

BURNOUT OF TRAFFIC MANAGERS AND ITS EFFECT ON ROAD SAFETY: EVIDENCE FROM LAGOS STATE TRAFFIC MANAGEMENT AUTHORITY, LAGOS STATE, NIGERIA

SHOLESI, Olayinka Yusuf

olayinka.sholesi@lasu.edu.ng

Orcid no-0000-0002-0196-4026

Department Of Industrial Relations and Human Resource Management
 Faculty of Management Science, Lagos State University, Ojo

&

ABDUL-AZEEZ, Ibraheem Forson

ibraheem.abdul-azeez@lasu.edu.ng

School of Transport and Logistics
 Lagos State University

&

DOPAMU Ifeoluwa Oluwaseyi

ifeoluwa.dopamu@lasu.edu.ng

Department Of Industrial Relations and Human Resource Management
 Faculty of Management Science, Lagos State University, Ojo

ABSTRACT

Chronic work place stress which is caused by the burnout syndrome, has become one of the most psychological occupational hazard affecting traffic managers in a highly populated city like Lagos state. The study examined Burnout of traffic managers and its effect on road safety. The study adapted the descriptive survey research design, convenient sampling technique was used to selected fifty respondents for the study Google form questionnaire were sent to fifty traffic managers in strategic location in Lagos State. Three hypotheses were tested using Pearson product moment correlation and multiple regression using S.P.S.S 27.0 version. The findings revealed that there is a 50-2% moderate relationship between exhaustion and road safety, and 68.4% strong relationship between mental distance and road safety. The findings further revealed that exhaustion and mental distance account for 47.3% of road safety which is the combined effect of the indicators of burnout on road safety. The study concluded that increased mental distance of traffic managers caused by energy depletion, exhaustion and distraction is having a negative effect on safety of lives and properties on Lagos roads. However the study recommended among others that the traffic management authority should adopt flexible work practices and work life balance options such as self roistering (exchange shifts, shift picking) also they should organize regular fitness exercise, medical and psychological check up for their staffs to ensure they are fit and healthy for the job.

Keywords: Burnout, Road Safety, Exhaustion, Mental distance, Traffic Managers.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Globally road accidents have become a common phenomenon. This occurrence is responsible for the continuous increase in the number of fatalities and injuries being witnessed every year on our roads world wide. Ineffective traffic management caused by burnout of traffic manager is one of the factors responsible for frequent fatalities on Lagos Roads.

Traditionally the first author to use the term burnout in his novel is Greene (1960) who described the story of an architect who found neither meaning in his profession nor pleasure in life, the term was later introduced in the psychological sphere.

Maslach (2020) posits that burnout is a gradual process of fatigue cynicism and reduced commitment among social care professional.

Freudenberger (2020) sees burnout as a state of exhaustion, fatigue and frustration due to a professional activity that fails to produce the desired anticipation. It is a syndrome that results from chronic workplace stress, which is yet to be managed successfully, it has become one of the most vital psychological occupational hazard affecting traffic Managers in a highly populated and commercial city like Lagos State,(Buckley, 2004).

The European union framework directive on health and safety has also taken to cognizance the importance of burnout and why it needs to be addressed critically.

According to Maslach and Jackson (2020) burnout is characterized by three dimensions, feelings of energy depletion, or exhaustion, increased mental distance from ones work and feelings of negativism or cynicism related to ones job. All these symptoms occurs when an individual is expressing fatigue.

It is also associated with negative health outcome such as anxiety gastrointestinal disease hypertension, muscle tension and chronic fatigue. Thus the well being of the traffic managers is very vital, the potential health damage to the road ushers, makes traffic accident a public health issues also age and experience are documented predictors of the risk of road crash. It is based on the afore mentioned that this study seeks to examine burnout of traffic managers and its effect on road safety.

1.1 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The huge negative impact burnout is having on work and personal life of traffic managers is affecting the economy and society at large especially the transportation sector, considering the amount of fatalities and injuries occurring on Lagos roads, due to the burnout of traffic managers. Traffic managers are officers mandated to ensure road users keep to the rules and regulations governing the roads so as to minimize accidents and fatalities on the road.

Premised on this the world health organization has included this syndrome in the 11th revision of the international classification of disease (ICD – 11) as a pheromone limited to the occupational context due to the fact that it is affecting the economy and public heath of many countries.

