Chapter 1: Background to the study

1.0 Overview

In this chapter the first part is the introduction which discusses the tenets in which the whole research was grounded. The second part of the chapter discusses the statement of the problem while the third part of the chapter looks at purpose of the study. The chapter further discusses the main objectives of the study in addition to the research hypotheses. The last part of the chapter discusses the significance of the study.

1.1 Introduction

In a world that is changing at a tremendous pace, globalization has led to an increase in the growth of education institutions all over the world and the education scene in Zambia is no exception and especially with the current scenario of trying to achieve the Millennium Development Goals (MDGS) of providing basic education for- all by 2015. Working in a basic school has got its own special demands and challenges.

Lehnert (2002) describes stress as a complex, dynamic process of interaction between a person and his or her life. He explains further that it is the way we react physically, mentally and emotionally to the various conditions, changes and demands of life. It is a concept regarded as a specific irritating event in life transitions and conflicts with either ones belief system or ones surroundings throughout a time period. In his article ‘’Teachers in the Twenty-first century: time to renew the vision’’ Day (2000) focuses on the situation within the teaching profession:’ for many teachers, the last 20 years have been years of survival, rather than development. As social and economic changes have placed new demands upon and created new expectations from schools, hardly a year passes without some form of reform being mooted, negotiated or imposed in the name of raising standards (appraisal, inspection), increasing ”user” participation (open enrollment, local financial. This concept regarded as teacher stress indicates that the great part of teacher stress can be explained with a rapid pace of changes in education in the 1980s and 1990s.

In many countries the work of the teacher currently is considered as one of the most stressful professions (Hunter, 1977). In the last two decades an intensive research in USA and Europe has been developed regarding both the sources and symptoms of teacher professional stress (Dunham, 1992; Kariacou, 1990; Mc Laughlin, 1986; Kelly, 1988; Kokss, 1989; Cole & Salker,

1989; Gold & Roth 1993; Schwab, 1995; investigations in the field of teacher stress indicate that the great part of teacher stress can be explained with the rapid pace of changes in the education system in the 1980s and 1990s, life cycle transitions and conflicts with either your belief system or your surroundings throughout a time period. In his article the writer places emphasis on the situation within the teaching profession: ''for many teachers, the last 20 years have been years of survival, rather than development. As social and economic change have placed new demands upon and created new expectations from schools, hardly a year has passed without some form of reform being mooted, negotiated or imposed in the name of raising standards (appraisal, inspection), increasing 'user' participation (open enrollment, local financial management) and pupil entitlement (national curriculum)."

Covey (1989) explained that stress is regarded to be a relative term in the sense that what is irritating and stressful to one person may make no difference to another. Since issues of changes and demands of life, life cycle transition, beliefs, culture and environment are all associated with stress, problem of stress and its management can therefore be conveniently viewed in an anthropological discourse.

Employment is one of the important parts of our daily lives which cause a great deal of stress. Due to the competitive nature of the job environment most of the people in the world are spending their time on job related work purposes resulting in ignoring the stressors which influence their work and life. Usually people are more worried about the outcome of their work that can even affect the way they treat other people and how they communicate with their peers and customers. For example, people with a higher percentage of occupational stress may not be satisfied with their job and therefore they will not feel happy working in the organization. Therefore, it is very important for employer and employees to realize the stress and the stressor that cause all the negative effects.

Although stress can exert some influence on an individual's susceptibility to stress, it also results into some disorders directly. Scientists attribute at least part of this effect to evolutionary history, reasoning that at one time people had to live with constant physical threats from wild animals and the elements, as well as from one another, and that the body developed in a way that helped it to cope with these physical stressors (Encarta 2007). The work environment therefore contains stressors that the progress of any disease such as a cold and perhaps even cancer, seem to outstrip an individual's capacity to adapt to them. These typically involve heavy

work load, long hours of work, low wages, lack of job security and demand to prepare work and meet deadlines. Munchinschy, (1993) also observed that, "the major sources of stress for most adults stem from work situations. Similarly, Steers and Black (1994) observed that an individual's occupation is the major source of the general stress he or she experiences.

Fontana (1998) described teaching in particular as being, by its nature, a stressful profession. A United Nations report (1995) also reported that, "today's teachers are high amongst over-stressed professionals." According to Schwab and Lwanicki (1982), occupational stress in teachers can lead to a variety of negative outcomes including emotional exhaustion, feelings of depersonalization, and a sense of failure with one's personal accomplishment--a condition the authors refer to as "burnout." Burnout is one of the major reasons that teachers leave the teaching profession, a loss that results in added costs in training and hiring for the field of education (Niles & Anderson, 1993). In other words, the negative outcomes of teachers' occupational stress can be both internal and external.

1.2 Statement of the problem

In Zambia there is little or no statistical data to reveal the existence and extent of occupational stress especially so, among basic school teachers. However, there are factors that suggest serious job stress such as handling overcrowded classes, low wages and poor working environment to mention just but a few. There is also a problem of high teacher turn-out, massive alcohol consumption, high morbidity and mortality rates in the recent years. (MOE, 1999; MOE, 2001) which suggest excessive and prolonged stress.

1.3 Purpose of the study

The purpose of the study was to examine how occupational stress manifests itself among basic school teachers by using a selected number of teachers in Lusaka Urban schools as a case study. In particular, the study aimed at identifying the sources of stress, patterns of stress, gender disparities in stress levels and the coping strategies adopted by basic school teachers to alleviate stress.

1.4 Objectives of the study

The objectives of this study were as follows:

(a) To identify the sources of occupational stress among basic school teachers.

(b) To examine the patterns of stress among teachers.

(c) To compare the severity of stress based on gender, age, academic qualifications and job experience.

(d) To examine coping strategies adopted by basic school teachers to deal with stress.

1.5 Research questions

This study was guided by the following research questions:

a) What are the major sources of stress among basic school teachers?

b) In what ways does stress manifest itself among different categories of basic school teachers?

c) Are there any differences in the manner stress affects male and female teachers?

d) Are there any coping strategies that basic school teachers use in order to reduce stress?

1.6 Significance of the study

The study is significant because it will help establish facts about the existence and severity of stress among basic school teachers. This information will be of value to the Government, policy makers, education providers and other stake holders who will work towards devising intervention strategies in order to alleviate stress levels among basic school teachers.

1.7 Limitations of the study

The time frame within which this magnitude of the study was carried out was not sufficient. The total number of questionnaires distributed was 150 but only 122 of them were effectively filled and returned. Furthermore, this study was confined to Lusaka and the findings and stress experiences may slightly differ with other areas in the country.

1.8 Definitions of the terms

Stress -This is pressure or tension experienced by an individual. Usually such tensions arise out of an individual's interaction with the environment where stimuli-response is enlisted on the individual. In responding to a stressor an individual exhibits physiological response to a potentially harmful external event.

Occupational or Job stress - This is a type of strain or pressure that affects an individual due to the nature of the environmental factors related to the type of job one does. Job stress, therefore, means experiences by an individual physically, emotionally or physiologically that lead to deviant behavior within one's place of work.

Sources of stress - Sources of stress are the causers which can be termed as stressors. These are factors at work that create anxiety, frustrations, tension and unnecessary pressures on workers on regular basis whether for a short or long time.

Patterns of stress - These are the manifestations or manner in which stress reveals itself among teachers. For example one category of teachers, say, and the married may be affected differently by a particular stressor as compared to those not married.

Coping strategies -These are solutions that one adopts in order to counteract the stress.

Chapter 2: Literature review

2.0 Overview

This chapter is divided into eight sections. The first section gives an introduction to the chapter, the second section reviews sources of stress among different categories of teachers and the third section looks at patterns of stress. The fourth section considers the functional categories of stress and the fifth section reviews demographic patterns of stress among teachers. In the sixth section, the chapter looks at the coping strategies adopted by teachers to alleviate stress. The seventh section covers the models of stress while the eighth section discusses the theoretical frame work into which this research is grounded.

2.1 Introduction

This chapter covers the literature from studies done by various scholars, which were reviewed by the researcher in relation to the topic of study. This chapter is very important because it has helped the researcher to better understand the depth of the topic under study through the review of previously related research work. It has also assisted the researcher to limit the research problem, define it better and come up with much more important specific goals and research questions to suit the current study. The literature reviewed further helped the researcher get exposed and familiarized with a variety of research methodologies as used by other researchers. In this way it was easy to learn the limitations so as to refine and adopt the most suitable scope of study. Further, the literature reviewed provided insight into already researched topics related to the current study thereby avoiding duplication but provide an opportunity to identify gaps in the existing knowledge that require further research.

Because of the negative outcomes associated with occupational stress, many studies have attempted to better understand the phenomenon of occupational stress as it relates to education. These studies have found that degree of stress can differ as a function of several variables. For example, Brown and Ralph 1992, in a study examining for relationships among secondary school teachers' levels of occupational stress, personality type, and social support, found that burnout was greater among teachers new to the profession, teachers with more personal (non-job related) stress in their lives, teachers who lacked strong social support systems, and teachers with Type A personalities.

Similarly, in his study of occupational stress and teaching, Borg (1991) identified four factors that contributed to teachers' level of occupational stress. These are described in terms of 'pupil misbehavior','time/resource difficulties',' professional recognition needs' and 'poor relationships'. Teaching can be a stressful occupation. The daily interactions with students and coworkers and the incessant and fragmented demands of teaching often lead to overwhelming pressures and challenges, which may lead to stress. Where work stress is unrelenting, some negative physiological, psychological, and behavioral consequences may result. (DeRobbio & Lwanicki, 1996, p. 1)

Many teachers would agree. Teaching is not only hard work; it can be full of stress. Pressure due to school reform efforts, inadequate administrative support, poor working conditions, lack of participation in school decision making, the burden of paperwork, and lack of resources have all been identified as factors that can cause stress among school staff (Hammond & Onikama, 1997).

In the multicultural Pacific region, contact between cultures could be a cause of workplace stress. For teachers who move into unfamiliar cultures, acculturative stress can cause lowered mental health (e.g., confusion, anxiety, depression) and feelings of alienation; those who feel marginalized can become highly stressed (Berry, 1990). Teachers from very different cultures might neither understand nor appreciate the cultural differences of the communities in which they are placed. Since novice teachers are often reluctant to ask for help, they may be afraid to let anyone know that they are having problems in the classroom. This could then lead to additional stress, which eventually leads to high absenteeism and attrition. Those who are recruited thousands of miles away from family and friends may have inadequate social networks to provide the social support that is critical for workers health.

2.2 Sources of teacher stress

Studies dealing with stress began during the early 1970s.The studies focused mainly on identifying sources of stress. Eckert and William (1972) found that routine duties, long hours, poor facilities, friction among faculty members, and administrative red tape were the prevalent sources of stress. Major weakness of this study was that it used the research absenteeism figure, the percentage of staff absent from work on any given day, to measure stress. Landmann (1978) studied stress among teachers with cooperation of the American Health Association. The questions that contained open-ended answers pointed to stress as the commonest health problem. Many teachers would agree. Teaching is not only hard

work; it can be full of stress. Pressure due to school reform efforts, inadequate administrative support, poor working conditions, lack of participation in school decision making, the burden of paperwork, and lack of resources have all been identified as factors that can cause stress among school staff (Hammond & Onikama, 1997).

According to The Fountain, (2002) the teaching profession has changed drastically in the last few years, as it has become more focused on "clients," the students and their parents. This makes the teaching environment less formal and teachers' jobs more difficult, as they must deal with more disrespectful students and parents who are more likely to question their decisions. Teachers also must occasionally deal with difficult co-workers, unfriendly work environments and stringent deadlines. As technology changes, teachers must also learn how to integrate new technologies into their classrooms. These situations can easily lead to stress both on and off the job.

