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**Influence of Work Stress, Motivation and Job Hazard on Attitude of Nurses in Lagos State Public Hospitals**

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**Abstract**

While the role of nurses in the delivery of quality healthcare is enormous, literature attests to the poor attitude of many nurses in public hospitals in Nigeria, but little is known for Lagos State. Furthermore, there exist inconclusive findings on the influence of work stress, motivation, and job hazard on the attitude of nurses in Lagos State public hospitals; thus, this study. Descriptive research design was adopted; 90 nurses and 120 outpatients were selected across 3 general hospitals in Lagos East Senatorial District using stratified and volunteering sampling, respectively. Work Stress, Motivation and Job Hazard Questionnaire ( $r = 0.89$ ) and Nurses' Attitude Questionnaire ( $r = 0.85$ ) were research instruments. The two formulated hypotheses were tested using multiple regression at a 0.05 significance level. Results revealed that motivation, work stress, and job hazard jointly influence ( $F_{(3, 89)} = 16.282, P 0.00 < 0.05$ ) attitude of nurses in Lagos State by 36.2%. The standardised  $\beta$  coefficient revealed that motivation ( $\beta = .451$ ) positively influences nurses' attitude by 45.1%, while work stress ( $\beta = -.343$ ) and job hazard ( $\beta = -.057$ ) negatively influence nurses' attitude by -34.3% and -5.7%, respectively. The authors concluded that work stress and job hazard are major factors influencing the poor attitude of nurses in public hospitals in Lagos State. The study recommended that governments should intensify efforts to equip hospitals with modern and safety-orientated infrastructures and recruit more nurses to combat stress and job hazards to enhance positive attitudes among nurses in public hospitals in Lagos State.

**Keywords:** Motivation, Work Stress, Job Hazard, Attitude, Nurses

**1. Introduction**

Healthcare practitioners are the foundation for the sustained social and economic growth of any given society, owing to their pivotal role in providing efficient and effective healthcare delivery. Nurses are the most essential healthcare professionals in the healthcare industry, and they play significant functions in rendering healthcare services to patients from diverse demography; above all, they are regarded as the primary point of contact for every patient (Akin-Otiko, 2018).

Nursing as a profession is characterised by a distinct set of expertise, values, and abilities that enable certified nurses to render compassionate and patient-centred care to individuals and communities at large. Health promotion, disease prevention, recovery, and suffering alleviation are the core responsibilities of a nurse (Olanipekun, 2018). The statutory responsibilities of a nurse in any healthcare facility are to manage a patient's health, prevent diseases through treatment, care for wounds, and administer treatments or medications based on doctors' instructions. Also, a nurse is saddled with the responsibility of conducting a medical examination, keeping track of patients'

records and health histories, running a diagnostic test, keeping an eye on patients receiving treatment and caring for patients with effective monitoring, particularly those in critical conditions or intensive care units, responding to emergencies, and discharging patients on a doctor's directive, educating patients on hygiene, exercise, and dietary practices that can aid recovery and healthy living, among other things (NIH, 2024). In fact, nurses coordinate all health care activities of patients in their care (Babatunde, Tolulope & Salami, 2015). Hence, the role and functions of nurses in the health care delivery of any nation cannot be underestimated.

Despite this laudable role of nurses in health care delivery, personal observation and empirical evidence attest to their poor attitudes towards patients while discharging their statutory duties in Nigeria, particularly in public hospitals. Personal observation of nurses' statutory conduct to patients in general hospitals in Nigeria reveals a high level of inadequacy in terms of effective health care delivery and compassionate care. Many of these nurses display a nonchalant attitude toward patients, particularly those from poor socio-economic backgrounds. Personal observation further revealed that patients who received quality health services from nurses in public hospitals are those who succeeded in giving bribes or incentives to these nurses, while those who failed to bribe them are treated with levity irrespective of the patient's health condition. Supporting the above personal

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observation, Sasegbo (2009) reported the case of a Mr. O that says “*I lost my baby due to negligence of the nurses. My wife gave birth to a baby boy four minutes to a health centre nearest to us. Instead of the nurse to give my wife and baby the necessary support required, they were left on attended to. Before we even moved an inch, the baby was gone, it now remains how to rescue my wife. It was a sad experience*”. This means that nurse do not perceive that they are causing more injuries and deaths to the populace rather than restore life.

