WORK, STRESS, AND CHRISTIAN SPIRITUAL COPING

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ABSTRACT

Stress is a common theme in today's work environment. Stress can positively and negatively impact an individual's ability to do work. It has been found that perceived stress at work can impact a person's physical, emotional, and mental state. Studies show a correlation between stress with anxiety, depression, work efficiency, and burnout syndrome. Christian spiritual/ religious coping is one of the significant ways people cope when faced with stress. Spirituality is the belief in a Supreme Being, and Christianity is based on the belief in Jesus Christ as God and the director of humankind. Christian-based spiritual coping with work stress is influenced by the perception of work as a vocation and a direct command from God. Studies have shown that stress and spirituality have an inverse relationship, and thus one's faith can be used as a predictor of how one is likely to react in a stressful work environment. While many studies have been carried out to explore the relationship between spirituality, religiosity, and coping, there is little research on how Christians apply their faith in the work environment. In this qualitative phenomenological study, the lived experiences with workplace stress and spiritual coping was examined in 12 Christian participants. Participants revealed that their faith plays a significant role in coping with workplace stress. Themes that emerged from the data were factors related to workplace stress, as well as psychological, behavioral, and spiritual strategies used to cope with stress. The faith practices that were most reported as helping participants cope with workplace stress were, Bible reading, church attendance, and inner-life connection. This research provides a better understanding of the lived experience of spiritual and religious coping with workplace stress among Christians.

Dedication

To the memory of Larry Paul Thompson, the most influential man in my life.

Although he was my inspiration to pursue my doctoral degree, he was unable to see my

graduation. This is for him.

To my committee members Dr. Rachel Piferi, who guided me in this process and was a

source of consistent encouragement, and Dr. Jennifer Geyer has served as my professor

and helped keep me on track.

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

Introduction

Stress is a common and regular part of human life (Chu et al., 2015) and the modern work environment is a significant source of stress in life (Nkoranec & Kmosena, 2015). According to the British Health and Safety Executive, the strain people feel due to work results from the amount and type of demand set on them in the workplace (Chirico et al., 2019). Stress can affect the well-being of individuals in a work environment. This impact can be either negative or positive. In some instances, when demands increase, individuals respond by increasing their job efficacy (Hassan, Mir &Hassan, 2015). However, in most cases, when demands increase, individuals suffer adverse effects (Hassan, Mir & Hassan, 2015). When stress is prolonged, it can easily result in physical and mental illness among individuals. Stress can negatively influence four aspects of human life: work, health, family, and social relations (Chu et al., 2015). Just recently, burnout syndrome has been included in the classification of diseases as an occupational occurrence resulting from stress (Chirico et al., 2019). Naturally, when people perceive any stress, they form a coping mechanism to deal with the stress. It is likely that spiritual and religious coping is one of the coping styles individuals use when dealing with stress in the workplace. The terms spiritual and religious coping are used interchangeably and for this study, spiritual coping will be used. Broadly, spiritual coping refers to religious or spiritually centered methods employed in response to stressors (Pargament, 1997) and encompass cognitive, behavioral, and emotional strategies. Spiritual coping is not unique to any one faith or spiritual approach, but rather common across various religions (Abu-Raiya & Pargament, 2015) and spirituality, in general, is a vast concept that entails searching for meaning in life and having a

connection to Supreme Being (Chirico et al., 2019). Christian spiritual coping in the workplace, however, is the focus of this study. Christian spiritual coping can be understood as a three-step sequential process:

    a.   believing and accepting biblical truths regarding the nature of Christ and

    b.   cultivating a relationship with Christ and

    c.   applying biblical sound principles in response to stressors.

Most studies have reported that spirituality and religiosity have an inverse relationship with reported stress (Chirico et al., 2019, Francis et al., 2018, Kim, 2014, Perera et al., 2018, Sanchez, 2020). Furthermore, research has shown that the more spiritual and religious an individual is, the lower the chance they will experience mental health issues due to stress (Perera et al., 2018). Religiosity has been defined as being an ardent follower of traditional practices affiliated with the object of one's belief (Charyzynska, 2015). Spirituality can be defined as the search for meaning in life that is apart from us based on pre-existing exposure to religion and personal experience (Scott, 2016). In the Christian context, an individual can be religious without being spiritual; however, a true Christian convert, out of spirituality, also practice religiosity. Studies have shown that both spirituality (Fredrick et al., 2017; Vitorino et al., 2018) and religiosity (Hassan, Mir & Hassan, 2015) are related to positive coping with stress and mental health. Furthermore, research has shown that individuals who self-report as Christian cope well with stress (Charyzynska, 2015; Krok, 2015; Vitorino et al., 2018). However, it is unclear what spiritual or religious coping mechanism they employ specifically in the workplace.

Background

According to Nekoranec and Kmosena (2015), stress is defined as the body's way of responding to demands made to it. Similarly, Chirico et al. (2019) described stress as the

unpleasant emotion experienced by individuals due to work. It is the perceived discrepancy between demands made on an individual and the coping resources available in the present situations (Geissing, 2019). In another study carried out by Hassan, Mir, and Hassan (2015), stress was defined as the interaction between demands and individuals within the environment. Therefore, stress occurs when the demands made on a person exceeds their capability to execute the needed response.

Studies show that workplace stress is increasingly becoming an issue in the modern world (Achour et al., 2018; Chu et al., 2015). It can lead to undesirable outcomes at work by altering workers' physiological and psychological behaviors (Nkoranec & Kmosena, 2015; Hassan, Mir & Hassan, 2015).   In a study carried out in Europe, 4 out of 5 individuals believed that stress is an issue that influences efficiency in the workplace and has not been dealt with appropriately (Nekoranec & Kmosena, 2015). The European Foundation for improvement of living and working conditions site did study in Europe. Stress has increased in the workplace. It is the number one cause of low job performance (Hassan, Mir & Hassan, 2015).

When faced with stressful situations naturally, people will cope. Christian spiritual coping has been introduced as an effective way of coping with stress (Fredrick et al., 2017). In the basic sense, it involves individuals seeking out coping strength from God (Mcghee, 2019). Many studies have focused on examining how spirituality and religiousness affect the quality of lifestyle, and this is inclusive of how one copes with stressful situations in the work environment (Krok, 2015; Yun et al., 2019). Spirituality denotes the unique ways of seeking out the meaning of life. It also encompasses how one forms relationships with the transcendent being; this includes a relationship with Jesus in Christians' case. (Vitorino et al., 2018). Christian spiritual coping has been shown to be an effective method of coping with stress in general (Chirico et al.,

2019, Francis et al., 2018, Kim, 2014, Perera et al., 2018, Sanchez, 2020). In addition to spirituality, religiosity has been examined in relationship to stress (Kim, 2014, Perera et al., 2018).

While spiritual and religious coping has been a center of interest for researchers in the past decades, little research focuses specifically on Christian-based spiritual coping (Kim, 2015). In Christian spiritual coping, prayer has been singled out as an effective method to deal with occupational stress and burnout (Chirico et al., 2019). Daily prayers and examen are useful tools Christians use to prevent or deal with burnout (Fredrick et al., 2017).

In addition to prayer, Christian spiritual coping includes how one looks at their work. According to Fredrick et al. (2017), the Christian understanding of work is a vocation or calling. This ultimately means that they invest their gift to serve an inevitably higher course when they perform in various workplace capacities. When one approaches work problems with a faith-based approach, everything becomes purposeful and meaningful (Fredrick et al., 2017). This means that more positive outcomes could be anticipated when those complicated moments could be expected compared to the negative.

The Bible, upon which basic Christian principles are derived, portrays the need and the value of work. Genesis 2:15 "*The Lord God took the man he had created and placed him in the Garden of Eden to work it and keep it."* The Bible is also full of verses that encourage humankind to do work while there is still breath. Ecclesiastes 9:10 says, "*Whatever your hands find to do, do it with all your might, for there is no work, knowledge, or wisdom in the grave where we all end up in."* It speaks very lowly about lazy individuals. Proverbs 18:19 says, "*He who is slothful in his work is a brother to him who is the destroyer of everything good.* The Bible shows that to a Christian, work is a command from God and should be obeyed. Christians are

encouraged to do what their hands can do and should look lowly upon someone who shy's away from work.

In conclusion, spiritual coping has been shown to be related to workplace stress among Christians. The research is limited, however, and more is needed to understand how Christians incorporate their faith into the work setting to reduce stress. This study focused on the experience of Christian spiritual coping with workplace stress among Christian workers so that a model of workplace coping practices among Christians can be developed. Research often collapses across religions when studying religiosity or spirituality (Mc-Ghee, 2019), so the focus on Christians alone will help define the Christian faith-specific practices that are effective in reducing stress in the workplace.

Problem Statement

Many studies have shown that stress is increasingly becoming a concern in various work fields (Adeoulu, Yussuf & Popoola, 2016; Nekoranec & Kmosena, 2015). In a study conducted by Bhui et al. (2016), stress was found to play a significant role in the work environment. Stress hurts individuals' mental health, resulting in burnout, lack of job satisfaction, anxiety, depression, post-traumatic stress, low self-esteem, and behavioral disorders (Chirico et al., 2019; Chu et al., 2015; Fredrick et al., 2017). Stress is cited as the number one cause of low job performance among individuals (Hassan, Mir & Hassan, 2015).

Spiritual coping and religious coping have been shown to improve mental health outcomes (Thomas & Barbato, 2020; Richa et al., 2020; Sinter, 2019; Vitorino et al., 2018). Furthermore, several studies show a correlation between prayer, Bible study, devotional meditation, and Christians' ability to cope with stressful situations (Charyzynska, 2015; Krok, 2015; Vitorino et al., 2018). Spirituality in the workplace is defined as an organizational

framework containing values that make up the culture guiding employees. It provides a platform for interconnection among themselves that makes them feel complete and joyful. It is a factor that promotes stress coping in the workplace. The work environment has various stress factors arising from colleagues, different individual beliefs, and pressure from employers (Bhui et al., 2016).

While Christian spiritual coping has shown to be effective in reducing stress, there is little research on how it is used to cope with workplace stress. More research is needed to understand how Christians apply spiritual or religious coping in the workplace to reduce stress. A phenomenological study was done to understand how Christians who have applied spiritual coping at work describe their experiences.

Purpose of the study

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to examine the lived experience of spiritual and religious coping in the workplace among Christian adults.

Research Question(s) and Hypotheses

Research Questions

RQ1. How do Christian employees describe their lived experience with coping with workplace stress?

RQ2. How do Christian employees describe how their faith is related to coping with stress at work?

RQ3. What faith practices do Christian employees report using to cope with stress at work?

Assumptions and Limitations of the Study

The sample used was limited to the workforce and may not necessarily be an accurate representation of how spiritual coping works in other settings. This limited the external validity of this study. In addition, the study only focused on Christianity.

For this study, Christian was defined as a three-step sequential process:

a. believing and accepting biblical truths regarding the nature of Christ

b. cultivating a relationship with Christ, and

c. applying biblical sound principles in response to any demands of life.

On this basis, it excluded other religious groups such as Islam, Buddhism, and Hinduism in this study. When looking into Christianity, the difference that results from different sub-sects was not considered. Christians from other denominations may report different practices or coping methods, however, this was not explicitly dealt with in this study.

Dependability was predicted to also be problematic because the responses from the sample chosen may not necessarily have been truthful. According to Yin (2011), evaluation of the dependability of data requires checking data interpretation. Assuredly, there was the assumption of the study group delivering honest responses when administered with the interview

questions. Equally important, the participants were also assumed to have the ability and knowledge to respond to the interview's questions.

Ultimately, the research utilized the form of semi-structured interviews to collect data from the participants. The interviews were carried out online for a recorded duration where the participants were presented with open-ended questions to aid in the final data's effectiveness (Jamshed, 2014). Notably, recording the participants' verbal engagement was utilized to avoid errors in the presented feedback. The participants were presented with interview guides to aid in exploring the available respondents within the desired conduct and actions. The queries integrated multiple associated questions central to the core question about work, stress, and the connection of both to religion.

Theoretical Foundations of the Study

The research utilized the functionalism theory that asserts Christianity's positive contribution to helping individuals cope with workplace stress (Nkoranec & Kmosena, 2015).). The theory will be perceived as a conservative force to reinforce the existing social norms and add value to social solidarity (Riesebrodt, 2010). There tends to be a complex correlation of spirituality and stress. Conversely, a person's wellness is determined by the ability to manage the common stressors at work via the utilization of the relevant faith practices. The constructs of the study include the value of prayers, specific scriptures, and church attendance. Notably, the constructs were crucial to delve into the biblical foundation of the study, which gives the green light to the impact of spirituality and religion in coping with workplace stress.

Definition of Terms

The following is a list of definitions of terms that are used in this study:

Work stress- Job stress can be defined as the harmful physical and emotional responses that occur when the requirements of the job do not match the capabilities, resources, or needs of the worker (Nkoranec & Kmosena, 2015).

Spirituality- Spirituality is defined as the approach to seeking a meaningful life via a supreme being's connection (Vitorino et al., 2018).

Christian Spirituality -   Christian spirituality is defined as accepting the Bible as standard truth, cultivating a relationship with Christ, and personally applying daily living practice (Mc-Ghee, 2019).

Christian Spiritual Coping – It has three definitions, namely

    a. Believing and accepting biblical truths regarding the nature of Christ

    b. Cultivating a relationship with Christ and

    c. Applying biblical sound principles in response to stressors

Religion- Religion is defined as an individual's extension to following a particular belief that has a significant effect on how they experience their lives (Vitorino et al., 2018).

Stress- Stress can be defined as the extrinsic or intrinsic stimulus depicted as triggering a biological reaction (Yaribeygi et al., 2017).

Belief- Belief is defined as the rational knowledge perceived by human beings of connecting a particular issue originating from a specific source (Seitz et al., 2016).

Anxiety- Anxiety can be defined as the feeling of nervousness for being uncertain about a depicted outcome (Salari et al., 2020).

Depression- Depression can be defined as the ultimate feeling of losing interest and being sad (Salari et al., 2020).

Occupational Burnout- Occupational burnout is defined as a prolonged response to chronic emotional and interpersonal stressors on the job (Visker, et al., 2017).

Christianity- Christianity is the religion derived from Jesus Christ, based on the Bible, a sacred scripture, and professed by Eastern, Roman Catholic, and Protestant bodies. It will be assessed through individuals' acceptance of the divinity of Christ i.e., belief in Christ as the son of God, his life, death burial and resurrection as the ultimate atonement for mankind's sin, and the nature of Christ as distinct from that of other gods. (Christianity, 2021)

Significance of the Study

The research findings are necessary to understand the value of Christianity in managing stress at work. Additionally, the research findings will provide a problem-solving technique for stress originating from the workplace. Hopefully, the place will rule out the existent contradiction of the relationship between stress-coping strategies and mental disorders. It will show the relationship between depressive symptoms and spiritual striving. The study was intended to confirm the inverse proportion between mortality and religiousness by identifying psychosocial predictors of mortality, demographic variables, perceived control, and the importance of religious beliefs.

Summary

Stress has been perceived as being an emotional concern affecting an individual's overall wellness (Salari et al., 2020). Additionally, stress has been demonstrated to affect a person's mental wellbeing, including depression and anxiety (Yaribeygi et al., 2017).

Workplace stress refers to the harmful physical and emotional responses that occur when conflicts occur between the job demands and the employee's control of the demand. Stress in the workplace comes from different sources, employees, and employers. Stress could be positive or negative, where positive stress is perceived as a challenge and becomes negative when a person cannot handle it. Christianity has been linked with approaches used to influence individuals to seek the meaning attached to life, especially when they are under stress. The research questions will be used to guide the research study through the subsequent chapters. Research has been intensively done concerning Christianity in coping with stress found in the workplace. Documents written by credible authors and researchers are used in the following chapter to grasp content related to the study topic. The literature review exposes the origin of the spirituality concept in dealing with stress.

CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

Overview

Studies have shown that stress is prevalent in the workforce (Chirico et al., 2019; Chu et al., 2015). Prolonged stress can lead to undesirable outcomes at work by altering workers' physiological and psychological behaviors (Hassan et al., 2015; Nkoranec & Kmosena, 2015). Christian spiritual coping is one of the positive ways individuals can cope when faced with stress at work.

Many studies have been done to examine how spirituality and religiousness affect quality of life (Charyzynska, 2015; Chirico et al., 2019; Perera et al., 2018). Research has also shown the importance of spirituality and religiousness in coping with stressful situations in the work environment (Krok, 2015; Yun et al., 2019). It is estimated that over 70% of studies demonstrate a positive correlation between spirituality and individual mental wellness (Francis et al., 2019). Studies show that prayer and scripture reading help Christians improve their response to stress in the workplace (Chirico et al., 2019; Sanchez, 2020). This literature review focuses on the relationship between spirituality and religiosity and people's ability to cope with stress at work. It also examines Christianity as well as the impact of Christian ideology and practices on stress coping at work.

Description of Search Strategy

The articles reviewed in these studies were mostly obtained from PsycInfo, Google Scholar, PsycNet, Sagepub.com, SIOP.com, Scholar works, Research Gate net, and PubMed Search terms used in the literature review included "spiritual-based coping in Christian," "work stress," and "religious coping," "work stress," and "spiritual-based coping," and "Stress in America".

To understand the biblical basis of Christian spiritual coping, I employed the technique of studying the Bible. First, I focused on the person of Jesus Christ; how his life impacts the way Christians choose to live their lives, and what he had to say about work, stress, prayer, and scripture teachings. Bible characters like Hosea, Paul, and Jesus show how spirituality is used to cope with stress arising from their workplaces. I used the New King James Bible. It proved a vital source as the side and footnotes quickly referred me to other texts that dealt with the same constructs my study is based on.

Review of Literature

Prevalence of Stress at Work

Stress is an inevitable part of society and is very prevalent at work (Adeolu et al., 2016). Adeolu et al. (2016) carried out a study to examine the prevalence of stress among junior doctors in Ibadan University Hospital. They collected information from 253 doctors using a questionnaire containing one hundred and six items adapted from the hospital general health questionnaire. Some of the variables tested included job stress, mental health, and job satisfaction. Adeolu et al. (2016) reported that pressure was the most common stress source in a doctor's life (83.4%). The second source of stress reported was the patient's problems (80.2%). The third source of stress reported was the impact the job had on doctors' social lives (78.7%).

The attitude of the supervisor ranked fourth (78.3%). Exams, the demand of the job on families and having to remain alert while on call also acted as a stress source of its own, scoring 75.9%, 75.9%, and 75.1%, respectively. About 74.7% of the participants attributed a portion of their work-related stress to care for terminally ill individuals, compounded by having terminally ill relatives of their own. In general, Adeoulu et al. (2016) discovered that about 31.6% of doctors were stressed. 15.4 % were not satisfied with their jobs, and 9.9% had mental health issues. Fifty-six percent (56.4%) of the participants reported being unsatisfied with their job and were equally stressed, and the 68% that reported having mental problems were similarly stressed. This study shows that stress can stem from any part of a job. It can generate within self i.e., job satisfaction; it can arise from the job's pressure, the employee, or the circumstances surrounding patients' stay in the hospital.