This may not necessarily affect your psychological (or mental) state, however psychological stress brings immediate or long term irritation or negative effect on your psychological or mental state. This may not necessarily have any immediate effect on your physical state. But these two groups can be very interactive i.e. your physical state can affect your psychological state and vice versa.

Lehnert (2002) also categorize stress as acute (immediate) which can be one-time incident that usually comes and goes quickly. Its effect he described can last from minutes or hours to days or weeks. Whereas the chronic (long-term) which can be caused by a continuing string of stressful incidence of an ongoing situation.

Ferkol (1998) reported the study of Schneider in 1991 on stress and job satisfaction by comparing people working in public services with those working in technical services in large public library system. The study was conducted because of the growing concerns of the employees working at the library; there were no enough employees to handle the work load and it appeared that this was having a harmful effect on the workers health (Schneider 1991). The findings from the study revealed that apart from the too much load of work affecting the health of workers, there were more factors bringing greater stress on the workers like poor funding which definitely leads to poor availability of resources, management's poor communication with workers, failure to allow workers to participate in decision making and poor work environment.

2.3 Patterns of Occupation Stress

Burge (1987) provides the result from his stress management workshops using group interview to collect data from people participating in the workshop from different kinds of libraries, as well as people holding different positions in the libraries. His findings revealed that different groups of librarians often had

similar feelings regarding job satisfaction and stress. He went further to reveal that cataloguers for example expressed that they did not get recognition for their efforts, but instead received complaints regarding subject headings that were not useful and that processing was not done quickly enough.

Routray and Satpathy (2007) described the types of stress in digital library environment and broadly divided them into: Technological, Physical, Mental and Situational. Technological stress was described as the stress due to the development and application of information technologies among the library and information professionals. Due to rapid change in computer hardware and software, obsolescence of existing hardware and software is a common phenomenon in almost all libraries. Thus there is the necessity to keep pace with the changing technologies which due to financial, time or technological constraints, it is difficult to do. Past research on job stress among postsecondary faculty has identified numerous sources and variables affecting stress levels. Among sources of stress identified by college faculty, certain patterns have emerged. For example, researchers have consistently reported time pressures (Astin, 1993; Barnes et al., 1998; Gmelch et al., 1986; Olsen, 1993; Smith et al., 1995; Thompson & Dey, 1998), high self-expectations (Gmelch et al.; Smith et al.), and research and publication demands (Astin, 1998, Blix et al., 1994; Smith et al.) as significant sources of job stress. In addition, the frequent technological advances of modern society along with the ongoing change that those advances spur have yielded increased stress. Approximately two thirds of United States college faculty. Members reported that keeping up with information technology (IT) was stressful for them (Sax, Astin, Korn, & Gilmartin, 1999).

In one notable study, Gmelch and colleagues (1986) examined dimensions of stress among 1,920 professors from 80 postsecondary institutions. Using factor analysis, they identified five dimensions of perceived stress: reward and recognition, time constraints, departmental influence, professional identity, and student interaction. The most important dimension was reward and recognition, which accounted for 55% of common variance. This dimension highlights the effects of inadequate rewards and recognition on professors' stress levels. The results indicated a discrepancy between performance expectations placed on faculty and the amount of effort required meeting those expectations. Identification of this dimension of job stress is unique to postsecondary faculty.

Researchers also have identified several demographic variables that affect stress levels among postsecondary faculty members. Gender is one such variable. In general, female faculty members have reported higher levels of stress than their male counterparts (Blackburn & Bently, 1993; Blix et al., 1994; Sax et al., 1999; Smith et al., 1995; Thompson & Dey, 1998). Another variable accounting for differences in stress levels is ethnicity. In studies by Dey (1994), Smith and Witt (1993), and Thompson and Dey, non-White faculty members reported higher levels of stress than White faculty members. Tenure status also has accounted for differences in individual stress levels; with researchers such as Gmelch et al.

(1986) and Marcy (1996) reporting that untenured faculty had higher levels of stress than tenured faculty members. Similarly, Blix et al. found that postsecondary faculty with less than 10 years of experience had higher stress levels than faculty with more than 20 years of experience. Smith et al. found that stress levels differed among faculty in different academic disciplines.

Effects of stress are detrimental to the well-being of postsecondary faculty. In a study by Blix et al. (1994), 48% of participants reported health problems related to stress, and 84% reported a decrease in productivity because of stress. Moreover, postsecondary faculty who have reported high levels of stress have also been more likely to report intent to leave academia than faculty with low levels of stress (Barnes et al., 1998). Barnes et al. suggested that higher education must combat stress-related problems if it is to attract and retain high-caliber faculty members.

2.4 Functional Categories of Stress

Following studies by Gmelck and his co-workers, three functional categories of work situations were delineated. These were teaching, work situations and condition of service. Items appropriate to each of the categories were then identified from the teacher stress index questionnaire (TSIQ). The teaching group consisted of 23 items. This included items such as, cumbersome assessment systems, teaching classes of limited ability, repetitive nature of the job and so on.

Items (stress factors) appropriate to each of the categories were gleaned from the main questionnaire of the study. Respondents were requested to indicate the severity of each stress factor on a five point likert type of rating scale calibrated as follows, 1. Least stressful, 2. Mildly stressful, 3. Considerable stressful, 4. Very stressful, 5. Most stressful.

For each stress factor, the mean value of total score was subsequently computed using the five point ratings. Thereafter, the mean percentage response or the mean percentage response or the mean score calculated. The teaching group consisted of thirteen categories including cumbersome assessment systems, lack of teaching materials and repetitive nature of the job. The work situation group contained seventeen categories. The condition of service group had eight items.

It was discovered that, conditions of service emerged as the most stress inducing category with 93% score. This was followed by work situation which scored 60%. The teaching category was the least stressful at 44%.

2.5 Demographic Patterns of Stress

The demographic figures reviewed come from studies carried out by Fong and Amateal (1972) who carried out a study on occupational stress among (114) academic women. The purpose of the study was

to find out whether gender, age and field of job specialization have an effect on a worker as a stressor. This study explored levels of stress, career satisfaction and coping strategies among teachers in four (4) groups (single, single-parent, married and married parent woman).The results revealed that teachers in the age group of thirty one (31) to forty four (44) reported higher levels of stress than teachers under thirty (30) and those forty five(45) and above. On gender based patterns of stress, Cruden (1984) noted that women are less likely to suffer stress related illness than men in similar jobs. In addition, Nhundu (1999) found that female teachers perceived both prevalence and severity of stress in the work place as significantly less prevalent and less stressful than male teachers. However there are other studies that reveal that female teachers are prone to stress than their male counters. Goldberg and Comstock (1980) in their study to examine the nature and sources of stress among health workers in the North of England noted that women reported more stressful incidents than men.

2.6 Coping strategies of stress

Among the occupational stress coping strategies are those that are effective at reliving stress in an individual. A survey conducted by Robert Half International (1998) in the United Kingdom, It was found out that workers used various coping strategies to cope with work load, for example, 60% were found to take homework at night and during week- ends on average three times in a month. It was further found that almost a third of workers were unable to take the holiday entitlements for various reasons. Sears (Journal of Occupational Health Psychology, 2000) examined occupational stress and coping strategies among health workers. He observed that most of the participants used negative coping strategies such as excessive beer drinking and drug abuse

2.7. Models of Stress

Before defining stress, we need to look at the various models to fully understand the concept. Two stress models-the medical-biological model and the psychoanalytical model are discussed here.

The first model of stress, proposed by Hans Selye, is probably identified with the medical model more than any other individual. Seyle"s 1982 model includes both psychological and biological stressors and is more commonly known as the General Adaptation Syndrome (GAS). This model describes the way in which the body's biochemical defence is similar to biological responses of other animals and even plants.

The GAS model is a three-stage biological process in response to a stressor. In the initial stage, called the alarm reaction, the body makes a biochemical response in an effort to mobilize defensive forces. During the alarm reaction, the body becomes overwhelmed and dies or enters a second stage, called resistance, in which it responds in a different biochemical way. If a body is unable to adjust because of the severity and continued exposure to stress, the third stage, exhaustion, results. The body's ability to adapt is finite, and with continued exposure it gradually wears out, similar to a machine. Thinking about occupational stress, this model can certainly account for stressors caused by certain job conditions, such as excessive noise. However, this model may be inadequate to explain our reactions to complex job conditions caused by many factors both internal to workers and external in the job environment, such as role ambiguity. The contribution of Selye"s model should be acknowledged, however, since it advanced the study of stress as well as defined stress as an experience that can progress through different stages. It should also be noted that Seyle believed in the concept of eustress, that is, stress that can be a motivation for growth and development, a positive stimulus for change. This stress has sometimes been called "good stress".

Although Syle"s model (sometimes call the "wear and tear "model) has been used to explain psychological stress, other research shows that the body reacts very differently to stress, depending on whether the stressor is biological or psychological (Baum, Singer and Baum, 1981). The second stress model, the psychoanalytical model focuses on the individuals conflicts between biological and societal pressures. Freud referred to defenses as efforts made to protect one from instinctual biological demands that are in conflict with environmental pressures.

2.8 Theoretical Framework

This study is grounded on one conceptual framework: a model of interactional or transactional theory of organizational stress.

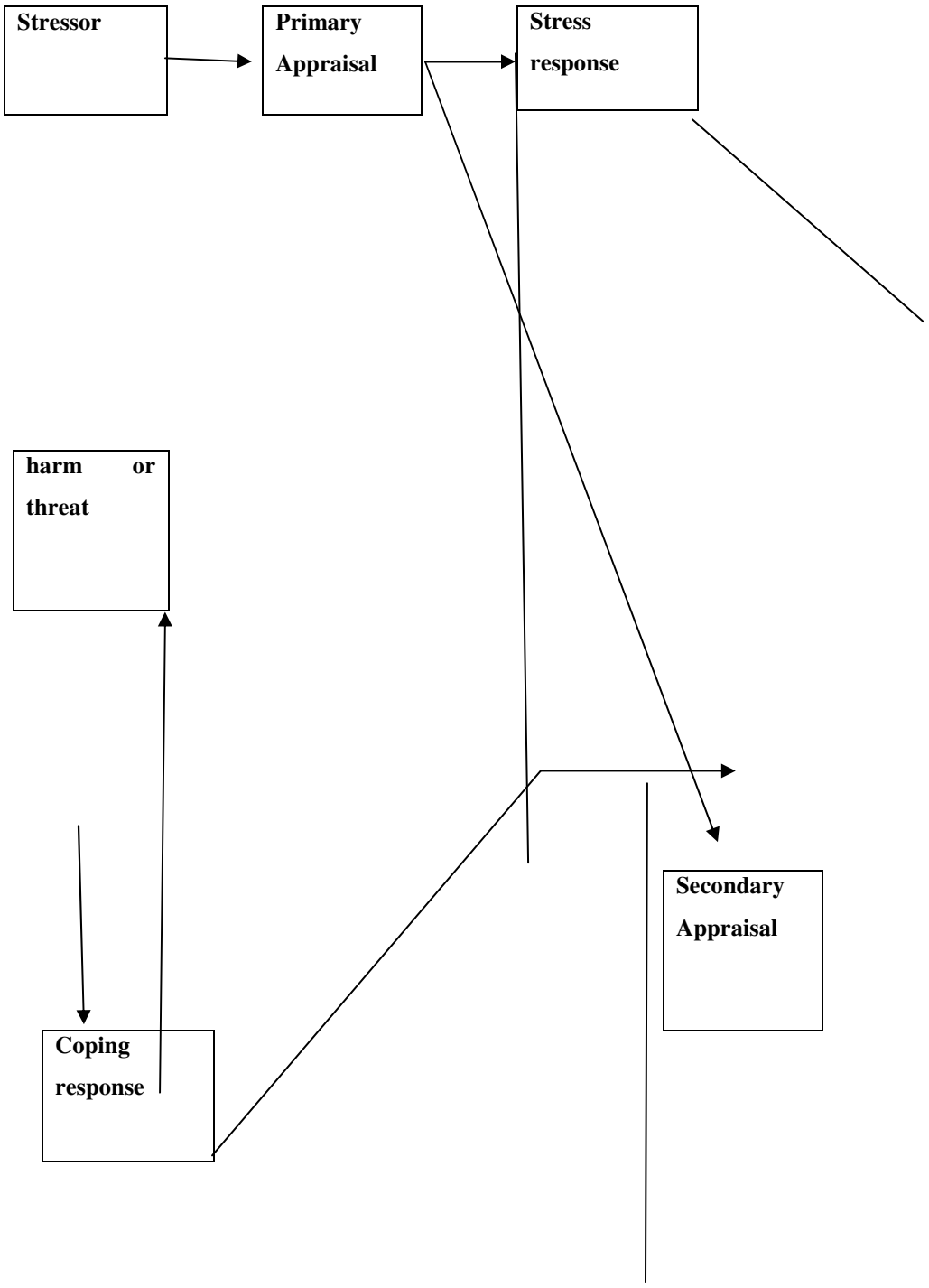
Ross and Altimaier (1994) described three various models and theories that were developed by scholars to understand, prevent and remedy occupational stress. These are:

