

# Work Related Stress as Determinant for Poor Health Conditions among Christian Religious Managers in Lagos State

Ogunbamowo, Waliu Babatunde, MPH, PhD / Ashon, Daniel Oluwatobi / Abudu, Abosede Mariam / Exradallenum Olusegun Akinsanya / Onifade, Olufemi Timothy, PhD, & Oladipupo, Basirat Olushola, PhD

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## ABSTRACT

*Work-related stress is a negative physical or emotional response to perceived imbalance between one's job demands and his ability to meet these demands. This study examined work related stress as determinant for poor health conditions among Christian religious managers in Lagos State. Descriptive research design was used while 450 Christian religious managers were sampled using the multistage sampling technique of simple random sampling and purposive sampling techniques. The research instrument used was a self-developed "Work Related Stress and Poor Health Conditions Questionnaire (WRSPHCQ)". The research instrument which was distributed and collected on the spot while Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.76 was obtained. Chi-Square ( $X^2$ ) and Linear regression were used in testing the stated hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. In conclusion there was significant occurrence of work-related stress ( $X^2=313.04$ ,  $p<0.05$ ) and significant relationship between work related stress and sleep disorder among Christian religious managers in Lagos State ( $F=348.076$ ;  $p<0.05$ ). Based on this study, it was recommended that Christian religious managers should be encouraged on a need to adopt balanced work schedule with regular days off, vacations and relaxations that will help ameliorate work related stress.*

**Keywords:** work related stress, poor health conditions, Christian religious managers

## INTRODUCTION

Stress is unpalatable and not good for achieving holistic health and wellbeing. Daily, individuals are faced with obligations leaving them to consequences of threatening and unwholesome responses. Stress can have a terrible impact on both physical and emotional well-being of an individual leaving many to deteriorating mental and physical health (Godinić & Obrenovic, 2020). Since many of this daily task are unavoidable, learning healthy stress management techniques will enhance one's resilience which will be beneficial to the health of the individual and the community (CDC, 2014). Ogunbamowo et al., (2020) opined that stress is an inevitable part of man as it evolves from everyday challenges human faced in a bid to achieve sustenance and pursue other life goals.

In the face of this challenges, it is regrettable that the modern-day healthcare provision is far from identifying indicators that shows the pervasive prevalence of stress in the modern age. one is faced with stress at one point in time. Stress affects both the mind and the body of all in individuals at one time or the other in life complimenting the report of United Nations on World Population Day, 2023 that the world population was approximately 7.9 billion in 2021 making stress an increasing public health issue (United Nations, 2023). The physical consequences of stress are significant and extend widely creating a role in the emergence of cardiovascular conditions like high blood pressure and atherosclerosis which occurs due to factors like elevated blood pressure and increased inflammation (Idowu et al., 2019). Consequently, prolonged exposure to stress hormones compromises the immune system and increases vulnerability to infections and illnesses (Cohen et al., 2016). Kessler, (2010) opinion that persistent stress is a recognized factor in high-risk mental health disorders like depression, anxiety, impaired cognitive abilities, process of memory impartation, focus, relationships and decision.

Work-related stress extends beyond occupational boundaries, impacting individuals in various fields. Christian religious managers, in particular, encounter emotional challenges stemming from their

daily experiences in the administration of church duties. Inability to strike balance meeting work demands and relaxation may facilitate the occurrence of sorrow, anxiety, compassion fatigue and interpersonal conflicts which could be preventable (Malasch et al., 2001; Terziev et al., 2017). Christian religious leaders are charged with loads of responsibilities ranging from organization of services, gathering and the necessity to offer virtual support to their congregations globally has increased their workloads and exacerbated stress levels (Pargament et al., 2020).

Christian religious managers find themselves at the crossroads of providing spiritual guidance, financial aids, emotional supports amidst many demands they encounter. They have responsibility to selflessly lead their organisations while they look out for the interest of members and their immediate community. Balancing these responsibilities often results in extended working hours, emotional fatigue, and the continuous requirement to address the diverse needs of their congregations (Chan & Chen, 2019). As a result, this intricate work setting makes them susceptible to increased stress levels. Ogunfowokan et al., (2018) opined that the elevated stress experienced by religious leaders in Nigeria is closely linked to negative health conditions such as hypertension and burnout experienced among religious managers (Ogunbamowo et al., 2022).

