



**THE ROLE OF 'WORSHIP MUSIC' IN PROMOTING MENTAL
WELLNESS AMONG NEO-PENTECOSTALS IN DALLAS, TEXAS.**

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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the conception and execution of this research is my original work. I have equally acknowledged all ideas, views, and extracts of others used.



08 July 2025

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Date



10 July 2025

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Date

DEDICATION

“For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers: all things were created by him, and for him” Col. 1:16 (KJV)

“In him was life; and the life was the light of men.” John 1:4 (NLT)

“To God belong wisdom and power; counsel and understanding are his” Job 12:13 (NIV).

Based on the scriptures above, I declare that the success of a project of this magnitude can never be achieved through individual effort or skill. Therefore, I appreciate the supreme God for His inestimable grace, divine wisdom, and strength in completing this research.

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ABSTRACT

The effects of mental unwellness in the United States of America, especially among Dallas residents seem to be above the limited support provided by mental healthcare organisations. Such mental stress and trauma led to questions of causes, mitigations and subsequent investigation of the role of worship music in promoting mental wellness among some Neo-Pentecostals in Dallas, Texas. Using literature reviews and mixed research methods, it was discovered that worship music as a music therapy is not novel but using it to address economic and immigration-related trauma and stress was never explored in Dallas, Texas. Both the 201 quantitative and 10 qualitative data collected show that economic crises like inflation leading to a high cost of living and border crises raised the level of mental stress and Trauma. The data, analysed with 'Python regression', 'Word-cloud' and thematically interpreted with a 'Simple Observatory and Explanatory Process', show that these levels of trauma and stress have been mitigated by the worship music which acts as a coping mechanism and trauma diffuser. Furthermore, the data results under the lens of the theological narrative of David's music expression and parapsychological (PSI) frameworks reveal that most respondents use lyrics meditation. In contrast, others cry and laugh during worship to ease pain, trauma and worry. Consequently, they experience improved mental well-being via calmness, peace, relief and comfort. Though the findings stipulate that worship music is a coping mechanism and trauma diffuser, it did not guarantee the possibility of achieving deliverance in the case of Dallas nor did it provide a once-and-for-all solution to mental illness, but consistent practice provides progressive mental wellness. The thesis concluded with recommendations to churches, care facilities, healthcare organisations and mental wellness Chaplains, on utilising and improving worship music as mental wellness therapy in the Church, health sector and the community.

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KEYWORDS

- Calmness
- Congregational worship
- Coping mechanism
- Christian worship music
- Dancing
- Deliverance
- Hymns
- Immigration crises
- Listening
- Lyrics
- Mental wellness
- Neo-Pentecostals
- Parapsychological
- Peace
- Psycho-spiritual
- Worship
- Socio-economic crisis
- Socio-political crisis
- Solace
- Stress
- Theological
- Trauma
- Worship Music Therapy

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background of the Study

There are many reasons behind mental unwellness associated with socio-economic and socio-political crises. These may include but are not limited to poverty and food crises caused by inflation and skyrocketing cost of living; fear, panic, crime, and murder motivated by insecurity vis-à-vis the immigration crisis at the borders. Several information in the public domain have shown that socio-economic crises, including food inflation, can easily lead to mental unwellness. Guerra and Eboreime (2021) affirmed that “after the 2008 global financial crisis (GFC), there was an increase in the prevalence of depressive symptoms and disorders seen across most of the developed world. Consequently, a pervasive increase in mental health care utilization for depressive symptoms was seen during or following periods of economic recession. The narrative of Guerra and Eboreime now transcends the earlier 2000 experience, it is increasingly becoming the norm in Dallas, Texas.

In the last few years, there has been inflation and skyrocketing cost of living prices in the United States of America. Hobijn *et al.* (2022) attest that “Inflation has accelerated across industrialised countries, and the U.S. is in the middle of the pack. It also affirmed that the durable goods prices play an outsized role in overall inflation relative to other countries” This sad development has driven fear and worry into the people of the United States of America and, by extension, to the city of Dallas and the entire state of Texas. According to Smialek, “The government of the United States reported in June 2022 that consumer prices climbed 8.6%, the fastest rate of increase in four decades. The result is that Americans are confronted with more expensive food, fuel and housing. This sends waves of shock into Texans, while some are traumatized about the situation, others are either seeking means of ‘detraumatizing’ themselves or seeking socio-political answers to the price burst, how long it might last and what can be done to resolve it (2022:1).

In addition, the popular porous border crisis along the Texas and Mexico borders has created an influx of illegal immigrants terrorising not only Texas but the entire United States. Although recently, the Governor of Texas, Greg Abbott, rose to defend the people of the state of Texas concerning the porous border crisis, unfortunately, there were already over (10.5 million) illegal immigrants in the United States, with some among them committing crimes within the

communities. Davis affirms that “While the majority of illegal aliens seek a better life, the undeniable link between increasing illegal immigrants and crime poses a significant threat to American communities” (2023:1). In this regard, the immigration crisis has also been alleged by various political actors, media houses and related groups as a crisis relating to the 2024 presidential election in the USA. Davis presumes that “President Joe Biden’s decision to grant mass parole for millions of aliens, allowing them to remain illegally in the United States, only amplifies the devastating effects of increased illegal immigration on our society” (Davis, 2023:1).

With the above background, these socio-economic and socio-political challenges seem to affect middle and lower-class Americans more than the political and upper classes. Food costs are on the rise due to economic inflation. The cost of healthcare and housing is rising. Individuals and families are afraid of the influx of illegal yet harmful immigrants roaming the streets of Texas. Even the Law enforcement agencies that are saddled with the responsibility of protecting Americans are now attacked by illegal and harmful immigrants. Dienst *et al* (2024) write on NBC citing the case of the four illegal migrants who assaulted two police officers in New York. Here in Texas, incoming immigrants now overpower the border guards and national guards regardless of their military training (Taer and Palin, 2024; Shaw, 2024. The worrisome question is if the harmful illegal immigrants overpower the military and border patrol, how safe are the citizens on the streets and their houses? This is a disturbing development for the people of Dallas and other Texas regions.

Another good example of the insecurity and rise in crime levels caused by both native citizens and undocumented immigrants due to the porous border crisis led to the death of an innocent young lady by the name of Kathryn Steinle in San Francisco. She was murdered by an illegal yet harmful immigrant who leveraged the porous borders to commit murder. Philips assert that “The slaying of Kathryn Steinle, who authorities say was killed by an illegal immigrant with a criminal past, became a rallying cry for the Authority to push for hardline immigration policies” (2017). Unfortunately, no such policy to restrict or control the border crisis. Hence, the people of Dallas and the entire people of Texas are left to worry about the migrant’s crime and, in some cases, deal with their insecurity-led trauma at individual levels.

Amid all these socio-economic and socio-political challenges, life seems to be increasingly tough, especially for the people who live in one of the cities at the centre of the border crisis. The situation is true because research has shown that socio-economic and socio-political crises of this nature tend to create fear, panic, worry, and uncertainties, leading to surges of mental crises in different communities in America, including Dallas (Tracy, 2023; American Psychological Association, 2022; Feilging, 2022; Kopasker et al., 2018).

While these challenges subsist, the question is - how can the people of Dallas, who are in one of the biggest cities in Texas, cope with the socio-economic and socio-political challenges without facing irreparable mental damage? What role has or can worship music play in helping the people of Dallas cope with these challenges? Americans both in religious and secular spaces are lovers of music; could this be one of the instruments adoptable by the Dallas community of Neo-Pentecostals to survive the wave of mental health challenges in this trying period? For some Neo-Pentecostals who are already coping around Dallas, what role has worship music played in their coping experience? These are the questions that this research seeks to answer.

Answering these questions will be achievable in this research by investigating the role of worship music in promoting mental wellness among some Neo-Pentecostals in Dallas, Texas. The investigation will begin with a robust literature review, followed by the collection of data with a quantitative research method from some Neo-Pentecostals in Dallas to know the role and effectiveness of worship music (if any) in their coping mechanisms amid socio-economic and socio-political crises. With the analysis and interpretation of the data, it should be clear whether the phenomenon or hypothesis which suggests that worship music may be a coping mechanism in the mental wellness of the Dallas Neo-Pentecostal community is true or false.

1.2 Problem Statement

Section 1.1 above showcases the research problem which is that inflation and immigration are major in the upsurge of mental health crises (Tracy, 2023; American Psychological Association, 2022; Feilging, 2022; Kopasker et al, 2018). These challenges in the mental healthcare sector are fast increasing globally beyond the current level of intervention. As these challenges are on the

rise, the level of mental healthcare support provided by limited healthcare workers seems to be insufficient to close the gap of increasing mental challenges (Orogun, 2023:20-21; WHO, 2017).

The magnitude of mental illness caused by socio-economic and political instability (including inflation and border crises leading to crime and insecurity) is upsurging stress and subsequently eroding the mental wellness of average Americans among which are members of the Neo-Pentecostal churches in Dallas. It is not surprising that “Mental illness is a prevalent concern that affects Christian churches in North America in significant ways. The typical experience of people with mental illness who attend church is positive, suggesting that there are considerable resources within the church for supporting those who experience mental health problems” (Lehmann *et al*, 2022,). In another development, economic contagion in the United States and Dallas, Texas, by extension, spread rapidly, with many of the citizens experiencing failures in their businesses and increased financial debt. The trio of Kien, Agius and Zaman affirmed that “while the economic and political implications have been studied in detail, the impact on health, especially that of mental health, has received much less attention” (Kien, Agius and Zaman, 2013: 211). With these growing challenges, this research seeks to investigate how some Neo-Pentecostal churches in Dallas cope with a focus on the role of worship music as a possible coping mechanism amid socio-economic and socio-political related mental stress in America.

1.3- Aims and Objective

The following are the progressively interconnected aims and objectives of this research:

- a. This research is aimed at evaluating or demonstrating the relevance, impact, and the role of worship music as an instrument capable of alleviating the effects of mental health-related challenges like trauma, worry and stress among some Christians in Dallas, Texas.
- b. To probe the effectiveness of worship music as a coping mechanism for worry and other related mental health challenges within American communities, especially in Dallas, Texas.
- c. To demonstrate the psychological impact of worship music on individuals who have experienced various categories of stress-related problems in relation to immigration or other socio-economic challenges.

1.4. Purpose of the Study

The study aims to investigate the role of worship music in the coping mechanism of some Neo-Pentecostals in Dallas. It is to confirm from people's experiences the evidence that worship music has psychological effects on them, thereby alleviating their fear, worry and related stress in the face of socio-economic and socio-political challenges. The outcome of the research, if affirmative, will be proof of the effectiveness of worship music as it relates to providing mental wellness support for American communities in the wake of overwhelming demand for mental healthcare and insufficient supply of the same.

1.5 Research Question

- a. In what ways can worship music among Neo-Pentecostals become a psycho-spiritual instrument to mitigate the effect of socio-economic and socio-political related mental stress in the Dallas environment?
- b. How can it be used as a coping mechanism, if possible?
- c. How relevant is worship music in mental wellness among Neo-Pentecostals in Dallas, Texas?

1.6 The Research Hypothesis

Unlike a thesis statement, a hypothesis in research like this represents a strong and concise statement that forms the basis for research. It is a prediction of the findings of the paper, data, and perhaps the possible conclusion of the paper. The formation of a research hypothesis stems from the researcher's curiosity and intuition (Deeptanshu and Shubham, 2021). However, this action does not represent the full opinion of the research until it is validated or otherwise disapproved by the evidence of the data or research findings. In the case of this research, the following hypotheses are relevant:

- Christian worship music represents a coping mechanism and therefore provides some Neo-Pentecostal worshippers
- Some form of mental wellness support in the face of fear, worry and related trauma caused by socio-economic and socio-political crises.
- worship music may not be a stand-alone remedy for complete healing in mental health crisis, it has a way of easing mental stress and calming down those who are psychologically challenged.

The goal of this research, therefore, is to either validate or disapprove of this philosophical assumption based on the outcome of the data collected, analysed, and interpreted.

1.7 - Theoretical Framework

It is important to provide a theoretical framework for the hypothesis suggesting the role of worship music in dealing with Neo-Pentecostal worshippers' trauma and stress experiences. Two schools of thought will be adopted. The first is the thoughts of Oman and Thorensen (2002) which raises the question - Does religion (or spirituality) cause health benefits? In their conclusive research, they held four prominent pathways in which religion influences health: health behaviours, social support, psychological states and 'PSI' influences. The 'PSI' speaks to the supernatural laws that govern 'energies'¹. These spiritual energies are proposed in this research as what can stage a coping culture among traumatized Neo-Pentecostals in Dallas, Texas.

The second philosophical framework is narrative. It draws from the experience of David the Psalmist who ministered to Saul in music to ward off terror (1 Samuel 16:14-23). Although the source of the terrorizing spirits on Saul is contextually debatable, the goal of this research is not the exegesis but an inference that if the psalmist music expertise brings healing to Saul, worship music can be beneficial to those traumatized by socio-economic, socio-political and immigration crises. Hence, the first framework from Oman and Thorensen is the bedrock, the biblical story of David and Saul only remain an addendum in this research. On a side note, the researcher wishes to submit that such a narrative on David's use of music as a coping mechanism or de-traumatizing therapy has a robust academic view in chapter four where the scholarly arguments of Odiase (2023:1077) Anderson (2020) and Lohmeyer (2006) were brought forward to underscore the theological relevance of David's story regarding the role of worship music in mental wellbeing.

¹ psi is the unknown factor in extrasensory perception and psychokinesis experiences that is not explained by known physical or biological mechanisms. This unknown factor is spiritual not comprehended by science not currently comprehended by science, but possibly understandable at some point by science. See *APA Dictionary of Psychology*. (2018). Dictionary.apa.org. <https://dictionary.apa.org/psi>

1.8 Research Methodology

A mixed research method aptly described as an “explanatory sequential model of mixed research method which involves juxtaposing a few qualitative pieces of evidence with quantitative empirical results” (Orogun and Pillay, 2022:1), will be employed in this research. A mixed method approach is significant in providing a critical, in-depth and comprehensive perspective that is valid for addressing multi-sided research questions.

1.8.1 Quantitative: The quantitative data will be collected among some members of the participating Neo-Pentecostal churches in Dallas, Texas. The number of participants as the real sample size is estimated to be about 200. Hopefully, this will meet the 5% benchmark of the targeted population of some Neo-Pentecostal churches in Dallas, Texas (See Daniel 2023:30-32). Data instruments will be disseminated through a Google questionnaire and analysed with Python software. Special focus will be given to the regression analysis to show the role of worship music in mental wellness.

1.8.2 Qualitative: The qualitative data collection will be done randomly among lead pastors, music ministers, worship teams, and congregants in the selected Neo-Pentecostal congregations in Dallas. The estimated number of participants is 10. The data will be collected through interviews, subsequently analysed thematically, and interpreted with a simple observatory and explanatory process. The participants will also be drawn from all the targeted churches within Dallas.

Overall, the outcome of the two different processes will be compared to ensure the validity and reliability of the research. This will also lead to the validation or disapproval of the research hypothesis and concluding opinions about the research. It is also important to mention that the research participation will be voluntary, and all ethical rules will be observed as provided by the ethics committee of the Faculty of Theology and Religion, University of Pretoria.

1.9 - Targeted Population

The Neo-Pentecostal churches and their adherents in the Dallas environment are the research population because of the high level of subscription to worship music by the churches and its strong influence among the church adherents. Secondly, they are in one of the cities of Texas where

immigration crisis allows an influx of illegal and harmful people who perpetrate criminality. The fear, worry, and tremor of being closer to such crisis make the churches and adherents a very good research population; how they cope with the challenges is of the utmost importance for this research. The proposed participants' figures, including the sample population and sample size, will be delineated in the demography subsection in chapter 3 subsection 3.2.1.

1.9.1 – Justification for the choice of Targeted Population:

Religious research conducted by PEW Research Center shows that Dallas has the highest percentage of people who identify as Christian, with 78%, while 18% claim no religious affiliation (Heid, 2015). The study identified the Dallas metropolitan area as the top city with the largest religious affiliation in the United States, and the majority are Evangelical-Pentecostals, easily identified by their worship music practices. One of such Churches in Dallas Texas is the Potters House; a Pentecostal and multicultural church led by Senior Pastor, T.D. Jakes. With more than 30,000 members on its rolls, the church is consistently ranked among the largest and most influential churches in the U.S. T'D Jakes and the Potters House became more prominent after the release of “Woman thou art loosed”; a worship music with a lyrical expression that addresses trauma, emotional and spiritual tragedies. This music project has overtime become an annual conference that features worship and other ministrations. In addition, one of the Pentecostal churches that took part in this research exercise is the Redeemed Christian Church of God in North America, headquartered in Dallas Texas. RCCG is a multicultural church known for its worship music practice in all church activities and known to devote quality time for regular praise and worship. It has several branches spread across the Dallas metroplex. Some members of RCCG also participated in this research exercise.

Pentecostalism has influenced modern worship music through its emphasis on emotional expression because the Pentecostals believe in the power of emotions as a way of connecting with the divine (Duker, 2023). Other Pentecostal churches within the Dallas metropolitan have a high subscription to worship music. They include but are not limited to Gateway Church, Genesis Church, Watermark Community Church, The Life church, House of refuge church and One community church. On these accounts, the choice of Neo-Pentecostals as the targeted population is justified because (1) There is a sizable number of Pentecostal churches in Dallas and their

population justifies their use in this research. (2) They are part of the Dallas population going through the challenges economic and immigration crises. (3) Neo-Pentecostal churches are frontliners in the subscription to worship music in America. (4) Dallas represents a Cosmopolitan city where people of all colors reside and fellowship together under same spiritual environments

1.10 - Significance of the Study

- i. The research will contribute to the body of academic knowledge within the area of the scientific study of Religion, Spirituality and Healthcare.
- ii. The research will provide academic literature to support the role of spiritual exercise in alleviating mental health challenges in the face of socio-economic and socio-political challenges.
- iii. Where the hypothetical assumption is validated as true based on data outcomes and analysis, this research would have contributed to the project of bridging the gap between the high demand and diminishing supply of mental healthcare to form a religious and spiritual perspective in Dallas, Texas and beyond.

1.11 Research Limitation

There are few difficulties related to this research, some of these limitations are location, participant's responses and denominational limitations.

1.11.1 Location Limitations

Firstly, in discussing my research limitations, it is important to make the point that this research is limited to some selected churches within the Dallas metroplex. The churches involved in this research are Neo-Pentecostal with multicultural flavour housing both black and white congregants in their worship services. This means that the churches consist of different cultures and races, this indicates that members of these churches are not only Americans, but mostly Africans, African Americans, Asians and other nationalities.

Regardless of the multicultural nature of this study demography, this research's findings and conclusions may not represent the overall experience of American Churches regarding the role of worship music in mental wellness. Therefore, the demographic limitation will not support an interpretation covering the entire State of Texas, nor the worship music practices across the United States of America.

