

The Relationship Between Assumed Family Responsibilities and Psycho-Spiritual Well-Being among Selected Female Religious of the Catholic Archdiocese of Lagos, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

The main purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between assumed family responsibilities and psycho-spiritual well-being among selected female religious in the Catholic Archdiocese of Lagos, Nigeria. Guided by Role Conflict Theory and Psycho-Spiritual Theory, the study had two objectives: to determine the relationship between assumed family responsibilities and psycho-spiritual well-being, and to identify strategies for enhancing psycho-spiritual well-being. The study employed an embedded mixed-methods research design, which enabled the collection of both quantitative and qualitative data. The instruments used were the adapted Role Conflict and Ambiguity Scale and the Psycho-Spiritual Well-Being Scale. Six self-developed semi-structured interview questions were used for the qualitative strand. Data collection was conducted online. The target population comprised 352 female religious, from which a sample size of 187 was determined for the quantitative strand using proportionate stratified sampling. A total of 132 respondents participated in the quantitative strand, while 10 participants were purposively selected for the qualitative strand. Pearson's correlation coefficient was used to evaluate the relationship between assumed family responsibilities and psycho-spiritual well-being, while in-depth interviews were conducted for the qualitative strand. The findings revealed a weak positive, non-statistically significant relationship between assumed family responsibilities and psycho-spiritual well-being among the respondents, indicating that the findings failed to detect a statistically significant relationship between the variables in the sample ($r = .075$, $p = .395$). The qualitative data were thematically analysed, and the study found that participants used prayer, spiritual practices, healthy community living and support, family enlightenment, integration of apostolate and religious life, and self-care as strategies to enhance psycho-spiritual well-being. The study recommends that congregational superiors and leadership teams establish clear family welfare policies, strengthen emotional and financial support systems, teach boundary-setting in formation, create safe forums for sharing, and provide regular psycho-spiritual workshops for ongoing growth.

Keywords: Assumed family responsibilities, female religious, psycho-spiritual well-being, Nigeria.

BACKGROUND

Family remains a primary source of shelter, survival, communication, identity formation, and cultural learning for children and young people. The family and home are often experienced as one's own space, which is fundamental to self-identification and the formation of self-awareness. It is within the family that a child's first encounter with traditional culture and informal education usually takes place. Through the ongoing process of cultural interaction, integration, and socialisation, children and young people become functional members of society (Kacane, 2020).

According to Bose and Pal (2020), family responsibility refers to the extent to which a person holds himself or herself accountable for taking care of immediate family members, including dependent children, spouses, and dependent elders. Taking care may involve perceiving oneself as primarily responsible for financial support, child-rearing, and other obligations. The concept of assumed family responsibilities refers to the roles, duties,

and obligations that individuals take on within the family unit. These responsibilities may arise from factors such as parental absence or death, illness, economic hardship, socio-cultural expectations, emotional labour, familial loyalty, and sacrifice (Ngundo & Wiggins, 2017). They may also be influenced by contextual factors such as socioeconomic status, family structure, and cultural background.

In the context of female religious, these expectations may create a complex interaction between religious commitments and familial obligations. Religious life, which is defined by vowed commitment, emphasises renunciation, detachment from materialism, and dedication to religious obligations. However, cultural and societal norms may still impose reciprocal expectations on female religious, thereby creating potential role strain (Kahn et al., 1964). In many African societies, where family ties are strongly rooted in reciprocity, individuals perceived as successful are often expected to contribute materially and emotionally to their families (Akin-Otiko, 2016; Curreri et al., 2023). Female religious may therefore struggle with the tension between remaining faithful to religious obligations and responding to family expectations.

Psycho-spiritual well-being (PSWB), which refers to holistic wellness involving the integration of psychological and spiritual stability, has been identified as central to religious life (Egunjobi, 2024). It includes dimensions such as self-awareness, connectedness, meaning, compassion, and self-transcendence. Despite the importance of assumed family responsibilities and psycho-spiritual well-being, limited empirical attention has been given to how assumed family responsibilities influence psycho-spiritual well-being among female religious in African contexts, particularly in Nigeria. This study therefore examined the relationship between assumed family responsibilities and psycho-spiritual well-being among selected female religious in the Catholic Archdiocese of Lagos.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to determine the relationship between assumed family responsibilities and psycho-spiritual well-being among selected female religious in the Catholic Archdiocese of Lagos, Nigeria, and to identify strategies that could enhance their psycho-spiritual well-being.

