Church Culture, Organizational Climate And Career Commitment As Predictors Of Church Ministers' Mental Health In Ogun State, Nigeria



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Abstract

Introduction: Mental health problems are becoming more widely acknowledged due to their significant influence on general health and well-being of people. Therefore, this study investigated the exact contribution of church culture, organizational climate, and commitment on church ministers' mental health in Ogun State, Nigeria.

Methods: The study adopted a survey design and used a multi-stage sampling technique to select the one hundred and eighty-two (182) church ministers for this study. Four validated questionnaires were used for data collection. Three research hypotheses were formulated, tested, and analysed using multiple regression and chi-square analysis at 0.05 level of significance.

Results: The results of this study revealed that church culture, organizational climate and work commitment combined to influence church ministers' mental health (R = .687; R² adj. = .466; F $_{(3,179)}$ = 28.236; P \leq .05). The most potent predictor of Church ministers' mental health among the predictor variables of the study is the church culture (β = .691; t = 6.183; p \leq .05). This is followed by organizational climate (β = .448; t = 5.194; p \leq .05) and work commitment (β = .103, t = -2.435; p \leq .05). Additionally, age, gender, work experiences were found to be good correlates of church ministers' mental health.

Conclusion: The study concluded that church culture, organizational climate and work commitment predicted church ministers' mental health, as age, gender, and years of experience were good correlates of mental health outcomes among church ministers. It is recommended that training should be structured to meet the personality and coping needs of each individual, making sure that the contemporary challenges of the church is confronted.

Keywords: Career commitment, Church culture, Organizational climate, Mental Health, Ministers

Introduction

The church is beset with problems, just like any other human organization. These include issues with spiritual leadership and administration, doctrinal issues, interpretations of values and etiquette, ongoing member exodus, illiteracy, disillusioned youth, financial and economic issues, and more. The consequences of these issues led to schism and internal church politics, which had previously hampered church growth and development. Regardless of whether it is Orthodox or Pentecostal, the church has been suffering from political tensions, tribalism, and severe internal fragmentation into multiple groups. It is now clear that the clergy health and well-being may be closely related to their vocation and that this often leads to mental health issue (stress, depression, anxiety, burnout, and suicidality).

Mental health problems are becoming more widely acknowledged due to their significant influence on general health and well-being of people. Mental health is a person's emotional, psychological, and social well-being. The World Health Organization (WHO) has acknowledged the growing public health concern related to the incidence of mental health

disorders since mental health is seen as a crucial component of total health.1 With Nigeria's dynamic socio-cultural diversity and fast urbanization, mental health problems have emerged as a major public health concern. Similarly, it has been demonstrated that mental health is an essential part of total wellbeing, and that neglecting it can have detrimental effects on both individuals and society.2 The mental well-being of the pastor is crucial for the pastor and their family as well as the church. Pastors' mental health and stress levels can occasionally result in physical and mental health issues if they are not appropriately and quickly treated.3 About three out of five pastors (59%) report having experienced depression at some point during their ministry career. That number increased by 13 points in just four years after the same study was conducted in 2016.4 However, it is the responsibility of pastors to strike a balance between the demands of both God and humanity.5 The pastor may experience excessive mental strain as a result of this pressure, which may lead to health problems, stress, and sadness.

Like wider delineations such as national culture and organizational culture, the church culture may be generally described as a set of norms, beliefs, principles and ways of behaving that together give a church her distinctive character. Like national cultures, organizational or church culture form and are transformed over time. There is broad agreement amongst writers that around the time of its inception, an organization responds to and reflects industry characteristics such as the competitive environment and customer requirements, together with the wider community values held by its employees, and also the values and behaviours of its founders or early leaders.6, 7, 8, 9

Burman and Evans argue that organizational culture can be described as a set of assumptions shared by the individuals in an organization that directs interpretation and action by defining appropriate behavior for various situations.10 In addition to an overall culture, organizations also have subcultures. Examples of subcultures include corporate culture, departmental culture, local culture, and issuerelated culture. Organizational culture has been shown to have an impact on important organizational outcomes such as performance, attraction, recruitment. retention. employee satisfaction, and employee well-being. Also, organizations with an adaptive culture tend to perform better than organizations with an unadaptive culture.

Organizational climate in this study is otherwise known as the church climate, which is the situation within and around the church. Just as the weather can affect daily activities, the church climate influences the priests' behavior. Every organization has a work climate. Within an organization, the climate of an individual work group may differ from the prevailing organizational climate. Highperforming work groups can operate well even in organizations that are troubled by declining funding, weak senior leadership, or similar problems. Parry and Proctor-Thomson says work climate is the workplace environment.11 Church climates affect how well church goals and vision are being met because maximum efficiency, production and employee motivation are impossible when the work climate is poor.

