Big Five Personality Traits and Job Burnout: Testing a Collectivistic Teachers' College Lecturer Sample

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Abstract: - **This study sought to determine the relationship between Big Five personality traits and job burnout dimensions.211 lecturers from three Zimbabwean teachers' colleges were surveyed using a convenience sampling strategy. A fifty-item IPIP scale was used to map personality while the Oldenberg Burnout Inventory (OLBI-English translation) determined burnout levels on two dimensions; exhaustion and disengagement. Data were analysed using multiple linear regression (MLR) analysis to identify dominant personality traits that predicted each of the dependent variables, and correlation analysis (CA) to determine the relationship between personality and dimensions in the dependent variables. With regards to burnout, regression analysis mapped extraversion, conscientiousness, neuroticism and agreeableness as the dominant personality traits prevalent in the Zimbabwean teachers' college lecturer sample. Furthermore, CA showed that extraversion, neuroticism, agreeableness and conscientiousness did not have any significant correlation with disengagement, while extraversion, neuroticism and conscientiousness had a significant negative and weak correlation with exhaustion. This suggests that lecturers who are high in extraversion, neuroticism and conscientiousness scores are likely to experience low levels of exhaustion. As there is currently no evidence of prior studies with a Zimbabwean teachers' college lecturer sample, this study provides useful information for future research in collectivistic cultures. This study showed a weak relationship between personality and burnout, indicating potential for further related research. Future research should develop measures with local language-appropriate translations of the five-factor model and the OLBI in order to counteract the culture difference which could have made some of the lecturers fail to comprehend the English nuances in the two measures. The convenience sample of 211 lecturers was large but non-random, and therefore not representative of the population of teachers' colleges in Zimbabwe which severely limited the generalizability of the findings of this study to other settings. Further studies using probability sampling may generate representative samples from which the findings can be generalized.**

Keywords:- **Burnout, Disengagement, Exhaustion, Job demands, Job resources, Personality.**

I. INTRODUCTION

The relationship between personality and variables such as stress, burnout, and coping has occupied personality psychologists for decades. Furthermore, the preponderance of extant literature suggests that personality traits relate to these three variables (Bakker, Van Der Zee, Lewig & Dollard, 2006; Penney, David & Witt, 2011; Cleare, 2013; Foley, 2013; Johnson, 2013; Fink, 2015). In recent times, the focus of personality psychology has been on five broad traits – namely openness to experience, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism (McCrae & Costa, 1989; McCrae & John, 1992). However, it is noteworthy that most of the reported research has been contextualized to western cultures which are largely individualistic. While much is known about the relationship between personality and the foregoing constructs, very little research has examined this relationship in collectivistic cultures, more so with a sample of teachers' college lecturers.

Compared to other professions, academics are exposed to higher levels of job stress (Steyn & Kamper, 2006) which at times leads to job burnout. In higher education worldwide, these high levels of job stress emanate from an overload of demands (Mxenge, Dywill & Basaza, 2014), a sharp rise in student numbers (Kinman, 2014), work overload (Gilbert, 2000) and demands placed on lecturers as a result of massification of students. Massification is a worldwide phenomenon that has also affected Zimbabwe's higher education sector, particularly teachers' colleges. It is therefore evident teacher education has not escaped the challenges that have characterised the global demand for higher education. These include inadequate government funding, inability of institutions to recruit staff resulting in high staff/student ratios, increased administrative responsibilities for lecturers, poorly resourced libraries, and physical infrastructure which has not matched the high student enrolment (Teferra & Altbachl, 2004; Altbach, Reisberg, & Rumbley, 2009; Mohamedbhai, 2014).