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This study employed Role Conflict Theory (RCT) and Psycho-Spiritual Theory (PST). These theories provided complementary perspectives that enriched the study. Role Conflict Theory was developed by Robert L. Kahn and his colleagues in 1964, with related contributions from scholars such as Daniel Katz (Katz & Kahn, 1978). Their work provides a theoretical basis for understanding the stress or tension that may result when an individual is confronted with incompatible, ambiguous, or competing role expectations (Kahn et al., 1964). The main assumption of the theory is that incompatible expectations from multiple roles, when combined with limited resources, can create stress and reduce well-being.

Another important dimension of Role Conflict Theory is role ambiguity. Role ambiguity arises when individuals lack clarity about their roles, objectives, or the boundaries of their authority. This lack of clarity may lead to frustration, inefficiency, and diminished performance (Khawaldeh, 2023). While role ambiguity and role conflict are often linked, role ambiguity may intensify role conflict because of the discrepancy between a person's understanding of his or her role and the actual expectations of others. Role conflict and role ambiguity have also been associated with impaired employee performance, personal distress, and increased turnover (Anglin et al., 2022).

Joyzy Pius Egunjobi developed Psycho-Spiritual Theory in 2024 as an integrative and holistic view of the human person. The theory is grounded in the idea that spiritual problems cannot be fully resolved through biological, psychological, sociological, or technological interventions alone, but require spiritual intervention. It provides a framework through which the human person may be understood and assisted to find meaning in life. The theory is built on the pillars of psychology, spirituality, and culture, and its integration of psychology and spirituality is crucial for psycho-spiritual philosophy. The psycho-spiritual concept addresses the inner life of individuals, including emotions, thoughts, and spiritual consciousness, enabling individuals to connect psychological health

with spiritual values and purpose. In this sense, Paul Rohan (2023) states that the psycho-spiritual approach promotes harmony between body and soul, and between matter and mind.

Objectives

- To determine the relationship between assumed family responsibilities and psycho-spiritual well-being among female religious in the Catholic Archdiocese of Lagos, Nigeria.
- To identify strategies for enhancing psycho-spiritual well-being among female religious in the Catholic Archdiocese of Lagos, Nigeria.

METHODOLOGY

This study used a mixed-methods approach and adopted an embedded mixed-methods research design. According to Kajamaa et al. (2020), the embedded or nested mixed-methods design involves the integration of qualitative and quantitative elements, with one data set taking the lead while the other is embedded within it. This design enhances the findings and strengthens the overall quality of the conclusions drawn from the research. It was chosen because it allowed the researcher to consider both quantitative and qualitative data, since one set of data alone was not sufficient to answer all the questions that arose in the course of the study.

Participants

The target population comprised 352 female religious in the Catholic Archdiocese of Lagos, Nigeria. Using proportionate stratified sampling, a sample size of 187 participants was obtained for the quantitative strand. Although the study targeted 187 respondents, only 132 participated, resulting in an actual response rate of 71%. Ericson et al. (2023) state that survey response rates of 70% or above are necessary for findings to be considered generalisable. The non-response may have been influenced by network challenges, the sensitivity of the research topic, or lack of personal interest among some invitees. Ten participants who were not part of the quantitative sample were purposively selected across age groups for the qualitative strand.

Research Instruments

The study employed two standardised instruments: the 20-item Role Conflict and Ambiguity Scale (RCAS-20) and the 25-item Psycho-Spiritual Well-Being Scale (P-SWBS-25). The scales were interpreted using a five-point scale in which 1.00-1.79 indicated “Very Low”, 1.80-2.59 indicated “Low”, 2.60-3.39 indicated “Moderate”, 3.40-4.19 indicated “High”, and 4.20-5.00 indicated “Very High”. The qualitative strand used six self-developed semi-structured interview questions.