- General Adaptation Syndrome (GAS) model- developed by Hans Selye in 1956 which describe stress as the response of the individuals;

- Stressors in the Environment model- developed by Adolf Meyer in the 1930s but further developed by Holmes and Ruche in 1967 which describe stress as the accumulation of difficulties in an individual's environment; and
- Transactional Model (or interactional model) - developed by Richard Lazarus around 1978 which describe stress as the interaction of characteristics of the person and factors in the environment. Transactional model is described by Ross and Altimaier (1994) as the most widely regarded today. Thus this is the model that will be adopted and applied in this study. This model describes stress as occurring when there is an imbalance between demands and resources and emphasizes the ongoing nature of the balance or imbalance. In addition, the model describe further that environments can influence people and that people can influence environment, thus, any particular person-environment encounter has implications for both the person and the environment.

Lazarus explained that a person should evaluate a particular event, situation, or demand. This evaluation he termed Primary appraisal which may be appraisal of harm, threat or challenge; Secondary appraisal which is the individual's attempt to define what coping options are available for dealing with the harm, threat or challenge. These options might be internal or external and might be resources or responses.

Stressor Appraisal Reaction



International Model of Stress and Coping Response

(From Ross and Altmaier, 1994)

This model is an interactional or transactional one in that the available coping resources have a strong influence on the future appraisal of the event or situation as stressful. The model allows us to understand stress as the combination of personal issues and responses that a person can fall upon in times of stress, which also change over time. These responses, in turn affect the initial situation or stressor, and may cause us to appraise it, or think about it, differently. Where the balance of demands and resources defines stress if the demands are greater than the resources, then the stress occurs. The reverse is also indicated, if the resources are available to meet the demand, then the secondary appraisal might be one of challenges rather than harm or threat and thus would be less stressful to the individual. This can be applied to the basic school teacher's work place stress in Lusaka urban especially at the University of Ibadan libraries. The theory is associated with Lazarus (1971).The theory portrays stress as any demands which tax the system, be it a physiological, social or psychological system and the response of that system. According to this theory, the individual s' reaction to potential stressors depends on how the individual consciously or unconsciously interprets or appraises the significance of a harmful, threatening or challenging situation. In emphasizing the individual nature of the phenomenon of stress, the theory places considerable importance on the idea that different stressors will have different meanings for individuals in line with the latter's particular circumstances and past experiences. Thus, on the basis of this theory, we would expect different sub-categories of teachers such as male and female, experienced and newly recruited, married and unmarried to be affected differently by the same stress factor. This theory is important in this study because it helps in understanding how patterns of stress arise in a given population.

Chapter 3: Methodology

3.0 Introduction

This chapter deals with the methods that were used to conduct this research. This chapter on methodology is divided into seven parts. The first part gives an introduction, part two deals with research design; part three addresses the total population sampled in the study, part four looks at the actual sample size, part five covers the research instruments used in the study in data collection, part six looks at the methods that were used to analyze the data and the seventh part covers the limitations of the study.

3.1 Research Design

The study combined both quantitative and qualitative types of designs in that it aimed at getting numerical information as well as description of people's feelings, perspectives, opinions, attitudes and experiences. A survey method of research was adopted based on the consideration of positive aspects of a survey. The advantages of adopting a survey methodology are covered in more detail under section five of literature review chapter. These include the fact that surveys are relatively cheap and easy to conduct; allow large coverage and can easily accommodate open-ended questions to allow flexibility on standardized responses so that pre-selected uniform responses can be chosen from the given options (Colorado State University, 1993). These reasons fitted –in well with the adoption of the survey method.

However, like any other method of data collection, surveys also have their own weaknesses. These include the fact that surveys rely on standardization which requires that constructed questions are general enough to be minimally appropriate for all the respondents. This factor could lead to failure to elicit information from some respondents with unique characteristics (Colorado State University, 1993). This limitation was addressed by the use of Focus Group Discussion (FGD). FGDs helped in getting in-depth information, capturing the information which could not have been collected through questionnaires and for the purpose of triangulating the results.

Questionnaires captured both qualitative and quantitative data while the FGDs specifically captured qualitative data which gave additional value to the research findings. It was particularly felt that the findings from FGDs would help add more value to the findings of the questionnaires because it involved quality interaction between the researcher and the respondents. In this regard, Fontana and Frey (2000) observes that FGDS have the ability to elicit detailed information about personal feelings, perceptions and

opinions because FGDs allow ambiguities to be clarified and precise wording to be tailored to specific respondents, they make possible the discovery of attitudes and opinions from respondents that could not have been revealed in a survey questionnaire. This therefore leads to the production of a lot of information far more quickly and at less cost.

3.2 Population

Population, also referred to as target population is the total number of people, group or workplaces which might benefit from the research findings and its implementation. The target population of this study was all Lusaka Urban Basic School teachers. Lusaka Urban has 96 basic schools according DEBS records. Teachers in these basic schools comprise of two year training certificate holders, three year training diploma holders and degree graduate teachers.

3.3 Study Sample

The study sample includes those people, groups or workplaces chosen from the sampling frame to be used in the study. It is a subset or subgroup of the sampling frame, which in turn is a sub-group of the target population. It is important that the study sample is representative in order to make the generalization of the findings easy and possible.

For this research, a sample size of 150 basic school teachers was targeted. The sample was drawn by proportional stratified random sampling from a number of Lusaka urban basic schools. The sampling was done by firstly picking 10 teachers from 5 schools each of low density, medium density and high density areas and secondly the sample sizes drawn from these schools were worked out proportionally, and finally the required number of teachers were randomly selected from each school stratum adding up to the needed sample size of 150 respondents. This was in the hope that in this way, the researcher would get representative views from all the teachers in Lusaka urban district. Gender was also taken as an important variable but it was discovered by this researcher that Lusaka urban has more female teachers in basic schools than their male counterparts.

In addition to the 150 respondents drawn for the purpose of answering the questionnaire, fifteen FGDs were conducted with 5 teachers in each FGD and 5 schools from each of low density, medium density and high density areas being involved. A total number of 75 discussants were therefore dawn for this exercise. The discussants were randomly selected from different basic schools for each FGD. The discussants were drawn from teachers who did not participate in the answering of the questionnaire.

3.4 Describing the sampling procedure

Imenda and Muyengwa (2000), describe a sample as a small group of subjects that have the main characteristics of the accessible population. Respondents were selected from Lusaka urban district, which is one of the four districts in Lusaka province. The researcher believes that the district selected was representative enough to give a general overview of the entire Lusaka Province. According to the records gathered from the Lusaka Urban District Education Board Secretary by this researcher, the district selected has 104 basic schools with similar characteristics that assisted in the investigation.

The researcher used simple random sampling to select his sample, namely schools, educators and principals to administer questionnaires. According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2005), this method involves selecting at random from a list of the population the required number of subjects for the sample. Welman and Kruger (2001) describe simple random sampling as a sampling technique in which each member of the population has the same chance of being included in the sample and each sample of a particular size has the same probability of being chosen.

3.5 Data collecting instruments

Research instruments are tools used for data collection from the field. For the purpose of this study, two data collecting instruments namely questionnaires and focus group discussions commonly referred to as FGDs were used to collect raw data from the respondents. The data collection exercise for questionnaires was done in August to September, 2010 and at the same time data was collected from focus group discussion.

3.5.1 Structured questionnaires

Questionnaires included both open ended and standardized questions in order to collect both quantitative and qualitative data. These were administered to all the respondents by the researcher in person assisted by research assistants who were mostly senior teachers. Among the reasons for choosing questionnaires were because questionnaires allow responses to be gathered in a standardized way and are relatively fast in collecting data. It is easy to analyze data from a questionnaire using SPSS and in addition questionnaires allow collection of information from a large portion of a group, making them more suitable for the coverage of a large sample.

3.5.2 Pilot study sampling procedure

Before the actual data collection was embarked on, questionnaires were pilot tested and peer reviewed. For the pilot study, the instruments were administered to 50 teachers from selected five basic schools from Lusaka urban schools. The schools involved in this pilot study are part of Lusaka urban schools with

characteristics similar to the targeted study population. During this exercise, some questions were designed to suit the stress experience by teachers under study. The purpose of the two exercises on the data collection instruments was to ascertain the feasibility of the study, validity of data collected in relation to the study objectives, logical sequence and appropriateness of the questions and wording within questions.

Following the two activities, changes were realized such as dropping of certain questions and sections, which were not relevant.

Some questions were rephrased or completely removed to ensure that the data collecting instrument is perfected with minimal ambiguities. The interview schedule was replaced with a questionnaire for school managers as this could provide genuine response to the question this researcher prepared so as to arrive at proper conclusions. These processes made the instrument s more suitable for the actual research and it brought out the required information from the respondents as demanded by the objectives.

3.5.3 Focus group discussions

A FGD essentially is a data gathering technique that involves a group of people brought together in a formal or informal setting to participate in the discussion of an area of interest. It relies on the systematic questioning of the respondents simultaneously from a predesigned interview schedule. The interview schedule for this study's FGDs included specific questions the researcher thought would help elicit in-depth information and insights the questionnaire could not have captured. It was also for the purpose of triangulating its findings with those from the questionnaires.

For the purpose of this study, each focus group discussion conducted comprised teachers teaching different class levels. The responses were recorded manually on the focus group discussion schedule designed by the researcher for that purpose. Meanwhile for the purpose of checks and balances with what was written down, mobile phone was used to record the responses using voice recorder facility within the device. This was done by ensuring that only a compiled list of names of teachers that did not participate in the questionnaire survey were used to form FGD .The aim for this was to get different and balanced views from different teachers in the schools. It was not easy to organize the FGDs since the period of data collection the teachers were full time in their teaching sessions and classes had to be interrupted. Even when sessions were scheduled to take place out of the teaching time-tables teachers proved to be uncooperative in some circumstances. The FGDs had teachers from the same school but handling different class levels. Each FGD lasted between 20-30 minutes. Despite these problems, all the scheduled FGDs went on very well.

