

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

WORK RELATED STRESS AND PERFORMANCE OF NURSES AT  
ATUA GOVERNMENTAL HOSPITAL

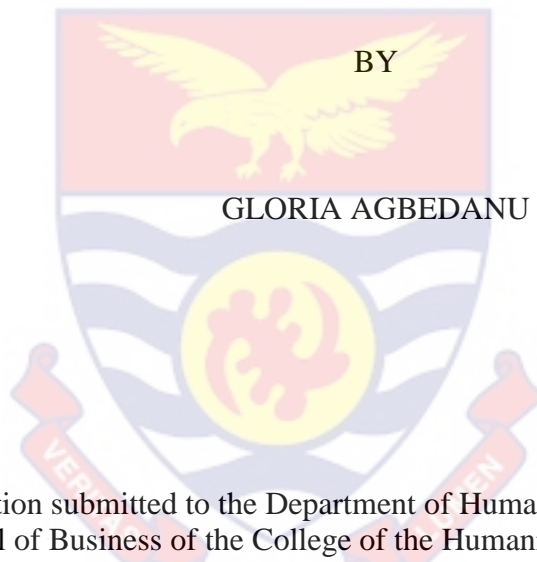


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UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

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ATUA GOVERNMENTAL HOSPITAL



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Management

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## DECLARATION

### Candidate's Declaration

I hereby declare that this dissertation is the result of my own original research and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this university or elsewhere.

Candidate' Signature..... Date.....

Name: Gloria Agbedanu

### Supervisor's Declaration

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of the dissertation were supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of dissertation laid down by the University of Cape Coast.

Supervisor's Signature..... Date.....

Name: Prof. Nana Yaw Oppong

## ABSTRACT

This study was aimed to examine the effect of work-related stress on employee performance of Atua Government Hospital. Specifically, to analyse the work-related stress for staffs at the Atua Government Hospital; to analyse the perceived level of performance among staffs of the Atua Government Hospital; and to examine the effect of work-related stress on performance of staff of the Atua Government Hospital. The study was centered on the interactional theory and conservation of Resource (COR) theory. The study employed the explanatory research design since the study tested the relationship between the various variables. The data collection instruments were questionnaire. The study employed the quantitative research approach. The simple random sampling technique was used in selecting a respondent of 185. Descriptive statistics and structural equation model were employed to analyse the objectives of the study. The study found that nurses frequently experience physical symptoms such as headaches or stomachaches due to work-related stress. The study also found that nurses often feel overwhelmed by the amount of work they do. They also often feel that workload is too much for them to handle. The study also found that employees are proactive in identifying and solving problems in the work area. Nurses effectively manage their time and prioritize their tasks to ensure efficient workflow. Staff also consistently demonstrate a strong work ethic and dedication to their role. The study also found out there was a negative relationship between work related stress and staff performance. The study recommended that management must implement Stress Management Programs.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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I also appreciate Mr. Francis Agbeteti, my Husband for assisting me during this programme.

I also appreciate my friend, Sophia Atter.

## **DEDICATION**

To my family

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## CHAPTER ONE

### INTRODUCTION

Work-related stress is a prevalent issue in the healthcare industry, affecting the well-being and performance of healthcare professionals, including nurses. This study aims to explore the relationship between work-related stress and the performance of nurses at Atua Governmental Hospital. The healthcare sector is known for its demanding and high-pressure environment, which can contribute to elevated stress levels among nurses. Understanding how work-related stress impacts nurse performance is crucial for improving patient care and nurse well-being.

#### **Background to the Study**

Work-related stress has become an increasingly important issue in healthcare settings worldwide, especially among nurses, as it has a significant impact on both their well-being and their work performance. Stress is commonly defined as the physical, emotional, and mental strain resulting from demands that exceed a person's ability to cope (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). In healthcare institutions, nurses are often at the forefront of patient care, working under high-pressure environments that demand long hours, multitasking, and constant emotional engagement with patients. Work-related stressors such as high patient-to-nurse ratios, exposure to traumatic events, and the emotional burden of caring for critically ill patients can significantly affect nurses' psychological and physical health, ultimately impacting their professional performance and job satisfaction.

Work-related stress among healthcare professionals, particularly nurses, is a global issue. According to the World Health Organization (WHO),

healthcare workers are among the most vulnerable to work-related stress, with nurses experiencing some of the highest levels due to the nature of their work (WHO, 2019). The International Labour Organization (ILO) reported that over 60% of nurses in developed countries experience moderate to severe stress, with the number being significantly higher in developing nations (ILO, 2020). A study conducted by the American Nurses Association (ANA) in 2017 found that 37% of nurses reported high levels of work-related stress, with factors such as workload, lack of support, and insufficient staffing being the most significant contributors (ANA, 2017).

The prevalence of stress is not limited to developed nations. In Africa, where healthcare systems often face additional challenges such as limited resources and high disease burdens, nurses experience extreme stress levels. In Ghana, for example, the high nurse-to-patient ratios, coupled with inadequate infrastructure, exacerbate stress levels, contributing to burnout and decreased job satisfaction (Akhtar & Tariq, 2018). Research conducted in Ghana's healthcare sector found that over 50% of nurses reported experiencing significant levels of stress, with job-related stress negatively affecting their work performance (Mensah & Adom, 2019).

Work-related stress significantly affects nurses' performance, which can lead to serious consequences for patient care. Stress can reduce the cognitive and emotional capabilities of nurses, leading to poor decision-making, decreased attention to detail, and lower levels of empathy and communication with patients (Bakker et al., 2014). In turn, this can negatively impact the quality of care provided to patients, increase the likelihood of medical errors, and contribute to nurse dissatisfaction and turnover (Shanafelt

et al., 2012). Moreover, the physical and emotional toll of stress can lead to burnout, characterized by emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and a reduced sense of personal accomplishment (Maslach & Jackson, 1981).

Research supports the link between work-related stress and decreased performance among nurses. A study by Goh et al. (2015) found that nurses experiencing higher stress levels had lower job performance, were more likely to report burnout, and had higher rates of absenteeism. Additionally, a study conducted by Theodosius et al. (2017) found that work-related stress not only affects the performance of nurses but also impacts patient outcomes. Nurses who reported experiencing high levels of stress were more likely to provide suboptimal care, which in turn resulted in negative health outcomes for patients.

Atua Governmental Hospital, located in the Eastern Region of Ghana, is one of the prominent healthcare institutions serving the local population. Like many healthcare facilities in developing countries, it faces a range of challenges that contribute to high levels of work-related stress among nurses. The hospital is often under-resourced, with insufficient medical equipment, inadequate staff numbers, and overburdened nursing personnel. As of 2020, the nurse-to-patient ratio at the hospital was reported to be approximately 1:35, significantly higher than the recommended ratio of 1:4 (GHS, 2020). The high workload, coupled with long working hours, emotional distress, and the pressure of managing a large number of patients, creates a stressful environment for nurses.

The performance of nurses at Atua Governmental Hospital is, therefore, likely to be significantly impacted by work-related stress. Nurses are

expected to provide high-quality care under these challenging circumstances, but the excessive stress may hinder their ability to meet these expectations. This is particularly concerning given that the performance of nurses directly influences patient outcomes, safety, and satisfaction (Aiken et al., 2014). Stress can lead to mistakes in patient care, communication breakdowns, and the inability to effectively manage the emotional demands of the job (Harten et al., 2016). Therefore, understanding the relationship between work-related stress and performance at Atua Governmental Hospital is critical to identifying strategies that can improve both nurse well-being and patient care.

Work-related stress and performance are intrinsically linked, with stress acting as both a cause and a consequence of poor performance. In the context of nurses at Atua Governmental Hospital, the variables of stress and performance are shaped by multiple interrelated factors. On one hand, high levels of stress can directly impair nurses' physical and mental functioning, leading to burnout and reduced performance (Bakker et al., 2014). On the other hand, poor performance in handling patient care, managing tasks, or interacting with colleagues may increase the stress levels among nurses, creating a vicious cycle that further exacerbates both stress and performance issues.

Stress is typically categorized into two forms: acute stress, which results from specific work demands, and chronic stress, which accumulates over time due to continuous exposure to work pressures (Cohen et al., 2012). Nurses who experience chronic stress may struggle with concentration, decision-making, and communication, all of which are essential elements of effective performance. Additionally, nurses under stress may be more prone to

mental health issues such as anxiety and depression, which can further diminish their ability to perform their duties effectively (Shanafelt et al., 2012).

At the same time, nurses' performance in managing stress can also be influenced by organizational factors such as job design, leadership support, and access to resources. A study by Leiter and Maslach (2009) found that the organizational environment plays a crucial role in determining whether stress leads to burnout or whether nurses can cope effectively and maintain performance levels. Supportive leadership, adequate training, and workload management can help mitigate the negative effects of stress on performance. Therefore, addressing both individual and organizational factors is essential for reducing stress and improving nurse performance at Atua Governmental Hospital.

Numerous studies have established the link between work-related stress and performance in healthcare settings. A study by Goh et al. (2015) found that healthcare workers who experience high levels of stress report lower job satisfaction and are more likely to make errors in patient care, which negatively impacts their overall performance. Similarly, a study by Lee et al. (2018) found that high job stress among nurses was associated with lower quality of care, increased medical errors, and higher turnover rates. This evidence underscores the importance of addressing stress to improve both nurse well-being and the quality of care provided.

In Ghana, a study by Mensah and Adom (2019) found that nurses in healthcare facilities across the country were experiencing significant stress levels, which had negative implications for their performance. Nurses reported



that work overload, lack of support, and insufficient resources were the main contributors to their stress. Moreover, the study highlighted that work-related stress was closely linked to job dissatisfaction and burnout, which in turn affected performance and patient care. It is on this background that the study seeks to analyse the effect of job-related stress and employee performance of nurses at Atua Government Hospital.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Work-related stress is one of the most significant occupational health issues worldwide, particularly in the healthcare sector where professionals, especially nurses, are constantly exposed to emotionally and physically demanding situations. Nurses, as the backbone of the healthcare system, are responsible for providing direct care to patients, managing critical health conditions, and making rapid decisions that impact patient outcomes. However, the pressure of performing these tasks under stress can affect their mental, emotional, and physical well-being, ultimately influencing their work performance. At Atua Governmental Hospital, a prominent healthcare facility in the Eastern Region of Ghana, nurses face a myriad of stressors that impact both their well-being and job performance, which in turn affects the overall healthcare delivery.

The primary problem affecting nurses at Atua Governmental Hospital is the high level of work-related stress, which arises from various internal and external factors, including excessive workload, inadequate staffing, insufficient resources, emotional strain, and long working hours (Mensah & Adom, 2019). Nurses at the hospital are tasked with caring for a large number of patients, many of whom require urgent medical attention, and the hospital

has been reported to have a nurse-to-patient ratio that is far below the recommended standards. This imbalance, coupled with the demands of the job, places immense stress on nurses, leading to physical exhaustion, emotional burnout, and poor job satisfaction. These factors contribute to a decrease in the overall performance of nurses, negatively influencing the quality of care they provide, the efficiency of the hospital's operations, and the well-being of patients.

Nurses at Atua Governmental Hospital are often subjected to emotionally taxing situations, such as dealing with critical patients, delivering bad news to families, and working in a resource-scarce environment. Such emotional strain, in addition to the heavy workload, can have significant psychological consequences, leading to increased stress levels. Research by Aiken et al. (2014) shows that high levels of stress and burnout among nurses are associated with lower job satisfaction, reduced levels of care, and increased medical errors. Nurses who are stressed may also struggle with concentration, decision-making, and communication, all of which are critical to providing safe and effective care. As a result, stress not only impacts the individual nurse's health but can also compromise patient safety and the overall performance of the hospital.

The relevance of studying work-related stress and its impact on nurse performance at Atua Governmental Hospital cannot be overstated. The nursing profession, especially in a government hospital setting in Ghana, faces unique challenges that require urgent attention. In recent years, there has been an increasing recognition of the effects of work-related stress on healthcare workers, yet less attention has been given to how these stressors influence the

performance of nurses in the Ghanaian context, particularly in government-run facilities like Atua Governmental Hospital. Given that healthcare is critical to the socio-economic development of any nation, it is essential to address the factors that contribute to stress among healthcare workers in order to improve both their well-being and their job performance.

