

INFLUENCE OF OCCUPATIONAL STRESS ON QUALITY OF PARENT-CHILD RELATIONSHIP AMONG MOTHERS IN THE OYO STATE CIVIL SERVICE

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ABSTRACT

The quality of parents-child relationship between parents and their children have been found to be linked to the health and social wellbeing of the children. Most times, parents are stressed from working to earn a living for their family thereby impacting the quality of parent-child relationship. This research work sought to examine the influence of occupational stress on the quality of parent-child relationship among multiparous mothers.

The study adopted an ex-post facto research design. The research was conducted on multiparous mothers working in the Oyo State civil service. Systematic and simple random sampling technique was adopted during the course of the research. Three hundred and nine (309) multiparous mothers participated in the study. The mean age of mothers being (40.6yrs)SD (1.08). A structured questionnaire was used to collect data from the participants. Three hypotheses were formulated and tested using multiple regression and one way ANOVA.

Results revealed that the components of occupational stress; workload, interpersonal problems, temporal problems, reward system, leadership problems and inadequate working facilities jointly accounted for 18% of the variance of quality of parent-child relationship ($R = .43$, $R^2 = .18$, $F = 3.98$; $p < .01$). The analysis further revealed that workload ($\beta = .91$, $t = 2.59$, $p > .01$) have the highest independent influence on quality of parent-child relationship among multiparous mothers with a beta value of .91. The result further showed that there is a significant joint influence of demographic variables on quality of parent-child relationship among multiparous mothers ($F = 2.49$; $p < .05$), participant's income ($\beta = .16$; $t = 2.10$; $p < .05$) and educational qualification ($\beta = .15$; $t = 2.03$; $p < .05$) had significant independent influences on quality of parent-child relationship among multiparous mothers. High income earning mothers who earn above N51,000 scored significantly higher on the quality of parent-child relationship ($F = 2.96$; $p < .05$) which shows that high income earning parents have a higher quality parent-child interaction.

The study concludes that occupational stress contributes significantly to the quality of parent-child relationship among multiparous mothers, with workload having an individual influence on quality of parent-child relationship.

Keywords: Occupational stress, Parent-child relationship, Multiparous mothers.

INTRODUCTION

Family and work are aspects that are crucial in women's lives as they have to fulfill the primary responsibility of taking care of the home and also satisfy their career dream or support the family financially. Balancing work and family roles have become a germane personal and family issue in Nigeria (Animasahun & Oladeni, 2012). As the name implies, quality parent-child relationship is the nature of relationship between parents and their children and according to Popov and Ilesanmi (2015), this relationship is the most important relationship an individual can experience. Subjective well-being has been used by researchers to capture happiness and satisfaction with life (Diener, Suh, Lucas & Smith, 1998), and this has been discovered to decline in parenting (McLanahan & Adams, 1987). According to Kuczynski (2003), parent-child relationship is a special type of social relationship, one in which the partners are closely interdependent in terms of emotions, goals and needs. Parent-child relationship influences children's decision making and communication (Field, Ball, Kawycz & Harriet, 2007); development of children's emotional functioning and regulation (Boutelle, Eisenberg, Gregory & Neumark-Sztainer, 2009).

Poor quality parent-child relationship which leads to reduction in child supervision, more punitive discipline and less child involvement, can lead to anti-social behavior in children (Popov

&Ilesanmi, 2015). The place of the family in the life of children can therefore not be understated, early socialization of children often occurs in the context of parent-child interactions (Grusec, 2011). Orlov (1996), identified two types of family in relation to parent-child relationship; the person-centered family and the socio-centered family, he further posited that person-centered families are characterized by high levels of attention paid to the personality of the child and his or her inner world, respect for his or her needs and values, and unconditional acceptance of his or her individuality. In contrast, socio-centered families are characterized by more likelihood to neglect the child's needs and values, more ambivalent relationships and acceptance of the child only if he or she shares the parents' point of view. The different style obtainable in the family is further dependent on the parenting style adopted by the parents. Parenting is a bi-directional process that involves a complex interplay between evolutionary predispositions, genetic and socio-cultural factors (Grusec, 2011). Parenting practices therefore has an impact on child behavior (Lau, Litrownik, Newton, Black & Everson, 2006).

