

Influence of socio-demographic characteristics and occupational attributes on work-related stress among frontline hotel employees in the Kumasi metropolis

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Abstract

Socio-demographic characteristics as well as occupational attributes of employees are gradually becoming important factors in the assessment and management work-related stress. However, most studies on work-related stress in the hospitality industry have generally focused on the causes, effects and coping mechanisms. This paper therefore attempts to delve into the influence of frontline hotel employees' socio-demographic characteristics and occupational attributes on work-related stress. This is very useful to all stakeholders, particularly hotel managers and employees themselves since insight would help improve the assessment and management of work-related stress in hotels. The study adopted a quantitative approach. Questionnaires were administered to 296 frontline hotel employees consisting of receptionists, waiters and bar attendants. The study revealed that marital status and workstation influence work-related stress. Findings are discussed in terms of theoretical and managerial implications.

Keywords: work-related stress, socio-demographic characteristics, occupational attributes, frontline hotel employees, Kumasi Metropolis

Introduction

Work-relates stress (WRS) has been defined as “a pattern of emotional, cognitive, behavioural and physiological reactions to adverse and noxious aspects of work content, work organisation and work environment. It is a state characterised by high levels of arousal and distress and often by feelings of not coping” (European Commission, 2002: 3). This exemplifies the nature of work frontline hotel employees are engaged in. According to Wireko-Gyebi and Akyeampong (2014), frontline hotel employees in the Kumasi metropolis perceive their work to be stressful. This can be attributed in parts, to the fact that frontline work in hotels places much emphasis of face-to-face interaction with guests (Dann, 1990). On their part, Hales and Nightingale (1986: 10) opined that frontline employees are “subject to a mass of competing, often contradictory or conflicting demands and expectations for a multiplicity of services”. In addition, Kristensen, Hannerz and Tuchsén (2002) observed that the nature of work undertaken by frontline employees includes hard deadlines, repetitive work, high emotional demands, low control, shift work, high work space, and problems with coordination of work. This makes frontline employees susceptible to stress.

In view of the above, WRS has become an important issue within the hospitality industry. This flows from the fact that WRS has dire consequences for both employers and employees. Gillespie, Walsh, Winefields, Dua, and Stough (2001) opined that if unchecked and unmanaged, WRS can undermine the quality, productivity, and creativity of employees work as well as employee health, well-being, and morale. In addition, WRS has resulted in high labour turnover (Imtiaz & Ahmed, 2009); headaches, gastrointestinal problems, sleep disturbances, and depressions (Ghaleb, 2008); backaches and weakness (Comish & Swindle, 1994; Dua, 1994; Lind & Otte, 1994; Wireko-Gyebi & Akyeamong, 2014); irritation, tiredness, and anxiousness (Wireko-Gyebi & Akyeamong, 2014), lack of concentration, difficulty with logical thinking, and decision making and lack of motivation to work (Leka, Griffiths & Cox, 2003). According to Malik (2011), the workplace is an important source of both demands and pressures causing stress and structural and social resources to counteract stress. This could potentially be as a result of the amount of time spent at the workplace (Erkutlu & Chafr, 2006). The cause of stress, which has been described by Strank (2005) as 'stressors', consists of a plethora of factors. Michie (2002) stressed that factors that are intrinsic to the job (long hours, work overload, time pressure, difficult or complex tasks, lack of breaks, lack of variety, and poor working conditions); under work or conflicting roles and boundaries; under promotion, lack of promotion, lack of training, and job insecurity are sources of stress at the work place. Di Salvo, Lubbers, Rossi and Lewis, (1995) observed that WRS is generally as a result of an imbalance between environmental demands and individual capabilities. Other sources of stress identified by Ramires, Graham, Richards, Cull, and Gregory (1996) include: work feeling badly managed and resourced, managerial responsibilities, and dealing with customers. Ivancevich and Matteson (1980) suggest four clusters of work stressors: physical environment; individual level (a mixture of role and career development variables); group level (primarily relationship-based); and organization level (a mixture of climate, structure, job design, and task characteristics).