Research into factors responsible for the poor attitude of nurses towards patients in public hospitals in Nigeria highlights several factors. Akinmoladua and Okafor (2021) posited that heavy workloads resulting from understaffing and high patient-to-nurse ratios, which lead to stress and burnout, are one major factor influencing the poor attitude of nurses in the discharge of their statutory duties. In the same vein, Adebisi, Oni and Salawu (2021) highlighted long working hours and limited resources, such as medical supplies and personal protective equipment (PPE), as additional factors influencing nurses' unfavourable attitudes towards patients. Nurses may endure emotional strain while dealing with seriously ill patients, which can lead to compassion fatigue and emotional exhaustion (Adeyemi, 2022). Low pay and a lack of financial incentives lead to low motivation, lowering nurses' excitement and negatively influencing their views towards patient care (Okeke, 2020). Furthermore, employment dangers such as exposure to infectious illnesses and physical injury risk, along with poor work conditions typified by inadequate hospital infrastructure, raise stress and anxiety among nurses (Ojo & Osundina, 2022). Workplace conflict and the lack of career advancement opportunities also play significant roles in shaping nurses' attitudes toward patients (Akinmoladun & Okafor, 2021). Among all these factors, there exist inconclusive empirical findings on work stress, motivation, and job hazard on the attitude of nurses in public hospitals in Nigeria and Lagos State in particular.

Work stress for instance, is one of the most significant factors affecting nurses' attitudes toward patients in Nigerian general hospitals (Adebisi et al. (2021). Stress can manifest physically, emotionally, and psychologically, influencing how nurses interact with patients. High levels of stress often result in negative attitudes, such as irritability, fatigue, and a lack of empathy towards patients. Adebisi et al. (2021) discovered that high levels of job stress are linked to negative attitudes such as weariness, impatience, and emotional depletion. Nurses who suffer chronic stress may exhibit a lack of empathy, which can have a direct impact on their relationships with patients. This stress is caused by variables like severe workloads, long hours, understaffing, and the emotional strain of patient care, which limit nurses' capacity to keep a good attitude towards patients (Selamawit & Amanuel, 2014). Okeke (2020) suggested that, while job stress is

a difficulty, it does not necessarily lead to bad attitudes. According to Okeke, some nurses find personal and professional satisfaction in managing stressful situations, which could lead to an enhanced sense of competence and resilience. This perspective suggests that nurses' attitudes towards patients may not always be negatively impacted by stress, particularly if they have developed strong coping mechanisms or have a high level of intrinsic motivation.

Motivation is perceived to have a positive effect on nurses' attitudes towards patients because it fosters a sense of devotion and job satisfaction (Okeke, 2020). Motivation may stem from a variety of sources, including inner delight from helping others, external benefits like income and privileges, and recognition from peers and superiors. Motivated nurses in Nigerian hospitals are more likely to go above and beyond their job requirements, giving higher-quality treatment to patients. Okeke (2020) observed that highly motivated nurses are more likely to engage well with patients, displaying care, empathy, and professionalism. This finding lends credence to Herzberg's two-factor theory, which claims that intrinsic motivators such as a sense of accomplishment and recognition from superiors lead to higher levels of satisfaction and positive attitudes.

In contrast, Akinmoladun and Okafor (2021) argued that even highly motivated nurses sometimes struggle to maintain a positive attitude in a high-stress work environment. In hospitals where nurses are motivated by extrinsic rewards such as salary and perks, the beneficial impact of motivation can be reduced if external stresses such as insufficient resources or understaffing continue. This viewpoint emphasises that motivation alone may not be sufficient to mitigate the negative impacts of workplace stress or risks.