3.6 Data Analysis

Data analysis is a process of making meaningful and useful conclusions from bulky and jumbled pieces of information obtained during the course of one's investigation of the problem. For the purpose of this study and looking at the nature of the study (covering both quantitative and qualitative), data from questionnaires was analyzed using SPSS while data FGDs was analyzed manually. SPSS was used to summarize observations or data in a way that would provide answers to research questions. It helped in the generation of tables and graphs of frequencies and percentages and hypotheses testing. After data was collected, it was edited, grouped according to related subjects coded and then entered into SPSS data editor. During data entry, great care was taken to ensure uniformity and accuracy in respondents' answers and recording for analysis and tabulation. For example, respondents from open-ended questions were classified under headings and then coded. The analyzed observations were mostly presented in form of tables and graphs indicating frequencies and percentages. Meanwhile data from FGDs was sorted and the emerging issues were categorized into various themes or sub-headings. These sub-headings were later used as sections and sub-sections during report writing.

The findings from the analysis helped establish relationships between and among variables; and to determine the extent to which each variable contributed towards revealing the stress levels among basic school teachers. Quantitative analysis provided facts and figures for easy verification and evidence, while qualitative analysis provided knowledge and understanding of the problem job stress among teachers.

3.7 Limitation of the study

The study was limited by the resources and time flame within which to carry such a huge magnitude of research work. It was difficult to organize FGDs as most teachers were actively involved in teaching thereby making it difficult to find suitable time for participants.

Chapter 4: Presentation of the Research Findings

4.0 Overview

This chapter presents the findings from data captured from both questionnaires and focus group discussions. It is divided into the following sections: Section 4.1 provides the demographic data of respondents in the research sample obtained from the questionnaires, 4.2 present's findings on levels of teacher stress. Section 4.3 covers the sources of stress. Sections 4.4 pattern of stress, 4.5 the present's findings from the focus group discussions, and 4.6 present's findings from self-administered questionnaires for school managers, and Section 4.7 presents the conclusion. The results obtained for each of the factors that were investigated are presented separately.

4.1 Demographic information of teacher respondents

In this category of respondents the sample size was 150 drawn from 15 basic schools (i.e. five basic schools selected from low density, five from medium density and a further five from high density areas of Lusaka). A hundred and twenty-two questionnaires were returned, giving a response rate of 82%.

The results revealed that 12.2% of the respondents were from low density areas, 67.5% from medium density areas and 20.2% were from high density areas. The response rate could be attributed to persistent personal follow-ups by the researcher. The other reason could be the selfless in-put provided by the research assistants (senior teachers) who made constant follow-ups on teacher respondents.

Out of the total number of 122 respondents to the questionnaire, 95 were female, (77%) were (19.6%) males and 3 did not indicate their gender. The age range of respondents revealed that three (2.4%) were aged 20-25 years, while thirty-four (27.8%) were aged 26-30 years and fifty-three (43.4%) were aged31-40 years. There were twenty-eight (22.9%) respondents who were above the age of 40, while four (3.2%) respondents did not indicate their ages. The finding therefore indicates that on average, the population under study was in the age group of 26 to 40 years.

Table 1: Gender and age of respondents

Gender	Frequency	Percent	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Male	24	19.7	20.2	20.2
Female	95	77.9	79.8	100
Total	119	97.5	100	
No Resp.	3	2.5		

Total	122	100		
Age	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative
Percent				
20-25	3	3	2.5	2.5
26-30	34	28	28.6	31.4
31-40	53	43	44.9	76.3
40+	28	23	23.7	100
Total	118	96.7	100	
No Resp.	4	3		
Total	122	100		

Results revealed that forty-eight (39.3%) respondents had a family size of more than five members. A further thirty-nine (31.9%) respondents indicated that they had between 4-5 family members. There were twenty-seven respondents who had between 2-3 family members. Results further revealed that seven respondents had no children and forty-seven respondents had between one to two children a representation of 38.5%. There were thirty respondents who had three to four children while thirteen respondents had four to five children. Twelve respondents indicated that they had more than five children while three respondents did not indicate the number of children they had. The table below shows the age range and period of service of respondents.

Table 2: Family Size

	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
1	7	5.7	5.8	5.8
2-3	27	22.1	22.3	28.1
4-5	39.3	32	32.2	60.3
More than 5	48	39.3	39.7	100
Total	121	99.2	100	
No Resp.	1	8		
Total	122	100		

Table 3: Number of Children

	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
None	7	13.9	14.9	14.3
1-2	47	38.5	39.5	53.8
2-3	30	24.6	25.2	79
4-5	13	10.7		89.9
More than 5	12	9.8	21.00%	89.9
Total	119	97.5	100	
No resp.	3	2.5		
Total	122	100		

The table2 above shows that 45% of the respondents had more than three children, while 44% had not less than two children.

The findings further revealed in table4 that three respondents had grade seven qualifications while two respondents had grade nine qualifications. Eighty-nine percent of the respondents had grade twelve education levels. Six percent of the respondents did not indicate their education level. Among the 122 respondents there while 30 and 13 were teaching three subjects. There were 14 respondents who were teaching more than 4 subjects while 5 respondents did not indicate the number of subjects they were teaching.

Furthermore, thirty-eight (38%) of respondents had worked for five years and below, while thirty (24.5%) had worked between 6-10 years. There were twenty-seven (22%) of respondents who had worked between 11-15 years and twenty-five (20%) had worked for more than 15 years. Two (1.6%) respondents did not indicate the period of their service. Table 3 below shows the academic qualifications of respondents while table 4 displays the teaching loads of the respondents. Results revealed that eight-five respondents were confirmed in teaching while thirty respondents indicated that they were not confirmed.

Table 4: Academic qualifications

Grade attained	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative percent
7	3	2.6	2.6	2.6
9	2	1.6	1.8	4.4
12	109	89.3	95.6	100
Total	114	93.4	100	
No Resp.	8	6.6		
Total	122	100		

From the table above it is evident that the majority of respondents had attained grade twelve level of education and these were 109 a percentage rate of 89% as compared to the 5 who had grade 9 qualifications or less a percentage rate of 4%.

Table 5: Teaching load

Subjects taught	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative percentage
I subject	7	5.7	6	6
2subjects	27	22.1	23.1	29.1
3 subjects	13	10.7	11.1	40.2
4 subjects	14	11.5	12	52.1
4+	56	45.9	47.9	100
Total	117	95.9	100	
No Resp.	5	4		
Total	122	100		

From the table above it is evident that most of the respondents were teaching 4 subjects or more. This is an indication of quite a higher work load.

Table 6: Years of service

Experience	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative percent
0-5	38	31.1	31.7	31.7
6-10	30	24.6	25	56.7
11-15	27	22.1	22.5	79.2
15+	25	20.5	20.8	100
Total	120	96.4	100	
No Resp.	2	1.6		
Total	122	100		

The results reveal that a larger percentage of respondents had served for more than ten years and therefore were quite experience. The type of schools sampled was also investigated and results revealed that 109 schools were Government schools. There were 11 schools which were run by missionaries.

Table 7: Type of schools

	Frequency	Percent	Valid	Cumulative percent
Government	109	89.3	90.8	90.8
Private	11	9	9.2	100
Total	120	98.4	100	
No Resp.	2	1.6		
Total	122	100		

From the table above it is clear that most of the schools under study were Government run.

4.2 Levels of stress among teachers

In order to assess the levels of stress among teachers, the respondents were asked to indicate how stressed they felt based on the following variables;

a) If they experience any stress due to the work environment

b) If they encounter conflicts with peers

c) If they encounter conflicts with pupils

d) If they encounter health related problems due to the nature of work

These levels were measured on a Likert scale, that is, 1= very often, 2= often, 3= rarely 4= never

The findings indicate that 95% of respondents very often felt irritated by the nature of their working environment, while 55.9% experienced conflicts with pupils. Results further revealed that 38% of respondents encountered conflicts with peers often. A further 59.9% of respondents acknowledged experiencing health related problems due to the pressures of work. Respondents were asked to rate their levels of stress based on the variables ,(a) stressed, (b) more stressed, (c) not sure .There were 81% of respondents who rated their stress levels as often. In tables 9, 10, 11and 12 is the summary of the levels of stress as perceived by the respondents.

Table 8: Stress due to work environment

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Very often	9	7.4	7.6	7.6
Often	81	66.4	68.1	75.6
Rarely	13	10.7	10.9	86.5
Never	16	13.1	13.4	100
Total	119	97.5	100	
No Resp.	3	2.5		
Total	122	100		

Table 9: Encounter conflict with pupils

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Yes	58	48.2	50.8	58.8
No	60	47.5	49.2	100
Total	118	96.7	100	
No Resp.	4	3.3		
Total	122	100		

Table 10: Encounter conflicts with peers

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Very often	6	4.9	5.2	5.2
Often	56	45.9	48.3	53.4
Never	54	44.5	46.6	100
Total	116	95.1	100	
No Resp.	6	4.9		
Total	122	100		

Table 11: Encounter health related problems due to the nature of the job

	Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Very often	3	2.5	2.5	2.5
Often	13	10.7	10.7	13.5
At times	81	66.4	66.9	83.2
Never	24	19.7	10.8	100
Total	121	99.2	100	
No Resp.	1	8		
Total	122	100		

Table 12: Rating of self perceived stress based on severity

	Frequency	Percent	Valid	Cumulative percent
Stressed	40	32.8	36.4	36.4
More stressed	8	6.6	7.3	43.6
Not sure	62	50.8	56.4	100
Total	110	90.2	100	
No Resp.	12	9.8		
Total	122	100		

4.3 Sources of occupational stress

The first objective of this study was to determine sources of occupational stress in the study sample. In order to identify sources of stress a self administered questionnaire was designed with an inventory of 45 possible factors likely to subject someone to prolonged anxiety, frustration or tension as a result of the

nature of the job. The degree to which one feels stressed were calibrated on a five Likert scale as, 1 least stressful, 2-mildly stressful, 3-considerably stressful, 4-very stressful and 5-most stressful.

The results in table14, on the next page shows selected discreet sources of stress and their severity. It is interesting to note that,' accommodation related problems'' rank the highest stress factor at 95%. It is of interest to note that the second highest stressor is'' low salaries'' at 93%,''difficulties of obtaining entitlements'' in the third position at 92%. All the three top stress factors are closely related in that they reveal the benefits and rewards that teachers expect to receive from their services as teachers. The three highest factors can be summarized as related to teacher's conditions of service. The fourth highest stress factor ''lack of recognition by the general public'', at 89% and the fifth highest stress factor 'time consuming but not rewarding'' may also be related to the top three because they both border on the teachers feeling of being appreciated which can be summed-up as psychological rewards.

The sixth highest stress factor, poor promotion prospects, seventh ranked, lack of regard for qualifications'' and ninth ranked pay problems'' are all very closely related to the highest three stress factors as they have to do with emoluments for teachers for the services that they offer to the general public. From the highest seventeen stress factors, stressors 17, 16 and 15 are all closely related as they have to do with the job related-sources or the environmental related sources which can be summed-up as the nature of the teacher's job.

The sources of stress can be divided into four major categories namely; conditions of service, nature of the teaching job, working environment and public perception of a teacher. Under the condition of service category was accommodation related problems, low salaries difficulties of obtaining entitlements and pay problems. These stress sources in fact ranked first, second and third among the highest of the seventeen selected most serious causes of stress among basic school teachers in Lusaka urban in exception of pay problems which was ranked tenth. The second category of stress sources were those emanating from the nature of the teaching job and these included, time consuming of doing the job but not rewarding which was ranked sixth, poor promotion prospects at rank number seven and limited opportunities for further training which was ranked twelfth. On the third broad category of sources of stress which was the working environment were lack of teaching materials ranked ninth, taking classes of limited ability ranked fourteenth handling two sessions which was ranked fifteenth, working under deadlines at rank number sixteenth and teaching schedules with few or no breaks ranked seventeenth. The fourth broad category of stress sources was, the public perception of a teacher, which included lack of recognition by the general public ranked fifth, lack of regard for qualification ranked eighth, and discriminative practices by school managers in dealing with staff which was ranked eleventh.