1.11.2 - Respondent Limitations

Another major limitation of this research is that lots of materials in terms of quantitative questionnaires were sent out to most of the churches within the Dallas metroplex. However, the responses received were limited because the researcher had no control over the respondents, irrespective of the follow-up and announcements by the church leaders encouraging their members to participate. More so, there are people who are currently dealing with psychological trauma and some sort of mental unwellness whom cannot be contacted. This is because there are no provisions for support in case their psychological or mental conditions get triggered during the interview. Therefore, the research was limited to only those who have experienced trauma or mental crisis in the past and are currently well recovered to share their stories willingly.

1.11.3 - Denominational Limitations

One of the difficulties encountered during this research was the unwillingness of some churches to participate in the research questionnaire. Some churches did not give any reason for their refusal to participate in the questionnaire, while some churches did not show interest at all. What this implies is that Neo-Pentecostals are rarely opened to academic research or interested in discovering the role of religious experience in the mental well-being of congregants. Consequently, poor response may affect the sample size in comparison to the sample population. Based on this limitation, the researcher has decided to make it clear that the research is limited to a few churches within the Dallas metroplex

1.12 - Chapters Summary

1.12.1 - Chapter 1 – Introduction: The first chapter introduces the research. It showcases the idea, problems, questions, objectives and intending inquiry. It further delineates the framework, methodology, significance and limitations. The purpose of the introductory chapter is to give readers an overview of the entire research.

1.12.2 - Chapter 2 – Literature Review: In this research chapter two presents the effort made in reviewing pieces of literature relevant to the study under five subsections. They include Conceptual clarification of worship music in the context of healing; Impact of worship music on healing and mental wellness; Controversies on worship music as a mental illness remedy; Socio-economic and socio-political impact of Inflation on people’s mental health; Examples of healing worship songs and summary interpretations. The purpose of this chapter is to capture earlier research done and the gap between the earlier research and this research under consideration. It helps the researcher underscore the uniqueness of this researcher and emphasize that this research is worth undertaken as a contribution to academic knowledge in the interdisciplinary field of religion and healthcare.

1.12.3 - Chapter 3 – Results, Analysis, and Interpretation of Findings: This chapter presents the mixed research methods results of the fieldwork undertaken. It systematically presents the demography of both the quantitative and qualitative exercises. It further presents the data, analyses and interpretations. The purpose of this chapter is to provide scientific evidence that worship music truly impacts and promotes mental wellness among some Neo-Pentecostals in Dallas, Texas.

1.12.4 - Chapter 4 – Discussions (Critique, Implications and Submissions): The previous chapter is a precursor to this chapter as it provides information needed to discuss the thoughts of the researcher in line with the theoretical framework provided earlier in section 1.7. Therefore, this chapter critiques the reliability, validity and data evidence collected in the fieldwork. In the end it shows the position of the researcher on the current role of worship-music in mental wellness support and some Neo-Pentecostals in Dallas, Texas.

1.12.5 - Chapter 5 – Conclusion and Recommendations: Following the previous chapter's critique is the need to propose recommendations to embrace and improve the healthy practice of worship music and further promote its practices among denominations and individuals, assuming the data provides positive evidence of impacts on the wellness of religious adherents in Dallas, Texas.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 - Introduction

Pieces of literature under review are directly and indirectly related to the research topic because academics have written extensively on worship music and mental wellness. The materials in view are books and articles structured under five different sections. Section one discusses the conceptual clarification of worship music in the context of healing; section two focuses on the Impact of worship music on healing and mental wellness; section three presents the controversies on worship music as a mental illness coping mechanism or remedy. In section four attention is given to the socio-economic and socio-political impact of inflation on people's mental wellness. Lastly, section five provides some examples of healing worship music and the lyrical interpretations.

2.1 - Conceptual clarification of worship music in the context of healing

The use of music as a therapeutic tool of intervention for mental well-being is a developing practice. In history, music therapy has been used as one of the effective tools for healing emotional stress. Though there may be different dimensions to the conversation of music and mental wellness, nevertheless, worship music is recently identified as a weapon that pierces through the inner parts of the soul to cause psychological, emotional, and even physical transformation in an individual. According to Whittemore, (2019) Worship music can be generally referred to as a spiritual mechanism which depicting an amalgamation of Christian faith lyrics and musical melody to express personal or corporate belief. Such amalgamation provides therapeutic system for introducing worship experience into music therapy and ultimately bringing spiritual healing to individuals or a group. Boswell (2019) thinks that worship music has more impact on human emotion and mental state than other styles of music because of its ability to connect humanity with divinity. Boswell (2019) further affirms that "Worship is by necessity something that must involve our heart. It's something that must be seated in the emotions of our life. The songs we sing must be true to our emotions, whether it is sorrow and despair or joy and thankfulness. Worship is inherently emotional. Boswell (2019), the author further cited scriptural examples of David's compositions in the book of Psalms produced from deep emotional situations. This gives an

understanding that music and worship are powerful tools that can impact human emotions positively.

Tuberville (2022:17-18) in his book *“An Unfinished Melody: Mental Illness, Worship Music, And the Tension of The Pentecostal ‘Now’ And ‘Not Yet,* writes that music therapy uses music experiences to help people with serious mental disorders to develop relationships and to address issues they may not be able to resolve using words alone. The author claims that studies to date have examined the effects of music therapy as an add-on treatment to standard care. The results of these studies suggest that music therapy may also improve mental state and functioning if a sufficient number of music therapy sessions are provided. Turbeville (2022:17-18) further attests that studies were carried out on individuals with depression (some of whom also suffered from anxiety). Patients who received music therapy in addition to other treatment, exhibited “significantly greater” improvement than those who received only standard care.

Macharia in an online article describes praise and worship music as a powerful tool that can affect the human mind and mood such that it could make an individual feel relaxed and happy. In the author’s words “As a Christian, I know the power of Praise and Worship music. Whether listening or singing along, I know that everything will be alright. That God is listening to me as I sing to him. I am not consumed by the difficulties I may be facing because I am in the presence of God, where there is fullness of joy” (Macharia, 2022). The author further referenced Acts 16 verses 25-26, where Paul and Silas prayed and sang worship hymns in their moment of depression and distress. The suggestion of the author therefore implies that praise and worship music bring joy and peace that can stabilize an imbalanced emotion.

All the conceptual clarifications and examples above will add great value to the discussion in this thesis as it appears they all tend towards having worship music as an add-on element to healing. As will be seen later in the data collected. These submissions on conceptual clarifications are not contrary to what worshippers in Dallas assume worship music contributes to their mental and emotional wellness.

2.2 - Impact of worship music on healing and mental wellness

Food (2023) in a publication titled “*Faith and Music Impact Mental Health*”, describing the effect of music and faith on human stress posits that both faith and music can serve as effective stress relievers. The author further impresses that engaging in religious or spiritual music practices, prayer or meditation, can also provide a sense of calm and inner peace. Similarly, listening to music that resonates with your emotions can help reduce stress levels and promote relaxation.

Orogun (2023:21-22) in his article titled “*Improving Spiritual Care to Bridge the Gap between Demand and Supply of Healthcare Services in South Africa*” discovered that spiritual, social, and emotional well-being can be achieved through worship and devotion. In a quantitative research outcome among over 70 staff of Pharma Valu Pharmacy in South Africa, it was discovered that employees of the organization engaged in a daily devotion which includes the singing of worship songs and prayers. This exercise was believed to have positively impacted the employees’ performances for each day, and it helped to improve their spirit and psychological well-being. The research of Orogun (2023:21-22) is like this intended research. However, it addresses the South African situation but does not address the Dallas circumstances. This is why this research is imperative because it directly deals with Dallas’ situation. Moreover, Orogun addresses the situation in a medical environment while this intending research focuses on addressing trauma and stress-related issues among the Neo-Pentecostal churches in Dallas, Texas.

Similarly, praise and worship music were explored in an activity that involved a set of Pentecostal young people. Patel and Tshabalala (2010:73-82), in an international journal, submit that 40 members of the group completed an adapted version of the Spiritual Well-Being Scale (SWBS) and a questionnaire. It was discovered that praise and worship music played a very important role in their spiritual well-being. The involvement of worship music and prayers was instrumental in uplifting their spirit and causing emotional transformation. Furthermore, the spiritual atmosphere created by worship music helps some group members cope with difficulties, such as emotional and mental stress. Again, this discovery by Patel and Tshabalala (2010) is helpful as a reference point for this thesis. However, it does not address the situation in Dallas among the Neo-Pentecostals. This current thesis will address the geographical gaps in research.

Komaroff (2015:3), in his research article with Harvard Medical School's publications, affirms that there is a connection between music and health. He explained his thoughts using the ancient Greek experiment; in this demonstration, one God, Apollo, was placed in charge of healing and music. Komaroff stated that recent medical studies confirmed the Greek thought, because music was discovered to slow heart rate, lower blood pressure, and reduced levels of stress hormones. A further discovery was also made that music seems to provide relief for stroke and heart attack's victims and patient undergoing surgery. This publication by Komaroff (2015) though demonstrated how experiment carried out proved the efficacy of music that provides relief from health challenges. However, this thesis is focused on the abilities of worship music to relief mental unwellness within the Pentecostal churches in Dallas.

According to Somani (2023) in his article "*How devotional music can transform your health*" it was claimed that listening to devotional music can help reduce stress and anxiety, increase positivity and well-being, and bring a sense of inner peace. The author asserts that devotional or worship music has been proven to be one of many effective tools to improve mental health and overall well-being. Devotional worship music can make an individual feel inspired and highly spirited when it is incorporated into one's daily activities.

Lastly, Orogun (2024: 1-19), in his recent article titled *African Accounts of Religious Conversations and Interventions in Mental Healthcare*, presents detailed mental wellness discussions from a religious perspective in Africa. Evident in the article is the fact that religious groups recognize that the causes of mental health challenges are not only medical or physical but spiritual. Of the eight loopholes of religious mental healthcare support pointed out by the author, none speaks to the fact that music can be part of the spiritual care model or the extended biopsychosocial model of addressing mental wellness challenges (Orogun 2024: 11-12). While this article provides a deep understanding of how religious communities think and respond to mental wellness challenges, there are gaps unattended which include the use of music as part of mental health improvement instruments. Moreover, the research focuses on Africa while this thesis will focus on Dallas in America. Therefore, the demographic difference and the exclusion of music in the conversations and interventions, reveal a gap that this thesis will fill from an American Neo-Pentecostal perspective.

2.3 - Controversies on worship music as a mental illness remedy

There are controversies around worship music as a remedy for mental illness because not everyone believes in the potency of music as a trusted channel of healing. Some scholars think there are potential risks of music therapy or healing music depending on the type of music experience, or method employed. Mondanaro (2019) explained that the provision of integrative treatment options such as music therapy may not be able to meet the high standard demands of the fast-growing healthcare business. Though it has become a competitive feature of corporate healthcare, the full integration of music therapy services can be challenging in a myriad of ways. Even though the author believed that music therapy generally may be insufficient to meet the demand of the growing healthcare standard. Nevertheless, this intended thesis does not argue against the claims of Mondanaro (2016). Rather, this thesis intends to verify whether worship music has a positive and lasting impact or not as against the claims of Mondanaro.

Chen (2023) in the article titled *“Influence of music on the hearing and mental health of adolescents and countermeasures”* disputed the efficacy of music as a remedy for healing from the point of view that improper or excessive use may cause damage to the health of an individual. The author argued that improper use of music may cause permanent hearing damage to the ear of the listener. Chen further states that most people enjoy their music with the use of headphones, thereby gradually increasing the risk of impairment to the ear of the listener and eventually causing temporary or permanent damage. The author thinks that music therapy or the use of music as a remedy for mental wellness may be more harmful rather than beneficial to its user. While this thesis may not contest the opinion of Chen, the intended investigation will show if the impact of music is positive as against the negative assumptions of the author. More so, this thesis intends to explore the benefits of music as a psychospiritual mechanism for healing trauma, anxiety, fear, and other mental disorders as against Chen’s argument on the physical health implications of listening to music.

Heimuli (2023) raised a profound question in another article titled *“Can too much music be bad for your mental health?”* The author agrees with music therapy as a means of expressing the feelings of someone’s mood but notes that music can evoke tears and feelings of depression. Heimuli further reiterated that “music could become harmful in specific settings if someone has pre-existing

mental health challenges, issues like depression, anxiety or post-traumatic stress,” (2023). This intended thesis does not dispute Heimuli’s argument that music therapy could sometimes evoke negative emotions. Nevertheless, this proposed research has the intent to verify that worship music as against other genres has the potential for productive and long-term impact on human mental health.

2.4 - Socio-economic and socio-political impact of Inflation on mental health

The impact of inflation has created an overwhelming and worrisome situation for the average American citizen, especially the residents of Dallas, Texas.

The article by Fielding (2022) titled “*High Inflation Rates Impact Almost Every Aspect of Our Lives, Including Mental Health*” gave an explicit description of how the circumstances surrounding the socio-economic conditions in the United States have continuously created uncertainty, leading to stress and mental instability. Every transaction reminds an average citizen of inflation because affordable things have instantaneously become unattainable or escalated in price beyond reach for an average person. Fielding (2022) notes further that in June 2022, the Bureau of Labor Statistics indicated that the inflation rate in the United States had reached a four-decade high at 9.1%, affecting food, gasoline, and shelter. As a result of this, the financial stress has created exhaustion, chronic anxiety and mental and emotional imbalance in many people, including Christians. The conclusions of Fielding (2022) support the intended thesis’s topic and will be a very useful reference. However, Fielding (2022) speaks generally about the United States of America, while this thesis will discuss Dallas' situation specifically. Also, this research intends to adopt worship music to alleviate these challenges among residents of the Dallas, Texas metroplex, most especially Pentecostal worshippers known to believe in divine intervention.

Bethune (2022) in the American Psychological Association (APA) journal titled “*Stress in America*” describes the range of stressors experienced by the American population over the past years as very intense. The summary report of the APA’s findings on stress levels indicates that three-quarters of adults (76%) confirmed that they have experienced health issues due to stress. Some of these health challenges include but are not limited to fatigue, anxiety and feelings of depression. Some of the victims of these socio-economic challenges attest that their health has

been impacted negatively by the feelings of being overwhelmed, constant worrying and changes in their sleeping habits. Despite all these, the writer postulates that the people are still hopeful about their future and confident to handle these problems. Bethune (2022) brought forward a very important point by raising the notion that stress is very high in America and that socio-economic challenges play a big part in the challenge. The paper supports this thesis because it agrees with the notion of an existing problem. However, this thesis still intends to bridge a gap not filled by Bethune (2022) because it will address the issue specifically in Dallas while also providing an add-on health solution which Bethune never discussed.

An article written on CNN Business by Wiener-Bronner (2022) titled *Food Prices are Soaring, and That's Changed How We Eat*, further analyses the impact of food hikes on the lives of Americans. In the past, it was easier to budget weekly and stick to it, but as time went by, it became impossible as food prices rapidly increased. The author said that consumers were asked how inflation has impacted their eating habits. Many responded that they have resulted in dining out less often, buying less meat and giving up splurges, while others said they are very worried about the future. Many others must give up pleasure and resort to only what they can afford to eat, even if it is not healthy. Reviewing the writer's content, unhealthy food contributes to health challenges in the United States in addition to the pain and stress generated by socio-economic hardship. Other residents have also determined to grow vegetable gardens on their lawns as a means of providing food for themselves to lower the effects of this penury. While the submissions of the author are appreciated, they did not address Dallas' situation directly but gave a piece of information on the general current socio-economic circumstance in America. Likewise, the article pointed out the problem but discussed no solutions to the trauma and worry of Americans. This is why this current thesis is very important because it will discuss the possible ways of addressing the socio-economic trauma and worry using worship music.

In another paper, Kopasker, Montagna and Bender, (2018) admit that social insecurity is causing traumatic experiences in an article titled "*Economic Insecurity: A Socio-Economic Determinant of Mental Health*," the authors note that economic insecurity is an emerging socio-economic determinant of mental health, although the size of the effect varies across measures of insecurity.

The authors describe mental health as the single biggest contributor to life's satisfaction. They further agree that mental health is an issue that is receiving increasing attention, meaning that the search for the remedy for the illness is still ongoing. This information is very useful because it will guide this thesis in conducting an enquiry into how worship music could be one of the remedies for prevailing mental crisis among the Neo-Pentecostals in Dallas, Texas.

Shaw, Melugin and Lee reported in an article on Fox News (2024) how Customs and Border Protection (CBP) increased patrols after the migrant surge overwhelmed the Texas National Guard in El-Paso. The authors report one of the major concerns being addressed in this research, which is the issue of the influx of illegal immigrants causing security threats to the people of Texas. Illegal immigrants are forcibly finding their way into the streets of Texas and by extension into Dallas City which is one of the economic centres of the state. This development has created fear and abnormal trauma for the residents of Dallas, Texas. This article review has exposed how the migrants became one of the sources of mental unwellness among the people of Dallas. However, this proposed research will go further by revealing how members of the Neo-Pentecostal churches who are the subjects of this research are directly affected by this socio-political crisis. Additionally, this research will further investigate how worship music becomes one of the coping mechanisms for trauma and mental stress created by the socio-economic and socio-political crisis.

2.5 - Examples of healing worship songs and summary interpretations.

2.5.1- I am the God that heals you.

The song below is the lyrics of Don Moen, in a song released in 1986, it reads as follows:

“I am the God that heals you, I am the God your healer,
I sent my word and healed your disease; I am the God your healer.

You are the God that heals me, you are the God my healer,
You sent your word and healed my disease.

You are the God my healer.
You sent your word and healed my disease.
You are the God my healer”.

Don Moen’s lyrics above are a testament to God’s miraculous power to heal. The lyrics connect to the Hebrew word “Jehovah Rapha” meaning the God who cures or heals. This worship music has been performed by music teams globally, especially among the Neo-Pentecostals. This is a song that acknowledges and invokes the presence of “Rapha” for healing varieties of illness including mental and physical health challenges. Dallas Neo-Pentecostals usually use this song in worship services.

Don Moen’s song connects to the research in view because the song speaks to healing both physical and mental conditions. It seems to have some sort of emotional and spiritual succour that can provide a coping mechanism for Dallas Neo-Pentecostal worshippers in trying times. However, the difference is that Don Moen was not using his song for a clinical trial or academic research, and it deals with Christian groups across the world. This research will narrow down the value of this song to the current challenges of Dallas Neo-Pentecostal worshippers.

2.5.2- He touched me.

The song below is the lyrics of Bill Gaither’s song released in 1972. It reads as follows:

“Shackled by a heavy burden,
'Neath a load of guilt and shame.
Then the hand of Jesus touched me,
And now I am no longer the same.
He touched me, oh He touched me,
And oh the joy that floods my soul!
Something happened and now I know,
He touched me and made me whole.

Since I met this blessed Savior,
Since He cleansed and made me whole,
I will never cease to praise Him,
I'll shout it while eternity rolls”.