Effective work climates ensure that employees are clear about their purpose in the larger realm of the company and know exactly what is expected of them. In this way, organizations can better function as a whole to meet their goals. In a poor work climate such as one of ineffective communication and unfocused supervision, the productive goals can become unclear. Employees may lack interest or motivation which is likely to decrease productivity even further. Even if employees are still productive, it may be wasted if they are working on tasks that don't fit into crucial organizational goals. In this way, a good work climate is one that is supported and enhanced by effective management. While a poor

work climate does not support a strong and motivated team environment.

The concept of organizational commitment has enjoyed a great deal of research interest, the sustained interest in organizational commitment stems, in part, from the recognition of the limitations of technological innovations in creating and sustaining competitive advantage. For this reason, many organizations are turning from a control model to a commitment model in managing their workforce.12 One of the main reasons for its popularity is that organizations have continued to find and sustain competitive advantage through teams of committed employees. Meyer and Allen have found that committed employees are more likely to remain with the organization and strive towards the organizations mission, goals and objectives.13 Organizational commitment is defined as the degree to which the employee feels devoted to their organization.14

Further research into this variable has concluded that commitment is a diverse construct. Akintayo posited that there is general acceptance that organizational commitment has three main facets: affective, continuance, and normative, each with its own underlying "psychological states".15 Affective commitment refers to the emotional bond and the identification the employee has with organization. For the employees, the positives include enhanced feelings of devotion. and stability. Continuance belongingness, (economic/calculative) commitment refers to what the employee will have to give up if they have to leave the organization or in other terms, the material benefits to be gained from remaining. Employees whose primary link to the organization is based on continuance commitment remain with the organization because they feel they need to do so for material benefits.16 Therefore, if the employees believe that fewer viable alternatives are available their continuance commitment will be stronger to their current employer. Lastly, normative commitment or moral commitment reflects a feeling of obligation to continue employment.₁₇ Employees with a high level of normative commitment feel that they ought to remain with the organization.18

From all the aforementioned review, no research literature treats organization climate, commitment, and organizational (church) culture as the ultimate dependent variable and as exogenous variable predicting mental health most especially in churches as formal organization. The present research therefore tends to determine the exact contribution of some of these active variables especially church culture, organizational climate, and commitment on church priests' mental health. There is also need to establish whether these variables when taken together are good predictors of mental health.

Hypotheses

In the pursuance of bringing the topic under study into proper perspectives, the following hypotheses were formulated for testing

- 1. There is no significant combined contribution of church culture, organizational climate and work commitment to the prediction of Church ministers' mental health.
- 2. There is no significant relative contribution of church culture, organizational climate and work commitment to the prediction of Church ministers' mental health.
- 3. There is no significant socio-demographic correlate of mental health outcomes among church ministers.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design: This study adopts a descriptive survey design of an ex-post-facto type. This survey design was preferred because researcher cannot control the conditions experienced by the subjects. This is so, because the researcher is only interested in determining the influence of the independent variables on the dependent variable. Also, his interest is on the effect of the moderating variables on both the predictor and the criterion variables. This design is most appropriate for the simple reason that the study did not intend to manipulate the variables but measure them in their natural setting, determining the extent at which the independent variables predict the dependent variable.

Population: The target population of this study comprised of all the trained ministers in the 12 major denominations in Ogun State, Nigeria. These denominations are: The Church of the Lord (Aladura), Anglican Communion, Christ Apostolic Church, Redeemed Christian Church of God, Deeper Life Church, Seventh-day Adventist Church, Celestial Church of Christ, Methodist Church Nigeria, Four Square Gospel Church, Living Faith (Winners) Chapel, Catholic Church, and Methodist Church Eleja. **Sample and Sampling procedure:** The sample for this research was drawn from all the trained ministers in the 12 major denominations in Ogun State, Nigeria. The sampling frame used was stratified sampling technique. This sampling offers the benefits of selecting sample on the basis of specific features and conditions. In order to select sample from this sampling frame, simple random sampling was adopted. The reason behind the sampling method was the inclusion of respondents in this diocese alone. In this way, the impact of church culture, organizational climate and work commitment on Church ministers' mental health was better evaluated. Participants were selected randomly among the denominations putting into

consideration other variables like church location. The sample size of one hundred and eighty-two (182) ministers/pastors was determined using Leslie Kish sample size determination technique.

Research Instruments: Five major instruments were used in this study.

Biographical Data Form: A biographical data section of the form was used to gather information regarding participants' demographic variables, in which the research respondents are required to provide information bothering on their churches, gender, cadre, among others.

Church Culture Inventory (CCI): This instrument consists of 34 items and was designed to capture some dimensions of formal organization culture. The scale employ a five point likert scale, ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The internal consistency (measured by Cronbach coefficient's alpha) for church culture inventory is 0.88.

