job performance by business educators is a function of their

exposure to work burnout. They also concluded that the experiences of work burnout accounted for the significant or strong relationship between job demands and poor job performance. In other words, the extent of relationship between job demands and poor job performance is as a result of the consistent experiences of work burnout.

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made: 1) University administrators and managers should endeavour to device some strategies of creating a conducive, resourceful and motivated working environment as it will provide opportunity for business educators to continually surmount work burnout. 2). University administrators and managers should endeavour to device some strategies of creating a conducive, resourceful and motivated working environment as it will provide opportunity for business educators to continually experience effective job performance. 3). University administrators and managers should endeavour to device some strategies of surmounting work burnout as it will provide opportunity for business educators to continually experience better job performance.

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