In a similar study carried out in Europe, 20% of workers confessed that they stressed frequently about not meeting work deadlines (Nekoranec & Kmosena, 2015). According to the report, 23% of these employees stated that they battled anxiety and fatigue constantly. Nevertheless, 72% of the study populations' stress originated at work due to job insecurity and job reorganization. Most importantly, four out of five employees reported that the workplace's stress had not been dealt with properly. The findings of this study highlight the importance of detecting and mitigating workplace-related stress.

The previous two studies show similar findings to other studies, which consistently found that stress is a significant problem in the workforce and negatively affects individuals' efficacy and mental health (Bhui et al., 2016; Fortes et al., 2020). Workplace stress has been documented as an important cause of psychological and physical illness (Bhui et al., 2016). Individuals have to cope with the demands and pressures of the workplace. Conversely, workplace stress has a

significant effect on individual work performance, which affects overall organizational performance. From a more general perspective, workplace stress has a negative impact on children's wellness concerning disrupted parenting. Notably, violence may be a critical factor in the development of workplace stress which negatively impacts employee relationships (Rayan et al., 2019). Stress in the work environment may lead to an early retirement due to a lack of motivation to cope with workplace pressures (Fortes et al., 2020). Additionally, stressors may lead to non-informed decision making by victims of stress, which affect productivity and progress (Gebeyehu & Zeleke, 2019).

Defining Workplace Stress

Workplace stress can be understood as the psychological impact of environmental stressors to impact the manner in which individuals conduct themselves in the working environments (Nkoranec & Kmosena, 2015). Ultimately, stress may arise from perceptions that are characterized by pressures, conflicts, and injustice in the workplace (Fortes et al., 2020). It is a direct interaction between individuals and works within the environment (Hassan et al., 2015). Stress results from extreme pressure, poor communication at work, and low decision-making latitude (Nkoranec & Kmosena, 2015).

Coping with Workplace Stress

Coping can be described as how individuals react to a perceived threat (Gissing et al., 2019). Generally, it has been classified into two categories, namely negative and positive coping mechanisms (Lazarus, 2020). Positive coping includes applying problem-solving skills and seeking support and emotional health (Fortes et al., 2020). Negative coping skills include behaviors such as anger issues at work, or substance abuse (Hassan et al., 2015). Religious and spiritual coping fall under a positive coping mechanism.

Generally, researchers, exploring how people cope with workplace stress, have emphasized various areas besides the impact of faith in dealing with stress. According to Leszko et al. (2020), reactions to stressful circumstances can fall into three significant coping styles that include emotion-oriented, avoidant-oriented, and task-oriented coping. Emotion-oriented coping is self-directed and encompasses various behaviors that reduce distress arising from diverse stressors. Emotion-oriented stress coping mechanisms incorporate the inclusion or withdrawal of an individual's emotional involvement in an activity to ensure that they can navigate in a stressful situation (Geissing et al., 2019). These mechanisms are effective when an individual is aware of the cause of their stress. In most instances, stress occurs due to bottled-up emotions that emanate from frustrations and moments of uncertainty. Such emotions cause sleep deprivation and easy irritability, among other irrational behaviors (Leszko et al.,2020). To effectively manage such anger, an individual needs to release pent-up anger through activities such as changing an environment and moving to a place with less frustration and exposure to factors that could trigger irritation. This new environment helps an individual to carefully release bottled-up emotions and helps the individual to be able to distract themselves and develop strategies on how to manage their anger triggers in the future.

Emotional coping uses cognitive and behavioral strategies to modify one's affective state in response to stressors (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). Simple tactics, such as physical exercise, allow an individual to divert the energy they have from stress into a positive course of action. This enables them to release and express their stressful frustrations in a manner that helps them get rid of the stress positively (Lazarus, 2020). Developing and coming up with logical solutions for their problems is also an essential aspect of emotional-based stress coping mechanisms. It

requires individuals to analyze their expectations and transform them into achievable set objectives that lower the risk of frustration.

Creative art, such as painting, music and dance, are alternative avenues that are essential to providing an individual with an opportunity to express what is going on in their mind and their bodies (Lazarus, 2020). These exercises create an avenue for them to communicate and let go of the emotional buildup caused by their stress, thus, enabling them to cope with the stress.

The second critical stress coping style is avoidance-oriented coping and can involve various activities that enable people to avoid stressors physically or emotionally through multiple means. Most individuals prefer to deal with stress by avoiding factors that increase the risk of stress. Avoiding such triggers or situations leads to individuals changing their behaviors to prevent activities and memories that could lead to stress. This mechanism can involve a lot of procrastination, encouraging people to put aside vital engagement to avoid facing situations that could be stressful or trigger anger or fear (Lazarus, 2020). However, this mechanism is effective, especially when people are anxious or prone to anxiety. It is absolutely encouraged when an individual does not know what will happen next. This fear of the unknown prompts one to avoid taking action that, although they believe, is necessary, they know will lead to the ultimate exposure of what they are trying to avoid. This mechanism can be dangerous since it does not offer an ultimate solution but instead postpones the inevitable (Lazarus, 2020). It also limits an individual's productivity because they will still be aware that there is something that they are supposed to do at the back of their mind but are not doing, and this could also increase their level of anxiety. This strategy, however, could be essential and helpful, especially in situations where it takes time to develop a strategy that can help an individual overcome the concern that they

have. If an individual needs to build up self-confidence, this strategy will prove valuable, as it gives time to improve themselves and tackle the challenges that come their way.

Another critical stress coping strategy is task oriented. Individuals who adopt this strategy focus on identifying the cause of the problem that triggers the stress and developing strategies and ways to deal with the root cause of the stress (Mohiyeddini et al., 2015). This strategy involves finding out the major causes of the problem and developing new skills in managing said problem. Individuals who adopt this strategy believe that for them to enjoy a life without stress, it is vital to eradicate the cause of the stress, making their stress non-existent. This strategy incorporates several aspects, including taking control of one's life and understanding where a problem needs to be solved. Individuals must seek information regarding the situation and study the available solutions for the specific problem. It also involves evaluating the benefits and disadvantages of the problem and the known solution in order to choose an alternative route of behavior that eliminates the problem (Mohiyeddini et al., 2015). Adopting a solution that deals with the cause of the problem while still maintaining one's course of life is essential to mental health and well-being. This stress coping strategy is vital, as it allows an individual to be proactive and develop solutions for challenges. However, it could be destructive and frustrating and lead to an increase in stress levels. This is especially true in situations where an individual may not be able to gain control over the source of the problem, making it impossible for them to get rid of the problem.

Other individuals adopt social coping to deal with their stress in the workplace. an example is individuals embracing the fact that they are part of society, partly responsible for the stress they experience. These individuals also appreciate the fact that this environment encompasses resources that could help them get rid of the stress challenges that they have.

Activities such as counseling and talking to other people about their challenges, hoping to find an individual who has gone through the same challenge and has overcome their stress (Mohiyeddini et al., 2015). Such individuals are often able to offer sound advice on how situations can be handled to reduce stress. In a work environment, this is important because it helps people create awareness about what is happening in other individuals' lives. It also provides a roadmap for future cases to be addressed and possible solutions to be granted for people who would experience the same challenges in the future. While relying on previous helpful solutions used by others to deal with workplace stress, extra care must be taken to avoid misuse of resources in developing tailor-made solutions for similar problems in different individuals. The social coping structure helps to ensure optimum use of resources such as ad hoc and informal consultations are done so that referrals to people and individuals who have had similar problems can be easily accessed. (Mohiyeddini et al., 2015).

Coping with workplace stress also appears to be related to psychological traits (Bell et al., 2020). Research has revealed that people high on neuroticism have experienced more physiological and emotional responses to stress (Mohiyeddini et al., 2015). Furthermore, those high in neuroticism tend to consider stressors as a significant threat and resort to disengagement or emotion-oriented coping to lessen the adverse effect of depression, sadness, or anxiety (Mohiyeddini et al., 2015). When people encounter stress in their workplaces, they turn to social support to as a way to channel their emotions, but the such solution has been suggested to be temporal. Those high on extraversion seeks instrumental social support and care through advice-seeking that relates to their stressful conditions. People with a high degree of consciousness are self-disciplined and avoid actions that harm their reputations. This feature is linked with cognitive restructuring or distraction, including gauging, and changing self-damaging thoughts

which require changing focus from bad to good thoughts. Studies on agreeableness show a positive link between this personality feature, cognitive restructuring, and seeking social support (Leszko et al., 2020). Openness to experience has been linked to seeking information, problem-solving, and positive appraisal. Prior research demonstrates that personality traits predict coping approaches. Research on the impact of spirituality in dealing with stress is limited.

According to Hacket and McClendon (2017), Christianity is one of the largest religious groups globally, and using it for a study improves the reliability of findings to people from different backgrounds. Adding a new dimension for coping with workplace stress is also helpful since it offers various ways of managing workplace challenges. Personality may not help people manage all daily life stresses. On the other hand, spirituality and religiosity are linked to a personal connection with God. This connection help individuals find the best way out of any problem throughout their lifetime.

Spirituality, Religiosity and Coping with Workplace Stress

Both religiosity and spirituality have been examined as factors related to coping with workplace stress (Kutcher et al., 2010). While these terms are separate, some scholars use them interchangeably. Spirituality refers to the act of seeking meaningful life experiences by following a set of the defined transcendent with the connection of a supreme being (Vitorino et al., 2018). Furthermore, spirituality influence how people seek to express a purpose and meaning to their life experiences while connecting a defining moment to a sacred being or nature. On the other hand, religiosity refers to individuals being connected to a particular religion (Vitorino et al., 2018). The individual believes they are set to follow a specific religious regime that seeks to define how the individuals extend their lives and treat others in society. However, they apply different terms in referring to the divine and transcendent aspects of life. Groups such as

Buddhism have a different view of the divine. From a Christian perspective, pain is a normal part of the word, and it is an aspect one will be free from once one dies. In contrast, Buddhism focuses on doing away with pain. In their review, Perera et al. (2018) conclude that spirituality and religiosity are a part of human life and should be a point of consideration when trying to alleviate stress and its effects among individuals.

Religiosity is largely comprised of ardent followers of traditional practices affiliated with the object of one's belief. the factor of positive and negative religious coping stems from these beliefs. As Chirico et al. (2020) suggest, religiosity is part of spirituality. Religiousness is the most known form of spiritual life, and some individuals may practice it without involving the spirituality sphere. In the study done by Chirico et al. (2020), the students who practiced negative religious coping-based viewed stress as a function of their wrongdoing rather than a natural occurrence in life. This theory is built on how an individual bases his success on his works rather than on the relationship he has with his spiritual supreme.

Ultimately, there have been multiple perspectives concerning the concept relating to religion and spirituality. The two constructs may sound related but do not have to be parallel when applied in individuals' daily routines. For instance, an individual may be perceived as being spiritual but not religious. Numerous scholars have asserted spirituality as an approach to life from a non-prejudiced and nondenominational stance and can be lived out by all races, faiths, and genders (Bell et al., 2012). Religion can be depicted as a set of highly organized doctrines relating to a specific faith. Integrating religion in the workplace can be inappropriate because it may influence the working culture and compromise the organizational function.

Spirituality enables an individual to be interconnected with life experiences and find the act of sacredness in life's situations. Additionally, spirituality is vital to leading to people's calm

and inner peace by applying willpower and faith. Religion aids workers in overcoming the consequences of stress by satisfying their external and internal life through purpose and meaning in the workplace. Spirituality can serve as a critical buffer against the effects of stress, especially in workers that believe they have what it takes to find a solution to their problems.

Most of the studies point to there being a negative relationship between religiosity, spirituality, and stress (Chirico et al., 2020). In multiple studies, when reported religiosity/spirituality goes up, stress goes down.Perera et al. (2018) investigated the role of religion and spirituality in stress management among nurses. Religiosity can be understood as the degree to which individuals depend on and utilize their religious beliefs and practices (Perera et al., 2018). In his study, he considers both religiosity and spirituality as interchangeable terms. In their research, Perera et al. (2018) maintain that religion is a multifaceted phenomenon that makes it impossible to use only one tool to measure it. There are diverse concepts of divine and transcendent aspects of life. For example, Christians and Jews believe in a God, Yahweh.

Similarly, Safaria et al. (2010) conducted a study to investigate the relationship between Islam religious coping and job insecurity among Javanese staff. The study aimed to examine if religion had a central role to play in stress mitigation. One hundred and fifty-five (155) participants were recruited to participate in the study. The parameters that were measured in this study included job stress, insecurity, and religious coping. The results showed that job insecurity positively correlated with job stress. It was consistent with other studies that predict job insecurity is more likely to lead to stress. The study also confirmed a positive correlation between religious coping and job insecurity. When higher levels of religious coping mechanisms were used levels of job insecurity increased. Safaria et al. (2010) determined that religious coping could be used as a moderator when faced with stress.

It is plausible that spirituality enhances positive interpersonal interaction with their colleagues at work. Spirituality in the workplace possibly facilitates employees to care for their colleagues' interests in the workplace, eliminating the possibility of stress. Equally important, spirituality is a motivating mechanism to enhance workers' psychological wellness.

Religiosity and Mental Health

There is an inverse relationship between perceived stress and religiosity due to religiosity's protective spiritual, social, and psychological aspects. Religiosity serves as a buffer to life's frustrations and related stress by invoking adaptive coping resources during stressful events (Richa et al., 2020; Sinter, 2019; Thomas & Barbato, 2020). Conversely, the effects of work-related stress disorders include blood pressure changes, behavioral disorders, and emotional disorders like depression, anxiety, and low self-esteem (NeKoranec & Kmosena, 2015).

A study by Thomas and Barbato (2020) examined the effects that COVID-19 had on both Christians and Muslims and how it affected their ability to cope positively. In the study, it was hypothesized that positive mental health outcomes were more likely to be manifested among religious individuals. The study involved 611 participants from the United Arab Emirates (UAE), who were required to complete an online survey. The participants were required to fill in the patient health questionnaire to determine depression symptom levels. To assess anxiety symptom levels, participants were asked to indicate how many times they had received any of the main symptoms associated with an anxiety disorder in the past week. Using Brief-RCOPE, Thomas and Barbato measured to what degree religion played a part in the participants' everyday lives.

The prediction made by Thomas and Barbato (2020) was that religious coping would have an inverse relationship with stress. This case turned out to be true among Muslims within the UAE. The percentage of positive religious coping was significantly higher in both Muslims and Christians. Thomas and Barbato (2020) concluded that religion could help people cope positively when facing extreme situations that include losing jobs and family, such as the COVID-19 pandemic. A better understanding of the basis of religious coping can help health practitioners provide better healthcare to their patients.

In addition, Richa et al. (2020) carried out a study to examine the effects of trauma exposure and the prevalence of post-traumatic stress disorders (PTSD) among Christian, Yazidis, and Muslim asylum seekers. The study aimed to understand if there was a difference in how individuals of different religions responded to forms of stress they are exposed to. The comprehensive research was comprised of 150 participants, 50 from each of the three religious groups participating. The social workers of the refugee camps helped in collecting the much-needed data. A life Event Checklist (LEC) was used to collect information on trauma types and their frequencies. A PTSD checklist was used to check if any of the participants had exhibited trauma symptoms in the last 30 days. Most of the refugees in the camps were assumed to be from low socio-economic status. The study showed that Christians and Muslims had higher levels of education compared to the Yazidis. The structured interviews showed that the prevalence of at least one traumatic event among all the refugees, regardless of their religious background, was at 100%. The Yazidis had a higher PTSD stress level compared to the Muslims and Christians. Depression symptoms were higher among Yazidis compared to Muslims and Christians. However, while Christians reported being exposed to much more traumatic events than the rest of the group, they reported minor depression symptoms in greater proportion compared to the

other two groups. Richa et al. (2020) argued that some of the reasons the Yazidis recorded a low mental health state is due to the feeling that their religion is lost. Richa et al. (2020) also pointed out that most refugees could not find work to support themselves. Some of the help given to refugees comes only from the minority groups, putting them at a disadvantage. This study showed a difference in how people cope with stress when exposed to it and can be related to religious differences.

Religiosity has been shown to have an inverse relationship with depression. Santero (2019) carried out a study to investigate how religion and depression correlate among Southern American adults. The study cut across four cities based in Southern America. 7,549 adults participated in this study. The study measured two dimensions: belonging to a religion and the frequency of individuals participating in that religion. Santero (2019) carried out a home survey, and information concerning demographics, religiosity, and depression symptoms were measured using a standard questionnaire. To determine the degree of religiosity, participants were asked how frequently they attended church or did any other religious activity, such as participating in Bible study, listening to a Christian channel, praying, and personal scripture reading. Depression symptoms were measured using the DMS-IV criterion of diagnosis. Symptoms included things such as insomnia, loss of appetite, and weight change. The study found that women participated more in religious activities compared to men, and the frequency of participation increasing with age. The study showed that women who never attended any form of religious activity ranked higher on the depression scale. Santero (2019) argued that religious cognition is a helpful tool that helps individuals cope with stressful life events linked with depression. He concluded that there exists an inverse relationship between religiosity and mental health. In an attempt to

understand it better, religious coping should be broadly studied, especially in cultures where religion is a crucial part of society.

Furthermore, Francis et al. (2019) researched to investigate the prevalence of depression and anxiety among medical students. The focus also covered how students relate to religious beliefs. The study was held in Malaysia in a plural religious setting. People belonged to different groups such as Islam, Christianity, Buddhism, Taoism, and Hinduism. The study expounded on two distinct modes of religious coping: negative and positive religious coping. Positive religious coping was described as having a secure relationship with his worship object and involves complete trust in God's providence. Negative religious coping involved religious individuals interpreting bad occurrences in their lives due to punishment for supposed wrongdoing. To investigate all these variables, Francis et al. (2019) applied the Duke Religious Index (DUREL-M) scale and Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scale (HADS) to test for religiosity, anxiety, and depression symptoms consecutively. The study found out that anxiety and depression symptom prevalence was at 4.7% and 17.4%, respectively. In Islam, which a large portion of the medical students adhered to, negative coping was directly related to depression and anxiety symptoms. Francis et al. (2019) concluded that the prevalence of anxiety and depression was generally lower, with students exhibiting it tending to lean on negative religious coping rather than positive religious coping. The study recommended that for us to understand how religious coping works, researchers need to focus on the difference between religion and spirituality and how they affect mental outcomes. In a different, but similar study, carried out by Philip et al. (2019), 12 students from diverse religious settings participated in a phenomenological inquiry. It was discovered that religion and spirituality played a crucial role in cognitive and social ability, affecting their overall class performance.

Another study by Aldrich (2018) hypothesized that since America has different cultural beliefs, with a large number not subscribing to traditional faiths and denominations, there must be a difference in people's coping mechanisms. Aldrich (2018) studied to determine the difference in managing stress between majority and minority communities. When performing the research, parameters measured included God's perception and participation in religious activities to dissipate anxiety. 1,611 people participated in the study. The anxiety rate was calculated using an anxiety scale, while five items were used to measure religiosity from the religion scale. Some of the questions asked included frequency of attendance at church/mosque. Another question was to investigate how often individuals engaged in the study of the holy books. Perception of God was measured by the degree to how individual participants related to God. Did he create a buffer? Do they feel that God is responsible for everything going on in their life? An overwhelming majority of participants in the study were Judea Christians- about 85%. Aldrich (2018) determined that people who did not form a part of the Judeo-Christian group were more likely to have higher anxiety levels in comparison. In both groups, spirituality positively related to anxiety scores. The frequency of how individuals participated in religious activities was inversely proportional to their anxiety levels. Furthermore, the researcher found out that people who inconsistently sought out a relationship with God in their lives had higher levels of anxiety in terms of god's perception. Aldrich (2018) concludes that understanding how spirituality works are essential concerning anxiety that affects school, home, and work. Once a framework has been developed, spiritual coping resources can be included to help combat mental illnesses.

