Moderating Role of Religiosity on the Relationship between Job Burnout and Workplace Deviant Behaviour among Academic Staff of University

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Abstract
The increasing reports of workplace deviant behaviour among academic staff of universities have become a source of concern to the government, researchers, parents, and other stakeholders. Hence, several efforts have been made to reverse this ugly trend due to its negative consequences on the university system. The main thrust of this research is to examine the moderating role of religiosity on the relationship between the dimensions of job burnout and workplace deviant behaviour among the academic staff of Kaduna State University, Kaduna. The study utilized proportionate stratified sampling design to draw a sample of 404 academic staff across the faculties of the university. PLS-SEM was used to analyze the hypotheses developed for the study at 5% level of significance. Findings revealed that depersonalization and reduced personal accomplishment have a positive significant effect on workplace deviant behaviour among academic staff. However, emotional exhaustion was found to have insignificant effect on workplace deviant behaviour. On the moderating role of religiosity on the relationship between emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment, the result revealed that religiosity does not moderate the relationship. Based on the findings of the study, the study recommends among others that the management of the university should continue to sustain its wellness programmes to prevent academic staff from developing emotional exhaustion, provide an organizational culture that supports academic staff, and enhance professional development.

Keywords: Workplace Deviant Behaviour, Job burnout, Religiosity, Emotional Exhaustion, Depersonalization, Reduced Personal Accomplishment, Academic Staff.

Introduction

The phenomenon of Workplace Deviant Behaviour (WDB) has become prevalent in many organizations as there are many reported cases of employees violating the organizational norms which makes the achievement of objectives difficult. WDB occurs when an individual decides to consciously behaves contrary to the organizational norms which as a consequence threatens the organization`s welfare, its employees, customers, or both. (Harder, 2019; Bennett, Robinson & Locklier, 2018).

Globally, employees have been found to engage in various forms of WDB across many sectors and occupations. For instance, a report by the Ethics and Compliance Initiative [ECI] (2021) shows an increasing rate of WDB among employees. The report shows 58% in 2015, 63% in 2019 and 81% in 2020. Similarly, ECI (2023) reported that employees` pressure to go against standard have reached its all-time high in 2023. Similarly, Jelavic and Glamuzina (2021) in a research reported that more than 90% of employees engaged in various forms of WDB. These actions resulted in the organizations suffering from financial and economic losses. For instance, Ivana (2022) reported that United States businesses annually losses amount to between $20 billion to $50 billion due to employee theft. Other consequences include, hiring cost, loss of

expensive and inimitable knowledge assets, loss of reputation, decreases productivity, among others (Lavelle et al, 2018; Peter, Okpa & Okoi, 2020; Rubenstein, Eberly, Lee, & Mitchell, 2018).

In the Nigerian university context, there has been several reports of academic staff engagement in WDB. Academic staff engagement in WDB includes plagiarism, absent from classes, sexual harassment, acting rudely to students, sorting, inability or deliberate refusal to complete course outline, extortion of money, irregularity in conducting students` examination, sex for grade, money for grade, abuse of office, gross insubordination, misappropriation of university funds, daydreaming, among others (Oyeizugbe, Ndubusi-Okolo, & Ikhuenekhemhe, 2021; Duhu et al, 2021; Onoyase, 2019; Adeoti, 2018; Igbe, Okpa & Aniah, 2017). Consequently, management of the affected universities have developed drastic actions to deal with deviance through issuing of queries, dismissals, suspension, keeping of registers, setting of committees to deal with sexual harassment, among others (Obalade & Mtemba; Ochentenwu, 2022; and Obalade & Akeke, 2020). However, despite these measures put in place, deviance among academic staff is still on the increase (Goga, Bello, and Sahnun, 2024). This means that unless the root causes of WDB among academic is uncovered, the phenomenon will continue to surge.

Consequently, several empirical efforts have been made to determine the antecedents of WDB, and the most significant factor triggering workplace deviance among academic staff in Nigeria is job burnout (Amir, 2020). Job burnout is defined as a syndrome of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and reduced personal accomplishment that often occurs among employees that render services to people, (Maslach 1982). Emotional exhaustion is the feeling of tiredness and fatigue developed when emotional resources becomes depleted making academic staff unable to make themselves available to their students. Depersonalization refers to the negative feeling academic staff develop about their students, colleagues or co-workers which gives birth to psychological withdrawal and physical distancing (Maslach, 1982). Finally, reduced personal accomplishment is the feeling of incompetency and reduced productivity in the academic profession developed by academic staff due to chronic, overwhelming and exhausting demand that contribute to exhaustion or cynicism (Leiter & Maslach, 2003). Hence, the syndrome of job burnout is developed in a work environment with high workload (Leiter & Maslach, 2003) like the academic environment (Amir, 2020).