Data Collection Procedure

The researcher obtained a research authorisation letter from the Director of the Psycho-Spiritual Institute of Lux Terra Leadership Foundation before beginning data collection. In addition, the researcher formally wrote to the president of the Nigerian Conference of Women Religious (NCWR), Lagos Archdiocese, to request cooperation and consent to distribute questionnaires to the respondents. The study topic, objectives, possible benefits, and ethical considerations were communicated to the female religious of the Lagos Archdiocese through the president.

The adapted RCAS-20 and P-SWBS-25 questionnaires, which were intended to evaluate assumed family responsibilities and psycho-spiritual well-being, were sent to 187 participants through a Google Forms link. The link was sent to the secretary of the NCWR Lagos Chapter, who distributed it to the sisters through their WhatsApp platform. The Google Forms link remained open for one month to allow the participants enough time to respond. Participants were assured that their responses would remain confidential. They were also briefed on the purpose of the study, the objectives, and ethical considerations, and they provided informed consent for participation. The study adhered to ethical guidelines by ensuring anonymity, confidentiality, and voluntary participation.

Data Analysis Procedure

Quantitative Data

Data collected from the quantitative questionnaires were prepared for analysis through thorough organisation. This included data cleaning, coding, and formatting to ensure consistency and accuracy (Creswell & Inoue, 2025). The generated data were coded and computed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 26. Quantitative data were analysed using descriptive statistics, including frequencies, percentages, means, and standard deviations. Pearson's correlation coefficient was used to determine the relationship between assumed family responsibilities and psycho-spiritual well-being. Statistical significance was set at $p < .05$.

Qualitative Data

Qualitative interview recordings were transcribed verbatim using TurboScribe (TurboScribe, 2025). The data were analysed thematically through familiarisation, coding, categorisation, theme development, and interpretation (Braun & Clarke, 2021), while maintaining an adequate ethical process to safeguard participant confidentiality.

Integration

The quantitative and qualitative findings were integrated during the interpretation and discussion of results. Themes that emerged from the qualitative findings were used to support, explain, and provide a deeper understanding of the quantitative findings.

Results

Table 1 Demographic Information of Participants

Demographic variable	Category	frequency
Age	20-29	18
	30-39	31
	40-49	35
	50-59	9
	60 and above	5
Years of religious profession	1-10	63
	11-20	39
Apostolate	21-30	21
	31-40	6
	School	50
	Hospital	14
	Students	14
	Retreat centre	14
	Social work	3
	Others	15
Level of education	Secondary	15
	Nursing	7
	Diploma	8
	Graduate	23
	Postgraduate	44

Table 1 presents the demographic information of the respondents. The largest age group was 40-49 years, followed by those aged 30-39 years and 20-29 years. This suggests that many respondents were in middle adulthood, a stage that may be associated with maturity, stability, and increased responsibility in negotiating family expectations and the demands of religious life.

In terms of years of religious profession, most respondents were within the early to middle stages of religious vocation. The distribution of apostolate also showed that many sisters were involved in schools and hospitals, while others were engaged in student life, retreat centres, social work, and other ministries. Educational attainment was generally high, with many respondents having graduate or postgraduate qualifications. This demographic profile is relevant because age, years of profession, apostolate, and level of education may influence how female religious navigate assumed family responsibilities and sustain psycho-spiritual well-being.

Table 2 Assumed Family Responsibilities and Psycho-Spiritual Well-Being

Variable	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Psycho-Spiritual Well-Being	132	3.28	5.00	4.18	.35
Assumed Family Responsibilities	132	1.67	3.60	2.64	.39
Valid N (listwise)	132				

Table 2 presents the distribution of scores for psycho-spiritual well-being and assumed family responsibilities among the respondents. Psycho-spiritual well-being scores ranged from a minimum of 3.28 to a maximum of 5.00, with a mean score of 4.18 (SD = .35). This indicates a high level of psycho-spiritual well-being. The low standard deviation suggests that responses were closely clustered around the mean, implying consistency in participants' well-being levels.