Parental supervision was found to be the strongest predictor of behavioral adjustment in children, while parental care, the strongest predictor of resilience, that is, capacity to adapt to change and stressful events in a healthy way (Ngai, Cheung, To, Liu & Song, 2013). Although Ngai and Cheung (2009) reported that parents who behave with high nurturance and have more democratic parent-child interaction are more likely to raise children who show higher levels of mental health, identity achievement, behavioral adjustment, resilience and academic performance. Cognitive theorist has gone a step further by highlighting that parent-child relationship is an essential environmental context in which structuring of the child's emerging cognitive abilities take place, reciprocal interactions between parents and children provide the collaborative basis for the creation of shared knowledge (Bugental & Johnson, 2000). Authoritative parenting was reported by Glasgow, Dornbusch, Troyer, Steinberg and Ritter (1997) to be associated with higher school achievement than other parenting styles. It can therefore be inferred that parents who pay special attention to their children can be expected to provide an optimal environment for the child to learn, which can further be strengthened by the child's own motivation. However, parents have to balance work commitments with family time and ensure a high-quality parent-child relationship. Occupational stress refers to work-related psychological stress, as well as an individual's inability to handle a particular situation or work environment (Jamal, 1999). Salami (2003), considered work load, interpersonal problems, temporal factors (time pressure), reward systems, leadership problems, inadequate working facilities and personal problems as some factors that can result in occupational stress.

Workload refers to the amount of work that is allocated to an employee to do. Heavy workload among parents can make them miss spending quality time with their children such as meal times and school events, on a psychological level however, parents who are mentally stressed with the workload will allow more freedom for the children, as he/she is too stressed to bother about what the children are doing whenever he/she is not around.

Interpersonal problems or conflicts represent the extent to which an employee has negatively charged social interactions with his or her co-workers (Spector, 1987). Interpersonal problems at work have been associated with counterproductive work behaviour, absenteeism and reduced job performance which shows that conflicts at work have important ties to employee behaviors (Giebels & Janssen, 2005). It has also been shown to cause poor-work related attitudes and psychological states such as job dissatisfaction, organizational commitment, turnover intentions, negative emotions and emotional exclusion (Giebels & Janssen, 2005; Liu, Spector & Shi, 2007). This behavioral, attitudinal and psychological state can have a negative influence or effect on how parents relate with their children, thus leading to poor quality parent-child relationship.

The quality of the working environment has a role to play in the output level of a worker and also the stress level of an employee. Working environment includes communication at workplace, political environment, colleagues and manager behavior (Jamal, 1984), the quality of the working

environment impacts on employee productivity, and stress levels. When stress levels are high it can be a stressor on the quality of parent-child relationship.

Time pressure from work can have a significant effect on the quality of parent-child relationship. The stressful job conditions associated with working a non-standard schedule or long hours may in turn lead to less positive family dynamics, including reduced time spent with children and lower parental knowledge of children's whereabouts (Greenberger, O'Neil, & Nagel, 1994; Bumpus et al., 2006). Moreover, even if they are able to find the time to spend with their children, parents working evening or night hours may not have the energy to foster a positive parent-child relationship (Presser, 2003).

The work environment is becoming increasingly demanding with workers having huge bills to pay and employers having targets to meet in a hostile business environment like Nigeria. This behavioral, attitudinal and psychological state can have a negative influence or effect on how parents relate with their children, thus leading to poor quality parent-child relationship.