Religiosity has been depicted as being critical in solving various life stressors. Notably, stress leads to episodes that have a negative impact on the overall wellness of the individual. For instance, stressful events may lead to psychiatric disorders that pose a threat to the health and

well-being of an individual (Lorenz et al., 2019). A study conducted on individuals attending church revealed that after two years of commitment to the religious doctrines, the measures of stress were significantly reduced (Lorenz et al., 2019). Depression can be intertwined with stress, however, the odds of being depressed were found to be low for individuals committed to a religion.

Religion can be divided into four orientations: interpersonal, supernatural, cultural, and communal. The orientations affect ideational and behavioral manners among employees attached to a particular religion (Thao, 2020). Past research suggests that involvement in multiple religious forms impacts a reduction of psychological distress (Thao, 2020). For example, Hamilton et al. (2013) suggested that in episodes of stress, the victims engaged in Bible study sessions had reduced stress levels. The psychological outcome of such studies proves the ability to reduce stress among workers. Hence, religious doctrines such as prayers, faith, and reading the Bible are vital to alleviate negative emotions and enhance the individual's psychological wellness. Another study, conducted in 2012, asserted reduced alcohol usage among participants who had a positive religious approach (Thao, 2020). Substance use is common among numerous stressed individuals, and the consequences of drug abuse are interlinked with stressful events.

In summary, both spirituality and religiosity consistently are inversely related to stress and impacts mental health. Religiosity has been shown to shape individual conduct in the workplace (Vitorino et al., 2018) which affects experiences of conflict, stress, and managing behaviors (Lorenz et al., 2019). Furthermore, spirituality has been shown to influence the stress response of employees. Researchers suggest creating prevention programs to enhance employee coping skills by incorporating a greater emphasis on spirituality (Vitorino et al., 2018).

Spiritual and Religious Coping among Christians

Christianity is one of the major world religions existing in the world today. While many studies look at religiosity and spirituality generally, several studies have been done to examine Christians' coping mechanisms, in particular, based on their faith (Charyzynska, 2015; Krok, 2015; Vitorino et al., 2018). Higher levels of religiousness and spirituality reflected a positive outcome in stress management in the workplace. Notably, employing either religiosity or spirituality had a significant effect on stress management. Nevertheless, Christians that employ both of these aspects yielded better outcomes of stress management. Christianity has the ethics of an organized religion that enables the followers to meet specific doctrines which enhance happiness and healthy behaviors. The latter allows for Christians to cope with any form of stress in the workplace.

Yun et al. (2019) focused on spirituality and religious coping for Christians. The study involved a pilot approach to investigate perceived stress levels in faith-based programs. It was found that spiritual coping provided students with a buffer, affecting how the students perceived stress. The researchers suggest that changing the perception of stress among students can increase positive outcomes.

Similarly, Robinson (2019) studied how spirituality affected the perception of stress among police officers. The study was based on Fry's spiritual theory, consisting of four different elements of love, vision, hope, and spiritual well-being. Robinson (2019) defined spirituality as a set of values and principles that motivate survival by calling for members belonging to a religious group. A total of six people participated in the study. They were required to fill in a study questionnaire with 13 question items to investigate police perception of spirituality concerning stress. Five of the participants confirmed their perception of stress was derived

directly from their faith. This involved practicing prayer to help with relaxation and resilience at work. It also helped them find comfort in distress when in survival mode, during conflicts, and reduced fear and anxiety. One police officer confirmed that his Christian faith helped him deal with his temper and was a part of him at both work and home. Another officer reported they were required to yield fruits that pleased God in everything they had to do, which acted as the guiding principle to his life. They also confirmed that sometimes they needed an outlet to help cope and a Christian support group when overwhelmed with stress. Spirituality was reported to help them create a sense of community and help them find the life and work balance.

Another study by Curry (2017) examined the coping strategy and perseverance among college students at an urban public college. Members of an intervarsity Christian fellowship were recruited to participate in this study. The inclusion criteria included Christians from different sects, namely Seventh Day Adventism, Pentecostal, evangelical, and Baptist Christian groups. The researcher strived to examine the lived experience of each of the 27 participants. The participants had to be active members of the Christian fellowship club. Information was collected in this study through one-on-one interviews with the participants holding the right to discontinue at any time. In this particular study, the coping mechanism theory was developed around Bandura's theory of self-efficacy, an enduring cognitive schema that can lead to a corrective form of achievement.

The interviews were conducted for 45 minutes. The first question aimed at defining what spirituality meant to a Christian student. Curry (2017) found out that family upbringing had a lot to do with individual students' faith. Spirituality resulted from what the students had read and understood from the Bible. It was also found that prayer, reading the Bible, and going to church were fundamental to the participants' lives. They could hardly answer a question without

referring to the Bible or God in a general context. The second question Curry (2017) aimed to answer with this study was how spirituality related to individual self-efficacy. Two out of eight students gave a strong connection between their self-efficacy rate and the Bible. Some would provide an example where initially they felt worthless and not needed, but because of the Bible, they learned of their value as human beings. The third question the study aimed to address was concerning taking academic and personal responsibility as students. The study showed that support was a significant part of how these students dealt with their obligations. The fourth question asked in this study was whether students related their success with spirituality. Most of the students mentioned prayer, Bible study, and other faith-related themes as the main force behind their success. This study not only provided a basis for prediction for how students are likely to turn up and face their stress loads in work environments, but it also shows that if religious-based coping is employed well, self-efficacy can be improved at school and work levels.

Charyzynska (2015) carried out a study aimed at creating a questionnaire that would expressly validate Christian spiritual coping. This author conducted the study in two parts. In the first study, participants were assumed to be experiencing stressful situations such as hospitalizations, being placed in rehabilitation centers, going through a divorce, or losing a job. They were asked to fill out a questionnaire at the beginning of the study and six weeks later. In the second study, participants included a group of alcohol addicts entering an outpatient therapy word. They also were instructed to fill out questionnaires at the beginning and the end of their therapy. Apart from measuring spirituality, the study also measured forgiveness, religiosity, and gratitude. In the results, Charyzynska (2015) found out that there was no significant relationship between positive and negative coping. However, spiritual coping positively correlated with

spirituality, gratitude, and forgiveness. On the other hand, negative coping is negatively correlated with spirituality, gratitude, and forgiveness.

Vitorino et al. (2018) also focused on spirituality research. The study aimed to investigate the different levels of spirituality and religiosity. The study was inclusive of Christians. The researcher associates low spirituality and low religiousness with quality of life, depression symptoms, anxiety, optimism, and happiness. A cross-sectional study was done on Brazilian adults. The adults were required to complete a questionnaire on social demographics, and self-reported levels of spirituality and religiousness and health status. The screening was done for depression, anxiety, happiness, and optimism. The results showed that having higher spirituality and religiousness had better outcomes than low spirituality and religiousness levels.

Mahipalan (2018) carried out a study to examine the effects of spirituality on subjective stress and psychological well-being of secondary school teachers in India. The quantitative research involved collecting data from 322 secondary school teachers in India by utilizing a structured questionnaire. The study measured workplace spirituality (W.S.) using the Ashmos and Duchon's scale of 2000. Psychological well-being was assessed using six items of the health continuum developed by Keyes in 2007. The results showed that workplace spirituality positively correlated with psychological well-being. Therefore, stress acts as a significant mediator between spirituality and mental well-being. Mahipalan (2018) concluded from the study that the spirituality aspect could be tapped into to improve coping and perceptions of stress. In a similar study, Krok (2015) investigated the relationship between religiousness, spirituality, and stress coping among adolescent teens. The parameters measured included religiousness (religious meaning questionnaire), spirituality (self-descriptive questionnaires), global meaning of life (Global meaning questionnaire), situational meaning in events, and coping

mechanisms. Two hundred and twenty adolescent teens participated in the study, with about 93.5 % being Christians and 6% identifying as non-believers. The results showed that spirituality and religiosity positively correlated with having meaning in life. Krok (2015) concluded that if spirituality and religion are utilized by individuals, positive outcomes could be expected.

Studies carried out by multiple researchers (Charyzynska, 2015; Curry, 2017; Krok, 2015; Mahipalan, 2018; Vitorino et al., 2018) show a positive relationship between Christianity coping and stress. They also highlight essential aspects integral to Christian-based coping such as prayer, scripture reading, and church attendance. These studies also show that elements of spirituality, such as prayer and scripture reading, affect how levels of gratitude and seeing a deeper meaning in life positively impacted coping. From a religious or spiritual coping framework, faith also has been found to influence how individuals perceive stress. Yun et al. (2019) found that spiritual coping provided students with a buffer, affecting how they perceived stress.

In summary, among all measures, the previous studies focusing on the impact of religiosity and spirituality in the workplace found a negative correlation between stress and spirituality. Ultimately, the central theme of the research was the management of stress among social work learners. The conducted research assures that there was no deviation of Christianity being parallel to stress. The spirituality of the individuals had a positive impact enabling them to cope with work-related stress and enhance their overall well-being. The studies delve into supporting empirical evidence of how spirituality has a buffering effect on the workers' ability to cope with stress.

Prayers, Meditation, and Scripture in Christian Coping

The essential tools that are included in Christian spiritual coping are scripture reading and prayer (Chirico, et al. 2019; Stewart, 2019). These two components act as critical indicators of individual spirituality and can be used as predictors of coping mechanisms. Some studies, like one conducted by Sanchez (2020), suggest a difference between religious groups and their effectiveness to cope. Sanchez (2020) carried out a study to examine how psychologists' spiritual practices in the United States influence secondary traumatic stress (STS). The study's primary aim was to explore the variations in STS and the frequency of psychologist participation in spiritual-based self-care. In carrying out the research, Sanchez chose (2020) licensed, practicing, semi-retired psychologists, and fully retired psychologists. The participants were recruited online through Facebook advertisements, and they were informed of the nature of the study to allow for informed consent. Those who participated were required to complete questionnaires on demographics and religious affiliation. Other details included how often they participated in prayers, scripture reading, and meditations. At the end of the survey, the participants had to go through the 30 items of ProQOL-5. The study found that there exists a difference in stress levels between different religious identities. The study also showed that there exists a difference in the frequency of prayers among different religious identities. Sanchez (2020) also found a relationship between the frequencies of participation in spiritual-based self-care practices. While the general STS levels were low, there was a significant difference as non-religious but spiritual psychologists reported more STL levels than religious psychologists. Non-religious but spiritual individuals participated in more meditation compared to the religious and non-religious individuals. Religious psychologists participated in more prayer compared to the rest of the

group. Despite being the group that participated in more meditation, the non-religious but spiritual group reported the highest STL levels.

Stewart et al. (2019) carried out a study to determine the effect of religion on anxiety. They reviewed 26 articles to determine how religion can affect individuals' mental health at both work and home. Stewart et al.'s (2019) literature review showed that, in a general sense, anxiety has an inverse relationship with religion. Studies that were reviewed revealed that prayer and frequency of prayer positively correlated with the prevalence of stress. Other studies showed that religious-based coping was significantly more useful than psychotherapy in mental health intervention. Stewart et al. (2019) mention that a religion such as Christianity carries with it the assurance of a caring God who provides support to his people. The review suggested that religious based coping should be embraced in all applicable circles.

In Christian-based spiritual coping, prayer and scripture reading are the focus for researchers in drawing a clear picture its functions and possible benefits. The frequency of prayer and the amount of time dedicated to scripture reading are significant predictors of how Christians are likely to cope in workplaces when faced with adverse situations. Chirico et al. (2019) carried out a study to investigate the effect of spirituality and prayer on teacher stress and burnout in Italy. The study focused on the use of prayer as a technique in Christian spiritual coping. In this study, Chirico et al. (2019) viewed Christian spirituality as how Christians lived and conducted themselves in their day-to-day life due to their relationship with God. Religiousness was considered as being part of spirituality. This study also highlights that there are many inconsistent findings when looking at meditation in religious coping. Thus, it may be logical to conclude that meditation has less impact in helping professionals cope with stress than many researchers posit. In carrying out the study, Chirico et al. (2019) invited 50 workers and teachers

from a Catholic school to participate in a health campaign. The participants were divided into two groups: one participated as a control while the second group was subjected to treatment. The second group attended a lecture where they were advised to engage in a 10-minute session of prayer before sleeping every day. The first group was asked to maintain their routine. At the end of the study, it was found that the second group, which participated in mandatory 10-minute prayer sessions every day before sleep, had improvements in terms of job satisfaction, mental well-being, emotional exhaustion, and depersonalization. Chirico et al. (2019) concluded that spirituality could be employed in the work environment to improve individual workers' work efficacy. It may also act as a buffer to adverse job effects affecting many individuals.

The study by Chirico et al. (2019) confirms what other scholars have discovered. Zhang et al. (2019) created a survey to identify spiritual climate and its role in reducing burnout among clinical nurses. The study involved observation of nurses' behavior in a tertiary nursing institution. Zhang et al. (2019) uncovered that a moderate spiritual climate was positively correlated with job burnout, and an excellent spiritual environment resulted in high job satisfaction and low burnout. From a review of several spiritual-based works of literature, Fredrick et al. (2017) hypothesized that Christian human service workers who exercise mindfulness and spirituality have practical tools to control burnout and compassion fatigue. They focused mainly on the overlap between burnout and compassion fatigue and the Christian understanding of the same facets. According to Francis et al. (2017), some of the ways pastors cope with emotional exhaustion is through renewal strategies such as prayer and Bible reading. The word of God and prayer provide a forum from which Christians connect with their God spiritually.

LaBarbera and Hetzel (2016) conducted a study to examine if prayer was an effective coping strategy among Christian educators. The study included 916 educators who used prayer as a tool for coping. The study found out that there exists a significant relationship between prayer and job satisfaction among Christian educators. A separate but similar study conducted by Danahoo et al. (2018) set out to investigate compassion fatigue and special educators among special education teachers. In the study, 27 teachers and professional staff working in special education participated in a quasi-experimental study. The participants were required to complete a set of questions for the demographic test to pass through the Perceived Stress Scale and the Professional Quality of Life (ProQOL). All participants were required to attend a presentation session on stress, compassion satisfaction, support, prayer, and mindfulness. Every week of the study, the participants received a text that acted as a reminder of the usefulness of being mindful and engaging in prayer. At the end of the study, it was seen that there was an improvement on the perceived stress scale. There was also an improvement when evaluating the means of prayer on the previous highest and lowest prayer levels. ProQOL burnout levels also improved significantly.

Visker et al. (2017) carried out a study to investigate clergymen's stress-coping mechanisms concerning burnout. The ministers involved in this study were specifically from the Assemblies of God denomination. Among those surveyed, about 65% were already experiencing the burnout effect or were on the verge of it. It was found that there was a difference between the coping mechanisms of those who were experiencing burnout and those who were not.

In 2014, Kim investigated the comparative effectiveness of Christian Devotional Meditation vs. muscle relaxation as a means of mitigating stress, anxiety, and overall spiritual health among Korean Christian adults living in the US. Kim (2014) included 79 Korean

immigrants and students living in Northern Virginia. Using a randomization table, forty-one

individuals were assigned Christian Devotional Meditation (CDM), and thirty-eight participated

in the progressive muscle relaxation (PMR). The study examined parameters such as anxiety,

depression, stress, and attachment style to God. The Center for Epidemiology Studies Depression

scale (CES-D) was used to investigate depression; The Brief Symptom Inventory was used to

examine distress levels. The Attachment to God scale was used to investigate the relationship

between individuals and God and the PSS scale for perceived stress levels among individuals.

The participants had to fill out the questionnaires at the beginning of the study and the very end.

The first group was encouraged to engage in meditative devotion, while the second pursued a

muscle relaxation mode of dealing with stress, anxiety, and depression. The results showed that

after two weeks, individuals who participated in CDM experienced a significant reduction in

perceived stress than those who participated in PMR. All groups showed a substantial decrease

in stress levels. However, the CDM group showed better treatment effects compared to the PMR.

In terms of depression, both groups had a significant improvement. However, when weighing

both groups' means, CDM had much lower depression levels than the PMR group. In terms of

attachment to God, the CDM group had a more secure attachment to God; the PMR level of

attachment to God did not change within the two weeks. The participants had been instructed to

report on the frequency of doing the activities. The data showed that the CDM group had a

higher frequency of devotional meditation than the PMR group.

  McGhee (2019) created an approach that can integrate Christian spirituality at work,

known as the combined to down and bottom-up approach. He suggests that people always want

to, and some will bring their worldview into the work context. McGhee (2019) indicates that one

way an organization can integrate spirituality at work is by allowing Christians to observe events

that hold spiritual importance, such as holidays, traditional events, and Sabbath day worship. A company can also allow individuals to wear Christian jewelry at work and have other accessories such as their Bible in the work setting. With limitations, an individual can be allowed to practice their faith, such as conducting prayer. McGhee (2019) says that it is crucial to ensure that other religions do not feel excluded in implementing such measures. The article reviewed in this section allows a spiritual environment to help individuals deal with compassion fatigue, burnout effect, anxiety, and even severe depression. This consequently leads to job satisfaction and better job outcomes.

Green (2017) carried out a study to investigate positive religious and spiritual coping strategies on teachers' chronic pain. In the study, participants were recruited via social media from different states of the US. The participants were required to fill in questionnaires that showed how taxing it was to lift heavy loads. A brief RCOPE was used to determine the frequency at which the teachers conducted religious-related activities to deal with their physical pain. A Teacher Stress Inventory was used to record the different kinds of stress the teachers were subjected to. Using four items in the J.B. scale, the level of job satisfaction was recorded. Over 50% of the total teacher population reported having pain during work, such as headaches, shoulder pain, neck pain, and anxiety. The study showed that a significant portion of the teachers' pain was mitigated when the teacher chose to participate in positive religious coping strategies. Green (2017) discovered that religious coping was beneficial for those experiencing severe pain.

Pan et al. (2010) carried out a study to investigate the use of prayer and scripture in a Christian-based support group. The study aimed to understand the Christian perception of using prayer and scripture reading to cope with stressful situations. Pan et al. (2010) noted that even

prayer can be used abusively by believers and can rise from the lack of an understanding of what the scripture indeed says concerning work, prayer, and stress. The study carried out involved participants who were from a free Presbyterian Church. The participants had to be undergoing some form of stress in their daily lives and freely participating in scripture and prayer outside of their regular support group. They were subjected to 10 one and half-hour sessions in a Christian-based support group to engage in scripture and prayer. The session included individual self-disclosure of the stress attacking their lives, encouraging members to take turns in prayer, applying scripture appropriately, and inviting members to write self-reflections and feedback. 22 out of 28 participants were affected by stress in their lives. Most of the adults reported using prayer and scripture reading to help them cope. However, some were frustrated, as scripture did not give them the answers they hoped for, such as lowering expectations in some of their situations. They also reported that attending study and prayer groups helped them understand that they were not alone in stressful situations and that other people were going through much worse scenarios. Overall, participants expressed having a prayer support group was an advantageous way to deal with stress as it brought a wealth of caring with it. Private prayer and scripture reading also acted as a buffer for a stressful event.