Previous study (Valsania,Laguia, and Moriano, 2022; Schaufeli, Desart, and De witte, 2020; Habesleben and Buckley, 2004; that have been carried out in the transportation sector, on burnout focused on bus drivers little has been done on road traffic managers and this is affecting traffic management often causing road accident and fatalities on Lagos Roads.

The peculiarity of the Lagos environment which is the commercial hub of Nigeria and Africa's largest city (most populous) with a population of about (26,612,101) people as at 2022, (Wikipedia, 2023) with a land area of 3.77km² has made this study topical, coupled with the increasing fatalities and injuries occurring on Lagos Roads.Considering the hectic nature of the Lagos environment it is imperative to address the burnout syndrome of traffic managers in Lagos State. The physical and psychological health of traffic managers is a critical factor for their performance and safety on Lagos roads.

It is based on this that the study seeks to examine the burnout of traffic managers and its effect on road safety.

1.2 OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

1. To examine the relationship between traffic managers exhaustion and road safety
2. To investigate the relationship between the mental distance of traffic manager and road safety
3. To examine the joint effect of traffic managers exhaustion and mental distance on road safety.

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. To what extent is the relationship between traffic managers exhaustion and road safety.
2. What is the relationship between traffic managers mental distance and roads safety.
3. What is the joint effect of traffic managers exhaustion and mental distance on road safety.

1.4 RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

1. There is no significant relationship between traffic managers exhaustion and road safety.
2. There is no significant relationship between traffic managers mental distance and road safety.

3. There is no significant joint effect of traffic managers exhaustion and mental distance on road safety.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 CONCEPTUAL REVIEW

BURNOUT

Burnout has been conceptualized from different perspective, Studies have continued to link burnout to cognitive malfunctional and deficit. It was documented as stress symptoms, such as irritability, sleeping problems and tension, headaches, seem to occur in employees who suffer from burnout.

Burnout is seen to reveal excessive involvement characteristic of the frenetic subtype. The frenetic subtype is essentially of work situation with excess load and employees that work tirelessly until they are exhausted. It is also common in jobs with spilt shifts, temporary contracts and in general situation that make workers to be much more involved to keep the job.

Burnout is usually coursed by some factors, which can be classified into categories (i) organizational factors such as the workload or the emotional demands involved and (ii) individual factors which include the workers personality or coping strategies it is vital to emphasise that burnout syndrome is due to exposure to certain working conditions and not an individual characteristics such as a personality trait. Thus the triggers of burnout are factors that has to do with work for example the content, structure of relationship with users, clients, bosses and or colleagues.

Schaufeli and Taris (2020) posits that burnout is the combination of the inability and the unwillingness to no longer spend the necessary effort at work for proper task completion, based on this the inability manifest itself, in lack of energy and unwillingness increased resistance, reduced commitment lack of interest and disengagement

Furthermore Thorndike (2004) also opined that the basic tenet of fatigue is the intolerance of any efforts. The burnout phenomenon is represented in two components namely inability and unwillingness which act as energetic and motivational dimension respectively.

Road Safety

Road safety has to do with the methods and measures put in place to reduce the risk of a person using the road network from being severely injured or killed. The people that make use of the road include motorists, pedestrians, and cyclists. Lave and Elias (1994) posit that nations have set maximum speed limits for a specific class or group of vehicles and on roads and locations. Road safety is emerging as a foremost concern around the world. Drinking, driving and ineffective traffic managers are major public health challenges and the greatest problems facing road safety globally.

2.2 THEORETICAL REVIEW

The following are some of the theories examined:

1. Social exchange theory(1961) By George Homans
2. Organizational Theory (1982)By Maslach (Burn out in Organizational life)

2.3 SOCIAL EXCHANGE THEORY

This approach is characterized by giving a central role to individual variables such as self-efficacy, self-confidence, and self-concept in the development and evolution of Burnout. So this syndrome is triggered when the worker harbors doubts about their own effectiveness in achieving professional goals. The social psychological and sociological approach known as social

exchange theory explains social development and stability as a process of negotiated trade between parties. The social exchange theory holds that subjective cost-benefit analysis and the appraisal of options are the foundations of human relationships. The theory is based on sociology, psychology, and economic theory. Social exchange theory is frequently used in the business world to indicate a two-sided, reciprocally contingent, and rewarding process including transactions or simply exchange. It also shares many of the fundamental principles of structuralism and rational choice theory.