This piece of music by Bill Gaither is being used several times by Neo-Pentecostal churches in Dallas, Texas, and even globally. The writer was very instrumental in addressing the challenges facing the demography of this research (the neo-Pentecostals in Dallas) by narrating his testimony of how the song was birthed out of reflections of Jesus’ touch of healing. The first line of the song “Shackled by a heavy burden” describes the mental crisis, pain, fear, emotional stress and several other challenges that has overwhelmed the people of Dallas. Though this song is a Christian worship song often rendered in church worship services. Nevertheless, this research’s intention is to dissect the value of this song as an instrument for mitigating the prevailing mental and emotional crisis faced by the neo-Pentecostals in Dallas, Texas.

2.5.3- Way Maker

The song below is the lyrics of Sinach, in a song released in 2015. It reads as follows:

“You are here, moving in our midst.
I worship you, I worship you.
You are here, working in this place.
I worship you, I worship you.
You are here, moving in our midst.
I worship you, I worship you.
You are here, working in this place.
I worship you, I worship you.

Way maker,
Miracle worker,

Promise keeper,
Light in the darkness.
My God, that is who you are. /2x

You are here, touching every heart.
I worship you, I worship you.
You are here, healing every heart.
I worship you, I worship you.
You are here, turning lives around.
I worship you, I worship you.
You're here, mending every heart.
I worship you, I worship you.
You wipe away all tears,
You mend the broken heart.
You're the answer to it all.
Jesus, You wipe away all tears.
You mend the broken heart.
You're the answer to it all. (to it all)
Jesus”.

The song ‘Way Maker’ written and performed by Sinach has been constantly performed in Dallas Neo-Pentecostal churches during worship and healing services. There is a link between this song “Way Maker” and the ongoing research because the song expresses how God can make a way out of mental crisis, fear, anxiety, depression, and other challenges facing the Dallas Neo-Pentecostal worshippers. The lyrical lines of the song “You are here healing every heart” makes provision for recovery from traumatic experiences and illnesses caused by socio-economic and socio-political challenges. Although Sinach wrote the song as a predominantly praise and worship song. But this research will extract the benefits of the song as a tool for healing trauma and mental health crises facing the Pentecostal churches of Dallas, Texas.

2.5.4 Break Every Chain-

The song below is the lyrics of Will Reagan, in a song released in 2009. It reads as follows:

There is power in the name of Jesus/3x
To break every chain, break every chain, break every chain
To break every chain, break every chain, break every chain.
There's an army rising up/3x
To break every chain, break every chain, break every chain
To break every chain, break every chain, break every chain.
The chains are broken (The chains are broken)/repeat.
I hear the chains falling /repeat
I hear the chains falling, the chains are falling.

This song has always made the top of the list of songs during worship and healing sessions especially in Dallas Neo-Pentecostal churches and globally. It is mostly rendered as a confession of the authority of Jesus to cure incurable infirmities, including trauma and other mental disorders. Chains in this context can represent mental unwellness, fear, anxiety, depression and other crises experienced by worshippers. It is also a song of faith in the ability of God to heal and deliver the oppressed from external factors, such as socio-political and economic crises. While this song's lyrics present an authority that has the potential to liberate the people from these predicaments, it also has an interconnection with this research as a tool to be used as a coping mechanism in traumatically difficult times among the Neo-Pentecostal worshippers in Dallas, Texas.

2.6 – Chapter Summary

It is important to note that all the materials reviewed in this chapter provide relevant references to this research work. More books were consulted beyond these reviewed literatures, as will be seen in the subsequent chapters. Although all the pieces of literature referenced have some connection with this research in one way or another, none of this literature specifically addresses the situation in Dallas, which is why this research intends to fill the gap and add value to the body of academic

knowledge. In addition, all articles in this chapter are helpful for this research because they provide direct and indirect support and precursor thoughts to determine the value of this research. However, none of the research addresses mental stress and trauma from a worship music perspective in the demography in question (Dallas, Texas) Therefore, they all represent an argument validating the importance and the gap this research intends to fill in religion, spirituality and healthcare research.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODS, RESULTS, ANALYSES, AND INTERPRETATIONS OF FINDINGS

3.0 Introduction

The previous chapter provided literature and shows gaps that emphasize the value of this research in academia. Seven sections are provided in this chapter. The chapter discusses the mixed research methods used and the justification. The chapter also provides the results of the investigation done among the Neo-Pentecostals in Dallas to know exactly how worship music impacts their well-being. The mixed research method presented here includes qualitative and quantitative exercises. The chapter opens with the quantitative data and progresses to the qualitative results. The second section then provides the data gathered from participants. It covers how the data was collected, themed and coded in readiness for analyses. This is followed by the next two sections and subsections detailing the quantitative and qualitative analysis and interpretations. The fifth and sixth sections discuss the connectedness and synchronicity of the quantitative and qualitative results and the implications for this research's questions, aims and objectives. The chapter then ends with a chapter summary.

3.1 Methods

As discussed in Chapter 1, section 1.8, this research uses a mixed research method. Ethical Clearance was obtained on the 16th of April 2024 from the Research and Research Ethics committees. A copy of the Ethics Clearance is provided in Appendix C. In compliance with the Ethics of Research, the consent of the quantitative and qualitative participants and the leadership of the churches responsible were obtained. The consent and permission letters are provided in Appendixes B and D respectively. In the next few subsections, the data findings of both methods will be systematically provided beginning with the quantitative exercise below.

3.2 - Quantitative

3.2.1 – Demography: It is common knowledge that quantitative research involves collecting data from many participants (see Daniel, 2023:24-25). The research was carried out among Neo-Pentecostal worshippers in Dallas, Texas. Four Questions (Q1, Q2, Q3, Q4) provide the research demography. Several intending participants were targeted from different churches. However, the data collected showed that four church groups participated consistently. They include (1)

Redeemed Christian Church of God, (2) Word Revival Outreach Mission, (3) House of Prayer Evangelical Church and (4) Other participants from sister Pentecostal Churches around Dallas. See Figure 1 below indicating the church demography of participants.

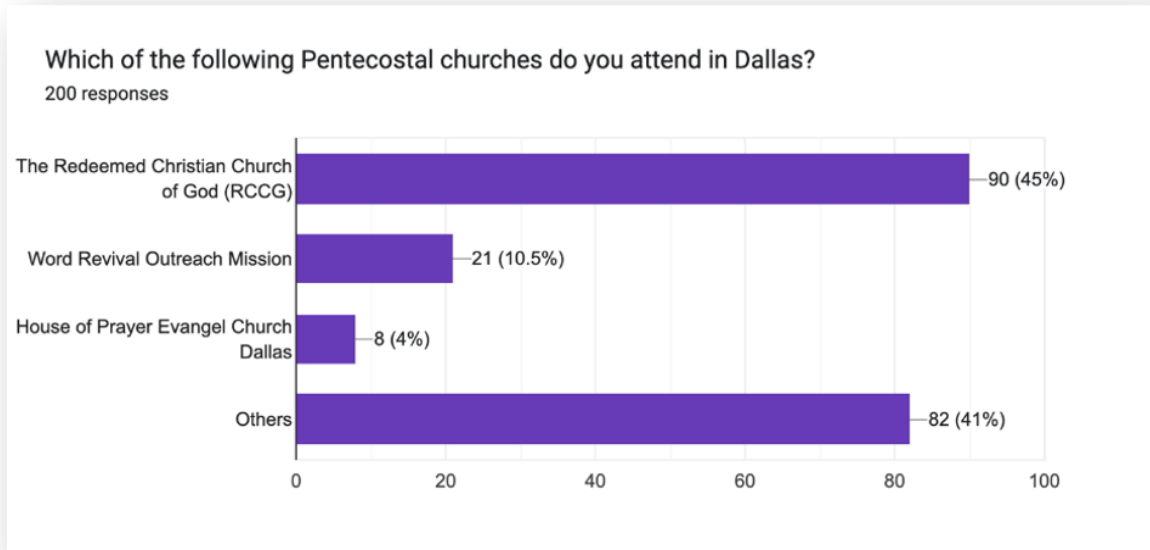


Figure 1 - Church demography of participants

The church communities consist of mixed congregations with black, brown, and white congregants, including American citizens and immigrants. In this exercise, about 1000 proposed participants received a Google online survey invitation alongside a letter of permission and consent. These numbers represent the research sample population. Subsequently, 201 participants responded. These numbers represent the population size of the research². The sample size consists of four different age groups. Participants between the ages of 41-60 represent the highest group of participants, with about 45% of the sample size. Being the second highest age group of participants, those between the ages of 26-40 are 34.3% of the sample size. The third group of companies between the ages of 18-and 25, representing 12.9% of the participants' population. The last and least group are those of 61 and above years, and constitute about 7.5% of the sample population. See Figure 2 below as evidence of group participation.

² The quantitative data used for this research was obtained from participants via online Google questionnaire. See the link to the respondents' submissions below.

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1OHdtBpLxVjEcBiY9s6tqc6ke58h0prKAZY6weGVZF3k/edit#responses>

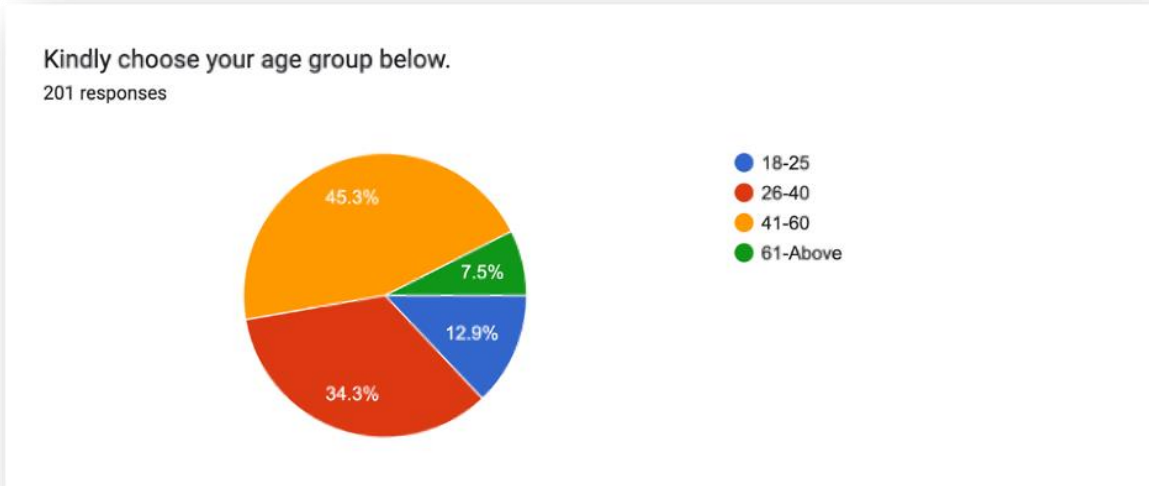


Figure 2 – Age group of participants

Besides the age group of the participants, their Church demography and level of commitment also added value to the research. In a multi-choice question in Figure 3 below, 35.2% of the participants are church members only, 38.7% are volunteer workers, 29.1% are music ministers and 13.1% are pastors.

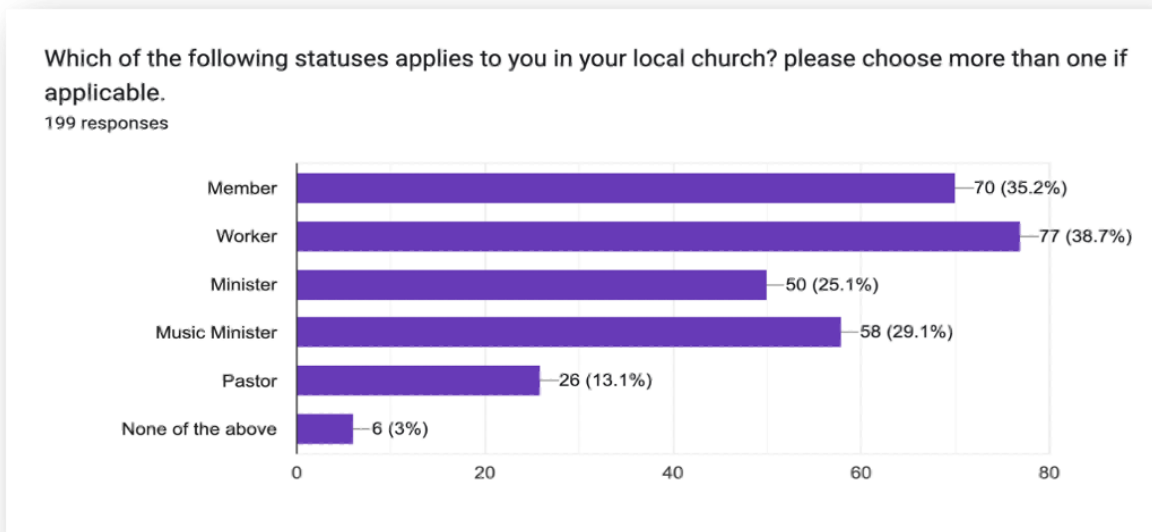


Figure 3 – Participants' level of commitment

It is also important to mention that all the participants have spent between 5 and 16 years as members of Neo-Pentecostal churches with worship music encounters.

3.2.2 – Instruments and Results: Through an online Google form, the distributed research instruments popularly called questionnaires in this research were objective questions that allowed the participants to choose what applies to them freely. The instrument contained 14 questions. These questions were constructed to target five categories of responses. Group A covers *demography* with questions (Q) 1,2,3 and 4. Group B focuses on the role of *worship music as an instrument of trauma and stress diffusion* with Q8, 9, 10, and 11. Group C seeks to inquire about *Trauma triggers* (Q 5,6 and 7). Group D focuses on *coping mechanisms and choices* with Q13 and 14, and finally, Group E is about *worship versus coping expressions* with Q11 and 12. While general analyses (simple explanations) are considered for most groups, the most important of all is Group B because it centres on the research questions and objectives. Therefore, the linear regression analysis of the quantitative method is centred on Group B. The next paragraph will now provide the data results from the themed, coded, and collated research instruments with a special focus on Group B which speak to the research questions and objectives.

Table 1 – Quantitative data results

R - CODE	IST %	WCM%	WTD%	WHD%
1	71.1	86.9	93.4	73
2	18.9	2	0	2.5
3	10	11.1	6.6	24.5

In the table above, the data gathered represents the connection of worship with trauma and stress among the participants in Dallas, Texas. In terms of coding, the questions and answers were determined by the researcher’s simple alphabetical and numerical coding languages as follows;

- **(R)** – Represents the responses of the participants.
- **R – Code** – Yes (1), No (2), Maybe (3). These speak to the responses of the participants in data language. A “yes, no, or maybe” response to questions is coded numerically to achieve graphical synchronicity of questions and the commensurate response of participants.
- **IST** – Represents inflation stress and trauma.
- **WCM** - Represents **worship** as a coping mechanism
- **WTD** - Represents **worship** in trauma diffusion
- **WHD** - Represents **worship** in healing and deliverance

To produce further results based on the table, codes and themes above, a few variables were determined by the researcher. Three variables (WTD, IST, and WCM) are themed and grouped. The variables are juxtaposed in two dimensions as will be seen in the next subsection where the analysis and interpretation of the data in Table 1 above representing the variables will be presented.

3.2.3- Analyses and Interpretation: It is imperative to bring forward the intent of the research questions and objectives earlier presented in Chapter 1 subsections 1.3 and 1.5. Since the intent is to ask and investigate the role of worship music in mitigating the effect of socio-economic and socio-political related mental stress, it is important to conduct scientific analyses and interpret the data. Python software as alluded to earlier in subsection 1.9.1 remains the analysis instrument for the questions that will be delineated in the following subsections.

3.2.3.1 - Linear Regression Analysis: Figure 4 below shows the linear regression results after the data collected from the participants were analysed using Python regression analysis³. Juxtaposing

³ Regression analysis allows for investigating the relationship between variables; Dependent and independent. An independent variable is an input, driver or factor that has an impact on a dependent variable (which can also be called an outcome). There are four (4) primary purposes of regression analysis; description, estimation, prediction and control. Also, there are three types of regression analyses; linear, logistic and multiple regression (Ali and Younas, 2021: 116-118; cf. Van Belle, 2022). In this research, linear regression analysis has been adopted. Linear regression is a single or simple regression analysis process that examines the relationship between one independent and dependent variables. In this research linear regression analysis is used to investigate the relationship between trauma and stress (IST) and worship in trauma diffusion (WTD), and the relationship between Worship as a coping mechanism versus trauma and stress (WCM versus IST). Although IST, WTD and WCM seem to be three items, the variables are worship and trauma experience and reduction remedies. The dependent variable is the one that changes whereas the independent variable is the one that does not change but is relied on by the dependent variable

the three variables mentioned earlier into two dimensions of inquiry, the research attempts the two-dimensional investigation as (1) Trauma and stress versus the role of worship in trauma diffusion (IST versus WTD) and (2) Worship as a coping mechanism versus trauma and stress (WCM versus IST). The linear regression report presents a detailed analysis of the provided data on trauma and stress (IST), worship as a coping mechanism (WCM), and worship in trauma diffusion (WTD). Four points were derived from the analysis provided in Figure 4 below. The interpretations follow the analysis in subsections 3.2.3.2 to 3.2.3.5.

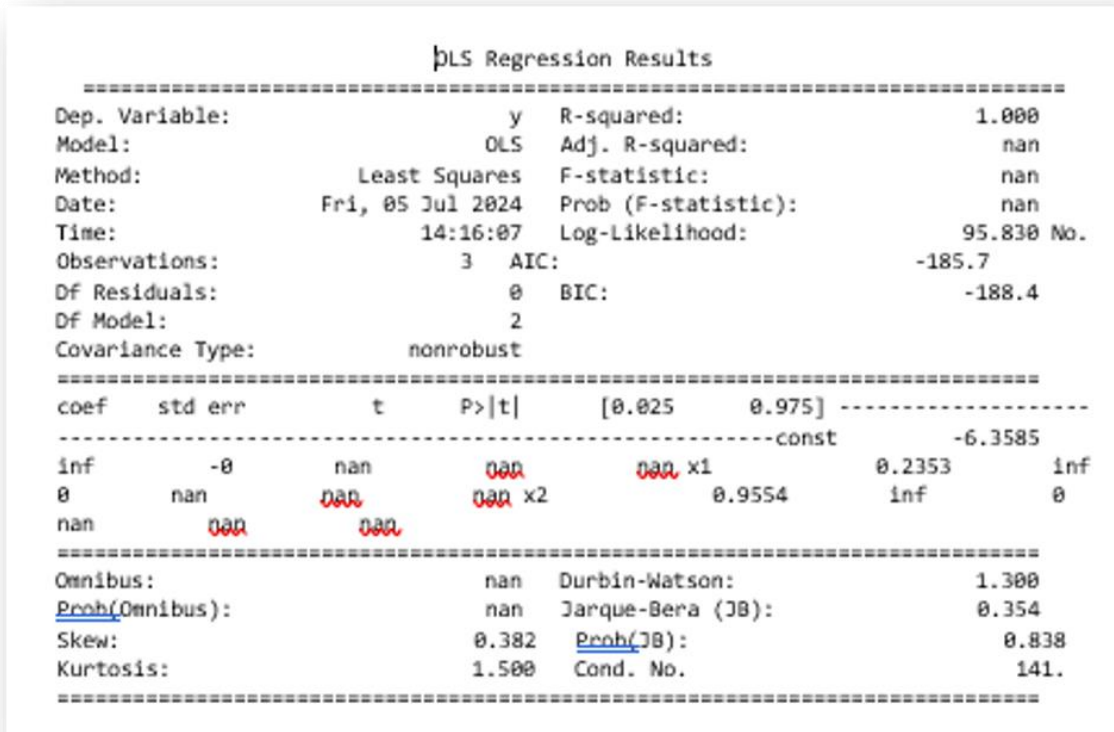


Figure 4 – Python regression analysis results.