Table 13: Serious Sources of Stress

RANK	ITEM	Percent
1	Accommodation related problems	95%
2	Low salaries	93%
3	Difficulties of obtaining entitlements	92%
4	Handling over crowded classes	89%
5	Lack of recognition by the general public	79%
6	Time consuming but not rewarding	78%
7	Poor promotion prospects	77%
8	Lack of regard for qualification	76%
9	Lack of teaching materials	75%
10	Pay problems	73%
11	Discriminative practices of dealing with staff	71%
12	Limited opportunities for further training	70%
13	Difficulties of getting alternative job	70%
14	Taking classes of limited ability	60%
15	Handling two sessions	58%
16	Working under deadlines	52%
17	Teaching schedules with few or no breaks	44%

On the first measuring category of stress which was to find out as to whether the respondents experienced any differences with peers, 62% indicated that they encountered differences with pupils while 49% indicated that they did not. It is interesting to note that 78% of the respondents reported having health related problems due to the nature of the job. In addition 49% of respondents reported they were stressed by the nature of the teaching job. Results further revealed that 61% of respondents felt stressed by their inability to manage changes. A percentage rate of 74% of the study sample was stressed by heavy work load. Results revealed further that 62% of respondents felt stressed by the unpleasant state of most classrooms. The results further revealed that 93% of the respondents felt stressed due to handling of overcrowded classes. Another interesting revelation was results that showed that teachers felt stressed in teaching of two or more sessions which scored 81% of the study group.

A percentage rate of 80% was recorded as being a cause for stress for teaching schedules which allowed few or no breaks. Results further revealed that 87% of the respondents felt stressed by the lack of teaching materials while sub- category of working under deadlines recorded 77% stress rate and a further 75% felt stressed by having to do work that allowed few breaks. The sub-group of teaching classes of limited

ability a further 77% indicated being stressed while 75% reported being stressed by extreme temperatures in classrooms. Another interesting sub-group was the lack of opportunities to get alternative job which rated 80% among the respondents. There were 95% respondents who indicated that they felt stressed by the situation of having to source for teaching materials.

Just like we observed with the first three stress factors which were related to rewards that teachers expect from their services, the multiple response results on what the respondents were doing about their promotion prospects, 67% indicated that they intended to look for an alternative job. A total rating of 77% of respondents acknowledged they experienced physical exhaustion due to the nature of their job and so they engage in teaching activities that help them to relax while on the other hand 78% submitted that they felt stressed by too much work and as a result they either worked long hours or tried to do everything at once. The research further revealed that 62% respondents felt stressed by handling sessions that had few breaks and working in classroom that were unpleasant. It is interesting that the findings further revealed that 56% of the respondents felt stressed by their failure to manage changes their profession.

4.4 Patterns of Occupation Stress

4.4.1 Gender patterns

The study had a total number of 122 respondents and of these 24 were males while 95 were females. Three respondents did not indicate their gender.

Cross-tabulated results of patterns of stress revealed that gender is a factor in levels of stress among teachers. Eighty female teachers indicated that they felt stressed by the nature of their job. However, there were 8 males who felt stressed by the nature of their job. From this picture we can therefore conclude that female teachers were more prone to be stressed by the nature of the teaching job than their male counterparts.

4.4.2 Location and related patterns of Stress

The study sampled 14 teachers from low density schools and of these 5 indicated that they felt stressed by the nature of the teaching job a percentage rate of 35%. From medium density location the study had 77 teachers a percentage rate of 63% .There were 55 teachers who indicated that they felt stressed by the nature of their job, which translated into a percentage rate of 71%. From high density location the study had 23 respondents and of these 17 felt stressed by the nature of their job, a percentage rate of 73%. A close analysis of the above findings reveals

that location is a factor in the stress levels of a teacher. There was a high percentage of stress among teachers in high density location at73%, medium density at 71% and low density at 35%.

4.4.3 Teaching experience related patterns of Stress

Out of the total 122 respondents, 82 had served more than five years translating into 67% and of these 38 felt stressed a percentage rate of 46%.On the other hand 38 respondents had served less than five years and of these 22 felt stressed by the nature of their job a percentage rate of 53%. From the above outlined findings it is clear then that the less experienced teachers are more stressed by the nature of their job as compared to the more experienced counterparts.

4. 4.4 Qualification related patterns of Stress

A total number of 107 respondents indicated that they had attained a certificate or diploma in teaching, a percentage rate of 88% and of these 48 indicated that they felt stressed by the nature of the teaching job a percentage rate of 45%. On the other had 12 respondents were graduates a percentage rate of 9% and of these 8 indicated that they felt stressed by the nature of the teaching job a percentage rate of 67%.These findings therefore lead us to conclude that graduate teachers are more stressed by the nature of the teaching as compared to the certificate and diploma holders.

4.4.5 Teaching load related patterns of Stress

There were a total of 70 respondents who indicated that they teach more than 4 subjects a percentage rate of 57% and of these 62 indicated that they felt stressed by the nature of the teaching job translating into a percentage rate of 89%. However, there were 47 respondents who indicated teaching less than 4 subjects a percentage rate of 38% and of these 18 indicated that they felt stressed by the nature of the teaching job a percentage rate of 38%. This is an interesting revelation which shows that the less the teachings load the less stressful the teacher feels and the larger the teaching load the more stressful the teacher feels.

The results of this research showed that the teachers who were teaching more than 4 subjects a percentage of above 89% indicated being highly stressed by the nature of the teaching job. This is in contrast to the 38% of those who were teaching less than 4 subjects.

4.4.6 Work Status Related Patterns of Stress

The study had 85 teachers who were confirmed a percentage rate of 70% and of these 32 indicated that they felt stressed by the nature of the teaching job a percentage rate of 38%. On the other hand there were 30 respondents who were not confirmed a percentage rate of 24% and of these 20 indicated that they stressed by their status and the general nature of the teaching job; a percentage rate of 67%.We can conclude from these findings that the unconfirmed teachers felt more stressed than the confirmed ones.

4.4.7 Family Size Related Patterns of Stress

The study revealed that a total number of 87 respondents indicated that they had more than 4 members in their family representing 71% of the total respondents. There were 62 respondents a percentage rate of 71% who indicated that they felt stressed by the pressures of providing for the family. It is therefore clear that family size is a factor in stress levels among teachers

4.5 Results from Focus Group Discussions

4.5.1 Characteristics of the discussants

In order to cement the perceived sources of stress among basic school teachers drawn from self administered questionnaires, the researcher organized fifteen focus group discussions. The FGD'S were structured in form of a questionnaire with thought throbbing questions. Discussants were given freedom to express themselves on what they thought about stress.

The Focus Group Discussions had 30 participants who were drawn from six schools in Lusaka urban with two schools drawn from low, medium and high density areas. Each group had five discussants. There were thirteen male discussants and seventeen female discussants. Two 2 discussants were below the age of 25 years while16 discussants were between 25-40 years and 12 were aged above 40years. Eighteenhad1 five discussants less than 5 years in service while 11 had served between 6-10 years and the remainder 14 had served for more than 15 years. There were a total of 4 graduates, 13 diploma holders and 11 certificate holders among the discussants.

Among the 6 Focus group discussions, two were drawn from each of low, medium and high density areas respectively. Each group had five discussants balanced by two of each gender while the fifth discussant was either male or female. A total of 30 discussants were involved in the focus group discussions.

4.5.2 Respondents understanding of stress

The discussants were asked to define the term stress. The discussants defined stress as the undesirable feeling of pressure associated with the work demands. They further defined stress as a situation where a person falls ill due to many worries. Some discussants felt that stress was an internal personal force that could either be positive or negative. One discussant further defined stress as the physical and emotion response to tension that builds up in someone when resources fail to meet the need. Another discussant associated stress a frustration, provocation or pressure placed on an individual as a result of the nature of the job and working environment.

4.5.3 Symptoms of stress

The results indicate that the discussants attributed what they consider as the possible causes of stress or teacher burnout to financial problems such as poverty and low salaries. Twenty discussants were of the opinion that handling overcrowded classes was a major source of stress, while 18 discussants felt that the pressure of teaching more than one session was a major source of stress.

The stress symptoms were enlisted from a question which required discussants to explain how they would tell that one is under stress or stressed. Results revealed that 25 discussants indicated lack of concentration on the tasks at hand while a further 20 indicated that anti-social behavior and a tendency to look clumsy were some of the indicators of a person under stress. Other symptoms included loss reporting for work and eventual absenteeism. The discussants further sighted loss of appetite and loss as some of the stress symptoms. They agreed that the tendency to develop bad temper or being moody could as well be attributed to stress.

However, one female participant strongly argued that the major symptom of stress was illness. She stated that; ‘‘stress can be identified when there is a condition of ill healthy where one feels frustrated or depressed, lacks concentration and constantly complains of headaches or some other ill healthy.’’ The discussants attributed increased stress levels to too much assessment and assignments that teachers were expected to do. Other causes of stress included that over enrolment as well as supervisors who were rigid contributed to increased levels of stress. The discussants further cited being financially handicapped and general shortages of teachers as contributors to increased stress levels among teachers.

4.5.4 Coping Strategies

Among the various coping strategies adopted by the teachers drawn from the Focus Group Discussions were two major categories namely, positive and negative coping strategies. The coping strategies spell out the various mitigation mechanisms that different categories of teachers adopt in order to alleviate the stress levels. These strategies can either be positive or negative in nature. Positive coping strategies entail

constructive engagement in alleviating stress levels while the opposite entails negative coping strategy. The major coping strategies included engaging in extra activities to raise money to meet accommodation costs and soliciting for support from peers to deal with discriminatory tendencies by some of the school managers. Other coping strategies included looking for alternative job or pay for one's own training to better promotion prospects.

The discussants indicated that among the high ranking positive coping mechanism was engaging in extra-curriculum activities. A good number of discussants indicated that they ensured that everything for teaching and learning process was put in place or sought entertainment. Some also said that they found time to relax and ensured that they avoided loneliness and found some accompany. Asked as to what ways or means a teacher can use to contain stress, discussants indicated that it was advisable to share ones situation with friends or pray over it or alternatively seek company. The discussants responded by indicating that they also sought Gods intervention through prayer, sought advice from friend or rested. Some discussants responded by indicating that they would rather find less strenuous work to engage-in or get some entertainment.

Among the high ranking negative coping mechanisms adopted by teachers as indicated by all the FGDS was a tendency to give –up and let things take their natural course.

The discussants listed various ways of coping with stress and the negative ones included pretending to be happy by soliciting for company. The discussants further said that at times they engaged in physically beating children despite a ban on corporal punishment and at times use abusive language to the learners. Some mentioned that they either stay away from work or better still arrogantly respond to superiors who they felt are in the habit of nagging them. Many of the discussants concerted to the fact that they may resort to beer drinking, prostitution and drug abuse.

Among the leading coping mechanisms the study revealed that 92% of respondents indicated engaging into extra-money making activities in order to deal with major stressors such as low salaries. Respondents further indicated that they positively coped with shortage of teaching materials by sourcing from friends. It is interesting to note that a good number of respondents engaged in discussions and opening-up to friends in order to lighten their stress levels. Findings further reveal that 70% of respondents turned to prayer or attending church organization work.

4.6 Findings from School Managers

In order to find out whether school managers were aware of the existence of stress among their members of staff, a self administered school manager's questionnaire was designed. The questionnaire consisted

of eight question prompts that required the respondents to indicate whether they viewed each of those prompts as [problem] [or not a problem].

4.6.1 Characteristics of the school managers

The study sampled 15 school managers from the fifteen targeted schools. Five school managers were drawn from low density, five from medium density and another five from high density. There were 7 males and 8 females in the study sample whose age range was between 28-55 years. About 10 respondents had served in their respective positions for more than five years while 5 had served less than five years. There were 10 Head teachers and 5 Deputy Head teachers and these were drawn from five of each of low, medium and high density areas. There were 2 Head teacher graduates, 10 diploma holders and 3 certificate holders.