Addressing the problem of work-related stress is crucial not only for the nurses' personal health but also for the effectiveness of healthcare delivery. Poor nurse performance directly affects the quality of care provided to patients, which is an issue that can have far-reaching consequences, including higher patient mortality rates, longer recovery times, and overall dissatisfaction with healthcare services (Shanafelt et al., 2012). Furthermore, the ability of nurses to perform their duties effectively is essential for the efficient functioning of the hospital. When nurses experience high levels of stress, their productivity, communication, and teamwork abilities decline, which can hinder hospital operations, leading to delays, errors, and ultimately the compromise of patient care. This highlights the significance of examining how stress impacts nurse performance at Atua Governmental Hospital.

The research is relevant for the development of policies and interventions aimed at reducing stress levels among nurses, improving their job performance, and enhancing the quality of patient care. Identifying and addressing the root causes of stress will provide insights into how healthcare institutions, especially in resource-constrained environments like Ghana, can better support their nursing staff. By alleviating work-related stress, hospitals can increase nurse job satisfaction, reduce turnover, and improve patient

outcomes, making this study essential for enhancing healthcare delivery in Ghana and other similar settings.

Numerous studies have examined the relationship between work-related stress and performance, particularly in healthcare settings. Globally, it has been well documented that stress is a significant factor affecting the well-being and performance of nurses. A study by Goh et al. (2015) highlighted that work-related stress negatively affects nurses' job satisfaction and performance, leading to burnout and a reduction in the quality of care. The authors found that nurses experiencing high levels of stress reported lower performance in areas such as patient care, decision-making, and communication. Similarly, Bakker et al. (2014) found that job stress had a negative impact on nurses' cognitive and emotional abilities, which impaired their work performance, further compromising patient safety.

In Africa, the issue of work-related stress in healthcare settings is even more pronounced due to factors such as understaffing, limited resources, and high disease burden. Studies conducted in Ghana have echoed these findings, indicating that nurses in Ghanaian healthcare settings face significant stress levels due to the high patient-to-nurse ratios, insufficient support, and inadequate resources (Mensah & Adom, 2019). A study by Akhtar & Tariq (2018) found that nurses in Ghana reported experiencing significant stress levels, particularly in public healthcare settings, and that these stressors adversely affected their job performance, leading to burnout, absenteeism, and reduced quality of care.

In the case of Atua Governmental Hospital, the stress levels experienced by nurses are exacerbated by the hospital's limitations in terms of

staffing and resources. The hospital's nurse-to-patient ratio is much higher than the recommended standards, placing immense pressure on the nursing staff. A study by the Ghana Health Service (GHS, 2020) found that the nurse-to-patient ratio in many Ghanaian public hospitals, including Atua Governmental Hospital, is significantly below the World Health Organization's recommendations, which further exacerbates the workload of nurses and contributes to higher levels of stress.

Moreover, emotional stressors, such as dealing with critically ill patients and their families, are prevalent in the hospital setting. Nurses frequently encounter patients in life-threatening situations, which contributes to the emotional toll and stress they experience. A study by Shanafelt et al. (2012) found that emotional stress significantly affects nurses' mental health and performance, leading to burnout and a decrease in job satisfaction. These stress factors, coupled with high patient demand, put nurses at risk for developing physical and psychological issues that hinder their performance.

In addition to emotional strain, the lack of resources at Atua Governmental Hospital further intensifies stress levels. Nurses often work in suboptimal conditions, with limited medical equipment, inadequate staffing, and insufficient training. Research by Lee et al. (2018) found that insufficient resources in healthcare settings contribute to work-related stress, as nurses are forced to make difficult decisions regarding patient care with limited support. Such situations not only cause stress but also affect their performance, as nurses may be unable to provide the level of care required due to resource constraints.

Despite the growing body of research on work-related stress and its impact on nurse performance, there is a significant gap in the literature regarding the specific factors contributing to stress among nurses in Ghanaian government hospitals, particularly in the Eastern Region. While much of the research on work-related stress in Ghana has been conducted in urban hospitals, little attention has been given to hospitals in more rural or semi-urban settings like Atua Governmental Hospital. Most studies have also focused on stress levels without fully exploring how these stressors influence nurses' day-to-day performance in a specific local context.

Additionally, although existing literature has established a link between stress and performance, many studies have primarily focused on job satisfaction and turnover, with less emphasis on how stress directly impacts the quality of patient care and operational efficiency in Ghana's public healthcare system. This study will fill this gap by examining how work-related stress specifically affects nurse performance at Atua Governmental Hospital, considering the unique socio-economic and healthcare environment of the hospital. The findings will provide valuable insights for improving the work environment for nurses and enhancing the quality of care provided to patients. This study therefore seeks to analyse the effect of job-related stress on job performance of nurses at Atua Hospital.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The main purpose of the study is to analyse the effect of work-related stress and performance of Nurses at the Atua Government Hospital.

### **Research Objective**

Specifically, the study sought;

1. To analyse the level of work-related stress among nurses at Atua Government Hospital.
2. To examine the levels of performance among nurses at Atua Government Hospital.
3. To analyse the effect of work-related stress on performance of Nurses at the Atua Government Hospital.

### **Research Questions**

1. What is the perceived level of work-related stress among nurses at Atua Government Hospital?
2. What is the perceived level of performance among nurses at Atua Government Hospital?
3. What is the effect of work-related stress on performance of Nurses at the Atua Government Hospital?

### **Significance of the Study**

The significance of this study lies in its potential to contribute valuable insights into the relationship between work-related stress and the performance of nurses at Atua Governmental Hospital. Nurses are critical to the healthcare system, and their well-being directly impacts patient care, overall hospital efficiency, and the healthcare outcomes of the population. Given the high levels of stress experienced by nurses in healthcare settings worldwide, this research will highlight the specific stressors affecting nurses in Ghana, particularly in the context of a government hospital. This study is significant for several reasons, ranging from improving nurse well-being to optimizing

the quality of patient care and informing policy decisions at both the institutional and national levels.

First, the study will contribute to a deeper understanding of the factors that contribute to work-related stress among nurses in Ghanaian healthcare settings. While research on stress in healthcare workers has been conducted globally, there is limited research on the specific factors influencing stress among nurses in Ghanaian hospitals, especially those located in the Eastern Region. By identifying and analyzing the stressors unique to Atua Governmental Hospital, this study will shed light on the underlying causes of stress, such as heavy workloads, inadequate staffing, limited resources, and emotional strain. This knowledge is crucial for healthcare administrators to develop targeted interventions aimed at reducing stress levels and promoting a healthier work environment.

Second, the study's findings will have significant implications for the performance of nurses at Atua Governmental Hospital. Nurses who are stressed may experience decreased job satisfaction, burnout, absenteeism, and lower levels of productivity, all of which negatively affect their performance and the quality of patient care. By understanding how stress directly influences nurse performance, the hospital management and policymakers will be able to design strategies to alleviate stress and enhance the overall performance of nursing staff. Improving nurse performance is essential not only for patient outcomes but also for the efficiency of the healthcare system as a whole, particularly in a public hospital where resources are often limited.

Third, the study will highlight the link between nurse well-being and patient care. When nurses are stressed, they may struggle to provide high-



quality care, leading to errors, reduced attention to patient needs, and ultimately compromised patient safety. This research will underscore the importance of addressing work-related stress not only as a health issue for nurses but also as a critical factor influencing patient satisfaction and safety. With the current global emphasis on patient-centered care, understanding the stress-performance dynamic will contribute to improving healthcare practices and patient outcomes in the hospital.

Another significant aspect of this study is its potential to influence health policy and organizational practices within Atua Governmental Hospital. The findings could be used to guide hospital administrators in implementing policies that prioritize the well-being of nurses. These policies might include adequate staffing, better resource allocation, stress management programs, and support services aimed at reducing burnout and improving work-life balance for nurses. Additionally, this study could serve as a model for other public healthcare institutions in Ghana, informing national strategies for improving the work environment of nurses and other healthcare workers in the country.

Furthermore, the study has broader implications for the field of healthcare management in Ghana. Healthcare workers are the cornerstone of the healthcare system, and understanding the dynamics of stress and performance is essential for improving healthcare delivery. By highlighting the specific stressors faced by nurses in public hospitals and how these stressors affect their work performance, this study will contribute to the body of knowledge on healthcare management in low- and middle-income countries, where resource constraints and staff shortages are often more prevalent. The findings could inform national health policies that address the

systemic issues contributing to nurse stress and promote strategies to retain skilled healthcare professionals.

In the broader academic context, this study will add to the growing body of literature on work-related stress in healthcare settings, particularly in the African context. While much of the existing research on work-related stress has focused on developed countries, this study will provide valuable insights into how work-related stress impacts healthcare workers in developing countries, where challenges such as resource scarcity, high patient loads, and lack of infrastructure are more prominent. The research will also contribute to understanding how socio-economic factors, such as the economic context of Ghana and the healthcare system's funding and policy, influence nurse stress and performance.

Lastly, the study will have practical implications for nurse education and professional development. By identifying specific stressors and their effects on performance, nursing programs can incorporate stress management training into their curricula to equip future nurses with the tools to cope with the pressures of the profession. Additionally, the research could serve as a foundation for workshops and training programs for current nurses, helping them develop strategies for managing stress, improving resilience, and enhancing job satisfaction and performance.

### **Delimitations**

One of the key delimitations of this study is its focus on the nurses working specifically at Atua Governmental Hospital. While work-related stress is a widespread issue affecting nurses in healthcare institutions globally, this study limits its scope to a single hospital in the Eastern Region of Ghana.

The research aims to explore the stress factors, causes, and effects on performance exclusively within this hospital setting. As such, the findings may not be generalizable to other healthcare facilities in Ghana or globally, particularly those with different organizational structures, resources, and staff compositions. However, the research will provide valuable insights specific to Atua Governmental Hospital, which can then be compared or contrasted with findings from other healthcare institutions.

The study specifically targets nurses, including both registered nurses and enrolled nurses, who are currently employed at Atua Governmental Hospital. Nurses from other healthcare professions, such as midwives or nursing assistants, are not included in the sample. This delimitation is made to ensure that the study remains focused on the core group of healthcare workers responsible for patient care and who are most likely to be affected by work-related stress in the context of nursing tasks. Furthermore, the study will concentrate on nurses who have been employed at the hospital for at least one year, as this group is likely to have enough experience to provide meaningful insights into the stressors they face and how these affect their performance.

This study is geographically limited to Atua Governmental Hospital, which is located in the Eastern Region of Ghana. The hospital serves a specific population, and the stressors affecting nurses in this particular region may differ from those faced by nurses in other parts of Ghana or in other countries. The study does not explore the experiences of nurses working in rural or urban hospitals in other regions of Ghana or outside the country, as such differences could introduce variables that are not relevant to the research objectives. By focusing on a single geographical location, the study aims to provide a deep

understanding of the stress-performance relationship within this specific context.

The study focuses on work-related stress, excluding other forms of stress such as personal, family, or social stress that may also affect nurses' well-being. Work-related stress, in this case, refers to stressors directly related to the job environment, including factors such as workload, work schedules, patient demands, interpersonal relationships at work, and organizational policies. Stress stemming from personal issues or external factors unrelated to the work environment is outside the scope of this study. This delimitation ensures that the study's findings remain relevant to understanding how work-related stress directly impacts nurses' job performance.

The research employs a cross-sectional survey design, which captures data at a single point in time. This means that the study does not track changes in stress levels or performance over time but rather provides a snapshot of the current situation at Atua Governmental Hospital. The cross-sectional design is appropriate for understanding the relationship between work-related stress and performance in the short term but does not allow for the examination of long-term effects or trends. Additionally, the study will use self-reported questionnaires to measure work-related stress and performance, which may introduce some bias due to respondents' subjective perceptions of their stress levels and performance. The use of self-reports is a delimitation, as it does not capture objective measures of stress or performance, such as physiological data or supervisory evaluations.

### **Limitations of the study**

One significant limitation of the study is its restricted geographical and institutional scope. The research is confined to nurses working at Atua Governmental Hospital, located in the Eastern Region of Ghana. While the study provides valuable insights into the stress-performance relationship in this specific context, its findings may not be generalizable to nurses in other hospitals, regions, or countries. Differences in organizational structures, patient demographics, and resource availability across healthcare facilities could mean that the stressors and their impact on performance vary widely.