In the current study, the relationship between the variables is investigated using measures which have been developed within a Western individualistic worldview. The study explains this relationship using a sample of lecturers in a Zimbabwean setting that is largely collectivistic and has an Afrocentric worldview. The study is conducted against a backdrop of ongoing debate which has led some scholars to argue that personality traits are more applicable to western

cultures (Shweder & Sullivan, 1993; Cross &Markus, 1999). Piedmont, Bain, McCrae and Costa, (2002) argue that taking such a constricted view of personality traits would lead to the prediction that personality trait models and instruments could never be successfully imported into truly collectivistic cultures. Piedmont et al. (2002) also argue against taking such a constricted view. In the current debate, Mkhize (2003) proffers a balanced view by pointing out that the emergent challenge is therefore to advance a psychologically relevant and dynamic interpenetration of the African and other worldviews because in the modern world people are exposed to multiple worldviews and social realities.

Various measures have been proposed by western researchers. Currently, the five-factor model (FFM) which has given rise to the NEO-Personality Inventory is viewed as the gold standard in western psychology. In this model, traits are commonly referred to as The Big Five factors (Srivastava, 2013). Laher (2008, p.76) points out that "The NEO-Personality Inventory (NEO-PI-R) is amongst the most widely used and researched operationalization of the FFM. Evidence from studies using the NEO-PI-R suggests that the FFM is cross-culturally applicable."

Conceptualizing job burnout

In the 1970s Freudenberger observed enduring exhaustion marked by an absence of inspiration among New York volunteer guide laborers which he depicted to be 'burnout'. On the premise of his observations, Freudenberger (1974) outlined burnout as condition of psychological and physical fatigue caused by one's career which resulted in the gradual disappearance of motivation or attachment to one's work marked by reduced work output (Bakker, Demerouti & Sanz-Vergel, 2014). Burnout, which is associated with the negative effects of prolonged stress emerged in teaching professional literature at this time (Salami, 2011), The Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) was then developed into the gold standard which conceptualized burnout along three dimensions (Bakker et al., 2014). However, the Oldenberg Burnout Inventory (OLBI) is emerging as a plausible alternative to the MBI. Because our intent was not to imprison ourselves to the MBI tradition but explore a new pathway, the current study used the OLBI which conceptualizes burnout along two dimensions; exhaustion and disengagement.

Burnout has been associated with negative consequences such as employee ill-health (Schaufeli, Leiter, & Maslach, 2009) decisions to quit work (e.g. Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004; Spence-Laschinger, Leiter, Day, & Gilin, 2009) and unsatisfactory work outcomes (Wright & Hobföll, 2004). Salami (2011) states that burnout is level specific and for this reason argues for the importance of differentiating teacher burnout as peculiar to the profession. In view of this, teachers' college burnout should be separated from general teacher burnout. While it shares some common dimensions with other levels in the teaching profession, teachers' college lecturer burnout is a special form of burnout. Teachers' college

lecturer burnout is that which manifests as a direct result of being in the employ of a college which trains teachers for the school system.

The relationship between burnout and personality

The relationship between burnout and personality is well documented (Alarcon, Eschelman & Bowling, 2009). Various scholars have reported the Big Five personality dimensions to have varied relationships with burnout irrespective of the measure used to determine burnout. For example, Sulea et al. (2012) using the MBI found that conscientiousness demonstrated a negative relationship with emotional exhaustion, cynicism and professional inefficiency. This finding implied that people with a high conscientiousness score were likely to demonstrate less emotional exhaustion, cynicism and professional inefficiency. This confirms that individuals who exhibit high conscientiousness tend to be systematic and restrained (Costa & McCrae, 1992) and because of this trait, such individuals invariably report lesser stress (Alarcon et al., 2009). A cogent explanation is that individuals with high conscientiousness have a proclivity to employ problem-focused coping strategies (Connor-Smith & Flachsbart, 2007), which predisposes them to less work related fatigue but aids them to derive a higher sense of achievement from their work.