4.6.2 Results

School managers where asked what they understood by job stress in order to find out their awareness of the existence of stress among teachers. Ten respondents answered differently with answers ranging from poor nature of condition of service to that of too much workload. One respondent defined job stress as, 'the conflict of work roles for example deputy head teacher teaching and supervising teachers at the same time leading to heavy workload, mental strain and pressure'. Others defined stress as a state of mental or emotion strain caused by the job one is doing. As to the question on how they know that job stress exists among teachers 10 respondents indicated that the general dissatisfaction of teachers and complaining all the time were some of the indicators. All the fifteen school managers indicated that condition of service was a major source of stress among teachers. The condition of service was specified as low wages, poor accommodation and poor working environment. Out of a total number of fifteen managers, nine indicated that lack of motivation was a source of stress among teachers.

On the first prompt, managers were asked to rate their experience on whether teacher turnover was a problem at their stations or not. The responses from school managers were that the teacher turnout or resignations were a problem. In addition the managers were prompted to indicate whether teacher absenteeism was a problem or not. All the 15 school managers acknowledged that absenteeism was a problem. There was overwhelming response from 12 managers against 3 who felt that teacher misbehavior and suspected drug abuse were a problem at their stations. Furthermore all the fifteen school managers confirmed that teacher alcohol abuse and negligence of duty were a problem. However, 14 managers denied the relative high teacher morbidity and mortality rates as being a problem as opposed to two of their fellow counterparts who felt it was a problem.

School managers were asked what in their opinion were the causes of the problems that they had listed in the eight prompts. Ranking among similar answers given by the respondents were poor conditions of service, lack of incentives and poor accommodation. The questionnaire also required the managers to indicate whether job stress was the cause of the problems they cited and 14 of them indicated that it was. The school managers described stress as a condition in which the teacher fails to meet teaching demands as a result of over enrolment of pupils. They also added that stress is as a result of worry, anxiety, pressure or strain associated with work or work place. One manager defined stress as the inability by the teacher to carry out job demands as expected due to limitations in resources. Managers were asked to mention some of the factors that could lead to job stress and ranking high on the manager's submissions were lack of accommodation, poor conditions of service, poor working environments and lack of incentives

Three quarters of the managers felt that the education authorities were not concerned about job stress among teachers while managers submitted that the authorities might not even be aware of the condition. School managers were further asked to list what they felt were mitigating measures the education authorities and government were putting in place to alleviate or prevent stress. Ten managers submitted that the Government was recruiting more teachers to beef up numbers while five managers felt that nothing was being done because most of the issues are politicized. The school managers were further required to propose how to remedy the situation of the Zambian teacher or what plans they had to enhance teaching and improve employment conditions of teachers in Zambia. All the fifteen school managers indicated that the conditions of service should be improve and proposed improved accommodation, better salaries, soft loans and health schemes. Other responses suggested improvement in allowances such as housing and double class. One manager felt that bureaucratic tendencies should be removed and then decentralize services to avoid delays in dealing with teachers problems.

4.7 Conclusions

This chapter has presented the findings of the research as analyzed from both the questionnaires and focus group discussions. To make sense of the various pieces of raw data collected, this chapter gives a complete picture of the situation in terms of factors that are associated with teacher stress among basic school teachers and the likely coping strategies employed to alleviate stress. A number of factors were identified as sources of teacher stress that fall into four major categories namely; conditions of service, nature of the teaching job, work environment and public perception of a teacher. On the first major objective which was to identify the sources of occupational stress, the findings revealed that poor conditions of service such as low salaries and accommodation problems posed as major sources. On patterns of stress it was revealed that biographical factors such gender and sex produced significant differences in the severity of stress. The major coping strategies adopted by teachers were in two

categories that are negative and positive strategies such as absenteeism and engaging in extra activities to raise money. Respondents suggested that stress levels could be reduced if the employer provided teachers with adequate accommodation and improved salaries. They further felt that improved teachers working environment such as limited enrollment levels and adequate teaching materials would improve their well being.

Chapter 5: Discussion of Research Findings

5.0 Overview

This chapter discusses the findings of the investigation based on factors that cause stress among basic school teachers. The issues discussed include the sources of teacher stress, patterns of stress and the coping mechanisms that teachers have adopted to alleviate levels of stress. As indicated earlier under literature review the teaching profession is one of the most stressful occupations as it involves dealing with pupils, parents and co-workers all of who can be sources of stress. Besides the working environment, conditions of work can also all be very stressful.

5.1 Sources of stress among basic school teachers

In this study of occupational stress and teaching, several factors have been identified that contribute to teachers' level of occupational stress. Described in terms of 'poor accommodation', 'low salaries,' in discipline', lack of resources ' lack of professional recognition ' and 'poor relationships'. Teaching can be a stressful occupation. The daily interactions with students and fellow teachers and the incessant and fragmented demands of teaching often led to overwhelming pressures and challenges, which in turn led to stress. Where work stress was unrelenting, this resulted into some negative physiological, psychological, and behavioral problems.

The study was able to identify four major categories of sources of teacher stress among Basic school teachers in Lusaka Urban. These four sources were; poor conditions of service, poor work environment, nature of the teaching job and public perception of a teacher. It was further revealed that poor conditions of service affect teachers especially in areas of accommodation problems, low salaries and difficulties in obtaining entitlements. Under poor work environment category, the study revealed that teaching overcrowded classes and teaching classes of limited ability were major sources of stress among teachers. The third category, nature of the teaching job, it was discovered that lack of learning and teaching materials as well as working under deadlines stressed most Basic school teachers. On the fourth measuring category, public perception of a teacher which was more psychological in measurement, the major stressors were the lack of recognition by the general public and lack of regard for qualifications. Given the above scenario, teacher's productivity is adversely affected.

This study therefore confirms earlier research that job stress can hinder effectiveness at work and can lead to low performance, job dissatisfaction, poor motivation, absenteeism and turnover (Copper, 2002). Reglin and Reitzammer (2008) and Tnetteman and Punch (2005) opined that, teachers regardless of what level they teach are exposed to high levels of stress. In some extreme cases, they may suffer from burn out as well (Seldman and Zager, 2001). The fact that teachers are exposed to high level of stress can be an international phenomenon (Mokdad, 2005). We have endeavored to bring out coping strategies that teachers are likely to implore as the results show. The major ones involve entrepreneurship in order to supplement meager salaries and therefore meet up-keep costs.

The results have revealed that the sources of stress were grouped into four categories namely; poor conditions of work, nature of the teaching job, work environment and public perception of the teacher. Further results reveal that under poor conditions service the accommodations problems ranked as the highest source of stress which was closely followed by pay problems and difficulties of obtaining entitlements. This revelation confirms the assumption by the hypothesis that poor working conditions of service are major sources of worker stress among basic school teachers. It was discovered that the nature of the teaching job under which were doing the same job without rewards, lack of promotion prospects and few prospects for further training also caused stress. We can conclude that teachers have difficulties in accessing better work conditions of work. The third category examined the environmental factors under which teachers work in which it was discovered that lack of teaching materials, teaching two sessions and handling of classes of limited ability were some of the major sources of stress. In the present study we extend the previous work to include ethical climate that direct the moral conduct of school teachers. Consistent with the above line of research in educational institutions, we expect teacher absenteeism to increase when they perceive their schools' climate to be unethical. The fourth category looked at the public perception of the teacher which included lack of recognition and respect for a teacher.

This study aimed to investigate relationships between biographical variables and occupational stress. Four variables, gender, age, experience and education levels were investigated. All of the biographical variables except gender showed no association with one or more domains of occupational stress. In addition, significant associations were found for stress arising from administrative support and school climate (school domain). This might be due to the prevailing school cultures in most Zambian schools in which administrators pay little attention to teachers

needs. In this light the findings are not surprising and, indeed, affirming for most of the schools. Female staff members experienced more general stress than their male colleagues. This is an important finding, given the concern in Zambia over retention of female teachers and gender equality in accessing job opportunities. These findings are supported by Manthei (1988) who has reported that female teachers experience more stress than male teachers due to job over load. Payne (1987) has found that women teachers reported significantly more stress concerning time management. However, there are no gender differences on the remaining six factors: age, teaching experience, academic qualifications, job status, and type of school and location of the school.

While the findings have been explained in terms of the work environment in this paper, the underlying reasons for these findings need to be investigated by school systems with the aim of maintaining the attractiveness of primary teaching as a career choice for teachers. Given recent concerns about the rate at which early career teachers leave the profession, there is a clear need for school administrators to provide support for and build up the resilience of younger teachers and other staff.

It is also important that the Government of the Republic of Zambia understands the needs of basic school teachers and provide improved working conditions. Constant appraisal programs and appreciation should be given to reinstate and motivate the teachers. Motivation is a key factor as well in affecting job stress among employees.

Workers who are highly motivated are happier and more willing to work for the organization. Unhealthy working environments among basic school teachers as custodians of the future education of the children will ultimately affect performance. Failure of the education institutions to provide working environment or even a working environment with minimal levels of job stress will lead to far reaching consequences resulting in poor performance by pupils and eventually lower education standards. It should be emphasized here that it is the responsibility of both education providers and Government to issuer that the best education is given to the Zambian child and this can be achieved by reducing on teacher stress. Since it is the institutions internal and external environment that causes the stress, the employees, employers and pupils will be affected by effects of the stress.

5.2 Coping strategies

5.2.1 Gender

The results show that all the respondents adopt at least one form of coping strategy. There is an interesting revelation in the results because females exhibit negative coping strategies as compared to their male counterparts. From the total number of 122 respondents 95 were female a percentage rate of 78% and of these more than 55 which is 52% indicated negative coping strategies such as accepting to live within the limits of generally low salary of teachers and also accepting the situation as it is. About the repetitive nature of the teaching job, again the female gender sub- group indicated a higher negative coping strategy by acknowledging that they tend to feel bored after serving a few years.

5.2.2 Age

The years of experience also reveal an interesting coping strategy in that the most young tend to adopt negative coping strategies. For example of the 122 respondents there were about three who were less than twenty five years and all of them indicated negative coping strategies that included drinking beer when they find themselves under intense pressure and frustration due to many setbacks in the teaching job. This picture can be interpreted with an understanding that the young teachers have a lot of expectations which are not satisfied by what is actually obtaining on the ground in the teaching profession

5.2.3 Experience

The less experienced category were thirty eight out of one hundred twenty two respondents and results revealed that these adopted negative coping strategies of either ignoring the situation and use whatever is available when they face the problem of lack of teaching or learning resources.

5.2.4 Qualification related

Results reveal that the most educated such as graduates adopted negative copying strategies such as resorting to drinking beer in order to lessen pressures of workloads. This revelation lead us to conclude that graduate teachers have confidence that the level of their education will offer the best in terms of condition of service and working environments which turn out to be the opposite.

5.2. Workload related

Results reveal that teachers who had a higher teaching load negatively copied with work pressure by doing what they could. This reflects frustration and non concern for the job. Respondents further indicated that teaching overcrowded classes was irritating to them.

5.3 Focus Group Discussion (FGDs) results

The results clearly shows that the discussants in the Focus Group Discussions fully understood the meaning of occupation stress because they were able to define it either as conditions of work or work environments that tend to affect the normal dispensation of daily routine at work place. There is also overwhelming evidence that the discussants were able to identify sources of stress which they listed as poor conditions of service such as low salaries, delayed payments of allowances and little prospects for promotion. In addition, the discussants were able to show how stress manifests itself among different categories of teachers such gender, academic qualifications and years of experience.