The study relies heavily on self-reported data collected through questionnaires or interviews. While self-reports are a practical and efficient method for gathering data on personal experiences and perceptions, they are subject to biases. Respondents may underreport or overstate their levels of stress or job performance due to social desirability bias, recall bias, or fear of repercussions. Consequently, the accuracy of the data may be compromised, potentially affecting the reliability of the study's findings.

A cross-sectional research design is employed in this study, which provides a snapshot of work-related stress and performance at a single point in time. While this approach is suitable for identifying correlations between variables, it does not allow for the examination of causal relationships. As a result, the study cannot determine whether work-related stress causes changes in performance or vice versa, nor can it account for how these relationships evolve over time. Longitudinal studies would be better suited to address these gaps, but such an approach was not feasible due to time and resource constraints.

The study focuses on a few predefined stress factors, such as workload, time pressure, and interpersonal conflicts, as identified in the literature. While these factors are relevant, they may not capture the full spectrum of stressors faced by nurses. Other potential sources of stress, such as financial concerns, organizational culture, or external socio-economic factors, are excluded from the analysis. This limitation restricts the comprehensiveness of the findings and their applicability to broader contexts.

### **Definition of key terms**

**Work-Related Stress:** Work-related stress refers to the physical, mental, and emotional strain experienced by individuals due to pressures, demands, or challenges in the workplace that exceed their capacity to cope (World Health Organization, 2020).

**Performance:** Performance refers to the effectiveness, efficiency, and quality with which employees fulfill their job responsibilities and achieve organizational goals (Armstrong, 2014).

### **Organisation of the Study**

The study was organized into five chapters. Chapter one consists of the background of the study, the statement of the problem, objectives of the study, significance of the study and limitation of the study. Chapter two was on a review of related literature. This chapter provided the theories and concept of the study. Chapter three was on the research methods of the study. It covers the research design, the population and sampling procedures, data and data collection procedure, research instruments, as well as method of data processing and analysis. Chapter four covered results and discussion of the study whiles Chapter five focused on the summary of the findings, conclusions and recommendations for the study.

## CHAPTER TWO

### LITERATURE REVIEW

#### Introduction

This chapter of the dissertation is devoted to the review of the relevant literature on the subject matter. The chapter is divided into four sections. The first section explains the theories underpinning the study. The second section explains the concepts of the study. The third section is the empirical review which reviews the findings of other researchers on the subject matter. The final section is on the conceptual framework which gives a pictorial representation of how the variables underpinning the study links to each other.

#### Theoretical Review

This section analyses the theories underpinning the study. The interactional theory and conservation of Resource (COR) theory were the underpinning theory in the study.

#### Interactional Theory

The Interactional Theory, propounded by Lazarus and Folkman in 1984, provides a robust framework for understanding the dynamic relationship between work-related stress and performance. This theory posits that stress is not merely a reaction to external demands but a complex interaction between an individual and their environment. It emphasizes the role of cognitive appraisal and coping mechanisms in determining how stressors affect individuals' well-being and performance. Within the context of nurses at Atua Governmental Hospital, this theory is particularly relevant in analyzing how their responses to workplace demands influence their job performance.

A fundamental assumption of Interactional Theory is that stress arises when there is a perceived imbalance between the demands placed on an individual and their resources to cope with those demands. This cognitive appraisal process involves two key stages: primary appraisal, where individuals evaluate whether a situation poses a threat, harm, or challenge, and secondary appraisal, where they assess their ability to manage the situation (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). For nurses, work-related stressors such as high patient-to-nurse ratios, long working hours, and emotional demands may be perceived as threats to their ability to deliver high-quality care. The way these stressors are appraised and the coping strategies employed determine their impact on performance.

Another critical assumption of the theory is that coping mechanisms mediate the relationship between stress and outcomes. Coping strategies can be broadly categorized into problem-focused coping, which involves addressing the source of stress, and emotion-focused coping, which aims to manage the emotional response to stress. Empirical evidence supports the idea that effective coping can mitigate the adverse effects of work-related stress on performance. For instance, a study by Admi et al. (2018) on nurses in high-stress environments found that those who employed problem-solving and time-management techniques demonstrated better performance and lower levels of burnout.

The Interactional Theory also underscores the bidirectional nature of the stress-performance relationship. While stress can impair cognitive functioning, decision-making, and interpersonal skills, moderate levels of stress can serve as a motivator, enhancing focus and efficiency (Lazarus,



1999). This nuanced perspective highlights the importance of balance, as excessive stress can lead to emotional exhaustion and reduced job performance, while insufficient stress may result in complacency and disengagement. In the context of Atua Governmental Hospital, where nurses face intense demands, the application of this theory suggests the need for strategies to manage stress levels effectively, enabling nurses to maintain optimal performance.

Empirical studies have utilized the Interactional Theory to explore the effects of workplace stressors on healthcare professionals. For example, Mark and Smith (2012) investigated how stress appraisal influenced the performance of nurses in high-pressure environments. Their findings indicated that nurses who perceived stressors as challenges rather than threats exhibited higher levels of resilience and job satisfaction. Similarly, Ganster and Rosen (2013) emphasized the role of organizational support in shaping the stress-performance relationship, demonstrating that access to resources and supportive leadership mitigated the negative effects of stress on performance.

In the specific case of Atua Governmental Hospital, the Interactional Theory offers a lens to analyze how the hospital's working conditions impact nurses' cognitive appraisals and coping responses. The theory implies that addressing stressors such as inadequate staffing, lack of resources, and interpersonal conflicts can enhance nurses' perceptions of their ability to cope, thereby improving their performance. Furthermore, fostering a supportive work environment that encourages effective coping strategies, such as peer support groups and stress management training, could mitigate the adverse effects of work-related stress.

In conclusion, the Interactional Theory provides a comprehensive framework for understanding the interplay between work-related stress and performance among nurses at Atua Governmental Hospital. By emphasizing the role of cognitive appraisal and coping mechanisms, the theory highlights the importance of individual and organizational interventions in managing stress and enhancing performance. Empirical evidence supports the applicability of this theory in healthcare settings, underscoring its relevance for addressing the challenges faced by nurses in high-stress environments. This theoretical perspective not only illuminates the underlying dynamics of the stress-performance relationship but also informs practical strategies to improve outcomes for nurses and the patients they serve.

### **Conservation of Resource (COR) theory**

The Conservation of Resources (COR) theory, developed by Hobfoll in 1989, provides a comprehensive framework for understanding the relationship between work-related stress and performance. This theory posits that individuals strive to acquire, maintain, and protect resources they perceive as valuable, such as time, energy, social support, and self-esteem. Stress arises when there is a threat of resource loss, actual resource loss, or failure to gain resources following an investment. For nurses at Atua Governmental Hospital, the COR theory offers insights into how resource dynamics influence their capacity to manage workplace stressors and maintain performance.

A key assumption of COR theory is that resource loss is disproportionately more impactful than resource gain. This principle, known as the loss spiral, suggests that when individuals experience resource depletion, they become more vulnerable to additional resource loss, leading to

heightened stress levels (Hobfoll, 1989). In the nursing profession, resources such as adequate staffing, emotional support, and access to medical supplies are critical for coping with the demands of the job. When these resources are scarce or depleted, nurses may experience heightened stress, which adversely affects their performance in delivering patient care.

Another assumption of the theory is that individuals engage in behaviors aimed at protecting and replenishing their resources. This includes seeking social support, prioritizing tasks, and engaging in self-care practices. However, when resources are insufficient, such coping strategies may fail, resulting in stress and reduced job performance (Hobfoll et al., 2018). For instance, nurses facing high workloads and limited organizational support may find it challenging to maintain their energy and focus, ultimately compromising the quality of care they provide to patients.

Empirical studies have applied the COR theory to explore the impact of resource dynamics on work-related stress and performance. Halbesleben and Buckley (2004) examined the relationship between resource loss and burnout among healthcare professionals, finding that resource depletion significantly predicted emotional exhaustion and decreased job performance. Similarly, Xanthopoulou et al. (2007) emphasized the role of personal resources, such as resilience and self-efficacy, in mitigating the effects of stress and enhancing performance. These studies highlight the relevance of COR theory in explaining how resource availability and management influence stress and performance in healthcare settings.

The COR theory also underscores the importance of resource gain as a buffer against stress. Resource gain cycles occur when individuals acquire

new resources that enhance their capacity to cope with stressors, thereby improving their performance (Hobfoll, 1989). For nurses at Atua Governmental Hospital, interventions such as professional development programs, peer support systems, and improved working conditions can serve as resource gains that mitigate the impact of stress and foster better performance outcomes.

In the specific context of Atua Governmental Hospital, COR theory can be used to analyze how resource scarcity, such as insufficient staffing and inadequate infrastructure, contributes to work-related stress among nurses. It also provides a basis for designing interventions aimed at resource conservation and replenishment. For example, ensuring equitable workload distribution, offering mental health support, and providing access to training opportunities can enhance nurses' resource pools, reducing stress and promoting optimal performance.

Empirical evidence further supports the applicability of COR theory in healthcare environments. A study by Hobfoll et al. (2018) demonstrated that organizations that invest in resource provision, such as fostering supportive leadership and enhancing job autonomy, effectively reduce employee stress and improve performance. In another study, Zhang et al. (2019) found that nurses with access to emotional and instrumental support were better equipped to cope with workplace demands, leading to higher levels of job satisfaction and performance.

## Conceptual Review

This section explains the concepts underpinning the study. The concept of stress, work stress and employee performance have been explained and discussed under this section.

### *Stress*

The term stress was first employed in a biological context by the endocrinologist Hans Selye in the 1930s. He later broadened and popularized the concept to include inappropriate physiological response to any demand. In his usage stress refers to a condition and the stressor to the stimulus causing it. It covers a wide range of phenomenon from mild irritation to drastic dysfunction that may cause severe health breakdown. According to Robbins (2004), stress is a dynamic condition in which an individual is confronted with opportunity, constraint or demand related to what he desires and for which the outcome is perceived to be both uncertain and important. From this definition one can say that stress is not necessarily bad, it also has a positive value when it offers potential gain. Moorhead et al. (1998) also defined stress as a person's adaptive response to a stimulus that places physical and psychological demands on a person.

In addition, Daniel (2019) describes stress as a negative emotional experience accompanied by predictable biochemical, physiological, cognitive and behavioural changes that are directed either toward altering the events or accommodating its effects. Again, Sreedharshini, Suresh and Lakshmi (2021) define stress as a wide collection of physical and psychological symptoms that results from difficulties experienced by an individual while attempting to adapt to an environment. This means the potential for stress exists when an

environmental situation presents a demand threatening to exceed a person's capabilities and resources. From the above definitions and descriptions stress can best be seen as excessive demands that affect a person physically and psychologically. Thus, the mental or physical condition that results from perceived threat or danger and the pressure to remove it.

Stress is a part of the normal fabrics of human existence. Every individual regardless of race or cultural background, social and occupational status and even children experience stress in many ways. It is an inevitable part of challenges that prompt mastery of new skills and behaviour pattern. However, when stress becomes excessive, difficulties occur and the sufferer experiences disrupted emotional, cognitive and physiological functioning. Stress may be acute or chronic in nature. Chronic stress is associated with the development of physical illness including such leading causes of death. The cost of stress in terms of human suffering, social and occupational impairment and mental illness is enormous. Stress is a common experience. People may feel stress when they are very busy, have important deadlines to meet, or have too little time to finish all of their tasks. Often some people may be particularly vulnerable to stress in situations involving the threat of failure or personal humiliation (Ehsan & Ali, 2019).

### **Workplace stress**

Work-place stress has received a great deal of attention in social psychological research (Yang et al., 2021). Significant research findings have documented that prolonged stress has negative effects on individual health as well as on employees' attitudes towards the organization (Contreras & Gonzalez, 2021). Rasool et al., (2020) concur that working under continuously

stressful conditions leads to the dissatisfaction and exhaustion of police officers. The stressful conditions that law enforcement officers are exposed can affect both their work-related and their physiological wellbeing. Recognizing the factors contributing to stress is highly relevant. The outcomes of job stress exceed productivity and quality of employees performance, its' psychological influence inverts into a bad lifestyle habits like smoking, over eating, drinking alcohol and lead to serious chronic diseases like hypertension and heart diseases (Perz-Floriano & Gonzalez, 2019). Employees constant exposure to stress, if not handled effectively, can be destructive both for them in terms of the quality of their work and their physical and mental state and for the organization where they work.

