

**INVESTIGATING THE EFFECTS OF OCCUPATIONAL STRESS ON  
THE PERFORMANCE OF THE PASTORS OF FRIENDS CHURCH,  
NAIROBI COUNTY, KENYA**

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## **ABSTRACT**

Stress is an all too common part of life today since it is the body's way of responding to any demand. It can be caused by both good and bad experiences. The positive side of stress is that it can jumpstart your adrenaline and also motivate you to perform your tasks more quickly in response to impending deadlines. An overwhelming work load, lack of peer support and too many demands at once, however, contribute to a sense of frustrations and panic that there isn't enough time to complete the tasks. Growing evidence suggests that high levels of stress affect our physical health, psychological well being and general performance. This study is an investigation of the effects of occupational stress on the performance of the pastors of Friends Church Nairobi County Kenya. The objectives that guided the study were (1) to establish how working hours are influencing the delivery of ministerial services of the pastors of Friends Church Nairobi County (2) to establish the relationship between pastors work load and delivery of civic functions and (3) to establish intervention measures pastors and the Friends church are using to mitigate stress. The study employed the descriptive survey design and simple random sampling method. 55 pastors were selected from the various Friends churches in Nairobi County. Data were collected using questionnaires, interview guides and observation checklists and were analyzed using descriptive statistics. The results show that: pastors work load, lack of community and church support and personal characteristics increased stress levels experienced by pastors. The study recommends appropriate stress mitigation measures to be put in place in order to reduce occupational stress and consequently improve service delivery to the church members and the community at large. The study also recommends that other intervening variables such as organizational culture, economic and political environment be included in future studies to further establish effects that influence occupational stress and work performance. On theoretical implications on the relationship between stress and work performance, the study was based on Wellford performance and demand theory. The theory stipulates that whenever there is a departure from optimum demand which an individual is unable to cope with stress emerged. An individual performance is therefore, less than maximum efficiency when the individual experiences either too high or too low levels of demand. Finally in order to mitigate stress in the church the study recommends that, regular stress audits among its pastors should be undertaken and the work environment should be improved.