In contrast, assumed family responsibilities recorded a minimum score of 1.67 and a maximum of 3.60, with a mean score of 2.64 (SD = .39). This indicates a moderate level of assumed family responsibilities. The standard deviation also indicates a moderate spread of responses, showing some variability in how participants experienced family responsibilities.

Overall, the findings suggest that although respondents reported moderate levels of assumed family responsibilities, they still maintained a relatively high level of psycho-spiritual well-being. This may imply that, despite the existence of assumed family responsibilities among selected female religious in the Catholic Archdiocese of Lagos, they maintained spiritual and psychological balance.

Table 3 Correlation Between Assumed Family Responsibilities and Psycho-Spiritual Well-Being

Variable		Assumed Family Responsibilities	Psycho-Spiritual Well-Being
Assumed Family Responsibilities	Pearson Correlation	1	.075
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.395
	N	132	132
Psycho-Spiritual Well-Being	Pearson Correlation	.075	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.395	
	N	132	132

The Pearson correlation coefficient analysis in Table 3 indicates a weak positive relationship between assumed family responsibilities and psycho-spiritual well-being ($r = .075$). The p-value of .395, two-tailed, is substantially higher than the conventional threshold of .05. This indicates that the observed correlation was not statistically significant at the .05 level.

The findings therefore failed to detect a statistically significant relationship between assumed family responsibilities and psycho-spiritual well-being in the sample ($r = .075$, $p = .395$). This does not rule out the possible existence of a relationship; rather, it indicates that the relationship, if present, was too small to be reliably detected at this sample size and significance threshold. The number of respondents for both variables was 132.

The findings indicate a non-significant correlation between assumed family responsibilities and psycho-spiritual well-being among female religious in the Catholic Archdiocese of Lagos, Nigeria. Given the structured nature

of religious life, together with communal and spiritual support systems, it is plausible that these factors influenced how participants sustained their psycho-spiritual well-being.

Qualitative Findings

Several strategies emerged from the semi-structured interviews with the ten participants in the qualitative strand. Most participants identified prayer and other spiritual practices, family enlightenment, community support, sharing with a spiritual director, setting boundaries, integration of apostolate and religious commitments, and intentional self-care as strategies for sustaining psycho-spiritual well-being.

Prayer and Other Spiritual Practices

Participants identified prayer as the primary means of sustaining their psycho-spiritual well-being. Many expressed that prayer provided strength, guidance, and inner peace in difficult situations. One participant noted that turning to prayer helped her remain grounded and focused. This indicates that prayer serves as a personal resource for managing emotional and spiritual challenges. Within the context of this study, prayer enabled sisters to cope with the pressures associated with assumed family responsibilities and therefore played a central role in maintaining psycho-spiritual balance.

Community Support

The findings revealed that community life provided strong emotional and spiritual support for the participants. Sisters reported that living together allowed them to notice and respond to one another's struggles. One participant explained that encouragement from others helped her feel supported and less burdened. This shows that community relationships reduced feelings of isolation and stress. In relation to this study, community life acted as a support system that helped sisters manage the demands associated with family responsibilities and contributed significantly to their psycho-spiritual well-being.

Sharing and Spiritual Direction

Participants emphasised the importance of sharing their struggles with trusted individuals and seeking spiritual direction. They noted that this practice helped them gain clarity, emotional strength, and guidance in decision-making. One participant explained that sharing helped her process difficult experiences and move forward. This suggests that interpersonal support played a key role in emotional regulation. Within the context of this study, sharing and spiritual direction helped sisters cope with internal pressures linked to assumed family responsibilities and enhanced both emotional and spiritual stability.

Integration of Apostolate and Religious Life

The ability to balance apostolic work with religious commitments emerged as an important strategy. Participants explained that integrating these responsibilities prevented them from becoming overwhelmed. One participant stated that maintaining this balance helped her stay stable and focused. This indicates that proper management of responsibilities is essential for well-being. In this study, integration helped sisters navigate multiple demands without neglecting their spiritual life, thereby supporting psycho-spiritual well-being amid competing responsibilities.

