

UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU-NATAL

**The role of teachers and school managers (SMT) in addressing
teacher work-related stress: teachers' perspectives**

RESEARCH REPORT

BY

DHANABALAN PADAYACHEE

EDUCATION LEADERSHIP, MANAGEMENT & POLICY

SCHOOL OF EDUCATION: UNIVERSITY OF KWAZULU NATAL

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AUTHOR DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the study of the role of teachers and school managers (SMT) in addressing work-related stress of teachers: teachers' perspectives; is my work and that all sources consulted and quoted have been indicated and acknowledged by means of references. In the event of failure to comply, please accept my apology as it is unintentional.

Signature: D. Padayacchee

Date

Statement by supervisor:

This mini-dissertation is submitted with/without my approval.

Professor V. Chikoko

Date

ABSTRACT

This study sought to investigate teacher work-related stress. In my experience as a teacher for 28 years I found myself frequently enmeshed in the stranglehold of work stress and at times contemplated quitting as a teacher. I now reflect on my experiences as a teacher and consider the role I played as well as that of my school managers in addressing my work-related stress.

As the Head of a Department and a manager, I am serious about assisting teachers cope as well as playing a role in reducing work-related stress of teachers.

In this study I chose a secondary school, with similar context to that of my school, as a site to study the role of teachers and managers in addressing work-related stress of teachers. I have chosen to give voice to Level One teachers who I found in my experience were denied channels to communicate on how they experienced work related stress. The reason for my choice of school was that it would allow me to make comparisons as well as provide me with data from which I would be able to reflect on my own practices.

I chose to gather data by means of a questionnaire which I handed to all Level One teachers and by two focus group interviews which I conducted at the school.

The data revealed that teachers experience a very high level of work related stress at the school; that teachers believe that managers have an important role in addressing teacher-work related stress; and identified professional demands, interpersonal relationships, role based factors, career developments, school factors and home/work interface as the causes of work-related stress.

The analysis of the data gathered indicated the need for a regular appraisal on the level of work-related stress by managers; creating a means of communication between managers and teachers on factors which cause work-related stress, programmes of induction, mentoring and working through teams in order to address work-related stress. The data revealed that level one teacher's place all blame of work-related stress on managers and conveniently absolve themselves from the responsibility of addressing their stressors.

The onus of addressing teacher work-related stress is primarily that of the teacher. However, the constitution lists education as a basic right of all citizens. One of the ways in which this right can be effectively implemented is by emphasizing school effectiveness which invariably requires optimum levels of commitment and performance from teachers. Therefore it is

essential for school managers to ensure that teachers are performing at optimum levels. Underpinning any notion of affecting and improving the performance capability of individuals is the concept of stress free working conditions. It is with this in mind that the study was conducted.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this dissertation to my:

- Mum, Mala Padayachee who inspired me to focus on education and work hard.
- Wife Mollie and sons Ruveshan and Kimeshan Padayachee, whose patience, tolerance and support was instrumental in my completing this study.
- Dr F. Patel, Dr N. Amin and Fatima Olgar who encouraged me to continue when I felt like quitting.
- Late brother Teddy Padayachee who supported my early education.
- Late Naveen Singh, a brilliant colleague dedicated teacher and inspiring friend who inspired me to study, but sadly and ironically succumbed to the ravages of teacher work related stress. A sad loss to education.

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List of Acronyms

Some acronyms used in this project are:

- 1.1.1 SMT: School management team which usually comprise of the principal, deputy principal and Heads of Department
- 1.1.2 EEA: Employment of Educators Act 76 of 1998
- 1.1.3 SASA: South Africans School Act 84 of 1996
- 1.1.4 SGB: School Governing Body
- 1.1.5 TWRS: Teacher work-related stress
- 1.1.6 NQT: Newly qualified teachers (teachers in their first year of teaching).

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION TO THE STUDY

1.1 Introduction

This study investigates the role played by teachers and managers (SMT) in addressing teacher work-related stress in an urban, public, secondary school in the Umlazi Circuit of EThekweni Region. This chapter highlights the background and purpose of this study, the research problem, the research questions, the rationale for the research, summary of research aims, ethical issues, limitations of the study, research plan, proposed layout of the study and conclusion of the chapter.

1.2 Background to the study

The motivation for this study is as a result of the voluminous literature on studies conducted by psychologists and educationists (Jongeling & Lock, 1995; Steyn,2000; Motseke, 1998; Moduka, 2001; Steyn &van Niekerk, 2002; and van der Merwe,2005).These studies reveal that people in different professions experience stress, but teachers experience the highest level of stress.

One of the major adverse influences on job satisfaction, work performance and production, and absenteeism and turnover is the incident of stress at work (Edelmann & Woodall, 1997, p. 28).

The presence of stress is also felt in the school environment (van der Merwe, 2005, p. 49).

The above citations identify stress as having serious, negative, economical and social effect, which extends from industry to schools. As the Head of the Department of Mathematics and Science at a public secondary school and a member of the School Management Team (SMT), I am tasked to manage fifteen teachers and I am directly responsible for the quality of teaching rendered by these teachers. Aside from my managerial responsibilities, I teach classes and share the difficulties experienced by teachers not just in the classroom but in the school as a whole. I am in agreement with Steyn and van Niekerk (2008, p.161), where they premise that.....

Both teachers and school managers will benefit from stress reduction in schools. Teachers need a calm working environment and need to adopt a humane approach to children, if children are to learn. The task of managers is much easier if teachers can cope. The humane, emotional qualities of the teacher and educational manager are at the very heart of teaching. The ideal educational manager is therefore sensitive to all factors that influence the productivity, efficiency and professional satisfaction of teachers. Unfortunately many educational managers have no formal training and may have little understanding or sympathy for the stressed teacher.

This quotation forms the embers of my research, as in my experience I find that the common thread that weaves through the discontent amongst teachers may be attributed to be the high level of work-related stress in schools. The high level of teacher absenteeism and leave taking by teachers, as well as the high rate of sick leave taken by teachers for apparently stress related conditions is of grave concern to all stakeholders in education. The impact of teacher absenteeism translates directly into a loss of teaching time. The effect of the cumulative loss of teaching time over the year by a single teacher, added to that by other teachers in the school, who teach a child in a single year, cannot be recovered nor can the impact be measured or overcome. However, the economical impact is estimated.....

...in South Africa alone more than R500 million is lost annually through absenteeism and productivity as a result of stress (Spangenberg & Orpen-Lyall, 2006. p. 6).

At my school teacher absenteeism, casual leave from school and late arrival of teachers at school is high on the list of serious concerns. In the school environment stress does not only affect the individual teacher or manager, but also the school as an organisation. One of my administrative duties is to appoint relief teachers to classes when teachers take leave or are absent. The appointing of teachers to serve relief in their non teaching period is not a pleasant task as most teachers do not like to serve relief and some teachers cite serving relief as adding to the stress of teachers who planned to perform other tasks.

Stressed workers would definitely not be able to perform at their peak and deliver the quality of service expected of them. According to Steyn and van Niekerk (2008), some of the results of stress on teachers, aside from irregular attendance at work , are, lack of preparation, high level of work disorganisation, reduced tolerance of others, violent behaviour, unpredictable mood swings and inability to keep up with deadlines.

The quality of teaching and learning is sure to be directly affected when teachers are stressed. It is in the interest of all role players that teacher stress (more specific work-related stress) be minimised, carefully monitored and managed. Thus, as hypothesised by Steyn and van Niekerk (2008), changing the organisation and its environment in ways that will reduce stress and make it more manageable will result in changes that benefit all stakeholders and the organisation as a whole.

This research project focused on how teachers experience and address work-related stress. It probed and investigated the role played by teachers and school managers (SMT) in addressing the work-related stress of teachers, thus seeking to shed light on the assumptions made by Steyn and van Niekerk (2008) in the quotation earlier.

The high expectations of parents, politicians and Departmental officials are directed through principals and departmental managers to teachers. These expectations, frequent changes in curriculum and policies, together with lack of resources and support have placed immense stress on teachers. The element of change as a result of political pressure arising from transformation from an apartheid state to a democratic one, coupled with the changing world view and economics, has impacted on our system of education. It is through the lens of managing change that the role of SMT in managing work-related stress of teachers was viewed in this study

In secondary schools the public and political interest in the results of the matriculation examinations has placed immense stress not only on the learner but the teacher and the school. Schools are ranked according to the results of the matriculants, and categorised as underperforming when the pass rate is below fifty percent. Teachers and managers in these underperforming schools then come under the microscope and are indirectly blamed for the poor results. The stress experience by teachers in preparing learners for the matriculation examinations is evident by the numerous hours spent after school, and during weekends and holidays.

The question that arises is how is teacher work-related stress addressed by teachers themselves and managers? The presence of teacher work-related stress seems to be unavoidable but can it be reduced, if yes then how; and if not how can it be managed? This study hopes to identify the causes of teacher work-related stress and attempt to explore the role of teachers and managers in reducing and managing teacher's work-related stress.

This will be done by first proposing the research questions; then, discussing the methodology, the rationale for the research, the method for data collection, sample selection, analysis of data and the anticipated challenges in the research project.

1.3 Research Problem:

How do teachers and managers (SMT) address work-related stress in school?

1.4 Research Questions:

- 1.4.1 What are the causes of teacher work-related stress in the selected school?
- 1.4.2 How do teachers seek to cope with work-related stress?
- 1.4.3 What can managers in schools do to reduce work-related stress in teachers?