Prayer and scripture reading has been shown to be effective in helping Christian's deal with stress (Pargament et al., 2004). While most of the research has been conducted on stress in general, it seems probable that Christians who employ these methods of coping are also using them at work. However, there is a lack of information on how prayer and scripture reading are used to cope with stress in the work environment. Furthermore, it is unknown if there are other tools apart from prayer and scripture reading used in the workplace when coping with stress.

Therefore, this study aimed to examine how spiritual coping resources are used by Christians in the workplace to cope with stress.

Biblical Foundations of the Study

Christian Perception of Work

It is important to know how Christians perceive work to fully understand Christian behavior in the work setting. According to Fredrick et al. (2017), Christians perceive work as a mission to fulfill their purpose and abilities. Following this reasoning, working is viewed as a calling and obedience to God, and it is done for the sake of investing our gifts in fulfillment of a course greater than us. When a Christian derives work meaning from God, their accomplishment in the work area has a faith basis (Fredrick et al., 2017). Understanding perception of work enables us to predict how individuals will perceive stress that stems from work. To a Christian, work is a direct commandment from God. Genesis 2:15 "The Lord God took the man he had created and placed him in the Garden of Eden to work it and keep it."

In Christian theology, honest work is worthy of honor, and it is rewarded not only by earthly employees but Jesus, who commands them to work. This is demonstrated in the scriptures: Ecclesiastes 9:10 "Whatever your hands find to do, do it with all you might, for there is no work, knowledge, or wisdom in the grave where we all end up in." Colossians 3:23-24 "And whatever you do, do it heartily as to the Lord and not to men, knowing that you will receive the reward of your inheritance for you serve the Lord Christ."1st Corinthians 10:31 "Therefore, whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God."

When a Christian partakes in work, he acts in obedience to God and shares the love of God through offering their services to man (Fredrick et al., 2017). Christians are not encouraged to be only accepted for the jobs they like but also for those they do not enjoy but must do. From the

book of Eccl, 3:22, they are told what they have as work is honorable and should be treated as such. Ecclesiastes 3:22 "So I perceived that there is nothing better than a man to rejoice in his work, for that is his share and heritage, for who can help him see what the future holds." The Christian view of work gives many perspectives on what kind of God they serve. Unlike what some may portray in the world, the Christian God instructs his followers to be productive members of society. Jesus himself tells his disciples that God created the earth in six days and rested on the seventh. Even so, he still works, and Christians are supposed to emulate this example. To not work is shunned in many of the Christian teachings: 1st Timothy 5:8 "If anyone does not provide for his own, most especially the immediate family he has denied his faith and is worse than an unbeliever. "Ephesians 4:28 "Let him who stole steal no longer, but rather use his hands-on, honest living so that he may be able to provide also for the needy. "Proverbs 18:19 "He who is slothful in his work is a brother to him who is the destroyer of everything good."2nd Thessalonians 3:10 "If anybody is unwilling to work let him not eat..."

From the above scriptures, we can conclude that work is a good thing for a Christian and must be carried out by every committed believer who still has breath. Carrying out work diligently is a form of obedience and worship to the Almighty God, creator of all things who worked extensively during creation and continues to work until today. To not work is a great sin and is equated to the act of being an unbeliever. It is direct disobedience to God's commandment for people to work.

From the Christian outlook, it is easy to predict that they are likely to react positively and embrace positive coping mechanisms when faced with stress. Ultimately, followers who have their ethics founded on Bible teachings are able to apply the relevant teachings to overcome stress critically. Nevertheless, it should be noted that it is not guaranteed that Christians will have

the ability to cope with any form of stress. Despite Christianity being a mandate from God, it should be done with a cheerful heart.

Christian Perception of Work Stress

In the Bible, God does not promise that everything will be blissful throughout a Christian's life. However, there is a promise to every believer that even when the road gets tough, God's continual presence will see him or her through. The primary type of vocation/work demonstrated in the Bible is the spreading of God's word. Jesus himself was the most outstanding worker to ever walk the surface of the earth. He was tasked to bring the whole world to the word/light/truth. Notably, every single day of his life, he had to teach and perform miracles for the same purpose. He was and still is responsible for people's souls. Although he never harmed anyone with his work, the Pharisees even hated him, and thus there was a rejection of his excellent work. Assuredly, at the Garden of Gethsemane, Jesus knew his death was near, and his flesh was incredibly overwhelmed with what was to come. Additionally, the scriptures note that he had at his command a legion of angels he could command to set him free from the stress he was about to face, but instead, he went on to finish the work he was tasked with. He was experiencing the highest form of stress a human being could endure.

> Matthew 27:38 Then He said to his disciples, "My soul is exceedingly sorrowful even to death. Stay here and watch with me." He went a little different way and fell on His face, and He prayed. "Oh, my father, if it is possible, let this cup pass from me nevertheless not as I will but as You will."

The Christ agonized to the point that he was sweating blood. Luke 22:45 "And being in agony He prayed more earnestly, And His sweat became like significant drops of blood falling on the ground."

Despite the stress he was going through, he continued with his work. The Christian perception of stress is that it is a normal part of earthly life. It is never going to end till the afterlife. Jesus himself, in his teachings, refers to this. John 16:33 "This thing I have spoken to you that in Me you may have peace. In this world, you have tribulations but be of good cheer for I have conquered the world."

His apostle echoes the same sentiments in his teachings.1st Peter 1:6 "In this, you greatly rejoice though now for a little while, if need be various trials have grieved you."

One of the sources of stress in the workplace is from troubled relationships between employees and their employers. There may be a lack of proper communication or a Christian feeling overburdened with work without equal compensation. This causally relates to the conditions in the Bible. In most ancient cultures, people owned slaves. A perfect example of an illustration is the case of Jews; God commanded them to treat the slaves fairly and release them after seven years. Some individuals still oppressed their slaves. The treatment was much crueler among Gentiles who did not believe. When preaching to them, Christ's apostles did not ask them to leave their masters. Instead, they were instructed otherwise.

> 1Peter 2:18 Servants be submissive to your masters with all fear, not only to the good and gentle but also to the harsh. For it is commendable if with good conscience one endures grief. What credit is it for you if you are punished for your faults you take it without complaint? When you do good and suffer for it, it is commendable.

Another reason why someone may perceive stress at work may be because they are afraid to get laid off. Companies can decide to lay off workers due to the lack of accomplishment of tasks and financial difficulties. In the study done by Chirico et al. (2020), some of the students who negatively coped blamed the negatives on themselves. They stated that God was punishing them

for some wrongdoing. Notwithstanding, it was not the case in a Christian view of God. The Bible says that by God's will, good happens to both the deserving and undeserving. Matthew 5:45 shows that God does trials may come even if He finds us just in His eyes: Matthew 5:45 "That you may be sons of your Father in heaven, for He makes sun shines to the evil and the good and send rain to both the just and unjust." And again, John 9:2-3 it says, "And His disciples asked who sinned that this man may be born blind? Moreover, Jesus answered, 'Neither this man nor His parents sinned, but that God's work should be seen through him.'" Difficulties that may arise at work should not be perceived as a course of wrongdoing, but as an occurrence happening according to God's will. When Christians know this, they are likely to look upwards rather than inwards for the answers they need.

Stress is a normal part of this life from a Christian angle and should be expected. When Christians perceive stress from an authority, rebellion is not the first code of action but rather submission so that if it was possible, their masters could be won over by their conduct. True believers are also warned not to see the stressful situation as caused by their wrongdoing. An employer's harshness may be justified as there is a need for better results. Threats of being laid off can be because of the company lacking money.

In conclusion, from the Christian perspective, it is more likely that individuals who use religious coping will do so in an adaptive way. For example, if there is a threat of being laid off due to lack of finances, Christians are called to a place of understanding that it is not their fault the company lacks finances. If there are troubled relationships in the workplace, Christians are called to rise to the occasion and be better person. In so doing, their character can win the oppressor to their faith.

Role of Scripture Reading in Spiritual Coping

From various studies carried out, most Christians who can positively cope with work stress regularly engage in scripture reading (Chirico et al., 2019; Francis et al., 2017; Zhang et al., 2019). Christ Jesus is the standard of Christian living, and it is coherent to conclude that for Christians to understand what stress is, they have to engage in scripture reading. From reading the scripture, Christians know who their God is and what he commands them to do when faced with trials. From the Word of God, they can emulate God's character concerning work and stress. It also transforms our perspective on hardship and trials. Once we understand who God is and what He wants, the Bible instructs us to emulate that example. For instance, Ephesians 5:1 "Therefore be followers of God as dear children."

In Acts 17:11, a comparison is made between the Thessalonians and the Berea's. Both had converted to the Christian faith, but one group studied the scriptures more than the other, and for this reason, they had the real picture of what their salvation entailed. Acts 17:11 "These were more fair-minded than those in Thessalonians in that they received the word with all readiness and searched the scriptures daily to find out whether these were true."2nd Timothy also mentions, "Scripture is given for reproof, corrections, and instructions unto righteousness that a man of God may be complete and equipped for every good work. "The scriptures are the life manual of a Christian. It guides how he/she lives with his family. It recommends how they interact with people at work and submit even to their superiors. Psalms 119:105 "Your word is a lamp to my feet. "Psalm 19:11 "Good sense enables a man to be slow in anger, and it is in his glory to overlook an offense."

The scriptures are endowed with words of encouragement for the Christian when going through a rough patch at work. Isaiah 41:10 "Fear not For I am with you: Be not dismayed for I am your God. I will strengthen you; yes, I will help you. I will uphold you with my righteous hand."

Without scripture reading, it is doubtful that professing Christian can coherently ground themselves. The question comes; How will they know what to do if they have not read it? The systematic study of the scripture allows a Christian to have an accurate view of who God is and what he commands concerning living the Christian life. The Bible acts as a source of spiritual guidance and encouragement to Christians.

Role of Prayer in Christian Coping

From previous studies, it has been found that the frequency of prayer in a believer's life positively correlates with their coping mechanism (Chirico et al., 2019; Fredrick et al., 2017; Kim, 2014; LaBarber & Hetzel, 2016; Visker, 2017). This practice has its roots in the Bible. However, the one to whom it is sent to has the ability to change situations. Jesus, who is the standard to all Christians, took time to pray in the most challenging moments, such as in the Garden of Gethsemane.

In the Bible, God is portrayed as one who truly cares about his servants' affairs, and for this reason, he asks them to trust him with their troubles. This attribute of God as one who cares is shown in various places in the scripture.

Isaiah 43:2 "When you pass through waters, I will be with you, and through the rivers, they shall not overflow you. When you walk through the fire, you shall not be burned."

Hebrew 13:5 "Conduct yourself without covetousness and with contentment, For He said, "I will never leave you nor forsake you."

I Peter 5:7 "Casting all your care upon Him for He cares for you. ""

Isaiah 49: "A woman cares deeply for the son she has borne from her womb, and even then, she still can forget, But I God will not forget you. ""

A believer's life is filled with the assurance that God loves them despite what they are going through in life. It is important to note that the Bible's God does not promise that life will always be a smooth ride. However, he does promise that he will be watching every step of the way. This assurance is only found through two mediums: knowledge of God's word and prayer. Prayer acts as the avenue through which Christians can communicate to God when facing difficult times. Prayer is a command, and it is instructed in many Bible verses. Examples include: Philippians 5:6 "do not be anxious about anything but in everything, by prayer and supplication, make your requests be known to God. The peace of the Lord that exceeds all understanding will guard your hearts and minds through Jesus. "Mark 11:4 "Therefore, I tell you whatever you ask in prayer, believe that you have received, and it shall be yours."

> James 5:13 "Is anyone among you suffering? Let him pray. Is anyone cheerful? Let him sing psalms. "Matthew 7:7-11 "Ask and it shall be given unto you, seek, and you shall find. Knock, and the door shall be opened unto you. For whoever asks will receive, and he who seeks shall find, and to he who knocks the door shall be opened. If you who are evil give good things to your children, how much more will your Father who is holy give to you."

We can logically argue that Christians are likely to show positive outcomes when faced with stress. This stems from the fact that actual believers view work as a vocation, and they execute tasks as obedience to God and service to man. According to Christian theology, stress at work is a normal part of human life and should not bring one down. Christians are called to bring all their worries and cares from different aspects of their life to God. God, who is merciful and

kind, answers them according to his will. A person's faith in God shapes their trust and his guidance.

Summary

Most of the reviewed literature provides a basis for a positive correlation between Christian spirituality and positive coping mechanisms. The studies confirm that there is an inverse relationship between Christian coping and coping with stress. Many studies have reported that Christian-based coping is linked to having better mental health outcomes such as less anxiety, depression, and PTSD symptoms. Some of the studies have shed light on the essential tools of Christian-based coping. These tools include prayer, scripture reading, and church attendance. While research on spirituality and religiosity and workplace stress has shown some relationship, it is unknown what they lived experiences of spiritual practices at work is for Christian employees. Furthermore, while Scripture offers many truths that could be applied to workplace stressors, it is not clear how or if Christian employees are using them to cope with stress at work. Therefore, this study seeks to understand further spiritual coping at work by examining the lived experiences of spiritual coping with workplace stress among Christian workers.

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHOD

Overview

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to examine the lived experience of coping in the workplace among Christian adults. This chapter provides the details of the research design, research question, conceptual and theoretical framework, justification, sampling approach, data collection, analysis, and the provisos regarding what can and cannot be achieved through this process.

Research Questions

The research questions guiding the design of this study are as follows:

RQ1.   How do Christian employees describe their lived experiences with coping with workplace stress?

RQ2.   How do Christians employees describe how their faith is related to coping with workplace stress?

RQ3.   What faith practices do Christian employees report using to cope with stress at work?

Research Design

The study used a qualitative phenomenological research design. A phenomenological approach will provide a more detailed background and context regarding how Christian adults perceive their spirituality and religious beliefs and practices in relation to workplace stress and stress reduction. The phenomenological approach is one that both justifies and guides research about how perceptions are related to problems and phenomena (Lanigan, 2013). Phenomenology

values the beliefs, attitudes, and perceptions of respondents and positions the variables of importance within that understanding and experience of participants (Davidsen, 2013). Phenomenology does not prescribe a specific qualitative method, but rather it is a philosophy that justifies movement from observation to the attempt to interpret experience and meaning (Davidsen, 2013). Phenomenology is appropriate to this study as the goal is to understand individuals' experiences and understanding of how their faith is related to their coping with workplace stress. The use of phenomenology in this study allowed for a rich description of what it means to apply Christian spiritual practices and faith to cope with workplace stress so that a greater understanding of the phenomenon can be obtained. Recording the lived experiences of Christian employees will allow for the development of a Christian perspective on coping with workplace stress.

Participants

Participants for this study were American Christians who are employed full-time (defined as at least 40 hours per week). This study was conducted online, through Zoom, with a focus of adult Liberty University working students. During the purposive sampling recruitment exercise, potential participants were invited to participate if they reported working full time and self-identify as Christian. Following self-identification, a screening questionnaire confirmed that they met the criteria for identification as Christian (see Appendix B). For this study, Christian was defined as a three-step sequential process:

(a) Believing and accepting biblical truths regarding the nature of Christ.

(b) Cultivating a relationship with Christ.

(c) Applying biblical sound principles in response to any demands of life.

The target sample size included 10-12 participants and recruitment was ongoing until the saturation of themes was met. Participants were recruited through the sample size justification for qualitative studies requiring the achievement of saturation. Saturation refers to the point where new data only serves to confirm the previously identified themes (Saunders, 2016). In other words, there is no new information, or value, to continue with data collection (Saunders, 2016). Best efforts will be made to achieve saturation within the parameters and resources available. It is anticipated that saturation will be achieved within 10-12 participants, but interviews will be continued until saturation is achieved.

Study Procedures

The recruitment of participants was purposive, and the study consisted of four phases: (a) recruitment, (b) screening, (c) informed consent, and (d) brief semi-structured oral interview.

Recruitment phase. Prospective participants were invited to complete brief semi-structured oral interviews via Zoom. This invitation email was sent to active Liberty University students. The invitation was an announcement posted and sent via email to all Liberty University students where they accessed a Google Form document with the study's title, brief description, inclusion criteria, and next steps (see Appendix * for the announcement to be sent). Prospective participants were screened and directed to indicate if they are willing to participate and provide a valid contact email and phone number to be contacted by the researcher. After agreeing to participate and providing their contact information, prospective participants were prompted to complete the screening phase via Google Forms as well.

Screening phase and Scheduling Phase. During this phase, prospective participants were asked to complete a brief screening form (Appendix B). The contents of this screening probed the following inclusion criteria: (a) age [18 years and older], (b) employment status [full-time: ≥ 40

hours per week], (c) declaration of Christian faith [an affirmative answer in response to the following questions: "Do you believe in the miracle birth, life, death burial and resurrection of Christ" Do you believe that Christ's death was an act of atonement for the sins of mankind"]. Once participants answered all screening questions and satisfied the inclusion criteria, they were instructed to wait for a phone call from the researcher to begin the scheduling phase. During this phase, the researcher contacted the prospective participant to briefly confirm the screening responses provided through Google Forms. If during the phone call, the researcher discovered the prospective participant did not meet inclusion criteria, he or she was thanked for their time and informed why they did not meet inclusion criteria. After the screening confirmation was completed, the researcher and prospective participant agreed on a date and time to conduct the virtual semi-structured oral interview via Zoom. After the Zoom interview was scheduled, participants were emailed a link to a different Google Form to read and electronically sign the informed consent document.

Informed consent phase. During this phase, prospective participants were provided with a digital informed consent document. Upon signing the informed consent document, participants were allowed to begin the final phase, the brief semi-structured oral interview via Zoom that was previously scheduled.

Semi-structured interview phase. This phase consisted of two sub-phases: (a) a brief sociodemographic interview in which the researcher asked the participant to provide select demographic information (Appendix C). (b) Three open-ended interviews and associated clarifying questions exploring workplace coping. Oral interview delivery is preferred for many reasons, including convenience for respondents, affordability, and ease of data collection.

Provision of informed consent can be provided using an internet-connected device, and in the case of anonymous surveys, this can significantly streamline efforts.

The screening and demographic questions serve a specific purpose in relation to the credibility, reliability, and validity of the results. There are two types of measures, closed questions, and open-ended questions. These variables and the indicators that result will also provide for comparative analysis with previous research. During the sociodemographic sub-phase, participants were instructed to provide open-ended and single or multiple-choice responses for questions probing age, gender, race/ethnicity, city of residence, city of work (if different from where they reside), level of education, area/field of employment, position/title, time employed, and monthly income. Upon completing the sociodemographic phase, participants participated in the oral interview to answer the three open-ended interviews and associated clarifying questions. These questions are provided in (Appendix D). After completing the oral interview, the participants were prompted to submit their answers, followed by a thank you message and a prompt to close the window. The open-ended survey questions will provide data relating to the faith-based practices that respondents have used and their details in relation to how and why these are related to their work-related stress and stress reduction.