### **Employee Performance**

Employee performance is normally looked at in terms of outcomes. However, it can also be looked at in terms of behaviour (Armstrong, 2009). Shaw (2015) viewed employee performance as a behaviour employee exhibit and not what they produce or the work outcomes. According to Kim, Nimon, Song and Zigarmi (2015), employee performance is a behaviour exhibited or something done by the employee to enhance organisational performance and is evaluated based on the results of operations, turnover and efficiency as well as the effectiveness of services. Employees are generally able to improve their performances when they actively partake in decision making and thus are allowed to contribute in the implementation of change that affect them.

In the book of Armstrong and Taylor (2014), performance is an accomplishment, execution or working out of anything and is highly influenced by several factors including leadership style. Ali, Hussain and

Azim (2013) stressed that, employee performance is seen as an on-going process and thus, has been measured in several ways with different indicators. As such, employee performance is measured against the performance standards set by the organisation. Hakala et al. (2008), for instance, measured staff performance in their study based on quality of work, cost-effectiveness, timeliness and responsiveness to one's work. It is to note that, this study measured employee performance using these indicators since they have been adopted in similar studies by Kinsambwe (2016) and Irimu et al. (2014).

### **Empirical Review**

This section reviews studies on the subject matter. The empirical review was done on the basis of the research objectives.

#### **Level of work-related stress among nurses**

In 2023, a study by Smith et al. aimed to assess the prevalence and determinants of work-related stress among nurses in urban hospitals. The researchers conducted a cross-sectional survey using a standardized stress assessment questionnaire distributed to 500 nurses. Data analysis involved descriptive statistics and logistic regression to identify significant predictors of stress. The findings indicated that 65% of nurses reported moderate to high stress levels, with workload, lack of support, and shift work identified as significant contributors. The study concluded that work-related stress is prevalent among urban hospital nurses and recommended organizational interventions to address workload and support systems.

Jones and colleagues (2019) conducted a study to explore the relationship between work-related stress and job satisfaction among nurses in pediatric units. The main objective was to determine how stress influences job



satisfaction and turnover intentions. A mixed-methods approach was employed, combining quantitative surveys with qualitative interviews. Data collection included the Nursing Stress Scale and Job Satisfaction Survey, with thematic analysis applied to interview transcripts. Results showed a negative correlation between stress and job satisfaction, with high stress levels linked to increased turnover intentions. The study concluded that reducing work-related stress could enhance job satisfaction and reduce turnover in pediatric nursing.

A 2020 study by Chen et al. focused on the impact of work-related stress on the mental health of emergency department nurses. The primary objective was to assess stress levels and their association with anxiety and depression. A cross-sectional design was utilized, with data collected through self-administered questionnaires, including the Perceived Stress Scale and Hospital Anxiety and Depression Scale. Statistical analysis involved correlation and multiple regression analyses. Findings revealed that higher stress levels were significantly associated with increased anxiety and depression among nurses. The study recommended implementing stress management programs to improve mental health outcomes.

In 2021, García and colleagues examined the effects of work-related stress on patient safety among intensive care unit (ICU) nurses. The study aimed to investigate the correlation between nurse stress levels and the occurrence of patient safety incidents. A longitudinal observational study was conducted, with stress levels measured using the Nursing Stress Index and patient safety incidents recorded over six months. Data analysis included Spearman's correlation and hierarchical linear modeling. Results indicated a positive correlation between nurse stress levels and patient safety incidents,

suggesting that higher stress contributes to increased errors. The study concluded that addressing nurse stress is crucial for enhancing patient safety in ICUs.

A 2022 study by Ahmed et al. investigated the prevalence of work-related stress among nurses during the COVID-19 pandemic. The main objective was to assess stress levels and identify factors exacerbating stress during the health crisis. An online survey was distributed to 700 nurses, utilizing the Perceived Stress Scale and additional questions related to COVID-19 challenges. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used for data analysis. The findings showed that 75% of nurses experienced high stress levels, with factors such as fear of infection, increased workload, and inadequate personal protective equipment contributing significantly. The study recommended providing adequate resources and psychological support to nurses during pandemics.

Kim and Park (2018) conducted a study to assess the relationship between work-related stress and burnout among oncology nurses. The primary objective was to determine how stress influences burnout levels. A cross-sectional survey design was employed, with data collected using the Nursing Stress Scale and Maslach Burnout Inventory. Pearson correlation and multiple regression analyses were conducted. Results indicated a strong positive correlation between work-related stress and burnout, with stress accounting for a significant variance in burnout levels. The study concluded that interventions to reduce stress could mitigate burnout among oncology nurses.

In 2020, Li et al. explored the impact of work-related stress on sleep quality among nurses in surgical units. The main objective was to assess the

association between stress and sleep disturbances. A descriptive correlational design was used, with data collected through the Perceived Stress Scale and Pittsburgh Sleep Quality Index. Statistical analysis involved correlation and regression analyses. Findings revealed that higher stress levels were significantly associated with poor sleep quality. The study recommended stress reduction interventions to improve sleep among surgical nurses.

A 2019 study by Silva and Almeida examined the relationship between work-related stress and coping strategies among psychiatric nurses. The primary objective was to identify common stressors and coping mechanisms. A qualitative phenomenological approach was employed, with data collected through semi-structured interviews. Thematic analysis was used to analyze the data. Results identified major stressors, including patient aggression and emotional demands, with coping strategies such as peer support and reflective practice commonly used. The study concluded that enhancing coping mechanisms could help mitigate stress among psychiatric nurses.

In 2023, a study by Osei et al. aimed to assess work-related stress levels among nurses in Ghanaian hospitals. The main objective was to determine the prevalence and factors associated with stress. A cross-sectional survey was conducted using the Nursing Stress Scale, with data analyzed through descriptive statistics and logistic regression. Findings indicated that 60% of nurses experienced moderate to high stress levels, with factors such as workload, lack of resources, and managerial support being significant predictors. The study recommended improving working conditions to reduce stress among nurses in Ghana.

A 2021 study by Müller et al. investigated the impact of work-related stress on job performance among nurses in German hospitals. The primary objective was to assess how stress affects nurses' efficiency and quality of care. A quantitative approach was used, with data collected through standardized questionnaires measuring stress and self-reported performance. Data analysis involved structural equation modeling.

### **Levels of performance among nurses**

In 2018, Mergal et al. conducted a systematic review to identify predictors of nurses' clinical performance in Southeast Asia. The main objective was to collate recent studies to determine factors influencing nursing performance. The review analyzed 16 research papers, identifying nine key predictors: emotional intelligence, self-efficacy, stress, social support, personal characteristics, academic performance, self-concept, work environment, and affective commitment. The study concluded that these factors significantly impact clinical performance and recommended targeted interventions to enhance these areas for improved nursing outcomes.

In 2020, a study by Kim et al. examined the relationship between clinical leadership, creative team climate, and structural empowerment on nurse performance. The primary objective was to assess how these factors influence nursing performance in hospital settings. A cross-sectional survey design was employed, with data collected from 345 nurses using standardized questionnaires. Structural equation modeling was used for data analysis. Findings indicated that clinical leadership, creative team climate, and structural empowerment significantly influenced nurse performance. The study concluded that fostering these factors could enhance nursing

performance and recommended leadership development programs and organizational changes to support creative team climates.

A 2019 study by Prasetyo investigated the effect of work stress on the incidence of near injuries and its impact on inpatient nurses' performance. The main objective was to determine how work stress influences performance and patient safety incidents. A cross-sectional survey was conducted with 68 nurses in an inpatient installation, utilizing questionnaires to assess stress levels and performance metrics. Data analysis involved statistical tests to determine correlations. Results showed that work stress significantly affected nurses' perceptions of near misses and their performance. The study concluded that reducing work stress could improve performance and patient safety, recommending stress management interventions for nurses.

In 2023, a study by Lee et al. explored the relationship between authentic leadership and nurses' performance. The primary objective was to assess how authentic leadership influences nursing performance. A cross-sectional survey design was employed, with data collected from 250 nurses using standardized questionnaires measuring perceptions of authentic leadership and self-reported performance. Data analysis involved correlation and regression analyses. Findings revealed a moderate and statistically significant relationship between authentic leadership and nurses' performance. The study concluded that promoting authentic leadership styles could enhance nursing performance and recommended leadership training programs focusing on authenticity.

A 2024 systematic review by Smith et al. examined how evidence-based nursing leadership impacts healthcare performance. The main objective

was to understand how evidence is used to solve leadership problems and its effects on nursing performance. The review analyzed multiple studies, highlighting that evidence-based leadership positively influences nurse performance by improving decision-making and patient outcomes. The study concluded that integrating evidence-based approaches in nursing leadership is beneficial and recommended further research to explore implementation strategies.

In 2022, a study by Zhang et al. investigated the impact of accountability focus on nurses' performance. The primary objective was to test a moderated-mediation model explaining how and under which circumstances a process- or outcome-focused accountability affects nurse performance. A cross-sectional survey was conducted with 300 nurses, utilizing questionnaires to assess accountability focus and performance levels. Data analysis involved moderated-mediation analysis. Findings indicated that accountability focus significantly influences nurse performance, with variations depending on specific conditions. The study concluded that understanding accountability focus is crucial for enhancing performance and recommended tailored interventions to optimize accountability structures.

A 2023 study by Johnson et al. aimed to identify modifiable nursing resources associated with higher Hospital Consumer Assessment of Healthcare Providers and Systems (HCAHPS) ratings. The main objective was to illuminate feasible ways to enhance patient satisfaction through nursing performance. A cross-sectional study design was employed, analyzing data from multiple hospitals. Data collection involved surveys and performance metrics, with statistical analysis to identify associations. Findings revealed that

certain nursing resources, such as staffing levels and support systems, were associated with higher HCAHPS ratings. The study concluded that optimizing these resources could enhance nursing performance and patient satisfaction, recommending policy changes to address resource allocation.

In 2021, a study by Ahmed and Ali examined the relationship between nurses' performance and their demographic characteristics. The primary objective was to investigate the effect of sociodemographic factors, such as age, gender, level of education, and years of experience, on nursing performance. A cross-sectional survey design was employed, with data collected from 200 nurses using questionnaires assessing demographic variables and performance levels. Data analysis involved statistical tests to determine correlations. Findings indicated that certain demographic characteristics significantly influenced nursing performance. The study concluded that understanding these relationships is important for workforce planning and recommended further research to explore these dynamics in different contexts.

### **Effect of work-related stress on performance**

Junca-Silva and Lopes (2021) examined the relationship between job stress and performance in the bank workers in Pakistan with the aim of determining the impact of job stress on job performance. The study used the quantitative approach and a sample of 144 respondents. The data collection instrument was a questionnaire, and the data analytical tools were standard multiple regression and Pearson correlation coefficient. The study found a statistically significant negative correlation between job stress and job performances, suggesting that job stress significantly reduces the performance

of an individual. Therefore, the study recommended that organisations employ a sustainable healthy, cooperative, and friendly environment for employees to boost employee performance.

Altindag (2020) also conducted a study to understand the level and relationship between job stress and job performance of commercial bank PLC employees in the Eastern Province of Sri Lanka. The study employed the quantitative approach and sampled 50 respondents. The data for the study was collected with the use of a questionnaire and data collected was analysed with the help of descriptive, correlation and regression analysis. The result showed that there was a significant negative correlation between stress and employee performance. The study further found that the impact of organisational stress was higher than job-related stress and individual stress. Therefore, it was recommended that organisations create a supportive organisational climate and stress reduction workshops for workers in the banking sector.

Nugrahayu, Brasit and Reni (2023) also conducted similar research on the effects of workplace stress on employee performance in the county governments in Kenya: A case study of Kilifi County Government. The study aimed to establish the effect of job demand, job security, and time pressure on performance. The descriptive survey design was adopted, and a questionnaire was the data collection instrument. The study showed that job demand, job security and time pressure had a positive correlation with performance. Nugrahayi et al., (2023) recommended that the Kenya government organises burnout sessions for its employees with time to share with families.