1.5 Rationale for the research:

The rationale for this study stems from the notions, that schools that function as learning organisations are sure to achieve success in learner performance (Senge, 2002) and; that organisations are made up of people, by people, for people which provide the focal point for this research, namely effective management. My role as the Head of a Department in a public secondary school and directly involved in the professional management of a Department of teachers, answers to these research questions would provide greater insight into management and allow me to reflect on my practice as a manager and leader of teachers.

The responses to these research questions may provide managers and leaders, of organisations of learning, insights into management practices and expectations of teachers. The analysis of the data would allow for reflection of present practices, and possibly make recommendations to leaders and inform policy makers on directions for reflection and transformation. The vision for the research is to lend voice to teachers on their perceptions of the role of the SMT's in addressing teacher work-related stress and in so doing transform management styles and practices, leading to the success of schools as organisations of learning whilst grappling with the numerous challenges in schools.

1.6 Summary of Research Aims

In mapping the causes of teacher work-related stress in an urban secondary school in the Umlazi Circuit, the fundamental aims were as follows:

- 1.6.1 To identify the causes of teacher work-related stress.
- 1.6.2 To examine selected theories on stress, management and their implications in this context.
- 1.6.3 To explore how teachers seek to cope with teacher work-related stress.
- 1.6.4 To explore the perceptions of teachers on the role of managers (SMT) in addressing teacher work-related stress.
- 1.6.5 To explore the implications of the findings emanating from this study for possible strategies/techniques that manager(s) may utilise in addressing teacher's work-related stress.

1.7 Limitations of the study

The causes and effects of stress vary from person to person as a result of uniqueness of individuals which makes it difficult to generalise on findings. However the role of the researcher was to identify the range of factors which cause work-related stress as well as how teachers experience and attempt to cope with work-related stress.

This project is a case study as it involves a single school and a selected group of teachers. Thus, the data obtained would not be sufficient to form generalisations or grand theories. It would however, provide teachers the opportunity to explore their experiences and the voice to articulate their perceptions on what stresses them at work and the role of the SMT in addressing the work-related stress.

I must concede that I do not believe that it is the sole responsibility of the SMT to address work-related stress; the ultimate responsibility is that of the individual who should seek the assistance of colleagues, managers or professional personnel depending on the level of stress. Not obtaining data from managers may be viewed as a limitation of this study as it may be perceived to present a one side view of the problem of teacher work-related stress. However, the focus of this study was to view the issue of teacher work related stress from the point of level one teachers, the view of managers may be recommended for further study.

According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007, p. 352) the process of obtaining data through interviews may have the following shortcomings:

The very nature of interviewing may impact negatively on the data, we are all aware of how stressful the thought of undergoing an interview may be; the physical setting of the interview arena and presence of the interviewer may impact on the participants responses; the physical appearance, mannerisms, tone, and general disposition of the interviewer; the interviewers preparedness and ability to conduct the interview process and the ability of the interviewer to accurately record the data and be aware of opportunities to explore the responses. The sincerity of the respondent may be questionable. Participants may lie or provide socially desirable responses instead of true opinions and feelings. All of these factors would be considered in the setting up and conducting of semi structured focus group interviews which would be audio recorded; and corroborated in the analysis of the data.

I anticipated that the principal, managers and staff may be reluctant to have the school and managers publicly exposed by the research. This problem would be overcome by providing a written consent that no information would be divulged without their approval. I also indicated that once the research was completed all participants would be shown transcripts of their responses to ensure accuracy of the data collected. This was done as promised

I also anticipated that teachers may be afraid to speak out against their managers and may choose to provide more favourable and socially acceptable responses to; to ensure that they do not offend their managers and the school. This situation would be reduced by assuring the teachers that their anonymity would be maintained; as each group will be interviewed personally by me in the absence of their managers; and that pseudo names would be used. The correct names of the teachers selected for the interview would not be disclosed to anyone including the principal. The correct name of the school will also not be disclosed.

The type (open ended) and nature of the questions in the interview schedule would be such that the participants would be required to provide examples of situations and explanations in support of their opinions and beliefs. This would attempt to capture their true opinions and beliefs rather than socially and politically acceptable responses.

Logistical problems arose as not all teachers completed the questionnaires by the date agreed. I allowed for an extension of time and sent a thank you note to all members who participated. The completed forms were collected a week later than scheduled.

The second difficulty was to organise for the participants to be available at the same time. I had to work with the principal and review the school programme before I could schedule the

focus group interviews. I was forced to make changes to the participants initially chosen without compromising the selection criteria. It took me four weeks before I could conduct the first focus group interview.

1.8 Research Plan:

The research plan accepted and followed was that of a case study as outlined by Hearn (2010, pp.394-419) comprising of seven steps which I chose to follow as indicated below. A brief outline is provided but detailed discussion will be present in the relevant chapters of this report.

Step One: Determine the rationale:

Educators in most public schools are challenged by barriers resulting in poor performance, which leads to work-related stress. Teachers in public schools are compelled to perform at the same level as the teachers in the few well resourced schools. However, only a few public schools have met this challenge and are excelling. This project explores the role of teachers and managers in addressing work-related stress of teachers. It focuses on the teachers perceptions of what factors stress them at work and the role that the teachers and SMT can play in addressing this stress.

Step Two: Determine the research questions:

Key Research Question

What role do teachers and managers play in addressing teacher work-related stress?

Sub- Questions:

What are the causes of teacher work-related stress in the selected school?

How do teachers seek to cope with work-related stress?

What can managers in schools do to reduce work-related stress in teachers?

Step Three: Identify a data collection strategy and design:

A public Secondary school was chosen. A thick description of the context within which the school functions was provided in keeping with the style for case studies as outlined by Manion *et al* (2007). The study was supported by a review of documents

at the school. All Level One Teachers at the school were given questionnaire to complete. Teachers from the school, eight (two from each department) were selected and interviewed. Two focus group interviews were conducted and the responses were audio recorded. Notes were taken by the interviewer to highlight points for reflection and for probing during the interview. An interview schedule was used to ensure that key questions are posed to all participants and will allow for the interviewer to probe responses for greater depth or clarity.

I personally interviewed the teachers and record all data which is being kept in a safe for five years before it is incinerated.

Step Four: Determine the feasibility of doing a case study:

A case study methodology was used to gain in depth understanding of the factors which cause teacher work-related stress in the selected urban, secondary school in the Umlazi Circuit. Various sources (primary in the form of questionnaire and focus group interviews; and secondary from the review of documents) for data would be collected and corroborated. The quantitative research design contributed towards maximising objectivity through the use of numbers and statistics (McMillan & Schumacher, 1997). Permission from the University of KZN for ethical clearance (Appendix F), permission from the Department of Education (Appendix E), permission from the school Principal (Appendix D) and consent from the participants were obtained.

Step Five: Collect the data:

Research Site, Population and Sample

The targeted population comprised all Level One Teachers in the selected school. Teachers at the school were given a questionnaire each which they had to complete. Two focus groups were chosen and each group comprise of teachers from all Departments at the school, both males and females and teachers of varying teaching experience (new to experienced) were selected. This indicates that purposive sampling technique was used for the focus group interviews.

The questionnaire and focus group interviews served as the primary sources of data; and the review of relevant documents (IQMS, EMIS and teacher leave records).was used to corroborate the data from the primary sources.

Step Six: Analyse the data:

The data was then subjected to content analysis in order to give meaning to the responses of the participants. Direct quotations were used where necessary. Closed questions in the questionnaire were analysed through frequency counts or percentages.

Step Seven: Write the report:

A report of the study was written and submitted to the supervisor Professor Vitallis Chikoko for acceptance and assessment.

1.9 Proposed layout of the study

The study will be presented in five chapters as outlined below

CHAPTER 1: Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of the study which will include an introduction and rationale for the study. It also contains the research problem, research questions, and purpose of the study and definition of relevant concepts.

CHAPTER 2: Literature Review

In this chapter the conceptual framework for the study is outlined by providing a literature exploration with regard to information on theories of stress, leadership and management styles.

CHAPTER 3: Research Methodology

This chapter provides an in depth description of the research process in, including the research design and methodology followed in the study.

CHAPTER 4: Research Results

Chapter Four presents the raw data, an analysis of the data and the findings of the research.

CHAPTER 5: Summary, Conclusion and Recommendations

This chapter provides a summary of the results of the study and presents conclusions drawn from the research. It also discusses recommendations for additional research.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter I discussed the nature of the research, briefly outlined the research problem, the focus of the project and the process that I would follow in order to obtain the necessary data to answer the research questions. This chapter will be divided into two major parts in which I will review literature on Stress and thereafter review literature on leadership and management theories.

The review of stress will focus on the Historical development on the perspective of stress, modern views of stress, theories of stress, types of stress, the causes of stress, reactions to stress and the managing of stress. Thereafter, I will review theories on leadership and management.

2.2 Historical Development on the Perspective of Stress

A review of several different literatures on stress reveals that there are basically three different, but overlapping, approaches to the definition of stress (Lazarus, 1966; Appley & Trumbull, 1967; Cox, 1990; Cox & Mckay, 1981; Fletcher, 1988) as indicated by Cox (1993) in the Health and Safety Executive Contract Research Report (HSECRR). The first approach views stress as an aversion or noxious characteristic of the work environment (the environment causes ill health). This approach in which stress is treated as an independent variable is called the **‘engineering model’**.

The second approach defines stress in terms of the common physiological effects of a wide range of aversion or noxious stimuli. It treats stress as a dependent variable, a psychological response, to a threatening or damaging environment. This approach has been called the **‘physiological model’**.

The third view is that of work stress, in terms of the dynamic interaction between the person and the work environment. This is referred to as the '**psychological model**'. The engineering and physiological models are earlier theories and the psychological model is viewed as the more recent stress theory.