Work Environment Questionnaire (WEQ): It is a 15-item scale used to elicits response from the respondent, which were scored in Likert format of strongly agree to strongly disagree, strongly agree was scored 5 while strongly disagreed was scored 1, the scale reported a reliability level of 0.77 and a validity level of 0.73

Work Commitment Inventory (WCI): The measure for Work Commitment was done by adopting the instrument of Meyers and Allen.₁₉ This scale consists of 18 items altogether. A five-point response was employed, ranging from 1(strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). The internal consistency for this scale is 0.88 while the Cronbach's coefficient alpha for WCI in the present study was 0.83.

Ministers' Mental Health Scale (MMHS): This study adopted the 4DSQ questionnaire developed by Terluin et al.₂₀ The 4DSQ comprises four symptom scales: distress (16 items), depression (6 items), anxiety (12 items), and somatization (16 items). Depression and anxiety sub-scale were only be used in this study (18 items in all). The items were answered on a 5-point frequency scale from "no" to "very often or constantly".

Stress Scale: The statements concentrated on the indicators of job stress. The responses were scored on a five-point Likert scale of Very High Level (4), High Level (3), Moderate level (2), Low Level (1), and Very Low Level (0). This section has a total of 10 items.

Method of Data Analysis: The hypotheses generated to guide the study were tested by the Multiple Regression Analysis to explain the contribution, joint and relative of the independent variables to the dependent variable at the 0.5 level of significance.

Results

Table 1: Model summary of the multiple regression analysis of the combined contribution of church culture, organizational climate and work commitment on Church ministers' mental health

	R	R ²	Adj. R ²	SE	Change Statistics				
Model					R ² Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
Predictor Variables	.687	.472	.466	6.098	.466	28.236	3	179	.000

- a. Predictions: (Constant), church culture, organizational climate and work commitment
- b. Dependant Variable: Mental health

The results in Table 1 revealed that church culture, organizational climate and work commitment combined to influence church ministers' mental health (R = .687; R² adj. = .466; F $_{(3,179)}$ = 28.236; P ≤ .05). This revealed that church culture, organizational climate and work commitment accounted for 46.6% of the variance in the church ministers' mental health. This finding negates the

earlier stated null hypothesis, which stated that there is no significant combined contribution of church culture, organizational climate and work commitment to the prediction of church ministers' mental health. Thus, church culture, organizational climate and work commitment are good predictive factors of church ministers' mental health.

Table 2: Coefficients of relative contribution of church culture, organizational climate and work commitment to the prediction of Church ministers' mental health

Dependent Variable: Ministers' mental health

	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig	
	В	SE	Beta			
(Constant)	56.100	4.819		8.221	.000	
Church culture	.117	.016	.691	6.183	.000	
Church climate	.289	.057	.448	5.194	.000	
Work commitment	.215	.022	.103	2.435	.000	

The results in Table 2 revealed the strength of causation of the predictor variables on the criterion variable. The most potent predictor of Church ministers' mental health among the predictor variables of the study is the church culture (β = .691; t = 6.183; p ≤.05). Organizational climate is the next potent factor (β = .448; t = 5.194; p ≤.05). Work commitment (β = .103, t = -2.435; p ≤.05) is the last potent factor in the prediction of Church ministers' mental health. The null hypothesis of no significant relative contribution of church culture, organizational climate and work commitment to the prediction of church ministers' mental health was rejected by this finding.

Table 3: Socio-demographic correlates of mental health outcomes among church ministers

Socio-demographic variables		Freq.	%	Depression		Anxiety		Stress	
				χ2	Sig	χ2	Sig	χ2	Sig
Age	21-30yrs	29	15.9	42.57	.000	36.49	.000	57.01	
	31-40yrs	47	25.8						.000
	41-50yrs	73	40.1						
	51yrs above	33	18.1						
Gender	Male	27	14.8	13.93	.000	17.05	.000	15.88	.000
	Female	155	85.2						
Years of experience	1-10yrs	54	29.7						
	11-20yrs	81	44.5	29.44	.000	36.03	.000	49.96	.000
	21yrs above	47	25.8						
Cadre	Senior Pastor	109	59.9	9.81	.078	5.23	.287	5.57	.328
	Junior Pastor	73	40.1						

Table 3 shows the chi-square value obtained for age is $(x^2 = 42.57, p \ge .05)$; gender $(x^2 = 13.93, p \ge .05)$; and years of experience $(x^2 = 29.44, p \ge .05)$ at the significant levels of less than 0.05 for the three variables respectively. Since these p-values were equal to or less than 0.05 values, it could be said that

age, gender, and years of experience are good correlates of mental health outcomes among church ministers in relation to depression. However, for cadre, the chi-square values obtained was 9.81 at insignificant levels of .078. It could be said that cadre

is not a good correlate of mental health outcomes among church ministers in relation to depression.