Parenting is a very important social role in an adult's life, parenting involves a high level of stress as caring for children permeates every aspect of the parent's life from the moment the child is born (McLanahan & Adams, 1987). Nomaguchi and Milkie (2003) found that there is more demand on parents and higher levels of social integration among adults with children than those without children, married mothers had more house work and more marital conflicts as compared with childless married women, but also reported lower depression levels. This shows that parenting is not entirely stress free, occupational stress can therefore be a stressor on the quality of parent-child relationship.

Poor parent-child relationship has been reported to be linked with delinquency and aggressive behavior in children (Popov & Ilesanmi, 2015; Fletcher, Steinberg & Williams-Wheeler, 2004). Every child needs the support, presence and attention of parents, with little children standing to benefit a lot more from the time spent with them than older children, children that have good relationship with their parents will extend a positive social and emotional relationship with their peers. Poor quality relationship between parents and their children have been found to create susceptibility to a range of health problems, such as cardiovascular and musculoskeletal disorders (Dykstra & Fokkema, 2011), this view on the relationship between children health and quality of parent child relationship was also buttressed by Habib, Hamdan, Al-Sahab, Tamim, Mack and Rema (2010) who posited that parent-child relationships are linked to the health and social wellbeing of children.

Extensive and inflexible work hours, over-involvement in work and job stress may produce distress within the family sphere, as well as withdrawal from family responsibilities (Udedibie, 2012). In a study carried out by Raboteg-Saric and Sakic (2013) to examine the effects of mother's and father's perceived parenting style and friendship quality on several indicators of adolescents' well-being, they found out that the perceived parenting style of both parents as well as the quality of friendship had significant effects on adolescent's well-being, while the interaction effects of friendship quality and either parent's parenting style were not significant.

Majority of the existing research have failed to map the nexus between job stress and parent-child relationship, which is why this research work will focus on the influence of occupational stress on parent-child relationship with emphasis on multiparous mothers.

This study sought to investigate influence of occupational stress on parent-child relationship with emphasis on multiparous mothers.

In this study, it has been hypothesized that:

1. There will be a significant joint and independent influence of occupational stress on quality of parent-child relationship.
2. Demographic factors will have a significant joint and independent influence on the quality of parent-child relationship.
3. High income earning mothers will score significantly higher on the quality of parent-child relationship than those in other income categories.

METHODOLOGY

Design

Ex-post facto research design was used to examine the influence of occupational stress on quality of parent-child relationship. The research study was conducted among Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) in the Oyo State Civil Service. The MDAs are located in Ibadan.

Participants

The study population included married mothers with two or more children (multiparous). This was so because as parents, women spend more time with their children and have a stronger connection/bond with the children most especially in their formative years.

Multiparous Mothers who are civil servants and work in the Ministries, Departments and Agencies (MDAs) in the Oyo State civil service. Multiparous mothers were used because of the number of children they have (two and above) and their need to balance work stress with the relationship they have with their children.

Sampling Techniques

A multi stage sampling technique was used to select the respondents for this study. In the first stage, ministries, departments and agencies were randomly selected based on their number. A total of fifteen (15) ministries, seven (7) departments and fifty-two (52) agencies exist in the State civil service. Systematic random sampling was used to select the ministries, departments and agencies to allow for a fair representation. For the ministries two ministries were sampled, the fifteen (15) ministries were listed alphabetically; and every seventh ministry was picked; the two ministries thus selected are the Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Rural Development and the Ministry of Lands, Housing, Survey and Urban Development. For the departments, only one (1) department was selected, and this was done using simple random sampling, Office of the Accountant General was thus selected. For the agencies, four (4) agencies were selected using systematic random sampling. The fifty-two (52) agencies were listed alphabetically with the thirteenth agency on the list selected; from this the four agencies selected are Oyo State Signage and Advertisement Agency, Bureau of Investment Promotion, Oyo State Women Development Center, Oyo State Property Development Corporation. Going by this, seven (7) civil service branches were therefore selected for this study comprising of two (2) ministries, one (1) department and four (4) agencies selected for the study, 50 participants were therefore selected in each of these MDAs. In every office visited, qualified population (multiparous mothers) were selected through balloting with every member of the population that picked an even number had a questionnaire administered on them, till the sample size was completed at each MDA.