Work-place demand, control, support, relationships, role, change, salary, and hotel guests have also been identified as major stressors of WRS (Health and Safety Executive (HSE), 2000, 2001; Galvin & Dileepan, 2002; Lo & Lamm, 2005; Ajgaonkar, 2006; Wireko-Gyebi & Akyeamong, 2014). Krone, Tabacchi and Farber (1989) observed that addressing and reducing stress is both a noble and goal and has a far reaching capability of expense reductions for employers. In response to this, a gamut of studies into WRS has been conducted in this regard (HSE, 2000; Palleson, 2001; European Commission, 2002; Lo & Lamm, 2005; HSE, 2006; Karatepe & Uludag, 2007). However, these studies were limited to Europe and Asia. With respect to Ghana, little is known on WRS among frontline hotel employees. This is because majority of the studies on accommodation in Ghana are limited to hotel facilities instead of employees (e.g. Akyeamong, 2007; Mensah, 2009; Teye, 2010). The few on employees primarily focuses on employee motivation and satisfaction, service quality among others. Although the study of Wireko-Gyebi and Akyeamong (2014) was on WRS among hotel frontline employees, their focus was on the causes and effects of WRS. This creates a dearth of knowledge with respect to WRS among frontline hotel employees in general and WRS and socio-demographics nexus specifically. The current study therefore seeks to explore the relationships between WRS and frontline hotel employee's socio-demographic characteristics.

Literature review

WRS is not an objective phenomenon (Sauter & Murphy, 1995). This, according to them, is so because different people experience and perceive organisational conditions differently. By extension, the level of WRS experienced and perceived depends on a myriad of factors. According to Axelsson, Vonagas and Vonagiene (2004), individual responses to stressful situations can vary greatly and that certain people are more likely to experience high levels of stress in their jobs than others. Key individual differences such as age, gender, education,

etc. have been identified as having implications in the relationships between stressors (causes) and strain (consequences or effects) of WRS (Sauter & Murphy, 1995). Dollard (2001) posits that these differences seem to influence people's reactions to stress. Socio-demographic variables as well as occupation attributes of employees are gradually becoming important factors in the assessment and management of WRS (European Agency for Safety and Health at Work, 2012; Leka, & Jain, 2010). For the purpose of this study, the demographic characteristics that influence WRS have been grouped into two broad categories, genetic (age and gender) and acquired (marital status, education).

Work-related stress and gender

The relationship between WRS and gender has been widely researched (Dua, 1994; Sharpley, Reynolds, Acosta & Dua, 1996; Kirkcaldy & Furnham, 1999; Antoniou, Polychroni & Vlachakis, 2006; Fotinatos-Ventouratos & Cooper, 2005; Vakola & Nikolaou, 2005). However, there are variations in the literature regarding the relationship between WRS and gender. Nelson and Burke (2002) argued that there is little or no significance of gender influences on the perception of WRS. Similarly, Bright (2001) posits that research on the subject does not reveal clear-cut gender differences. Contrary to the above, other studies by Matt and Dean (1993), Mirowsky (1996), Bodil (1997) and Tsutsumi, Kayaba, Tsutsumi and Ignarsh (2001) have revealed that females tend to report more WRS than males. In addition, women are seen to experience the greater level of stress (Ganster & Schaubroeck, 1991). This is so because women are more vulnerable to the demands of work to the extent that they often have more non-work demands than men. In an attempt to explain why females were more likely to experience WRS than their male counterparts, Gregory (1990) stated that for the female professional, gender stereotyping in the work place adds to the role conflict stress experiences. Comish and Swindle (1994), however, explained that role demands such as being a wife, mother and professional can provoke role conflict for the female worker.

Work-related stress and age

The literature is not clear on the differences between WRS and age, though the subject has received considerable attention in the literature. The works of Sharpley, Reynolds, Acosta and Dua (1996); Kirkcaldy and Furnham (1999); Antoniou, Polychroni and Vlachakis (2006) and Vakola and Nikolaou (2005) attest to the extent to which the subject has been discussed. Pallensen (2007) observed that there were no significant differences among age groups and perception of WRS. Axelsson and Vanaga (2004) also revealed similar results, though they admit that there is the possibility that there can be age differences in WRS perception. According to them, WRS is twice higher in older age as in young persons. According to Sager (1990), the ability to handle stress associated with job and organisation is found to increase with age (experience). Dua (1994) agreed with the above statement when he revealed that younger staff members reported more job stress than older staff. Similarly, Ben-Bakr, Al-Shammari and Jefri (1995) stated that employees who are less than 30 years old experience the highest levels of stress.

