

Spirituality, Job Satisfaction and Stress in Ugandan Academic Institutions

Carolyn Marth Nakisuyi

Global Trust Bank Limited P. O. Box 72747, Kampala, Uganda

Abstract The study set out to investigate the relationship between spirituality and stress on one hand; and also stress and job satisfaction on the other hand. The study used a non-experimental research design, over interviewing a total of 92 workers chosen according to convenience of ability to answer the questionnaire in Ugandan academic institutions of Kibuli Police Children School, Centre for Basic Research (CBR) located in Kololo of Kampala; two universities of Uganda Pentecostal University (UPU) in Fortportal and Kampala International University (KIU) main Campus in Kansanga. At CBR, I also administered questionnaires to participants of the seventeenth Intake who were undertaking a one month's course in June 2009. Spirituality, stress and job satisfaction were measured using five-point Likert scale. Data was analyzed using the Pearson's product moment correlation coefficient. The results indicated that while stress was not related to spirituality because spiritual people did not complain when overloaded with work increasing stress levels of the spiritual; stress was negatively linked to job satisfaction. Job satisfaction accounted for 14.3 % of stress in the work place. Further study is recommended using a bigger sample to establish the stress and spirituality relationship.

Keywords Stress, Spirituality, Job Satisfaction, Workplace, Educational Institutions

1. Introduction

Studies on relationship between spirituality, stress and job security in Uganda generally have been not gone beyond 'stress' on one hand; but also concentrated on stress (trauma) from war-effects (Sayer Josef, 2007). This study attempts to investigate relationship between spirituality and stress on one hand, and stress and job security on the other hand.

The purpose of the study will be to establish the relationship between spirituality, stress and job satisfaction. The significance of the study lies in the fact that, organizations are still very reluctant to include spirituality on their employee assistance programs. This study, therefore, explains the urgent need of the managers to include spirituality in their assistance programs if they are to deal with the high levels of job satisfaction and stress. The study also promises to help employees realize the need for a real spiritual connection with a higher power and it's effectiveness in helping employees deal with stress and reduce job dissatisfaction.

2. Understanding Spirituality, Stress and Job Satisfaction

The assumption here is that; spirituality is significantly

related to stress, and stress to job satisfaction. Spirituality is, therefore, an important factor in dealing with job satisfaction and workplace stress (Neal, 2000) although indirectly.

Spirituality in a way concerns itself with aligning the human will and mind with that dimension of life and the universe. According to the different traditions, spirituality may take on different names like; 'path' and 'practice'. Spirituality according to Alister E McGrath (1999) entails improving ones wisdom and will power, achieving a closer relationship with deity, removing illusions or false ideas at the sensory, feeling and thinking aspects. An important distinction exists between spirituality and religion.

Spirituality as opposed to religion

Spirituality in religion often carries connotations of the believer having a more personal faith which is less dogmatic and also it connotes the believer's personal relationship with their God as opposed to a 'general' relationship or connection between the god and 'all' members.

Those who speak of spirituality as opposed to religion however believe in many 'spiritual paths' and deny any object truth about which path to follow. They emphasize every one following their path to whatever god they will find rather than what others say works. The most coherent form becomes the best one. People of the new age tend to regard spirituality not as a religion but as a vital connection to a power or force within oneself. Religion is not identical to spirituality; spirituality is rather the form religion takes in civilization (Yogi William Irwin Thompson, 1938).

Christians view themselves as more spiritual than religious, reducing rules, rituals and tradition while preferring

* Corresponding author:

kibscaro@yahoo.com (Carolyn Marth Nakisuyi)

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an intimate relationship with God or taking him as one's best friend. Their basis for this belief is that Jesus Christ came to free man from rituals, rules and traditions enabling them to 'walk in the spirit' and thus maintaining a one to one relationship with God as explained in the gospel of John 4:24 (Watchman Nee, 1999)

2.1. Elements of and Factors That Shape Spirituality

A set of beliefs, found in the Creeds and Doctrines of the Church; A set of values, based on hope and promise of redemption; Love of others denial of self; and a way of life the real, human life in which our beliefs and values are embodied and expressed.