Self-interest and interdependence are two key components of social interaction, according to Homans, who thought that the theory was founded on reinforcement principles. When two or more actors have anything of value to one another, they must decide whether and how much to exchange. Three basic sorts of interaction take place. Homans uses the idea of individualism to define individual self interest as a combination of psychological and economic needs. Pursuing one's own interests is typically the rule in the economic realm of the social exchange theory, where competition and greed can be widespread.

Self interest is not a bad thing in social trade; rather, when it is acknowledged, it will serve as the driving force behind interpersonal connections for the benefit of both parties. Models of social exchange also assume that interactions and decisions are influenced by costs and rewards, and that both parties in a social trade are reliant on and responsible for one another. A partner's shortcomings and the time and effort needed to maintain a relationship are examples of relationship life's low perceived value elements that are referred to as "the cost of relationship life" (costs can be time, money, effort etc). Rewards are the facets of a relationship that have positive value. (Among other things, rewards include feelings of approval, aid, and camaraderie.)

In order to help structure individual behaviour based on benefits and costs, Homans (1961) proposed five basic premises. The fundamental principles of social exchange theory as applied to humans are embodied in this group of theoretical concepts.

- i. The initial premise According to the success proposition, people will frequently repeat actions that have positive results.
- ii. The stimulus hypothesis, which is the second claim, holds that if a person's behaviour has been rewarded in the past, they will likely continue to act in that way.
- iii. The third claim: The value statement contends that behaviour is more likely to take place if the outcome is deemed desirable to the individual.
- iv. The fourth claim is in clause. According to the deprivation satiation hypothesis, a reward's value will decrease if a person receives it multiple times.

The fifth premise explores how emotions are triggered by various reward scenarios. Those who are pleased and behave favourably are those who either obtain more than they expected or do not incur the anticipated consequence

2.4 ORGANIZATIONAL THEORY

This theory posits that burnout is a consequence of organizational and work stressors combined with inadequate individual coping strategies. This theory explain two alternative modules to explain the relationship between the dimensions of burnout.

Golembewski, Munzenrider, Carter, (2005) posits that burnout starts because of the existence of organizational stressors or risk factors such as work overload or role ambiguity and before which some individuals show as a coping strategy a decrease in their organisational commitment which is very similar to cynicism and depersonalisation.

Thus, the person will experience low personal fulfillment of work and emotional exhaustion which triggers burnout syndrome. Therefore, depersonalization would be the first phase of burnout

followed by a feeling of low self – fulfillment and finally emotional exhaustion. Emotional exhaustion caused by enduring work stressors is the initial dimension of this syndrome. Depersonalization is considered a coping strategy in the face of emotional exhaustion and low personal fulfillment is the result.

The study reviewed two theories that are pertinent to this research work; however, the social exchange theory was chosen to provide an explanatory framework because it makes the assumption that reward and cost drive relationship decisions and that both parties in a social exchange take responsibility for one another and rely on one another. Costs can take the shape of time, effort, etc.; rewards might take the form of approval and support. The stimulus proposition and the social exchange hypothesis both contend that when people are rewarded for their activities, they tend to repeat them. If someone has been rewarded for their behaviour in the past, they will likely continue to do so. The social exchange theory typically implies the idea of a two-sided, mutually contingent, and rewarding process encompassing transactions or simply exchange.

2.5 EMPIRICAL REVIEW

Several studies have been conducted on burnout, for example is a study carried out by Vaisania Lagura and Moriano (2022) on burnout assessment tools development validity and reliability the study adopted the survey research method on in-depth face to face semi structured interview was carried out. The interviewers were asked to describe a patient with prototypical burnout symptoms and to focus on specific symptoms caused and the way burnout unfolds across time. Computer assisted qualitative data analysis program Nvivo was used. The findings revealed that 260 codes or symptoms were collected on the coding sheet which were clustered into 19 categories. Eventually seven dimensions emerged

- i. Exhaustion ,
- ii. Mental distance,
- iii. Emotional impairment,
- iv. Cognitive impairment,
- v. Depressed mood ,
- vi. Psychological distress ,
- vii. Psychosomatic complaints

In a study conducted by Schaufeli, Desart and Dewitte (2020) on Burnout, a review of theory and measurement the study is a review of literature which focus on burnout, an occupational phenomenon that results from chronic stress in the work place. The study analyzed the various dimensions and came up within the following

- i. Description of the factors that can trigger burnout and the individual factors that have been proposed to modulate it
- ii. Identification of effect that burnout generates at both individual and organizational level
- iii. Presentation of the main actions that can be used to prevent or reduce burnout.