3.2.3.2 - R-squared value of 1.000: In interpreting the analysed data to understand the relationship between trauma and stress (IST) and worship in trauma diffusion (WTD), the model in Figure 4 above shows an R-squared value of 1.000, which indicates a perfect fit. In other words, the

to change. In this case, Worship (WTD and WCM) represent the independent variable that Trauma and Stress (IST) relied upon to change. The whole idea of this research is to see how worship music (independent variable) as a coping mechanism and trauma diffuser describes, estimates, predicts or controls changes in stress levels amid socio-economic and immigration crises among some Neo-Pentecostals in Dallas Texas.

variables juxtaposed are perfect to help provide the best interpretation of the relationship between trauma and worship experience among the Neo-Pentecostal worshippers in Dallas. Figure 5 below further buttresses how worship in trauma diffusion is strongly correlated with trauma experience. By interpretation, this analysis reveals the reliability of the data collected, the analysis done, and the perfect importance of discovering the value of worship in trauma experience.

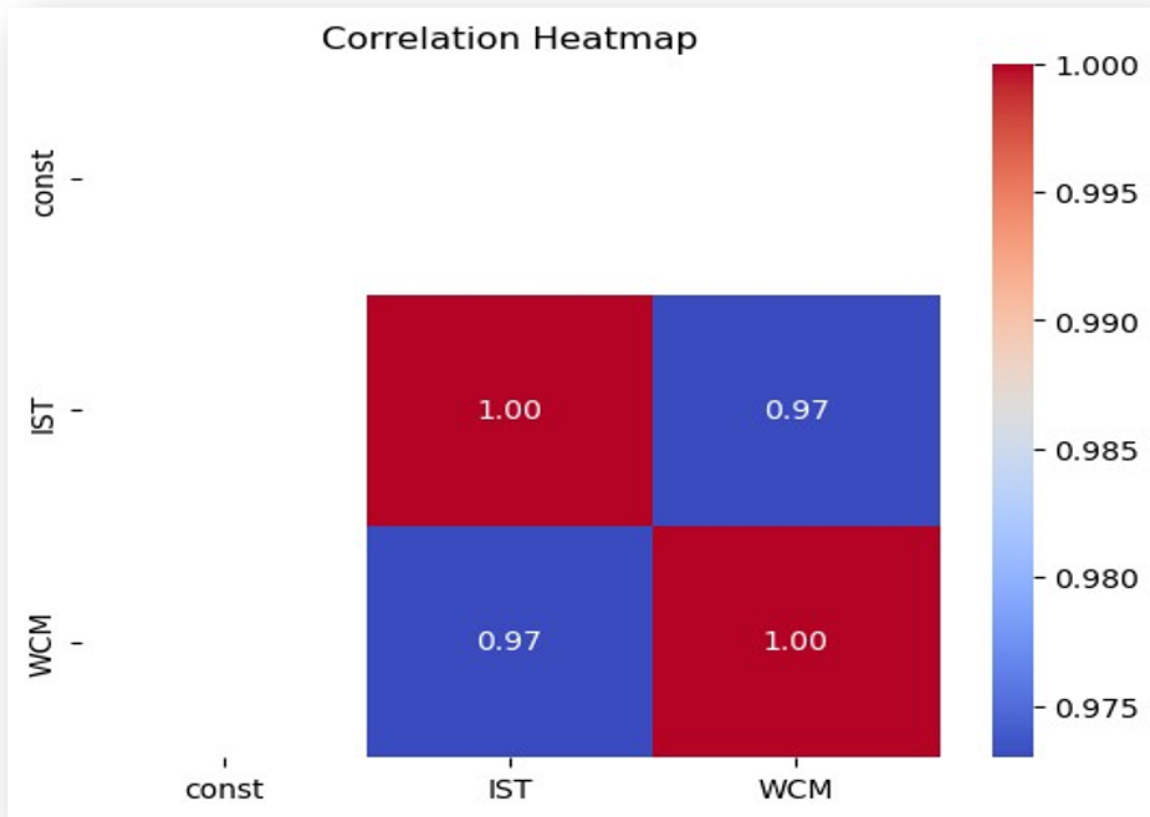


Figure 5 – Worship music and trauma correlation

3.2.3.3 - Logistic Regression Analysis: Logistical regression was performed to understand the likelihood of high WTD (above median) based on IST and WCM. In Figure 4 above Coefficients are [2.48204515e-05, 8.20211533e-02, 1.13946347e-01] while the intercept is (-9.18563209). The interpretations for the coefficient and intercepts are presented below

- **IST coefficient (2.48204515e-05):** This value is very close to zero, indicating that inflation stress and Trauma (IST) have a negligible effect on the log odds of the outcome

- **WCM coefficient (8.20211533e-02):** This coefficient is positive, suggesting that as WCM increases, the log odds of the outcome (WTD being above the threshold) increase. In other words, higher values of WCM are associated with a higher probability of WTD being above the threshold.
- **Intercept (-9.18563209):** The negative intercept indicates that, when IST and WCM are zero, the log odds of WTD being above the threshold are very low. This makes sense because a negative intercept typically indicates a low baseline probability of the outcome occurring.

3.2.3.4 - Data Reliability and Validity: During the analysis, Cronbach's Alpha was calculated to find the reliability of the data. The Cronbach's Alpha calculated is approximately 0.981. This is so because the interception points between IST and WCM indicated by the yellow colour in Figure 6 below is 90 which is 0.9 in percentage. Cronbach's Alpha value above 0.7 generally indicates good internal consistency, and a value above 0.9 indicates excellent reliability (see Frost 2022; Taber, 2018). In other words, the reliability of the data collected in this research is excellent. This indicates excellent internal consistency and reliability of the data. See Figure 6 below showing data reliability.

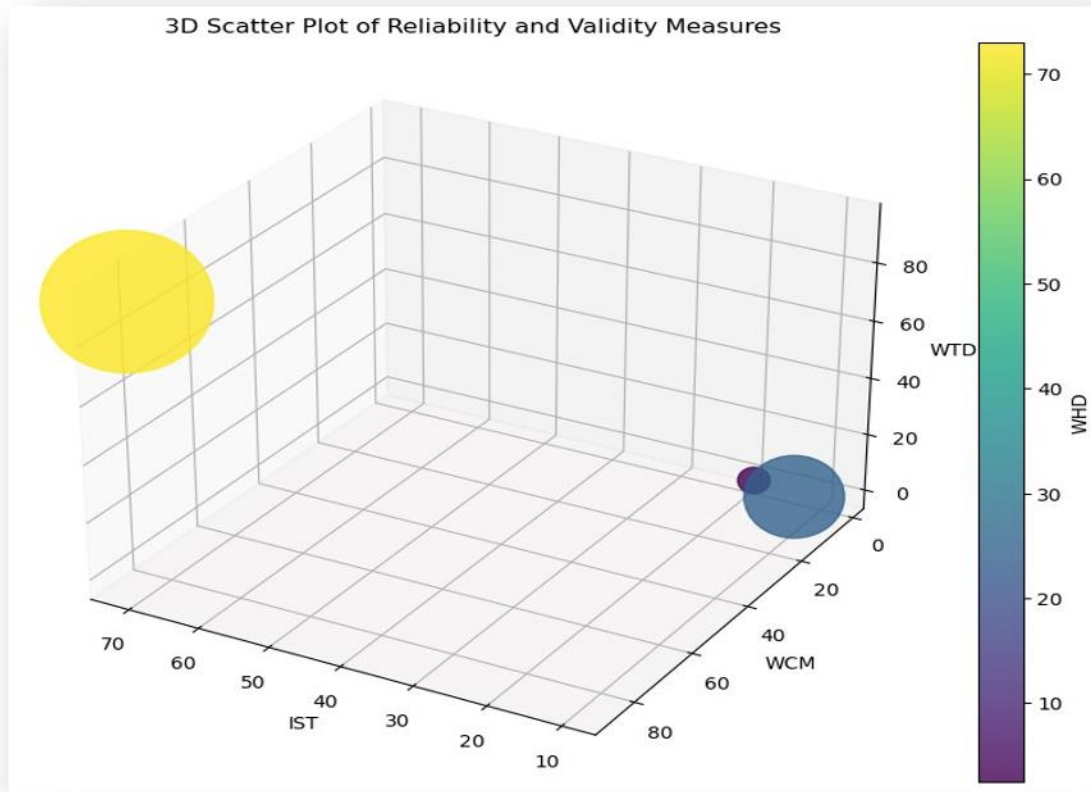


Figure 6 – Reliability and validity measures

3.2.3.5 - Interpretation by Simple Explanation of Group C, D and E

Firstly, Group C deals with trauma-trigger, duration versus trauma, and stress (Q7, Q6)

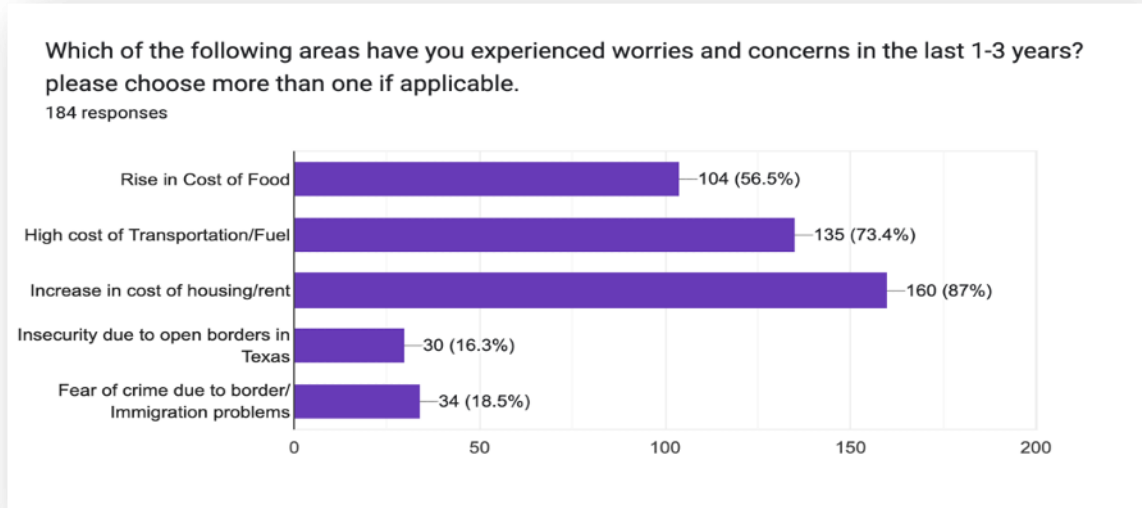


Figure 7 – Inflation and immigration trauma and stress experience.

The duration of the trauma in Q7 is represented in Figure 7 above. The data can be said to be reliable because the last 3-4 years of the current Washington administration policies have negatively affected the economy thereby creating inflation while allowing immigration policies that favour the influx of harmful immigrants hailing from prisons and mental institutions. The respondents' report here agrees with the literature review made earlier, which suggests that current administration policies worsen economic conditions due to inflation and insecurity due to the border crisis. Following that are the percentages of the triggers (specific challenges) leading to trauma and stress among the respondents. The increase in the cost of housing or rent, transportation or fuel and food or groceries are 87%, 73.4% and 56.5% respectively.

Secondly, GROUP D is about *coping mechanisms* versus *choices*, as shown in Figure 8 below.

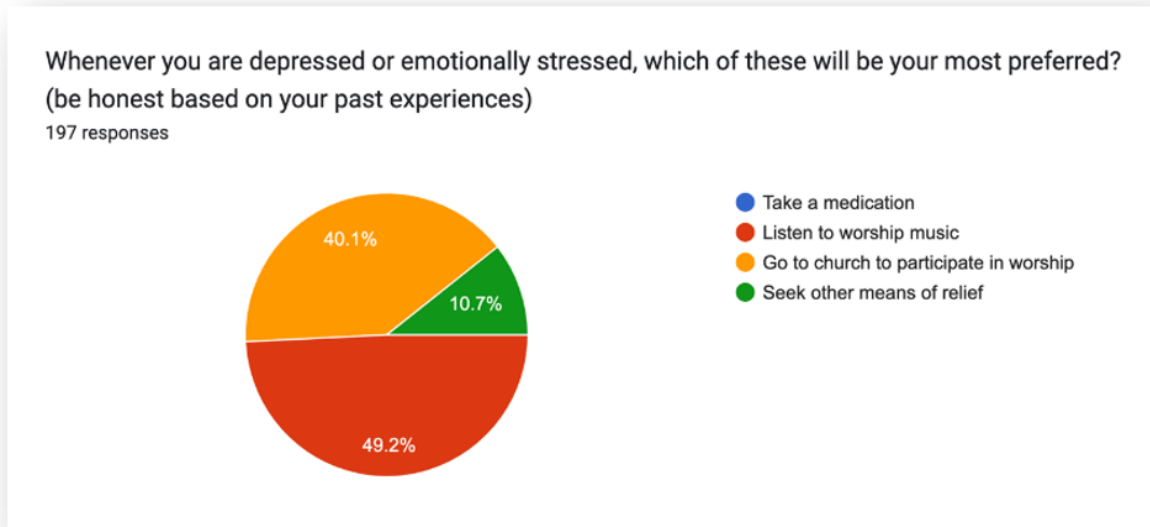


Figure 8 – Coping mechanisms and choices

Preference for congregational worship music in approximately half (49.2%) of the respondents' opinions shows that collective or community worship provides the environment for the possible diffusion of individual trauma and the debriefing of community trauma caused by inflation, immigration crisis and insecurity trauma. Additionally, listening to music as an individual plus participation in community worship music is $49.2 + 40.1 = 89.2\%$. This choice of the majority as a high percentage is a shred of evidence that worship music cannot be underestimated among coping mechanisms concerning stress, worry, or trauma caused by economic hardship, immigration and insecurity crises.

Thirdly, GROUP E addresses *worship* versus *coping expression* (Q11) as presented in Figure 9 below

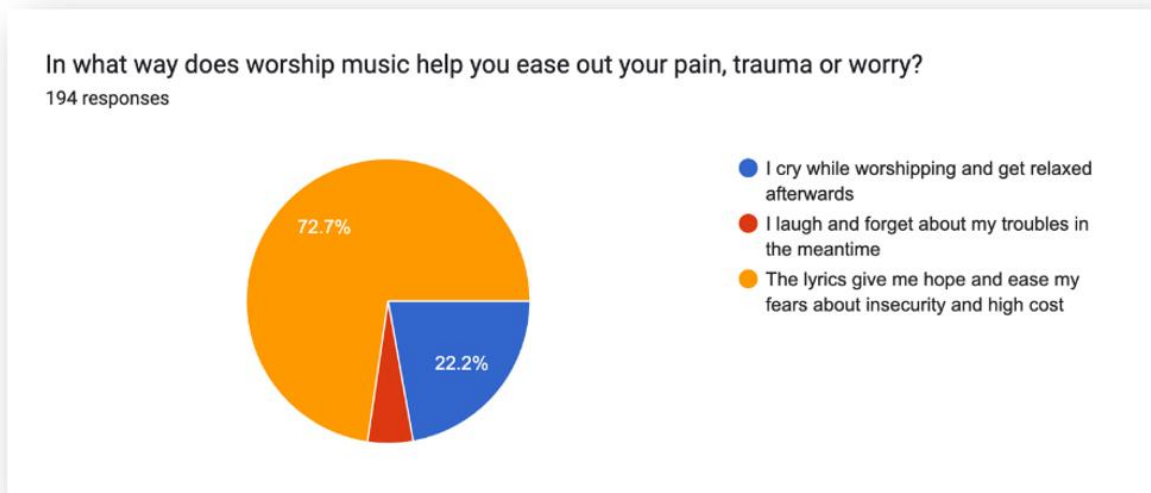


Figure 9 – Medium of expression for coping and diffusion of trauma.

Concerning the variables of worship and coping expression, Q11 above answers the question as to why respondents choose worship music as a stress and trauma coping mechanism. According to the respondents, there are three worship music expression pipelines: cry (C), laugh (L) and lyrical meditation (LM). Among the respondents, 22.2% claim they cope through crying while in worship; an emotional expression that allows the outflow of tensions, pain, and worry energies. 22.2% of the respondents claim worship gets them into a laughing mode thereby assisting them temporarily to forget their worries and thereby, diminishing their stress levels. Lastly, 72.7% of respondents' opinion is critical to understanding the most coping extraction from worship music; the worshippers do not just get emotional they are eased off stress and trauma by meditating on the lyrics. The lyrics take their minds off their pain and the music words create assurances of hope amid their traumas.

3.2.3.6 - General Interpretations and Contrast: The interpretation of the analyses so far indicates that a small sample size significantly limits the reliability and validity of the regression models. Larger sample sizes are recommended for more robust analysis. The high Cronbach's Alpha value suggests that the survey items consistently measure the same underlying construct.

While the initial findings provide some insights, the limited data restricts the reliability of regression analysis results. Further data collection and analysis with larger sample sizes are necessary for more conclusive results. The high-reliability score is promising for future research efforts. In other words, more data far above the current data could have provided more promising results. However, given the reliability and validity of the data (though more data would have made more sense), the analyses show that change is constant in trauma experience when worship music is present. In other words, the more worship music finds expression in worshippers' experiences, the more they can cope with trauma and stress. This means that when worship as a coping mechanism is very low, the odds are against the possibility of worship music becoming an instrument of trauma diffusion. Regardless, there remains a contrast as seen in Figure 10 below.