2.2.1 Engineering Approach

Proponents of this approach treat stress as a stimulus characteristic of the persons environment, usually related to the demand or load placed on a person by some aversive (threatening) factor in the environment (Cox,1993). Occupational stress is treated as a property of the work environment, and usually as an objectively measurable aspect of that environment.

According to this approach stress was said to produce a strain reaction which although often reversible could, on occasions prove to be irreversible and damaging (Cox & Mackay, 1981; Sutherland & Cooper, 1990, in Cox, 1993). The concept of stress threshold grew out of this way of thinking and individual differences in this threshold have been used to account for differences in stress resistance and vulnerability. This approach whilst limited in view does account for the fact that individuals are affected differently by the same stressor. It accounts for the fact that what is a stressor for one teacher is not necessarily a stressor for another.

2.2.2 Physiological Approach

The physiological approach to the definition and study of stress was first derived from the work of Selye (1955). He defined stress as a state manifested by a specific syndrome, 'general adaptation syndrome' (GAS), which consists of all non-specific changes within the biologic system. Selye's investigation involved the use of animals and included the measurements of hormones and the change in organ (thymus and kidney) size under conditions of stress.

Selye (1955) argued that the physiological response was triphasic (three phased) in nature, involving an initial **alarm stage** (sympathetic-adrenal medullary activation), followed by a phase of **resistance** (adrenal cortical activation), which in turn may be followed by the final stage **exhaustion** (terminal reactivation of the sympathetic-adrenal medullary activation). Repeated or prolonged activation of this response increases the wear and tear, and leads to what Selye (1955) called the 'disease of adaptation'. The physiological response to stress has a short term advantage (energy mobilisation for active response) and long term disadvantages

(increased risk of certain 'stress related' diseases). This view forwarded by Selye is evident in that all teachers experience stress differently as well as the fact that their physiological responses are varied. The different stages of stress in this study were demonstrated when job insecurity cause alarm in some teachers, changes in practices being met with resistance and unreasonable demands caused teachers to become exhausted. Hence, elements identified by Selye (1955) were evident in this study

2.2.3 Criticisms of the Engineering and Physiological Approaches

Two criticisms have been offered to these approaches: empirical and conceptual.

Firstly engineering and physiological models do not account for much of the existing data. Secondly certain stimuli may be problematic to certain individuals (Type A and Type B Characters – to be discussed later) only. This suggests that individuals may be able to mediate the stress factor by strong cognitive ability and contextual factors. Douglas (in Cox, 1993) explained from the results of his investigation, that the risk of stress has a group and cultural bias.

The physiological model was also open to criticism as the responses to the physical stimuli do not produce the stress response in its entirety. There is also difficulty in differentiating between those physiological changes which represent stress and those which do not, as the former may dissociated in time from the stressor (Fisher, 1986, in Cox, 1993). One can be justified in questioning the applicability of the effect of stress on animals compared to that in humans as demonstrated by Selye (1955). In terms of this study the physiological conditions identified by teachers may not necessarily be as a result of work-related stress but could be caused by lifestyle (diet, alcoholism, drug abuse or lack of exercise); or hereditary (family history – hypertension, aneurisms or stroke). Thus, in this study the focus is on the causes of teacher work-related stress rather than the physiological effects as this would require the assistance of a medical practitioner to confirm.

The validity and reliability of Selye's (1955) generalisations becomes questionable, considering the fact that Selye used food as the stress factor and that humans are more complex emotionally and cognitively. In present day studies such conditions (food deprivation) will be viewed as unethical because of the physiological and emotional trauma which may result.

2.2.4 Psychological Approach

This approach conceptualise stress in terms of the dynamic interaction between the person and their work environment; inferring a problematic person-environment interaction which may be measured in terms of cognitive processes and emotional reactions which underpin those reactions. This approach is called the ‘**psychological model**’ (Cox, 1993).

In this study work related-stress is viewed as a problematic relationship between the teacher and the school (work environment). However, the problem is not restricted to the physical environmental conditions of the school but also includes problematic relations between people (colleagues, learners, managers or parents).

2.3 Modern View of Stress

According to Bush and Middlewood (1997) trying to understand stress is by no means an easy task. They (ibid.) recommend that before looking for a definition for stress, we should consider what happens when a person becomes stressed.

Stress reaction has its origins in the ‘fight or flight’ model that occurred when prehistoric humans were faced with a frightening situation. The hormonal reaction to equip the body to prepare for the danger in the wild is now being used for action in social predicaments. The reaction in these instances, is in most case not violent, however, the signs (raised blood pressure, sick feeling in the stomach) are the same. (Bush & Milwood, 1997).

Drawing from Bush and Middlewood (1997) and Steyn and van Niekerk (2007), the presently accepted definition of stress by most clinical psychologists is a combination of the various theories and draws mainly from Transactional Theories and the work of Hans Selye. Selye (1955) described stress in terms of General Adaptation Syndrome (GAS) and developed a framework for describing the four basic variations of stress, namely, hyperstress (too much stress), distress (bad stress), hypostress (too little stress) , and eustress (good stress). These contributions form part of the modern definitions and perspective of stress.

Umstot (1988) defines stress as some type of response, to an external event or situation that imposes special physical or psychological demands on a person and causes a deviation from their normal functioning. Gray and Stark (1988) view stress as a person’s reaction to disturbing factors in the environment. Van Fleet (1991) state that most definitions of stress

agree on three basic elements: stress is a basic response to excessive psychological and physical demands caused by some stimulus (stressor). This view supported by Bush (1997) and Steyn and van Niekerk (2007) has been accepted as the definition of stress for the purpose of this study. Hence, this study focuses on the excessive psychological and physical demands made on teachers as a result of factors identified in the selected school. The demands were viewed by teachers as unreasonable, unnecessary and excessive.

2.4 Theories of Stress

Whilst literature reviewed earlier revealed consensus around the definition of stress, there are variations to the theories of stress. The two distinct types identified in Cox (1993) are interactional theories and transactional theories of stress.

2.4.1 *Interactional Theories of stress*

These theories focus on the structural characteristics of the person's interaction with their work environment. The two interactional theories which stand out are: the Person-Environment Fit theory by French, Caplan and van Harrison (1992); and the Jobs Demands/Decisions Latitude theory by Karasek (1990), as indicated in the Cox (1993).

2.4.1.1 *Person-Environment Fit Theory*

According to this theory, stress is likely to occur, and the well being of an individual is likely to be affected when there is a lack of fit between the degree to which the employee's attitudes and abilities meet the demands of the job; and the extent to which the job environment meets the workers needs.

This theory is viewed as restrictive in that stressors are limited to the work environment. Stressors of life events (deaths, illness, trauma, etc.) are excluded by this theory. However, it is directly relevant to this study as the focus of this study is the work environment. This study aims at addressing the causes of stress at the place of work (the selected school). This makes the assumption that stress is as a result of a problematic relationship between the teacher and the work environment. There as a notion of work related as being a disagreement between the teacher and the work environment (the school).

2.4.1.2 Job Demand/Decisions Latitude Theory

According to this theory the greater the latitude in the job decision by the workers the less the stress. This is even though the work load may be high. However, there is only moderate evidence in support of this theory. Similar to the person environment-fit theory it is limiting to work stressors. The implication of this theory in the context of this study is that stress is only related to the relationship between teacher and manager. This theory allows for abuse by teachers who are not committed to their work and may diminish the authority of the manager. A loosely structured organisation may result.

2.4.2 Transactional Theories of Stress

Most transactional theorists focus on the cognitive processes and emotional reactions underpinning individual's interaction with their environment. Stress is viewed as a problematic transaction between individuals and their environment. In this study teachers express how work-related stress affects them emotionally. The cognitive processes are demonstrated by the inability to prepare their work, complete tasks timeously, forgetfulness and the means by which teachers seek to cope with work-related stress.

Appraisal is the evaluation process that gives these person-environment transactions their meaning (Holroyd & Lazarus, 1982, in Cox 1993). The appraisal process involves monitoring the transaction and recognition of the problem in the person-environment transactions. The appraisal process is important for managers in addressing teacher work-related stress. This theory however, encompasses life events as well as work-related stress. The transaction between teachers and the school environment forms a critical focus of this study.

2.5 Types of Stress

Steyn and van Niekerk (2007) categorise stress into two types, namely eustress (good stress) and distress (bad stress). Eustress is described as positive stress, because it has a positive impact on the individual similar to the feeling one gets when facing a challenge (like marriage or promotion). Eustress is also seen as a motivator, as in the absence, a person may lack the drive for peak performance. The problem is that employers may over work and stress their staff, citing eustress as a motivation factor, or for the reduction of boredom.

Hypostress (too little stress) may lead to boredom and reduced effectiveness of staff. The difficulty that arises is how managers determine the correct amount of stress so that the staff is motivated, relieved from boredom and not adversely affected.

Distress is the form of stress that is harmful to the individual and leads to the various symptoms from mild headache to severe heart attack. The ability to withstand stress varies from person to person. Understanding the individual's stress threshold is a challenge to managers and the management of stress in the work environment. Incidents such as death of children or spouse, financial crisis, or conflict at work are some of the causes of extreme distress. Stressors such as noise level, odours, bright lights or untidy office space may exert different levels of stress on individuals. Steyn and van Niekerk (2007) define a stressor as a source of stress. Stress in this study in fact refers to distress. The level of stress (distress) experienced by teachers and the factors which cause teacher work-related in the selected school were explored.