Due to the crucial roles religious managers play in guiding and overseeing religious functions, their challenging duties conditionally make them susceptible to health problems. Religious managers frequently bear substantial emotional and spiritual burdens emanating from continuous counselling, pastoral care, and leadership obligations which result in chronic stress and exhaustion (Fitchett et al 2015; Cafferata, 2017). Additionally, extensive administrative duties and extended periods of prayers and meditation can contribute to a sedentary lifestyle, elevating the likelihood of obesity and associated health (Bull et al., 2020). Participating in night-time services, communal gatherings, and religious practices can disturb your sleep routine, resulting in insufficient rest, which is linked to a range of health issues (Altena et al., 2020). Erratic routines may result in unhealthy eating habits, such as irregular meals and unhealthy food selections, leading to gaps and emptiness and the demands of their position occasionally result in feelings of social seclusion, which negatively impact one's mental well-being (Pargament, 2007; Saxena, 2017).

In the vibrant city of Lagos State with an estimated population of 15, 945, 912, amidst the constant hustle and bustle, a special set of people assumes the challenging responsibility of Christian religious managers (Oshinaike et al., 2014). These devoted individuals are tasked with leading their flocks on spiritual paths, offering pastoral support, and managing the intricate workings of religious organisations. Despite their unwavering faith-driven mission, they, like anyone else, are vulnerable to the widespread pressures of today's world, especially the harmful impact of work-related stress on their health and overall welfare (Prada-Ospina et al., 2019). Christian religious managers in Lagos State play a crucial role within their communities by offering spiritual guidance and assistance to numerous people. Nonetheless, they face distinct and widespread job-related pressures that affect their physical, mental, and emotional health. Based on this premise, this study aims to investigate the impact of work-related stress on the health of Christian religious managers in Lagos State.

The specific purposes of the study were to:

1. To determine the occurrence of work-related stress among Christian religious leaders in Lagos State?
2. To assess the relationship between work-related stress and occurrence of sleep disorder among Christian religious managers in Lagos State?

## RESEARCH QUESTIONS

1. Will there be occurrence of work-related stress among Christian religious leaders in Lagos State?
2. Will work-related stress determine occurrence of sleep disorder among Christian religious managers in Lagos State?

## HYPOTHESES

The following research hypotheses were postulated for the study:

1. There will be no significant occurrence of work-related stress among Christian religious leaders, Lagos State.
2. Work related stress will not significantly determine the occurrence of sleep disorder among Christian religious managers in Lagos State.

## METHODOLOGY

The descriptive research design of survey type and a cross-sectional study was adopted because of its capability to examine the relationship between variables under study, hypotheses testing and development of generalisation. The population of the study consists of all religious managers in Lagos State and twenty local governments which include Agege, Ajeromi-Ifelodun, Alimosho, Amuwo Odofin, Apapa, Badagry, Epe, Eti-Osa, Ibeju-Lekki, Ifako-Ijaiye, Ikeja, Ikorodu, Kosofe, Lagos Island, Lagos Mainland, Mushin, Ojo, Oshodi-Isolo, Shomolu and Surulere. The sample for this study comprised Four hundred and fifty (450) Christian religious managers in Lagos State. A multistage sampling technique was used. Simple random sampling technique was used in selection of five local governments which are Ojo, Alimosho, Lagos Island, Epe and Mushin local government area respectively while purposive sampling technique was used in selection of four hundred and fifty religious managers (450) from different churches. Ninety religious managers were selected from each local government area. The research instrument for this study was a self-developed questionnaire, titled Work-related Stress and Health Condition Questionnaire (WRSHCQ). The questionnaire was divided into two sections: A and B. Section A contained demographic data of respondents, while Section B was structured to test the hypotheses. The questionnaire adopted a four (4) point Likert modified scale ranging from Strongly agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (D) and Strongly Disagree (SD). The face and Content validity of the instrument were ascertained by a panel of three experts in the departments of Human Kinetics, Sports and Health Education, Faculty of Education, Lagos State University, Ojo, Lagos. The reliability of the instrument was tested using the Cronbach alpha technique. An r-value of 0.76 was obtained and used as basis for the adoption of the instrument for data collection. Four hundred and fifty (450) copies of the questionnaires were distributed and collected by the researcher with the help of three trained research assistants to the respondents. Copies of the administered questionnaires were checked to ensure that they were well completed. Daily review meetings were held at the beginning and end of each day with the research assistant's data collection lasting Two weeks. Data collected were analyzed using appropriate descriptive statistics of frequency counts and percentages for data presentation. While the inferential statistics of chi-square and regression analysis were used to test stated hypotheses at 0.05 alpha level of significance. The Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 23 was used for analyzing the data collected