Instrumentation and Measurement

A semi-structured interview was used as the research instrument for this study. The reliability, validity, and credibility of study findings can be triangulated in various ways by grounding data in previous research, as well as the study at hand (Cooper & Schindler, 2014; Leedy & Ormrod, 2016). Reliability in qualitative studies entails ensuring the stability of participants' responses when viewed by different researchers, coders, and other consumers of

such data. Validity on the other hand refers to the accuracy of results obtained from qualitative research (Creswell & Poth, 2013) and entails credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability. A common way to ensure validity is through participant validation or member checking, the process of returning data and results to participants to ensure the researcher indeed captured the essence and intended message of the participant. Initial validation of the interview was conducted through a pilot study of two to three participants to ensure comprehensibility and flow. Also, following data collection, participants were given a transcript of the interview to review for accuracy of experience and thought. Participants were invited to edit or clarify any of their responses when reviewing their transcripts.

Data Analysis

The interview was recorded via Zoom and upon completion of the interview, was downloaded by the researcher for transcription. The transcribed interview was completed on Word Document and once complete will be uploaded to ATLAS.ti (V9) for thematic content analysis.

ATLAS.ti (v9) was used to conduct the thematic content analysis from responses obtained from the five written interview questions. Interview responses downloaded from Google Forms were exported to ATLAS.ti (v9) and text responses were examined for themes. Thematic content analysis ensures rigor in textual analysis of the responses provided to open-ended questions. The written responses to the open-ended questions were treated in much the same way as a transcription from an interview using iterative coding and determinations of

themes. The information was further processed in relation to the implications for the research questions and the evidence to support a response.

Results and outputs

The anticipated result of the survey is demographic information describing the individuals, which provides for sample characteristics, a more quantitative determination of workplace stress, mental health impacts, and job satisfaction, and detailed insight in relation to faith practices. It was anticipated that thematic content analysis will provide for some understanding of the clustering of themes or profiles of respondents. The ideal outcome is the achievement of saturation. Saturation is a theoretical threshold in grounded theory methods (Saunders, 2016).

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Delimitations, Assumptions, and Limitations

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Delimitations

The study will only focus on Christianity as a point of inclusion as a means of positioning the context and responses within this subpopulation. Christianity is complex, with various sub-sects as well as differences in theology and doctrine. The focus on this faith is because millions of people ascribe to it, thus study findings would apply to people from different backgrounds. The three research questions direct it to accomplish the main objective.

Assumptions

Assumptions in this research project include the viability of this phenomenological approach to elicit the necessary data to leverage new insights. This requires the full participation of willing respondents who provide detailed and accurate representations of their faith, stress levels, and faith practices that may support coping with workplace stress. Oral responses

guarantee rich lived participant experiences due to the liberty to express their thoughts. Furthermore, it is not time-bound, thus respondents take time to generate accurate feedback.

Limitations

Common limitations in relation to purposive recruitment can include sample bias based on the voluntary nature of participation. Efforts were made to understand the resulting sample in order to mitigate this possible weakness. The second limitation is data saturation or information redundancy since respondents will have the same questions. Mitigation of this setback necessitates the determination of a common theme from redundant participant feedback. A common weakness in survey accuracy is the issue of social desirability where some respondents would offer biased views to uphold a positive image. Exaggeration and false feedback can trigger mixed perceptions about respondents. However, ideally, this effect is mitigated by the anonymous nature of the instrument.

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Summary

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This qualitative study was facilitated through a virtual semi-structured interview delivery to facilitate data collection using a voluntary and purposive sample approach. The survey instrument included sociodemographic questions and open-ended questions intended to confirm credibility and provide for response to the research questions. The various choices and approaches are justified by the nature of this exploratory research topic. Ethical considerations included ensuring that there was no risk of harm, employing informed consent as a requirement for participation, and anonymity to avoid the need for the protection of private or confidential data. The results of carrying out these procedures will be provided in the next chapter.

CHAPTER 4: RESULTS

In this phenomenological study, I captured the lived experiences of participants with workplace stress and spiritual coping strategies. Specifically, participants were asked to describe their lived experience with coping with workplace stress and using faith in coping with workplace stress.

The following research questions guided the study:

RQ1. How do Christian employees describe their lived experience with coping with workplace stress?

RQ2. How do Christian employees describe how their faith is related to coping with stress at work?

RQ3. What faith practices do Christian employees report using to cope with stress at work?

Descriptive Results

Participant Demographics

Twelve participants were interviewed in this study and recruitment ceased when the saturation of themes was met. Of the 12 participants who were interviewed, 58% were female and 42% male. The average age of all participants was 37 years and ages ranged from 22 to 59 years as shown in Table 1 below.

Table 1

Demographics of Participants

	Frequency	%
Biological Sex		
Females	7	58.3
Males	5	41.7
Age Group		
22 – 31	4	33.3
32 – 41	5	41.7
42 – 51	1	8.3
52 – 61	2	16.7

Analysis of Interviews

Data analysis occurred as described in Chapter 3. I read the transcribed data multiple times while listening to the audiotaped version to ensure accuracy and to begin identifying codes and themes that would emerge from the data. After a study of analysis, as suggested by Moustakas (1994) and Creswell (2007), I established the codes and themes.

The analysis strategy included the following steps: I conducted and videotaped each interview and transcribed the audiotaped data. I read the transcribed data multiple times, while watching to the videotaped version to ensure accuracy. Next, I searched for significant statements to underscore an awareness of how participants experienced the phenomenon. Afterward, I categorized groups of meaningful experiences into codes and then themes. I

composed accounts of what participants experienced. From those descriptions, I wrote summaries that encased the spirit of their experiences into themes (Creswell, 2007). The following are short definitions of the codes used with examples of direct statements taken from study participant interviews that embrace the meaning of each code.

Code 1: Physical activity/exercise

The code of *physical activity/exercise* included any behavior related to physical activity or exercise. Participant 1 demonstrated this code in the statement, "I mean it depends on what it is…I…will go running." Likewise, Participant 2 shared, "I exercise a lot. I jog every day." Finally, Participant 3 expressed, "I command my body to leap for joy…I got out of my car at the gas station and began to just leap for joy…"

Code 2: Discussion/Talk about the Situation

The code of *discussion/talking about the situation* included talking to a neutral party or a trusted party. For example, Participant 1 shared, "I'm the clinical director in that clinic and if there is a conflict between two parties, then I'll go have a discussion." Participant 5 also demonstrated this code with her significant other, "…a lot of talking with my husband…" Discussing workplace stress with significant others was recurrent as stated by Participant 3, "…when I get home, my wife is my sounding board, so I kind of get to talk through the stressors of the day and that kind of helps relieve things, as far as like a non-spiritual aspect."

Code 3: Prayers

The code of *prayers* included personal or interpersonal praying and depending on the prayers of others and is a remarkable response in this phenomenological study. Examples of personal prayers were demonstrated by Participant 7, "…I pray a lot…" Participant 9 also mentioned, "…some praying, just [to be] in connection with God for a bit before I actually

enter…that helps give me peace…" Regarding interpersonal prayers, Participant 1 expressed, "…I feel led by the Holy Spirit, then I will pray with them." Participant 2 shared an instance of depending on the prayers of others. "…I really depend on prayers…I relied heavily on my husband praying over me…"

Code 4: Relying on Faith

The code of *relying on faith* emerged explicitly expressed as "relying on faith" as seen by Participant 2. "…I relied so much on my faith…"

Code 5: Looking at the positive side

The code of *looking at the positive side* emerged recurrently and included purposefully viewing the stressor positively. Participant 2 exemplified this code through the following quote, "…looking at things in a positive way like Job did…"

Code 6: Relying on Divine Intervention

The code of *relying on divine intervention* encompasses a stated reliance on God working in a situation. This was exemplified by Participant 2 in the statement, "I knew that my God had already taken care of the situation that was making me upset and the next day when I went back to work, sure enough, it was resolved."

Code 7: Pick a job you can live with

The code of *pick a job you can live* with was defined as identifying a career path that the individual deems is within their capability to manage with reduced stress and was exemplified by Participant 4 in the statement, "…I've realized all jobs have stress, so you need to find a job that you can live with, so you don't bring stress home.

Code 8: Self Comfort

The code of *self-comfort* was defined as the ability of the individual to find ways to self-soothe or comfort in response to difficult conditions in the workplace. The code of self-comfort emerged as expressed by Participant 4, "And I've created an environment at my job where when I do start getting stressed out, I have things that comfort me…"

Code 9: Read Bible

The code of *reading the Bible* emerged as expressed by Participant 4, "I have like little verses, like my favorite Bible verses on my desk." Participant 2 shared this code. The participant said, "…it's really constantly hearing the Word because Satan loves to get you out of that Word." Participant 4 expressed, "There's not a lot of practices we follow…I know they always encourage us to read our Bible…and that's something I do when I do get stressed out."

Code 10: Read favorite quotes

This code emerged from Participant 4 as well. The participant mentioned, "I have some of my favorite quotes from some of my favorite books on my desk."

Code 11: Look at pictures of family and places visited

Likewise, the code of *look at pictures of family and friends* also emerged from Participant 4 as another way to cope with workplace stress. "I have pictures of my son and my husband and places that I've been."

Code 12: Take a deep breath

The code of *taking a deep breath* emerged from various participants. Participant 4 shared, "…I can stop, take a breather, relax…" Participant 11 expressed, "…I usually find a way to …take a deep breath." Similarly, Participant 12 shared, "…I take a deep breath and I say a

prayer…"

Code 13: Auto Relaxation

The code of *auto-relaxation* emerged as a coping strategy from two participants. Participant 4 expressed, "So when I start getting overwhelmed, I can stop… [and] relax…That's what I do right now." Additionally, Participant 11 shared, "…whenever I know I'm going to get overwhelmed…I will take some time to start to relax."

Code 14: Distraction

The code of *distraction* emerged as expressed by Participant 11. "…I will find something to read sometimes…or sometimes I will also just start playing whatever I feel like on my piano."

Code 15: Acceptance

The code of *acceptance* was shared by Participant 12. "I take a deep breath…let it go, after that and just approach life as it could always be worst."

Code 16: Talk about God to Coworkers

The code of *talking about God to coworkers* was also shared by Participant 12. The participant described "…I like to also talk about God more freely. I find that it becomes a more Christian environment which is not necessarily bad…"

Code 17: Reaccreditation

The code of *reaccreditation* also emerged from participant feedback. Participant 2 shared, "Ok, so that one is undergoing our reaccreditation…for our medical assisting program at San Jacinto College North…" This quote depicts the stressful work setting encompassing massive paperwork and self-studies with strict deadlines. Additionally, the individual had to grapple with the loss of a close family member. The challenges collectively increased blood

pressure. Participant 2 was dedicated to meet college expectations. The realization of this mission had to happen in a stressful circumstance.

Code 18: Toxic Coworker

The code of *toxic coworker* emerged as expressed by Participant 4, "I had a very toxic co-worker to the point where I couldn't even stand to be in the same room with her because she was so negative and condescending."

Code 19: Overwhelming workload

The code of *overwhelming workload* emerged as expressed by Participant 6. The participant described, "When my workload is overloading like it's beyond my normal amount of work."

Code 20: Apprehensive patient/client

The code of *apprehensive patient/client* emerged as exemplified by Participant 7. The participant noted, "Well, for example, this patient I just met…was very apprehensive and I'm about to do some dental work…I was just praying beforehand…that God would give me the skill…that my training would come into play and that I could just basically treat the patient as painlessly…so that their anxiety wouldn't overtake them."

Code 21: Competing demands

The code of *competing demands* emerged as described by Participant 7. "So, there's a lot of competing interest and time management is an absolute must…" Participant 11 also shared an example of competing demands as a source of workplace stress. "So, a lot of times I have a bunch of things to do at one time. And I think that's the major stress of my position that I'm expected to do them all…rapidly."

Code 22: Managing a Complicated Situation

The code of *managing a complicated situation* emerged as shared by Participant 8, "…I was on [the] night shift…there [were] a couple of kids I was taking care of…they were pretty sick…and…you're trying to do everything you can of course to make sure that they don't get worse." Participant 10 also shared an example of when managing a complicated situation was a source of workplace stress. "…I was helping at the studio that I work at…I was helping with the group piano class, and they were all quite a little energetic…I was feeling myself…starting to get a little anxious."

Code 23: Dealing with a rude Patient

The code of *dealing with a rude patient* emerged expressed by Participant 9. The participant shared, "…I'm dealing with a very rude patient…gives me an insult for no reason."

Code 24: Cultural Differences

The code of *cultural differences* emerged from the phenomenological study with some participants describing it more as a challenge to navigate and others noting that it's an enjoyable aspect of their job. Participant 1 expressed, "…I would say at work being aware of different cultures and what is important to one culture may not be important to another." Similarly, Participant 5 shared, "I have adult and pediatric patients, so I feel like every day is a new day and I get [to] learn from a lot of different cultural groups." Participant 9 noted, "…yeah, there's definitely some cultural differences that makes interpersonal interactions a great challenge."

Code 25: Race/Ethnicity

The code of *race/ethnicity* also emerged from several participants. Participant 2 shared, "So, the demographics in the sample I gave you…my leaders being African American, my employees being Hispanic and Anglo/white…so I [have] big diversity. I think I had a big diversity because I dealt with schools I dealt with affiliations which had a big diversity and I dealt with definitely our current students and our graduates which were an abundance of diversity so I would say our demographics for my stress level for the reaccreditation." Participant 4 expressed, "So, I've had people in the workplace treat me badly because…you're not the right skin color. I wasn't the right color, my sex wasn't the right sex, and my religion has caused problems. It is surprising but had a few instances." This statement affirms the racial discrimination targeting an individual's race.

Code 26: Gender/Sex

The code of *gender* emerged as detailed by several participants. Participant 2 shared, "I [have] a mixture of all diversity and literally male/female…" Participant 4 expressed, "So, I've had people in the workplace treat me badly because of my sex…" The Participant implies that job promotions were pipe dreams because of unfair workplace discrimination that revolved around sex. The bad treatment resulted from colleagues.

Code 27: Religion

The code *religion* emerged as exemplified by Participant 4. The participant commented, "…religion being one of them…I have had problems with people when they learn I'm a [Jehovah] Witness because they have preconceived ideas." Participant 5 expressed, "…so, I have a broad variety of patients from…multiple different religions…I feel like it's very important to have cultural sensitivity."

Code 28: Education

The code *education* emerged as shared by Participant 6, "…educational background…I do notice that those who may not have as much education or further education…seem to struggle a bit just because there's a lot of technical and computer information…"

Code 29: Age

The code of *age* emerged as shared by several participants. Participant 7 expressed, "…age…sometimes I have to kind of approach…people that I work with different because they're not as experienced." Participant 10 shared, "… [they] could be 90 years old…you can have an entirely different point of view… I see everybody as equal."

Code 30: Yes, to faith

The code *yes to faith* emerged as a significant way of managing workplace stress through faith. Moreover, this code emerged in varying degrees of intensities (i.e., yes, absolutely, and definitely).

Code 31: Faith is a Lifestyle

The code *faith is a lifestyle* emerged as a response to what is it like for your faith to play a role in helping to cope with stress at work. Participant 1 shared, "…it's the way I've live most of my life…"

Code 32: Suppress what I really want to say

The code *suppress what I really want to* say emerged as exemplified by Participant 1. The participant noted, "…there are time[s] I have to school my tongue and make sure that I don't say what I would love to say."

Code 33: Enjoy being a [Christian] Catholic

The code *enjoy being a [Christian] Catholic* emerged as a description of what it is like using your faith to cope with workplace stress as shared by Participant 2. The participant shared, "I really enjoy being a Catholic. I think…we were brought up Catholic…even as I entered adulthood where I could make my own decisions [,] I kept the faith…"

Code 34: Joy in the Presence of the Lord

The code *joy in the presence of the Lord* emerged as expressed by Participant 3. The participant shared, "In the presence of the Lord there is joy that is exactly what it is like for me."

Code 35: Calming

The code *calming* emerged as another description of what it is like having your faith play a role in coping with workplace stress as exemplified by Participant 4. The participant shared, "…it's calming and comforting." Likewise, Participant 11 shared, "being able to pray…help[s] me to just achieve a little bit of calmness…"

Code 36: Exhausting

The code *exhausting* emerged as expressed by Participant 4. The participant shared, "other times its exhausting…I was raised a Jehovah's Witness, it is very traditional or conservative lifestyle. And as I gotten older it can be very difficult to follow that path…to stay with that."

Code 37: Sense of peace

The code *sense of peace* emerged as another way faith plays a role in coping with workplace stress as shared by Participant 5. The participant expressed, "It's a sense of peace. It's as you know that you have someone that's over you that's looing…taking care of you."

Code 38: Helps relieve stress

The code *helps relieve stress* emerged from Participant 7. The participant shared, "…it helps relieve the stress," and similarly, Participant 11 expressed, "And that reduces my stress levels…"

Code 39: Helps connect with other Christians

The code *helps connect with other Christians* emerged as a description of how faith plays a role in workplace stress coping as expressed by Participant 11. The participant shared, "I think…with an extra connection and how if my students and I have at least one sort of connection it makes it easier…" This quote implies that the conscious cognition of one's faith principles simplifies bonding with others, including having other people's shoulders to lean on to overcome stress. Furthermore, this code occurred several times when participants described, "because I am myself a Christian, to kind of like a connection…," "…fortunate enough to have other believers…. they were already there…," and "…having other coworkers [who are Christian] …helps us to handle stress differently than other coworkers…"

Code 40: Comfortable to be myself

The code *comfortable to be myself* emerged as shared by Participant 12, "…I'm able to be myself and others are as well."

Code 41: Personal prayer

The code *personal prayer* emerged as an example of faith-related practices that aid in coping with workplace stress from various participants. Participant 1 shared, "I would say prayer." Participants 11 and 12 respectively expressed, "…the biggest one would be prayer" and definitely prayer."

Code 42: Praise music

The code *praise music* emerged as another example of faith-related practices that aid in coping with workplace stress as exemplified by Participants 1, "Almost every day we start our clinic with praise music," and 10, "praying and singing, they're two big ones."

Code 43: Cultivate gratitude

The code *cultivate gratitude* emerged as exemplified by Participant 1. The participant shared, "And so that's a lot of it, is mindset and praising and being grateful and so we talk constantly about being grateful, what we're grateful for with between ourselves…also with our patients."

Code 44: Attend religious services

The code *attend religious* services emerged as another example of faith-related practices that aid in coping with workplace stress as shared by Participants 2 and 5. Participant 2 expressed, "I go to church a lot," and Participant 5 shared, "I attend mass on Sundays."

Code 45: Talk with the priest

The code of *talking with the priest* emerged as an example of faith-related practices that aid in coping with workplace stress as expressed by Participant 2. The participant shared, "…and we talk to the priest."

Code 46: Being positive

Being positive emerged as a code as expressed by Participant 2. The participant shared, "to continue being positive because it is very easy for Satan to pop into your head and really bring you down."

Code 47: Interpersonal prayer

The code *interpersonal prayer* emerged as another example of faith-related practices that aid in coping with workplace stress as exemplified by Participant 8. The participant expressed, "I try to take the opportunity as much as possible to pray with my co-workers."