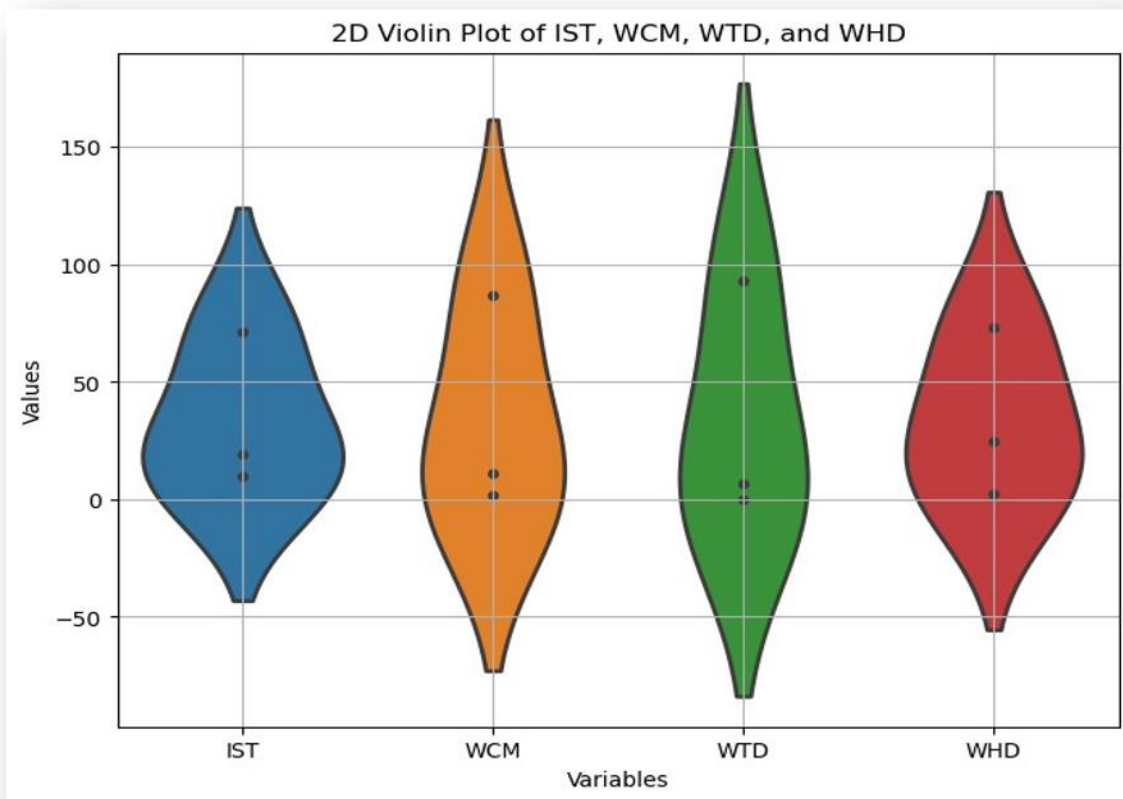


Figure 10 - Logistic regression

In contrast with the possibility of using worship for coping and perhaps diffusion of trauma, the research seems not to support the use of worship music to achieve deliverance. Looking at Figure 7 above, with trauma and stress levels constant at approximately +120% and -40%, the probability

that worship music can be a coping mechanism (WCM) is high at approximately +170%, while the probability of being irrelevant for coping is approximately -70%. This means $+170-70=100\%$ probability. In the same vein, the probability of increased WCM leading to the possibility of diffusing trauma is approximately +190% while the impossibility is -75% . This means $+190-75=115\%$. Therefore, the probability of coping and diffusing trauma and stress with worship music is high. Contrarily, the probability of achieving deliverance through worship music is low compared to coping and diffusion of trauma with approximately +120% and -60%. This means $+120-60=60\%$. The interpretation then is that (1) Worship is significant as a coping mechanism (WCM) during crises or traumatic situations (2) Consistency in WCM can make worship music an instrument of diffusing trauma and lastly (3) The probability of using worship music as an instrument to perform healing and deliverance is low, but not impossible. These are the interpretations from the experience of the participants. To further confirm the reliability of this data the qualitative data will be presented, analysed and interpreted in the next section.

3.3 - Qualitative

Table 2 – Quantitative data results.

P	S e x	Role	MSI	CMSI	BIS	CM	ECS	WECS	OE	KON
P1	M	Pastor worshipper	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Bereaved	Lyrics Melody Rhythms Dance	Yes	Peace, Calmness, Solace, Healing, Connections with other worshippers.
P2	F	Pastor worshipper	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Bereaved	Lyrics scriptures	No	Encouragement, Joy Hope
P3	F	Worship leader	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Inflation Relocation Stress	Congregational worship	No	Dis-Stress, Calm, Better, Well, Cheerful Lightweight
P4	M	Head of Ushers	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Failed Project Bereaved Marriage Inflation-Extra Job Stresses	Love of Christ Lyrics	No	Burden-Lifted Relief Soul-lifted
P5	M	Pastor	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Office Downsizing Office Bullying	Flow of God's Spirit in Worship.	No	Lessened Worries, Cheered-up, Spirit & Soul lifted, healing
P6	M	Pastor worshipper	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Academic Trauma	Worship Concert	Yes	Restores, Intune, and Healing.
P7	M	Pastor	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Post covid19 Trauma & Rejection Trauma	Worship Concert	Yes	Less burdened, stabilized, comforted
P8	F	Worship leader & Member	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Immigration, insecurity, and inflation stresses.	Praising and Dancing	Yes	Anti-depressant, excited and lifted
P9	F	Worship Leader	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Immigration, insecurity, and inflation stresses	Intense worship crying and Dancing	Yes	joyous expression stabilized Connections
P10	M	Pastor	No	No	Yes	Yes	Immigration, insecurity, and inflation stresses	Congregational worship	No	Healing, No worries.

3.3.1 – Demography: Table 2 above covers the demography of this research method. It is important to mention that the number of participants is different and way lower than the quantitative data earlier presented. However, that does not diminish the quality of data as more time is spent with each participant. This is consistent with the rules of qualitative research which allows a smaller number of participants but with longer time and robust response to the questions provided in the research instruments. Gender is considered in this method. Among the 10 participants, there are 6 males and 4 females.

3.3.2 – Instruments and Results: There are 8 questions placed before each respondent. The questions covered the research question and objectives in view. The questions and responses were coded and themed to derive results that speak to the research objectives as follows.

P1-12: Represent Participants

Role – Represents their function and office in the church

MSI – Represents Mental Stress by Inflation/Increase in cost of living

CMSI – Represents constant MSI

BIS – Represents Border-Immigration Stress

CM – Represents worship as a coping mechanism for MSI and BIS

ECS - Represents Experience and case studies

WECS – Represents Worship help Mediums in ECS

OE – Represents Other Examples

KON – Represents Key Outcome Nomenclatures

The data of the interviews are provided in Table 2 above. The table shows that 90% of the participants claim they are traumatized and stressed by the inflation and cost of living (MSI) while 100% agree they are traumatized by the border and immigration challenges (BIS). Meanwhile, 90% claim such trauma experiences have become constant over time. Correspondingly, 90% of the participants deploy worship music as a coping mechanism during inflation and immigration trauma and stress. Besides immigration and inflation stress, individuals under ESC discussed their personal experiences leading to trauma and stress. Bereavement, marriage crisis, extra-job stress

caused by attempts to meet needs in the face of inflation, insecurity, office downsizing and office bullying are some of the issues causing stress and trauma. Also, about 60% of the participants cited other examples (OE) around them where traumatized people encountered worship and got relieved of their stress.

3.3.3 - Analyses and Interpretation: Since the main research objective is to see how worship music impacts stress and trauma as a coping mechanism, the protocol and purpose of analysis is to discover the connections among (1) Worship as a coping mechanism (CM) for inflation and immigration stress (MSI and BIS), and the mediums through which worship helped engender coping (WECS) and (2) The connection among CM, WECS and the key outcome experiences of the participants (KON) after subscribing to worship music. At the end of this analysis, it should be clear whether worship music relieves the stress or trauma found among the participants as established under ECS in Table 2 above.

3.3.3.1 - Reliability and Validity: The first thing to look at is the reliability and validity of the data collated. As provided in Table 2 above and as it will be seen later in this subsection, consistent themes across participants suggest the data is reliable. Recurring themes such as "Healing", "Solace", and "Peace", indicate consistent experiences. In terms of validity, the themes which align with the context of worship as stress-coping mechanisms and the quantitative visualization in section 3.2 above, support the qualitative findings and enhance the validity in this subsection.

3.3.3.2 – CM versus WECS: Using thematic and content analyses to analyse the data in Table 2 above, the Bar Plot in figures 11 and 12 below show the frequency of themes like 'Peace', 'Healing', 'Encouragement' across participants, indicating good connections between worship as Coping Mechanism (CM) and mediums through which worship finds expression to engender coping ability in the participants (WECS). In Figure 11 below, while other themes are relevant as the coping mechanism, healing stood out as the biggest key outcome. In other words, worship music can promote emotional and sometimes psychological healing.

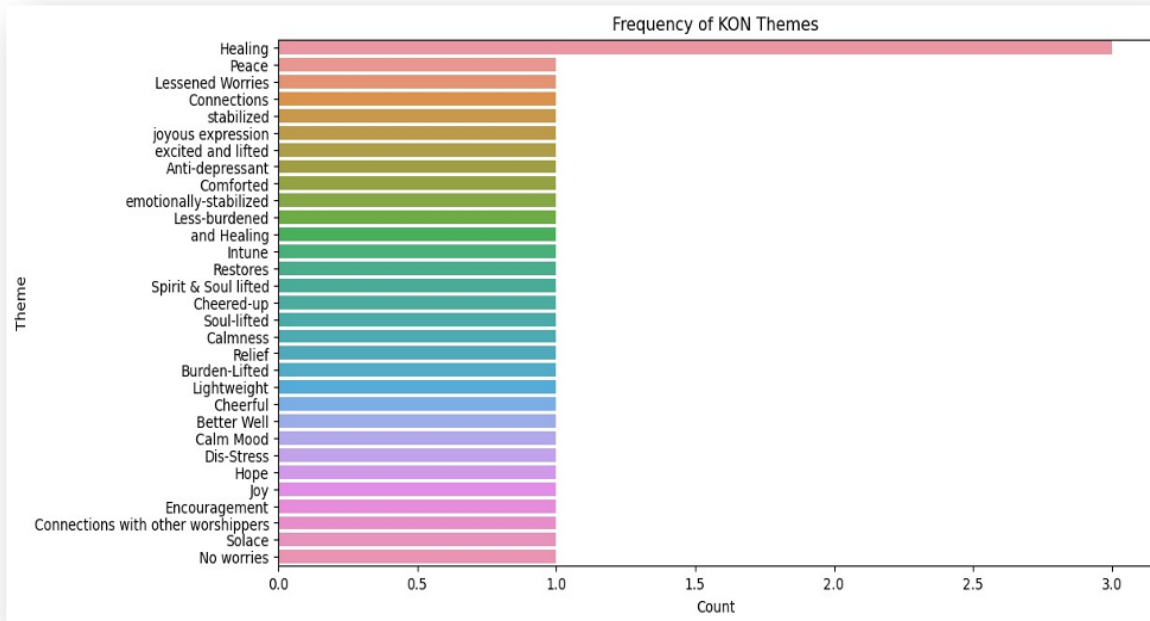


Figure 11 – Frequency of coping mechanism themes

On the other hand, Figure 12 below provides a worship expression medium (WECS). It shows that lyrics, worship concerts and congregational worship experiences take the lead as a medium through which worship music provides a coping experience.

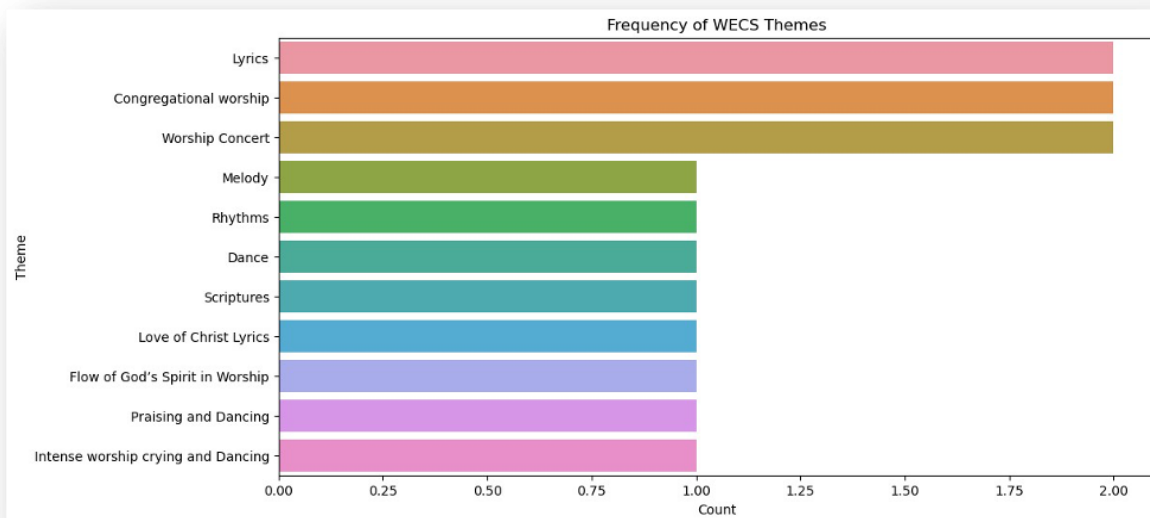


Figure 12 – Frequency of mediums of expression of worship music

3.3.3.2 – Overlapping of CM, WECS and KON: Looking at the connections among CM, WECS AND KON based on the analyses of the data provided in Table 2 above, a “Correlation Heatmap” was part of the outcome graphs as presented in Figure 13 below.

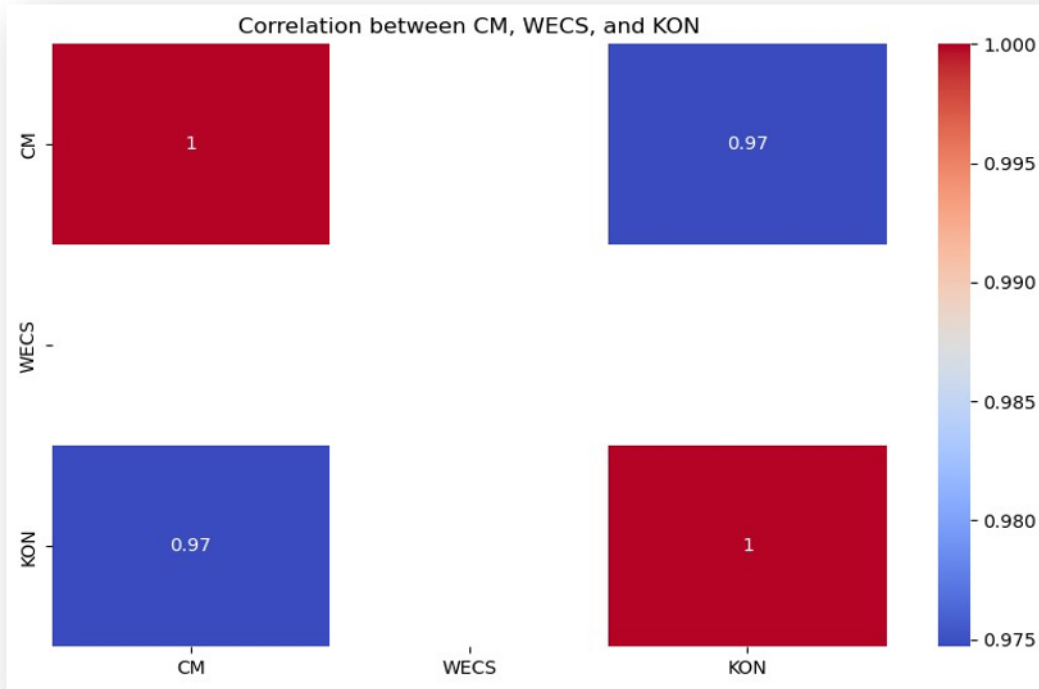


Figure 13 – Frequency of mediums of expression of worship music

The significant correlations between CM, WECS, and KON suggest interconnectedness. High correlation values indicate these elements often co-occur in participants' narratives. In Figure 13 above, CM AND KON are either in Red or Blue Colour, while WECS is constant with White Colour. Looking at the sidebar which represents the analysis of their connectedness, between 0.975 and 1.000 values, the red and blue colours were changed or faded by white to greyish and pitchy strands. In other words, overlapping of colour occurs in the analysis. The interpretation is that there is interconnectivity between worship music, its expression (lyrics, melody etc.) and the stress-coping outcomes (healing, solace, calmness etc.). In summary, themes related to coping mechanisms (CM), WECS, and KON overlap, suggesting interconnected experiences in worship contexts.

3.3.3.3 – Concurrences of WECS and KON: Continuous analysis of Table 2 above reveals the co-occurrences of WECS and KON as presented in Figure 14 below.

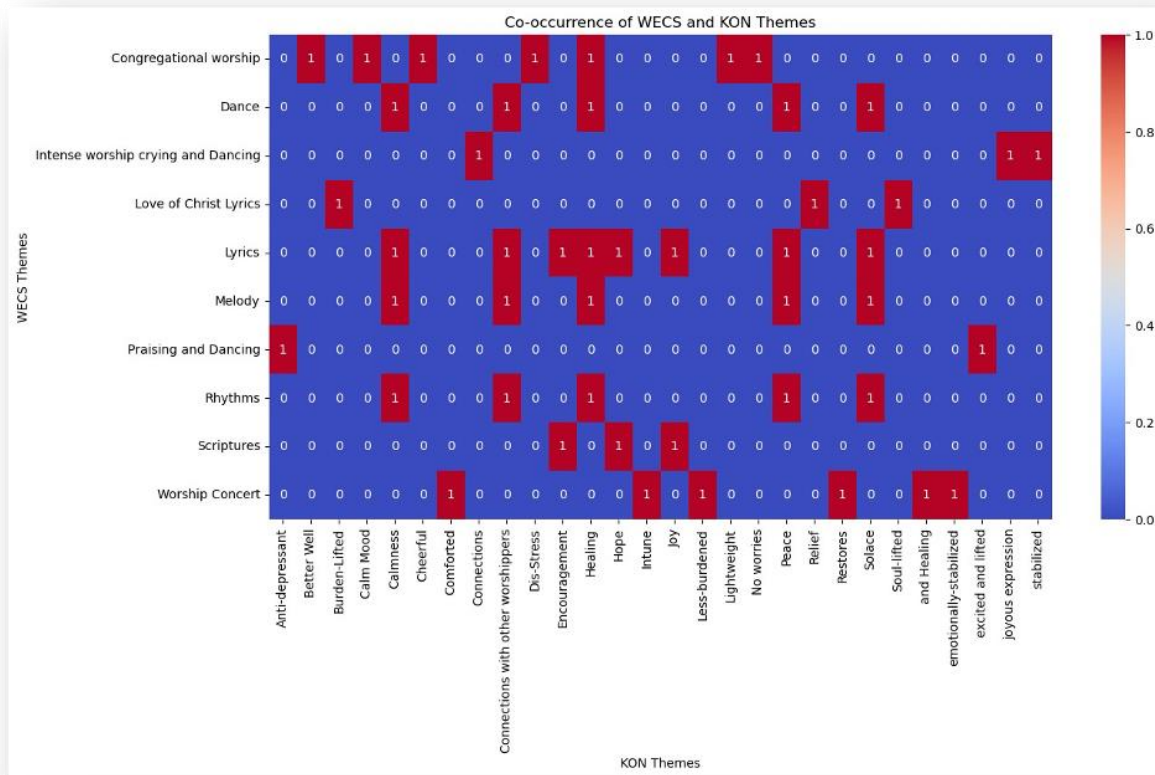


Figure 14 – Concurrence of coping mechanisms and mediums of expression

Few among many cogent points can be deduced as evidence of the relevance of worship music in coping with and diffusing trauma and stress caused by immigration and inflation crises. For example, scriptures bring encouragement, hope and joy while praising and dancing focus on anti-depressants and excitement. Meanwhile, congregational worship and lyrics have the highest occurrences with almost 7 KON themes in relationship. Correspondingly, healing is the predominant outcome of the experience of participants as it appears on 5 occasions (5 bars) with the instrumentality of congregational worship, dance, lyrics and the melody of worship songs and hymnal songs. This is followed by peace, solace, calmness and connection with other worshippers, each having 4 bars on the chat. It can therefore be inferred that solace, calmness and peace imply the ability to cope with the trauma and stress through worship experience. These four bars are consistent with the instrumentality of worship lyrics, melody, hymns and body movement (dancing).