Habesleben and Buckley (2004) conducted a study on Burnout in organizational life, the study is a meta analysis a review of literature on burnout for about ten years, identifying important trends that have characterized the literature focusing on the theoretical model that explain the process of burnout, the measurement of burnout, means of reducing burnout and directions for the future of burnout research

3.0 METHOD

This research is limited to Lagos State Traffic Management Authority, (L.A.S.T.M.A) Lagos, Nigeria, due to the nature and scope of the study. The population of the study is comprising of over five thousand (5000) Lagos State Traffic Management Authority Staff, using krejcie and morgan sample size determination formular a sample size of three hundred and fifty seven (357)

was arrived at, based on this and due to the limited time two hundred and fifty questionnaires were properly filed and retrieved.

The study adopted a descriptive survey research method, google form questionnaire were sent to traffic managers in strategic locations which comprises of the five divisions in Lagos State (Ikeja, Lagos island, Badagry, Epe, Ikorodu) and a 4-point Likert scale was used...

Valsania, Laguia, and Moriano (2022) as well as Molina, Ramirez, Izquierdo, and Ortega, (2021) scale were adapted for burnout and road safety respectively. A Reliability coefficient of 0.75 was obtained after the instrument was pilot tested using the test-re-test procedure. Multiple regression and Pearson Product Moment Correlation were used in the study to analyse data using SPSS 27.0.

Exhaustion Mental distance and Road safety

H₀: There is no significant relationship between Exhaustion and Road safety.

Correlations

		Exhaustion	Road Safety
Exhaustion	Pearson Correlation	1	.502**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	250	250
Road Safety	Pearson Correlation	.502**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	250	250

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Hypothesis one reveals the interaction between exhaustion and road safety. The result shows that there is a 50.2% moderate and positive relationship between exhaustion and road safety. The result corroborates with the finding of previous study Schaufeli, Desart, & Dewitte (2020) which found a significant relationship between exhaustion and road safety

H₂: There is no significant relationship between Mental Distance and Road Safety

Correlations

		Road_Safety	Mental Distance
Road_Safety	Pearson Correlation	1	.684**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	250	250
Mental Distance	Pearson Correlation	.684**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	250	250

Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). Hypothesis two shows the relationship between mental distance and road safety. The result revealed that there is a 68.4 relationship between mental distance and road safety. The result further shows that there is a strong and positive relationship between mental distance and road safety. The result further corroborates with the findings of Habesleben and Buckley (2004) who found a strong relationship between mental distance and road safety

H₃: There is no significant joint effect of exhaustion and Mental Distance on Road Safety

Model Summary

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.688 ^a	.473	.451	2.37632

a. Predictors: (Constant), Mental Distance, Exhaustion

ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	238.595	2	119.297	21.126	.000 ^b
	Residual	265.405	47	5.647		
	Total	504.000	49			

a. Dependent Variable: Road_Safety

b. Predictors: (Constant), Mental Distance, Exhaustion

Coefficients^a

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients B	Std. Error	Standardized Coefficients Beta	T	Sig.
1	(Constant)	6.706	1.575		4.258	.000
	Exhaustion	.153	.207	.103	.738	.464
	Mental Distance	1.203	.271	.617	4.441	.000

Hypothesis three shows the combined effect of exhaustion and mental distance on road safety. The findings revealed that there is a direct and positive relationship between exhaustion, mental distance and road safety. The result further revealed that exhaustion and mental distance account for 47.3% of road safety, in which other factors not explained account for the remaining 52.7%. the result further established that the composite effect of burnout gave the f – ratio value 21.126. The table reveals at a glance the relative effect of the two independent variables (Exhaustion, mental distance). The result in the table shows that mental distances is the most significant variable affecting road safety . (B= 1-203, t = 4.441, P<0.05) the result corroborates with previous findings of Valsania, Laguia, & Moriano (2020) which found that burnout affects workers performance.