2.6 Causes of stress

According to Steyn and van Niekerk (2007) stress may be as a result of personal factors, life events or work related. The fact that life outside the work environment impacts on the individual's performance at work, is reason for managers to be cognisant of the external stressors of their staff and recognise the impact it has on the individual's performance and the resulting impact on the organisation.

2.6.1 Life Events (General Causes)

Life events like, emotional (worries, fears, anxiety...); family (death, illness, parenting...); social (lack of status, delivering a speech,); financial; environmental (noise, odours,) and travel (long distances, heavy traffic) are some of the general causes of stress. These are what are commonly termed as resulting from fate, as the individual has little if any control over such events. There is belief that the character of the individual (Type A or Type B personalities to be discussed later) may have a significant role in determining the impact of life event stressors. This study acknowledges the factors external to the work environment may lead to stress, however, the study would be too extensive if the external factors were to be explored as well.

2.6.2 Personal Factors

A great deal of attention was placed on individual vulnerability in relation to coronary heart disease and on the role of psychological and behavioural factors in reacting to and coping with stressful situations (Cox, 1993). The two personality types A and B were identified by Friedman and Rosenman (cited in Cox, 1993), in respect to their vulnerability to stress. Personality type A which were prone (thrice compared to type B) to coronary disease from stress, marked by a strong commitment to work and involvement in work, a well developed sense of time urgency (always aware of time pressure and working against deadlines), and a strong sense of competition marked by tendency to be aggressive. Type A personality individuals are regarded as easily stressed and more prone to the impact of stressors. Type B personalities are believed to be in contrast to Type A and have a greater tolerance to stressors.

Hence, in this study we find factors which will cause stress in some teachers but have no effect on others. The degree of stress caused by a particular factor may also vary from person to person, depending on their personality type (A or B).

2.6.3 Work-related stress

The following have been identified by Steyn and van Niekerk (2007), as the main work related causes of stress: professional demands, career developments, role based stress, interpersonal relationships and home/work interface. There is definitely a need for managers to take heed of these factors and strategise on how to reduce these stressors in their organisation. Some work-related causes of stress will be discussed.

2.6.3.1 Professional Demands

Heavy workloads and too little time (Kinman & Jones, 2003; Kyriacou, 2001), lack of resources, large classes, the effort to raise standards (Olivier & Venter, 2003) are some of the well known researcher teacher work related stress. In the selected school teachers spend up to fifty periods in a ten day cycle teaching, thus having a single non teaching period a day. This period may be taken to serve relief for teachers who are absent, took leave or leave school on official matters. Teachers are also expected to serve ground duty once a week (during recess) as well as co-ordinate and participate in extra mural activities after school. There cluster subject committees and moderation process of continuous assessment tasks which teachers must attend after school hours. Teachers may teach up to five different class units; hence the volume of preparatory work for lessons would be extensive. The school is a public school and

has an average of forty learners per class. Hence, it is difficult to disagree with teachers who express how stressful their workloads are.

2.6.3.2 Interpersonal Relationship

Poor relationships and learner motivation may lead to teacher stress (Kinman & Jones, 2001). The poor discipline and behaviour problems are important predictors of stress (Olivier & Venter 2003, p.190). Learners with emotional problems and learning difficulties add to the teachers' level of stress (Steyn & van Niekerk, 2007). Relationship with other staff members, Heads of department or the principal may also be stressful.

In the school studied there are cliques formed amongst teachers. These cliques may have a positive effect, in that it allows for mentoring, coaching and teamwork. However, when cliques form as a result of being drawn together by negative factors (racial, gender, religious or personalities) then the danger of discord and conflict may arise. The interpersonal relationships may become stressful.

This study also explores problematic relationships between teachers and learners which is presently evident in most schools as a result of the banishing of corporal punishment; and strained relationships between teachers and over empowered parents (as a result of power entrusted in school governing bodies).

This study explores the effect of these factors on teacher work-related stress as well as the ways in which teachers seek to cope with these stressors. The role played by managers is also explored in this study because it is one of the role functions, as deduced by van der Merwe (2005).

2.6.3.3 Role Based stress

This occurs when teachers are not clear about their responsibilities, expectations and objectives (Steyn & van Niekerk, 2007). Role ambiguity occurs when duties and responsibilities are ambiguous and teachers have to play too many roles. This study reveals the roles teachers are required to play range from counselors, clerks, police, doctors and sports coaches to mention a few. Not all teachers are trained or equipped to handle all these demanding roles physically and emotionally. This study explores the roles played by teachers and the effect on stress levels of teachers.

2.6.3.4 Career Development

Inadequate training (common reason for the untimely resignation of novice teachers) to meet the demands of teaching (the content and methodology), continuous learning (grappling with the ever changing curriculum) and professional development owing to time constraints, may lead to stress (Adams, 1999, p.17).

Job insecurity, appraisal linked to salary or possibility of promotion may also cause stress in educators. Interference by the Governing bodies that affect chances of upward mobility is sure to create stress in aspiring teachers. In this study I assumed that career development would not be a serious stressor as in my personal experience career development had not been of great significance. It was assumed that development would occur gradually over a period of time. However, this study revealed that career development was high on the list of stressors. It had affected the newly qualified teachers in terms of getting to grips with workloads and duties; and on the other hand the lack of upward career mobility as a result of the interference of SGB members, Teacher Union and Departmental representatives caused stress in experienced or senior teachers.

2.6.3.5 School Factors

Restrictive bureaucratic style of management, interfering parents, adverse working conditions, excessive rules, poor salaries and low status of teachers, all have the potential to act as stressors (Harris & Hartman, 2002 ; Koslowski, 1998).

Added to the above school factors, gradual decline in the status of teachers by the shoddy treatment when negotiating conditions of service, resulting in loss of salary caused immense stress in teachers in the recent years. Forcing teachers to take to the streets was demeaning to many teachers especially those who have been serving the community for many years.

2.6.3.6 Home/work Interface

Although educators report that a high level of their stress is caused by their jobs, as well as the home life may become a significant source of stress. Twice as many female educators report this as a problem, mainly because they carry a disproportionate share of household chores. (Rout & Rout, 2002, pp37-38)

Of particular significance is the effect on women, considering that over 60% of teachers are females. This happens when family life is adverse affected and the individual is trapped in a

web of stress between work and home. The work and home stress may have a compound effect on the individual. In this instance the individual may resort to alcohol or drugs for relief from the stressors. In the absence of positive intervention this may lead to a downward spiral and can ultimately lead to death by overdose or suicide. The family members and the work organisation may become ultimate losers of the individual.

2.6.4 Creation of stress by Managers

Jongeling and Lock (1995) indicated that there are various ways in which school principals may cause stress in teachers. The lack of support, favouritism, poor communication, failure to provide adequate resources, non consultation, lack of respect, lack of leadership and unfairness in job allocation; are some of the ways in which the principal may create stress in schools. However this does not apply to just the principal, in the context of a school it may apply to the deputy principal or heads of department.

In order to understand the implications of teacher work-related stress it is imperative that the reactions of teachers to work-related stress is reviewed

2.7 Reactions to Stress

Individuals in an organisation react differently to stress. If the stressor is as a result of a positive life change, it may lead to increased motivation, energy and performance. If the stress is the result of a negative life change, then it may lead to individual consequences, organisational consequences and burnout (Steyn & van Niekerk, 2007).

Individual consequences may be behavioural, psychological or physical. Behavioural consequences are displayed by alcohol abuse, violence, drug abuse, difficulty sleeping; psychological consequences have a major impact on a person's well being (withdrawn, depressed); and physical consequences are headaches, intestinal disorders, backaches and other physical complaints (van der Merwe, 2005). Stress related disorders and symptoms are numerous to mention, however, according to Umstot (1988), stress related disorders may be divided into; performance (poor), satisfaction (low), commitment (high absenteeism, tardiness) and quality of relationships (distrust, suspicion, low consideration). As a teacher and manager I have personally experienced and witness these symptoms in many teachers. The knowledge of symptoms identified by Umstot (1988) from his study caused my senses to

light up as in my experience I immediately realized that there are many teachers in the field who are severely stressed. My expectation of this study was boosted.

Burnout may be defined as a progressive loss of idealism, energy, purpose, and concern as a result of conditions of work (Edelwich & Brodsky, 1980). In general, burnout is an inconsequential feeling that no matter how hard one works, the pay offs in terms of accomplishment, recognition, or appreciation are not there. For example, it has been shown that when teachers' needs for self-actualization and self esteem are unfulfilled there is a higher probability of burnout (Cox, 1993).

Burn out is most often the result not of stress per se (which may be inevitable in teaching) but of unmediated stress, of being stressed and having no "out," no buffers, no support system, no adequate rewards. In this regard too, the literature has paid far too little attention to identifying those counterbalancing factors that do motivate teachers to continue in their profession despite the relatively high level of work-related stress (Steyn & van Niekerk, 2007).

In order for the organisation to function effectively and successfully, it is important for teacher work-related stress to be managed, by both teachers as well as the managers.

2.8 Managing Stress

The presence of stress is also felt in the school environment. To be able to manage school effectively it is important that educational managers operate without the dysfunctional effects resulting from excessive stress. Principals need to manage their own stress and they have the responsibility to manage the school in such a way that stress levels are reduced for all staff. Van der Merwe (2005).

Sharman (1995) provides a useful model of stress management techniques involving: eliminating the stressor in your environment, altering your perception of stressors, changing your own stress-producing behaviour, altering certain aspects of your life, regular practice of relaxation techniques and airing our concerns in a supportive environment.

