

Psychosocial Pathways to Burnout in Women in High-Responsibility Caring Professions

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1. Round 1

1.1. Reviewer 1

Reviewer:

In the paragraph starting “High-responsibility caregiving roles...”, the phrase “empathy is commodified” is theoretically compelling but not elaborated. Consider explaining what is meant by this commodification and how it relates to institutional dynamics.

The reference to “psychosocial safety climate (PSC)” appears twice in adjacent sentences referencing similar content (Potter et al., 2024; Teoh & Kee, 2020). Consider consolidating or expanding to differentiate their contributions.

It’s stated that “theoretical saturation was reached,” but it’s unclear how this was operationalized. Consider specifying what constituted “saturation”—e.g., how many interviews yielded no new codes.

The sentence “These findings resonate with research by Gan et al. (2023)...” is strong but could benefit from more detailed linkage—i.e., specify how mindfulness modulates identity strain, and whether participants in the current study also reported mindfulness as protective.

The suggestion “Organizations must prioritize...” is important, but it would benefit from greater specificity. For example, what kind of “emotional labor audits” should be implemented? Provide examples or models.

Authors revised the manuscript and uploaded the document.

1.2. Reviewer 2

Reviewer:

While the introduction includes strong references, there is minimal discussion of the research gap. Consider including a sentence in the final paragraph that explicitly articulates what prior studies have not addressed, which this paper does.

In “Theme 1: Emotional Labor,” the quote “You just learn to push it all down” is powerful but should be tied more directly to a concept such as emotional suppression or professional emotional dissonance to strengthen its analytical connection.

In the paragraph listing participant demographics, consider including more intersectional indicators such as race/ethnicity or rural/urban background, given the South African context’s sociopolitical nuances.

In the sentence “Burnout among women in high-responsibility caring professions cannot be adequately explained by individual stress responses alone”, consider softening the tone (e.g., “should not be exclusively explained”) to avoid an absolutist stance.

While gender is central, other axes of identity (e.g., class, race) are not thoroughly analyzed. Consider incorporating more intersectional commentary, especially given the South African context.

Although theoretical constructs (e.g., emotional labor, perfectionism) are mentioned, the discussion could be improved by tying themes to a specific theoretical framework (e.g., Hochschild’s emotional labor theory, gender role strain theory).

Authors revised the manuscript and uploaded the document.

2. Revised

Editor’s decision: Accepted.

Editor in Chief’s decision: Accepted.