Code 48: Religious rituals

Engaging in *religious rituals* also emerged as a code as expressed by several participants. For example, Participant 12 shared, "Sometimes the Rosary." Generally, the Catholic faithful use the rosary beads when counting prayers that collectively constitute the rosary. The rosary help Catholics remember significant faith events that reinforce their commitment to God's service and duty toward humankind.

Code 49: Assess where I am

The code *assess where I* am emerged as expressed by Participant 7. The participant shared, "I have time every day to just kind of assess where I am…where does God have me…"

Code 50: Seeking social support

Seeking social support emerged as code as shared by Participant 2. The participant shared, "talking to my husband, praying together as a husband and wife…"

Code 51: Taking a break

Taking a break from work or the current situation emerged when participants shared, "…I will take some time out to relax…," " I often find a place of solitude where I can just escape," "…I will if I have to take a little time just a mental break in the midst of it all," and "…I can stop…take a minute and just breathe."

Code 52: Music

The code *music* occurred when participants described music as being an integral part of dealing with workplace stress, such as, "…start playing whatever I feel like on my piano," and "…I listen to some Gospel music…"

Code 53: Making the work environment conducive/safe for others

Making the environment safer and/or conducive for others is also a way through which participants deal with workplace stress. Participants shared, "to be supportive and uplifting of the assistant…" and "…trying to do everything you can of course to make sure that they don't get worse…"

Code 54: Conversing with God

A few participants pointed that they like to have *conversations with God* in order to reduce the stressful situation. They expressed, "…just a talk to my Lord," "God will speak to me," "start talking to God when you are praying to Jesus…"and "I felt like God talked to me…."

Code 55: Meditation

A few participants also *meditate* to deal effectively with stress. One noted, "reflective thinking and you know just sort of not really breathing exercises but that sort of thing too…" A few participants pointed out that meditation is one of the ways through which they cope with workplace stress. They explained, "…I often time meditate..." and "…meditation…" The code of meditation once again appeared as a way to cope up with stress. Participants pointed out that in many a situations God is in control. They stated, "that it's in God's hands…" and "God's Holy spirit to have His way…"

Code 56: Seeking help from others

Seeking help from others, especially close relationships, also helps participants. They shared, "[I] relied heavily on my husband…" and "leaning on your support staff around you…"

Code 57: Connecting with God

The participants reflected that *connecting with God* is an important aspect of them dealing with workplace stress. One expressed, "…I love walking with the Lord and experiencing his presence…"

Code 58: Trusting God

Trusting God with situations and current circumstances also helps participants deal with stress One expressed, "...we are in God's hands…" and another shared, "God has already taken care of the situation…"

Code 59: Following/Implementing Christian Beliefs

Following/implementing Christian beliefs is another way in which participants cope with workplace stress. One described, "…practice some of my core beliefs…"

Code 60: Being answerable to God

The belief that one is *answerable to God* plays an important role in coping with stress. One stated, "…I have a manager in the sky you know that I have to answer to as well"

Code 61: Feeling presence of God

Participants described that in many a situations, *feeling the presence of God* helps give them strength to cope with stress. They expressed, "…He works through people…God was there…," "…Jesus listens to me and answers my prayers…," "…is to rely on God…," "…God let me know…," "...that He is taking care of you…," "I felt like God talked to me…was very spiritual uh moment that I had at work," and "…God is there.."

Code 62: Giving control to God

Giving control to God or acknowledging that an individual cannot always control situations and people, also helps participants cope with stress. They shared, "…the whole situation was really in God's hands," "...just realize I only have so much control…," and "…a submission to how your thoughts should be and a submission of how your response should be…," "…that He is in control…"

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Evidence of Trustworthiness

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As noted previously in the methods section of Chapter 3, quality research involves validation strategies. According to Creswell (2007), issues such as credibility, transferability, dependability, confirmability, reflexivity, and intra- and intercoder reliability are important and help solidify accuracy in documentation of the study. The purpose of phenomenological qualitative research is to gain a greater understanding of the phenomenon. In this present study, understanding emerged through learning about Christian adult participants' personal experiences engaging in spiritual and religious coping in the workplace.

Credibility

The participant is the only legitimate one who can judge the results. Thus, one of the best ways to establish credibility is to have participants check the data for accuracy. Participants were given a transcript of the interview to review for accuracy of experience and thought. Participants were invited to edit or clarify any of their responses when reviewing their transcript. This is also known as member checking and is regarded as the most significant method to verify credibility, according to Creswell (2007). This study also addressed credibility through saturation of data. Member checking resulted in confirming the capture of the essence of each participant's voice.

Transferability

Transferability refers to the degree to which results can transfer to other populations or settings (Tromisch, 2000). I addressed transferability through purposeful sampling and through descriptive documentation of the population and setting.

Dependability

Reliability in quantitative research is referred to as dependability in qualitative research. This study established dependability using audio video interviews. I reviewed these professionally transcribed audio videos in conjunction with detailed field notes of each interview numerous times to maintain accuracy.

Confirmability

Confirmability is the degree to which the results can be confirmed by others (Morse, Barrett, Mayan, Olson, & Spiers, 2002). This was easily established by documenting the procedures for checking and rechecking the data. Participants were given a transcript of the interview to review for accuracy of experience and thought. They were also invited to edit or clarify any of their responses when reviewing their transcript.

Reflexivity

Reflexivity, according to Creswell (2007), addresses the awareness of the researcher of their biases. It is important for researchers to be conscious of the experiences they bring to a study; in this case, I share a similar background and culture with the participants. Bracketing allows one to "table" personal views and experiences, and see the information gained through the study as new material to be studied.

Inter- and Intracoder Reliability

Researchers accomplish intercoder reliability when two or more coders code the themes similar to the level of a predetermined threshold (i.e., 90% of the time multiple coders code a particular response the same way). Intracoder reliability means only one person was coding. I intracoded in a systematic manner to ensure all coding was consistent by categorizing codes in a database and assigning them numbers and linking them to their respective participants. This system allowed me to search and track codes in a uniformed and efficient fashion. (Creswell, 2007; Van den Hoonaard, 2008).

Study Results

The 62 codes translated into 11 thematic findings to answer the research questions. Three themes focused on spiritual, behavioral, and psychological coping approaches regarding workplace stress. Behavioral coping necessitates constant dedication to change or the adjustment of daily practices to manage stress effectively. Spiritual coping, on the other hand, encompasses reliance on divine power to overcome workplace stress. The theme of psychological coping necessitates a positive mindset and talking about stress or the stressors with others.

Two thematic findings describe job-specific elements and conflictive interpersonal interactions as sources of workplace stress. Job-specific elements include aspects related to job duties that induced stress, such as workload, underlying deadlines for task completion, and availability of resources to undertake different duties. Conversely, conflictive interpersonal associations include the nature of both vertical and horizontal communication and personality traits of different people, including extroverts, self-centered individuals, and role models. The theme of conflictive interpersonal interaction was further divided into two sub-themes: co-worker and client interactions.

Another three thematic findings focused on personal, social, and religious demographic factors affecting workplace experiences. Personal factors encompassed an individual's perception about work and colleagues. It also covered management of cognitive biases. Social factors include social construction and societal expectations regarding what work entails. Lastly, religious demographic factors denoted how dependence on divine powers affect people's perceptions and reactions toward different stressful situations.

Furthermore, two thematic findings described psychological and social benefits faith has in coping with workplace stress. The final thematic outcome explored religious activities that help in managing workplace stress. Engagement in religion-focused duties played a remarkable role in helping the fight against workplace stress. The table below offers an overview about the themes for this research.

Research Questions	Themes/Practices
1. How do Christian Employees Describe Their Lived Experiences with Coping with Workplace Stress?	Job specific stressors Conflictive interpersonal relationship stressors Personal factors Social factors Religious factors Spiritual coping Behavioral coping Psychological coping Combination of strategies
2. How do Christian employees describe how their faith is related to coping with stress at work?	Spiritual coping Psychological coping Psychological Benefits Social Benefits

3. What faith practices do Christian employees report using to cope with stress at work?	Religious Activities that Help Manage Stress
	        Spiritual practices (i.e., praying)
	        Religious faith-related practices (i.e., attending religious services.)
	        A combination of both (i.e., inner life connection).

Each theme and practice are discussed according to which research questions it addresses below. The main objective of the discussion is to answer the original three research questions using the themes that arose from participant responses.

Research Question 1: How do Christian Employees Describe Their Lived Experiences with Coping with Workplace Stress?

Participants described their experiences in three parts. They explained sources of stress in the workplace, demographic factors that affect their workplace experiences, and they gave coping strategies for how they deal with workplace stress. Thus, a total of nine themes emerged to answer the first research question. When participant described sources of stress, the themes of (1) job-specific stressors and (2) conflictive interpersonal relationship stressors emerged. When participants described demographic factors that affect them in the workplace, three themes emerged: (3) personal, (4) social, and (5) religious factors. When participants described their lived experiences with coping with workplace stress, themes that emerged centered on (6) spiritual, (7) behavioral, (8) psychological, and (9) a combination of strategies to managing stress. All themes are illustrated below.

Two themes emerged from the interviews to describe the nature of the workplace stressors participants experienced: job specific and conflictive interpersonal relationship stressors. Additionally, two subthemes emerged from the conflictive interpersonal relationship theme: conflict with coworkers and conflict with clients. Nine participants (75%) described job specific elements as examples of workplace stress and 25% described conflictive interpersonal relationships. Within the two subthemes of conflictive interpersonal relationships, 17% described conflicts with coworkers and 8% described conflicts with clients.

Job Specific

Job specific stressors are causes of stress that emerge directly from the work an individual has to complete for their job. Among those who described job specific stressors, Participant 2 mentioned, undergoing reaccreditation. The participant shared, "Actually, the reaccreditation for our medical assisting program at San Jacinto College – North started in May of 2020, and it's a one-year process of turning in massive paperwork, self-studies, files and so…that was a tremendous stress."

Similarly, Participant 5 shared, "Yes, well I run my own practice and own my own business, and I was also working on my doctorate fulltime, so I had to do a lot of time management skills to make sure that I was able to provide the best patient care to my patients." Participant 6 stated, "When my workload is overloading, like it's beyond my normal amount of work…Normally, I have 30 or more patients. So, on our Day of Service, we literally have last minute add-on patients, and I could have my normal day plus 15 additional patients that day…and just to deal with that like I say, I still have to make sure that mentally I am in a good space because if I'm not then my work is not going to [get] done effectively."

Participant 7 expressed "well, for example, this patient I just met, that I mentioned…was very apprehensive and I'm about to do some dental work. I can see that she's had other teeth extracted, a lot of dental work that she has admitted she has gone through some real pain…I was just praying beforehand when we were preparing to do the procedures that God would give me the skill, that he would give me the intelligence…that my training would come into play and that I could just basically treat the patient as painlessly and completely [as] possible."

Participant 8 shared, "I'm at a point in my professional career where I have multiple bosses from different divisions within the same organization. So, there are a lot of competing interests and time management is an absolute must…one manager wanted to know how their

investment was increasing operational readiness. So, they were demanding a product right now and I had another director that said, hey, in addition to that I want to know the impact [on] operational readiness if we decrease the budget by X amount of million dollars which decreases our personnel by X amount…"

Participant 9 stated, "I was on night shift [and] there [were] a couple of kids I was taking care of that were pretty sic…in the middle of that you're trying to do everything you can of course to make sure that they don't get worse….they don't have to be sent to the ICU….especially as a new nurse at the time, it was even more stressful because you really don't feel like you know what you're doing at all."

Participant 11 shared, "I was helping at the studio that I work at. I was helping with the group piano class. The teacher needed to get some paperwork done, so I filled in for her and it was my first time working with a group class. They were all quite a little energetic I would say. They were all bouncing off each other's energy. And I was feeling myself starting to get a little anxious because I can't seem to get control here."

Participant 12 expressed, "A lot of times I have a bunch of things to do at one time. I think that's the major stress of my position, that I'm expected to do them all rapidly."

Conflictive Interpersonal Relationships

Conflictive interpersonal relationships are work relationships with either coworkers or clients that are characterized by negative interactions. Among the 25% who described conflictive interpersonal relationships as examples of workplace stress, Participant 1 shared her experience of conflict with a coworker, "a conflict between two coworkers, we [sat] down and [had] a discussion." Participant 3 mentioned, "I remember leaving work one day so stressed out because of an altercation that had happened at the job." Participant 4 expressed, "I had a very toxic co-

worker to the point where I couldn't even stand to be in the same room with her because she was so negative and condescending." Lastly, Participant 10 shared his experience with a client, "I'm dealing with a very rude patient…the patient gives me an insult for no reason."

Demographic Factors Affecting the Workplace Experience

Three subthemes emerged from participants regarding demographic factors affecting the workplace experience: personal [i.e., race, ethnicity, age, education level], social [i.e., cultural differences], and religious factors. Moreover, there was a combination of multiple themes described as well. Twenty-five percent of participants described personal demographic factors only, another 25% described personal and religious factors, 17% described religious factors only, 17% described personal and social factors, 8% described social factors only, and one participant did not respond (8%). Some note that these demographic factors could and sometimes do cause stress, others see them as factors that are positive, while others mention them as though they are just an aspect of their workplace without indicating whether they are positive or negative.

Personal Factors (demographic factors)

Of those that described personal demographic factors affecting their workplace experience, Participant 2 shared, "So, the demographics in the sample I gave you would be [race] African American, my leaders being African American, my employees being Hispanic and Anglo/White. So, I had a big diversity…" Participant 6 expressed, "I will say educational background, not me specifically, but I do notice that those who may not have as much education or further education seem to struggle a bit, just because there's a lot of technical and computer information that you need some type of computer background [to understand]." Participant 8 expressed, "as in the races or ethnic makeup of my organization, I would say we're probably 50% African American, 25% Caucasian, and about 25% of either mixed race, Asian, Hispanic, in

that vein…what I mean by Asian is Pacific islander, more than just Chinese, Vietnamese but a good mixture of Asian culture."

Religious Factors

Another demographic factor that emerged among several participants was how religious affiliation may create stress at work. Participant 11 stated, in the context of stress as an educator in the classroom, "because I am myself a Christian and I know my students are also sometimes, I can use that to kind of tie a connection in terms of whatever I'm teaching." Similarly, Participant 12 shared, "So, I work in a clinic that works with pregnant women and abortion is a huge topic there, which as a Christian I disagree…so it's difficult sometimes."

Participant 4 acknowledged that "Religion being one of them…I am a Christian but I'm not like mainstream religion. I'm a Jehovah's Witness. I have had problems with people when they learn I'm a Witness because they do have preconceived ideas…" Participant 7 expressed, "When I had my own office, I was fortunate enough to have other believers that were already there." Similarly, Participant 10 stated, "…you can be Muslim and have an entirely different point of view… I see everybody as equal." As seen by these statements, several reported religious affiliations as a contributor to stress.

Spiritual Coping

When participants described how they coped with stress at work, several mentioned spiritual coping in their description as a significant theme. Participants often mentioned a variety of ways their faith helped them cope. Several reported depending on divine power to manage workplace stress. This included, but was not limited to prayer, Bible reading and using any workplace opportunity to share God's goodness with colleagues. 8.3% of respondents stated they use this approach in combination with other approaches, specifically changing mindset through

behavioral adjustment to have a stable mindset. For instance, a female respondent confessed she is a devout Catholic who depends on prayers as a vessel for fighting workplace stress. Mrs. D said,

> So right now, it's funny, since the 20th day of July of 2020 I have been under a tremendous amount of stress and with my faith of being Catholic … I'm a devout Catholic … I really depend on prayers… so on 20th July 2020 my mom died, and shortly after in February of 2021, my father committed suicide. My brother just died October 5th, and so when you talk about faith, I really went through three family members dying back-to-back, and I relied so much on my faith. I relied heavily on my husband praying over me, our Catholic church praying over me, and I really had to take that one day at a time. I really felt at one point the Bible verse on Job where just things were just attacking him and all you could do was look up, you know and, you know, family members dying, and I was also under the reaccreditation of my program and I was praying every day to make it work and having a good faith and looking [at] things in a positive way like Job did, and honestly, that's how I deal with stress.

Another respondent also resonated with the same idea, stating that the Lord's joy forms the basis of his strength. He said, **"'The joy of the Lord is my strength,'** the Bible says, and I take that scripture as face value in my life. I love walking with the Lord and experiencing his presence. I make it a habit to feel my day with the joy of the Lord. The Bible says that if one wants joy to leap for it. I remember leaving work one day stressed out and I was so angry because of an altercation that had happened at the job, and as I was talking to my prayer partner, a song came to my mind, and it was I command my body to leap for joy, and I got out of my car at the gas station and began to just leap for joy, because I knew that once I began to leap all my

stress would melt away, and I knew that my God had already taken care of the situation that was making me upset and the next day when I went back to work sure enough it was resolved. As a Christian, one learns to place their life in God's hand and just let go and let God have his way."

Behavioral Coping

In addition to spiritual coping methods, participants also reported using behavioral strategies to cope with stress. This is described as any tactic an individual employs to contain stressful situation or event through action modification. For example, in order to deal with feels of stress one participant physically moved their body. Participant 3 expressed,

> I command my body to leap for joy and I [got] out of my car at the gas station and began to just leap for joy…" Similarly, Participant 11 physically moving away from the situation and shared, "I usually tend to find a way to step back…I will take some time to relax.

Psychological Coping

Furthermore, participants also reported using psychological strategies to cope with stress. One commonly used behavior was mindful introspection. This included examining their own feelings and behaviors to manage emotional and physical reactions to situations in the workplace that may cause stress. A respondent attested to using this approach to avoid disagreements with a toxic colleague. The person described calmly excusing himself for the sake of peace and harnessing his emotions. Mr. Jeremy said,

> What I do when I cope with workplace stress is I usually tend to find a way to step back, take a deep breath. Usually in the form of telling myself, ok breath, breath whenever I'm like in the heat of the moment or whenever I know I'm going to get overwhelmed, and then, if I am outside of the moment so the action, I know is stilling carrying a little bit of

stress with me, I will take some time to start to relax. Usually, I will find something to read. Sometimes I will pray a little bit, or sometimes I will also just start playing whatever I feel like on my piano.

A different respondent confirmed this theme as part of his approach in his discussion of soul searching when managing work and personal issues. Dr. N said, "For me I'm a very religious person so I cope through a lot of prayer, a lot of soul searching, a lot of talking with my husband, and planning one thing at a time."

Moreover, another respondent also affirmed practicing a lifestyle of regular soul searching to keep her life in order and overcome stress. This theme fits the focus of this study since engagement in spiritual matters necessitates introspection as a prerequisite for managing other concerns about life.

Combination of Strategies

Finally, a theme that emerged in participants' discussions of their lived experience with coping with workplace stress is that most used a combination of spiritual, psychological, behavioral, and social strategies to cope. Only one participant (8.3%) described using one coping strategy in isolation; the remaining 91.7% described employing a combination of strategies. Psychological coping was the only strategy employed in isolation. A combination of behavioral and psychological strategies was most commonly employed as exemplified by 25% of participants. Behavioral and spiritual (16.7%) and behavioral, spiritual, and psychological (16.7%) were the second most common combinations.