Setting Boundaries and Family Enlightenment

Participants reported that setting clear boundaries with family members and educating them about religious life reduced pressure. One participant explained that early communication helped her family understand her limitations. This prevented unrealistic expectations and unnecessary demands. This finding shows that clarity in relationships reduces stress. In the context of this study, boundary-setting enabled sisters to manage family responsibilities without compromising their vocation and contributed to the maintenance of psycho-spiritual well-being.

Self-Care and Avoidance of Burnout

Self-care practices such as rest, relaxation, and engagement in personal activities were identified as important strategies. Participants noted that neglecting self-care could lead to emotional and physical exhaustion. One participant explained that activities such as reading and listening to music helped her regain balance. This suggests that personal care is necessary for sustaining well-being. In this study, self-care helped sisters manage stress arising from multiple responsibilities and supported long-term psycho-spiritual stability.

Mixed-Method Integration of Findings

The integration of quantitative and qualitative findings revealed that assumed family responsibilities had both challenging and growth-enhancing implications for the psycho-spiritual well-being of female religious. Quantitative findings indicated a weak positive, non-statistically significant relationship between assumed family responsibilities and psycho-spiritual well-being. The qualitative findings helped explain how participants sustained their well-being despite emotional and financial pressures associated with family responsibilities. Respondents employed coping strategies such as prayer, community support, spiritual direction, boundary-setting, and intentional self-care to enhance psycho-spiritual balance.

The qualitative themes complemented the quantitative findings by showing that the meaning attached to family responsibilities, religious commitment, and spiritual practices influenced how respondents experienced psycho-spiritual well-being. The qualitative findings therefore provided deeper insight into the lived experiences behind the statistical results.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The quantitative findings showed a weak positive, non-statistically significant relationship ($r = .075$, $p = .395$) between assumed family responsibilities and psycho-spiritual well-being. This suggests that an increase in assumed family responsibilities was not associated with a statistically significant reduction or improvement in psycho-spiritual well-being among the respondents.

The findings suggest that assumed family responsibilities may have a dual effect depending on how they are managed. Well-managed family responsibilities may have minimal or controlled impact, while poorly managed responsibilities may result in pressure, tension, distraction, and reduced well-being. This finding resonates with literature showing that coping mechanisms may mediate the relationship between stressors and well-being (Broglia et al., 2023). From the perspective of Role Conflict Theory, unmanaged assumed family responsibilities may increase role strain, while effective coping strategies may reduce their negative effects (Kahn et al., 1964).

However, the findings differ from Zhou et al. (2018), who linked family responsibilities with negative mental health outcomes due to conflict arising from competing demands, including stress, anxiety, burnout, depression, and physical health concerns. Reimann et al. (2022) also note that family may be a source of support and, at the same time, a source of conflict that can affect individual well-being. They therefore recommend interventions to mitigate negative effects and enhance overall well-being.

Conversely, the findings of this study suggest that, among selected female religious in the Catholic Archdiocese of Lagos, assumed family responsibilities were not shown to significantly impede psycho-spiritual well-being. This may suggest the presence of unique contextual factors that shield this population from some of the negative effects commonly associated with family responsibilities.

These findings contribute to evidence-based discourse on assumed family responsibilities and well-being by highlighting the importance of context, especially within the spiritually oriented structure of religious life. The findings suggest that the impact of assumed family responsibilities on psycho-spiritual well-being may depend greatly on how individuals navigate family expectations, the support systems available to them, the boundaries they establish, and their personal values. This aligns with Kahn et al.'s (1964) Role Conflict Theory, which argues that tension and stress arise when individuals take on multiple, sometimes conflicting, roles

simultaneously. Additional factors that may influence psycho-spiritual well-being in relation to family obligations could be explored in future studies.

The broader literature indicates that family responsibilities are often associated with increased psychological and emotional strain, which may negatively affect overall well-being. Research on role conflict and work-family dynamics consistently indicates that individuals with higher family demands may experience greater stress, emotional exhaustion, and reduced psychological well-being (Reimann et al., 2022; Sadiq & Ali, 2014; Zhou et al., 2018). These findings suggest that competing family responsibilities can create role strain that undermines emotional stability and life satisfaction. Similarly, the present study challenges aspects of Netemeyer et al. (1996), who showed that contradictory expectations from multiple roles may lead to role clashes and internal conflict. However, the strength and nature of this relationship are not uniform across contexts.