The current study acknowledges inconsistent findings between the dimensions of job burnout and WDB. For instance, Ugwu, Enwereuzor, Fimber and Ugwu (2017) established positive relationship between the three dimensions and WDB, Liang and Hsieh (2007) revealed that of only depersonalization (out of the three dimensions) predicts WDB, Guetirrez (2019) as well as Makhdoom, Atta and Malik (2019) found out that emotional exhaustion does not predict sabotage and withdrawal despite theoretical link between them. Makhdoom et al (2019) consequently suggest for the introduction of mediator or moderator for the relationship. Hence, based on the inconsistencies identified and the suggestion by Makhdoom et al, (2019), this study considers the introduction of religiosity as a moderator. Religiosity in this context refers to the extent to which an academic staff comply with and incorporates religious values, teachings, beliefs, as well as practices in their daily lives (Putranta, 2020). Thus, an inverse relationship between religiosity and WDB has been found (Putranta, 2020; Kumar, 2019), and encourages constructive behaviours (Qureshi, & Shahjehan, 2019).

Consequently, this study suggest that religiosity can play a major role in combating or casting negative effect on the job burnout-WDB relationship among academic staff. Putranta (2020) also stated that religiosity suppress negative behaviours and encourages positive attitude. Therefore, when the religiosity variable is introduced as a moderator, the relationship between job burnout and WDB may change. This is because people high in religiosity include God in every step of their thinking which could reduce the tendency of the occurrence of actions that are deviant in nature. Hence, based on social bond theory, this study theorized that the academic staff level of engagement in WDB will depend on the academic staff`s level of religiosity. Thus, academic staff with high level of religiosity are less likely to engage in WDB while academic staff that are low in religiosity are more likely to engage in WDB. Hence, the incorporation of religiosity on the job burnout-WDB framework is to play a weakening role. Based on the problem identified, the current research objectives are to determine the effect of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and reduced personal accomplishment on WDB among academic staff and to investigate

the moderating role of religiosity on the relationship between emotional exhaustion, depersonalization as well as reduced personal accomplishment and WDB among academic staff.

Literature Review
Concept of Workplace Deviant Behaviour
The increasing rate of employees engagement in WDB and its negative consequences on organizations, customers and members leads to efforts by researchers to study the phenomenon using different conceptualizations like counterproductive work behavior (Mangione & Quinn, 1975), anti-social behavior (Glacolone & Greenberg, 1997), aggression (Fox & Spector, 1999), Revenge (Bies, Tripp & Kramer, 1997), workplace deviance (Bennett & Robinson, 1995), retaliation (Skarlicki, & Folger, 1997), among others. These behaviours in common are voluntary; intended to harm the organization, colleagues, customers or both; have negative consequences; and violate significant norms (Oluwakemi & Olanrewaju, 2012; Idiakheua & Obetoh, 2014).

According to Bennet and Robinson (1995) WDB is any voluntary behaviour employees engaged in which cast negative consequences on the organization, its members, customers, or both. According to the Bennett and Robinson`s (1995) categorization of WDB, WDB is categorized into Interpersonal deviance and Organizational deviance. Interpersonal deviance refers to deviant acts target toward individuals such as colleagues, customers, supervisors, or both. Organizational deviance are all forms of deviant acts target towards the organization (Bennett and Robinson, 1995). However, in the context of this study, WDB refers to voluntary behaviours engaged by academic staff in KASU which are against the norms of the institution which in consequence affect the university and its students.

Concept of Job Burnout
The concept of job burnout was brought into the literature by Freudenberger (1974). In his attempt to describe this state of mental and physical exhaustion, Freudenberger used "burnout." to mean the consequences of excessive addiction to drug abuse: (Maslach & Schaufeli, 1993). Maslach, et al (1996) opined that burnout is a psychological syndrome of emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and reduced personal accomplishment that is experienced by employees that render services to customers. Hence, job burnout according to Maslach and Jackson, (1981) has three dimensions, which are emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment.

Emotional Exhaustion
Codes and Dougherty (1993) submitted that when an individual feels drain in energy, and a feeling the low emotional resources, the syndrome of emotional exhaustion sets in.. Thus, employees that are emotionally exhausted lack enough energy to work the next day because their emotional resources are drained and have no source to restore it. Emotional exhaustion represents stress experience of employees (Leiter & Maslach, 2003). However, in this study, emotional exhaustion is the tired and fatigued feeling that academic staff develop when their emotional resources are drained which makes academic staff to present themselves to students.