Managers need to be trained to recognise the symptoms of stress in their staff. They need to know how to deal with individuals who are stressed without aggravating the condition. It is frightening to think of the possible consequences of schools with managers who are lacking

in these skills. Managers have a vital role in minimising stress in schools. This may be done by: recognising stress, management training, role clarification, recognising type A people, design work to minimise stress and involve people in decision making. (van der Merwe, 2005).

Pawlas (1997) and Veninga (1998), claim that principals may lower stress amongst educators by: listening, planning ahead, use mentors, provide regular feedback, examine workloads, carefully consider restructuring and use employee creativity. Teachers in this study shared this view. This study identified the inability of teachers to communicate with managers as well as the frequent negative feedback by managers as fuelling the stress levels of teachers.

The personality type of the principal is very important if he is to reduce stress in his organisation. A disorganised manager would result in stressing his staff. The management model and style may impact on staff and create stress. An autocratic manager is bound to stress the staff by making demands without due consideration whereas a collegial and participatory style may result in less stress. This does not mean that managers must adopt an indifferent attitude, for fear of causing stress within the organisation. This study explores the influence of the personality types of managers on teacher work-related stress. The study investigates how the personality type of managers may help teachers manage work-related stress.

Encouraging team work, team building activities, social events, detail job descriptions, training of mentors and coaches, having a proper induction program for new teachers, staff development programs, regular meetings and providing of support and guidance by managers would certainly reduce stress within the organisation (van Deventer & Kruger, 2003)

The success of a learning organisation depends largely on the quality of the input by the staff. If the teachers are negatively affected by stressors then so too will be the input by the staff, thus, adversely impacting on the success of the organisation. It is for this reason that successful managers are those who are able to reduce and manage stress in their schools. Effective stress management is imperative for a schools successful functioning. Thus it becomes imperative to review leadership and management models, roles and how they impact on the creation or relief of teacher work-related stress.

2.9 Role and Functions of Educational Leadership and Management

A plethora of definitions, characteristics and role functions of managers, and leaders in the educational context have been forwarded; by the numerous theorists in the field of educational leadership and management. I aim to present some of these theories, definitions and views of management, leadership and the relationship between management and leadership, as well as the importance of leadership in the context of a democratic and transforming education system in South Africa.

According to Bush (2007, p. 391) there is increased recognition that schools require effective leadership and managers if they are to provide the best possible education for their learners. He acknowledges the perception that “as the global economy gathers pace, more governments are realising that their main assets are their people, and that remaining or becoming competitive depends increasingly on developing a highly skilled workforce.” This would undeniably require trained and skilled teachers and effective principals to guide, direct and support the senior and middle managers.

According to (Piek, 1992, p.13)

Educational management is a term used for the core element in educational administration which studies the dynamic executive action, mainly directed as immediate task completion. Education management in general and school management in particular, should be seen as activities without which the educational leader (e.g. Principal) cannot function efficiently.

Davies and West-Burnham (2003) are of the view that manager’s think incrementally, whilst leaders think radically. “Managers do things right, while leaders do the right thing.” This implies that managers possibly go by the book of prescribed rules and procedures. They may tend to become totally focused on following policies and protocol of the organisation, while leaders follow their own intuition, which in turn may be more beneficial to the organisation. Understandably from this perspective leadership involves taking risks, whereas, management involves following a preset and safe path.

Often one is faced with the question of ‘what is the difference between management and leadership’. The biggest difference is the way they motivate people who work or follow them, and this sets the tone for most aspects of what they do. Many people may be both managers

and leaders which are determined by what they do and how they do it. There exists the common perception that a leader is someone who people naturally follow through their own choice, whereas a manager must be obeyed. This view implies that a manager may only obtain his position of authority through time and loyalty given to the organisation and not as a result of his leadership qualities. Many believe that a leader may have no organisational skills but it is his vision that unites people behind him.

According to (Starratt, 2001), leaders stand out by being different as they question assumptions and are suspicious of tradition they seek out the truth and make decisions based on fact, not prejudice and have a preference for innovation. This implies that leaders need not follow policy especially in the post apartheid South African Educational System where many fundamental policies and practices are still firmly entrenched in the past. The educational system under the apartheid regime promoted managers and not leaders. Managers had to follow and implement policies in keeping with the political agenda of the ruling party. Transformation in The South African Educational System is in dire need for courageous leaders to challenge many notions in the educational policies. Most changes in the South African educational system may be ascribed to transformational leaders.

Despite the important role of leaders, I believe that the role of managers in the educational system should not be trivialised. The main aim of the manager is to maximise the output of the organisation through effective administrative implementation. According to van Deventer and Kruger (2003), managers must undertake to: plan, organise, control and make decisions. Planning can be seen as one of the most important task that educational managers must perform, as this forms the basis for all other management tasks.

As a result of the role function of the manager and compulsion to increase output by promoting “efficiency and effectiveness” (van Deventer & Kruger, 2003, p.115) managers become too controlling and reduce others to subordinates. By nature of such structure, organisations will run the risk of stifling creativity, devaluing, disempowering and demotivating staff. The impact could lead to stressful situations and as a result the teachers themselves becoming stressed. In this case the very method for positive change has a negative outcome.

2.10 Selected Theories of Leadership and Management

Leithwood, Jantzi and Steinbach (1999) identified six models of leadership Bush and Glover (2002) extended this topology to eight models. Some of these models will be discussed below according to their relevance to the educational system in South Africa.

2.10.1 Managerial Leadership

According to Leithwood *et al* (1994, p.14), “this model assumes that the focus of leaders should be on functions, tasks and behaviours, and that if these functions are carried out competently the work of others in the organisation will be facilitated. Authority and influence are allocated to formal positions in proportion to the status of those positions in the organisational hierarchy.”

Caldwell and Spinks (1992) argue that managers and leaders of self managing schools must be able to develop and implement a cyclic process involving seven managerial functions: goal setting; needs identification; priority-setting; planning; budgeting; implementing and evaluating. However, this type of leadership excludes the concept of vision which is central to most leadership models. This form of leadership ‘is suitable for schools with leaders working in centralised systems as it prioritises the efficient implementation of external imperatives’ prescribed by those higher up in the bureaucratic hierarchy. Sebakwane (1997) maintains that this form of leadership was brought into black schools by the Apartheid Government in order to control black teachers and student at a time when there was massive protests by teachers and students.

Despite this association, managerial leadership has an important role to play in achieving functional schools which is essential for teaching and learning to take place. Organisational stress and individual stress of teachers needs to be managed if the organisation is to function effectively. Managerial leadership would ensure proper planning, thus reduce workloads and professional demands on teachers.

2.10.2 Transformational Leadership

Bush (2003) links three leadership models to his collegial management model i.e. transformational, participative and interpersonal leadership. According to Leithwood *et al* (1994), transformational leadership focuses on the commitment by members within the

organisation that is there is a high level of personal commitment to organisational goals and greater capacities for achieving these goals. Leithwood *et al* (1994), maintains that this form of leadership is essential for building school visions, setting school goals, providing intellectual stimulation, offering individual support producing school culture and fostering participation in school decisions.

Caldwell and Spinks (1992, p. 49) state that transformational leadership is essential for autonomous schools as it succeeds in “gaining the commitment of followers to such a degree ... that high levels of accomplishment become virtually a moral imperative.” In contrast, Chirichello (1999) views transformational leadership as being a vehicle for control over teachers by leaders. Allix (2000) possesses a similar view in that transformational leadership has the potential to become ‘despotic’. The notion forwarded by Chirichello (1990) and Allix (2000) above stems from the understanding that leaders under the guise of transformation assume positions of power and institute changes to ensure their positions.

In the South African context there exist the inclination for politicians and bureaucrats to use the Language of ‘transformation’ to achieve their own political agendas, the government recognised the need for ‘transformation’ in order to redress the injustices of the past (Bush 2007, p.397). This is evident in the numerous changes experienced in the educational system with the numerous changes in curriculum to Outcomes based, National Curriculum Statement, Revised Curriculum Statement and now the CAPS.

However, the positive influence of transformational leadership should not be over shadowed by the potential for abuse. Transformational leadership can assist teachers cope with the frequent changes in the educational system. This type of leadership allows for deviation from traditional approaches to teaching and learning, in keeping with change (Fullan, 2001).

The model of transformational leadership by Leithwood and Jantzis (2006) is made up of three broad categories of leadership practices, namely, setting directions, developing people and redesigning the organisation. This model has direct implications on teacher work-related stress, especially in terms of workloads, professional demands and teacher development which were identified by Steyn and van Niekerk (2008), earlier as causes of work-related stress in teachers.

Should the leaders in the school selected for this study be transformational leaders then we would expect this to have a bearing on the teachers level of work related stress.

2.10.3 Participative Leadership

“Participative leadership...assumes that decision-making process of the group ought to be the central focus of the group,” (Leithwood *et al*, 1999, p.12).This form of leadership is supported by the Jobs Demand/ Decision latitude Theory discussed earlier.

This model is underpinned by three assumptions:

- Participation will increase schools effectiveness
- Participation is justified by democratic processes
- On site management, leadership potential is available to any legitimate stakeholder (Leithwood *et al* , 1999, p. 12)

This model has the potential to bond staff and ease the pressure on principals. According to Bush (2007), the participative model is consistent with the democratic values of the new South Africa.

In light of this study participative leadership may address the problem of interpersonal relationships, need for participation in decision making process and a means to communicate issues of professional demands with managers. This model also supports the jobs demand/decision making latitude theory of stress, which this study explores.