Factors Which Shape Spirituality are six and include Theological, Historical, Personal, Aesthetic sensibilities, Psychological and Sociological differences, and Denominational variables. First, theological variables are variations in the set of beliefs and values (the theology) of different Christians. Second, History defines the "horizons" of a Christian and the available resources for Spirituality like; availability of the Bible and the ability to read it. Third, personal variables that influence types of Spirituality might be subdivided into: *aesthetic sensibilities* which are different views on what is the "beautiful" language, music, architecture for the worship of God; psychological differences including not only verbal thinking but also spiritualities such as spoken devotions, sermons visual thinking. There are also sociological differences such as gender such as the different ways of talking about God. For instance, Julian of Norwich (1342- after 1416) envisioned Christ in terms of motherhood.

Last, is denominational Variables including Catholicism; Orthodoxy and Evangelical Protestantism and Anglicanism. First, Catholicism; church is a visible institution grounded in divine reality (a "sacrament") includes a corporate sense of Christian community ("Body of Christ") Veneration of Mary: Hail Mary, Rosary prayers to the saints: novena: 9 days of prayer invoking a particular patron saint for a cause. Second, Orthodoxy is a Strong sense of historical continuity with the early church emphasis on the writings of the early Church fathers such as Gregory of Nyssa, John of Damascus, a strong sense of tradition as a living resource for the present emphasis on salvation through the Incarnation and "deification", God became human so that we might someday become divine. Third and last, is evangelical Protestantism and Anglicanism as in Lutheranism and the "theology of the cross" versus a "theology of glory" emphasis on the need for personal conversion, sometimes to the point of emphasizing a need to be "born again"

2.1.1. Understanding Stress

Stress is a psychological term that refers to the consequences of the failure of the human body to respond appropriately to emotional or physical threats whether actual or imagined. The term stress was first used by Hans Selye (1930) to identify the physiological responses in animals. He later broadened his study to include humans that were trying to adapt to everyday life stress. Stress has been studied using

many models but the commonest is the general adaptation syndrome which has three stages of alarm, resistance, and exhaustion. First, Alarm here, the stressor is identified; the body is in a state of alarm. Adrenaline is produced to bring about the fight or flight response. Second,

Resistance, if the stressor persists, it becomes necessary to try some form of coping, although the body tries to cope the stress is sometimes overwhelming and may exhaust the body resources leading to the third stage. Third, *Exhaustion*, the body's resources are exhausted and the body is unable to resist further and function normally, symptoms like sweating and high heart beat may reappear.

Signs and symptoms of stress

They are grouped in; *cognitive symptoms* which include; memory problems, indecisiveness, inability to concentrate, trouble thinking clearly, poor judgment, seeing only the negative, anxious or racing thoughts, constant worrying, loss of objectivity and fearful anticipation. Stress can take any of the three forms of Emotional, Physical or Behavioral symptoms. *First, emotional symptoms* include but are not limited to: moodiness, agitation, restlessness, short temper, irritability, impatience, inability to relax, feeling tense and over whelmed, Loneliness, isolation depression and general unhappiness. Secondly, *physical symptoms include*: headaches, muscle tension, stiff neck, diarrhea or constipation, nausea, dizziness, insomnia, chest pain, weight loss or gain, skin break outs, frequent colds and rapid heart rate. Third and last, *behavioral symptoms*; over or under eating, isolation, drug abuse, nervous habits like nail biting, over reacting, picking fights, and neglecting responsibility (Holmes rahe, 2003)

Before these signs become visible, they are prelude by causes. The *top ten stressful events in life include*; spouse's death, divorce, marriage separation, jail term, death of a close relative, injury, illness, marriage, fired from the job, marriage reconciliation and retirement. (Holmes- rahe life stress inventory)