For example, Participant 4 expressed, "I've created an environment at my job where when I do start getting stressed…I have things that comfort me…I can stop, take a breather, relax." Participant 3 expressed, "I command my body to leap for joy and I [got] out of my car at

the gas station and began to just leap for joy…As a Christian, one learns to place their life in God's hand and just let go and let God have his way."

Likewise, Participant 6 stated, "A lot of times it's me just stepping away from whatever the stressor is…say a quick prayer…That's what I do.**"** Participant 2 shared, "I really depend on prayers…I relied heavily on my husband praying over me…it way praying every day to make it work…looking [at] things in a positive way." Similarly, Participant 12 expressed, "I am a very prayerful person…I take a deep breath and I say a prayer…and let it go after that and just approach life, as it could always be worse."

Furthermore, Participant 1 described employing a combination of behavioral, social, and spiritual strategies as she revealed, "I will either go running…I'll have a discussion with…I'll pray with them." Participant 5 shared, "I cope through a lot of prayer, a lot of soul searching, a lot of talking with my husband and planning one thing at a time."

Research Question 2: How do Christian employees describe how their faith is related to coping with stress at work?

Of the themes, spiritual and psychological coping emerged as larger themes to describe how participants' faith is related to coping with stress at work. More specifically, four subthemes emerged to answer the second research question: resolute identity, spiritual connection, powerlessness in individual abilities, and intensity (high and low). Themes that emerged from participants in response to this question were discussed as benefits that one's faith offers in helping to cope with workplace stress as well. All participants responded in the affirmative that faith help when coping with workplace stress. Significant topical subthemes include resolute identity, spiritual connection, and powerlessness in individual abilities. Additionally, subthemes emerged related to the intensity with which participants responded affirmatively. Two levels of

intensities were discovered, where intensity denotes either the level of affirmation or the frequency of engagement with religious undertaking to manage workplace stress. These levels were high (e.g., absolutely, all day, every day), and low intensity (e.g., yes, every week). Fifty-eight percent of participants responded with high intensity, and 25% with low intensities. These themes and the subthemes they include are listed in Table 3. Moreover, similar to Research Questions 1, participants described using a combination of strategies to cope with workplace stress.

Spiritual Coping

Resolute Identity

The first subtheme that emerged as participants described their lived experience of

	Spiritual Coping	Psychological Coping	Benefits
1	Resolute Identity	Powerlessness in individual ability	Psychological Benefits
2	Spiritual Connection	Intensity (High and Low)	Spiritual Benefits

spiritual coping with workplace stress, is resolute identity. It denotes a steadfast desire to discover oneself. Several participants demonstrated this theme through their interviews in that they described identifying strongly with their faith. A Catholic respondent said, "I'm Catholic so I'm very faithful in my religion and um I go to church as often as I could and definitely every week, but sometimes I think during this time I went maybe twice a week and we went and lit candles and Catholics are very big on lighting candles especially when we're undergoing a special maybe a health um and really deciding whether I needed to take FMLA or not." This affirmation demonstrates that religious affiliation is a remarkable tool that helps to develop a

positive mindset to manage and fight stress. Secondly, a different respondent attested to spending most of his days from Monday to Friday talking with God. This firm determination and consistency in prayers affirm a resolute identity through devotion. This interaction is useful for insights to fighting stress. A resolute identity was observed in a respondent who attested that his faith plays a role in various undertakings, including suggesting most the appropriate responses to curb stress. In this regard, the resolute identity demonstrates a relentless determination to improve wellbeing. The context here is spiritual incorporation in the fight against stress.

Spiritual Connection

Spiritual connection refers to the capacity to intuitively comprehend something that affects the human soul and make life meaningful. It is another significant subtheme that emerged in interviews and denoted a connection to God that brings peace due to His sovereignty and presence. Participants who revealed this theme described how their belief in God and submitting to His guidance helped during stressful low moments. A female respondent attested that faith guarantees peace, knowing a divine being watches over her actions and would never allow stress to have a heavy toll on her. Mrs. K states, "It's a sense of peace. It's as you know that you know you have someone that's over you that's looking you know that's taking care of you. I know that I'm in God's hands so I know that He's not going to put more on me than I can handle. So, yes, I may be a little stressed by work but that's not more than I can handle because if it was God wouldn't allow me allow it to happen to me." This statement implies that God sets limits for people's problems. In this regard, people never suffer beyond what they can handle.

A different respondent held a similar view, holding that God gives him fortitude and patience to get through different days. Mr. J says, "From the spiritual aspect I would say that I do

try prior to the shift do some praying just kind of be in connection with God for a bit before I actually enter and that helps give me peace."

Powerlessness in Individual Abilities

The subtheme of powerlessness in individual abilities refers to the helpless human nature without God's intervention in daily undertakings. Participants mentally recognized this which helped them cope with stress in the workplace. This theme emerged when participants described their lived experience with coping and referred to a belief that no one can succeed with only their individual abilities. Generally, we are social beings who depend on support from others to succeed in our daily undertakings. This theme helped to answer the second research question by reaffirming the need for voluntary and total submission to God and interdependence on others. Responses confirm how human beings lack the capacity to fight stress through individual means alone. Religious affiliation is a constant reminder that we are neither on our own nor for this world. For example, one participant expressed "Because walking by faith is a minute by minute sometimes it can be a minute-by-minute submission to Christ … a submission to how your thoughts should be and a submission of how your response should be to people".

High Intensity

High intensity describes a strong positive affirmation or a high frequency of engagement with faith-based practices to cope with workplace stress. Among those that responded with a high intensity affirmative answer, Participant 1 shared, "Absolutely…because walking by faith is a minute-by-minute submission to Christ." Similarly, Participant 3 expressed, "My faith plays a major role in my daily life, especially at work where I spend most of my time Monday through Friday." In a similar vein, Participant 4 expressed, "Absolutely…I know when I'm having a hard

time with things, I like to think… on certain Bible characters or stories in the Bible to help me focus on my job." Moreover, Participant 5 shared, "Yes, my faith plays a role really in everything I do. I feel like I've really started my own practice and made faith the center of what I do every day. Without God in my life, I couldn't provide the services I do at the level that I do." Participant 6 stated, "Most definitely. I feel if you don't have God to look up to or look forward to give you that beacon of light that even though I may be dealing with stress right now that there is good at the end of it." Participant 8 responded, "Yes, absolutely. I would say that my faith probably plays the largest role." Participant 9 expressed, "Yeah, definitely. I find that you now especially when you have situations where it feels hopeless." Participant 12 shared, "Absolutely, no question asked there. I know that with God's help, I'm able to do certain things."

Psychological Benefits Only

This theme emerged as beneficial psychological effects of engaging in religious coping. Psychological benefits denote how faith transforms individual feelings**.** Among participants that described psychological benefits only, Participant 2 shared, "I really enjoy being Catholic. We were brought up Catholic. My parents were Catholic, and I think that even as I entered adulthood where I could make my own decision, I kept the faith. I enjoy being Catholic." Participant 3 expressed, "In the presence of the Lord there is joy, that is exactly what it is like for me when one walks and talks with God daily, one stays in peace…" Similarly, Participant 4 stated "Sometimes it's calming and comforting. Other times it's exhausting…I was raised a Jehovah's Witness; it is a very traditional or conservative lifestyle." Participant 7 related, "It helps relieve the stress. So, there [has] just been a long history [of] being able to look back and know God was there. Let me know the next time God's going to show up and I can be less stressed."

Spiritual Benefits Only

Spiritual benefits encompass the impact of faith in edifying a Christian's soul to connect with God. The one participant (#5) that described spiritual benefits only shared, "I'm always doing my daily prayers. And I feel like it gets me grounded before I start seeing patients because I have patients with a broad variety of disorders that require all of my energy all the time. So, I think that God gives me a lot of patience and fortitude to get through my day."

Spiritual and Psychological Benefits

This combines the definition of psychological and spiritual benefits discussed earlier. Of those that described a combination of spiritual and psychological benefits, Participant 6 shared, "It's a sense of peace. It's as you know that you know you have someone that's over you, that's taking care of you. I know I'm in God's hands, so I know that He's not going to put more on me than I can handle. So, yes, I may be a little stressed by work, but that's not more than I can handle, if it was, God wouldn't allow it to happen to me." Another participant related, "I think it's just having that trust in God that you know even that things don't go well at work that He's in control. And that nothing that has happened even at work, He didn't see it coming….so that's a comfort to me." Participant 10 expressed, "I guess the easiest way I can put it is when someone is meditating and really focused on just one thing and that is yourself and everything around you is just clouded. And there's nothing else but you and there's just this huge presence that you experience when you start talking to God and when you're praying to Jesus. It gets very emotional."

Research Question 3: What faith practices do Christian employees report using to cope with stress at work?

Spiritual, psychological, behavioral, social, and religious faith-related practices emerged as ways of coping with workplace stress. As detailed in previous questions, participants described relying on single and a combination of faith-related practices to deal with workplace stress.

Spiritual practices were described by 33% of participants and psychological practices were described by 8%. Of those that described spiritual practices only, Participant 3 expressed, "prayer, praise, and binding and loosing. Where one binds the strong man in the place and loses God's Holy Spirit to have his way." Participant 7 described psychological practices as exemplified in his response, "I often meditate, or I have time every day to just kind of assess where I am." Participant 10 shared, "Praying and singing. They're the two big ones." Participant 11 agreed. "…the biggest one would be prayer. Whenever I carry stress at home, I will often pray just to have peace, and release my stress. Other practices include singing as part of worship and being close to the music. Being able to sing is also a very big stress reliever."

Individual Coping Practices

A significant theme that emerged to answer this research question is that participants reported a individual spiritual coping practices. For example, participant 8 described relying on a combination of social and spiritual practices when he stated, "I would say the biggest one is probably prayer. Prayer without ceasing obviously. We know the prayer of a righteous man avail[s] much and I'll be the first one to tell you that I'm not righteous, but I have a God that is righteous, and His righteousness is imputed to me, so prayer works. And as awkward as it is sometimes, and as much as it can put you in a precarious situation, I try to take the opportunity

as much as possible to pray with my co-workers. I find that praying corporately with the people you work with has a dramatic effect on the workplace."

Also, Participant 1 shared a combination of spiritual coping practices with prayer, praise music, and gratitude being among the strategies used. This participant shared,

I would say a prayer. Almost every day, we start our clinic with praise music. They know the songs and so that's part of our culture and praise and worship start the mood for the day. And so that's a lot of it, the mindset, praising and being grateful. So, mindset, you know whatever things are good, pure, right, and holy and of good report, think on these things. We have a better outlook with coping.

A combination of behavioral, psychological, and spiritual practices was also described by Participant 2. She related,

I go to church a lot. And we talk to the priest. We light candles. We say the Rosaries. Rosaries are a really big thing too in the Catholic [faith]. And it's really constantly hearing the Word because Satan loves to get you out of that Word. As soon as there's a slip as long as that faith is going down you can have so many things just enter your mind that you're not going to do good, you know that the reaccreditation is not going to succeed, and you're going to let your college down, and so it was that having to tell myself every day I'm going to get through this, 'get me through this good Lord, you say if I prayed to you to give me the strength to get up in the morning and continue the day.' …To continue being positive…talking to my husband, praying together as a husband and wife…

Essential aspects integral to Christian-based coping were fundamental to the participants' lives. The faith practices that were most reported as helping participants cope with workplace stress were prayer, Bible reading, church attendance, and inner-life connection.

Prayer

In Christian spiritual coping, prayer has been singled out as an effective method to deal with occupational stress and burnout (Chirico et al., 2019). Generally, it draws people closer to God, in the same way, constant communication with acquaintances graduates them into friends and family. Most of the participants mentioned prayer as the main force behind their coping with stress. Prayers are vital to alleviate negative emotions and enhance the individual's psychological wellness. Five of the participants confirmed their perception of stress was derived directly from their faith. This involved practicing prayer to help with relaxation and resilience at work. For instance, one participant reported; "A prayer a day you know to you know my God you know. I pray to Him every morning … first things first. I tell I ask Him for forgiveness for any sins that I've caused, and I repent for those sins and I go off praying." Secondly, Mrs. D affirmed she is a devout Catholic and faithful to her religion because faith unites her with God. Thirdly, Mr. R affirmed that faith plays a great role in the workplace. He spent most days of the week speaking to God and seeking His wise counsel on the best decisions to make in different situations. Lastly, Mrs. KC confessed that faith helps manage stress and maintain a positive outlook on life.

Bible Reading

The Bible acts as a source of truth, spiritual guidance, and encouragement to Christians. Besides, Christians believe that Bible reading applies a reverse concept compared to praying. Prayers enable humanity to speak to God, while through Bible reading, God speaks to us. All of

the participants could hardly answer a question without referring to the Bible in a general context. Participant 4 shared, "read our Bible and meditate on God's word, and pray when you're stressed out. That's something that I do when I do get stressed out. I do have a Bible at work on my desk and I flip through it, and I read my favorite scriptures." Mr. P read 1st Corinthians 10:31 which holds that every undertaking should glorify God to affirm the essence of regular Bible reading for meaningful spiritual insights. Similarly, Ms. C held that Bible characters are her major role models. For instance, she said Hannah exemplified resilience when she stayed calm after her husband married another woman. Therefore, Bible reading should be daily bread in a Christian's life and a constant reminder about God's assistance whenever challenges occur.

Church Attendance

When seen exclusively through the perspective of church attendance, evidence of a transforming religious landscape becomes much more evident. To determine the degree of religiosity, participants were asked how frequently they attended church. Participant 2 shared, "I go to church a lot. And we talk to the priest." Generally, spiritual experiences during church attendance are unique and different from a similar experience in cases of home worship. The COVID-19 pandemic offered the opportunity to weigh the two throughout the lockdown when social gatherings were restricted. Mrs. D asserted that she attends church regularly because it is a place of comfort and relief from life's burden. Similarly, she enjoys attending Catholic conferences because they provide good platforms to connect with others and jointly praise God.

Inner Life Connection

The theme of inner life connection is equally evident, where respondents affirms that affiliation to a religious group guarantees intrinsic motivation that any stressful event is manageable. For instance, Christian respondents who use the Bible as a source of inspiration

gain from the experiences of the people mentioned who were stressed and relied on God to improve their wellbeing. The success of this theme depends on a personal decision to connect with God through regular prayers and Bible study sessions. Such moments enable people to present their requests to God and seek His face. For instance, Miss P state that she manages to fulfill different obligations through God's guidance. She believes that prayers are windows for miracles to flow into a Christian life to see God's mercy. Similarly, Mr. A affirms that he prays every morning. This routine denotes the inner life connection with God to make daily prayers part of his lifestyle. In doing so, prayers become a desired practice rather than duty. The outcome of this practice is letting God lead in every stressful situation. This trust enables God to work miraculously within any challenge in a Christian's life.

Summary

This chapter provided results of this original study that examined the lived experience of spiritual and religious coping in the workplace among Christian adults. The results comprehensively cover participant responses that enhances the credibility of the study.

The three research questions sought to discover how Christian employees describe their lived experience with coping with workplace stress, how Christian employees describe the role of their faith in coping with stress at work, and what faith practices Christian employees report using to cope with stress at work. The study results yielded 66 codes. The codes were based on commonalities in respondent's feedback. Consequently, the codes translated into 12 thematic findings that narrow the results further. Four findings focused on spiritual, behavioral, and psychological coping approaches regarding workplace stress. The overall results indicated that participants described employing behavioral, social, spiritual, and psychological coping strategies in response to workplace stress. Only one (8.3%) described using one coping strategy

in isolation; the remaining 91.7% described employing a combination of methods. Nine participants (75%) described job-specific elements as examples of workplace stressors, and 25% described conflictive interpersonal relationships as a source of workplace stress. Within the two subthemes of conflictive interpersonal relationships, 17% described conflicts with coworkers and 8% with clients. Twenty-five percent of participants described personal demographic factors only, another 25% described personal and religious factors, 17% described religious factors only, 17% related personal and social factors, 8% described social factors only, and one participant did not respond (8%). These results are notably significant.

The study's participants responded in an affirmative way concerning their faith playing a role in helping to cope with stress. However, the study determined two levels of intensities. These levels were high (e.g., absolutely) and low intensity (e.g., yes). The two intensities imply that the study lacked lukewarm responses about moderate coping strategies toward workplace stress. Fifty-eight percent of participants responded with high intensity and 25% low.

Forty-two percent described psychological benefits only, 8% described spiritual benefits only, 25% expressed a combination of spiritual and psychological benefits, and 8% described behavioral, spiritual, and psychological benefits, behavioral and psychological benefits, and social and psychological benefits, respectively.

Participants described relying on single and a combination of faith-related practices to deal with workplace stress. Spiritual practices were expressed by 33% of participants, and psychological approaches were described by 8%. A variety of behavioral and spiritual (17%), social and spiritual (8%), social, spiritual, and psychological (8%), behavioral, social, religious, spiritual, and psychological (8%), behavioral, religious, and spiritual (8%), and religious and spiritual practices (8%) were also described by participants.

The chronology of illustrations in this chapter is as follows. First, I outlined the results of the present study and presented an introduction and a recapitulation of the original research questions. Then, I included the research setting, demographics, data collection, and data analysis, along with trustworthiness issues, in this chapter. This sequence simplifies the transition to the next chapter, describing the study's results in detail. Chapter 5 follows, including an introduction, interpretation of thematic findings, study limitations, recommendations, implications, and conclusions.

CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION

Overview

This qualitative phenomenological study evaluated Christian adults' lived experience of workplace religious and spiritual coping. The study was guided by the functionalism theory that reinforces Christianity's positive influence in assisting people in managing workplace stress. This theory is a conservative backup for underlying social norms. Furthermore, it adds value to social solidarity. This chapter offers a summary and interpretation of the research findings concerning the research questions as follows:

RQ1.   How do Christian employees describe their lived experiences with coping with workplace stress?

RQ2.   How do Christian employees describe how their faith is related to coping with workplace stress?

RQ3.   What faith practices do Christian employees report using to cope with stress at work?

 It begins with integrating the results with knowledge from past studies, then evaluating practice implications, methodological limitations, and future research recommendations.

Summary of Findings

The study results affirmed that spiritual and religious coping help in managing workplace stress among Christians. The stress sources included job nature, conflictive interpersonal associations, personal issues, and religious and social factors. Participant interviews confirmed that people employ diverse stress-coping mechanisms. Interviews generated 62 codes that yielded 11 thematic outcomes. 91.7% of the participant population confessed to utilizing several stress-

relieving methods, while 8.3% held that they use a single tactic to manage stress. The study outcomes are notably informative.

Discussion of Findings

How do Christian Employees Describe Their Lived Experiences with Coping with Workplace Stress?