2.10.4 Political and Transactional Leadership

Bush (2003) links transactional leadership to his political model. However, in political models, maintains that, there is conflict between stakeholders, with disagreement being resolved in favour of the most powerful protagonist According to Miller and Miller (2001) transactional leadership is an exchange process. Principals possess authority by virtue of their position but require the co-operation of the teachers to ensure the effective functioning of the school. An exchange may secure benefits for both parties. The limitation from such leadership is that the staff will not go beyond their gains arising from the transaction. Long term commitment to leadership and the vision of the organisation will not be promoted.

This type of leadership allows for means by which managers and teachers may engage in addressing factors which bring about work-related stress. The managers become aware of the level of stress experienced by teacher and could possibly recognise the impact on the organisation. The transactional process allows for addressing teacher work-related stress and seeking the means for teachers to cope.

2.10.5 Post-modern Leadership

Post-modern model suggests that leaders should respect, and give attention to, the diverse and individual perspectives of stakeholders. According to Starratt (2001, p.348) post-modernity may be aligned with democracy and advocates a “more consultative, participatory inclusionary stance.” This model compensates for the different personality type of teachers (Types A and B), thus may reduce teacher work –related stress by dealing with teachers differently. The consultative and participatory approach lends latitude in the decision making process which Decision Latitude theory postulates as means of reducing teacher work-related stress.

2.10.6 Moral Leadership

This model assumes that the central focus of leadership ought to be on the values, beliefs and ethics of the leaders themselves. According to Leithwood *et al* (1999, p.10) authority and influence are to be derived from conceptions of what is right or good. West-Burnham (1997, p.239) identifies two approaches to moral leadership;

- Spiritual and relates to ‘higher order ‘perspective, mainly of religious affiliations.
- ‘Moral’ confidence: the capacity to act in a way that is consistent way an ethical system and is consistent over time.

According to this model leaders understand the job demands of teachers and are morally obligated to be fair and reasonable in addressing teacher workloads, interpersonal relationships and career development of teachers.

2.10.7 Instructional Leadership

Instructional leadership focuses on the direction of influence rather than its nature and source (Bush, 2007). According to Southworth (2002, p.79) “instructional leadership is strongly concerned with teaching and learning, including the professional learning of teachers as well as student growth.” He suggests that effective in improving teaching and learning are:

- Modelling
- Monitoring

- Professional dialogue and discussion.

Instructional leadership is one dimensional as it targets the school's central activities, which are teaching and learning; thus this paradigm underestimates other aspects of school life, such as sport, socialising, student welfare and self esteem (Bush, 2003).

Instructional leadership can reduce teacher stress through proper planning, fair distribution of work load and avoiding unreasonable job demands.

2.10.8 African models of Leadership

Ubuntu is the most frequently cited African model. According to Mbiga (1997) Ubuntu means collective personhood and collective morality and should be reflected in our modern education system. The ACE School leadership course (Department of Education, 2007) introduces the concept of Lekgotla. The leader or kgosi should be one who "inspires trust in the decision making process." There are many similarities between African Model and the Western Participative and Moral leadership models, where the emphasis is on collective and humane values and on managing by consent.

2.10.9 Contingent Leadership

This model may be viewed as an alternate approach as it incorporates aspects from all other models. It recognises the diverse nature of school contexts and the advantages of adapting styles to the particular situation, rather than the one size fits all.

Individuals providing such leadership are expected to have mastered a large repertoire of leadership practices. Their influence will depend on how large and how much they have mastered and their ability to choose appropriately as the situation demands.

Yukl (2002, p. 234) states that "the managerial job is too complex and unpredictable to rely on a set of standardised responses for events." Leadership requires effective diagnosis of problems, followed by the most appropriate response to the issue or situation (Morgan, 1997).

In respect of this study, the literature reviewed on all leadership models possess elements which can be used to addressing teacher work-related stress. It thus appears that the contingent model provides the largest scope for managers to address teacher work-related stress.

2.11 Challenges facing Management and Leadership in South African Educational System

The transition to a democratic government in South Africa compels the need for the restructuring and redefining a whole system, to provide quality education management must be accompanied by an internal devolution of power within the school structure and by transformational leadership. This view is highlighted by

“A transformational leadership approach has the potential to engage all stakeholders in the achievement of educational objectives (Bush, 2007, p. 397).

In the South African context ‘transformation ’this would require action at all levels and limit what the principal can achieve in the absence of appropriate physical, human and financial resources. The transformational model should incorporate aspects of the participative model in order to embrace the democratic values of the new South Africa. The introduction of SGBs for all schools and the increased prominence given to SMTs suggests a commitment to the participative model of leadership.

The contingent model seems to be the most reasonable as it offers more dimensions than the others which tend to be one-dimensional or rather narrow in their focus. For schools to function as learning organisations there is a need for a more holistic, yet context specific approach.

Regardless of which approach is used, the focus should be on the key task of managing teaching and learning.

2.12 Studies on Teacher work-related stress

2.12.1 National studies

Reported studies on teachers experiences of work related stress were carried out in South by Maphalala (2002), Schulze and Steyn (2007) as cited in Molapho (2009).

Maphalala (2002) conducted a study on teacher stress in primary schools located in the Esingweni Circuit, yielding data which identified curriculum changes, unreasonable workload, lack of job security, poor relationship with colleagues, lack of rewards and recognition, learner discipline problems, poor rapport with management and role ambiguity.

Workload pressure, role ambiguity and job insecurity were also found as teacher stressors by Jackson and Rothman (2006) and Mokdad (2005), as cited in Molapo (2009).

Study conducted by Schulze and Steyn (2007) in secondary schools found that teachers were stressed by learners and parents' poor attitude towards learning, and because of discipline problems and changing conditions in schools.

2.12.2 International Studies

Studies by the Canadian Teacher organisation (2004) (cited in Molapo, 2009. p. 21) found that "lack of time and long working hours are often revealed as significant sources of stress for teachers."

Younghusband (2005) conducted a survey in Newfoundland which supports the findings of the Canadian Teachers Organisation; in that insufficient time was a serious problem to teacher. This survey revealed that 52% of the participants found lack of time to be a stressor.

Joseph (2000) found that inadequate time at work forced teachers to work at home, thus having less time to spend with their families and for relaxation.

Molapo (2009) conducted a study on work-related stress of teachers at a primary school in Lesotho, in which she identified learner absenteeism, lack of resources, high workload as well as competing demands of Church and Government.

It is clear from both national and international studies that stress is a significant phenomenon affecting the quality and efficiency of teaching. The stressors identified from all studies are very similar, indicating a common set of stressors for teachers' world- wide.

2.13 Conclusion

Whilst many theories and models of management and leadership are prevalent it is accepted that managers must not only be efficient and effective, but they must also have a vision and work towards achieving the vision. The distinction between leader and manager is not the focus of this project. I view all managers as having the role of leading as well as managing. In the same light leaders need to be efficient and effective, have a vision and, give direction and purpose to the staff and manager in order to actualise the shared vision, an effective and stress free work and learning environment. All of which cannot be achieved if the level of teacher work-related stress is very high or unmanageable. Leadership styles are expected to

impact on teacher work-related stress positively and negatively. It is hoped that this study will shed light, from the teachers' perspective on the role played by managers in addressing teacher work-related stress.

The next chapter will discuss the research method used in conducting this study

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This research project sought to explore the role of teachers and managers in addressing teacher work-related stress in a selected urban, secondary school in KwaZulu-Natal. In this chapter the research approach, research design, method of data collection, method for analysis of data and limitations of this study, will be discussed

3.2 Research Approach

I chose to adopt the interpretive approach as it provides a deep insight into “the complex world of the lived experience from the point of view of those who live it” (Schwandt, 1994, p. 118). Interpretive research assumes that reality is socially constructed and the researcher becomes the vehicle by which this reality is revealed (Cavana, Delahaye, & Sekaran, 2001). The researcher’s interpretations are expected to play a key role in this kind of study bringing, “such subjectivity to the fore, backed with quality arguments rather than statistical exactness” (Garcia & Quek, 1997, p. 459).

Researcher’s beliefs and worldviews lie behind their theoretical perspective. Guba and Lincoln (1994) talk about the need of researchers to make explicit both their ontological and epistemological assumptions before embarking on any research project. The researcher needs to answer the ontological question, “What is the form and nature of reality and, therefore, what is there that can be known about it?” (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p. 108), before the research problem is approached. The interpretive researcher’s ontological assumption is that social reality is locally and specifically constructed (Guba & Lincoln, p. 108) “by humans through their action and interaction” (Orlikowski & Baroudi, 1994, p. 14). Neuman (1997, p. 69) affirms that “reality is based on people’s definition of it”. Drawing from these assertions it is apparent that interpretive researchers do not recognise the existence of an objective world, they see the world bounded strongly by time and specific context. This researcher concedes’ to the axiology of multiple truths. The participant and researcher will need to reach consensus about all meanings derived. This was done by the participants after they viewed the transcripts of the interviews.

Thus, the epistemological question of “what is the relationship between the knower or would be knower and what can be known” (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p. 108) must be answered in a consistent way with the ontological view. The interpretive researcher’s epistemological assumption is that “findings are literally created as the investigation proceeds” (Guba & Lincoln, 1994, p. 111). Hence, I (the researcher) explicitly recognise “that understanding social reality requires understanding how practices and meanings are formed and informed by language and tacit norms shared by humans working towards some shared goal” (Orlikowski & Baroudi, 1991, p. 14). In this research, knowledge may be obtained by literature on the study and the data collection method of conducting focus group interviews and reviewing relevant documents of the organisation.