Apart from work stress and motivation, job hazard is another factor with inconclusive empirical findings regarding its influence on the attitude of nurses. In terms of job hazards, the lack of personal protective equipment (PPE) and insufficient safety protocols in some Nigerian hospitals exacerbate the risks nurses face. Inadequate personal protective equipment (PPE) might render nurses more vulnerable to illnesses such as HIV/AIDS, TB, and hepatitis, affecting their health and emotional condition (Adeyemi, 2022). The persistent worry of getting infectious diseases might lead nurses to have unfavourable attitudes towards patients, particularly those with contagious disorders. These hazardous circumstances not only limit work satisfaction but also reduce willingness to engage with patients, particularly in high-risk environments like emergency rooms and isolation units. This fear can lead nurses to become emotionally distant, focused on self-preservation rather than patient care (Abu-Rmeileh & Al-Dabbas (2012).

In contrast, Adeyemi (2022) argued that, while work hazards are certainly troubling, nurses typically display a high degree of professionalism and tenacity in the

face of such challenges. Adeyemi (2022) observed that many nurses, particularly those who have worked in high-risk environments for a long period, develop coping strategies that allow them to maintain a positive attitude towards patients. According to Adeyemi (2022), these nurses commonly view their work as a passion, and the professional satisfaction derived from treating patients usually outweighs the fear of being exposed to workplace hazards. This resilience throws into question the notion that professional risks necessarily result in negative attitudes, and it suggests that personal coping techniques may reduce the impact of such hazards on nurses' behaviour.

Sequel to the foregoing, it is evident that there exist inconclusive empirical findings on the influence of work stress, motivation, and job hazards on the attitude of nurses in public hospitals in Nigeria. More importantly, there is no such studies that succinctly examine how work stress, motivation, and job hazards influence attitude of nurses in public hospitals in Lagos State to the best of the authors knowledge, thus implying a gap in the literature for the current study. Sequel to the foregoing, this study examines the influence of work stress, motivation, and job hazards on the attitude of nurses in Lagos State public hospitals.

### **1.1 Statement of the Problem**

While the role of nurses in effective health care delivery cannot be overemphasised, observation and literature affirmed that nurses in public hospitals in Nigeria exhibited poor attitudes towards patients in the discharge of their statutory duties. which by extension accounts for many recorded deaths in public hospitals in Nigeria. However, little is known about Lagos State. More importantly, several factors have been examined as causative factors of the poor attitude of nurses in public hospitals in Nigeria. However, of all these factors examined, work stress, motivation, and job hazards remain factors with inconclusive findings as regards their influence on the attitude of nurses in Lagos State public hospitals. Based on the above submission, this study becomes imperative and thus investigated the influence of work stress, motivation, and job hazards on the attitude of nurses in Lagos State public hospitals.

### **1.2 Hypotheses**

- H0<sub>3</sub>: There is no significant composite influence of work stress, motivation and job hazard on attitude of nurses in public hospitals in Lagos state.
- H0<sub>4</sub>: There is no significant relative influence of work stress, motivation and job hazard on attitude of nurses in public hospitals in Lagos state.

## **2. Methodology**

### **2.1 Research design**

This study adopted the descriptive research design of survey type.

### **2.2 Population, Sample, and Sampling Technique**

The population for this study comprised all nurses and outpatients in all general hospitals in the Lagos East Senatorial District of Lagos State. At first, three local governments were selected out of the five local government areas in the Senatorial District in focus using a simple random sampling technique. In each of the selected local governments, one general hospital was selected. Lastly, in each of the chosen general hospitals (Ikorodu, Ijede, and Agbowa), 30 nurses and 40 outpatients were selected. The nurses were selected using stratified sampling on the basis of departments/units, while outpatients were selected using volunteer sampling. In all, a total of 3 local governments, 3 general hospitals, 90 nurses, and 120 outpatients constituted the study sample.

### **2.3 Research instruments**

Two instruments were used to obtain relevant information from the respondents. The two instruments were self-developed. They are:

1. Work Stress, Motivation and Job Hazard Questionnaire (WOSMAJHQ)
2. Nurses Attitude Questionnaire (NAQ)

### **2.4 Validation of the Instruments**

Content validity was adopted in validating the research instruments. To achieve this, the authors contacted experts in item construction and clinical psychology for improvement in content, language, and format. After corrections were made, final versions of the instruments were administered to respondents. For reliability, WOSMAJHQ and NAQ were trial tested on thirty nurses and outpatients that are comparable to the sampled population to determine their reliability; thereafter, Cronbach Alpha statistics were adopted, and a reliability coefficient of 0.89 and 0.85 were obtained for WOSMAJHQ and NAQ respectively.