Emotional Exhaustion and Workplace Deviant Behaviour
Efforts were made in literature to determine the link between emotional exhaustion and WDB. For instance, Goga, Bello, and Sahnun (2024) conducted a study among 458 sample of academic staff in ABU Zaria on the effect of job burnout on WDB. Stratified sampling design was used in the study. The study findings revealed that both emotional exhaustion has a positive significant effect on WDB among academic staff of the institution. Similarly, Goga, Bashir, and Aliyu (2023) have conducted a study on the moderating role of affective commitment on the relationship between emotional exhaustion and WDB among 142 sample of lecturers in the Faculty of Education, ABU Zaria. Findings revealed emotional exhaustion has a positive significant effect on WDB. However, the moderating role of affective commitment was not found.

Also, Tageja, Chaturvedi, and Rajput (2020) conducted a study on the effect of emotional exhaustion on WDB using a sample of 205 sales executive of three insurance firms. The study established a positive significant relationship between emotional exhaustion and WDB. Additionally, Jia, Liao, and Yin (2022) examined the effect of job insecurity and emotional exhaustion on WDB with corporate social responsibility as a moderator. The study was conducted among 145 computer equipment providers in China. Findings

revealed that employees` corporate social responsibility weakens the link between job insecurity and emotional exhaustion via organizational identification. Also, Makhdoom, Atta and Malik (2019) investigated the link between job burnout and counterproductive behavior based on a sample of 364 teachers of both private and public school of Sarghodha division. The study revealed that emotional exhaustion dimension was found to be a significant predictor of abuse but not a predictor of withdrawal. Gutierrez (2019) explored the effect of exhaustion and depersonalization on pressure, emotional demands, work performance and CWB among South African`s ICT professionals. Data were collected from 296 respondents. The study shows insignificant effect of emotional exhaustion on CWB.

Depersonalization
Depersonalization is viewed as a negative response or an extensive detachment to other people (Maslach, 1993). Teachers experiencing this feeling will no longer have positive feelings toward their students and will use derogatory labels, exhibit distant attitudes, psychological withdrawal among others (Maslach, Jackson & Leiter, 1996). Depersonalization in this study therefore, refers to the negative feeling academic staff have about their students, colleagues or co-workers that leads to detachment through psychological withdrawal and physical distancing.

Depersonalization and Workplace Deviant Behaviour
The effect of job burnout on WDB among 307 employees of Jordanian bank was investigated by Lubbadeh (2021). The study established a significant positive relationship between depersonalization and WDB. According to him, employees feel detached from their customers and work because of emotional exhaustion which make them engage in various forms of WDB like creating problems, complaining about work and task, talking about work inside and outside the work place inter alia. Meanwhile, Bicer (2020), in a study of 230 sales staff of pharmaceutical companies that are based in the provinces of Hatay and Gaziantep, depersonalization was found be statistically significant in predicting WDB. They pointed out that medical representatives experiencing depersonalization engage in WDB. In another effort, Turek (2020) conducted a study among 253 telephone customer support service employees from Poland companies on the effect of job burnout on perceived organizational support, organizational citizenship behaviour, and workplace deviant behaviour. Findings in relation to the relationship between depersonalization and WDB has shown a positive significant relationship.

A study of 401 nurses of South-Eastern Nigeria by Ugwu, Enwereuzor, Fimber and Ugwu (2017) found a significant relationship between depersonalization and WDB. They emphasized that nursing is a job that requires too much interpersonal interaction that deplete nurses` resources which make them become detached from their clients. The result of this detachment is translated into withdrawal, tardiness, and aggressive behaviours targeted toward clients. Also, in an empirical study aimed at investigating whether job demands and WDB would be mediated by Job burnout, Smoktunowicz, Baka, Cieslak, Nichols, Benight and Luszcynska (2015) collected data from 625 police officers in Poland. They maintained that high level of depersonalization is likely to be related to high WDB, hence established a positive relationship.

Reduced Personal Accomplishment
Reduced personal accomplishment is the self-evaluation dimension of job burnout (Leiter & Maslach, 2003). In the words of Leiter and Maslach (2003), it refers to the feeling of incompetence, reduced productivity and lack of achievement in the work. It is developed in a work environment with high demands (Leiter & Maslach, 2013). This third dimension is especially crucial for teachers (Maslach, Jackson, & Leiter, 1996). In the context of this study, reduced personal accomplishment refers to the feeling of decline in competence and successful achievement by academic staff which makes them unhappy about themselves and dissatisfied with their accomplishment in the academic profession.