## RESULTS

### Data Presentation

**Table 1: Distribution of respondents by age, gender, religion, work experience and level of education**

Gender	Frequency	Percentage %
Male	324	72.0
Female	126	28.0
Total	450	100.0
<b>Age</b>		
Below 20	45	10.0
20-29 years	77	17.1

Gender	Frequency	Percentage %
30-39 years	112	24.9
40-49 years	99	22.0
50 years above	117	26.0
Total	450	100.0
<b>Christian Classification</b>		
Catholic and Anglican	30	6.7
Pentecostal and charismatic	221	49.1
Mainline Protestants	15	3.3
Evangelical missionary	70	15.6
Indigenous	94	20.9
Nondenominational	20	4.4
Total	450	100.0
<b>Years of Leadership</b>		
1-5	175	38.9
6-10	133	29.6
11-15	87	19.3
16-20	40	8.9
21 years above	15	3.3
Total	450	100.0

Table 1 showed that 324 (72.0%) of the respondents were male while 126 (28.0%) of the respondents were female. Consecutively, table revealed that 45 (10.0%) of the respondents were below 20 years of age while 77 (17.1%) were in the age range of 20-29 years, 112 (24.9%) were in the age range of 30-39 years, 99 (22.0%) were in the age range of 40-49 years and 117 (26.0%) were 50 years and above. Also, the table revealed that 30 (6.7%) of the respondents were Catholic and Anglican religious managers, 221 (49.1%) of the respondents were Pentecostal and charismatic, 15 (3.3%) were Mainline Protestants, 70 (15.6%) were Evangelical Missionary, 94 (20.9%) attended indigenous churches while 20 (4.4%) of the respondents were selected from non-denominational churches. Further, the table revealed the years of managerial experience and 175 (38.9%) of the respondents had 1-5 years managerial experience, 133 (29.6%) had 6-10 years of managerial experience, 87 (19.3%) had 11-15 years of managerial experience, 40 (8.9%) of the respondents had 16-20 years of managerial experience while only 15 (3.3%) of the respondents had more than 21 years of experience as a religious manager.

### Hypothesis One

There will be no significant occurrence of work-related stress among Christian religious managers in Lagos State. This hypothesis was tested using Chi-square at 0.05 level of significance. The result is presented on the table below.

**Table 2: Chi-square result on the occurrence of work-related stress among Christian religious leaders in Lagos**

	Observed N	Expected N	Residual	X <sup>2</sup>	Sig	
Strongly agree		62	75.0	-13.0	313.04	0.000
Agree	293	75.0	128.0			
Disagree	60		75.0	-45.0		
Strongly Disagree	35	75.0	-70.0			
Total	450					

Table 2 projects the data collected from the respondents on hypothesis one. It shows that 62 of the re-

spondents strongly agreed to the items on having occurrence of work-related stress, 293 of the respondents agreed while 60 of the respondents disagreed and 35 respondents strongly disagreed to the items respectively. Further, the table reveals a calculated  $X^2$  value of 313.04 which is statistically significant at  $p < 0.05$  at 12° of freedom hence the rejection of the null hypothesis. It therefore implies that there was significant occurrence of work-related stress among Christian religious leaders in Lagos State.

The findings on hypothesis one revealed that there was significant occurrence of work-related stress among Christian religious managers in Lagos State. Many of the managers responses aligned with occurrence of stress emanating from been charged with duty to coordinate multiple assignments in the church in a short time, having to be selfless in most occasions while been under paid and having to work with extremely limited resources of time and money. This finding correlates with Wells et al., (2013) in their study that explores the effects of work-related and boundary-related stress on the emotional and physical health status of ordained clergy. This research explores the association between the sources of stress and the different measures of health (emotional health and physical health). The simple and multiple regression was used in the analysis this research which revealed that there was positive association between the two sources of stress (work-related stress and boundary-related stress), Their study further revealed that African-American and obese clergy exhibited lower levels of physical health as stress increased and are not monitored. Religious administrators and managers with children and those with higher levels of education exhibited lower levels of emotional health due to increased stress. Unexpected they showed higher levels of emotional health as they age.