Work-related stress and marital status

According to Evolahti, Hultcrantz, and Collins (2006) stated that one main primary concern regarding WRS is whether WRS has an equal influence on marital status. This concern is critical since WRS may have different level of impact between married and unmarried employees (Iravanja, Iravanib, Iravanic, Mahmoudid, & Salimid, 2012). In spite of this, studies on WRS and marital status seem to suggest varied views on whether marital status of employees has any significant influence on WRS. On exploring the influence of marital status on WRS, Vanagas, Bihari-Axelsson and Vanagiené, (2004) observed that married employees were susceptible to WRS as compared to unmarried colleagues. In specific terms, they concluded that married female employees experienced WRS more than married males. With respect to insurance industry employees and WRS, Nagaraju and Nandini

(2013) asserted that there are significant differences between insurance employees' marital status and occupational stress. They concluded that working married women experience more stress than their counterparts. Contrary to above findings, Osmany and Khan (2003) reported that unmarried employees, especially the female, experience high levels of WRS than their counterparts. According to Callaghan, Tak-Ying and Wyatt (2000), single or unmarried nurses marginally experience high stress scores than married nurses. They further explained that this situation is possible because unmarried nurses equally face stressful situations such as financial problems in relation to self-maintenance, clothing and education as well as love life challenges related to searching for life partners and caring for siblings (Callaghan et. al., 2000). From the above, two main divergent views on the relationship between marital status and WRS arose. While some studies indicate married employees experience WRS than the unmarried employee, others hold that unmarried employees are rather prone to WRS than married employees. In the midst of these divergent views on the influence of marital status on WRS, a third view has been identified in the literature. Anjui (2015) observed that there is statistically no significant difference between married and unmarried hospital nurses. Other studies (Okeke, 2013; Iravanja et al., 2012; Salawu, 2004) report no significant difference in the occupational stress among married and single women.

Work-related stress and education

WRS levels are higher among those who are less educated Tsutsumi et al., (2001). On their part, Jones and Bright (2001) found out that men with higher education were more likely to express reactions to environmental stressors in psychological terms than those with lower education. A research conducted on WRS, education and work ability of nurses indicated that nurses with low education were perceived to experience WRS compared to their counterparts with higher education (Golubic, Milosevic, Knezevic, & Mustajbegovic, 2009).

Work-related stress and occupational attributes

Despite the fact that there as an increase interest regarding the relationship between socio-demographic variables and occupation attributes (European Agency for Safety and Health at Work, 2012; Leka, & Jain, 2010), few studies have delve into WRS and occupational attributes nexus. Few of the studies carried on this phenomenon have however observed significant differences between occupational attributes and WRS. For example, Vokić and Bogdanić (2007) found out that there was a significant difference between work experience and WRS. According to them, 'the ability to handle stress associated with job and organisation is found to increase with experience'. In essence, they suggest that employees with limited work experience are more prone to WRS than those with longer working experience, since the latter are better at managing stress than the former. Conway, Campanini, Sartori, Dotti and Costa (2008) observed the effects of shift work, age and work stress in Italy and concluded that there were limited evidence on the influence of shift work with nights and work stress. With respect to short-term contracts and permanent job, it has been observed that there exist a negative association between short-term contracts and stress (Kim, Muntaner, Vahid, Vives, Vanroelen, & Benach, 2012). According to Park (2007), full-time workers were likely to perceive their work days as stressful and as such slightly more likely to perceive their jobs as requiring a lot of physical effort.

Study area

Kumasi Metropolis, the capital city of the Ashanti Region, is located between latitudes 6.350 N to 6.400 N and longitudes 1.300 W to 1.350 W and covers a total land area of approximately 245 km². The city was considered appropriate for this research due to the following reasons. According to the Ghana Tourist Authority, (GTA, 2015), the city has all categories of accommodation units with the exception of a five-star hotel. In essence, the city can be said to be the only one in Ghana to have a four-star hotel outside Accra. The city

is also uniquely positioned, making it a traversing point from all parts of the county. This has contributed to making Kumasi a notable city for business and partly explains why the city can boast of a wide range of accommodations facilities. Due to this, accommodation for transit travellers, business travellers and tourists/holiday makers in the city is not a challenge. In terms of tourism, the city is endowed with a host of tourism attractions.