Neuroticism has also shown a positive relationship with pessimism and professional inefficiency on account that individuals high in this trait also tended to be more psychological detached from their jobs because they experienced high levels of job stress which predisposed them to burnout as well (Langelaan et al., 2006). Agreeableness had a negative relationship with pessimism and professional inefficiency. This implied that agreeable individuals were more likely to create good work relations and evidence more commitment to their jobs because they were generally more effective at tasks. Other studies (e.g. Wright & Cropanzano, 1998) also confirmed that neuroticism had a relationship with emotional exhaustion.

The Job Demands Resources Model (JD-R) and job burnout

The JD-R model suggests that prolonged exposure to stress leads to overburdened employees who may reduce the effort they spend on the job resulting in reduced output and burnout ((Van den Broeck, et al., 2010; Rattrie & Kittler, 2014). In the extant literature job characteristics are segregated into two interrelated constructs; job demands and job resources. The JD-R is a tool which was designed to evidence the relationship between these constructs (Van den Broeck, 2010). The main proposition of the model is that while there could be differences, all jobs will of necessity characteristically be defined by these two dimensions which influence employee wellbeing (Demerouti &Bakker, 2011).

In the JD-R, job demands define a health impairment pathway and encompass all dimensions of the job which exert strain on the employee (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). Job

demands are energy depleting (Van den Broeck, 2010) and are associated with negative job outcomes which include decisions to quit the job (Qiao & Wilmar, 2011) and burnout (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). Employees who experience excessive exposure to high levels of unhealthy strain caused by job demands naturally trigger defense mechanisms to reduce or avert exhaustion. This ends up in underperformance and depleted efficiency and could be a sign of burnout (Van den Broeck, et al., 2010; Vander Elst et al., 2016). We examined the relationship between personality traits with the intention to explicate whether lecturer job demands cause exhaustion and disengagement.

On the other hand, job resources define a motivational pathway. These encompass all dimensions of the job which positively create an enabling work environment which stimulates and enable the employee to commit to and be more engaged in the job resulting in productivity (Bakker, Demerouti, & Euwema, 2005; Parzefall & Hakanen, 2010; Bakker et al., 2011; Van den Broeck et al.,2013. The current study sought to examine how job resources in teachers' colleges, such as peer and supervisor support, impacted lecturer job stress and burnout. In the light of this, Cavanaugh, Boswell, Roehling, and Boudreau (2000) raise an important dimension by illuminating two critical components to job demands namely, challenge and hindrance stressors. Challenges are those demands which present opportunity for development and are seen as incentives, while hindrances are those demands which place undue limitation on the motivation and development of the employee (Cavanaugh, et al., 2000).

The relationship between personality and burnout is illustrated in a number of ways (McGregor et al., 2016). The model advances that there is flexibly across professions (Van den Broeck, 2010). It specifies that each occupation is unique in terms of inherent risks. This supports an earlier proposition that lecturing in a teachers' college has its peculiar risk factors Furthermore, while there is a strong argument regarding the limitations of western derived tools; the efficacy of the model is explored in this study because the model allows for the examination occupations in the unique contexts within which they occur. This perhaps makes the lens generalizable across cultures. For example, Korunka, Kubicek and Schaufeli (2009) have shown this generalizability in studies with heterogeneous samples comparing blue and white-collar workers. Llorens, et al. (2006) also found evidence of cross-cultural constancy of the associations of the key concepts proposed in the model. Some African studies have supported the efficacy of model as well. A South African study (De Braine& Roodt, 2011) confirmed the existence of a positive relationship between job resources and work engagement. Karatepe's (2012) study involving frontline hotel employees in Cameroon also confirmed this finding. An important dimension attached to the De Braine and Roodt (2011) study was that the sample was multicultural as it included a spectrum of Black, White, Coloured, and Asian/Indian participants. This demonstrated that the lens' utility is crosscutting.