Instrument

Occupational Stress was measured by Occupational Stress Scale (OSS) designed by Salami (2003). The fifty items on occupational stress were classified into seven (7) sub-sections such as; Work load, Interpersonal problems, Temporal factors (time pressure), Reward systems, Leadership problems, Inadequate working facilities and Personal problems. Quality of Parent-child Relationship was measured by Quality of Parent-child Relationship Scale designed by Adejuwon (2002).

Procedure

Introduction letters were collected from Psychology department to introduce the researcher to the Ministries, Departments and Agencies selected, and the research participants officially informed

for ethical compliance and due process. Having obtained the informed consent, the researcher met with senior persons at each MDA on how best to go about administering questionnaire without hampering and delaying essential government work. A total of 350 questionnaires were distributed, however, only the fully completed and returned questionnaires were collated and coded for data analysis. The questionnaires that were completely filled and returned numbered up to 309, representing a response rate of 88.26%

Statistical Analysis

Data collected during the course of the study was analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 20. Both descriptive and inferential statistics were used in the analysis of the data collected. Specifically, multiple regression was used to test hypothesis one, multiple regression was used to test hypothesis two, one-way ANOVA was used to test hypothesis three.

RESULTS

Hypothesis 1: There will be a significant joint and independent influence of occupational stress on quality of parent-child relationship.

Table 1: Summary of multiple regression test showing the joint and independent influences of Occupational stress on quality of parent-child relationship among multiparous mothers.

Independent Variables	β	t	P	R	R ²	F	P
Workload	.91	2.59	<.01				
Interp. Probs	-.41	-1.09	>.05				
Temporal Problems	.94	1.84	>.05				
Reward System	.07	.46	>.05	.43	.18	3.98	<.01
Leadership Problems	.04	.10	>.05				
IWF	.48	1.06	>.05				
Personal Problems	.00	.00	>.05				

Interp. Probs: Interpersonal Problems
 IWF: Inadequate working facilities

Results from Table 1 reveals that there is a significant joint influence of occupational stress on quality of parent-child relationship ($R=.43$, $R^2=.18$, $F=3.98$, $p<.01$). Furthermore, of all the subscales of occupational stress, only workload had a significant independent influence on quality of parent-child relationship ($\beta=.91$; $t=2.59$; $p<.01$). This implies that workload as a subscale of occupational stress accounts for a beta value of .91 on the quality of parent-child relationship.

Hypothesis 2: Income, level of education, age and marital status will jointly and individually predict quality of parent-child relationship among multiparous mothers was tested with multiple regression analysis. The result is summarized in Table 2.

Table 2: Summary of multiple regression test showing the joint and independent influences of demographic variables on occupational stress on quality of parent-child relationship among multiparous mothers.

Independent Variables	β	t	sig	R	R ²	F	P
Income	.16	2.10	<.05	.22	.03	2.49	<.05
Edu.Qual.	.15	2.03	<.05				
Age	-.02	-.28	>.05				
Marital status	.12	1.74	>.05				

Results from Table 2 shows that there is a significant joint influence of the demographic variables on quality of parent-child relationship ($R=.22$, $R^2=.03$, $F=2.49$, $p<.05$). Also, participants' income ($\beta=.16$; $t=2.10$; $p<.05$) and educational qualification ($\beta=.15$; $t=2.03$; $p<.05$) had significant independent influences on quality of parent-child relationship, which implies that income and educational qualification accounts for 16% and 15% of observed variances in quality of parent-child relationship. However, age and marital status of participants were not significant independent contributors to change in quality of parent-child relationship.