In line with this, Boakye (2010) described Kumasi, together with Accra and Cape Coast as the “Tourism Triangle” of Ghana. Tourist attractions in the city include: the Armed Forces Museum (the only inland fort in Ghana), the Manhya Palace, the Komfo Anokye Sword site, Centre for National Culture (which houses the Prempeh II Museum, craft shops and the regional offices of the GTA). The city’s proximity to tourist attractions such as Lake Bosomtwe and the famous Kente City of Bonwire is worthy of mention. Figure 1 shows the map of the study area.

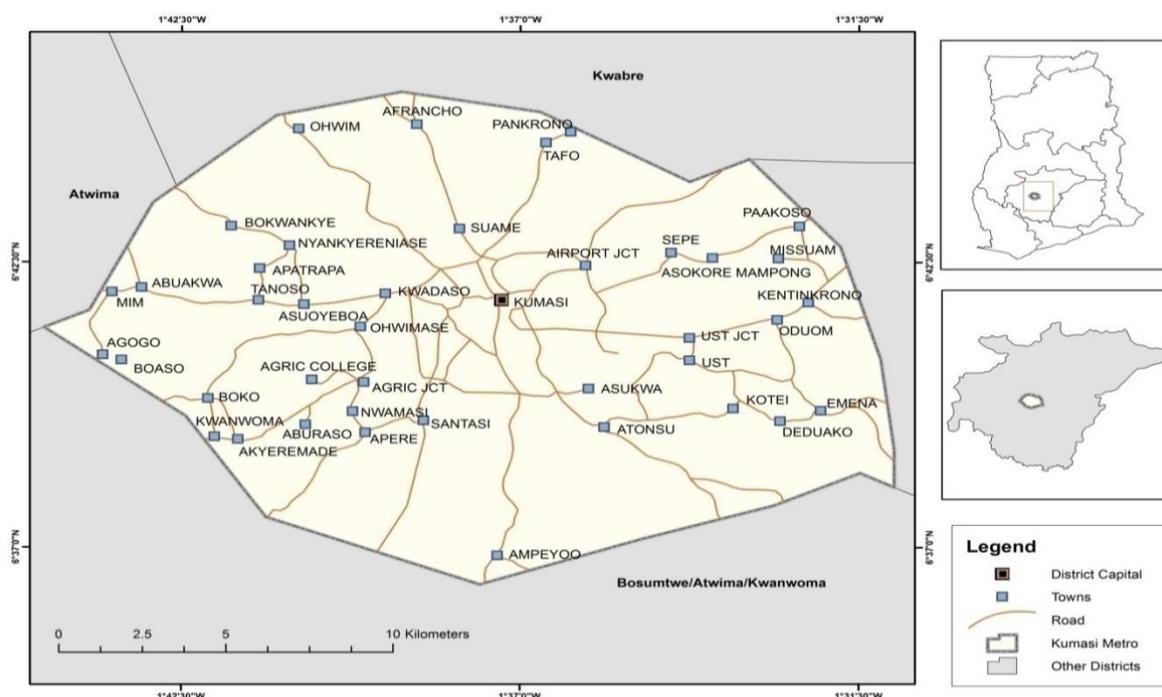


Figure 1: Map of study area

Methodology

The descriptive survey research design was adopted for the study. This design is a more rigid, planned and structured designed, and is typically based on a large sample (Churchill & Iacobucci, 2004). Creswell (2005) posits that the main purpose of the descriptive research design is to provide an accurate description of observations of a phenomenon and no attempt is made to change behaviour or conditions. Since the main aim of this study was to describe the causes and effects of WRS among frontline hotel employees with no intention of introducing any intervention, the descriptive research design was deemed appropriate. The total number of hotels in Kumasi is 249 (GTA, 2015). The licensed hotels were classified into four-star, three-star, two-star, one-star, guest houses and budget hotels. This was done based on the criteria set by the GTA. However, the three-star, two-star and one-star hotels were purposively selected. The total number of hotels selected was therefore, seventy (70) licensed hotels. Using the sample size calculator at a confidence level of 95%, which is the most widely used in social sciences, and a confidence interval of five (5), the sample size (number of hotels) for the study was fifty-nine (59) licensed hotels. However, since there were only five 3-star hotels, they were purposively included. The only 4-star hotel in the city was excluded because management of this hotel declined participation during the data

collection exercise, even they had earlier indicated their willingness to participate in the study.