Buitendach et al. (2016) revealed that burnout had negative relationships with job satisfaction and commitment. This study confirmed earlier research (e.g. Bakker, Albrecht, & Leiter, 2011) which has demonstrated that when employees disengage psychologically because of burnout, their commitment levels are also reduced. Buitendach and colleagues (2016) however, point out that their findings confirmed previous research (e.g. Van den Broeck, et al., 2013; Vander Elst et al., 2016) which revealed that commitment, job satisfaction and burnout were predicted by job demands and job resources. Buitendach and colleagues argue that their findings proved the postulate that job resources outline a motivational pathway once workers face high job demands. Thus, their sample of bus drivers reported high levels of stress which actuated them to be more engaged in their work thus enabling them to avoid burnout.

Some studies suggest the existence of a negative relationship between burnout and job resources (Bakker, Demerouti, & Schaufeli, 2003; Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004; Bakker, Demerouti, & Euwema, 2005). This implies that individuals with adequate job resources experience less burnout than those with limited resources (Lee & Ashforth, 1996). A Polish study (Basińska & Wilczek-Rużyczka, 2013) also confirmed this relationship where high job demands and lack of resources had a positive relationship with burnout. Jorgensen, Nel and Roux (2013) also established further confirmatory with a sample drawn from various South African occupations. While the foregoing studies primarily examined burnout at an individual level, Consiglio et al. (2013) found that with regard to work-teams, burnout had a strong relationship with job demands and job resources. These studies therefore support the postulate in the JD-R model that job resources define a motivational pathway, while job demands define a health impairing pathway. This postulate is tested in this study with a lecturer sample from a collectivistic culture.

While the JD-R continues to influence burnout research, the validity of the model has been queried (Van den Broeck, 2010). Furthermore, the dearth of studies using this model in cross-national settings (Rattrie & Kittler., 2014) would suggest the need for further research.

In order to explore the relationship between personality and lecturer job burnout we formulated the following questions.

RQ1. What are the dominant personality traits of the Zimbabwean lecturer sample as measured by the NEO-PI-R?

RQ2. What is the relationship between personality as measured by the NEO-PI-R and burnout as measured by the OLBI among teachers' college lecturers in Zimbabwe?

II. METHOD

Participants and Procedure

Two hundred and twenty-four (224) lecturers initially volunteered to take an interest in the survey. Of this figure, 13(5.8%) of the questionnaires were regarded deficient and were rejected, leaving a legitimate sample of 211, which accounted for a 78.1% return rate. 53.1% of the participants were male. The age profile demonstrated a close typical dissemination with 113 members in the 41-50 age class, which mirrored that the lecturers in the example were generally middle-aged. The majority of lecturers were married and did not hold any posts of special responsibility. Lecturers without any posts of responsibility accounted for 81% of the sample. Heads of Subject made 11.4 per cent, Lecturers' in Charge, 4.3 per cent, and Heads of Department 3.3 per cent. Furthermore, the majority of lecturers were in the senior to principal lecturer grades, implying that they had six or more years of teaching experience. 52.6% of lecturers had first degrees and a teaching qualification, while 47.4 per cent of the sample had senior degrees at master's level. One lecturer was a PhD holder.

Questionnaires were administered individually and in small groups at each teachers' college at the beginning of their working day. Additional, questionnaires were left with identified collaborators at the colleges for distribution to lecturers who for one reason or the other were not available during the initial distribution. Participation was based on the ethical principle of informed consent. Furthermore, it was both voluntary and anonymous.

III. INSTRUMENTS

Personality: Goldberg's Lexical Factor Markers – The Big Five Personality Test

A fifty-item IPIP scale with ten items per dimension was used to map the personality traits of lecturers. Currently, the five-factor model (FFM) which has given rise to the NEO-Personality Inventory (NEO-PI-R) is viewed as the gold standard in western psychology which is widely as it is applicable in several applied fields (Buchanan, Johnson & Goldberg, 2005).. In this model, the traits commonly referred to as The Big Five factors are; openness to experience, conscientiousness, extraversion, agreeableness, and neuroticism (Srivastava, 2013). The participants were asked to indicate their preferences on Likert scale items which had a range from 1 (disagree) to 5 (agree). On each trait, the final calculated score ranges between zero and forty. A South African study (Vogt, 2007) using the BTI (a South African adaption of the NEO-PI-R) established Cronbach's alpha coefficients as follows: Extraversion =.89, Neuroticism =.94, Conscientiousness, =.94, Openness to Experience, =.90 and Agreeableness = 0.88. The alphas calculated for the five scales in the current study were as follows: extraversion =.79, neuroticism =.76, conscientiousness, = .74, openness to experience, = .73 and agreeableness = .72. Based on the