Hypothesis 3: High income earning mothers will score significantly higher on the quality of parent-child relationship than those in other income categories. The summary of the result is presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Summary of One Way ANOVA showing difference among income levels on quality of parent-child relationship

Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	P
Between	2314.02	3	771.34	2.96	<.05
Within	53926.22	207	260.51		
Total		210			

Results from Table 3 revealed a significant main influence of levels of income on quality of parent-child relationship ($F(3,207)=2.96$; $p<.05$). Further statistics to establish the mean differences and significance was carried out using the scheffe multiple comparison tool. Results are presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Summary table of protected multiple comparison showing the mean differences among various levels of income on quality of parent-child

Variables	1	2	3	4	M	SD	N
22,000-30,000	-	-	-	-	83.70		41
31,000-40,000	-6.7	-	-	-	90.40	17.84	50
41,000-50,000	-3.29	-3.40	-	-	87.00	14.4960	

51,000 and above	-9.02	*2.33	-5.73	-	92.73	16.3360
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*P<.05.

As shown in Table 4, the mean score of participants who earn between 51,000 and above (M=92.73) is higher than those in the other categories, which implies that there is a significant difference among these categories of income levels on quality of parent-child relationship.

DISCUSSION

This study examined the influence of occupational stress on the quality of parent-child relationship among in multiparous mothers. Hypothesis one investigated the prediction that there will be a joint and independent influence of occupational stress on the quality of parent-child relationship. The result indicated that the hypothesis was partially supported. In that, while there was a significant joint influence of occupational stress on the quality of parent-child relationship among multiparous mothers, some of the subscales of occupational stress had no significant independent influence on the quality of parent-child relationship such as interpersonal problems, temporal problems, reward systems, leadership problems, inadequate working facilities and personal problems. However, workload as a subscale of occupational stress had a significant independent influence on the quality of parent-child relationship. This implies that the more the working hours and the task that has to be done at work, there is a high propensity for the work to be carried home, if not physically then mentally, as uncompleted task, deliverables. This can lead to role conflict, with sets of opposing pressures arising from participation in different roles, in this case work and family (parent-child relationship). Similar observation was made by Akintayo, (2010) when he emphasized the need to balance the role and responsibilities at work and that of family. Hypothesis two which stated that income, level of education, age and marital status will jointly and individually predict quality of parent-child relationship among multiparous mothers revealed that there is a significant joint influence of the demographic variables on quality of parent-child relationship. Meanwhile, income and educational qualification had significant independent influences on quality of parent-child relationship. Annisia (2015) confirmed the importance of income when he discovered that parents with low level of education were also found to be less responsible for the welfare of their children. These socio-demographic characteristics can constitute a major influence on the quality of parent-child relationship and child outcomes. Duke, (2000) and Eamon, (2005) stressed that parents' decision on what they want for their children are influenced by these sociodemographic factors. Parents with high levels of exposure and knowledge will be aware of the importance and necessity of having a quality parent-child relationship.

Hypothesis three predicted that high income earning mothers have a higher quality parent-child interaction than those earning lower income. Results revealed that parents earning N51,000 and above scored significantly higher on their parent-child relationship. This indicated that parental income positively influences child wellbeing and quality of parent-child relationship. Poverty is associated with increased levels of parental stress, depression and poor health that affects the parents' ability to nurture their children (McLloyd, 1990). With more disposable income, parents will be able to do more for their children. High income earners may have lesser workloads and can delegate responsibilities to others which may allow them to focus more on their children thus creating a better and improved quality parent-child relationship.

Conclusion

This study has delved into understanding the influence of occupational stress on the quality of parent-child relationship. Results however revealed that there was a significant joint influence of occupational stress on quality of parent-child relationship. Results further revealed that workload had a significant independent influence on quality of parent-child relationship while interpersonal problems, temporal problems, reward systems, leadership problems and inadequate working

facilities did not predict quality of parent-child relationship. There was also a significant joint influence of demographic factors on quality of parent-child relationship, income and educational qualification also had an independent influence on the quality of parent-child relationship. Income level was also found to have major influence on quality of parent-child relationship among multiparous mothers, with high income having a major influence on quality of parent-child relationship than other income levels.

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