The multi-stage sampling technique was used to select respondents for the study. At the first stage, fifty nine hotels were put into strata and the required number of hotels within each stratum was randomly selected (3-star=5; 2-star=29; 1-star=25). At the second stage, six (6) employees were accidentally selected from the sampled hotels. The accidental sampling technique was employed because hotel managers/owners were not willing to submit the list of frontline staff. In all, three hundred and fifty-four (354) respondents were selected for the study. Questionnaires were used for collecting primary data for the study. The questionnaires were developed using the Health and Safety Management Standards Indicator Tool. Almost all the items on the HSE tool were used with modifications made to suit the current study. In consonance with the literature and objectives of the study, the questionnaire was structured into three modules. Module 1 dealt with the occupational attributes of respondents. Key variables considered included workstation of employees, employment status and work experience. Module 2 looked at issues related to WRS. Module 3 of the questionnaire collected information on respondents' socio-demographics including age, sex, educational status and marital status. Data obtained from the field was processed using the SPSS (version 20).

The relationship between respondents' socio-demographics and occupational attributes were assessed using both t-test and one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA). T-test was used to measure the following because they were measured on a dichotomous scale: sex (1=male, 2=female); marital status (1=unmarried, 2=married); employment status (1=permanent, 2=contract). Since the remaining socio-demographics and occupational attributes (age, educational status, work station and work experience) were measured on interval scales, it became eminent to employ ANOVA.

Results

Profile of respondents

A total of 296 respondents out of a target of 354 participated in the study. This represents a response rate of 83.6%. One hundred and sixty-five (55.7%) of the total respondents were males while the remaining one hundred and thirty-one (44.3%) were females. Majority of the respondents (45.9%) were >25 years of age, more than two-thirds (75.0%) were single. Most of the respondents had completed secondary education (43.9%). With regards to workstation, there were more receptionists (42.9%) than were waiters/waitresses (35.5%) and bar attendants (21.6%). 92.9% were permanent workers while the remaining (7.1%) were contract employees with contracts ranging between one and five years.

Work-related stress among frontline hotel employees

According to the European Foundation for the Improvement of Living and Working Conditions, as cited in Houtman (2005), the hotel industry is one out of seven sectors that is exposed to high risks of WRS. To explore WRS among hotel employees, respondents were asked to indicate whether they perceived their work as stressful or not. Most of the respondents (85.2%) indicated that their work was stressful whilst 10.8% of the respondents did not perceive working in the hotel as stressful. This assertion is in consonance with that of Wireko-Gyebi and Akyeampong (2014). According to them, frontline employees in hotels in Ghana constantly undergo stress in relation to their job.

Work-related stress by socio-demographic characteristics

There are varying views on the influence of socio-demographics on WRS. The current study explored the influence of frontline hotel employee’s socio-demographic characteristics (age, sex, marital status and educational level) on their perception of WRS. Both the t-test and ANOVA were employed. The results of the analysis are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Work-related stress by socio-demographic characteristics

Socio-demographic characteristics	N	Perception of WRS	P-value
Gender			
Male	165	1.75	p=.350
Female	131	1.85	
Age			
>29	234	1.77	p=.611
29-44	47	1.88	
<44	15	1.51	
Marital status			
Single	222	1.79	p=.000*
Married	74	1.80	
Level of education			
Basic	40	1.65	p=.481
Secondary	152	1.88	
Tertiary	104	1.85	

*Significance level $p < .05$.

Results from the t-test indicated that there were no significant differences between employees’ sex and their perception of WRS ($p=.350$), though more males (56.4%) than females (43.6%) indicated they experience WRS. Similar results were revealed by the ANOVA with regards to frontline hotel employee’s experience of WRS. From the ANOVA analysis, there were no significant differences between age and perception of WRS ($p=.611$) as well as level of education and perception of WRS ($p=0.481$). Though no significant differences existed between respondents’ age and educational status and WRS, there were indications that more than two-thirds of respondents (69.2%) whose ages were >29years experienced WRS as compared to those aged between 30-34years (24.8%) and <44years. Secondary school leavers (46.0%) were more prone to WRS than those who had completed tertiary (31.9%) and basic school (15.3%). However, the t-test analysis revealed a significant difference between marital status and perception of WRS ($p=.000$). In furtherance to this, married respondents (53.8%) indicated they experience WRS as compare to the unmarried respondents (46.2%).