Ponterotto and Ruckdeschel (2007) matrix, a sample of 211 lecturers, and that the Big Five Personality Test had ten items per subscale, the alpha coefficients reported in this study were in the range "fair" to "moderate".

Oldenburg Burnout Inventory

This measure operationalises burnout as comprising two dimensions (Demerouti et al., 2010). It consists of sixteen (16) items to evaluate the two subscales of burnout, each which includes four positively worded items and four negatively worded items (Bakker & Demerouti, 2010). Disengagement is measured by items 1, 3R, 6R, 7, 9R, 11R, 13, and 15; while exhaustion is measured by items 2R, 4R, 5, 8R, 10, 12R, 14, and 16. Items marked with an R are reversed. This means that a score of 1 becomes 4 while a score of 4 becomes 1. Average scores for each sub-scale are then calculated. Higher scores indicate higher levels of burnout on each dimension (Demerouti et al., 2003). The answering categories used, as given by the developers, ranged from "strongly agree" to "strongly disagree". Mean scores for each dimension are summed to arrive at a burnout score. Demerouti and Bakker (2007) argue that the OLBI can be applied to a wide spectrum of professions. They have reported alphas of = .85 for exhaustion and disengagement (Demerouti & Bakker, 2007). A Zimbabwean study (Buitendach et al., 2016) reported alphas of =.76 for overall burnout, exhaustion = .72 and =.73 for disengagement. In the current study, alpha reported for the OLBI on the exhaustion subscale was = .88, and on the disengagement subscale it was =.83. The overall internal consistency of this measure was =.86. Based on the Ponterotto and Ruckdeschel (2007) matrix and a sample of 211 lecturers and given that the OLBI had ≥12 items per sub-scale;the exhaustion subscale was 'good', while the disengagement subscale 'moderate'.

IV. DATA ANALYSES

Data were analysed using Version 23.0 of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).We opted for multiple linear regression (MLR) and correlation analysis (CA) in the analysis process. MLR was used to identify dominant personality traits that predicted each of the dependent variables. CA was then used to determine the relationship between personality and dimensions in the dependent variables.A model was developed for the dependent variable, burnout. Predictive variables were simultaneously entered into the model to determine the relationship between personality and burnout. The statistical significance of the predictive variables which contributed to burnout was using an F statistic. A p-value of ≤ .05 demonstrates relationship between the predictive and dependent variables (Hussien, 2010; Shaffer, 2007).

We determined the relationship between personality variables identified by the MLR analysis and the two burnout dimensions using CA. This technique is used to evaluate the degree of relationship between two quantitative variables (Mertler & Vannatta, 2002). Pearson's Product Moment

correlation coefficient or r coefficient was used. It is a measure of the strength of the linear relationship between two such variables (Hauke & Kossowski, 2011). The r coefficient has a magnitude and direction of either positive or negative on a range of values from -1 to 0 to + 1, where the values are absolute and non-dimensional (Taylor, 1990). Therefore, a correlation of zero indicates that there is no relationship between the measured variables while the closer the r coefficient approaches ±1, regardless of direction; the stronger is the existing association between the two variables (Taylor, 1990). If a relationship between two variables is positive, an increase in one variable will result in an increase in the other variable. Conversely, if there is a negative relationship, it implies that higher levels of one variable are associated with lower levels of the other. In correlation analysis, a p-value <.05 identifies the predictor variables significantly related to the dependent variables' dimensions correlations (Taylor, 1990). CA was an expedient way of gaining a general impression of the dimensions that contributed to burnout. Correlation coefficients that were ≤ .35 represented low or weak correlations, .36 to .67 were modest or moderate correlations, and, 68 to 1.0 were high or strong correlations (Taylor, 1990). Data were interpreted using the determination coefficient (r^2). It is the percentage of variance in the dependent variable that can be predicted from the independent