### **2.5 Procedure for Data Collection**

Ethical consents were solicited from the selected nursing staff and volunteering outpatients for their enlistment in the study. To achieve this, an introduction letter was obtained from the Department of Counselling Psychology and Educational Foundations to the concerned management of the general hospitals for ethical approval. On approval from the management of the general hospital, ethical consent was also solicited from nurses. For the outpatients, the researchers solicited for their volunteering participation in the survey at their waiting period in the reception. On approval, the instruments were administered to the volunteering outpatients and the selected nurses across the three selected general hospitals in Lagos state. It is pertinent to state that, the selected nurses and the outpatients were sampling across various units in the hospital. The researchers ensured that respondents were adequately briefed on how to fill out the instruments. The researchers also ensured prompt retrieval of the copies of the instruments administered to facilitate the security of the document. The exercise was completed within the space of four weeks.

Table 1: Model summary of regression analysis on composite contribution of work stress, motivation and job hazard on attitude of nurses

R = .602<sup>a</sup>, R<sup>2</sup> = .362, Adjusted R<sup>2</sup> = .340, Std. Error of the Estimate = 8.465

	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Decision
Regression	3499.813	3	1166.604	16.282	.000 <sup>b</sup>	Significant
Residual	6161.976	86	71.651			
Total	9661.789	89				

a. Dependent Variable: Attitude of nurses

b. Predictors: (Constant), Work Stress, Motivation, Job Hazard.

Table 2: The beta ( ) coefficients in the Linear Regression Analysis showing relative contributions of work stress, motivation and job hazard on attitude of nurses

*Coefficients<sup>a</sup>*

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error			
(Constant)	28.191	6.110		4.614	.000
Motivation	.561	.107	.451	5.225	.000
Job Hazard	-.078	.132	-.057	-.596	.553
Work Stress	-.372	.104	-.343	-3.588	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Attitude of Nurses

## 2.6 Data Analysis Techniques

The two stated hypotheses were tested using multiple regression at 0.05 alpha level of significance.

## 3, Results and Discussion of Findings

H0<sub>1</sub>: There is no significant composite influence of work stress, motivation and job hazard on attitude of nurses in public hospitals in Lagos state. This hypothesis was tested with multiple Regression Analysis and the result is shown in the table below.

The correlation coefficient resulting from the [multiple regression] analysis shows that there is a significant correlation (R = .602) between the predictors and the criterion variable. The coefficient of determination is significant but relatively below average (R<sup>2</sup> = .362) and shows moderate strength in predicting attitude of nurses in public hospitals in Lagos State. Thus, 36.2% of the variance in attitude of nurses in Lagos state is explained by the three independent variables (Work Stress, Motivation and Job hazard). The remaining unexplained 63.8% could be attributed to the effect of several other variables not captured in this study. This composite contribution is further interpreted by the ANOVA, and the result shows that though the coefficient of determination, R<sup>2</sup>, is relatively below average, the analysis of variance is very significant (0.000, F<sub>(3, 89)</sub> = 16.282 < 0.05). This indicates that the composite contributions of work stress, motivation, and job hazards on attitude of nurses were statistically significant. Therefore, it can be assumed that the predictor variables reasonably predict attitude of nurses in Lagos State.

The above findings corroborate the work of Adebisi et al. (2021), who found that work stress, arising from

heavy workloads, understaffing, and emotional strain, significantly impacts nurses' attitudes by leading to emotional exhaustion, irritability, and a lack of empathy toward patients. When combined with job hazards, such as exposure to infectious diseases and inadequate personal protective equipment (PPE), nurses' emotional and physical well-being deteriorates, leading to detachment from patient care. This was further corroborated by Akinmoladun and Okafor (2021), who observed that the overwhelming stress caused by understaffing and long hours reduces nurses' motivation and negatively affects their interactions with patients. Also, Okeke (2020) found that nurses who are intrinsically motivated, deriving job satisfaction from helping others, are more likely to maintain a positive attitude despite facing high stress and job-related risks.