For the anxiety, age ($x^2 = 36.49$, $p \ge .05$); gender ($x^2 = 17.05$, $p \ge .05$); and years of experience ($x^2 = 36.03$, $p \ge .05$) were found to be significant at less than 0.05 levels while cadre ($x^2 = 5.23$, p = .111 was found insignificant. Therefore, this study established that there is a significant association between sociodemographic variables (age, gender, and years of experience) and mental health outcomes among church ministers.

For the stress, age ($x^2 = 57.01$, $p \ge .05$); gender ($x^2 = 15.88$, $p \ge .05$); and years of experience ($x^2 = 49.96$, $p \ge .05$) were found to be significant at less than 0.05 levels while cadre ($x^2 = 5.57$, p = .328 was found insignificant. Therefore, this study established that there is a significant association between sociodemographic variables (age, gender, and years of experience) and mental health outcomes among church ministers.

Discussion of the Findings

The outcome of this study showed that all the variables (church culture, organizational climate and work commitment) accounted for 46.6% of the variance in the church ministers' mental health. The implication of this result is that if the employees are in good mental health, it increases the likelihood of high productivity and performance in such an organization. The study of Amah support the findings of this study that organizations with strong adaptive cultures embodied with organizational innovative components where employees share a larger vision for their organization are more likely to have united, cooperative workforce which promote teamwork and productivity.21 This study equally lends credence from studies that reported the jobrelated factors that affected mental health outcomes to include temperature, noise, work overload,22 high job demands, long working hours,23 high workfamily conflicts,24 and lowered psychological wellbeing.25

The results revealed the strength of causation of the predictor variables on the criterion variable. The most potent predictor of church ministers' mental health among the predictor variables of the study is church culture, followed by organizational climate, and lastly by work commitment. Interestingly, the study findings indicate that church culture is the most potent predictor of church ministers' mental health. The reason for this outcome might be as a result of the fact that church culture is the reflection of organizational self-interest, employee's interests, and obedience to rules and regulations. This finding supported the work of Bashir, et al,26 Pondar and Golob.27 Vuontisiarvi.28 that organizational culture is embedded on ethical issues, which across the globe are compelling organizations and leaders to do

things beyond their personal interests. Also, the studies of Tseng and Fan₂₉; Valentine₃₀; and Leung₃₁ that culture (climate for ethics) significantly influence the way employees evaluate and behave within and outside the organization, which directly have influence on individual and organizational commitment also corroborated the outcome of second hypothesis.

The result of this study revealed that age, gender, and years of experience are good correlates of mental health outcomes (depression, anxiety, and stress) among church ministers. This result is in tandem with the findings of Reile and Sisask on socio-economic and demographic patterns of mental health complaints among employed adults in Estonia.32 They found out that demographic characteristics. especially age, gender, and marital/cohabitation status were highly relevant in terms of mental health outcomes. This result is similar to the findings of Akunne₃₃ that academics' professional stress and age together accounted for 72.0% and 6.2%, respectively of their mental health.

Conclusion

The study provided groundwork for understanding the church culture, organizational climate and work commitment on church ministers' mental health. The research framework presented in this study allows determining the combined and relative influence of the independent variables (church culture, organizational climate and work commitment) on the dependent variable (church ministers' mental health) through evidences gathered from extensive review of literature.

The study found that church culture is the most potent factor of the study which is shared values and norms, which influence church ministers' mental health. The finding of this research has also proved the relevance of organizational climate and work commitment in enhancing the effectiveness of both individual and organization especially among Church ministers.

Additionally, age, gender, work experiences were found to be good correlates of church ministers' mental health. The study concluded that church culture, organizational climate and work commitment predicted church ministers' mental health, as age, gender, and years of experience were good correlates of mental health outcomes among church ministers.

Recommendations

It was mentioned that all the predictor variables influenced the church ministers' mental health. Therefore, it is necessary that the churches goals and missions are defined explicitly and that job descriptions are stated unambiguously and without conflict with the central church (conference) vision

and mission statements. Further, the church's policies should be imposed in a way that have compatibility with not only the organization's objectives but also employees overall expectations. It is recommended that in the process of training church ministers, the work ethics or culture of the church should be taken into consideration. Preference should be given to improving work ethics in order to enhance the belief of the ministers towards the church.

Similarly, the management of the churches should make policies that would enhance mental health level of ministers. For instance, prompt payment of salary and provision of regular on the job or inservice training for minister from time to time will not only make them more competent but will also enhance their job satisfaction. This could further lead to an increase in their organizational commitment.

Psychological pressures in the work environment include role ambiguity; role conflict and repetition create an intention for an employee to remain indifference to church progress. Morris and Bloom (2002) rightly noted that 'work attitude could mediate the effect of climate on employees' performance and organizational characteristics and, on the other hand, could influence employees' commitment to their organization and their job satisfaction.

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