Reduced Personal Accomplishment and Workplace Deviant Behaviour
Ogungbamila and Adedayo (2021) studied the moderating role of psychological hardiness on the burnout-WDB relationship. The study collected data from 233 personnel of the Nigerian Immigration Service. The study established positive relationship between reduced personal accomplishment and WDB. They grounded their argument on the fact that employees who felt frustrated and underachieved are engaged in high level of WDB. Also, Akbar & Julie (2020) conducted a study on the effect of the three dimensions of job burnout on WDB with psychological capital as a moderator. Data of the study were collected from 274 employees in

information Technology industry of Pakistan. Result using PLS-SEM revealed that reduced personal accomplishment has a positive significant effect on WDB.

Meanwhile, Mahrukh, Batool, Batool and Quraishi (2020) conducted an empirical study on the effect of job burnout on WDB with forgiveness as a mediator and emotional intelligence as a moderator among 200 nurses in six different public and private hospitals in Multan, Paskitan. Findings of the study revealed that reduced personal accomplishment and WDB is positively related to WDB. Similarly, Makhdoom, Atta and Malik (2019) examined the relationship between burnout and counterproductive work behavior. The sample constitute 364 high school teachers of different private and public schools of Sarghodha division. The study established an insignificant relationship between reduced personal accomplishment and abuse. They justified the insignificant relationship based on the argument that researchers found a weak relationship between inefficacy and frustration. Again, Makhdoom, Mehmood and Atta (2017) conducted a study to examine the mediating role of job burnout on the relationship between perceived organizational politics and counterproductive behavior. Data were collected from 453 teachers from both private and public schools in Sargodha. The study established that employees enjoying less accomplishment in their work tend to be involved in those activities that are aimed at hurting the organization.

Religiosity as a Moderator
Religiosity refers to the extent to which a person follows and incorporates religious values, beliefs, teachings, and practices into their daily life (Miller & Thoreson, 2003). Religion has been described as an correction institution that prohibits WDB and emphasizes positive behaviours. Thus, people hold the belief that every act would be accounted for in the hereafter, therefore, those high in religiosity are less likely to engage in antisocial or immoral behaviours because of the belief that such behaviours offend God, (Nnadozie, et al. 2018). Consequently, previous studies have established that religiosity is inversely related to deviance (Jang, 2017; Akanni et al., 2018). Thus, based on the current model, religiosity is expected to weaken the relationship between job burnout and workplace deviant behaviour.

Theoretical Framework: Stressor Emotion Model and Social Control Theory
Stressor-Emotion Model
The stressor emotion model provides a theoretical explanation on how the dimensions of job burnout affect WDB. According to the theory, emotional responses are developed as a consequence of employees` appraisal of the work environment (Smoktunowicz, Baka, Cieslak, Nichols, Benight & Luszcynska, 2015), and any well-being threatening event is a job stressor that give birth to negative emotional reactions (Spector, 1998). Spector and Fox (2002) stated that when people become continually exposed to events that are emotionally-induced, there is high tendency of them to engage in behavioural responses. Hence, negative emotions increase the tendency or facilitates the occurrence of WDB while positive emotions are facilitates the occurrence of Organizational Citizenship Behavior (OCB).

Specifically, the model posits that people first perceive the environment which then leads to the development of negative emotion and finally to WDB (Fox, Spector & Miles, 2001). In the context of this study, emotional exhaustion, depersonalization and reduced personal accomplishment are stressors that induce negative emotion among academic staff which increases the likelihood of their engagement in various forms of WDB. Hence, as academic staff continue to work in an environment characterized by high level of workload such as the current Nigerian academic context, academic staff develop emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment which are workplace stressors, these stressors then give birth to the development of negative emotions which in turn trigger academic staff engagement in WDB.

Social Control Theory
The social control theory explains the moderating role of religiosity on the relationship between the dimensions of job burnout and WDB. According to this theory, religion, family, and school (regarded as social institutions) promote values that move in tandem with conventional behaviours. These institutions socialize their members to adopt to the norms and values of the organization or society (Gyimah, Kodzi, Emina, Cofie & Ezeh 2013) which reduces the tendency of engaging in deviant behaviours. As this theory proposes, individuals` religiosity discourages them violation of the norms of workplace and other forms of deviant acts. Hence, when an individual is bound by the moral and religious codes, they stay away from

engaging in deviance. According to this model, academic staff attachment to social and religious institutions will minimize the tendency to engage in WDB. This is because religiosity is capable of shaping the moral values of academic staff and will make them control emotions that may trigger the occurrence of WDB. Thus, any academic staff that possess high level of religiosity will engage less in workplace deviant behaviour than academic staff who possess low level of religiosity.