H0<sub>2</sub>: There is no significant relative influence of work stress, motivation and job hazard on attitude of nurses in public hospitals in Lagos state. This hypothesis was tested with multiple Regression Analysis and the result is shown in the table below.

From Table 2; the beta (β) weighing of the predictor variables was given in the standardized coefficients columns. The constant is 28.191. Relative to each other, motivation (β = .451) and this is statistically significant at P .000 < 0.05 which implies that motivation positive influence nurses' attitude to the tune of 45.1%. On the other hand, job hazard (β = -.057) and was found to be statistically not significant at P .5053 > 0.05). Thus, implies that job hazard negatively influences attitude of nurses to the tune of -5.7%, though it was found be statistically not

significant. Lastly, work stress ( $\beta = -.343$ ) and was found to be statistically significant at  $P .000 < 0.05$ ) which implies that work stress negatively influences attitude of nurses to the tune of -34.3%. In summary, out of the three independent variables examined, only one (motivation) had a significant positive influence on attitude of nurses in Lagos state, while the remaining two (Work stress and job hazard) negatively influence attitude of nurses in the sampled general hospitals in Lagos State.

The findings of hypothesis two are consistent with the findings of Okeke (2020), who found that motivated nurses exhibit positive attitudes towards patient care, demonstrating empathy, professionalism, and a commitment to high-quality service. The findings are also in tandem with that of Adebisi et al. (2021), who in their study found that high levels of work stress, which result from factors such as understaffing, long shifts, and heavy workloads, significantly affect nurses' attitudes towards patients. This stress manifests as physical, emotional, and psychological exhaustion, leading to fatigue, irritability, and a lack of empathy towards patients. Nurses who experience chronic stress are less likely to engage positively with patients, and their ability to provide compassionate care is diminished. In the same vein, Akinmoladun and Okafor (2021) found that the stressful work environment in Nigerian hospitals, compounded by inadequate resources, often leads to burnout, negatively affecting both the quality of care provided and the nurses' attitudes toward their patients.

Also, Adeyemi (2022) reported that nurses working in high-risk areas such as emergency rooms and isolation wards face heightened risks, leading to anxiety, stress, and emotional detachment from patients. The fear of contracting diseases such as HIV/AIDS, tuberculosis, and hepatitis, coupled with the lack of adequate personal protective equipment (PPE), often causes nurses to prioritise their personal safety over patient care. This fear and stress can manifest in irritability, fatigue, and a lack of empathy, which negatively affects their attitude toward patient care. Additionally, Ojo and Osundina (2022) found that nurses in environments with poor infrastructure and inadequate safety protocols often experience burnout, which further exacerbates their negative attitudes and affects their interactions with patients.

#### 4. Conclusion

The conclusion is that work stress and job hazard are major factors influencing the poor attitude of nurses in the discharge of their statutory duties in public hospitals in Nigeria. Also, it was established that motivation was the driving force enhancing positive attitude and professional conduct of nurses in the discharge of their statutory duties in the face of work stress and job hazard in general hospitals in Lagos State.

#### 5. Recommendations

On account of the foregoing findings, the following recommendations were proffered.

1. Provision of 21<sup>st</sup> century health care infrastructure by healthcare stakeholders, safety equipment's and recruitment of more nurses by government into public hospitals to cater for shortages of nursing staff in hospitals will go a long way in combating job hazard due to obsolete equipment and stress emanating from work overload among nurses in public hospitals in Lagos state.
2. Nurses in public hospitals are encouraged to continually display professionalism in saving lives through love, care and compassionate care towards patients at all times irrespective of any latent factors.
3. General hospitals management stakeholders should enact policies, sanctions and embark on routine monitoring of nurses and other health care professionals with respect to their professional conduct and attitude in the discharge of their statutory duties to combat nonchalant attitude among healthcare professionals and enhance effective healthcare delivery in public hospitals in Lagos state.

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