variable (Weber & Lamb, 1970; Congelosi, Taylor & Rice, 1983; Mason, Lind & Marchal, 1983). The interpretation of the results is easier by determining a per cent value. Taylor (1990) argues that it is a more conservative measure of the relationship between two variables that many statisticians prefer.

V. RESULTS

As shown in Table 1, Tolerance and VIF values were calculated among the predictive variables. Tolerance values are all higher than 0.1 and VIF values are all lower than 10. This suggests that the predictive variables were unrelated. The simultaneous MLR analysis was statistically significant at the .05 level (p-value of the F-Statistic =.001<.05). This means that the dependent variable burnout was related to at least one of the predictive variables. As shown in Table 1, four predictive variables showed significance at alpha .05. These are extraversion (B=-.026, Beta=-.194, p-value=.007<.05), agreeableness (B=.019, beta=.157, p-value=.049), conscientiousness (B=-.020, beta=-.156, p-value=.050), and neuroticism (B=-.022, beta=-.169, p-value=.020<.05). Burnout was negatively related to extraversion, conscientiousness and neuroticism. It was also positively related to agreeableness.

Table 1: Multiple linear regression model for burnout

Model	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients	T	p-value	Collinearity statistics	
	B	Std. Error	beta			Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)	6.202	.346		17.917	.000		
Extraversion	-.026	.010	-.194	-2.748	.007	.882	1.134
Agreeableness	.019	.009	.157	1.982	.049	.704	1.421
Conscientiousness	-.020	.010	-.156	-1.967	.050	.703	1.422
Neuroticism	-.022	.010	-.169	-2.343	.020	.850	1.177
Openness to experience	-.001	.010	-.007	-.087	.931	.764	1.309
Regression Equation Statistics							
F		4.466					
P-value of the F-Statistic		.001					
R Square		.098					
Dependent Variable: Burnout							

Based on the relative strength of the beta coefficients, the rank order of the significant predictive variables relative to the dependent variable, burnout is: (1) extraversion (-.194), (2) neuroticism (-.169), (3) agreeableness (.157), (4) conscientiousness (-.156).

The regression model summary shows an R Square of .098. The conclusion drawn is that extraversion, conscientiousness, neuroticism and agreeableness explain 9.8 per cent of the variation in burnout. This suggests that with regard to burnout, the dominant personality traits of the

Zimbabwean teachers' college lecturer sample were restricted to these four traits. These four traits were thus extracted for further analysis using CA.

Table 2 reveals that extraversion, neuroticism, agreeableness and conscientiousness do not show any significant correlation with disengagement at alpha .05.However, extraversion (r = -.217, p =.047), neuroticism (r = -.292, p =.000) and conscientiousness (r = -.214, p =.002) have a significant negative weak correlation with exhaustion.

Table 2: Burnout dimensions correlation analysis

Burnout dimensions	Extraversion			Neuroticism			Agreeableness			Conscientiousness		
	r	r^2	p-value	r	r^2	p-value	r	r^2	p-value	r	r^2	p-value
Disengagement	-.134	.116	.052	-.112	.013	.104	-.021	.000	.759	-.052	.003	.454
Exhaustion	-.217	.047	.002	-.292	.085	.000	.006	.000	.937	-.214	.046	.002

This suggests that lecturers who have high extraversion, neuroticism and conscientiousness scores are likely to experience low levels of exhaustion. The coefficient of determination indicates that neuroticism explains a significant variation of 8.5 percent in the dependent variable exhaustion, while the variation of 4.7 and 4.6 percent in the dependent variable exhaustion is explained by extraversion and conscientiousness. On the other hand, agreeableness explains zero per cent variation in the dependent variable exhaustion. The findings suggest that from the four dominants traits identified in the MLR analysis, neuroticism, extraversion and conscientiousness emerge as the traits which significantly explain exhaustion.