3.3.3.4 - Evidence in Cloud analyses: Looking at the word clouds of KON and WECS in Figures 15 and 16 below, the size in which the texts appear shows their level of significance regarding the medium of expression and the impact of worship music in inflation and immigration-related stress and trauma. The diagrams below speak for themselves in this regard.



Figure 15 – Word cloud of expression mediums for coping mechanisms.

Among all other themes connected to worship expressions, the lyrics of worship songs dominate the cloud analysis result. On the account of respondents' submissions, it can be deduced that worship lyrics have more effect than scriptures because people would rather listen to songs and get blessed by the lyrics than read their Bibles. Such lyrics may even be a combination of scriptures. Likewise, the melody of the music may have more effect than the emotions of crying amidst intense worship. However, this may be contestable because crying may be viewed as a way of releasing pain and worry in other circumstances.

In another cloud analysis as presented in Figure 16 below, the end result of using worship music in stress and trauma diffusion is obvious. Healing tops the list, followed by calmness, peace and solace. Interestingly, this analysis corroborates the concurrences of WECS and KON analysis in subsection 3.3.3.3. This then shows that the data is reliable, and it can be evidence that worship

music can act as a coping mechanism or diffuse immigration or inflation-related stress among Dallas Neo-Pentecostals.



Figure 16 – Word cloud of expression outcomes

Lastly, these analyses show strong connections between coping mechanisms (CM), worship mediums of coping and diffusion (WECS) and the outcome of the use of worship music (KON). The recurring themes and their correlations provide insights into how worship practices help participants cope with stress and trauma, enhancing their emotional and spiritual well-being. The consistent and contextually relevant themes support the reliability and validity of the collected data and the outcomes presented. This is evident in how the data analyses showcase consistent themes and their alignment with participants' experiences in worship contexts.

3.4 -Connection between Quantitative and Qualitative Analyses

Both analyses agree that worship music can be useful in diffusing trauma and coping with stress related to immigration and inflation challenges. They both agree that the data collected have reliability and validity. This means both quantitative and qualitative agree that the data integrity is excellent and so the interpretation can be trusted.

Quantitative seems to suggest that diffusing trauma and coping with stress have strong probabilities, whereas using the same worship music to achieve spiritual deliverance exercise has low probability or is almost impossible. On the contrary, the qualitative exercise makes no argument for any deliverance case as a possibility using worship music. Thus, it can be concluded that the variance of the two methods adds value to the discoveries and interpretations of data. It shows they agree more than they disagree and enriches the arguments of the research.

3.5- Implication of the connections to the research question, the aims and objectives

In chapter 1 section 1.5, the research question focuses on how worship music among some Neo-Pentecostals can be used as an instrument to mitigate the effect of socio-economic and socio-political related mental stress in the Dallas environment. To answer the question, section 1.3 suggests possible aims and objectives centred on (1) Investigating the power of worship music as an instrument that is capable of alleviating the effects of mental challenges and trauma among some Christians in Dallas, Texas, (2) Proving the effectiveness of worship music as a coping mechanism for trauma, stress, worry and related mental health challenges within Neo-Pentecostal community in Dallas, Texas. It is on the grounds of the question and objectives that research interviews (qualitative) and surveys (quantitative) were conducted to determine the impact of worship music on individuals who have experienced various categories of stress, trauma or worry due to immigration or other socio-economic challenges.

Given the background above, the imperative question is whether the analyses and interpretations of the results in this chapter address the question and objectives. The answer is affirmative because there are strong connections between the question, objectives and the research outcome as presented in sections 2 and 3 above. Therefore, the implication is that consistency abounds between Chapter 1 and Chapter 3 which indicates that worship music positively impacts coping capabilities and trauma diffusion among Neo-Pentecostals in Dallas, Texas.

3.6- Chapter Summary

In the five sections presented above, the purpose of the chapter which is to investigate the impacts of worship music among Neo-Pentecostal worshipers in Dallas, Texas was achieved. The first section introduced what to expect. Section 2 presents the demography and detailed research data

collected including the process of collection. Sections 2 and 3 further analysed and interpreted the results obtained from the field. The interpretations suggest the quantitative and qualitative data results are consistent; a scenario which guarantees the reliability and validity of the data. The chapter also finds aims, objectives and data interpretations consistent. This means the research is in the right direction and achieving its overall purpose. Lastly, the findings suggest worship music helps as a coping mechanism and diffuser during stress and trauma; however, worship music in the instance of Dallas participants, does not guarantee the possibility of achieving deliverance exercise. While this hypothesis is scientific, the next chapter will critique the interpretations, and discuss the convergences and divergences under scientific, spiritual and theological indices using the theoretical framework discussed in Chapter 1, section 1.8

CHAPTER FOUR

DISCUSSIONS, CRITIQUE AND SUBMISSIONS

4.1 Introduction

The previous chapter presented the method, results, analysis and interpretations of the survey completed by members of some selected Neo-Pentecostal churches in Dallas Texas. The purpose of this chapter is to critique the outcome of the field research. Coughlan, Cronin and Ryan write that “critique is an impersonal evaluation of the strengths and limitations of the research being reviewed and should not be seen as a disparagement of the researcher’s ability” (2007:658). The essence of critiquing the data outcome is to respond to the research question as described in chapter 1.5 and subsequently verify whether the result of the worship music experience among some Neo-Pentecostals in Dallas, Texas can be argued as theologically and para-psychologically valid for coping with stress and diffusing trauma.

4.2 Philosophical Frameworks: Psycho-spiritual

The philosophical frameworks are psycho-spiritual because they include theological and parapsychological components. These two were introduced in the previous chapter 1.7 where an explanation was provided on the role of worship music in coping with trauma and stress-related experiences among some Neo-Pentecostals in Dallas. In this section each will be discussed under two subsections namely, the Parapsychological and Theological frameworks. The parapsychological framework adopted is the school of thought of Oman and Thoreson which raises the question - “Does religion (or spirituality) have health benefits” or does religion in any way influence health behaviour, social or psychological states? On the other hand, the theological framework is adopted from the experience of King David, the Psalmist in 1Samuel 16:14-23, who ministered to Saul who was at a time afflicted by strange spirits. These two frameworks are the critiquing lenses in regard to affirming or dispelling the role of worship music in diffusing and coping with trauma.

4.2.1 Oman and Thoreson: Parapsychological (PSI) Influence of Religion on Health and Behaviour

The acronym PSI originates from the twenty-third letter of the Greek alphabet. It represents a parapsychological phenomenon in the sphere of psychology, and it has diverse forms of application in different fields. The term was coined by a biologist named Benjamin P. Wiesner, and it was first put into use in 1942 by a psychologist named Robert Thouless. Willin (2021:1) in an article described Thouless as a “psychologist and parapsychologist, best known for his cipher tests of postmortem survival and for introducing ‘PSI’ as a collective term for psychic phenomena. The term “PSI denotes anomalous processes of information or energy transfer, processes such as telepathy or other forms of extrasensory perception (ESP) that are currently unexplained in terms of known physical or biological mechanisms” (Bem and Honorton,1994:115). PSI can further be described as an expression used in parapsychology for the phenomena which includes the cognitive of conveying intelligence encompassing an anatomy that transcends the five senses.

Oman and Thoreson (2002) upheld four prominent conclusive pathways in which religion influences health: these pathways are health behaviours, social support, psychological states and ‘PSI’ influences. PSI as indicated in Chapter 1, section 1.8, describes the unknown factor in extrasensory perception and psychokinesis experiences that is not explained by known physical or biological mechanisms. PSI expresses a methodical approach to parapsychological phenomena which involves the transfer of energy that cannot be explained using the known scientific laws and data. Cardena in his own perspective affirms that “PSI should be seen in the larger context of biological processes including brain functioning and evolution (Cardena, 2018:666).

In their discussion, Oman and Thoreson agree that certain religious practices such as intercessory prayer may also act partially through natural laws by governing subtle energies, however, these practices are beyond modern scientific understanding. Spilka and Ladd write that Intercessory prayer is sometimes categorized as alternative medicine, a designation that covers a large number of unconventional procedures (2013:140). The duo further submits that when an individual is involved in some form of religious or spiritual activity, they are most likely to experience positive mental health and more positive psychological states such as joy and hope whenever the spiritual coping methods or mechanisms are applied. Idler (2008) attests to this submission that “spiritual

and religious practices help us integrate the body, mind, and spirit”, it also provides psychological and physical benefits. This could also mean that the more spiritual activities an individual engages in, the lesser the negative emotional state of the individual. Pardini et al. in agreement with PSI sustain that religious faith and spirituality were associated with a more optimistic life orientation, greater perceived social support, higher resilience to stress, and lower anxiety levels (2000:347-354).

In addition, Oman and Thoreson submit that PSI governs mental energy and that spiritual activities which can produce spiritual, yet positive energies can be part of the PSI. Kennedy (2004:1) acknowledged the submission that “PSI appears to have the function of drawing attention to spiritual matters. Solfvin also affirms that “mental healing is the practice of treating illness without a known physical curative agent. It is also known as psychic healing, spiritual healing, non-medical healing, shamanic healing, prayer healing, miracle healing, laying on of hands, paranormal healing, and magnetizing” (Solfvin,1984:31). The purpose of PSI in this case represents the supernatural force that engages worship music as the spiritual energies capable of staging a coping mechanism for trauma and other related mental illness. Likewise, Pandarakalam agrees that parapsychology helps us to develop a deeper understanding of the mind, affording us fresh insights into psychopathology; meaning that it could function as the bridge between religion and mental, emotional and psychological well-being (Pandarakalam, 2007:1).

Meier and O’Connor (2005) agree that pastoral care workers can help those with dementia maintain a spiritual connection to God through memories, life stories, and sharing in music, prayers, sacraments, symbols, and familiar rituals. The authors further explain that using the strength of psalms and parables can also assist the patients to find comfort; an assertion which agrees perfectly with the PSI concept (Meier and O’Connor, 2005). The implication then is that when religious folks gather, worship music can assist them to build the capacity or spiritual energy to cope with trauma and mental stress resulting from the economic and immigration worries. In the submission of Levin “the concept of the supernatural, is something altogether different, and is, by definition, outside of or beyond nature. God the Creator is believed by many to heal through means that transcend the laws of the created universe, both its local and nonlocal elements and that are thus inherently inaccessible to and unknowable by science” Levin (1996:66-73).

Based on the above submissions of Cardena (2018:666), Spilka and Ladd (2013), Pandarakalam (2007), Pardini et al (2000), Meier and O'Connor (2005), and Levin (1996), all agree with Oman and Thoreson's thoughts parapsychological approach to addressing mental challenges includes spiritual activities like prayer and worship, among others. Additionally, Bradshaw, Ellison, Fang and Mueller agree no less with this position with a claim that "the frequency of listening to religious music is associated with a decrease in death anxiety and increases in life satisfaction, self-esteem, and a sense of control" (2015:961-971).

Besides PSI, other models affirm the role of spirituality in advancing mental wellness. Such models are holistic and agree that the role of spirituality in mental wellness is not exclusive to PSI. Religion and healthcare research scholars like Daniel (2024:1-19) have recently proposed the use of Hefti's "Extended Biopsychosocial Model" in mental healthcare conversations and interventions. In the same vein, Daniel and Harriet (2024:1-19) further recommend both Hefti's "Extended Biopsychosocial Model" and Sulmasy's "Biopsychosocial-Spiritual Framework". These two models are in tandem with PSI. By implication, there is an increasing awareness of the need for spiritual interventions in healthcare. Therefore, the use of parapsychological model (PSI) to view the data obtained from the fieldwork of this research in chapter 3 is justifiable.

4.2.2 Critiquing the Research Outcome in Chapter 3 with Parapsychological 'PSI'

The summation of the data analysis in chapter three provides a correlation between the parapsychological PSI and the overall outcome of the research, because the data shows that respondents found worship music useful as a coping mechanism and for trauma diffusion, mental stress and other related psychological stress.

To critically examine the data outcome in Chapter 3, it is important to reiterate the research question; can worship music among some Neo-Pentecostals be a psychospiritual instrument to mitigate the effect of socio-economic and other socio-political related mental stress? The response to this question was obviously answered through the responses of the participants. The data outcome of Figure 7 of group C, sub-section 3.2.3.5 reveals that trauma among the respondents was triggered by various economic factors, the highest of these factors is house rent. Responses of

40.1% of the participants show their preference to participate in congregational worship. 49.2% of the participants also claim that listening to worship music whenever they are traumatised or stressed by inflation, immigration or insecurity, encourages them to keep hope alive while trusting God for divine intervention in the situation. This worship music is considered a coping mechanism. Ellison verifies that “psychic healing in PSI phenomena is known as distant healing, intercessory prayer, spiritual healing, nondirected prayer, intentionality, energy healing, pranic healing, non-local healing, noncontact therapeutic touch” (Ellison, 2012:12). This submission aligns with the respondents’ opinions in both the quantitative and qualitative data and the parapsychological (PSI) concepts. If the responses of the participants in the previous chapter are pieces of evidence to go by, the submission will affirm a strong connection between Oman and Thoreson’s theory of parapsychological healing and the research outcome. This is further shown in Figure 9 of group E in the same sub-section 3.2.3.5, where 72.7% of participants confirmed that lyrical meditation during worship music helps them cope with traumatic experiences and ease their fears of insecurity and high cost of living in Dallas.

There is a relationship between the data results and the PSI concept as shown in the outcome of the respondents above. Some of the participants claimed they experienced relief from trauma through meditation on the lyrics. The concept of PSI as a psychospiritual element represents the fact that worship music has a supernatural force and possibly helps the people to build some spiritual energy to cope with trauma or stress. The outcome of meditating on the lyrics during corporate worship or individuals’ private time in worship as seen in Figure 9 of chapter 3.2.3.5 clearly defines and connects with the PSI parapsychological phenomenon. Some of the respondents cry out their emotions and pains and get relaxed afterwards. Others in this group adopted laughing out their troubles to get their minds off the challenges in the meantime. The significance of these outcomes is that they agree with the philosophy of PSI parapsychology that worship music represents a spiritual energy that helps participants build capacity to cope and hope for the better. The responses from the qualitative data outcome in subsection 3.2.3.6 Table 2, further attests to the PSI parapsychological idea that the participants engage in worship music as their coping mechanism (CM) whenever they are faced with traumatic challenges. Looking at the qualitative data outcome of Chapter 3.3 Table 2; participants 1, 2,3 (P1, P2 & P3) who were bereaved acceded to worship music as their medium of building capacity to accept their losses,

and the key outcome (KON) after engaging in the exercise was Peace, Calmness, Solace, Healing, Joy, Hope and Encouragement.

With the hindsight that the objective of this research is to validate or dispel the authenticity of worship music as a coping instrument, the outcome of both the quantitative and qualitative data in chapter three establishes that spirituality has an undeniable impact on mental wellbeing. Additional evidence to substantiate this argument is reflected in the outcome of the qualitative data analysis involving the participants as presented in Figure 11, section 3.3.3.2. The worship music experience can create peace, comfort, calmness, relief, hope, joy, less burden, encouragement and lots more. However, healing stood out as the key outcome (KON) of the spiritual exercise. Maraldi in parapsychology and religion publication confirms that “spiritual practices have the capacity to influence the physical and mental state of others by means of intention, even at a distance” (2021:60-61). After engaging worship music as a coping mechanism (CM) Figure 15 of section 3.3.3.4 established healing as the principal outcome (KON) of the participants. This is followed by peace, solace and encouragement. If these outcomes are achieved through listening to worship music and engaging in spiritual exercise, it confirms the PSI concept that spiritual activities can influence mental well-being. Most of the participants in the qualitative data also asserted that they attended worship meetings, concerts and other praise and worship events where they contacted spiritual energy that promoted their journey to healing. Further, Figure 14, section 3.3.3.3 emphasises the basic elements of the coping mechanism (CM) and its medium of expression. For example, scriptural lyrics of the songs during congregational worship bring healing, which is the predominant outcome of the spiritual exercise. Likewise, joy, hope, relief and encouragement are possible derivatives of the outcome.

One of the worship songs reviewed in chapter two, titled “*I am the God That Heals You*” by Don Moen is often rendered by the Pentecostal churches in Dallas and across the globe, whenever these practitioners are experiencing mental stress and trauma. The lyric of the song has its root connected to the Hebrew word “Jehovah Rapha” meaning the God who heals or cures. The lyrics also confirm the claims of the respondents, that the lyrics of the worship songs they listened to in their moments of distress helped them cope with their trauma or challenges. The analysis and interpretation of the data results as shown in chapter three explained the importance of Worship music as a coping

mechanism (WCM) during a crisis or a traumatic situation. The observation here shows there is consistency in adopting worship as a coping mechanism (WCM) during distress. Worship music is also identified as an instrument of diffusing trauma and calming mental stress. However, it should be noted from the data analysis that the probability of using worship music as an instrument to perform deliverance is low but may not be impossible.

In summary, this section submits that the research outcome in chapter three agrees no less with the parapsychological PSI framework and shows that respondents use worship music as a coping mechanism (WCM) to diffuse trauma and stress in Dallas, Texas. It also shows that spiritual exercise such as worship music agrees with psychological measures to promote mental well-being among the Neo-Pentecostals in Dallas.

4.3 Theological Framework: David's worship music and healing experience

The philosophical framework to be examined in this section is the theological connection drawn from the experience of David the Psalmist when he ministered to King Saul in music, in 1 Samuel 16:14-23. The analyses in the previous chapter as well as the discussions in sections 4.2.1 and 4.2.2 above had already demonstrated that worship music as a spiritual exercise has a psychological influence on people. The outcome also verifies that the parapsychological framework aligns with the testimony of the respondents that worship can alleviate their worries and stress-related trauma. However, since this is religious research from the Christian perspective, it is crucial to establish a theological paradigm like the Davidic worship music experience vis-a-vis the worship music scenario with Saul.