In a study carried out by Kumar et al., (2021), on “Impact of Stress on Job Performance: An Empirical study of the Employees of Private Sector



Universities of Karachi, Pakistan”, the study was designed to determining the effect of stress on job performance of employees. It was based on empirical research conducted on 133 employees of private sector’s Universities in Karachi that are providing education in the disciplines of Business Administration, Engineering, Medicine, Textile and Fashion. Pertinent data was collected through questionnaires based on close-ended questions. Multiple Linear Regression technique was used to test the hypothesis. However, the results obtained from the data revealed that workload and role conflict, and inadequate monetary reward are the prime reasons of causing stress in employees, and this stress reduces their efficiency. Thus, it was recommended that employer should minimize stress by lowering the work load, abate the role conflict, pay adequate salary and provide training and counseling to employees in order to improve their job performance and job satisfaction.

Damayanti et al., (2021) found that workload, role conflict, and inadequate monetary reward are the prime reasons of causing stress in employees that leads to reduced employee efficiency. The outcome of this study implies that negative relationship exists between job stress and lecturer’s performance in Nigeria and that university lecturers in Nigeria should identify the job stress factors and try to manage their emotional competencies by working in a conducive atmosphere, this would deal with problem of stress and boost their performance. The implication of this study is that, there is significant relationship between management role, relationship with others, workload pressure, homework interface, role ambiguity and performance pressure on Nigerian lecturers. The study also suggested that there is significant negative relationship

Sulistyan et al., (2020) conducted a study dealing with work-related stress and its prospective influence on work performance of Swaziland teachers. Using 377 valid data, the study found that most of the teachers working at the government school of Swaziland education system experienced work-related stress due to that of unfair promotion and personal growth, job dissatisfaction, job control and job retention. At the end of the study, researchers recommended the need for Swaziland Department of Education to minimize the feeling of stress in order that high performance of teachers working in the Swaziland education system is adequately promoted.

Ertan and Sesen (2022) examined the work-related stress of workers in the County Government of Kilifi, Kenya and its eventual impact on performance. Using a total of 2300 employees as samples, the study found that work-related stress of workers in the County Government of Kilifi impact positively on their performance. The study recommended the need for the County Government of Kilifi to design effort of organizing employees' burnout and of creating a more sufficient time for employees to be with their family.

Yu, Park and Hyn (2021) conducted a study examining the effect of work-related stress on the job performance of workers in banking sector of Pakistan. Using a total of 144 workers as the source of data, the study found a negative correlation between work-related stress of workers and their performance. At the end of the study, the researchers suggested a need for management to create conducive climate among the workers in order that high performance of workers would be adequately promoted.

Singgih et al., (2023) conducted a study examining the effect of work-related stress of teachers with special reference to Jaffna district schools and its eventual impact on their performance. Using a total of 150 teachers (28 unmarried and 122 married) as samples, the study found that teachers under stress cannot perform well due to that of the decrease of teachers' motivation and the increase of teachers' absenteeism. Researchers then recommended a need for reducing teacher absenteeism and enhancing teacher motivation.

An et al., (2020) examined work-related stress of workers in business sector of Pakistan and its eventual impact on their performance. Using structured questionnaire as tool of gaining data from a total of 143 workers, the study found that work-related stress leads to workers' inability to focus, workers' inability to think well, and workers' inability to make decision. The researchers then concluded that work-related stress and performance of workers in the business sector of Pakistan was negatively correlated. The researchers further underlined a need for reducing work-related stress in order that high performance of workers in the business sector of Pakistan would be promoted adequately.

Another study conducted by Shoaib et al., (2022) on work stress and employee performance in banking sector evidence from district Faisalabad, Pakistan. The study examined the relationship between stress and performance and the impact of stress on employee performance. Questionnaires were used to collect data from a sample of 150 respondents out of which 144 were returned and analysed using SPSS v. 19. Results of the study revealed that, all the components of stress namely lack of administrative support, excessive work demand, problematic customer relations, co-worker's relationship,

family and work-related stress and riskiness of job cause great stress in bankers and then decrease their performance.

Pradeep and Sharma (2019) did a study in Ghana to examine the effect of work stress on staff performance at Koforidua Polytechnic. Based on the purpose of the study, cross-sectional survey design was employed. Using the systematic sampling technique, the study selected 150 participants for the study. Based on the correlational results obtained during data analysis, the study found that, workload was the major cause of work stress among staff of Koforidua Polytechnic. The study therefore concluded that, job stress has a negative significant effect on staff performance.

Estebesa and Andal (2023) did work stress and employee performance: implications for nursing management. The focus of the study was to explore the status of work stress among hospital nurses in Isfahan, Iran. It also examined the relationship between nurses' work stress and performance. The study employed the cross sectional, descriptive, correlational and survey research designs. Using correlation and regression, the study found a negative and strong significant relationship between work stress and employee performance. It was concluded that, any increase in work stress among nurses could lead to a decrease in performance of the nurses.

In Ghana, Munir et al., (2020) carried out a study on work stress and burnout in selected banking institutions in Kumasi aimed at assessing work stress and burnout, and their effects on performance of employees in selected banking institutions in Kumasi. The study adopted the descriptive survey method. The target population was 118 workers in four banks in Kumasi: Prudential Bank, CAL Bank, ECOBANK and Barclays Bank. Convenience

sampling technique was used to select the participants of the study. A questionnaire was chosen as the data collection instrument. Data collected was analysed quantitatively and the study found that, the level of work stress and burnout were both moderate and that there was a significant positive relationship between work stress and burnout among the workers. Both work stress and burnout had significant negative relationships with work performance.

Within an academic setting, Amiruddin (2019) did a quantitative study on organisational stress and employee intention to quit among administrative personnel at the University of Fort Hare, South Africa. The study focused on the effect of organisational stress on employees' performance among administrative personnel at the University of Fort Hare. The study employed the survey design with a population of 638 employees of which 225 of them were randomly sampled. The study analysed data using Pearson Product Moment Correlation and linear regression analysis. The study found a negative relationship between perceived organisational stress and staff performance. They concluded that, perceived work stress has a strong negative effect on the employees' performance.

Khan et al., (2022) investigated how work stress affect non-teaching staff performance at University of Technology and University of Uyo in the Cross River State. The study focused on a sample size of 279 comprising 168 males and 111 females. Self-administered questionnaire was used to collect data from the staff and analysed using regression analysis. The study found work stress to negatively affect non-teaching staff performance in the universities studied. It was, therefore, concluded that work stress needs to be

urgently addressed in order to overcome its negative consequences and invariably improve performance levels of the nonteaching staff.

Similarly, Gharib, Jamil, Ahmad and Ghouse (2016), studied the impact of job stress factors on job performance of academic staff of Dhofar University, Sultanate of Oman. The study used structured questionnaires to collect data from 102 academic staff and analysed data retrieved using multiple regression analysis, to find the impact of job stress on job performance. The results showed that the level of academic staff of job stress was medium and sometimes low. In addition, the level of job performance was somewhat high, while workload was found to have a positive statistical effect on job performance among the academic staff of the university.

Aroosiya and Ali (2016) investigated how work stress impacts the performance of teaching staff in State Universities in Eastern Province of Sri Lanka. Among the specific objectives, the study looked at the impact of work stress on employee performance at the universities using the deductive approach. The study collected data from 133 teaching staff using questionnaires. Analysis was subsequently done using Pearson Product Moment Correlation technique. The result revealed that work stress is significantly and negatively related with performance of the teaching staff. The study concluded that, the presence of work stress negatively affects teaching staff performance levels at the universities studied.

Murali, Basit and Hassan (2017) did a quantitative study and adopted the descriptive research design in bid to examine the effect of job stress on employee performance in Malaysia. Using the convenient method, the study selected 310 respondents from various sectors in Malaysia. The survey

questionnaire was distributed via Facebook and the data gathered from 136 respondents were analysed using regression analysis. The study found that, role ambiguity and time pressure have significant and negative influence on employee performance while the other two factors of lack of motivation and workload do not have any significant influence on employee performance. It was therefore concluded that, any increase in role ambiguity and time pressure would invariably reduce employee performance.

Jayasinghe and Mendis (2017) conducted a quantitative study on stress and job performance with focus on the banking sector of Northern Region of Sri Lanka. Using survey method collected data via self-administrated structured questionnaire with the sample consisting of 125 banks in the industry. The industry had a total of 176 employees in all the branches of the selected banks in the Northern region. The results showed a negative correlation between job related stress and job performance, thus, showing a negative relationship between organisational stress and performance. The study also revealed a negative relationship between individual stress and performance. The study concluded that, job stress negatively impacts on the performance of employees of bank industry.

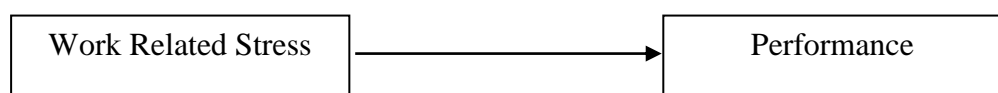
Chinenye, Chukwuemeka and Amobi (2017) conducted a descriptive study to investigate the effect of work stress and non-teaching staff performance in selected universities in the South Eastern Nigeria. The study collected primary data comprising face to face interview, focus group discussion, observation and questionnaire. Findings in the study revealed that work stress has a negative effect on non-teaching staff performance. The study

concluded that work stress is a major determinant of performance of nonteaching staff in the South Eastern Universities in Nigeria.

From the various reviews, it could be concluded that work stress and employee performance are negatively correlated. It was also found that, work stress has an effect on employee performance. However, the magnitude and strength of the relationship varies per the various reviews. This is an indication that, although job stress has been found to be a major threat to employees' performances in most organisations, its magnitude varies from organisation to organisation. It is therefore important to also examine the effect of work stress on employee performance at hospitals in bid to identify the strength and magnitude of the effect. This finding would add to existing literature and also inform policies of hospitals on job stress and employee performance.

### **Conceptual Framework**

This section explained how the concepts in the study are linked to each other. Work related stress was linked to employee performance. The framework has been presented on Figure 1.



*Figure 1: Conceptual Framework*

Source: Authors Construct (2023)

### **Chapter Summary**

This chapter covered the literature review of this study. The review was organised under four broad headings, namely: theoretical review, conceptual review, empirical review, and conceptual framework. Under the theoretical review, two relevant theories were integrated in addressing the effect of work-related stress on employee performance. Under the conceptual



review section, the concept of stress, work stress and employee performance were reviewed. Following the conceptual review, the empirical review was presented and organised. Then, the conceptual framework of this was offered.

## CHAPTER THREE

### RESEARCH METHODS

#### Introduction

This chapter illustrated the research design as well as the methodology employed while carrying out the study. The sections include research philosophy, research design, study area, target population, sampling procedure, the data collection instruments, data collection procedures, data processing, and analysis.

#### Research Philosophy

According to Guba (1990), a philosophy or worldview is a fundamental collection of beliefs that serve as a guide for behaviour. It is a broad stance that a researcher takes about the world and the nature of research, and it has an effect on the way that research is carried out. The academic field in which one may be involved, the beliefs of supervisors or faculty, and prior research experience are typically the factors that have an impact on one's research philosophy (Creswell, 2009). Research philosophy can also be referred to as a worldview or paradigm. The researcher is required to make a decision regarding the research philosophy that will be utilised in the study before beginning the research. Although it is possible that philosophical notions will remain, to a significant degree, concealed inside the study, Creswell (2005) argued that it is necessary to recognise them because of the impact they have on research.

In the realm of scientific study, the four most prominent philosophical approaches are pragmatism, critical realism, constructivism, and positivism. On the other hand, the positivist paradigm was chosen to serve as the research

philosophy for this particular study. Travers (2001), which was mentioned in Adam, Frimpong, and Boadu (2017), asserts that the essential concept of positivism is that researchers are able to use a scientific viewpoint when watching social activity, and that this allows for the possibility of conducting an objective analysis. According to Creswell (2014), a positivist researcher begins with a theory, then collects evidence that either supports or refutes the notion, and last, makes any required adjustments where they are deemed in an appropriate manner. Therefore, the type of worldview that is held unknowingly has an effect on the study design that is utilised, such as the quantitative, qualitative, or mixed design. As a result, research that is founded on a positivist philosophy tends to be based on deductive theorising, which involves the generation of several assertions for testing, followed by the quest for empirical verification (Babbie, 2007).