2.1.2. Understanding Job Satisfaction

Job satisfaction has been defined as a pleasurable emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one's job. Weiss (2002) argued that job satisfaction was an attitude. One of the biggest preludes to the study of job satisfaction was the Hawthorne studies (1924-1933) credited to Elton Mayo. This study found out that people work for reasons other than pay which prompted people to follow studies on job satisfaction hence forming the *affect theory*, *disposition theory*, and the *two factor theory* models each suggesting different ways of estimating job satisfaction..

First, the affect theory by Edwin Locke (1972) the main idea behind this theory is that satisfaction is determined by the discrepancy between what one wants in a job and what one has in the job. *Second, the disposition theory* is another theory that suggests that people have innate dispositions that cause them to have tendencies towards a certain level of satisfaction. However, a significant model by Timothy A. Judge stated that there are four core evaluations that define

one's job satisfaction which include; self-esteem, general self efficacy, locus of control and neuroticism. *Third, the two factor theory* by Fredrick Taylor, it explains that job satisfaction is driven by two factors; motivation which are those aspect of the job that make people perform and that provide people with satisfaction and some include, promotion and recognition and hygiene factors which include; pay, company policies and other working conditions. There is also the job characteristics model by Hackman & Oldman (1976) which studies how particular characteristics impact job satisfaction. It argues for five job characteristics including: skill variety, task identity, task significance, autonomy and feedback which impact the three critical psychological states of experienced meaningfulness, expected responsibility for outcomes which in turn affect work outcomes like, work motivation, absenteeism. The instruments in the appendix 1 use some of this measure listed in the models above.

Last is the job description index, created by Smith, Kendall and Hulin (1969) measures one's satisfaction in five areas including; pay, promotion, promotion opportunities, co-workers, supervision and the work itself. *The job in general index* is an overall measure of job satisfaction. It's an improvement of the job description index which features too much on the individual characteristics that are too narrow for measuring job satisfaction. There are many aspects that influence job satisfaction but our focus in this chapter is on spirituality. While several attributes of job satisfaction are mentioned, in conclusion, with evidence from the above studies, stress can indeed affect stress level and perception of stress.

2.2. The Relationship between Spirituality, Stress and Job Satisfaction

Severe stress grinds away at your mental health causing emotional damage. Overtime, stress causes problems like anxiety, eating disorders and substance abuse. Csiernk & Adams (2002) employed five different measures to examine the impact of spirituality in dealing with stress and it was reported that using the JAREL spirituality scale, further, studies by Csiernk *et al* (2002) indicated that spirituality does indeed help in reducing stress. Participants with high levels of spirituality perceived lower stress levels than their counterparts.

While Neal (2000) argue that there is no direct relationship between spirituality and job satisfaction; Arnold and Feldman (1982) under the structural path model argue that the relationship is not direct but indirect in the sense that shows that job satisfaction is more likely to be related to the transformation of ones spirituality into self actualization rather than spirituality directly affecting job satisfaction.

“work is love made visible and if you can't work with love but only with distaste, its better that you should leave your work and sit at the temple gate and collect alms from people that enjoy working”(Kahil Giban, 1965:28). In conclusion therefore, there is no empirical evidence that links job satisfaction directly to spirituality. They can only relate when there is an intervening variable such as self-actualization.

Workers that are more satisfied with their work are more likely to cope well with stress compared to their counterparts that are dissatisfied. (Holmes, 2003)

2.3. Summary of Literature

The theoretical analysis above investigated theoretical relationships among the two variables with view of coming up with theories to test empirically. First, the theory of Csiernk & Adams (2002) that argue that spirituality does indeed help in reducing stress are very important and is focus for proof. This study shows that participants with high levels of spirituality perceived lower stress levels than their counterparts. In terms of correlation, the relation between the two variables is expected to be negative. Second, is the Holmes (2003) theory argued that workers who are more satisfied with their work are more likely to cope well with stress compared to their counterparts that are dissatisfied? This implied that job satisfactions influenced stress at the place of work. In the next chapter, I discuss how I went about the study.