Also finding of this study is in collaboration with Visker et al. (2017) in their study that examined stress coping strategies and occupational burnout in ministers connected to the Assemblies of God. This was assessed using the psychometric tools and a cross-sectional design was used. Sixty-five percent of those surveyed reported being burned out and stress while there was significance in the coping mechanism adopted. Stress was widespread and was a condition that stimulated occurrences of many other unpalatable health conditions like cardiovascular related illnesses.

There was significant occurrence of work-related stress among Christian religious managers in Lagos State. Many complained of undue fatigue and tiredness, feeling of disaffection, emptiness. Many agreed to suffering from emotional burdens, inappropriate work-life balance, conflicts resolutions, lack of boundaries from people and untamed high expectations from members who expects a hitch free and perfect live experience for these religious managers.

### Hypothesis Two

Work related stress will not significantly determine the occurrence of sleep disorder among Christian religious managers in Lagos State. This hypothesis was tested using regression analysis at 0.05 level of significance. The result is presented on the table below.

**Table 3: Linear regression result on the relationship between work related stress and occurrence of sleep disorder among Christian religious managers in Lagos State University**

Model Summary		unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	SE	Beta		
R = 0.438	Model					
R <sup>2</sup> = 0.243	(Constant)	.472	.124		6.357	0.000*
AR <sup>2</sup> = 0.233	Work-related stress	.814	.044	0.584	34.45	
F = 348.076						
Sig. = 0.000*						

a. Dependent variable: Sleep disorder



It could be observed from table 3 above that the relationship between work related stress and occurrence of sleep disorder could be predicted at 24.3% ( $R^2=0.243$ ) accuracy. The table further showed that a significant F-value ( $F=348.076$ ;  $P=0.000$ ) was obtained at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, hypothesis one as stated above is hereby rejected. This implies that Work related stress significantly determined the occurrence of sleep disorder among Christian religious managers in Lagos State. The positive t-value ( $t=36.357$ ;  $P<0.05$ ) implies that Work related stress significantly determined the occurrence of sleep disorder among Christian religious managers in Lagos State and the more work-related stress is felt, the higher the acceptance occurrence of sleep disorder.

The findings on hypothesis two revealed that Work related stress significantly determined the occurrence of sleep disorder among Christian religious managers in Lagos State. The finding of this study is in agreement with Bowen, et al (2018) study on examining the relationship between work contact, work-family conflict and consequent outcomes of psychological distress and sleep problems experienced by South African construction professionals. 630 respondents were surveyed. The results indicated that psychological distress is determined by work-family conflict, work experience, and job pressure resulting from mild to severe sleep disorder. It was recommended that Interventions aimed at reducing psychological distress and sleep problems should be embraced to prevent development of poor health conditions.

Consecutively, this study collaborates the finding of Garbarino & Magnavita, (2019) study which examined the relationship between sleep problems and stress. This was done in a 5-year prospective cohort study which comprised 242 police officers from a rapid response unit. insomnia and excessive daytime sleepiness symptoms were assessed with the Pittsburgh Sleep Quality Index and Epworth Sleepiness Scale. There was prevalence of occupational stress among police officers during this period of five (5) years with further study revealing a reciprocal relationship between job stress and sleep problems. Work-related stress was a significant predictor of insomnia symptoms, short sleep duration, sleep dissatisfaction, and sleepiness.

There was established relationship between feelings of undue fatigue, dissatisfaction, tiredness and more reported cases of sleep disorders with prevalence of insomnia and sleep apnea.

## CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the findings of this study, the following conclusions were made:

1. There was significant occurrence of work-related stress among Christian religious leaders in Lagos State.
2. Work related stress significantly determined the occurrence of sleep disorder among Christian religious managers in Lagos State.

Based on the outcome of this study, it was recommended that;

1. Experts of health education should develop improved awareness for Christian religious managers on importance of practicing stress relieving measures which supports sound sleep hence help ameliorate sleep disorders.
2. Christian religious managers should be encouraged on a need to adopt balanced work schedule with regular days off, vacations and relaxations that will help ameliorate work related stress.
3. There is a need for the church setting to be built on a framework that operates with good support systems which facilitates Christian religious managers enjoying certain privilege's like counselling, self-health care and having an healthy work environment.

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