Work-related Stress and Occupational Attributes

Further analysis was conducted with respect to WRS and frontline hotel employees’ occupation attributes (work station, employment status and working experience). There is again no consensus in the literature regarding WRS and occupational attributes of employees. The t-test and ANOVA results are depicted in Table 2.

Table 2: Work-related stress by respondents’ occupational attributes

Occupational attributes	N	Perception of WRS	P-value
Work experience			
<6years	117	1.89	p=.064
6-15years	154	1.78	
>15years	25	1.40	
Workstation			
Bar attendant	64	1.75	p=.000*
Receptionist	127	1.80	
Waiter/Waitress	105	1.80	

*Significance level $p < .05$.

The t-test analysis revealed no statistical significance between employment status (permanent and contract) and WRS. ($p=.924$). Despite this, more permanent staff (76.4%) reported WRS than contract staff (23.6%). Similarly, there were no significant difference between work experience and WRS ($p=.064$) as shown by the ANOVA analysis. While respondents with 6-15years working experience (45.9%) reported WRS, respondents with more than 15years working experience (31.7%) and less than 6years working experience (22.4%) indicated they experience WRS.

On the contrary, the ANOVA analysis indicated a statistically significant difference between workstation and WRS ($p=.000$). Workstation was categorised into receptionists, waiter/waitresses and bar attendants. Despite reaching statistical significance, the actual difference in mean scores between the groups was quite small [receptionist ($M=2.11$), waiter/waitress ($M=2.21$) and bar attendants ($M=2.02$)]. The post-hoc comparisons using the Turkey HSD test indicated that the mean score for receptionists ($M=2.11$, $SD=0.25$) was significantly different from those waiter/waitresses ($M=2.21$, $SD=0.21$). In specific terms, more receptionists (42.9%) were prone to WRS than waiters/waitresses (35.5%) and bar attendance (21.6%).

Discussion

The literature on the relationship between both socio-demographic variables and occupational attributes of employees and WRS indicate varied opinions on the subject matter. The relationship between WRS and sex has been widely researched (Dua, 1994; Sharpley et al., 1996; Kirkcaldy & Furnham, 1999; Antoniou et al., 2006; Fotinatos-Ventouratos & Cooper, 2005; Vakola & Nikolaou, 2005). Nonetheless, there are divergent views on the relationship between sex and WRS. While some studies (Matt & Dean, 1993; Mirowsky, 1996; Bodil, 1997; Vokić & Bogdanić, 2007; Tsutsumi et al., 2001) posit that females are more prone to WRS than males, others (Bright 2001; Nelson & Burke 2002) observed no statistical significant between gender and WRS.

Results of the current study correspond to the views held by Bright (2001) as well as that of Nelson and Burke (2002). Several reasons have been cite to explain why females are more prone to WRS than men. For instance, Vokić and Bogdanić (2007), opined that women are more vulnerable to the demands of work to the extent that they often have more non-work demands than men. Gender stereotyping in the work place also adds to the role conflict stress experiences (Gregory, 1990). Finally, role demands such as being a wife, mother and professional can provoke role conflict for the female worker (Comish & Swindle, 1994). In spite of these plausible reasons, findings from the current study revealed no significant difference between sex and WRS. With respect to age, the study did not reveal any significant difference between the age of frontline hotel employees and WRS. Pallensen (2007) stated in her study on "Work-related stress and health among employees in Malmo, Sweden" that there were no significant differences among age groups and perception of WRS. However, there is the possibility that there can be age differences in WRS perception (Axelsson & Vanaga, 2004). According to Axelsson and Vanaga (2004), WRS is twice higher in older age as in young persons. Nonetheless, there were indications that respondents with younger age were prone to WRS than older respondents. As earlier indicated more than two-thirds of respondents (69.2%) whose ages were >29years stated they experienced WRS as compared to those aged between 30-34years (24.8%) and <44years (6%). The possible explanation to this trend could employees >29years are likely to be new entrants and as such might be overwhelmed with the demands of the job. Again, such employees might lack the necessary job experience and as such might be more prone to WRS as compared to the other employees who might have lots of exposure with respect to the rudiments of the job.

In the literature, WRS has been touted as having different levels of impact on married and unmarried employees and as such there might be differences in experiencing WRS with respect to marital status (Iravania et al., 2012). In fact, Evolahti et al. (2006) stated that one main primary concern regarding WRS is whether WRS has an equal influence on marital status.

