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THE IMPACT OF STRESS ON THE PASTORAL MINISTRY OF BAPTIST  
PASTORS IN OGBOMOSO METROPOLIS

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## ABSTRACT

The title of this study is "The Impact of Stress on Pastoral Ministry of Baptist Pastors in Ogbomoso Metropolis". The purpose of the study was to ascertain the level of understanding of pastors with regard to stress, and exhibition of stress among them. The researcher embarked on this study because of the negative effects of stress seen in pastors of this present generation as a result of overworking, and the first-hand experience of stress. The design of the study was a descriptive with sample survey option. All the Baptist seven Associations in Ogbomoso Metropolis were surveyed. A designed questionnaire was the instrument used for data collection. The subjects of the study were ninety-two (92) pastors drawn from all the seven Associations in Ogbomoso metropolis. From the data collected, it is clear that majority of the pastors were aware of the causes of stress and affirmed that there were physical, emotional chemical and spiritual causes of stress. Their responses showed that physical causes of stress was predominant. In the same vein, majority of the pastors did not exhibit any symptoms of stress. However, the minority of them admitted the presence of one or more symptoms of stress in their lives. The effect considered include indigestion, constant tiredness, shoulder aches, loss of appetite, profuse sweating, chest pain, erectile dysfunction, hypertension, heart diseases, and lower resistance to sickness. Other effects include migraine, headaches, ulcer, fatigue, anxiety, loss of memory, and overreaction to issues. The last set of effects considered were suspicion, panic-attack, feeling of guilt, loneliness, unhappiness, hopelessness, low self esteem, and lack of interest in activities, and isolation from others. Among the recommendations made were pastors should be willing to work with associates, churches should endeavour to remunerate their pastors very well, hostility and unwarranted conflict should avoided in churches, pastors should ensure that their environment is clean always, and they should avoid the excessive use of stimulants and chemicals, and imbibe the management techniques available to manage stress.

## Conclusion

From this research, it is obvious that Baptist pastors in Ogbomoso metropolis are aware and have understanding of the causes of stress. Due to this, some of them have associates to help them in the ministry. However, there are still many others who have not seen the need to do so. Since the physical stress which involves overworking was rated higher than all the causes of stress, pastors must ensure that they did not stress themselves beyond the limit. Also, as the exhibition of stress does not depend largely on age difference, it is necessary for pastors to watch their lifestyles and what they feed on so that the level of stress in them will not rise up beyond controls.

From the findings also, it can be seen that stress can be managed, and the effect of stress can be minimized, if the pastors are ready to follow the management techniques of stress which include harmonious good relationships with the churches

they pastored, working with associates, good working conditions, and spiritual activities. Physical effect of stress was dominant among the effect of stress, therefore, pastors must be careful and make concerted effort to live well in order to serve God better and live a fulfilled life.

### Recommendations

Based on the findings stated in this study the following recommendations are made:

- (1) The work of ministries keep expanding at present, therefore, pastors should be willing to work with associates, hence, multi-staff ministry should be encouraged among the Baptist Pastors in Ogbomoso metropolis and the Nigerian Baptist Convention at large.
- (2) Churches should endeavour to remunerate their pastors very well in order to be able to cope with financial problems they are encountering.
- (3) Hostility and unwarranted conflict should be avoided in churches so that pastors will have rest of mind.
- (4) Pastors should ensure that their environment is clean always in order to avoid stress that can emanate from environmental factors.
- (5) Pastors should avoid excessive use of stimulants and chemicals.
- (6) Pastors should imbibe the management techniques available to manage stress.
- (7) Those pastors who exhibit some of the symptoms of stress always should seek medical advice in addition to strategies of managing stress.
- (8) Pastor should see spiritual activities as one of the mechanism to reduce stress.
- (9) Pastors should have enough rest after labour.