When doing positivist research, the researcher's responsibilities are restricted to the collecting of data and the interpretation of that data in an objective manner. Additionally, the researcher is subject to measurable comments that lead to a statistical study. According to Crowther and Lancaster (2008), the observer thinks that positivism is the belief that knowledge is derived from human experience. The positivist ideology was utilised since it assisted the researcher in providing answers to the questions that were being investigated.

### **Research Design**

The preliminary plan that specifies the methods and procedures for gathering and assessing the necessary information for the study is referred to as the research design. It is the overall strategy that is used to include the

different components in an articulate manner in order to guarantee that all of the research questions have been answered (De Vaus, 2001). The research design is referred to as the overall strategy. The original intention to conduct research, the general assumption, the technique, the data collecting, and the comprehensive data analysis are all included in the research plan or procedure. According to Kothari (2004), the research design that was utilised in this study does have a significant impact on the dependability of the data that were obtained, and it also served as the solid foundation around which the complete research activity was constructed.

In order to accomplish the goals of this research, an explanatory research design was utilised on the investigation. According to Engstrom and Salehi-Sangari (2007), the design of research can be defined as either exploratory, descriptive, or explanatory. During the course of their Explanatory research, Philips and Pugh (2000) examined a causal link and documented the relationship that exists between a number of different characteristics or variables. For the purpose of explaining the relationship between variables, statistical tests are applied to the data that was obtained. An explanatory research design was utilised in order to acquire a more profound comprehension of the topics that were going to be explored in the investigation.

### **Research Approach**

According to Creswell (2014), there are three types of research methods: mixed, qualitative, and quantitative. The researchers used a quantitative research approach for this investigation. According to Aliaga and Gunderson (2000), quantitative research explains phenomena by gathering

numerical data and analysing it using techniques rooted in mathematics, especially statistics. Accordingly, studies that gather information or data in numerical form are classified as quantitative research (Healey, 2010). The results of the quantitative research approach will be organised and codified. It handles a wider range of answers with limited response possibilities and extrapolates the findings.

According to Creswell (2003), the quantitative approach allows the researcher to gather data through surveys and experiments, which are then further examined. Both experimental and non-experimental designs are a part of quantitative research design. The researcher used survey research since it is an example of a non-experimental design (Creswell, 2014). By examining a population sample, survey research offers a numerical depiction of the trends, viewpoints, or attitudes of a population. In order to extrapolate from a representative to the broader public, it employs organised interviews or questionnaires for data collecting (Fowler, 2008).

### **Population of the Study**

Malhotra (1996) defines the study population as the collection of items or components that contain the data the researcher is looking for and that are cited. According to Burns and Bush (2000), the population is the complete group that the researcher is studying, as specified by the goals of the study. All of the nurses at Atua Governmental Hospital made up the study's population. The population was expected to be 733 employees.

### **Sample Size and Sampling Technique**

According to Kumar (1999), a sample is a subset of the population that is ideally representative of the whole population. As a result, it is typically

impossible for researchers to observe every member of the population they are researching up close. Rather, they gather information from a subset of people and draw conclusions about the community as a whole based on those observations (Zickmund, Carr & Griffin 2013). A straightforward random sampling method was used. This was selected since it offered all participants an equal opportunity to participate in the research. It is important to keep in mind that the larger the sample size, the less probable it is that the results will be generalised to the entire population (Sim, Saunders, Waterfield & Kingstone, 2018). Using the Krejcie and Morgan (1970) sample size estimation approach, the study's necessary sample size was 185 based on a target population of 733.

### **Data Collection Instrument**

For this study, the researcher used primary data. To get the data, a Google Docs survey form was used to ask for answers. The questionnaire thoroughly addressed every research goal in relation to the study's issue. After a thorough examination of the relevant literature, the questionnaires for the respondents were created for this study.

The questionnaires were modified by the researcher to account for the variations among nations. The questionnaire's format was chosen keeping the respondents' needs in mind. To prevent responses from overthinking, the questions were succinct, clear, and specific. Experts who participated in the discussions offered their opinions and suggestions on how to properly organise the questionnaire.

The questionnaire covered all of the research objectives in depth and was divided into three sections, A through C. The demographic details of the

responder, including gender, educational background, marital status, dependents, and educational level, were included in Section A. Questions about stress at work were covered in Section B. The purpose of these self-assessment questions was to find out how stressed out the employees were at work. There were performance-related questions in Section C.

A questionnaire is a fairly formal, well-structured, and convenient way to collect data. However, distributing it when people are distracted by anything else may result in mistakes. As a result, the questionnaire was pre-tested at a staff meeting following its preparation and extensive expert review.

### **Data Collection Procedures**

It took around two months to acquire the data. The researcher first requested permission from the institution's administration. Then, during monthly staff meetings, the nurses were briefed on the current study. The researcher informed the staff about the study's goal and obtained their approval. The nurses completed the online survey after the researcher delivered it to them via their What's Up platform. The period of data collecting was one month.

### **Validity and Reliability**

The study included appropriate definition measuring items, expert review of the scale, and scale pre-testing to guarantee the instrument's content validity. These were consistent with McDaniel and Gates' (1996) tenets. Two important factors to take into account while assessing a certain instrument are validity and reliability. Cronbach's Alpha value is used to gauge an instrument's reliability (Saunders & Lewis, 2012). According to Pallant (2016), the Cronbach's alpha coefficient for variables is produced in order to

verify the reliability of the instrument. Additionally, according to Pallant (2016), scales are deemed credible if their Cronbach's alpha coefficient is 0.70 or higher. Nonetheless, research like Mahmoud (2010) and Boohene, Agyapong, and Asomaning (2012) validated the coefficient of 0.5.

### **Data Processing and Analysis**

The data collected on the google docs survey forms was exported into excel. The exported document that is the questionnaire was coded before it is entered into the SPSS. The keywords in each question were given a unique name and numbers assigned to them as codes. Codes was transferred to the response categories in the scale before data input. The quality of data input determines the quality of information output. To achieve accurate data entry, the researcher must practice effective coding, efficient data capture, access, and quality validation. The data entered was checked by three competent SPSS experts to ensure no mistakes to minimize errors in data entry and data processing. The structural equation model and descriptive statistics were employed to analyse the study's objectives.

### **Ethical Considerations**

Based on the 'Ethical Principles of Psychologists and Code of Conduct' as proposed by the American Psychological Association (APA), the following ethical considerations were observed in this study: institutional approval; informed consent, which enlightened the participants about the purpose of the study; establishing participants free will in participation or abandonment of the survey; reporting accurate methodologies and results; the absence of plagiarism in the survey; taking credit only for this study and giving credit



where it is due; and sharing of research data for verification (American Psychological Association, 2017).

### **Chapter Summary**

In conclusion, this chapter presented the study's research design and methodology while discussing research philosophy, the research design, the population, the instruments used, processes involved in data collection, data analysis, and ethical considerations.

## CHAPTER FOUR

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

#### Introduction

This study sought to examine the effect of work related stress and performance of Nurses at Atua Government Hospital. This chapter presented the results and discussion of the study. In addition, the chapter covered the analysis and findings of the research using both descriptive and inferential statistics. Specifically, the characteristics of the respondents were discussed.

#### Demographic Characteristics

This section analysed the demographic characteristics of respondents. The gender of respondents, age of respondents and educational level of respondents were explained. The results have been presented on Table 1.

**Table 1: Demographic Characteristics**

Variable	Frequency	Percent
<b>Sex</b>		
Male	108	58.4
Female	77	41.6
<b>Age of respondents</b>		
20-29	65	35.1
30-39	80	43.2
40-49	23	12.4
50-59	17	9.2
<b>Highest Educational Attainment</b>		
Secondary	21	11.4
HND	45	24.3
First Degree	68	36.8
Master's Degree	36	19.5
Others	15	8.1
<b>Marital Status</b>		
Single	102	55.1
Married	76	41.1
Divorced	7	3.8
<b>Total</b>	<b>185</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Field Survey (2023)

Out of 185 respondents, 108 were males. This represented 58.4 percent of the respondents. Seventy-seven (77) of the respondents were females. This also represented 41.6 percent of respondents.

Regarding to the age of respondents, eight (80) of the respondents were between the ages of 30 to 39 years. This represented 43.2 percent of the respondents. Sixty-five (65) of the respondents were 20 to 29 years old. This represented 35.1 percent of respondents. Twenty-three (23) of the respondents were between the ages of 40 to 49 years. This represented 12.4 percent of the respondents. Seventeen (17) of the respondents were between the ages of 50 to 59 years. This represented 9.2 percent of the respondents.

Sixty-eight (68) of the respondents were holding first degree. This represented 36.8 percent of the respondents. Forty-five (45) of the respondents were holding HND. This represented 24.3 percent of the respondents. Thirty-six (36) of the respondents were holding Master's degree. This represented 19.5 percent of the respondents. Twenty-one (21) of the respondents were holding secondary certificate. This represented 11.4 percent of the respondents. Fifteen of the respondents were having other certificates. This represented 8.1 percent of the respondents.

One hundred and two (102) of the respondents were single. This represented 55.1 percent of the respondents. Seventy-six (76) of the respondents were married. This represented 41.1 percent of the respondents. Finally, 7 of the respondents were divorced. This represented 3.8 percent of the respondents.

### Level of work-related stress among nurses at Atua Government Hospital

The first objective of the study was to analyse the perceived level of work-related stress among nurses at Atua Government Hospital. The descriptive statistics was employed in achieving this objective. Specifically, mean and standard deviation was employed in analysing the objective. The result has been presented on Table 2.

**Table 2: Level of work-related stress among nurses at Atua Government Hospital**

	Mean	Std. Deviation
I frequently experience physical symptoms such as headaches or stomachaches due to work-related stress.	4.26	.906
I often feel overwhelmed by the amount of work I have to do.	4.23	.952
I often feel that my workload is too much for me to handle.	4.14	.932
My work demands often interfere with my personal life and family time.	4.14	.943
I frequently feel anxious or tense at work.	4.09	.965
I frequently feel pressured to meet tight deadlines at work.	4.07	.902
I find it difficult to relax and unwind after work.	4.04	.974
I have trouble sleeping due to work-related worries	4.04	1.053
I often find it challenging to balance my work responsibilities with my personal life.	3.96	.931
I feel like I have little control over my work tasks.	3.84	1.022

Source: Field Survey (2023)

Table 3 shows the perceived level of work-related stress at Atua Government Hospital. "I frequently experience physical symptoms such as headaches or stomachaches due to work-related stress" recorded the highest average. This item recorded an average of 4.26 with a corresponding standard deviation of 0.906. This statement received a relatively high mean score, indicating that a significant number of nurses at Atua Government Hospital

frequently experience physical symptoms like headaches or stomachaches as a result of work-related stress. The low standard deviation suggests that there is relatively less variability in responses to this statement among the nurses. This statement assesses whether nurses often suffer from physical symptoms like headaches or stomachaches as a direct result of the stress they experience at work. High scores on this item indicate that many nurses experience physical manifestations of stress.

"I often feel overwhelmed by the amount of work I have to do" was the next item with a higher average. This item recorded an average of 4.23 with a corresponding standard deviation of 0.952. This statement also received a high mean score, showing that many nurses frequently feel overwhelmed by their workload. The standard deviation suggests that while this feeling is common, there is some variability in how individual nurses experience this sense of being overwhelmed. This item examines how frequently nurses feel a sense of being overwhelmed by the volume of work they have to complete. A high mean score suggests that a significant portion of nurses often feel overburdened by their workload.

"I often feel that my workload is too much for me to handle" was the next item with a higher average. This item recorded an average of 4.14 with a corresponding standard deviation of 0.932. Nurses commonly feel that their workload is excessively burdensome, as indicated by the mean score. This statement has a moderate standard deviation, implying that while many nurses feel this way, there is some variation in their perceptions. This statement assesses the nurses' perception of their workload, specifically whether they

frequently feel that it exceeds their capacity to manage. A high mean score indicates that many nurses feel their workload is too demanding.

"My work demands often interfere with my personal life and family time" recorded the next higher average. This item recorded an average of 4.14 with a corresponding standard deviation of 0.943. This statement received a similar mean score to the previous one, indicating that many nurses experience work demands interfering with their personal and family life. The standard deviation suggests that there is some variation in the extent to which personal life and family time are affected for different nurses. This item evaluates whether nurses frequently experience work-related demands encroaching upon their personal lives and family time. A high mean score suggests that many nurses face difficulties in balancing work and personal life.