3. Methodology

3.1. Research Design

The research will use non-experimental of an explanatory design to help explain the linkage between spirituality, stress and job satisfaction. The study was planned to be non-experimental and cross-sectional in approach. First, non-experimental refers to research that lacks manipulation of the independent variable by the researcher. Hence; the researcher studies what naturally occurs or has already occurred; and how variables are related. I chose non experimental because human beings are not subject to experimental manipulations or randomization.

This scheme is particularly useful if we were interested personality and interest. Examining the effects of personality and individual differences – what kind of people are more (or less) likely to do certain things is best approached from non-experiment methods. In addition, there are occasions an experiment would not answer the question of interest.

3.2. Population, Sample Size and Sampling Design

The total number of employees in the four organizations studies was 161. Sample Size (n) was computed using the Slovenes (1978) formula $n = N / (1 + Ne^2)$; Where n is sample size; Where N is the population size; e is the level of significance which in this case is 0.05. Substituting for N =161 gave the sample size of 115 (n=115).

3.2.1. Scope and Sampling Technique

The sample was taken from workers in the selected academic organizations because it was easy for these to answer the questionnaires. In the next chapter, I discuss the theoretical basis of the study. The four Ugandan academic institutions included two universities of Uganda Pentecostal

University (UPU) in Fort portal Kahungabunyonyi Campus and Kampala International University (KIU) Kampala Campus; Centre for Basic Research (CBR); and police Children's School, Kibuli. The 115 respondents were chosen according to convenience of ability to answer the questionnaire in Kampala in Central and Fort portal in Western Uganda in the month of May and June of 2009. This technique was used because of time and financial constraints.

3.3. Instruments, Validity and Reliability

The instrument was both self administered structured questionnaire and had four sections; A, B, C and D. Section A contained the bio-data information about the respondents. Section B contained questions about spirituality, Section C contained questions about stress and section D contained questions about job satisfaction. A likert scale was used where respondents stated their degree of agreement ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree.

3.3.1. Validity and Reliability

Internal validity is an estimate of how much the study measurement was based on clean experimental techniques to enable clear-cut inferences about cause-consequence relations. If one chose experimental designs without random assignment of subjects or (if that isn't possible) one would counterbalance for interfering variables then get an experiment with high internal validity. External validity, on the other hand, concerns the extent one may safely generalize the conclusion derived from a statistical evaluation to the population outside the confines of the experimental situation.ⁱ The validity was measured by a content validity index (CVI) that includes the number of valid divided by the total number of questions in the instrument. For instance, if Questionnaire has 195 valid out of a total of 203 questions; the CVI is computed as $195/203$ or 0.95. Normally, for a questionnaire to be valid, CVI must exceed the cut-off point of 0.70. CVI was computed and found to be 0.88 which exceeded 0.70.

Reliability is the consistency of a set of measurements or measuring instrument. This can either be whether the measurements of the same instrument give (test-retest) or are likely to give the same measurement, or in the case of more subjective instruments, whether two independent assessors give similar scores (inter-rater reliability).ⁱⁱ Practically, valid instruments are also reliable ones. Hence, using that fact the instrument shall also be valid, and also reliable.

3.4. Procedure

The researcher obtained a letter of introduction from the faculty supervisor institute of psychology, Makerere University Kampala (MAK), to the organization introducing her to the human resource manager who introduced her to the various department heads who in turn helped her identify the respondents.