VI. DISCUSSION

In the current study, extraversion, neuroticism, agreeableness and conscientiousness did not show any significant correlation with disengagement but neuroticism, extraversion and conscientiousness significantly explained the exhaustion dimension in the OLBI.

This study reveals that lecturers experience unhealthy levels of exhaustion, which may have potential for causing physiological problems for some of the lecturers. Lecturers report exhaustion caused by the pressure of deadlines and unscheduled work activities, which combine to create an unhealthy work-life balance. A related study by Bowen (2016) also confirmed that teachers felt that their jobs were time-consuming and interfered with their private lives. In stress literature, 'work-life balance' and 'work-life conflict are often used interchangeably (Bell, Rajendran & Theiler, 2012). In the light of the increasing research among scholars (e,g, Moore, 2007; Hayman, 2005; Pocock, 2005), evidence indicates that organisations which foster work-life balance among their employees benefit on account that there is increased employee well-being which results in lower stress and burnout levels as well (Parkes & Langford, 2008). Teachers' colleges can also benefit from a realisation that lecturers who frequently take home their work are creating an unhealthy work-life balance which may result in poor quality work from the lecturers fatigued by an excessive workload.

In a meta-analysis, Alarcon and colleagues (2009) found that a consistent association existed between personality and burnout. The study showed that among other job stress predictors, workload is an important predictor of burnout. This finding is also confirmed in the current study. Job demands define an energy-depleting health impairment pathway (Van den Broeck, 2010) encompassing high workload, ambiguity of roles and conflict of roles (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007), which may result in negative outcomes, including turnover intention (Qiao & Wilmar, 2011) and burnout (Schaufeli & Bakker, 2004). The majority of the lecturers had served more than six years, and were likely to be exposed to excessive stress. In the JD-R model, prolonged exposure to stress leads to overburdened employees. This leads to burnout, with employees experiencing either exhaustion or feelings of disengagement resulting in decreased work outcomes. Such employees are likely to exert less effort to save energy and avoid fatigue (Van den Broeck, et al., 2010). However, the current study seems to suggest the contrary.

The results of the current study indicate what appears to be an inexplicable motivational pathway, whereby the lecturers' job demands apparently function as job resources leading to increased work engagement by the lecturers. This is inexplicable given that with the massification of the Zimbabwean higher education sector, where there are increased numbers of students and increased workloads to deal with, lecturers were likely to experience greater exhaustion. However, the lecturers seemed to experience low levels of exhaustion.

Second, individuals with high neuroticism scores are generally pessimistic and view their surroundings as ominous which predisposes them to burnout (Langelaan at al., 2006). The findings of this study regarding neuroticism are contradictory to the Stoeva, Chiu and Greenhaus (2002) study, which reported that neurotic individuals had high job stress levels. However, the study by Stoeva et al. was done in Hong Kong, which has a predominantly western culture. Thus, a cogent explanation lies in the fact that the Zimbabwean lecturer sample comes from a collectivistic culture.

In individualistic Western cultures, where individuals generally prefer to isolate themselves from group contact, the potential for burnout is high. In the work environment, this leads to severe and unresolved conflicts, which increase the chance of frustration, hostility and diminished social support (Sulea et al. 2012). In collectivistic cultures, the focus is on one's social obligations and responsibilities to one's in-groups. The cultural transactional theory of stress and coping (Chun, Moos & Cronk, 2006) suggests that in collectivistic cultures, individuals generally work in groups as there is a sense of duty towards the collective and in-groups. Therefore, individuals in such cultures are more likely to demonstrate a dialogical rather than a monological account of the human person (Mkhize, 2004).