Prayer and Spiritual Practices

The analysis identified several key themes that enhanced psycho-spiritual well-being among the participants. These themes included prayer and other spiritual practices, healthy community living and support, sharing and spiritual direction, boundary-setting and family enlightenment, integration of apostolate and religious life, and self-awareness and self-care. The respondents highlighted integrative practices that blended spiritual, psychological, and physical dimensions, which are crucial for their overall well-being. These accounts underscore a holistic approach to well-being that is particularly relevant within religious life. Although spiritual life remains central, the findings suggest that it is strengthened through physical wellness practices and emotional support. From the perspective of Role Conflict and Ambiguity Theory (Kahn et al., 1964), prayer and other spiritual practices become coping mechanisms that help female religious navigate conflicting demands between family responsibilities and religious obligations. This strategy also resonates with Twum-Danso Imoh (2022), who emphasises reciprocal obligations within intergenerational relationships. In this study, spiritual practices functioned as a protective resource for maintaining psycho-spiritual well-being.

Healthy Community Living and Support

The theme of healthy community living and support aligns with Ogu et al. (2022), who show that quality interpersonal relationships based on trust and social support can reduce stress and anxiety and enhance well-being. This further explains how communal living, which is central to religious life, may foster emotional stability and spiritual growth among female religious.

Sharing and Spiritual Direction

The theme of sharing and spiritual direction aligns with Role Conflict and Ambiguity Theory (Kahn et al., 1964), which suggests that seeking guidance may reduce confusion and conflict caused by unclear role expectations. The reviewed literature also supports this view by showing that spiritual direction can help individuals process personal struggles and enhance well-being. Miles and Marburg (2025) emphasise that spiritual direction is both a religious practice and a support mechanism that may contribute to mental health and resilience among religiously minded individuals.

Integration of Apostolate and Religious Life

The integration of apostolate and religious life also connects with Role Conflict and Ambiguity Theory (Kahn et al., 1964). Integration minimises role conflict by helping female religious remain emotionally stable and focused while managing the demands of religious life and family obligations. The reviewed literature supports this conclusion by affirming that effective integration of religious commitments, emotional regulation, and coping mechanisms is associated with higher levels of psychological and spiritual well-being (Sudarman et al., 2025).

Boundary-Setting and Family Enlightenment

Boundary-setting and family enlightenment resonate with Role Conflict and Ambiguity Theory (Kahn et al., 1964), which highlights that clear role expectations prevent overload and confusion. Establishing boundaries minimises role conflict caused by family demands. This finding reinforces the study objectives by showing that proactive communication with family members can protect psycho-spiritual well-being. George and Mohanty (2025) similarly indicate that incompatible roles may compete for individual resources, especially time, energy, and psychological investment. This theme illustrates strategies that mitigate role conflict arising from family responsibilities and religious life while maintaining psycho-spiritual well-being.

Self-Awareness and Self-Care

The theme of self-awareness and self-care resonates with Nakimera and Muasa (2025), who identify intentional self-care and supportive programmes as strategies for improving psycho-spiritual well-being among consecrated women. Ndunge (2024) also emphasises the importance of attention to sisters' health and well-being, including rest, holidays, and leisure activities. By emphasising self-care, participants pointed to the need for a cultural shift towards valuing self-care as an important dimension of balanced religious life. From the perspective of Role Conflict and Ambiguity Theory (Kahn et al., 1964), attending to personal needs may reduce strain arising from conflicting obligations and sustain both spiritual and psychological health. Self-care therefore remains an important coping strategy for enhancing psycho-spiritual well-being because it supports the integration of body, mind, and spirit.

Practical Implications

The findings of this study have important implications for the well-being of female religious, the management of assumed family responsibilities within religious life, and policy development. First, the findings could help superiors and leadership teams of different congregations develop clear family welfare policies and structured support systems to guide financial and emotional assistance, as well as the management of family-related issues. This would help reduce confusion and internal conflict among members.