The discussants also admitted to the fact that most of the teachers resort to negative coping strategies due to so many frustrations in the teaching job. There is an overwhelming evidence that teaching in itself is a stressful job especially that the teacher has to deal pupils ,parents, fellow teachers and administrators all of these have their own expectations demands on a teacher. In addition to the above a teacher has also the challenging environmental working situations as well as conditions of service.

5.4 Administrative Awareness of Stress-Discussions

It is interesting to note that most administrators are aware of the existence of stress among their teachers. From the results the study was able to confirm that among the top causes of stress among teachers were the poor conditions of work and as well as unpalatable working environments. It was also clear that administrators get affected by teacher stress which in turn stresses them. Twelve administrators out of the total 15 recommended improved conditions of service and instituting motivators to alleviate teacher stress.

Chapter 6 Conclusions and Recommendations

According to Copper, (1974), stress in the work place arises from a variety of sources. Copper adds that numerous variables affect how people perceive stress and how they are affected by it. One would need to know these determinants to launch an effective program of preventing occupational stress in organizations. The findings of this study is in consonant with Coppers' observations as stated above, for example the fact that the stress factors identified as serious sources of job stress were of different types involving psychosocial and physical stress factors, it may be concluded that teachers in Lusaka region are subjected to multiple stress factors. These stressors emanate from various aspects of teachers' work setting such as administrative policies and organizational processes and working conditions.

The findings of this study suggest that the greatest sources of stress among teachers in Lusaka region were conditions of service especially those related to emoluments, for example, low salaries and lack of accommodation. Another major source of stress suggested by the study was work related situations, involving interruptions to school programs, heavy workload, and overcrowded classes and so on. Findings further suggested that not all the teachers in any given school were affected in the same way by stress. In particular it has been concluded that demographic factors, gender, qualifications, years of experience and many others influence the way teachers are affected by occupation stress.

However, with regard to teachers coping strategies the study concluded that avoidance or negative coping strategy was used by teachers more than the positive approach coping strategy. This leads this researcher to conclude that occupational stress is an enormous problem and taxing to teachers.

One of the most important observations made in this study was that of a possible nexus between occupational stress and infringement of workers' rights. In this regard it was observed that a good deal of occupation stress could be avoided if workers paid attention to their general as well as job related rights. Most importantly, the study established that the major sources of stress among teachers were poor conditions of service and work environment situations.

The coping strategies identified were collapsed into two categories. These were adaptive (positive) and maladaptive (negative) coping strategies. Positive ones included seeking support from colleagues and superiors, promising workload and recognizing limitation. Negative

outcomes were denial handling more than is manageable, working long and irregular hours absenteeism, frequent permissions and argumentative behavior.

On the basis of the findings, some conclusions were drawn and some suggestions for further research were given. Furthermore recommendations were made in the light of the findings. Finally it should be mentioned that although the study focused on teachers as a particular category of workers, the issues addressed and the principles generated have relevance to a wide spectrum of other occupations.

Overall, the findings concerning the sources and patterns of stress are consonant with what was reviewed in the literature review. This is suggestive of cross-cultural similarities in the experience and perception of the severity of self-reported stress among teachers. Furthermore, as found by Tuttemann (1991) in a survey of 574 teachers in Australia, dissatisfaction with salary and promotion are important factors related to job satisfaction. It becomes imperative in the current perspective for the school managements to look into the aspect of providing career security to the teachers.

Gender, age, academic qualifications and family size were the biographical variables identified as being related to occupational stress of staff members in the sample. As was anticipated the, Sixth variable, years of experience, was also related to occupational stress.

(McCormick, 1997), the relevant hypothesis was supported. This might reflect shared variance between age and experience. However, other studies have also reported no relationship (Solman and Feld, 1989; Jepson and Forrest, 2006). Occupational stress arising from poor administration support and unpleasant school climate was not influenced by any biographical variables in this study. This is in contrast to studies that have identified effects of such variables on similar aspects of occupational stress (Al-Mohannadi and Capel, 2007; Laughlin, 1984; McCormick and Solman, 1992; Punch and Tuetteman, 1996; Solman and Feld, 1989). Where gender was a significant predictor of occupational stress, females were more stressed overall than males. The suggestion is that primary schools are work environments that have become more feminized compared to secondary schools (ILO/UNESCO, 2000; Ramsey, 2000). Whatever the underlying explanation, the results reported here were in consonant with those of other studies that reported higher stress in male primary school staff (Antoniou et al., 2006; Laughlin, 1984; McCormick and Solman, 1992), but support the findings of similar research by McCormick (2000).

Where age was a significant predictor of occupational stress, younger staff members reported higher levels than older colleagues. The differences were particularly strong between the youngest and the oldest staff members. These results appear to support the findings of some studies (Lau et al., 2005), but are incongruent with others (Antoniou et al., 2006). The findings reported here have been explained in terms of the possible benefits life experience may have contributed to the ability of older staff members to cope with stress and the relevant aspects of work. It must also be recognized that, with respect to condition of service domain, nature of the teaching job and work environment have been widely recognized as a concern and source of anxiety and stress for most teachers (Borg and Falzon,1991; Kyriacou, 2001; Marsh, 2008).

6.1 Recommendations

The study makes the following recommendations to reduce stress among teachers:

The Government must:

- build and maintain a good mid-career development program so as to avoid stressors like lack of promotion, status problem;
- provide good performance feedback system which can easily enhance good workers performance and motivation;
- provide adequate reward for different excellent performance which may or may not include monetary, time-off from work, conference or training aid, etc;
- efficient administrative systems to handle staff conflicts and insecurity;
- provide adequate training to handle new developments, technologies, policy changes, etc.; and
- Provide an efficient administrative system to handle entitlements such as salaries, housing allowances, hardship allowances, extra duty allowances, etc.

This researcher further recommends that sensitization programs for teachers should be instituted. Counseling sessions for the teachers and education providers should also be conducted in collaboration with the Ministry of Healthy Psychiatric Department. The Government of the Republic of Zambia should pass legislation aimed at improving teacher's conditions of service and working environment. Teacher education should be promoted so that they are able to

upgrade their professional qualification. Proper improvement of classroom conditions will go a long way in motivating teachers. Further recommendations include the following;

1) Teachers' working conditions should be improved by providing some social facilities such as satellite T.V, computers with internet connections, so that they can use them as coping strategies for stress.

2) Teachers should also create time for themselves to relax in some designated recreation centers.

3) Teachers should cultivate the habit of playing different games as a means of coping with stress.

4) The school curriculum should be restructured to include both teacher-centered and pupil-centered co-curricular activities in schools.

5) All teachers in the schools should have general knowledge of healthy education so that they are able take care of their well-being at work and at home.

While this study has a number of limitations, such as not being conclusive on the relative scale of self reported stress levels, sample size relative to the populations of teachers in basic primary schools in Zambia and reliance on quantitative self-reported data, it is in the interests of schools and school systems to be aware of biographical differences and how they may interact with occupational stress levels. Schools and school systems need to ensure that occupational stress levels of employees are manageable or at least well managed, as the consequences of increased occupational stress can be considerable severe. It is important that teacher employers seriously consider uplifting living and working standards of these categories of workers in order to achieve quality education delivery. The overall results of the present study suggest the need for periodical stress management programme for reducing the levels of stress among the teachers which in turn will improve their functional skills and lead to effective teaching/learning in the class room.

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Appendix 1: An introductory letter to the questionnaire respondents

The University of Zambia
School of Education
M.E.D Programme
P.O Box32379
October 2010

Dear Sir / Madam,

I am conducting a survey to establish source, intensity and patterns of occupational stress among Basic School teachers in Lusaka. The survey will also seek to establish how teachers are coping with stressful situations in their occupation. Such data will be of value to policy and decision – makers, School teachers, administrators and professional organizations. In this way it is hoped that solutions will be found to alleviate stressful situations in the teaching profession, thus enhancing teaching and employment conditions of teachers in Zambia.

The success of this study depends upon your expression of sincere opinion on the issues about which you are called. Please do not answer the questions as you think other people would like you to answer them. We are interested in your own views and not the views of the general public. Do not therefore; discuss the questions with other people. Follow the instructions which are given before answering the question.

To ensure confidentiality, you are asked not to put your name on this questionnaire.

Thank you, in anticipation, for your willingness and the trouble you have taken to complete this questionnaire.

Thank you in advance for taking the trouble to answer the questionnaire.

Makasa Justine Wickinson

Appendix 2: Questionnaire

Topic: Stress among Basic School Teachers

Introduction

Kindly answer all the questions in this questionnaire as objectively as possible. Show your answers by making a cross (x) in the brackets against your choice or by filling –in the spaces provided.

After filling in the questionnaire, please return it to----------

Section A: Demographic Data

Indicate the following: (Please make a cross (x) against your answer)

a) Gender (a) Male [ ] (b) Female [ ]

b) Nationality (a) Zambian [ ] (b) Non Zambian [ ]

c) Age (a) 20 - 25 [ ] (b) 26 – 30 [ ] (c) 31 – 40 [ ] (d) above 40 [ ]

d) Years in teaching (a) 0-5 yrs [ ] (b) 6-10 yrs [ ] (c) 11 -15 yrs [ ] (d) Above 15yrs [ ]

e) Confirmed? (a) Yes [ ] (b) No [ ]

f) Highest Academic qualifications (a) grade 7 [ ] (b) grade 9 [ ] (c) grade 12 [ ]

g) Highest professional qualification obtained (a) Certificate [ ] (b) Diploma [ ] c) Degree

h) Number of Subjects taught (a) 1 [ ] (b) 2 [ ] (c) 3 [ ] (d) 4 [ ] (e) Above 4 [ ]

i) Number of children you have (a) None [ ] (b) 1-2 [ ] (c) 3-4 [ ] (d) 4-5 [ ] (e 5 [

j) Size of family including or excluding spouse (a) 1 [ ] (b) 2 - 3 [ ] (c) 4 - 5 [ ] (d) Above 5 [ ]

2. Indicate the following about your school.

a) Is your school Government, Mission or Private? (a) Govt. [ ] (b) Mission [ ] (c) Private [

b) Is your school boarding or day? (a) Day [ ] (b) boarding [ ] (b) both [ ]

C) Is it a single sex school or co-education? a) Single [ ] (b) Co – education [

d) In which part of Lusaka is your school located? (a) Low density [ ] (b) Medium density [

(c) High density [ ]

e) Does the nature of work environment irritate you? (a) Very often [ ] (b) often [ ] (c) rarely [ ] (d) never [ ]

f) Do you encounter differences with peers? a) Very often [ ] (b) often [ ] (c) never [

g) If married, is spouse (a) employed [ ] (b) self employed [ ] (c) un employed [ ]

h) Do you encounter differences with pupils? (a) Yes [ ] (b) No [ ]

i) If you encounter conflict with pupils, how frequent? (a) All the time [ ] (b) sometimes [ ] (c) not at all [ ]

j) Do you encounter health related problems due to pressures of work?

(a) Very often [ ] (b) often [ ] (c) at times [ ] (d) never [ ]

k) How do you rate your levels of stress? (a) Stressed [ ] (b) more stressed [ ] (c) not sure

Section B: Perceived sources of stress

In this section you are provided with an inventory of some of the possible factors which subjects you to prolonged anxiety, frustration or tension in your job as a teacher. In each case indicate the

degree to which you think the item stresses you by circling one of the five digits against each item. The number 1 means least stressful while the number 5 means most stressful.