"I frequently feel anxious or tense at work" was the item with a higher average. This recorded an average of 4.09 with a corresponding standard deviation of 0.965. A high mean score suggests that nurses frequently experience anxiety or tension while at work. The standard deviation indicates that there is variation in how anxious or tense nurses feel while working. This statement assesses how often nurses experience anxiety or tension while working. A high mean score indicates that a significant number of nurses frequently feel anxious or tense in their workplace.

"I frequently feel pressured to meet tight deadlines at work" was the next item with a highest average. This item recorded an average of 4.07 with a corresponding standard deviation of 0.902. This statement received a high mean score, indicating that nurses often feel pressure to meet tight work deadlines. The standard deviation is relatively low, suggesting that there is a

degree of consensus among nurses regarding this statement. This item measures the frequency with which nurses feel pressured to meet tight work-related deadlines. A high mean score suggests that many nurses frequently experience pressure in meeting deadlines.

"I find it difficult to relax and unwind after work" was the next item with a higher average. This item recorded an average of 4.04 with a corresponding standard deviation of 0.974. The mean score suggests that many nurses have difficulty relaxing and unwinding after their work shifts. The higher standard deviation implies that there is some variation in the ability to relax and unwind among nurses. This statement assesses whether nurses have difficulty in relaxing and de-stressing after their work shifts. A high mean score indicates that many nurses struggle to unwind after work.

"I have trouble sleeping due to work-related worries" was the item with the next average. This item recorded an average of 4.04 with a corresponding standard deviation of 1.053. This statement also indicates that nurses often have difficulty sleeping due to work-related worries, with a similar mean score to the previous item. The high standard deviation suggests that the impact of work-related worries on sleep quality varies among the nurses. This item evaluates whether nurses often experience sleep disturbances due to concerns related to their work. A high mean score suggests that work-related worries frequently impact the quality of sleep for nurses.

"I often find it challenging to balance my work responsibilities with my personal life" was the next item with a higher average. This item recorded an average of 3.96 with a corresponding standard deviation of 0.931. This statement indicates that, on average, nurses find it challenging to balance their

work responsibilities with their personal life. The standard deviation suggests that while this challenge is common, there is some variability in how nurses experience it. This statement measures how frequently nurses find it difficult to strike a balance between their work responsibilities and personal life. A high mean score suggests that this challenge is a common issue for many nurses.

"I feel like I have little control over my work tasks" was the next item with a higher average. This item recorded an average of 3.84 with a corresponding standard deviation of 1.022. The mean score is lower, indicating that, on average, nurses feel they have little control over their work tasks. The relatively high standard deviation suggests that some nurses may feel more control than others regarding their work tasks. This item assesses the nurses' perception of their level of control over their work tasks. A lower mean score suggests that, on average, nurses feel they have limited control over their job responsibilities.

These interpretations highlight that work-related stress is a significant issue among the nurses at Atua Government Hospital, affecting various aspects of their well-being and job satisfaction. While there is a general consensus that these stressors are prevalent, there is some variation in how individual nurses experience and perceive these challenges. The result is in line with Sorensen et al., 2021, Hayes et al., 2021 and Carter et al., 2020.

### **Perceived level of employee performance among Nurses at Atua Government Hospital**

The second objective of the study was to analyse the perceived level of employee performance among Nurses at Atua Government Hospital in Ghana.



Descriptive statistics was employed in analysing the objective of the study.

The result has been presented on table 3.

**Table 3: Perceived level of employee performance among Nurses at Atua Government Hospital**

	Mean	Std. Deviation
I am proactive in identifying and solving problems in my work area.	4.24	.779
I effectively manage my time and prioritize tasks to ensure efficient workflow.	4.14	.954
I consistently demonstrate a strong work ethic and dedication to my role.	4.13	.853
I willingly take on new responsibilities and challenges to contribute to the organization's success.	4.11	.909
I actively seek and implement feedback to improve my performance.	4.08	.861
I consistently receive positive feedback from colleagues, supervisors, and clients about my performance.	4.08	.884
I effectively collaborate with my colleagues to achieve team goals.	4.07	.977
I consistently deliver high-quality work that meets or exceeds expectations.	3.97	.904
I consistently meet the goals and targets set for my role.	3.90	.990
I actively seek opportunities to enhance my skills and knowledge relevant to my job.	3.88	.956

Source: Field Survey (2023)

The provided table represents data on the perceived level of employee performance among nurses at Atua Government Hospital. The data includes several statements related to employee performance, with each statement having a corresponding mean score and standard deviation. The mean score reflects the average level of agreement with each statement, while the standard deviation indicates the variability in responses among the nurses.

"I am proactive in identifying and solving problems in my work area" recorded the highest average. This item recorded an average of 4.24 with a corresponding standard deviation of 0.779. The high mean score suggests that nurses perceive themselves as proactive in identifying and solving work-related problems. The relatively low standard deviation indicates a degree of consensus among nurses about their proactivity in problem-solving. This statement assesses the nurses' perception of their proactivity in recognizing and addressing issues in their work environment. A high mean score (4.14) suggests that nurses generally view themselves as proactive in problem-solving.

"I effectively manage my time and prioritize tasks to ensure efficient workflow" was the next item with a higher average. This item recorded an average of 4.14 with a corresponding standard deviation of 0.954. Nurses perceive that they are effective in managing their time and prioritizing tasks for efficient workflow. The moderate standard deviation suggests that while many nurses agree with this statement, there is some variability in their self-assessments. This item evaluates how well nurses believe they manage their time and prioritize tasks to ensure efficient work processes. The high mean score (4.14) indicates that nurses perceive themselves as effective in time management.

"I consistently demonstrate a strong work ethic and dedication to my role" was the next item with a higher average. This item recorded an average of 4.13. The high mean score indicates that nurses believe they consistently demonstrate a strong work ethic and dedication to their roles. The standard deviation is relatively low, indicating a degree of agreement among nurses

regarding their work ethic. This statement assesses the nurses' self-perceived work ethic and dedication to their job. A high mean score (4.14) suggests that nurses generally believe they consistently exhibit a strong work ethic and dedication.

"I willingly take on new responsibilities and challenges to contribute to the organization's success" was the next item with a higher average. This item recorded the average of 4.11 with a corresponding standard deviation of 0.909. Nurses perceive that they are willing to take on new responsibilities and challenges for the benefit of the organization. The moderate standard deviation suggests that while many nurses agree with this statement, there is some variability in their willingness to take on new responsibilities. This item measures nurses' willingness to embrace new responsibilities and challenges for the benefit of the organization. The mean score (4.11) indicates that nurses are generally open to taking on new tasks and challenges.

"I actively seek and implement feedback to improve my performance" was the next item with a higher average. This item recorded an average of 4.08 with a corresponding standard deviation of 0.861. Nurses indicate that they actively seek and implement feedback to improve their job performance. The standard deviation suggests a degree of agreement among nurses regarding their feedback-seeking behavior. This item measures nurses' willingness to embrace new responsibilities and challenges for the benefit of the organization. The mean score (4.11) indicates that nurses are generally open to taking on new tasks and challenges.

"I consistently receive positive feedback from colleagues, supervisors, and clients about my performance" was the next item with a higher average.

This item recorded an average of 4.08 with a corresponding standard deviation of 0.884. Nurses believe they consistently receive positive feedback about their performance from colleagues, supervisors, and clients. The standard deviation suggests that there is some variation in the feedback nurses receive. This item assesses the nurses' perception of the feedback they receive from various stakeholders. The mean score (4.08) indicates that nurses generally believe they consistently receive positive feedback about their performance.

"I effectively collaborate with my colleagues to achieve team goals" was the next item with a higher average. This item recorded an average of 4.07 with a corresponding standard deviation of 0.977. Nurses perceive themselves as effective collaborators in achieving team goals. The standard deviation indicates some variability in their perceptions of collaboration. This statement evaluates nurses' perceived ability to work effectively with their colleagues to achieve team objectives. The mean score (4.07) suggests that nurses generally view themselves as effective collaborators in a team setting.

"I consistently deliver high-quality work that meets or exceeds expectations" was the next item with a higher average. This item recorded an average of 3.97 with a corresponding standard deviation of 0.904. Nurses, on average, believe they consistently deliver high-quality work that meets or exceeds expectations. The standard deviation suggests some variability in their self-assessments. This item assesses the nurses' perception of the quality of their work and whether it meets or surpasses expectations. The mean score (3.97) indicates that, on average, nurses believe they consistently deliver high-quality work.

"I consistently meet the goals and targets set for my role" was the next item with higher average. This item recorded an average of 3.90 with a corresponding standard deviation of 0.990. Nurses perceive that they consistently meet the goals and targets set for their roles, but the mean score is slightly lower than for other statements. The high standard deviation indicates a wider range of responses, with some nurses possibly not consistently meeting their goals. This statement evaluates whether nurses consistently meet the goals and targets set for their specific roles. The mean score (3.90) suggests that while many nurses meet these goals, there may be some who do not consistently do so.

"I actively seek opportunities to enhance my skills and knowledge relevant to my job" was the item with a least average. This item recorded an average of 3.88 with a corresponding standard deviation of 0.956. Nurses believe they actively seek opportunities to enhance their skills and knowledge relevant to their jobs. The standard deviation suggests some variability in their pursuit of skill enhancement. This item assesses whether nurses actively seek opportunities to improve their skills and knowledge in areas relevant to their job. The mean score (3.88) indicates that nurses generally perceive themselves as proactive in seeking skill enhancement opportunities.

In summary, the table reflects that nurses at Atua Government Hospital generally perceive themselves positively in various aspects of their work performance. However, there is some variability in their self-assessments, particularly in areas like consistently meeting goals and actively seeking skill enhancement. The findings is also consistent with Di Stefano et al., (2020) and Bialczyk et al., (2020).

## **Work related stress and performance of Nurses at the Atua Government Hospital**

The third objective of the study is to analyse the effect of work-related stress on performance of Nurses at the Atua Government Hospital. The simple regression was employed to analyse the objective of the study.

### **Assessment of Measurement Models for the Study**

The measurement models that were used for the investigation are the primary emphasis of this section. The evaluation of the indicator loadings comes first in this part of the section. Indicator loadings, internal consistency reliability (also known as composite reliability), convergent validity (AVE-average variance extracted), and discriminant validity are some of the aspects of the measurement model that are evaluated throughout the process (Fornell-Lacker and HTMT). In order to provide indications for the evaluation of the measurement model, a dependable PLS algorithm was put through its paces. The findings are summarised in the tables that are shown below.

### **Assessing Indicator Loadings**

The data in Table 4 reveals that some of the indications have been removed. In order to make the overall model more reliable, we eliminated any and all indicators that had a loading score lower than the suggested threshold of 0.7, which was established by Hair et al (2016). 15 of the 16 measurement items scored significantly over the threshold, which was established at 0.7, while all of the ones that fell within the individual variables were kept.

**Table 4: Cross Loadings**

	Employee Performance	Work related Stress
EmplPerf1	<b>0.806</b>	0.767
EmplPerf10	<b>0.799</b>	0.671
EmplPerf2	<b>0.8</b>	0.766
EmplPerf3	<b>0.841</b>	0.711
EmplPerf4	<b>0.869</b>	0.7
EmplPerf5	<b>0.837</b>	0.646
EmplPerf6	<b>0.875</b>	0.71
EmplPerf7	<b>0.875</b>	0.725
EmplPerf8	<b>0.894</b>	0.754
EmplPerf9	<b>0.742</b>	0.602
WRS1	0.6	<b>0.782</b>
WRS3	0.594	<b>0.793</b>
WRS4	0.56	<b>0.827</b>
WRS5	0.61	<b>0.816</b>
WRS6	0.584	<b>0.812</b>

Source: Field Survey (2023)

All the indicators on table loaded 0.7 and above. This indicates that, the items explained each of the constructs appropriately.

### **Assessing Internal Consistency Reliability**

In this particular investigation, the composite reliability was used in order to determine the level of internal consistency and dependability possessed by the various structures. Cronbach's alpha is not the most effective way to quantify internal consistency; the composite reliability is a more acceptable metric (Rossiter, 2002). According to the findings shown in Table 5, which show that all of the latent variables investigated in this research are trustworthy since their loadings were all very close to the 0.7 criterion. The employee performance had the highest composite reliability measure (0.953).