Formation teams should incorporate boundary-setting skills and expectation management into formation programmes to equip sisters early in religious life with the tools needed for healthy relational engagement with their families.

The findings also point to the need for superiors to create safe and supportive community forums that encourage open communication, where sisters can share their experiences without fear of judgement, criticism, or gossip.

To sustain and further enhance the psycho-spiritual well-being of female religious, leadership teams of various congregations should organise regular psycho-spiritual workshops and seminars as part of ongoing formation and enrichment programmes.

Limitations of the Study

This study focused exclusively on female religious, thereby limiting the generalisability of the findings across male religious orders.

Although the study was conducted within an African cultural and religious context, it did not explicitly examine how cultural variations shape family expectations and responsibilities. This limits the broader applicability of the findings.

Family responsibilities and psycho-spiritual well-being can be sensitive issues among female religious. This may have made some participants guarded in their responses because of fear of being judged or uncertainty about confidentiality.

The two quantitative instruments used were self-administered questionnaires: the Role Conflict and Ambiguity Scale and the Psycho-Spiritual Well-Being Scale. Therefore, the responses may have been influenced by social desirability, personal bias, or reluctance to disclose experiences authentically.

The quantitative strand also recorded a relatively low response rate, with only 132 of the intended sample of 187 participants completing the survey. This shortfall may reduce the statistical power of the analysis and limit the generalisability of the findings to the wider population of female religious.

In addition, the study employed a cross-sectional design in which data were collected at a single point in time. This design limits the ability to establish causal relationships between assumed family responsibilities and psycho-spiritual well-being, as it cannot capture changes that may occur over the course of religious life.

A further limitation is the reliance on self-reported data, which may introduce bias. This concern is particularly relevant within a religious context, where participants may present socially desirable responses rather than fully candid accounts of their lived experiences.

Suggestions for Future Research

Further research on assumed family responsibilities and psycho-spiritual well-being among female religious in the Catholic Archdiocese of Lagos, Nigeria, should consider the following:

- Examine assumed family responsibilities and psycho-spiritual well-being among male religious as a comparative study.
- Adopt a longitudinal design to investigate the long-term dynamics of assumed family responsibilities and psycho-spiritual well-being.
- Develop and evaluate culturally sensitive support systems for religious men and women with assumed family responsibilities.
- Employ a longitudinal research design to better understand how assumed family responsibilities influence psycho-spiritual well-being over time, thereby addressing the limitations of the cross-sectional approach.
- Expand the qualitative component by involving more participants and a wider range of religious congregations in order to generate richer and more varied insights.
- Explore potential moderating factors such as age, years in religious life, leadership roles, and community support systems in order to better explain the weak relationship observed in this study.

CONCLUSION

The findings of this study underline the uniqueness of examining assumed family responsibilities within the context of female religious. The selected female religious experienced moderate levels of assumed family responsibilities. However, the findings on psycho-spiritual well-being revealed that the sisters maintained general stability, with a high mean score in psycho-spiritual well-being. This suggests the presence of effective coping and spiritual resources.

Although the relationship between assumed family responsibilities and psycho-spiritual well-being was weak and non-statistically significant, the study highlights that family obligations still play a role in the lived experiences of selected female religious and may influence their vocational and spiritual balance.

The thematic analysis revealed several strategies that could enhance the psycho-spiritual well-being of selected female religious in the Catholic Archdiocese of Lagos. These strategies included prayer and spiritual practices, healthy community living and support, spiritual direction, boundary-setting and family enlightenment, integration of apostolate and religious life, and intentional self-care. These findings highlight the significance of both spiritual and psychological approaches in maintaining resilience and enhancing well-being.

Overall, the study demonstrates that although assumed family responsibilities are present among female religious, they were not shown to have a statistically significant negative impact on psycho-spiritual well-being

within this context. Rather, the findings highlight the resilience, psycho-spiritual maturity, and adaptive capacity of the respondents, as well as the importance of sustaining supportive structures that enhance their overall well-being.

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