4.0 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Hypothesis one reveals the interaction between exhaustion of traffic managers and road safety. The result shows there is a moderate and positive relationship between exhaustion of traffic managers and road safety. This implies that when traffic managers work long hours they

experience feelings of energy depletion, which makes them feel exhausted during work hours and eventually affects their performances on the road. The result corroborated the findings of previous study, Schaufeli, Desart, & Dewitte (2020) which found a significant relationship between exhaustion and road safety,

Hypothesis two shows the relationship between mental distance and road safety. The result reveals that the mental distance of traffic managers from work has a strong positive relationship with road safety. The implication of this is that when traffic managers have depleted their energy while working and become exhausted they experience increased mental distance from their work which makes them distracted and affects road safety.

The findings corroborate with previous study Habesleben and Buckley (2004) who found a strong relationship between mental distance and road safety.

Hypothesis three shows the combined effect of the indicators of burnout on road safety. The findings revealed that there is a direct and positive relationship between burnout of traffic managers and road safety. The findings further revealed that burnout accounts for 47.3% of road safety. The result corroborates with previous study, Valsania, Laguia, & Moriano (2020) which found out that burnout of traffic managers affects workers performance.

IMPLICATIONS FOR SAFETY OF LIFE'S AND PROPERTIES ON LAGOS ROADS

The findings from this study justifies why the Lagos state government authority must prioritize the physical and physically and psychological wellbeing of traffic manager. They should emphasise flexible work practices and enlighten them on the needs to ensure they are mentally and physical fit to discharge their duties to minimize fatalities on Lagos roads and ensure safety of lives and properties.

CONCLUSION

The study concluded based on its functions that the two indicators used in measuring burnout are good measures of the concept. The study also concluded that burnout affects the physical and psychological a well beings of traffic managers which energy depletion exhaustion,

Increased mental distance from one's work and feelings of negativism or cynicism related to ones job. Finally the study concluded that increased mental distance is the most significant variables affecting traffic managers which causes distraction and is having a negative impact on safety of lives and properties on Lagos roads.

RECOMMENDATION

Biased on the findings of the study the following recommendations were made .

- i. The layers state traffic management authority should adopt flexible work practices and work life balance options such as self restrung (exchange shifts, shifts picking.
- ii. Government should provide shades (tent) in strategic locations where traffic manager are operating to prospect them from the sun and rain
- iii. The authority of Lagos state traffic management should organize regular fitness exercise for its staff to ensure they are fit for the job
- iv. The authority should organize regular medical and psychological check up for its staff to ensure they are healthy for the job.

- v. The authority should provide and enforce regulations, to make sure road users don't drive beyond legal limits and also to ensure they obey traffic light signs and symbols.

4.1 IMPLICATIONS FOR SAFETY OF LIFE'S AND PROPERTIES ON LAGOS ROADS

The findings from this study justifies why the Lagos state government authority must prioritize the physical and psychological wellbeing of traffic managers. They should emphasize flexible work practices and enlighten them on the need to manage their health and ensure they are mentally and physical fit to discharge their duties and to minimize fatalities on Lagos roads and ensure safety of lives and properties.

5.0 CONCLUSION

The study concluded based on its findings that the two indicators used in measuring burnout are good measures of the concept. The study also concluded that burnout affects the physical and psychological well beings of traffic managers which is caused by energy depletion, exhaustion, Increased mental distance from ones work and feelings of negativism or cynicism related to ones job.

Finally the study concluded that increased mental distance is the most significant variables affecting road safety which causes distraction and is having a negative impact on safety of lives and properties on Lagos roads.

5.1 RECOMMENDATION

Biased on the findings of the study the following recommendations were made.

- i. The Lagos state traffic management authority should adopt flexible work practices and work life balance options such as self rostering (exchange shifts, shifts picking.)
- ii. Government should provide shades (tent) in strategic locations where traffic managers are operating to protect them from the sun and rain
- iii. The authority of Lagos state traffic management should organize regular fitness exercise for its staff to ensure they are fit for the job
- iv. The authority should organize regular medical and psychological check up for its staff to ensure they are healthy for the job.
- v. The authority should provide and enforce regulations, to make sure road users don't drive beyond legal limits and also to ensure they obey traffic light signs and symbols.
- vi. Finally Lagos state government should provide more surveillance cameras in strategic locations within the state to help discourage traffic offenders

5.2 SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER STUDIES

Further studies should be conducted on burnout using other dimensions or indicators such as cognitive impairment, depressed mood, psychological distress among other

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