Workplace Stressors

The two themes of job-specific factors and conflictive interpersonal relationships that emerged as sources of workplace stress are not unique to Christian employees. Decades of research findings suggest they are ubiquitous throughout the workplace. Researchers have documented job-specific stressors such as unrealistic demands, lack of support, poor communication, lack of appreciation, conflicting roles, low decision attitude, and effort-reward imbalance as common sources of workplace stress (Bhui et al. 2016). Participants in this current study expressed similar stressors, especially related to unrealistic demands. Participant #6 response best summarizes the underlying tone regarding job-specific stressors; "[for me, it's] when my workload is over[bearing]. In a similar vein, researchers have documented that conflictive interpersonal relationships in the workplace are a common phenomenon. In fact, it has been argued that interpersonal conflict is more health-damaging than any other form of stress (Almeida, 2005). To give context to the urgency of recognizing and addressing this issue, the Journal of Occupational Health Psychology summoned a special issue calling for research to prevent interpersonal stressors in the workplace (Grandey et al, 2022). Various types of interpersonal workplace stressors, such as incivility, chronic conflict, bullying abuse, and aggression, are well documented in the literature (Chen & Spector, 1992; Hershcovis, 2011).

Furthermore, experts have documented that such workplace stress stems from multiple sources (i.e., supervisors, team members, and clients/the public). The findings from this current study confirm the latter consensus as the two subthemes of co-worker and client-derived sources of interpersonal stressors emerged during the interviews: "I remember leaving work one day so stressed out because of an altercation that had happened at the job [#3]"; "I'm dealing with a very rude patient…the patient insults me for no reason [#10]".

In addition to job-specific and conflictive relationships, two demographic factors emerged as sources of workplace stress as well. Personal (race/ethnicity and educational level) and religious differences were the two subthemes communicated by participants. Race/ethnic-related stressors in the workplace are commonplace and are well documented in the literature. On-the-job microaggressions such as avoiding eye contact when communicating, being ignored in conversation, and being excluded from work-related leisure activities (Alleyne, 2004); as well as general, off-of-the-job racial discrimination contribute to stress in the workplace (Wadsworth et al., 2007). These microaggressions are not contained to any specific job setting, but rather widespread in academia, medicine, and myriad other professional settings (Decuir et al., 2020; Butler et al., 2023; Li, 2020). In this current study, experiences of blatant racial macroaggression were revealed: "she told me…the manager is never going to make you full-time because you're not the right skin color. I was dumbfounded [#4]".

In addition to race/ethnicity-related stressors, co-workers' level of education, skills, and ability surfaced as a source of workplace stress as well.

> "I will say educational background, not me specifically, but I do notice that those who may not have as much education or further education seem to struggle a bit, just because

there's a lot of technical and computer information that you need some type of computer

background [to understand] [#8].

Not surprisingly, this subtheme of education, skills/ability, and job demands mismatch as

a source of workplace stress is common. Researchers have discovered that such a mismatch is

stressful for the worker (Lunau et al., 2015) as well as co-workers that are directly and indirectly

involved with the work being produced (Stansfeld & Candy, 2006). The World Health

Organization (2020) warned the most stressful type of work is that in which there is an

imbalance between a worker's skill level and the demands their position requires of them;

attributing such stress to the little-to-no opportunity to exercise control over the work

environment. In addition to being a workplace stressor, experts have discovered that this leads to

burnout, impaired performance, decreased engagement, and lower levels of well-being overall

(Schaufeli & Taris, 2014).

Religious factors that emerged as a subtheme of demographic stressors in the workplace

were related to personal convictions interfering with job-specific duties. This subtheme is best

summed up as: "So, I work in a clinic that works with pregnant women and abortion is a huge

topic there, which as a Christian I disagree…so it's difficult sometimes. [#12]". A relatively

recent systematic review highlighted how incongruous religious and occupational identities can

have deleterious consequences on the worker and organization (Héliot et al., 2019). These

researchers emphasized three variables that connect religious and occupation identity: a)

personal preference, b) fit between religious identity and job-related concerns, and c) the

organization's policies, practices, and expectations. In short, this subtheme confirms what extant

literature posits on the issue of religious and occupational identity and how such incongruency

can indeed be a stressor. Importantly, the research team (Héliot et al., 2019) suggested that

tailored religious accommodations are made available to workers with religious interfering personal convictions.

How do Christian employees describe how their faith is related to coping with stress at work?

Spiritual and Psychological Coping Strategies

The two general coping strategies (spiritual and psychological) and their subthemes (resolute identity, spiritual connections, and perceived powerlessness in individual ability) that emerged in this study are quite commonly used in the workplace among Christians (Roberts & Hess-Hernandez, 2018). Some researchers label this set of coping strategies spiritual intelligence (Emmons, 2000) and have further conceptualized and detailed the use of such intelligence in the workplace (Roberts, 2016). This framework has been aptly named Christian Workplace Spiritual Intelligence (Roberts, 2016) and is hypothesized to positively contribute to desirable employee attitudes, behaviors, and the use of adaptive strategies to cope with workplace stress. Specifically, Christian workplace spiritual intelligence is believed to be demonstrated through five elements: a) experiencing the presence of God in daily work-related activities, b) maintaining an overall life orientation that is in line with their perception of the will of God, c) relying on a love-based altruistic motivational system, d) God-honoring type of work behaviors, and e) applying moral/ethical standards in the workplace to solve problems and assess motives, behaviors and related outcomes. In short, experts posit that for true spiritual-based coping to happen one must integrate their spiritual beliefs, values, and practices into their everyday dealings, including the workplace (Roberts, 2016) and have been linked to favorable workplace outcomes such as organizational commitment (Bell-Ellis et al., 2013; Kinjerski, 2013; Markow & Klenke, 2005), job satisfaction (Kinjerski, 2013); employee retention (Bell-Ellis et al., 2013)

and leadership attributes (Lynton & Thøgersen, 2009). Such integration is best summarized by one of the participants in this current study:

> "It's a sense of peace. It's as you know that you know you have someone that's over you that's looking you know that's taking care of you. I know that I'm in God's hands so I know that He's not going to put more on me than I can handle. So, yes, I may be a little stressed by work but that's not more than I can handle because if it was God wouldn't allow me to allow it to happen to me."

Spiritual Exercises Used to Cope with Workplace Stress

Prayer, bible reading, and attending religious services (in-person and via broadcasting platforms) emerged as the three specific exercises employed to cope with workplace stress in this current study. These exercises are considered staple commodities for Christians and are valuable tools employed in and out of the workplace to cope with stress. Experts in the field have labeled these exercises positive religious coping tools (Pargament et al., 1998) and they have been associated with intrapersonal and organizational benefits. On the intrapersonal level, six types of prayer have been differentially linked to subjective well-being. Prayers of adoration, thanksgiving, and reception are associated with higher levels of self-esteem, optimism, meaning, and satisfaction with life (Whittington & Scher, 2010). However, prayers of confession, supplication, and obligation (i.e., prescriptive, and scheduled rosary prayers) are linked to decrements in self-esteem, optimism, and other areas of subjective well-being (Whittington & Scher, 2010). The former types of prayers were expressed by participants in this current study. On an organizational level, employees have expressed perceived benefits of corporate prayer in areas of teamwork, relationships with colleagues, and setting a tone of tranquility in the workplace (Vasconcelos, 2010). Similarly, bible reading and religious service attendance have

consistently been linked to higher levels of subjective well-being among Christians (Lim, 2016)

and are believed to overlap with prayer. One possible explanation as to how these specific coping

behaviors translate into adaptive coping in the workplace can be understood through the lens of

the broaden-and-build theory of positive emotions (Fredrickson, 2004).

Succinctly, religious and spiritual coping behaviors (prayer, bible reading, religious service

attendance) fosters positive emotions (love, joy, gratitude, contentment) that are compatible with

the Christian faith. These emotions enhance (broaden) the likelihood of engaging in future

adaptive thoughts and behaviors and allow one to build healthy interpersonal relationships and

manage (cope with) their environments. Thus, a cycle of employing coping behaviors,

experiencing positive emotions, building/maintaining healthy relationships, and effectively

coping with workplace stress is a plausible explanation as to how the three spiritual exercises are

generalized and employed in the workplace.

Study's Contribution to Understanding of Underlying Constructs

This study confirms the essence of the three constructs of church attendance, prayers, and

specific scriptures in a Christian's life. Mrs. D, a devout Catholic, affirmed that regular prayers

and communal worship helped her overcome family-based and work-related stress. This

revelation implies that Christians should normalize integrating faith-based solutions to daily

challenges since God uses prayer as an invitation to change life circumstances. The 11 thematic

findings from the study's 62 codes revolve around the three constructs and enable a

comprehensive response to the three study questions. The fact that 91.7% of respondents

expressed utilizing multiple strategies to manage stress is significant. It confirms the need for

Christian persistence in prayers when grappling with life's crucibles. Jesus Christ, the author and

finisher of our faith faced this world's challenges in human nature to set the perfect example we should follow. He prayed, read scriptures, and attended synagogues to encourage people to persevere in the faith. A Christian grappling with stress occupies the same crucible as Christ, who instills the spirit of perseverance. Intrinsic religious affiliation is a prerequisite that makes prayers a helpful weapon in high and low moments. Christianity discourages lukewarmness, a faith-based name that lacks underlying actions. The Christian responses to the severity of stress affirm how the principle of lukewarmness is deeply rooted in their minds. The participants responded to stress severity in two dimensions high and low pressure. The average stress response is never featured since it cannot be quantified.

The Study's Fitting into the Biblical Foundations

This study's Biblical foundations in chapter two encompassed Christians' views about work, stress, the essence of prayers, and scripture reading. The Bible is typically God's primary method of communication with Christians. Bible reading is the first approach God uses to communicate with us. Prayers are reciprocal and enable us to communicate with God as He answers according to His will. The Bible encourages a positive outlook on anything happening in life. The participant responses affirm this statement where Christian believers strive for positive solutions to stress. This determination implies turning away from any negativity that drains personal energy.

Christians perceive work as part of God's commandments in Exodus chapter 20. The fourth commandment that touches on the Sabbath also adds that humans should labor for six days and rest on the Sabbath day. The practice of Bible reading among Christians triggers total submission to His will and guidance. In this regard, Christians believe that stress is part of God's

will in their lives; if it were not, He could constantly prevent it from happening. However, this statement does not imply that God deliberately allows His creatures to suffer stress. He is our loving father and will enable us to go through various challenges for our good. One of the benefits is the accumulation of experience when undergoing stress, which becomes useful when counseling others who feel hopeless amidst infirmities. The experience also strengthens character and makes people role models to others. The other benefit is to acknowledge God's existence. Christians believe anyone who enjoys a smooth life should perform a self-assessment to gauge whether they are of the faith. Challenges are vital to test the degree of a Christian's dedication toward achieving a Christ-like character. The other essence of Bible reading from the responses is that it divides attention. This division yields positive outcomes since people give little thought to underlying stressors and instead gain a deeper understanding of their Bibles. This approach helps to defeat Satan, who enjoys it when people, including Christians and members of other denominations, complain about life's challenges. The responses confirm that faithful Bible reading helps to cope with workplace stress. This practice should be a daily routine to enhance the internalization of the different verses and understanding of the context and languages of the Bible writers.

This study's takeaway is that religious affiliation and participation is a remarkable aspect of a Christian's life. It leads to managing stress positively and seeking God's direction to make informed choices. Generally, God's power manifests in our weaknesses, and He never forsakes us. Christians should double their prayer habits when struggling with stress. Faith-based coping is an act of worship and humble submission to God. He is the provider of all types of work and seeking Him during stressful moments at work also enables us to worship.

Furthermore, faith-based coping constantly reminds Christians of God's existence. Work can consume too much of an individual's time to the extent of abandoning communal worship during weekends for other work-related engagements. The recurring thoughts about God when attempting to manage stress allow Him the opportunity to send the Holy Spirit that convicts sinful men and women. Doing so draws them to repentance and accepts Jesus as a personal savior.

Implications

The study findings carry significant implications. Religion and spirituality are substantial players in the lives of Christian employees and how they handle stress. Prayers and meditation are critical activities for coping with stress. The findings supported past studies and highlighted other ways Christians exhibit faith in the Almighty God. As such, they can be used to support the public expression of one's faith in workplaces without fear of discrimination. This move would enable employers to give time off to staff to allow them to participate in religious activities that clash with their workdays once in a while.

Additionally, it will create room for respecting people's days of worship without the stress of firing due to absenteeism. In doing so, the Seventh-Day Adventist faithful would always be free from work every Saturday as the Catholics break on Sundays to attend masses. This mode of operation guarantees smooth working in shifts that reduce the chances of stress and burnout that take a toll on the health and well-being of people.

The findings challenge scientists to investigate the complex role of spirituality and religion in helping Christians cope with different stressful circumstances, their careers, and personal development. This focus would change their biased views against religion. Most

scientific studies downplay the importance of religion in human lives and instead rely on nature to explain various phenomena. Therefore, this focus would change the status quo given the evidence-based outcomes of the phenomenological study.

Psychology professional bodies can aid practitioners in embracing a proactive stand against occupational strain and stress. The associations may, for instance, sponsor workshops focusing on the relevance of faith in God to manage workplace stress. Additionally, the associations could encourage members to participate in professional support bodies and peer consultations. Such initiatives offer opportunities for case consultation, information sharing, problem-solving, peer support concerning workplace stressors, and effective stress management. Prayers, meditation, church attendance, and Bible reading emerged as critical support. Counselors should evaluate the essence of these factors in clients' coping and devise tactics for culturally appropriate intervention implementation. The participants placed great value on religious and spiritual matters. Positive religious coping emerged as an inevitable indicator of depressive affect. In this regard, culturally sensitive counseling necessitates that counselors appreciate and respect clients' spiritual and religious values and beliefs.

Limitations

Because of methodological limitations, caution is critical during the interpretation or generalization of study outcomes. Firstly, the study's sample is exclusive to the workforce. This single-line focus may not be transferable to other settings, thus limiting external validity. Secondly, the study's concentration on Christians limits the applicability of outcomes to those of other religious affiliations. People from different religions cannot integrate the findings into their daily practices because of their irrelevance in their cases. This limitation also overlooked the

possible differences among Christian subgroups, including but not limited to Catholics, SDAs, and Jehovah's Witnesses. Furthermore, the study's qualitative phenomenological design is time-consuming and prone to participant discontinuation.

Moreover, some participants gave inconsistent results that triggered challenges during the analysis and made it more difficult to draw valid conclusions. Another study limitation is sample bias since research participation is voluntary. Lastly, data saturation from common participant questions triggered the challenge of formulating common themes to narrow down responses.

Recommendations for Future Research

The essence of spiritual and religious coping necessitates further focus during studies involving Christian workers. The magnitude of workplace stress and depressive affect were not extremely severe among most participants. Religion is a great coping tactic during overwhelming circumstances and works where non-religious tactics fail. In this regard, it would be helpful for future researchers to scrutinize the significant and interactive impacts of religious coping during various situations, such as illnesses, occupation-based injuries, and rehabilitation processes. This extensive focus would consider everything that affects the well-being of people at the workplace and trigger recommendations about the essence of faith-based practices as coping approaches to improve affective commitment to one's workplace.

Furthermore, occupational stressors of professional self-doubt and work-home conflict necessitate further exploration in future studies involving U.S participants. Balancing professional and family roles is a significant stressor. Christians treat marriage with high regard since it is holy before God. Additionally, the teachings encourage working for six days and resting on the seventh day. Thus, Christians must strive to fulfill their duties in the two areas.

Further studies would offer discernment whether work-home conflict arises from circumstances where (a) the practices in one role are incompatible with practices in a different role, (b) time consumed on duties in one role impacts the accomplishment of duties in a different role, and (c) whether one role's pressure affects the accomplishment of needs in another role. Lastly, self-doubt is a familiar feeling in humans, though the Bible discourages the practice since Satan uses it to make people fall. In this regard, further studies into how religious coping helps curb these stressors would fundamentally help Christians manage workplace stress.

Summary

This study's findings illuminate the influence of religious affiliation on work practices and stress management tactics among U.S.-based respondents. Christian participants attested that religious values impact their work performance positively and help them find meaning in both joyous and low moments. Additionally, such values make people live purposeful lives courtesy of their impact on behaviors and morals. Beliefs and values form part of people's meaning systems, perhaps even motivating Christian professionals in their work engagements.

This phenomenological study implies that fellowship and faith are integral aspects of Christian's lives that remind them about God, His creative works, and his love towards humankind. Constant contemplation about God and seeking His guidance in every undertaking improve self-confidence and positivity amidst diversity. Additionally, this study is a wake-up call about religious tolerance in workplaces. Most employers believe Sunday is the only day of rest for staff. However, the study has partially revealed that Christianity has different subgroups whose members worship on other days. In this regard, embracing religious diversity is a clarion call for employers. It would enable respect for people's days of worship, whether Friday, Saturday or Sunday. This study was a great engagement exercise. It confirmed that religious

activities foster work engagements and adaptations to different issues to cope and thrive in the

workplace—this study built on past findings to affirm that self-tuning enables the cultivation of

coherent cognition about life.

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Appendix A: Survey Instrument

Informed Consent

Stress work is a significant concern for many, with potential negative impacts on personal

and professional outcomes. While spiritual coping is correlated with workplace stress reduction

and better results, the practices and beliefs that drive this positive impact have yet to be well

studied. There is not much information on how prayers and Bible reading in Christian-based

coping are applied in the workplace. There needs to be a clear picture of how individuals employ these strategies at work. This qualitative study examines how spirituality and religiosity are used to combat workplace stress in Christian adults.

The research questions are as follows:

RQ1.   How do Christian employees describe their lived experiences with coping with workplace stress?

RQ2.   How do Christian employees describe how their faith related to coping with workplace stress?

RQ3.   What faith practices do Christian employees report using to cope with stress at work?

Participation in this study is entirely voluntary. It is expected that completing this survey will take up to fifteen to thirty minutes of your time. While certain demographic information will be collected, you will remain anonymous to protect your privacy and confidentiality. There are no known risks to participating in this study; however, the only benefit is contributing to research on the topic of spirituality and the reduction of workplace stress. You may choose to participate, and if you do decide to participate, you may terminate your participation at any time before submitting the survey.

If you have any questions, please get in touch with the researcher at the contact information below.

<Contact info>

Do you agree to the terms of participation?

- Yes <Goes to next section>

- No <Goes to final thank you and prompts to close the page.

Appendix B: Screening

- An adult above 18 years

- A resident of the United States

- A full-time employee full-time: ≥ 40 hours per week

- Ascribe to the Christian faith: For this study, Christianity will be defined as a three-step sequential process: (a) believing and accepting biblical truths regarding the nature of Christ, (b) cultivating a relationship with Christ, and (c) applying biblical sound principles in response to any demands of life.

<If the answer to any question is no, go to the final section with thanks and prompt to close the page>

Appendix C: Demographic information

What is your gender?

- Male

- Female

- Prefer not to answer

What is your year of birth?

What is your state of residence? <Provide list>

Appendix D: Open-ended questions

RQ1 Interview questions:

Describe for me how you cope with workplace stress.

Can you give me an example of how you dealt with workplace stress and managed effectively

with it?

Can you describe demographic factors affecting your workplace experiences?

RQ2 Interview questions:

Does your faith play a role in helping you cope with stress at work?

Can you describe what that is like for you?

Can you tell me an example of how your faith helped you cope with stress at work?

RQ3 Interview questions:

What practices are related to your faith? What do you do to cope with workplace stress? Can

you explain them to me?

Appendix E: Final thank you

Thank you for your participation! Please share the invitation to participate in this survey with a

few contacts. The URL can be cut and pasted from below, or the icons can automatically

communicate to various social media sites.