Research Methodology

The present study was premised on the positivist paradigm. This hinges on the fact that the focus of the study is on theory testing and enhancement rather than developing a new theory (Park, et al., 2020). The ontological position of study will thus be built on objectivism. Based on philosophical and ontological assumptions of the current study, the approach for the present is quantitative. The current study also employed survey research method and collected data through questionnaire. Additionally, cross sectional research design was employed in this study.

The population of the study comprises the academic staff of Kaduna State University whose population stands at 933 (KASU Registry, 2024). Krejcie and Morgan (1970) formula was used and a sample of 269 was arrived. However, to minimize the rate of non-response, 50% was added (Salkind, 2007), which brings the sample size to 404. Stratified sampling design was used to distribute the questionnaire proportionately to the respondents. A total of 381 copies of questionnaire were retrieved, and 13 unengaged were removed. Hence, 368 were used for analysis.

Measurement

Workplace deviant behaviour was measured using organizational deviance dimension which consist of 12 items that were adapted from Bennett and Robinson (2000) WDB scale. A 5-point scale ranging from always=5 to never=1 was used. Maslach`s Burnout Inventory (1986) Educators Survey (ES) was used to measure emotional exhaustion (9 items), depersonalization (5 items) and reduced personal accomplishment (8 items). And lastly, religiosity was measured by adapting the Mahudin, Mohd-Noor, Dzulkifli, and Janon, (2016) ten–items scale. The items were also rated on a 5-point scale ranging from always=5 to never=1.

Results and Discussion

The measurement model constitutes the individual item reliability, internal consistency reliability and discriminant validity. Firstly, the individual item reliability was examined by assessing each measure`s outer loadings (Hair et al, 2017). According to Hair et al (2017), items with loadings of 0.70 are reliable for a scale already developed. According to them, researchers should consider eliminating items below 0.7. However, the elimination should be capable of improving the AVE and CR. Thus, based on the aforementioned rule of thumb, the study has 44 items, however, 12 items were deleted because the loadings were below the threshold. Hence, the study was left with 32 items which were acceptable for analysis. This is shown respectively in Figure 1 and Table:
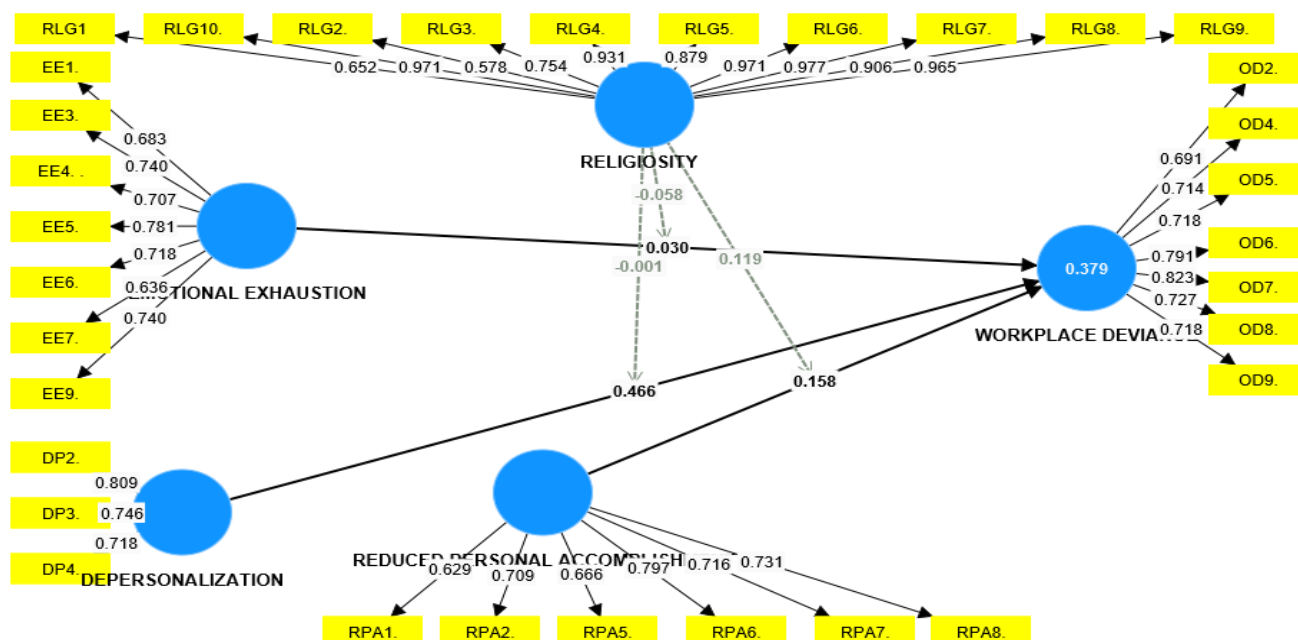
Figure 1: Measurement Model