The biblical story as written in 1 Samuel chapter 16 indicates in verse 14 that “*Now the Spirit of the Lord had departed from Saul, and an evil spirit from the Lord tormented him*” (NIV). Saul had earlier disobeyed in chapter 15 where he failed to carry out God's instruction. This led to God rejecting his kingship while also permitting an evil spirit to torment him. The ‘evil spirit’ mentioned here can be likened to insanity or mental illness since it was sent to torment him or cause pain. Although the mental challenges in view in this research is more of mental stress or trauma as against mental health illness as in the case of Saul, the researcher leverages on the fact that they all belong to the same space or genre of mental challenges, some milder while others are

chronic. “The torment Saul faced during his kingship showed many indicators of combat trauma, he also exhibited signs of mood swings, apathy and depression, violent temper, paranoia, and a distinct change in personality” (Anderson, 2020). Saul could be said to have been depressed, traumatized or mentally unstable due to his rejection by God. Consequently, the depressing condition of King Saul led to David’s invitation to the palace by the recommendation of Saul’s servant, to play soothing music for healing and deliverance from his insanity and perhaps for his mental wellness. David who was known for his shepherding skills and bravery in war was very skilled in playing the Harp and a successful musician.

Looking at Verse 16 of the passage - “*Let our lord command his servants here to search for someone who can play the lyre. He will play when the evil spirit from God comes on you, and you will feel better*” (NIV), the possibility of relief from mental unwellness through worship music is possible because the victim can feel better when the music is in progress. Nevertheless, Aluede and Ekewenu (2009) reveal that the kind of music, the choice of instrument, the duration of performance, the intensity of the music, the setting of the healing exercise are significant contributions to the therapeutic potency of music.

Saul’s relief from his depressing spirit came through David’s music ministration. Lohmeyer explains that “the implications here are important for the discussion of the morality of music because the ability of David's music to interrupt spiritual oppression qualifies its moral substance” (2006:1). It means the components of David's music can be likened to ‘worship music’ which was the spiritual force that rendered Saul’s traumatic spirit ineffective. David's musical role went beyond entertainment; when he played, it had a soothing and profound impact on Saul’s well-being. The music distracted Saul from his torment, provided emotional relief, and even led to his physical relaxation” (Odiase, 2023:1077).

4.3.1- Critiquing the Data result in Chapter Three with David’s theological Framework

Referencing the data results from chapter three, in section 3.3 Table 2; most of the respondents stated that they were able to pull through their traumatic or mental stress experiences with the assistance of worship music. For instance, some of the bereaved respondents agree to their

participation in congregational and personal worship as a coping mechanism (CM) to navigate through their painful experience. It is also important to mention that the data results from the Neo-Pentecostal respondents in Dallas agree with David's theological framework since the data shows that they use worship music as a spiritual exercise to diffuse their trauma.

The chapter three data analysis further agrees with David's experience with Saul in Section 3.2.3.5, figure 8. Participants were asked to state which method of treatment they would prefer whenever they were depressed or emotionally stressed. About 49.2% (almost half) of the respondents gave feedback that listening to worship music would be their preferred relief method, while 40.1% prefer to go to church to participate in worship service, similar to the earlier method. Approximately 89.3% of the people's response indicated that both individual and corporate worship music provides them with the atmosphere for possible trauma mitigation caused by the high cost of living, insecurity and immigration crisis. The choice of worship music as a coping mechanism (CM) with the majority of the respondents is an indication that its role cannot be underestimated in addressing psychological issues.

Contrary to the possibility of coping with and using worship music as a mechanism for diffusing trauma and other mental-related stress, the outcome of this research seems not to support the use of worship music to achieve deliverance as presumed in the case of David and Saul in 1 Samuel 16: 14-23. The text indicates that David's music had refreshed Saul previously on numerous occasions; it says that whenever the distressing spirit would come upon Saul, he would call for David to come and play and only then would the spirit depart. Saul's physical deliverance is emphasized clearly in the Hebrew language: the music made him well" (Lohmeyer, 2006). The implication of inviting David on several occasions to use music to address the mental crisis of Saul is an indication that using worship music as a coping mechanism or trauma diffuser is not a 'once and for all' procedure. This then means that (1) Worship is not a cure for mental challenges but a palliative procedure to lessen the severity and create hope for change, and (2) Conversation Consistency is key to sustaining the results. This implies that consistency is paramount if worship music will make any sense as a coping mechanism. This second point is in tandem with theological induction where believers are called to a life of worship. In other words, the first purpose of worship is not to seek its practice as a means to an end like mental palliative support but to worship

God and acknowledge His Lordship. *“Yet a time is coming and has now come when the true worshipers will worship the Father in the Spirit and in truth, for they are the kind of worshipers the Father seeks”*. Thus, deploying worship music for the alleviation of mental stress and trauma diffusion must not be a function of trade by barter.

4.3.2- Examples from David’s Experience

In a further critique of chapter three, the outcome of the analysis as explained in the respondent’s data, can be critiqued through the lens of David’s Psalms. Worship music and intercessory worship can be acknowledged as consistent instruments that empower the process of diffusing traumatic experiences. These are established in some scriptures written by the psalmist in times of distress.

David once said” *Why am I so depressed? Why this turmoil within me? Put your hope in God, for I will still praise Him, my Savior and my God” (Psalms 42:11 HCSB version)*. David’s statement here proved that his worship amid depression is like a coping psalm or song that builds his capacity to cope with a depressing situation and attract peace. The Psalmist also sang in a moment of despair that *“O God, listen to my cry, Hear my prayer. From the ends of the earth, I cry to you for help, when my heart is overwhelmed, lead me to the towering rock of safety. For you are my safe refuge, a fortress where my enemies cannot reach me.” (Psalm 61 vs 1-3 NIV)*. Despite the overwhelming situation and despondency of his spirit, David cried in an intercessory worship unto God for help and safety from his devastating and demoralizing condition. The outcome of his worship which may have engendered coping energy is reflected in both verse 3 where he acknowledges God *as his safe refuge*, and verse 8 where he expresses his appreciation to God for healing.

In Psalms 31 verses 9, 22 David cried out *“Have mercy on me, Lord, because I’m depressed. My vision fails because of my grief, as do my spirit and my body. When I was panicked, I said, I’m cut off from your eyes, but you heard my request for mercy, when I cried out to you for help” (CEB)*. David sang this song in a moment of hopelessness and grief, his engagement with this song of prayer generates spiritual energy that promotes anti-depressive elements like calmness, peace joy, peace, among others. The psalmist also cried out to God in worship when he was under the attack of King Saul. In his words David stated that *“Deliver me from my enemies, O God; be my fortress against those who are attacking me. Deliver me from evildoers and save me from those who are*

after my blood.” (Psalms 59:1-2 NIV). These words by David corroborate with the variables and coping expression highlighted in Figure 9 of chapter 3, subsection 3.2.3.5, where a portion of the research respondents attest to crying during worship to allow outflow of pain and mental stress.

These spiritual engagements by the psalmist possibly brought healing, peace, calmness, and solace, and promoted mental wellness. They were also seen in the key outcome factors of this research’s responses in chapter 3.

4.4 Chapter Summary

In summary, this chapter has critiqued the quantitative and qualitative research outcomes. It was established that worship music can be used as a coping mechanism for diffusing trauma and other mental-related crises. The chapter discusses the two philosophical frameworks as introduced in Chapter 1, subsection 1.8. The first theoretical framework by Oman and Thoreson explains the parapsychological PSI as a psychological phenomenon in the field of psychology which recognizes the role of spirituality in addressing trauma and mental stress. Section 4.2.1 further discussed the correlation between the parapsychological PSI and the outcome of the research. It was submitted that worship music is part of the spiritual activities that govern the mental energy of religious folks and that it helps them to cope with trauma and other mental challenges. Section 4.2.2 submits that the outcome of the research agrees with the PSI parapsychological theory because the data gathered from the participants shows that the respondents use worship music as a coping mechanism during their challenges.

On the other hand, the theological framework discussed the experience of David and Saul when he was afflicted with a strange spirit (spirit of depression). Section 4.3 analyses how David’s worship music calmed Saul from the pain of his depression and trauma whenever he was afflicted. The theological framework then connected the biblical experience of David and Saul with the experiences of the respondents who confirmed that worship music was used as a coping mechanism whenever they went through similar experiences as Saul. Overall, four critiquing points were submitted. (1) Worship music can create positive mental energy to address trauma and mental stress, (2) The practice does not guarantee deliverance with rare exceptions as in the case of Saul (3) Worship music does not provide solution to mental challenges in a ‘once and for all’

exercise, (4) It calls for consistency of practice not to seek healing and deliverance but to love God and be consistent in relationship with God.

This research will now proceed to chapter five for the conclusion. The final chapter will present the summaries of the literature reviews and primary research. Considering that “there is a growing concern across the globe regarding the overwhelming demand and the depleting supply of services in the healthcare sector” (Orogun, 2023), recommendations will be made on how worship music may be encouraged as a coping mechanism for trauma and other mental related stress among the residence of Dallas, Texas and beyond.

CHAPTER 5

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 - Introduction

This research explored the role of worship music in promoting mental well-being among Neo-Pentecostals in Dallas, Texas. It investigated how worship music among the selected Neo-Pentecostal churches can be a psychospiritual instrument through which mental stress, trauma and related mental crises can be mitigated. The exercise involved sending out questionnaires to different participants within the Pentecostal churches and engaging in one-on-one interviews with selected pastors, ministers, choir leaders, musicians and people involved in leadership roles. Gathering and analysing data gave clarity and provided the required evidence for the research question. It further provides interpretation and critiquing of the data results. In this final chapter, the findings both in the literature review and fieldwork will be summarised in line with their connections to the research questions and objectives and the value of the research; these will be followed by recommendations and a conclusion.

5.2 - Findings from the Study

The two aspects of the findings which include the literature review, and the primary research will be discussed below.

5.2.1 - Findings from Literature Review

Chapter Two explored the various knowledge that is directly or indirectly related to the topic. Academics globally have communicated immensely on worship music and mental wellness through their publications. Such existing literature was consulted to discover existing works and established areas of knowledge within the academic space. This study showed from the literature review that music therapy has been a developing practice. Different authors whose works were cited in the review discovered how the practice of music therapy can improve quality of life and create emotional balance. Music therapy on its own has been a research-based healthcare tool; however, findings in the review reveal that worship music has more impact on human emotion and mental state compared to other styles of music and practices. Findings in the literature review cited by Boswell (2019) further established that worship music can connect humanity to divinity as shown in scriptural examples of David's Psalms that were written out of deep emotional situations.

One of the findings also reveals that faith plays a vital role in worship music. Food (2023) whose book was reviewed, posits that engaging in spiritual exercises such as exercising faith during worship can positively impact the mental health of an individual. Other findings show how devotional music in an organization impacts the employee's mental and emotional state to achieve high productivity at work. This means that worship music practice goes beyond the four walls of a church or religious setting.

Further findings from the literature review indicate that immigration, socio-economic and socio-political factors are some of the main elements responsible for mental stress and trauma. Fielding's publication (2022) explained that almost all aspects of human life, including mental health are affected by high inflation rates as well as the influx of illegal immigrants at the Texas border. More discoveries also unveil the power of worship lyrics as a coping tool for mitigating mental challenges. Subsequently, lyrics of some popular healing worship songs which were selected by worship music ministers were explored with their interpretation. The Gospel music ministers whose lyrics were discussed are Don Moen, Will Reagan, Sinach, and Bill Gaither among several others.

So far, the literature review speaks to the research aim and objectives. It shows there is existing literature in agreement with the fact that worship music impacts the mental wellness of humans. The literature confirms this when music ministers adopt the use of music to encourage those who are stressed mentally to ask for God's healing. Conversely, there was no existing literature suggesting that any research was done to show a practical example of the power of worship in addressing mental stress and trauma in Dallas, Texas. They included rare pieces of literature with practical examples of the role of worship music in influencing solace, peace and calmness among others. This shows the imperativeness of this thesis as it fills the gap of practical examples of the power of worship music in managing mental stress and trauma through quantitative and qualitative research findings.

5.2.2 - Findings From the Primary Research

Findings from the primary research were presented in the data collected from the quantitative and qualitative research findings carried out among selected Neo-Pentecostal residents of Dallas,

Texas. The mixed research (quantitative and qualitative) exercise filled the gap found in the literature review. The demography of the participants shows ranges in age groups of 60 down to 18 years of age with men and women of multicultural diversities. Findings show that 201 participants responded to the quantitative questionnaire and almost all respondents had encountered mental stress or trauma-related experiences. Results from the qualitative research also show that the ministers and pastors who responded to the interview had sometimes experienced trauma or mental stress due to socio-economic and socio-political factors as well as immigration and security issues. As a result of the data gathered from the exercise, it was further revealed that there is a connection between worship music and trauma and other mental-related challenges among all the participants in Dallas, Texas.

Since the intention of this research as indicated in Chapters 1.3 and 1.5 is to explore the role of worship music in alleviating the effects of socio-economic and socio-political mental stress, the outcome of the data analysis presented in Chapter 3 shows some of the following findings:

- Chapter 3, sub-sections 3.2.3, 3.2.3.1, and 3.2.3.2 respectively, presented some basic analysis and interpretations using tools such as Python's Regression Analysis and Correlation Heatmap among others to explicate the data outcomes.
- Findings from research data analysis Chapter 3.2.3.5, Figure 7 stipulates that inflation (rise in house rent, food, transport and other basic amenities) and insecurity due to border porosity cause trauma and other mental-related stress.
- There is an agreement between the literature review and the respondents' feedback in Chapter 3 suggests that the policies of the current political administration might have contributed to the worsened economic condition, insecurity and border crisis, which in turn may have triggered trauma and mentally related stress among the residents.
- Other findings from Chapter 3.2.3.5 indicate that 49% of the respondents subscribed to congregational worship as a coping mechanism (CM) whenever they were mentally stressed. This then means that worship music as a coping instrument provides the avenue for diffusing individual trauma and debriefing communities' mental challenges caused by economic hardship.

- Research data also shows that lyrical meditations during worship give hope and mitigate fears, worries and pain. Figure 9 confirmed that 72.7% of the participants meditate on the lyrics of the worship music as a means of diffusing trauma and stress. Crying and laughing while worshipping is also a part of easing-out pain and trauma and the ability to relax afterwards.

5.3 - Conclusions

The literature review speaks to the research aim and objectives; it shows there is existing literature in agreement with the fact that worship music impacts the mental wellness of humans. The literature confirms that music ministers do adopt the use of music to encourage those who are stressed mentally to ask for God's healing. Conversely, there was no existing literature suggesting that any research was done to show a practical example of the power of worship in addressing mental stress and trauma in Dallas, Texas. However, there were rare pieces of literature with practical examples of the role of worship music in influencing solace, peace and calmness among others. This shows the imperativeness of this thesis as it fills the gap of practical examples of the power of worship music in managing mental stress and trauma through quantitative and qualitative research findings.

The primary research did not only fill the gap created in existing literature but also answered the research questions, aims and objectives. I argue that worship music can indeed have a positive impact on the mental wellness of any community of faith that practices worship music. With the discoveries made, this thesis will proceed to make some actionable recommendations.

5.4 - Recommendations

Worship music has been validated by most of the research respondents that it is a coping mechanism for trauma and other mental stress. Given the value that worship music brings to mental health, it is imperative to provide pieces of recommendation that could promote and maximise worship music as a non-medical or paramedical practice to improve mental wellness. The recommendations are directed to Church leaders, the Health sector and health professionals, Healthcare Chaplains, the Administrators of care homes and addiction or rehabilitation centres among others.

5.4.1 Recommendation for Church Leaders

The designation of Church leaders refers to the pastors and religious leaders of the Neo-Pentecostals and other branches of churches within Dallas, Texas and even across the globe. The recommendation to the Church leaders is critical because the research was conducted among the Neo-Pentecostal church members and the results confirmed that most of the members have been victims of trauma and other related mental stress. With that being said, the research recommends the following:

5.4.1.1 - Worship Therapeutic forum- Church leaders (not limited to Neo-Pentecostals) should create a forum for worship, which is different from regular church services. This could be titled a worship therapeutic session, where members and other families could gather to listen to and participate in worship music. This recommendation is necessary because respondents' feedback from the quantitative research in Chapter 3.2.3.5, Figure 8 described their preference; to listen to worship music or participate in congregational worship whenever they are depressed or emotionally stressed. Participant's preference for congregational worship and listening to worship is about 89.3%. This suggests that worship music can be adopted as a therapeutic coping mechanism among the Neo-Pentecostals. This way the churches and their leaders would be contributing to the wellness of their congregants and surrounding communities. Wholistic wellness pursuit cannot be left to the medical practitioners alone, the church has a responsibility and an opportunity to support the mental wellness of their congregants and surrounding communities through worship music.

5.4.1.2 - Technological upgrade of music and media services- It is recommended that church leaders invest in modern music and media technologies that can aid easy access to worship experience during regular services, concerts or therapeutic worship sessions. One of the expressions of worship that stood out among others is lyrical meditations. In Figure 12 of Chapter 3.3.3.2 lyrical meditation was presented as a worship expression medium. However, not many participants during worship could relate to or memorise lyrics during worship; hence, the need for media projection of songs on the projector screen to enable the participants to read and ruminate over the lyrics of the worship songs. Better still, the churches can invest in LED media screens

with anti-glare protective elements to aid the interaction of the worshippers with the lyrics while also reducing the impact of media screens on the eyes of the worshippers.

Additionally, musical instruments have been digitalised for better performance and production that soothes the soul. Orogun and Pillay (2023b) in an article titled “New technologies and the supply chain of African Neo-Pentecostals” submit to the need for Pentecostal churches to leverage technologies to improve their worship-music services to their congregation to reflect improved wellness among the Neo-Pentecostal worshippers. David possibly used analogue or less technologically savvy equipment, but this age requires something better. Therefore, the recommendations of Orogun and Pillay (2023b) become imperative; the better the technology, the better the services provided.

5.4.1.3 – Cooperation with Mental Wellness Professionals- It is recommended that church leaders work with professionals in the mental health sector because mental health and other related psychological matters require sensitivity. It is appropriate for medical professionals such as psychologists, clinicians and therapists to be involved in parapsychological exercise. Some of these professionals may be members of congregations and should be consulted for volunteer services whenever the church finds the need to conduct therapeutic worship sessions. Although they may not be the key players in providing worship music services, their expertise may be required to confirm the outcome of the exercise whenever participants claim recovery from mental stress and trauma.

5.4.2 - Recommendations for health sectors and professionals

The level of mental healthcare support provided by limited healthcare workers seems to be insufficient to close the gap of increasing mental challenges (Orogun, 2023:20-21; WHO, 2017). The research outcome in chapter three indicates that on a daily basis, people are faced with socio-economic, socio-political and insecurity challenges. As a result of this submission, this research recommends that worship music sessions be included in hospitals and healthcare centre programs for patients. This can be led by the hospital chaplains.

In addition, institutions such as psychiatric hospitals and healthcare centres should employ the services of worship music ministers to periodically provide therapeutic music services to their patients. This could be done on a contractual or part-time basis, weekly or every fortnight. These institutions can also include worship in their recovery program for the patients or better yet, worship music sessions may be created within the rehabilitation unit of these facilities.