Even though there were no significant difference with the first two socio-demographic characteristics (sex and age) and WRS, the scenario was different with respect to marital status. The study found out that there was a significant difference between marital status and WRS. This is not surprising since more married respondents (53.8%) indicated they experience WRS as compare to the unmarried respondents (46.2%). This confirms the assertion of Vanagas et al (2004). According to them, married employees, especially the female, were susceptible to WRS than unmarried employees. This has even been found to be true in the insurance industry. Nagaraju and Nandini (2013) asserted that there are significant differences between insurance employees' marital status and occupational stress. They concluded that working married women experience more stress than their counterparts. However, there are two other divergent views to the findings of the current study. Osmany and Khan (2003) as well as Callaghan et al (2000) reported that unmarried employees, especially the female, experience high levels of WRS than their counterparts. On the other hand, other studies (Anjui, 2015; Okeke, 2013; Iravania et al, 2012; Salawu, 2004; Faskin, 2002) observed no significant difference in the occupational stress among married and single women. Contrary to the assertion by Tsutsumi et al (2001) that WRS is higher among the less educated, results from the study observed that there were no significant difference between the level of education and WRS. Even though Jones and Bright (2001) indicate that employees with higher education were more likely to express reactions to environmental stressors in psychological terms than those with low education, this trend was non-existing with the current study.

According to Vokić and Bogdanić (2007), the ability to handle stress associated with job and organisation is found to increase with experience. In essence, they found a significant difference between work experience and WRS. Contrary to the assertion of Vokić and Bogdanić (2007), the findings from the study indicate that there is no statistically significance difference between work experience and WRS. Apart from work experience, one important occupational attribute that can influence frontline hotel employees WRS is employment status (permanent/full time and part-time) of employees. Park (2007) has suggested that full-time workers were likely to perceive their work days as stressful. On the other hand, Kim et al. (2012) indicated that short-term contract negatively impact on WRS and as such employees on short-term contracts are more stressful than those with full-time employment. Contrary to these two studies, the current study observed no significant difference between employment status and WRS. However, the study found a significant difference between work station and WRS. Further investigations revealed that receptionist were identified to report more WRS than waiters and bar attendants. The above could be explained by the fact that the reception area of any hotel is the first point of call for all guests of the hotel. The receptionist is therefore responsible for welcoming all guests arriving at the hotel, dealing with reservations by phone, e-mail, and face-to-face, checking guests into and out of the hotel, allocating rooms, preparing bills and taking payments, dealing with guests' complains, etc. These tasks are enormous and hence might explain why a large proportion of receptions indicated they experienced WRS than waiters/waitresses and bar attendants.

Conclusion

The study delved into the influence of frontline hotel employees' socio-demographic characteristics and occupational attributes on WRS experienced. A total number of 296

respondents, comprising 127 receptionists, 105 waiters/waitresses and 64 bar attendants were randomly selected from 59 licensed hotels in the Kumasi metropolis. As indicated by Wireko-Gyebi and Akyeampong (2014), frontline hotel employees in the metropolis are susceptible to WRS. However, limited research on the relationship between their socio-demographic variables and occupational attributes exist, hence, the current research. The importance of socio-demographic variables and occupational attributes for WRS among frontline hotel employees cannot be overemphasised. Findings from the current study reveals interesting trend in this regard. Findings from the study revealed that employees' marital status and workstation influence work-related stress. Workstation in particular is mostly overlooked when it comes to frontline employees' occupational attributes and WRS. Therefore, this paper adds an important construct to occupational attributes and WRS relationship thereby making a significant theoretical contribution. Though there were no statistical significant relationships between most of the socio-demographic characteristics and occupational attributes (age, sex, level of education, work experience and employment status) and WRS, they provide an understanding on the dynamics of these variables and WRS in the Ghanaian hotel contest.

Results of the study also have practical implications for hotel managers. Hotel managers, especially in the Kumasi metropolis have a fair idea as to which socio-demographic variable and occupational attribute of frontline employees influence WRS. Practically, hotel managers are encouraged to focus on interventions aimed at managing WRS among married employees as well as receptionist. Such interventions should include but not limited to maternity leave for marriage employees, training for frontline staff, especially receptionists, ensuring adequate breaks for employees, sick leave and strategies for reducing work-home conflict in reference to married employees.

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