3.5. Measurement of Variables and Data Analysis

3.5.1. Measurement of Variables-the Likert Scale

The variables of spirituality, stress and job satisfaction have been measured using the Rensis Likert five-point scale is displayed in Appendix 1. The numbers in Appendix 1 measuring the variables of spirituality, stress and job satisfaction are arrived at by multiplying the numbers of ticks (x) in each column by 1 (strongly disagree), 2 (disagree), 3 (neutral or neither disagree nor agree), 4 (agree), and 5 (strongly agree) and then summing up (total) in each questionnaire. For instance, in questionnaire 1, there were no (0) ticks for strongly disagree, no (0) ticks for disagree, two (2) ticks for neutral, two (2) ticks for agree, and three (3) ticks for strongly agree gave $(0 \times 1) + (0 \times 2) + (2 \times 3) + (2 \times 4) + (3 \times 5) = 29$ which would be the first item for spirituality.

3.5.2. Data analysis: Pearson Product Moment Correlations

The data collected was entered into statistical package for social science (SPSS). The bio-data was analyzed using descriptive statistics that is to say; frequencies and percentages; while the relationships between spirituality and stress on one hand, and stress and job satisfaction was analyzed using the Pearson Product Moment correlations and the coefficient of determination (CD) is also known as the r^2 . In the next section, I present the data from the filed, analyze the data and interpret the results.

4. Data Presentation of Spirituality, Stress and Job Satisfaction

The data for the results I report here was collected in the months of April and June of 2009. A total of 115 questionnaires were given, of which 93 were returned representing 79 % response rate. With respect to Gender, there were 49 (54 %) women, and 42 (46 %) men majority (71 or 75 %) mostly in full-time employment.

Table 1. Gender and Employment Status of Respondents 2009

Gender	Frequency	Percentage	Employment Status	Frequency	Percentage
Male	42	46.2	Full time	71	78.0
Female	49	53.8	Part time	18	19.8
Total	91	100.0	Total	89	97.8
			System	2	2.2
				91	100.0

Source: Field Findings, 2009

The data sources was predominantly academic institutions including a research Institute called Centre for Basic Research (CBR) located in Kololo of Kampala; two universities namely Uganda Pentecostal University (UPU) in Fortportal and Kampala International University (KIU) main Campus in Kansanga; and one Primary School called Uganda Police Children's School in Kibuli. At CBR, I also administered questionnaires to participants of the seventeenth Intake who

were undertaking a one month's course in research methodology and report writing skills most of whom were employees in other places (See Table 2).

Table 2. Institutions Visited for data 2009

	Frequency	Percent
CBR	23	25.3
KIU	7	7.7
UPU	18	19.8
Total	48	52.7
System	43	47.3
	91	100.0

Notes: CBR =Centre for Basic Research; KIU =Kampala International University, UPU=Uganda Pentecostal University
Source: Field Findings, 2009

In terms of religion, almost all respondents (90 or 99 %) belonged to at least a religion majority of whom were Anglican (41 or 45 %), 32 or 35 % were Catholics and 14 or 15 % were 'born' again faith. and fairly well distributed regarding marital status of single and married divide (See Table 3).

Table 3. Religious affiliation and Marital Status of Respondents 2009

Religion	Frequency	Percent	Marital Status	Frequency	Percentage
Roman Catholic	32	35.2	Single	44	48.4
Anglican	41	45.1	Married	43	47.3
Muslim	3	3.3	Divorced	1	1.1
Others (Born Again)	14	15.4	Separated	1	1.1
			Widower	2	2.2
Total	90	98.9	Total	91	100
System	1	1.1			
	91	100.0			

Source: Field Findings, 2009

Data was analyzed using correlations with the help of the statistical package for social scientists (SPSS). Two correlations were analyzed with spirituality and stress on one hand; and also between stress and job satisfaction on the other hand and the results are displayed in Table 4.