This was followed by Work-related stress (0.937). The findings of the convergence validity are shown in Table 5.

**Table 5: Validity and Reliability**

	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rho_a)	Composite reliability (rho_c)	Average variance extracted (AVE)
Employee				
Performance	0.951	0.953	0.958	0.697
Work related stress	0.934	0.937	0.943	0.625

Source: Field Survey (2023)

Before a data gathering device can be considered dependable, Cronbach (1951) suggests that its Cronbach alpha value should be at least 70 percent. According to the findings shown in the table that is located above, the levels of reliability achieved were higher than those considered to be acceptable (Cronbach's alphas  $>.70$ , Average Variance Extracted  $>.50$ , and composite reliability  $>.70$ ), as suggested by researchers (Fornell & Larcker) (1981). In addition, the factor loadings, which ranged from 0.7-0.9, demonstrated high convergent validity. More than half of the volatility in the model's indicators can be explained by the model's constructs, which are able to account for that much variance. The discriminant validity of the measurement model was also evaluated as part of the overall evaluation process.

### **Assessing Discriminant Validity**

In order to establish discriminant validity, a construct has to demonstrate that it is singular and can reflect phenomena that are not captured by any of the other constructs in the model (MacKinnon, 2008). In order to determine the discriminant validity of the HTMT and the Fornell-Lacker



criterion's results, this research was carried out. The Fornell-Larcker criteria is a comparison that is made between the square root of the AVE values and the correlations of the latent variables (Fornell & Larcker, 1981). To be more specific, the square root of the average variance explained for each construct need to be higher than the greatest correlation it has with any other construct (Hair et al, 2013). According to the findings in Table 7, the square root of each variable has a correlation that is much higher than its correlations with the other constructs that were investigated in this research. This indicates that every construct is one of a kind and that no two constructions capture the same phenomena in the same way.

**Table 6: Fornell-Lacker Criterion**

	Employee	Worklife
	Performance	balance
Employee Performance	<b>0.835</b>	
Work-related stress	0.649	<b>0.791</b>

Source: Field Survey (2023)

#### **Assessing Coefficient of Determination and Predictive Relevance**

According to Hair et al. (2014), a level of significance of 0.25, 0.5, or 0.75 for a structural model's coefficient of determination ( $R^2$ ) is considered to have a low level of significance, moderate level of significance, and large level of significance, respectively. In addition, the author said that a predictive relevance ( $Q^2$ ) of "0.02, 0.15 and 0.35," as well as an effect size ( $f^2$ ) of "0.02, 0.15 and 0.35," are each regarded as being "little," "mid," and "large," respectively, for structural models. The following conclusion is one that may be drawn from the data that is shown in Table 7: work related stress showed a moderate coefficient of determination (0.72) and it accounts for 72 percent of

the variation in employee performance. The results show that the model has a modest level of predictive relevance when it is applied to the endogenous variable. This is based on the examination of the predictive relevance of the model (0.352). This indicates that the independent variables are capable of generating accurate predictions about the dependent variable. The results of the impact size indicate that each variable has a very little influence on the endogenous variable.

**Table 7: Regression**

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics ( O/STDEV )	P values
WRS -> Employee Performance	-0.849	0.856	0.038	-22.47	0.00

Source: Field Survey (2023)

From the Table, there was a negative and significant relationship between work-related stress and employee performance [ $B = -0.849$ ,  $t(324) = -22.47$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ]. A unit increase in work-related stress would lead to a 0.849 decrease in employee performance. Work-related stress can have a significant influence on the performance of nurses at Atua Government Hospital. High levels of stress can reduce a nurse's ability to concentrate and focus on their tasks. They may become less productive, take longer to complete assignments, and make more errors in their work. This can lead to decreased overall performance. Stress can lead to physical and mental health issues, which may cause nurses to take more sick days or time off work. Frequent absenteeism can disrupt the workflow, increase workload on other nurses, and reduce overall team performance.

Chronic stress can lead to reduced job satisfaction and overall job engagement. When nurses are unhappy in their roles, they may not put in their best effort, leading to a decrease in their performance. Stress can lead to interpersonal conflicts among colleagues. When nurses are stressed, they may become irritable, and conflicts can arise, which can affect teamwork and hinder the achievement of common goals.

Prolonged exposure to high levels of work-related stress can contribute to burnout, characterized by emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment. Burnout can result in a significant decrease in overall performance and an increased risk of nurses leaving their jobs or the profession altogether. High-stress levels can directly impact the quality of patient care. Stressed nurses may not provide the same level of care as those who are less stressed. This can lead to medical errors, compromised patient safety, and decreased patient satisfaction.

Stress can impair cognitive function, affecting a nurse's ability to think clearly, make decisions, and respond effectively in critical situations. This can lead to serious consequences in healthcare settings. Nurses under significant stress may experience emotional challenges, such as anxiety and depression, which can further affect their performance and interactions with patients and colleagues.

A work environment with chronic stress can lead to high turnover rates as nurses seek less stressful job opportunities. Frequent turnover can disrupt the continuity of care and the hospital's overall performance. Managing stressed employees often requires additional resources, such as counseling, support programs, and temporary staff replacements. The allocation of

resources to address work-related stress can impact the hospital's operational efficiency and performance. The findings correspond with Goswami (2020) and Abdullahi et al., (2023). They found that, there was a negative and significant relationship between work-related stress and employee performance.

### **Chapter Summary**

This chapter was centered on the results and discussion of the study. The first objective of the study was to analyse the work-related stress existing in the Atua Government Hospital. This objective was achieved by using the mean and standard deviation. The second objective was to analyse the level of employee performance among staffs of the Atua Government Hospital. This objective was also achieved by using the descriptive statistics. The final objective of the study was to analyse the effect of work-related stress on employee performance. This objective was achieved by using the structural equation model. The chapter also discussed the demographic characteristics of the respondents.

## CHAPTER FIVE

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION

#### Introduction

It just so happens that this is the very last chapter of the research. In this chapter, we will go through the results and conclusions, as well as the policy implications and suggestions that stem from the research. In addition, the chapter provides some ideas for additional research.

#### Summary of the Study

This study was aimed to examine the effect of work-related stress on employee performance of Atua Government Hospital. Specifically, to analyse the work-related stress for staffs at the Atua Government Hospital; to analyse the perceived level of performance among staffs of the Atua Government Hospital; and to examine the effect of work-related stress on performance of staff of the Atua Government Hospital.

The study was centered on the interactional theory and conservation of Resource (COR) theory. The study employed the explanatory research design since the study tested the relationship between the various variables. The data collection instruments were questionnaire. The study employed the quantitative research approach. The simple random sampling technique was used in selecting a respondent of 185. Descriptive statistics and structural equation model were employed to analyse the objectives of the study.

#### Summary of Findings

The study also found that nurses often feel overwhelmed by the amount of work they do. They also often feel that workload is too much for them to handle. The study also found that employees are proactive in

identifying and solving problems in the work area. Nurses effectively manage their time and prioritize their tasks to ensure efficient workflow. Staff also consistently demonstrate a strong work ethic and dedication to their role. The study also found out there was a negative relationship between work related stress and staff performance.

### **Conclusion**

The findings are significant for understanding the problems and capabilities that exist within the nursing workforce. This understanding may inform initiatives for improving healthcare services and the well-being of employees. According to the findings of the study, working-related stress causes a significant number of nurses to develop both physical and emotional symptoms. They frequently experience feelings of being overwhelmed, are concerned about the amount of work they have to do, and struggle to maintain a balance between their personal lives and their professional lives. The findings of this study highlight the importance of implementing interventions that target stressors and provide support for the mental and physical health of nurses.

In addition, the research that focused on the level of employee performance that was perceived showed that nurses, in general, have a favorable perception of themselves in terms of their professional performance. They have the perception that they are proactive, efficient, dedicated, and open to challenges that are new to them. On the other hand, there is a certain amount of variety in self-assessments, particularly with regard to the constant achievement of particular goals and aims.

The connection between stress brought on by work and the performance of employees is a dynamic and complicated one. The negative effects of high levels of stress on performance can manifest themselves in a variety of ways, including decreased productivity, absenteeism, decreased job satisfaction, and greater interpersonal problems. On the other hand, making an effort to reduce stress and cultivate a supportive working environment can improve worker performance, collaboration, and the overall quality of care provided to patients.

### **Recommendations**

Based on the findings of the study, the following recommendations were made:

Programs for stress management are required to be implemented by management. Through the development and implementation of stress management programs, they are required to give nurses with the tools and resources necessary to deal with stress brought on by their profession. Some of the programs that may be included in these programs are stress reduction strategies, mindfulness training, and access to mental health assistance.

Additionally, management should foster a healthy balance between work and personal life. They have a responsibility to support and enable a healthy work-life balance for nurses by encouraging the scheduling of regular breaks, minimizing overtime, and providing flexible work arrangements wherever it is practical to do so. Providing nurses with opportunities to relax and engage in personal pursuits can be an effective way to alleviate stress.

Emotional support is something that the hospital is required to give for its staff. Creating a culture of emotional support within the company is

something that they need to do. Foster open lines of communication, attentive listening, and programs that provide support from peers. When nurses have the sense that they are being emotionally supported, they are better able to deal with stress.

It is imperative that management acknowledge and reward performance. The introduction of a recognition and rewards system that recognizes and celebrates the contributions and accomplishments of nurses will result in a reduction in the amount of stress experienced by nurses. In order to increase morale and motivation, it is important to recognize great performance.

### **Suggestions for further studies**

Due to time constraints, this research was cross sectional and was also restricted to the Atua Government Hospital. In future, longitudinal study should be undertaken to assess the effect of work-related stress on employee performance. Such a study will have the potential to reveal if the practices leading to employee performance which is measured at one time will be the same or vary from the outcomes at a later point in time. This can help in the decision that management may take at each point in time.



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**APPENDIX**  
**QUESTIONNAIRE**  
**UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST**  
**SCHOOL OF BUSINESS**  
**DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN RESOURCE**

This questionnaire has been designed to obtain information on “WORK RELATED STRESS AND PERFORMANCE OF NURSES AT ATUA GOVERNMENTAL HOSPITAL. We, therefore, seek your assistance since the information given is strictly for academic purposes. Any information provided will be treated as confidential.

**SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS**

1. Sex (1) male [ ] (2) female [ ]
2. Age of respondent: (1) 20-29 [ ] (2) 30-39 [ ] (3) 40-49 [ ]  
(4) 50-59 [ ]
3. Highest Educational attainment?  
(1) Middle School/Junior High School [ ]  
2) Secondary [ ] (3) HND [ ] (4) First degree [ ]  
(5) Master's degree [ ] (6) Other, please specify .....
4. Marital status (1) Married [ ] (2) Single [ ] (3) Divorced [ ]

**SECTION B: WORK-RELATED STRESS**

On a scale of 1 to 7, please rate the extent to which the following describes your perception. Where 1-Never 7-Always

No	Statements	1	2	3	4	5
1	I often feel overwhelmed by the amount of work I have to do.					
2	I frequently experience physical symptoms such as headaches or stomachaches due to work-related stress.					
3	My work demands often interfere with my personal life and family time.					
4	I find it difficult to relax and unwind after work.					
5	I frequently feel anxious or tense at work.					
6	I have trouble sleeping due to work-related worries.					
7	I often feel that my workload is too much for me to handle.					
8	I frequently feel pressured to meet tight deadlines at work.					
9	I feel like I have little control over my work tasks.					
10	I often find it challenging to balance my work responsibilities with my personal life.					

**SECTION C: EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE**

On a scale of 1 to 7, please rate the extent to which the following describes your perception. Where 1-Never 7-Always

No	Statements	1	2	3	4	5
1	I consistently meet the goals and targets set for my role.					
2	I actively seek opportunities to enhance my skills and knowledge relevant to my job.					
3	I consistently deliver high-quality work that meets or exceeds expectations.					
4	I effectively collaborate with my colleagues to achieve team goals.					
5	I am proactive in identifying and solving problems in my work area.					
6	I consistently demonstrate a strong work ethic and dedication to my role.					
7	I effectively manage my time and prioritize tasks to ensure efficient workflow.					
8	I willingly take on new responsibilities and challenges to contribute to the organization's success.					
9	I consistently receive positive feedback from colleagues, supervisors, and clients about my performance.					
10	I actively seek and implement feedback to improve my performance.					

**THANK YOU**