Considering the abovementioned philosophical assumptions I (the researcher) identify myself as an interpretive researcher. This approach was used to seek out the experiences or understandings of participants which are dependent on many factors such as context and time. The interpretive perspective is sometimes referred to as naturalistic research as it is conducted in the real world without the researcher’s manipulation (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007). According to Creswell (2003, p.8) the interpretivist researcher tends to rely on the “participants views of the situation being studied” whilst acknowledging their own background and experiences which may result in biasness and subjectivity. In this study I used focus group interviews combined with content analysis under an interpretive approach to develop meanings of the experiences of participants.

According to Cohen, Manion and Morrison (2007, p.352) “the number of types of interview given is frequently a function of the sources one reads.” and cites six types of interviews. Bogdan and Biklen (1992) added semi-structured interviews as a method for data collection.

Interviews have the following benefits over other forms of data collection:

Kitwood (1997) states that if the interviewer is skilful and the respondent sincere then well motivated, accurate data may be obtained. The researcher can explore the responses of the participant further subject to the flexibility of the type of interview (degree of structure or openness); can elaborate on the questions should there be a need; and gestures, facial expressions, tone; body language can be observed and immediately explored.

According to Niewenhuis (in Maree,2007), the focus group interview strategy is based on the assumption that the group interaction will be productive in widening the range of responses, activating forgotten details of experiences and releasing inhibitions that may otherwise discourage participants from disclosing.

It is for these (the above) reasons that I chose focus group interviews as one of the primary methods for my data collection process. More specifically I decided to use semi structured focus group interviews. An interview is a two way conversation in which the interviewer (usually the researcher) asks the participant questions, in order to collect data to learn about the ideas, beliefs, views, opinions and behaviours about the participant. However, in a focus group interview there are more than two people involved in the interview (Cohen *et al*, 2007), that is, the interviewer, and a group of participants (in this study up to eight),who were able to shed light on the topic of the study. The composition of a group of participants allows participants to expand, elaborate and at times to confirm the responses of other participants. The very nature of interviewing involves both visual and verbal contact between the interviewees (participants) and the interviewer (researcher) and as such may have positive or negative impact on the data obtained (a challenge to the research).Written notes would be made by the researcher of verbal and non verbal responses.

It is true that all interviews must have structure in order to achieve its desired outcomes (answer the research question); it is the degree of structure that characterises the process has been structured or unstructured. Lincoln and Guba (1985, p.269) maintain that researchers are aware of what they do not know; and use structured interviews to frame questions about what they do not know, so that the responses will supply them with knowledge. The knowledge is obtained from the verbal responses and observations made of the participants during the interview process. When and if, other groups are interviewed the interview schedule is closely adhered to, as it was first used. Thus, the structured interview process may be characterised by its closed nature.

According to Cohen *et al* (2007), in the unstructured interview the interviewer has greater flexibility and freedom to modify questions (every respondent should understand the question in the same way rather than replicating the question) and to explore the responses to the questions (by addition of questions) and even change the sequence of the questions should the need arise. There may be the view that the moment the wording of a question is changed, it becomes a new question. However this is acceptable provided the interpretation of the

question by the participants remains the same, i.e. the change is only for clarity and to help respondent to understand the question. This flexibility allows for the fact that not all participants have the same ability to comprehend the question; and is thus an advantage over the structured interview. Unstructured interviews are thus more flexible and allows for greater elucidation and exploration of the responses from the participants; hence, more data and greater quality of data may be obtained by a skilful interviewer

This research employed a semi-structured approach (Appendix B). The rationale for this is that the researcher acknowledges the fact that he is not an experienced interviewer and a prepared interview schedule provides a much needed guidance and uniformity in conducting the interview. Audio recording would be used to allow the interviewer to focus on the responses and be free from immediate detailed writing of the responses.

3.3 Research Methodology

3.3.1 Research Design

A case study was done to gather data in order to answer the research questions which were outlined earlier in chapter one. There are many definitions and understandings of case study research in literature. Bromley (1990, p.302) describes case study research as a“systematic inquiry into an event or a set of related events which aims to describe and explain the phenomenon of interest”.

Yin (2003, p .23) defines the case study research method as“an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context when the boundaries between the boundaries between the phenomenon and context are not clearly evident and in which case multiple sources of evidence are used”.

According to Merriman (1998) a case study is defined by the fact that it is a bounded system and Niewenhuis (in Maree, 2007) elaborated that, a case study can be used to describe a unit of analysis (e.g. a case study of a particular organisation).

Based on the above definitions, this study defines a case study as an enquiry of a phenomenon within a bounded system. This study involved the case of teachers in an urban secondary school context regarding their experiences of work-related stress.

I used questionnaire and reviewed documents at the school in order to gather data to present the context of the case in which the phenomenon is to be studied. A questionnaire was given

to all the teachers in the school in order to gather data on how they experience the phenomenon, stress. A focus group interview was also conducted to explore further aspects that may arise from the questionnaire and to expound the shared experiences of the teachers in the case study. I agree with Niewenhuis (in Maree, 2007, p. 100), that...

“the focus group interaction will result in a widening the range of responses, activating forgotten experiences and releasing inhibitions that may otherwise discourage participants from disclosing”.

Yin (2009) lists the three conditions which determine the use of a case study approach, to be firstly, the form of a research question (how and why); secondly, the study does not require any control of behavioural events and finally, focuses on contemporary events. This study did not involve any control of behavioural events and the focus on work-related stress of teachers satisfies the conditions outlined by Yin (2009) for the use of a case study approach. Yin (2009, p.9) states that in a case study exploratory question deals with “operational links needing to be traced over time, rather than mere frequencies or incidence.” As my study explored the perceptions of secondary school teachers arising from their experiences of work-related stress over a period of time, a case study method was the most suitable (no need for frequencies of incidents). Hence, my decision to use a case study approach was justified.

3.3.2 Research School and Participants

3.4.2.1 The School

The case is that of Level One Teachers in an urban secondary school in KwaZulu-Natal, located in a predominantly Indian working class township, closely surrounded by four informal settlements. The school draws its learner population from these surrounding areas as well as many learners from Umlazi, KwaMashu, Chesterville and Kwa Dubeka. The learner population was approximately sixty five percent Indian, thirty eight percent Africans and twelve percent Coloureds.

The staff was made up of mainly Indian teachers and two African teachers. The staff was predominantly female however, the management was predominantly male. The staff varied greatly in terms of age and experience. The range for both these factors i.e. age and experience was wide with heavy weighting on extreme ends (refer to table II and III).

The resources at the school were restricted to forty five classrooms, two laboratories (one fully functional), lights, water and flushing toilets, telephone, computer room with internet access for learners and staff, two photocopiers, one duplicator.

Resources regarded as lacking or limiting by the teachers were stationery, duplicating paper, smart board, data projector, library of books, pin boards in classrooms, cupboards, dustbins, door mat, chalk, dusters and in some classes window panes.

The school fee was R1400 per annum with a collection rate of about fifty five percent. Almost twenty percent of the learners have been granted concession from school fees as a result of no or low income. There were one thousand one hundred and fifty five learners and the expected income from school fees for the year 2012 was R800 000.

I chose an urban secondary school because I teach and manage such a school. The school chosen as the research site was because it was convenient, as it is located close to where I teach and is of similar context to my school. It was expected to be easy obtain the permission of the principal to conduct the research, as we worked together on many projects; the teachers would be obliging (I know many of them personally); venue for the interview would be easily accessible (the conference room at the school); time and cost would not be a problem as the interviews would be conducted immediately after school, as it was near to my workplace.

3.3.2.2 Participants

The case was of teachers working under challenging conditions and experience varying degrees of stress and work success. The challenges range from mixed learning abilities, poor language skills (different home languages) and low motivation of learners, lack of resources, unnecessary bureaucratic structures and varying styles of leadership and management.

There were thirty Level One Teachers in the school and all were approached to complete the questionnaire. I obtained permission from the principal to address all the level one teachers at the end of a staff meeting, during which I explained the aim of the study and appealed for their co-operation in the study. The teachers were then handed their forms and were requested to place the completed forms in a box which was housed in the office foyer. Teachers were not required to fill in their names and no data through which they could be identified was required in the questionnaire. This was for ethical reasons and to ensure that participants would not be afraid to express their true responses to the questions for fear of the

consequences thereafter. Anonymity was highlighted to participants and maintained throughout the study.

There were four departments in this school; with four heads of departments and each with between six to eight teachers. I chose to interview at least one teacher from each of the four departments in each focus group. I randomly selected equitable number of males and females.

Purposive sampling method was use for the focus group interviews. Only Level One Teachers were selected, at least one teacher from each department was selected in each focus group. Sampling also considered gender and experience at the site being studied.

3.3.3 Research Instruments

A thick description of the context within which the school functions will be provided in keeping the style for case studies as outlined by Manion *et al.* (2007). The study is supported by data gathered via a questionnaire (Appendix A) which were completed by all Level One Teachers and via two focus group interviews conducted with selected teachers. Both the questionnaire and the interview schedule were piloted before being implemented. This allowed for adjustments to the instruments for clarity and to ensure that the questions would provide the necessary responses to answer the research questions. The questionnaire was given to all level-one teachers (thirty in total). They were given a week to complete and had to insert the questionnaire into the box which was housed in the office foyer.

Two semi structured focus group interviews were conducted with eight teachers in each group. Each interview lasted for about forty minutes. The responses were audio recorded, as well as notes were taken by the interviewer. An interview schedule (Appendix B) was used to ensure that key questions were posed to both groups and for the interviewer to focus on responses and be able to probe for greater depth or clarity. Focus group interviews allow teachers to reflect on the input of others thus validating data as well as prompting recollection by others who may have experienced the same or similar situation.