4.1.1. Analysis and Interrelating of Spirituality and Stress in Uganda Academic

The objective was to empirically test the nature of the relationships between spirituality and stress. The null hypothesis was that there was no relationship between spirituality and stress. While the alternative hypothesis was that there was a relationship between the two variables. An insignificant result would uphold the null hypothesis while a significant one would lead to rejection of the null hypothesis and taking up the alternative hypothesis of existence of a

relationship (See Table 4).

Table 4. Pearson Product Moment Correlations between

		Stress	Job satisfaction
Spirituality	Pearson Correlation	0.071	0.008
	Sig. (1-tailed)	0.252	.469
	SS	333.9	26.304
	Covariance	3.669	.289
	N	92	92
Stress	Pearson Correlation		-.379
	Sig. (1-tailed)		.000
	SS		-1973.5
	Covariance		-21.688
	N		92

Spirituality, Stress and job satisfaction in Uganda 2009

Notes: 1) **Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1-tailed); 2) SS=Sum of Squares and Cross-products Source: Field Findings, 2009

The Pearson product moment correlation test result was insignificant with $r=0.071$, $p=0.252$ among the 93 respondents leading to upholding the null hypothesis of no relationship between the two variables (See Table 4.4). The result was interpreted to mean that there was no relationship between spirituality and stress, maybe explained by the fact that spiritual people were also given a lot of work and yet they did not complain causing stress unlike non-spiritual people who dodged work.

4.1.2. Data Analysis and Interpretation of Stress and Job Satisfaction

The objective was to empirically test the nature of the relationships between stress and job satisfaction. The null hypothesis was that there was no relationship between stress and job satisfaction. While the alternative hypothesis was that there was a relationship between the two variables. An insignificant result would uphold the null hypothesis while a significant one would lead to rejection of the null hypothesis and taking up the alternative hypothesis of existence of a relationship (See Table 4.4).

The Pearson product moment correlation test result was significant with $r=-0.379$, $p=0.000$ among the 93 respondents leading to rejection of the null hypothesis of no relationship and taking up the alternative hypothesis of existence of a negative relationship between the two variables (See Table 4.5). The result was interpreted to mean existence of a negative relationship between stress and job satisfaction. This implied that the higher the job satisfaction, the lower the stress on one hand; and the lower the job satisfaction, the higher the stress on the other hand. Job satisfaction ac-

counted for 14.3 % of stress and other factors explained job satisfaction by of 85.7 %.

While Csiernk & Adams (2002) argue that spirituality does indeed help in reducing stress. Csiernk & Adams further shows that participants with high levels of spirituality perceived lower stress levels than their counterparts. In terms of correlation, the relation between the two variables is expected to be negative. The Csiernk & Adams theory contradicted the results from this study. The result of this study showed that there was no relationship between spirituality and stress in Ugandan academic institutions maybe explained by the fact that spiritual people were also given a lot of work and yet they did not complain causing stress unlike non-spiritual people who dodged work.

While Holmes (2003) theory argued that workers who are more satisfied with their work are more likely to cope well with stress compared to their counterparts that are dissatisfied; the Uganda data supported this theory. In Uganda in this study, the result indicated a negative relationship between stress and job satisfaction. This implied that the higher the job satisfaction, the lower the stress and the reverse were true. Job satisfaction reduced stress.

5. Conclusions and Recommendations

The study set out to investigate the relationship between spirituality and stress on one hand; and also the relationship between stress and spirituality on the other hand. The study used a non-experimental research design, over interviewing a total of 93 workers in Ugandan academic institutions chosen according to convenience of ability to answer the questionnaire. The results indicated that while stress was not related to spirituality because spiritual people did not complain when overloaded with work increasing stress levels of the spiritual; stress was negatively linked to job satisfaction. Job satisfaction accounted for 14.3 % of stress in the work place. Further study is recommended using a bigger sample to establish the stress and spirituality relationship.

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ⁱ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Validity_%28statistics%29 (downloaded 9th September 2007).

ⁱⁱ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Reliability_%28statistics%29 (downloaded 9th September 2007).