KEY: 1-least stressful 2-mildly stressful 3-considerably stressful 4-very stressful 5-most stressful

1. Overstretched (having to perform tasks not trained for) 1 2 3 4 5

2. Managing changes (e.g. educational innovations and changes, curriculum & syllabus) 1 2 3 4 5

3. Conflict of work roles (teaching and other responsibilities e.g. being senior teacher) 1 2 3 4 5

4. Heavy work load 1 2 3 4 5

5. Un pleasant states of most classrooms. 1 2 3 4 5

6. Limited freedom in executing teaching duties. 1 2 3 4 5

7. Attending administrative and committee meetings. 1 2 3 4 5

8. Extracurricular activities (assembly, teacher on duty, manual work etc.) 1 2 3 4 5

9. Handling over crowded classes. 1 2 3 4 5

10. Handling two sessions in a day. 1 2 3 4 5

11. Teaching schedules which permit few or no breaks. 1 2 3 4 5

12. Lacking teaching materials. 1 2 3 4 5

13. Working under deadline pressures (school reports, schedules of work, lesson plans, record of work, monthly tests). 1 2 3 4 5

14. Interruption of school programs. 1 2 3 4 5

15. Having to stand during lesson. 1 2 3 4 5

16. Taking classes of limited ability. 1 2 3 4 5

17. Preparing and evaluating pupils work (homework, test, and exam.) 1 2 3 4 5

18. The challenge of maintaining class control. 1 2 3 4 5

19. Noise from neighborhood interfering with teaching. 1 2 3 4 5

20. Extreme temperatures in classrooms (cold & hot months) 1 2 3 4 5

21. Poor promotion prospects (stagnating in the classroom. 1 2 3 4 5

23. Limited opportunities for further studies (due to staff shortage or no funding) 1 2 3 4 5

24. Job not secure (e.g. on contract or likelihood of suspensions, expulsion). 1 2 3 4 5

25. Difficulties of getting alternative jobs. 1 2 3 4 5

26. Lack of regard for qualifications (e.g. no real differences in pay and job content). 1 2 3 4 5

27. Lack of recognition for work well done. 1 2 3 4 5

Low salaries. 1 2 3 4 5

28. Too much time consuming, but not rewarding (paperwork, record of work, setting exams, entering report etc.) 1 2 3 4 5 6

29. Pay problems (under payments, omission from pay roll, delays etch) 1 2 3 4 5

30. Difficulties of obtaining entitlements (e.g. allowances, leave benefits, loans etc) 1 2 3 4 5

31. Accommodation related problems. 1 2 3 4 5

32. Pupils 'tendency to challenge teachers .1 2 3 4 5

33. Pressure to produce better exam results.1 2 3 4 5

34. Discriminative practices of dealing with staff (e.g. inconsistence in promotions).1 2 3 4 5

35. Lack of involvement in decision making (e.g. cancellation of classes, change in time – tabling, class allocation) 1 2 3 4 5

36. Too many instructions and orders from administration. 1 2 3 4 5

37. Pupils' general lack of respect for teachers. 1 2 3 4 5

38. Dealing with parents (e.g. disciplinary cases, open –days) 1 2 3 4 5

39. Too much teacher supervision by management. 1 2 3 4 5

40. Dealing with education officers. (E.g. standards officers, Debs registry) 1 2 3 4 5

41. Few opportunities to communicate teaching problems to authorities. 1 2 3 4 5

42. General publics' lack of regard for teachers. (e.g. unfair criticism)1 2 3 4 5

43. Lack of clarity over immediate supervisors' expectations of the teacher. 1 2 3 4 5

44. Un realistic administrative demands. (e.g., preparation of lesson plans, administering of monthly tests) 1 2 3 4 5

45. Limited sanctions available to teachers reprimand pupil indiscipline.(children's rights) 1 2 3 4 5

SECTION C

In this section indicate any other factors not cited above which you feel subject you to mental or physical exhaustion in your occupation as a Basic school teacher. Rate their relative stress intensity on the same scale 1- 5

1. ----------1 2 3 4 5

2. ----------1 2 3 4 5

3. ----------1 2 3 4 5

4. ----------1 2 3 4 5

5. ----------1 2 3 4 5

Make an approximation of the total stress in your life which is induced by your job as a teacher.

Answer----------% of the stress I experience in my life as a result of my teaching profession.

SECTION D

In this section you are given some statements about specific aspects of your job as a teacher. In each case tick the option that most applies to you. For items that don't apply to you indicate N/A (Not Applicable).

Teachers' salaries are generally low. How do you survive on such earnings?

A.I engage in other activities to raise extra money [ ]

B.I live within the limitations of my salary [ ]

C.I have accepted the my situation [ ]

2. In teaching, promotions are rare .As a result most teachers remain as class teacher throughout their career. What are you doing about this situation?

A. Intend to find a better a job [ ]

B. I just regret about the state of affairs [ ]

C. I keep hoping that I will be lucky one day [ ]

3. Many teachers tend to feel bored after a few years in the profession. Apparently this is caused by the repetitive nature of the job .How do you handle this aspect of your job? [ ]

A. I talk about it with colleagues. [ ]

B.I avoid teaching when I don't feel up to it. [ ]

C. I have come to accept the situation. [ ]

4. How do you respond to mental and physical exhaustion during teaching hours?

A.I engage in teaching activities that help me relax. [ ]

B. I engage in non academic activities. [ ]

C. I just go on teaching until knocking off time. [ ]

5. How do you manage to prepare for your classes?

A. I have set aside specific time for that. [ ]

B. I have to work long and irregular hours. [ ]

C. I only prepare when I can. [ ]

6. Sometimes pupils perform poorly even after you have put in your best .How do you react?

A. I establish what might have gone wrong. [ ]

B. I blame it all on the pupils. [ ]

C. I don't let it bother me. [ ]

7. When you find yourself under intense pressure and frustration due to the many setbacks in your job,

What do you do? A.I talk to friends and close colleagues

B.I try to get over it by drinking beer. [ ]

C. I try not to think too much about my suffering. [ ]

8. How do you get around the problem of lack of teaching resources at your school?

A. I improvise or seek help from elsewhere. [ ]

B.I complain about the state of affairs. [ ]

C.I ignore the situation and use whatever is available. [ ]

9. How do you handle situations whereby you have too much?

A. I prioritize my work load. [ ]

B. I work long and irregular hours. [ ]

C. I try to do everything at once. [

10. Teachers are currently prohibited from administering physical punishment to pupils. What do you normally do?

A. I discuss the matter with the Head teacher. [B. I just get on with my work. [

C.I avoid having anything to do with them. [ ]

Thank you very for your variable response and time spent on completing this questionnaire

Appendix 3: An introductory letter to the FGDs discussants

The University of Zambia
School of Education
Department of Education Psychology
Box 32379
Lusaka

Dear respondent,

I am a postgraduate student studying for a Master of Education Psychology at the University of Zambia (UNZA). The main objective of this study is to investigate sources and patterns of stress among basic school teachers and the adopted coping mechanisms to deal with this stress. This study will therefore assist education providers and stake holders with variable information to put mitigation measures in place to reduce stress levels.

Please be assured that the information you give will be used sorely for academic purposes and will strictly be kept confidential.

I will be grateful if you truthfully answer the questionnaire.

Makasa Justine .W

Appendix 4: Interview schedule

The University of Zambia
School of education
M.E.D Program me
P.O Box32379
Lusaka
October 2010

Focus Group Discussion Instrument

I am carrying out a study to identify and examine the occurrence of stress among basic school teachers and see if there are any coping strategies adopted to alleviate the stress levels. The study is significant in that it will be useful to government and all education stake holders who shall the findings to improve on education delivery in Zambia .I want you to feel free to discuss on the various aspects on the topic "stress" by considering the following questions.

1. What do you understand by the term "**stress?"**

(i) ----------

(ii)----------

(iii) ----------

(iv)----------

(v) ----------

---

2. What would you consider as the possible causes of **"stress**" or '**teacher burnout**?'

(i)----------

(ii)----------

(iii)----------

(iv)----------

(v)----------

---

3. How would you tell that someone is under **stress** or is **stressed**?

(i)----------

(ii)----------

(iii)----------

(iv)----------

(v)----------

---

4. What are some of the ways a teacher can use in order to contain **stress?**

(i)----------

(ii)----------

(iii)----------

(iv)----------

(v)----------

---

5. Given a chance to be in a position of a **policy maker** or **a position of decision making,** what would you do in order to alleviate or reduce on teacher stress?

(i)----------

(ii)----------

(iii)----------

(iv)----------

Appendix 5: Introductory letter to respondents to the school managers' questionnaire

The University of Zambia
School of Education Department of Education Psychology
P.O Box 32379
Lusaka

Dear respondent,

I am a postgraduate student studying for a Master of Education Psychology at the University of Zambia (UNZA). The data collected will enable me isolate the sources and patterns of stress and the coping strategies adopted by teachers to alleviate stress. This information will assist education providers and stakeholders seek mitigating measures.

Please be assured that the information you give will be used sorely for academic purposes and will be strictly kept confidential

I will be grateful if you truthfully answer the questionnaire

Makasa Justine .W

Appendix 6: Questionnaire for school managers

University of Zambia
School of Education
M.E.D Programme
P.O box32379
Lusaka
October 2010

A Survey of sources and patterns of stress among teachers: A case of Lusaka basic schools.

Place---------- Date----------

I am carrying out a survey on sources and patterns of stress among Lusaka Basic school teachers. Additionally, I will be interested in establishing some of the coping strategies that teachers use to cushion the impact of stress in their work. This information will be of value to policy and decision makers, school teachers, administrators and other stake holders,

1. Respondents sex: Male [ ] Female [ ]
2. Respondents designation----------
3. Respondents duration in the position held (a) [ ]years (b) [ ]years
4. Which of the following do you think are major problems of concern to you and other education authorities?

A. Teachers turnover (e.g. resignations and sudden disappearances of teachers)
   Problem [ ] Not a problem [ ]
B. Teacher absenteeism (e.g. Non attendance to a class or classes without permission.)
   Problem [ ] Not a problem [ ]
C. Teacher misbehavior (e.g. involvement in examination leakages or love affairs with pupils or dishonesty.) Problem [ ] Not a problem [ ]
D. Suspected teacher drug abuse. Problem [ ] Not a problem [ ]
E. Excessive teacher alcohol consumption. Problem [ ] Not a problem [ ]

F. Teacher negligence in their duties (e.g. Failure to fully apply themselves to work)
Problem [ ] Not a problem [ ]

G. Relatively high teacher morbidity (e.g. Illness and hospitalization of teachers)
Problem [ ] Not a problem [ ]

H. Mortality rates among teachers. Problem [ ] Not a problem [ ]

1. What in your opinion are the possible causes of the problems you have cited, above in the teacher's working environment in Zambia?

a) ----------
b) ----------
c) ----------
d) ----------

2. Is job stress a possible cause of the problems you have cited above?
Yes [ ] No [ ]
3. What do you understand by job stress?

---
4. A. Would you say this phenomenon exists among teachers in Zambia or at your school?
Yes [ ] No [ ]
B. How do you know that job stress exists among teachers?

---
5. Mention some of the factors that can lead to job stress among teachers.

a) ----------
b) ----------
c) ----------
d) ----------

6. Do you think educational authorities are currently concerned about job stress among teachers in Zambia?

   Yes [ ] No [ ]

7. What measures are currently in place to try to prevent or alleviate stress among Basic School Teachers in Zambia?

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9. If you feel job stress exists among Basic School Teachers in Zambia, how do you propose to remedy the situation of the Zambian teacher in this regard? In other words what plans do you have to enhance teaching and improve employment conditions of teachers?

   ---

10. Tick the statement that you agree with.

A. There is need to be concerned about stress among teachers. [ ]

B. There is no need to be concerned about stress among teachers in Zambia. [ ]
   Prevention and alleviation of job stress among teachers is sorely responsibility of the teachers themselves. [ ]

C. Prevention and alleviation of job stress among teachers is the responsibility of both teachers and education authorities. [ ]

Thank you for the information