5.4.3 - Recommendations for care facilities

Most care facilities and assisted living residences in Western and developed countries provide accommodation and personal care for the elderly and people with mental and physical disabilities. Sharing from the experience of the researcher as a former employer of a state psychiatric hospital and a care facility both in New Jersey⁴ where music and psychospiritual exercises always interest the clients, the researcher has observed over time that clients always desire something new and unique from their regular support plan and daily living activities. Additionally, the researcher as a music minister, has been coordinating an annual music and worship event named “Instruments of Praise” from 2011 to the present day. This event has been one of such events that the respondents attest to as a therapeutic programme they subscribe to whenever they are faced with trauma and other mental-related stress. Therefore, the premise of the researcher’s experience and the testimonies of this research’s respondents, it is suggested that care facilities include regular or daily worship music sessions in their support plans for their clients. This will go a long way to provide a feel-good factor in clients' care and support programs.

5.4.4 - Recommendations for Institutions’ Chaplains

Chaplains offer spiritual care and counselling to individuals in prisons, hospices and other institutions. Most of the chaplains represent religious denominations and they often work with health professionals to achieve set goals. Patients in these institutions are individuals who are in assisted living programs with physical or mental disabilities. Some are emotionally or mentally

⁴ The researcher worked as a Human Services Assistant (Part-time) at the Greystone Psychiatric Hospital, New Jersey Department of Health (Rehabilitation Unit) He often served the patients at the recreation centre during their music and sports sessions. He also worked at Alternative Incorporation, a New Jersey Care Facility in Sommerville as a Direct Support Professional (DSP full time) where he assisted and supported clients who have mental and other disabilities to achieve their goals and to assist in implementing service plans. These positions and the activities carried out showed evidence of the researcher’s experience in worship music and mental health that impacts residents of the facilities. An employment letter (in Appendix D) has been provided as evidence of the researcher's experience.

unstable due to their conditions. Suppose the outcome of the mixed research in Figure 11 of Chapter 3.3.3.2 conducted with the respondents is considered, in that case, this indicates that worship music can provide healing, peace, stability, restoration, relief, encouragement, calmness, hope and joy among several others. Tuberville affirmed this submission with a claim that “Worship music is an effective vehicle with which individuals with mental illness can possibly experience the lessening of symptoms in addition to the presence of God based both upon scientific and Biblical bases” (2022:14). Therefore, this research recommends that chaplains should organize and incorporate therapeutic worship into their spiritual activities with their inmates, patients or clients.

5.5 - Further Research Areas

After exploring and attempting to answer the research questions on whether worship music as psycho-spiritual exercise can mitigate the effect of socio-economic and socio-political related mental stress in Dallas, Texas. It cannot be said that this research covered every aspect of psycho-spiritual means of providing mental wellness. Although worship music has a way of calming down those who are psychologically challenged and can provide relief for other mental-related stress, it can be deduced that worship music may not be a stand-alone remedy for complete healing in mental health crises. Most worship music practitioners are likely not medically educated, thereby we cannot ascertain the effectiveness of adopting worship music as a coping mechanism.

In addition, the research data analysis in Chapter 3.2.3.5 Figure 8, shows that 10.7% of the research respondents opt for other means of relief when they are depressed or emotionally stressed. Although this percentage may be smaller compared to worship music as a coping mechanism, nevertheless, future study needs to explore these other means of coping with trauma and mentally-related stress. This is besides the medically approved means. As another example, further research could investigate why data does not seem to support the fact that music can be readily useful in administering deliverance or are there economic reasons why Neo-Pentecostals prefer to subscribe to worship music rather than engage the services of mental wellness professionals and counsellors? Overall, this study evident in the primary research data, provides further research areas to be exploited.

5.6 - General Conclusion

This research opened with reasons behind mental challenges associated with socio-economic and socio-political crises. Chapter One further described the causes, symptoms and effects of mental crises among the people of the United States, especially in Dallas, Texas. It also reveals that the challenges in the mental health and care sectors are fast growing beyond the current level of intervention, hence the need to close the gap through worship music therapy. Chapter Two reviewed several books and articles by various scholars and showed gaps in practical evidence of the impact of music therapy on mental stress and trauma among some Neo-Pentecostals in Dallas, Texas. While Chapter Three gave an in-depth analysis of the quantitative and qualitative data that was gathered from participants, Chapter Four discussed and critiqued the data analysis and outcome of the research. The critique showed that the research findings answered the research questions and spoke to the research objectives. The last provides a summary of the findings and recommendations.

Finally, the initial hypothesis made in Chapter One was that worship music has a positive impact on the recovery of those stressed by mental stress and trauma. Yes! This research supports the hypothesis that worship music can be a healing tool for diffusing stress and trauma. However, the research points vividly to the fact that worship music in the instance of Dallas participants, does not guarantee the possibility of achieving deliverance exercise.

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APPENDIX A – DRAFT RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE

As the demand for mental and emotional wellness increases in our community and supply is not commensurate to the demand for healthcare support, it has become imperative to investigate how worship music can be used as a coping mechanism for mitigating mental stress and trauma during economic, political and immigration challenges in some Pentecostal churches in Dallas Texas.

It is therefore my pleasure to invite you to voluntarily participate in this research. You are not under constrain to participate, please feel free to quit at any point in the research. Your participation is highly appreciated. Your information will only be used for this research and confidentiality will be maintained as part of the required ethical standard.

Quantitative

1. Kindly choose your Age group below.
 - a. 18-25
 - b. 26-40
 - c. 41-60
 - d. 61-above

2. Which of the following Pentecostal churches do you attend in Dallas?
 - a. RCCG
 - b. World Revival Outreach Mission.
 - c. House of Prayer Evangel Church
 - d. Others

3. Which of the following statuses applies to you in your local church?
 - a. Member
 - b. Worker
 - c. Minister
 - d. Music Minister
 - e. Pastor
 - f. None of the above

4. How long have you been attending a Pentecostal church in Dallas Texas?
 - a. 0- 2 years
 - b. 3-4 years
 - c. 5-6 years
 - d. 7-10 years
 - e. 11-15 years
 - f. 16-above

5. Have you experienced any form of worry, stress, or trauma due to the rise in the cost of living, food, housing, bills, and insecurity here in Dallas?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. Not sure

6. Which of the following borders have you in the last 1-3 years?
 - a. Rise in Cost of Food
 - b. High cost of Transportation/Fuel
 - c. Increase in cost of housing/rent
 - d. Insecurity due to open borders in Texas.
 - e. Fear of crime due to border/Immigration problems.

7. If your answer to question 5 is Yes how long have you been going through any form of psychological or traumatic experience?
 - a. In the last 6months
 - b. In the last 1years
 - c. In the last 2years
 - d. In the last 3years
 - e. In the last five years.

8. Do worship songs help you to cope with situations or build resilience?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. Maybe

9. If yes or maybe, how often do you play or listen to worship music?
 - a. During morning devotion
 - b. Every morning, Noon and Night
 - c. Only while driving.
 - d. In Church during worship sessions.
 - e. Once in a while

10. Was there any time when worship music helped calm your emotional/mental stress?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. Not sure

11. In what way does worship music help you ease out your pain, trauma or worry?
 - a. I cry while worshipping and get relaxed afterwards.
 - b. I laugh and forget about my troubles in the meantime.
 - c. The lyrics give me hope and ease my fears about insecurity and high cost

12. Have you ever experienced healing/deliverance while singing or listening to worship music?

- a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. Not sure
13. Please describe your experience by ticking one or more options that apply to you.
- a. I was depressed but felt consoled after singing or listening to worship music.
 - b. I was emotional and sad but felt good during worship music in church.
 - c. Mentally traumatized but was relieved through participating in worship music.
 - d. I was mentally unstable due to a socio-economic crisis, but I was later stabilized after listening to worship music.
14. Whenever you are depressed or emotionally stressed, which of these will be your most preferred? (be honest based on past experience)
- a. Take a medication.
 - b. Listen to worship music.
 - c. Go to church to participate in worship.

Qualitative: One-on-one Interview.

1. What office do you occupy, Pastor, Music minister, worship leader, choir, musician, or congregational member? How long have you occupied this position? and please describe your responsibilities.
2. Have you experienced any psychological or mental stress resulting from a socio-economic or socio-political crisis here in Dallas? Please describe.
3. How do you feel about the rise in the cost of living in the USA
4. How do you feel about the Texas porous border as one living in Dallas, within the same state where the border is open to criminal elements?
5. Can you describe how worship music has helped you navigate through seasons of emotional/mental crisis in the past or during this inflation and immigration crisis?
6. Describe specific occasions if any, when you went to a worship meeting mentally or emotionally unstable but returned feeling cheerful after listening to worship music?
7. Share how worship music has contributed to your mental wellness and that of other congregants during service.
8. Can you provide one good example of your emotional and trauma-healing experience or that of anyone around you whose testimony you are aware of?

APPENDIX B - DRAFT COVERING LETTER TO RESPONDENTS



UNIVERSITEIT VAN PRETORIA
UNIVERSITY OF PRETORIA
YUNIBESITHI YA PRETORIA

Department Religion Studies

LETTER OF INTRODUCTION AND INFORMED
CONSENT
FOR PARTICIPATION IN ACADEMIC RESEARCH

Title of the Study:

investigating the role of worship music in promoting mental wellness among some Neo-Pentecostals in Dallas, Texas

Researcher:

JOHN A. KARONWI

University of Pretoria

johnkaroun@yahoo.com

You are hereby cordially invited to participate in an academic research study due to your experience and knowledge in the research area of worship music. You are encouraged to receive, read, understand, and sign this document *before* the start of the study. This research is strictly for adults above 18 years.

- **Purpose of the study:** The purpose of the study is to investigate the role of worship music in the coping mechanism of some Neo-Pentecostals in Dallas and ascertain how people in the Dallas Christian community are using spirituality in coping with the difficulty of Border Crises (immigration), insecurity, rise in the cost of living etc. The results of the study may be published as a Thesis and part of it will be subsequently published in an academic journal. You will be provided with a summary of the study's findings on request. No participants' names will be used in the final publication.

- **Duration of the study:** The study will be conducted over 10 months and its projected date of completion is October 2024.
- **Research procedures:** It is a Google survey questionnaire and interviews.
- **What is expected of you:** Fill out the online or participate in the interview.
- **Your rights:** Your participation in this study is very important. You may, however, choose not to participate, and you may also stop participating at any time without stating any reasons and without any negative consequences. You, as a participant, may contact the researcher at any time to clarify any issues about this research. The respondent as well as the researcher must each keep a copy of this signed document.
- **Confidentiality:** All information will be treated as confidential, and pseudonyms will be maintained in terms of names. No personal Biodata will be used. The relevant data will be destroyed, should you choose to withdraw.

WRITTEN INFORMED CONSENT

I hereby confirm that I have been informed about the nature of this research.

I understand that I may at any stage, without prejudice, withdraw my consent and participation in the research. I have had sufficient opportunity to ask questions.

Respondent: _____

Researcher: _____

Date: _____

Contact number of the Researcher: _____

VERBAL INFORMED CONSENT (*Only applicable if respondent cannot write*)

I, the researcher, have read and have explained fully to the respondent, named

_____ and his/her relatives, the letter of informed consent. The respondent indicated that he/she understands that he/she will be free to withdraw at any time.

Respondent: _____

Researcher: _____

Witness: _____

Date: _____

APPENDIX C – ETHICAL CLEARANCE LETTER



Faculty of Theology and Religion

Research Office
Mrs Daleen Kotzé

16 April 2024

NAME: Mr JA Karonwi
STUDENT NUMBER: 14454387
COURSE: Masters
DATE: 16 April 2024
APPLICATION NUMBER: T017/24

This letter serves as confirmation that the research proposal of this student was evaluated by:

- 1) **The Research committee:** This applies to all research proposals
- 2) **The Research Ethics committee:** This applies only to research that includes people as sources of information

You are hereby notified that your research proposal (including ethical clearance where it is applicable) is approved.



Prof D J Human
Chairperson: Research committee: Faculty of Theology and Religion



Dr JW Beukes
Chairperson: Research Ethics committee: Faculty of Theology and Religion

APPENDIX D - RESEARCH PERMISSION LETTERS



House of Prayer Evangel Church

Website www.hopeforallnations.org 26 March 2024.

Phone
+1 (214)-215-8844
(817)-822-8441
(817)-933-1774

Addresses
Global Hope Center
2321 S Beltline Road
Suite 144 Grand Prairie
TX 75051 USA

Hope School of Ministries (HSM)
2321 S Beltline Road
Suite 144 Grand Prairie
TX 75051 USA

The Research and Ethics Committee

**Faculty of Theology and Religion,
University of Pretoria,
Hatfield Campus,
South Africa**

Dear Chair and Members:

**RE: PERMISSION AND SUPPORT FOR JOHN
KARONWI'S RESEARCH**

I write to confirm that we have received a request from Minister John Karonwi with UP Student Number U14454387 to conduct research on the role of worship music in managing socio-economic and immigration related stress and trauma among Pentecostal brethren in Dallas Texas.

We confirm that Minister John has our consent to interact with voluntary individuals in our church community for questioning and provision of related information on how they use worship to mitigate stress and trauma.

We look forward to the positive outcome of the research for further benefit of the church in Dallas and beyond.

Simon Wale Olatunji, Ph.D. ThM, MA, MATH., MTh.

Lead Pastor | President

House of Prayer Evangel Church

Global Hope Center | Hope School of Ministries
2321 S Beltline Road
Suite 144 Grand Prairie
TX 75051 USA

Office Phone: +1 (817) 822.8441
Cell: +1 (407)-360-8280
reachingout@hopeforallnations.org





March 28, 2024

The Research and Ethics Committee
Faculty of Theology and Religion,
University of Pretoria,
Hatfield Campus,
South Africa.

Dear Chair and Members,

RE: PERMISSION AND SUPPORT FOR JOHN KARONWI'S RESEARCH

I write to confirm that we have received a request from Minister John Karonwi with UP student number u14454387 to conduct research on the role of worship music in managing socio-economic and immigration related stress and trauma among Pentecostal brethren in Dallas Texas.


We confirm that Minister John has our consent to interact with voluntary individuals in our church community for questioning and provision of related information on how they use worship to mitigate stress and trauma.

We look forward to the positive outcome of the research for further benefit of the church in Dallas and beyond.

Yours Sincerely,

Name: Benjamin Beckley

Date: 3/28/2024

Signature: 

1074 S. Erie St
Fort Worth TX. 76112
972 639 1762 | 972 639 1595
www.wordrevival.org
info@wordrevival.org

Place of Empowerment For Destiny Fulfillment.

12/9/24, 3:01 PM

FW: e-version - iopoutreach1@gmail.com - Gmail

☰ Gmail

🔍 march 2024

✕ 🌐

Compose

Inbox

211

Starred

Snoozed

Sent

Drafts

24

More

Labels

PASTOR E. A. ADEBOYE
GENERAL OVERSEER



THE AMERICAS
NORTH | CENTRAL | SOUTH

The Redeemed Christian Church of God, Americas-1
515 County Road 1118
Greenville, TX 75401

Dear Parish Pastor,

RE: PERMISSION AND SUPPORT FOR JOHN KARONWI'S RESEARCH

I write to confirm that we have received a request from Minister John Karonwi with UP student number u14454387 to conduct research on socio-economic and immigration related stress and trauma among Pentecostal brethren in Dallas Texas.

We confirm that Minister John has our consent to interact with voluntary Parish Pastors in our community here in Dallas Forth Metroplex information on how they use worship to mitigate stress and trauma.

We look forward to the positive outcome of the research for further benefit of the church in Dallas and beyond. RCCG will review the ou or submission.

Yours Sincerely,

Name: Pastor Lanre Sobo /Administrator

Date March 28, 2024

Signature:

Thank You,



Lanre Sobo

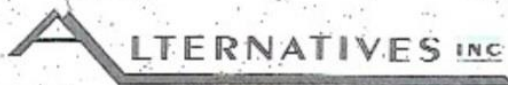
Continental Administrator

P: +1 (903) 213 6006

E: Lsobo@rccgamericas.org

W: www.rccgamericas.org





ALTERNATIVES INC.

dignity through independence

EMPLOYMENT AGREEMENT

Dear John Karonus:

Your employment is effective 8/12/19 with an hourly/bi-weekly rate of \$13.50/HR (weekend) \$12.50/HR (week day) As a(n) Frankie On Direct Support Pos you will/will not receive fringe benefits (the exception applies to part-time employees who qualify for health insurance under the Patient Protection and Affordable Care Act).

Your employment is pending an acceptable report from the Department of Motor Vehicles which must have 5 or less points on your driving record and no DUIs within the last 3 years. This motor vehicle record will also be reviewed, at minimum, on a quarterly basis. Furthermore, employment is pending acceptable criminal history checks and clearance provided by the Department of Human Services, as well as state and federal Medicaid fraud background checks. It is also required that you complete a medical examination with an acceptable Mantoux skin test and drug test prior to employment. This must be completed and submitted to Human Resources prior to starting employment or this agreement will be declared null and void. Alternatives, Inc. will be responsible for the cost of the medical examination, drug test and Mantoux Skin Test if needed but retains the right to select the facility where such examinations will take place.

In addition, it is required that you provide verification of your highest educational degree completed. If you are a f/t employee, your health/life insurance coverage commences on 11/12/19.

Your employment will be located at Somerhill - CH3. Your immediate supervisor will be Alia Sheriff-Brawley. A copy of the Human Resources Manual and job description will be provided to you.

Your employment is contingent upon continued funding of your program and your compliance with agency standards, rules, regulations, and governmental laws.

Your signature below indicates that the terms of employment are acceptable and that absolutely no other statements or conditions of employment than those set forth in this agreement have been made to you. It also indicates that you understand that your employment is at will and may be terminated at any time without notice.

If you have any questions concerning your employment with Alternatives, Inc. please address them to your immediate supervisor.

We are pleased to have you join our agency.

Sincerely,

Nancy Good
President

Name: John Karonus

Witness: [Signature]

Date: 8-5-2019

Date: 8/5/19



State of New Jersey

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
DIVISION OF MENTAL HEALTH AND ADDICTION SERVICES
GREYSTONE PARK PSYCHIATRIC HOSPITAL

"FOSTER HOPE, PRACTICE WELLNESS, LIVE RECOVERY"

PHILIP D. MURPHY
Governor

SHEILA Y. OLIVER
Lt. Governor

JUDITH PERSICHILLI, RN,BSN,MA
Acting Commissioner

DEBORAH HARTEL, MSW
Deputy Commissioner

CHRISTOPHER MORRISON
Acting Assistant Commissioner

TOMIKA CARTER, MSW
Chief Executive Officer

September 12, 2019

Regular & CMRRR: 7018 3090 0001 6157 7658

John Karonwi
18 Schuyler Ave
Newark, NJ 07112

Dear John Karonwi:

Congratulations! We are pleased to inform you that we have obtained the necessary clearances for you to begin employment at Greystone Park Psychiatric Hospital on **09/16/19**.

This letter serves as confirmation of employment as a **Human Services Assistant (TES- Rehab Department)** position with an hourly rate of \$14.44.

New Employee Orientation is scheduled for 12 days beginning on **09/16/19**, Monday through Friday, from 8:00am to 4:00pm. All components of your orientation program are mandatory and must be completed as scheduled.

On behalf of the entire staff, I would like to wish you success and hope that you find your duties both challenging and rewarding.

Sincerely,

James Frey
Acting Manager, Human Resources

JF/fv