Table 1: Loading of Items, AVE, and Composite Reliability

Variable	Code	Loading	AVE	CR
Workplace Deviance	OD2	0.691	0.550	0.895
	OD4	0.714		
	OD5	0.718		
	OD6	0.791		
	OD7	0.823		
	OD8	0.727		
	OD9	0.718		
Emotional Exhaustion	EE1	0.683	0.513	0.880
	EE3	0.740		
	EE4	0.707		
	EE5	0.781		
	EE6	0.718		
	EE7	0.636		
	EE9	0.740		
Reduced Personal Accomplishment	RPA1	0.629	0.504	0.858
	RPA2	0.709		
	RPA5	0.666		
	RPA6	0.797		
	RPA7	0.716		
	RPA8	0.731		
Depersonalization	DP2	0.809	0.567	0.802
	DP3	0.746		
	DP4	0.718		
Religiosity	RLG1	0.652	0. 756	0. 902
	RLG2	0.578		
	RLG3	0.754		
	RLG4	0.931		
	RLG5	0.879		
	RLG6	0.971		
	RLG7	0.977		
	RLG8	0.906		
	RLG9	0.965		
	RLG10	0.971		

Secondly, composite reliability was employed by the current study to investigate the constructs1 internal consistency. According to Hair et al (2019), internal consistency reliability of 0.70 and above is significant. Table 1 shows that, the internal consistency reliability is adequate because the CR ranges from 0.802-0.902 which is beyond the threshold. Thirdly, this study employed AVE to measure the construct`s convergent validity. The recommended threshold of AVE should be 0.50, (Hair et al, 2017). The construct`s convergent validity was achieved because the values are above the threshold. Lastly, to assessment of discriminant validity was done using Heterotrait-Monotrait ratio (HTMT). Hair et al. (2021) proposed a HTMT threshold value of 0.85 for structural models that have conceptually different constructs. Consequently, Table 2 shows

that the constructs inter-correlations are all less than HTMT 0.85. This means that the study constructs achieve discriminant validity.

Table 2: Discriminant Validity (HTMT)

	DP	EE	RPA	RLG	WDB
Depersonalization Emotional Exhaustion	0.753				
Reduced Personal Accomplishment	0.754	0.611			
Religiosity	0.133	0.234	0.170		
Workplace Deviance	0.777	0.407	0.549	0.158	

Structural Model Result

The current study`s structural model consists of the result of the direct relationship as well as the the indirect relationships. This is shown in Figure 2:
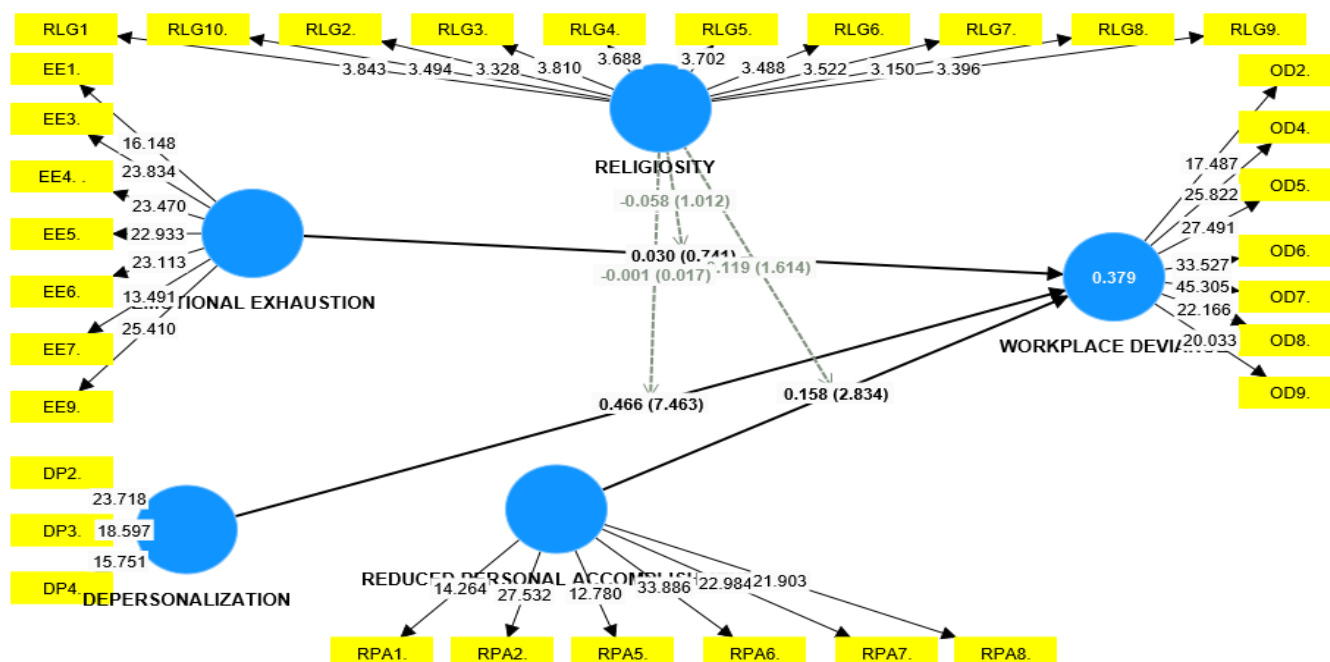