Individuals are compelled them to defer to and work within the group, and on account of this, they are able to minimise the negative effects of stress, which cause burnout (exhaustion).

Third, extraversion showed a significant but negative relationship with job stress which implies that teachers' college lecturers who are high in extraversion are likely to experience less stress associated with job demands, and report less stress regarding control of their jobs. This relationship confirms the potential for experiencing low levels of burnout on the exhaustion dimension. A meta-analysis (Lee & Ashforth, 1996)) of human service providers showed that job demands were predictive of burnout. The burnout reported by human service providers emanated from a host of job demands which included excessive workload and unclear job designations. On the contrary, the current study reveals that lecturers did not experience these negative job demands as they reported low levels of exhaustion. This finding further confirms that the accommodating nature of extraverts enables them to react more positively to situations and makes them experience lower levels of stress (Diener & Lucas, 1999; McCrae & John, 1992).

Fourth, individuals high in conscientiousness demonstrate proper organisation, careful planning and excellent time management. This enables them to complete more tasks timeously and expediently thereby reducing work conflict (Barrick & Mount, 2001; Judge & Higgins, 1999; McCrae & John, 1992). Furthermore, conscientious people are more likely to perform tasks thoroughly and correctly (Kaur, 2013). In the context of the work environment, these personality attributes help explain why such teachers' college lecturers experience low levels of exhaustion. Thus, lecturers who exhibit conscientiousness are more likely to focus on their work than on extraneous activities which may disrupt their carefully planned work routines.

VII. STRENGTHS, LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE RESEARCH

This study relied on self-reported data. We assumed that the sample of lecturer participants would give information with minimum or no bias as the participants were a generally well-educated group who would understand the value of giving honest responses in a study of this nature. However, some research has proved that some participants may not be adept at self-assessment, and therefore provide inaccurate and non-representative responses (Kazemian & Farrington, 2005). Added to the foregoing limitation was that Zimbabwean teachers' college lecturers from an agrarian collectivistic culture completed the two measures developed with a focus on Western individualistic cultures. The culture difference could have made the lecturers fail to comprehend some of the English nuances, which may have inhibited them from giving accurate responses. Furthermore, it has been proven that self-report measures do not preclude response style and prejudices by the participants (Van de Vijver & Leung, 2001; Piedmont

et al., 2002). While the lecturers generally use English in the course of their teaching, notable lingual and cultural differences between the developers of the measures and the lecturer sample exist, and these could have influenced the lecturers' interpretations of the question items. Consequently, some concepts measured by the personality measure may not have had meaning in ChiShona and IsiNdebele, the two local languages spoken by the lecturers. It is recommended that future studies design and use culture-relevant measures to map the personalities of participants from collectivistic cultures. The growth of Afrikology is encouraged whereby African psychologists develop culture-specific measures suiting the African context. Van de Vijver and Leung (2001) make a clarion call by arguing that while there is a need for cross-cultural psychology, without which psychological theory would be restricted to its own cultural precincts, "blind exportation of western instruments to other cultures without any concern for the appropriateness of the measures is also unlikely to lead to major theoretical advancements" (para.2).

The current study could be criticised for lack of model/data fit. We used the coefficient of determination (r^2)to evaluate the fitness of the data model. Statistically, a good model is one in which data has a value of r^2 close to 1 (Bowerman & O'Connel, 1990; Draper & Smith, 1998). In this study, the r^2 for the model was very weak (.098).The r^2 in the model was closer to zero, which implied that the dependent variable was open to influence by other predictive variables beside the personality traits. While the sample of 211 lecturers was considered as large and therefore acceptable (Zaidi et al., 2013), it was non-random. Therefore, this severely limited the generalizability of the findings of this study to other settings. Further studies using probability sampling may generate representative samples from which the findings can be generalized.

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