Figure 2: PLS Algorithm for the Direct and Indirect Relationship

Table 3: Hypothesis Testing

Relationship	Beta Value	Standard Deviation	T Statistics	P Value	Decision
EE->WD	0.030	0.040	0.741	0.459	**Failed Reject**
DP->WD	0.457	0.062	7.463	0.000	**Reject**
RPA->WD	0.162	0.056	2.834	0.005	**Reject**
RL× EE->WD	-0.064	0.057	1.012	0.311	**Failed to Reject**
RL× DP->WD	0.016	0.084	0.017	0.987	**Failed to Reject**
RL× RPA->WD	0.119	0.074	1.614	0.107	**Failed to Reject**

The coefficient of determination (R-Squared) for this model is 0.363. This implies that variation in WDB among academic staff in KASU is explained by the independent variables by 36.3%. thus, the remaining 63.7% is explained by other variables not included in the model.

The result of the hypotheses testing shows that hypothesis one which stated that emotional exhaustion does not have significant effect on workplace deviant behaviour was failed to be rejected (β=0.030, T= 0.5741, P-=0.459). Hypothesis 2 which sated that depersonalization does not have significant effect on WDB was rejected (β=0.457, T= 7.463, P=0.000) at 5% level of significance. Hypothesis 3 which stated that reduced personal accomplishment does not have significant effect on WDB was also rejected (β=0.162, T= 2.834, P=0.005) at 5% level of significance. Hypothesis 4 which stated that religiosity does not moderate the relationship between emotional exhaustion and WDB was failed to be rejected (β=-0.064, T= 1.012, P=0.311) at 5% level of significance. Hypothesis 5 which stated that religiosity does not moderate the relationship between depersonalization and WDB was also failed to be rejected (β=0.016, T= 0.017, P=0.987) at 5% level of significance. Finally, Hypothesis 6 which stated that religiosity does not moderate the relationship between reduced personal accomplishment and WDB was failed to be rejected (β=0.119, T= 1.614, P=0.107) at 5% level of significance. Hence, for the direct relationship, it was found that depersonalization and reduced personal accomplishment have a positive significant effect on WDB while emotional exhaustion was found to have an insignificant effect. For the indirect relationship, religiosity was found not the moderate the relationship between emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, reduced personal accomplishment and WDB.

Discussion

The prevalence of WDB especially in the academic environment is triggered by situational factors such as job burnout. Due to the negative consequences of WDB on the university system, it is important to identify strategies aimed at reversing this negative trend. Consequently, the current study emerges to examine the moderating role of religiosity on the relationship between job burnout and WDB among academic staff in KASU. The result of the hypotheses testing are discussed and implications of the findings were provided.

Firstly, the result established a positive but insignificant effect of emotional exhaustion on WDB among academic staff. This means that as academic staff become emotionally exhausted, the tendency to engage in WDB might not increase. This finding is not in line with the stressor-emotion model (Spector & Fox, 2002) which states that when people become consistently exposed to emotion induced events like emotional exhaustion, they automatically develop negative emotions, these negative emotions will then facilitate engagement in WDB.

One possible explanation for the result is that academic staff in KASU operate in an environment characterized by resources constraints, poor infrastructure, delay in the payment of salary, poor salary package, irregular payment of responsibility allowance, high workload, among others. This has made the academic staff to develop resilience in coping with these stressors without necessarily engaging in WDB. Hence, academic staff in KASU view emotional exhaustion as part of their work realities. Makhdoom et al, (2019), and Guetirrez (2019) in their studies also found an insignificant relationship between emotional exhaustion and WDB.

The second finding established that depersonalization has a positive significant effect on WDB among academic staff. This implies that when academic staff develop depersonalization, the tendency to engage in WDB increases. Thus, when depersonalization sets in, academic staff develop negative feelings about their students, colleagues or co-workers, these feelings then lead to psychological withdrawal and physical distancing (Maslach, 1982). Subsequently, academic staff experiencing depersonalization will have negative feeling toward their students and will exhibit distant attitudes (Maslach, Jackson & Leiter, 1996). The same result was also found by previous studies (such as Goga, 2024; Goga, Aliyu & Bashir, 2023; Lubbadeh, 2021; Bicer, 2020; Turek, 2020; Ugwu et al, 2017, among others) who found a positive significant effect of depersonalization on WDB.

The third finding revealed that reduced personal accomplishment has a positive significant effect on WDB among the academic staff of KASU. This implies that academic staff who have developed the feeling of reduced personal accomplishment are more likely to engage in WDB in the university such as coming to meetings late, absenteeism, daydreaming, among others. The study finding is not unexpected because the university work situation is characterized by chronic and overwhelming demands which contribute to the feeling of reduced personal effectiveness (Maslach, Schaufeli & Leiter, 2001). The finding is also in line

with the stressor-emotion model (Spector & Fox, 2002) which posits that, job conditions that interfere with the achievement or maintenance of objectives and goals of individuals would induce feeling of anger and frustration, which in turn leads to WDB. The finding also goes in line with previous empirical studies (such as Ogungbamila & Adedayo, 2021; Akbar & Julie 2020; Mahrukh et al, 2020).

The fourth finding that examined the moderating role of religiosity on the relationship between emotional exhaustion and WDB shows that religiosity does not moderate the relationship between emotional exhaustion and WDB. This suggests that religiosity does not weaken emotionally exhausted academic staff from engaging in WDB. One possible explanation of the absence of moderation is that most academic staff may not consider WDB as an issue that has to do with morality, especially when the deviant acts are minor such as coming to classes late, cancelling lectures, giving markings to PG students, delegating classes to junior colleagues without HoD`s approval, etc. Hence, in circumstances of this nature, religiosity may not weaken the relationship because the academic staff do not see the behaviours connected to religious values.

Fifthly, the result of the moderating role of religiosity on the relationship between depersonalization and WDB reveals that religiosity does not moderate the relationship. This implies that religiosity does not weaken the possibility of academic staff`s engagement in WDB. The justification for this finding is that since academic staff in KASU are exposed to high workload, they engage in cutting corners in order to cope with stress, hence, academic staff may not see these deviant acts as violating principles of their religion.

Lastly, religiosity was also found not to moderate the relationship between reduced personal accomplishment and WDB. This implies that religiosity does not block academic staff suffering from reduced personal accomplishment from engaging in WDB. One important reason for the absence of moderation is that reduced personal accomplishment has been found to be a severe emotional state. Hence, it can overpower any moral and ethical constraints which religiosity provides. Additionally, the academic environment in KASU is one devoid of institutional support, recognition, among others which leads to the increased development of the feeling of reduced personal accomplishment. Hence, academic staff in KASU see WDB as a weapon to fight back the system which they perceive as unfair, hence, the absence of the moderation.

Conclusion and Recommendation

The study made several contributions to both literature and practice by examining the moderating role of religiosity on the relationship between the dimensions of job burnout and WDB among academic staff in KASU. The study concludes that depersonalization and reduced personal accomplishment strongly predicts WDB among lecturers and that religiosity could not moderate the relationship between the three dimensions and WDB because of the intensity of the syndrome among the academic staff. Based on the findings and the conclusion, the following recommendations are made:

i. Although emotional exhaustion was found to be insignificant in predicting WDB among KASU academic staff, emotional exhaustion is regarded as a core dimension of WDB, hence, the university should continue to sustain its wellness programmes to prevent academic staff from the syndrome.

ii. To reduce depersonalization, the university should provide an organizational culture that supports academic staff such as recognition programmes, open communication programmes, among others.

iii. The university management should try to enhance professional development as well as provide recognition opportunities among its academic staff.

iv. The university management should focus on designing and implementing training programmes focused on workplace ethics and professionalism.

v. It is recommended that the university should try promoting initiatives in the workplace that enhance interpersonal connections without necessarily relying on religiosity.

vi. The university management should try and restore a sense of achievement among academic staff by providing a conducive atmosphere capable of fostering intrinsic motivation among its academic staff.

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