The focus group interview employed a semi-structured approach (Appendix B). The rationale for this is that the researcher acknowledges the fact that he is not an experienced interviewer and a prepared interview schedule (Appendix B) would provide a much needed guidance and uniformity in conducting the interview. Audio recording was used to allow the interviewer to

focus on the responses and be free from immediate writing detailed responses and allowed for reflection of responses during analysis.

To provide guidance and direction to the study, I first piloted the questionnaire and interview schedule with a few teachers from my school. Adjustments were made to these documents (questionnaire and interview schedule) before I personally conducted the survey and the focus group interview with the selected participants. All records of data collected will be kept in a safe for five years before being incinerated.

3.4 Data Analysis

According to Niewenhuis (in Maree, 2007), data analysis from the interpretivist approach is aimed at examining meaningful and symbolic content to establish how participants make meaning of a specific phenomenon. Niewenhuis goes on to explain that this is best achieved through a process of inductive analyses of qualitative data where the main purpose is to allow research findings to emerge from the frequent, dominant or significant themes inherent in raw data, without the restraints imposed by the more structured theoretical orientation.

Two types of data were obtained in this study, namely, written responses in the form of completed questionnaire and audio recording of the two focus group interviews. Data from the questionnaire were first analysed according to frequency counts and percentages.

The data from the audio recording of the focus group interviews were transcribed and subjected to content analysis. Meanings were developed from participants responses in relation to the research questions on teacher work-related stress.

3.5 Trustworthiness

The researcher was to use specific tactics as suggested by Yin (2003, p. 34) to construct validity, establish internal validity, external validity and reliability. To construct validity i.e. establish correct operational measures for the concepts being studied, by establishing chain of evidence (corroboration). Internal validity i.e. establishes causal relationship as distinguished from spurious relationships by pattern matching, explanation-building and the use of logic models. Validity would be confirmed by documentary evidence (completed questionnaire, consent forms of participants, confirmation of permission from “gatekeeper”, permission from the Department of Education) and the audio recordings made of the focus group

interviews. All of these will confirm that the study did take place and that the findings are valid.

The response from the numerous participants via the questionnaire as well as the responses from the focus group interview would serve to corroborate the input made by the responses. All of these together with the documents reviewed would serve as means to triangulate the evidence in support or gain insight into the claims made by the participants. The researcher acknowledges that there may be disagreement in the data arising from different personalities, experiences and understandings, and would consider these as and when they surface, with due circumspection. There is convergence of qualitative data obtained from the focus group interviews and the quantitative data from the questionnaire (this is discussed in the next chapter).

Finally the researcher acknowledges the nature of people as subjects in a system exposed to powers of intimidation which may impact on the data. This notion will be considered in the method of data collection and in the analysis of the data. The researcher also acknowledges that a skilful researcher may be able to navigate the study through the maze of external influences of power and intimidation, to render the study reliable and valid and in so doing make a positive contribution to understanding teacher manager relationships.

3.6 Ethical Issues

Yin (2009) cites traditional prejudices such as case study research being less rigorous and more prone to bias than other approaches; they provide little basis for scientific generalisation; may be time consuming as they result in massive unreadable documents; as being the arguments against the use of the case study approach. I acknowledge these traditional prejudices and that they may be more frequently encountered and less frequently overcome in the case study research as indicated by Yin (2003), however, I took cognisance of this and made every attempt to avoid biasness by allowing participants to review the transcripts and analysis, as well as being more rigorous in the gathering of data by the use of more than one method of data collection, that is by the use of searching questions in questionnaire to about twenty teachers, (semi-structured) focus group interview and document review , to provide reliable data in response to the research questions.

Written permission from the University and clearance (Appendix F) was sought. The consent of the Department of Education (Appendix E), the school principal (Appendix D) and consent

of all participants (Appendix C) were obtained. The identity of the participants and autonomy was protected at all times. All participants were informed that participation was voluntary, their identity will not be disclosed, they need not disclose their names on the questionnaire and their consent will be in writing.

The language used was simple to ensure that the questions could be easily understood by the participants. Participants were presented with a transcript of their contribution and the analysis thereof. They were informed that they may withdraw from the investigation at any time and that no information will be disclosed or published without their complete approval.

The principal, managers and staff would have been reluctant to have the school and managers publicly exposed by the research. This problem was overcome by providing a written undertaking (Appendix D) that no information would be divulged without their approval. I informed the principal and all participants that once the research is completed all participants would be shown transcripts of their responses to ensure accuracy of the data collected. No biographical information on participants in the interview was required.

Teachers may be afraid to speak out against their managers and may choose to provide more favourable and socially acceptable responses to ensure that they do not offend their managers and the school. In light of this the participants in the focus group comprised only Level One Teachers, this was to reduce any possibility of participants being intimidated.

The type (open ended) and nature of the questions in the interview schedule would be such that the participants would be required to provide examples of situations and explanations in support of their views, opinions or beliefs. This would attempt to capture their true opinions and beliefs rather than socially and politically acceptable responses.

3.7 Conclusion

This chapter discussed the research approach which was a qualitative case study, the methods of data gathering by questionnaire and focus group interviews were outlined, a description of the research site and participants were provided, methods used for the analysis of data explained and ethical issues related to this study were discussed

In the subsequent chapter the data obtained from the questionnaire and focus group interviews will be presented, analysed and discussed.

CHAPTER FOUR

DATA PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION

4.1 Introduction

This study was aimed at exploring the role of teachers and school managers (SMT) in addressing teacher work-related stress (TWRS) in an urban secondary school in KwaZulu-Natal. The focus of the study was to explore what teachers and managers identify as possible stressors; and the perception of teachers on the roles that teachers and managers can play in addressing teacher work-related stress.

The purpose of this chapter is to present and discuss findings emerging from the data obtained through questionnaire and focus group interviews. As already indicated in Chapter Three, the questionnaire was administered to all Level One Teachers in the school and two focus groups, each comprised eight teachers, spread across all the departments in the school. As already indicated the questionnaire (Appendix A) comprised a series of closed and open questions focusing on teacher work-related stress. I analysed the questions through frequency counts and percentages. The percentages were rounded off and the data were presented in the form of tables and graphs which are effective in demonstrating the relationship between the variables. Graphs presented in this chapter are derived from the data in tables, some of which are presented in the appendices at the end. All open ended questions in both the questionnaire and focus group interview were addressed through content analysis, to develop meaning to the responses of participants in order to answer the research questions.

The presentation of findings from the analysis of the data are supplemented with direct quotations and discussed in the context of the literature reviewed in Chapter Two. This chapter contains analysis of the responses of teachers to the questions posed in the questionnaire and from the focus group interviews. The data was also categorised into themes and sub themes were relevant.

This chapter unfolds as follows: Firstly background information on the case is presented. This is followed by analysis of: biographical details of participant and data in response to level of teacher work related stress, causes of work related stress, strategies used to cope with work

related stress and role that teachers believe managers play in addressing work related stress. Finally the relationship between theory and data is presented.

4.2 Background Information

This was a case study of a single school with a staff of thirty Level One Teachers from which twenty five participants responded. In attempting to analyse the data from the questionnaire I decided to use actual number of participants in order to indicate the degree of agreement or disagreement amongst the participants, even though the number of participants was relatively small for the use of questionnaire as a research tool. I reiterate that these statics are applicable to the research case of a single school and does not necessarily reflect on the wider teaching fraternity.

4.3 Analysis of Teachers' Responses in Questionnaire and Focus group Interviews

4.3.1 Biographical details of teachers (participants

Table I: Gender of Participants

Table I : Gender of Participants

Gender	Male	Female	Total
Total	5	20	25
Percentage	20	80	100

At the site there were thirty Level One Teachers of which 7 were males and 23 were females. All were given questionnaire but only 25 responded (83%) of which 5 (17%) were males and 20 (83%) were females.

Table II: Age of Participants

Table II : Age distribution of participants (in years)

	Below 30	30-39	40-49	50-59	60 and above	Total
N	10	8	6	2	10	36
Percentage	28	22	17	6	28	100

The age group of participants was widely spread from below 30 years old to over 60 years. Each age group was represented with more participants from the younger groups as this is the case of the population (fewer teachers from the over 50 years as most of them would be managers or retired).

Table III: Teaching Experience of Participants

	6-10	11-15	16-20	21-25	26-30	31-40	Total
N	6	10	4	3	2	0	25
Percentage	24	44	12	12	4	0	100

TableI IV: Experience (in present school) in years

YEARS	0-10	11-15	16-20	21-25	26-30	31-40	Total
N	6	11	3	3	2	0	25
Percentage	24	44	12	12	4	0	100

The biographical data of the participants to the questionnaire indicated that it is evenly distributed percentage of the total population, gender, teaching experience and experience at the site being studied. This indicates that the data gathered through the questionnaire as being truly reflective of the site and case being studied. I attempted to obtain a wide range of views as possible even though this is not a prerequisite of the study.

4.3.2 Teachers level of Work –related stress

Table V: Teachers level of work-related stress (TWRS)

Level	Not stressful	Slightly(seldom) stressful	More often stressful than not	Frequently stressful	Always stressful	Total
N	2	3	5	7	8	25
Percentage	8	12	20	28	32	100

The data as reflected in the table V and graph IV indicate that over 80% of the participants level of TWRS ranged from more often stressful to always stressful with only 20% indicating

that their level of TWRS was seldom to not stressful. This to an extent justifies the purpose of the study which was based on the assumption that a high level of TWRS exists amongst the present teachers. The participants by their own admission in the focus group interviews were emphatic in declaring the high level of TWRS they experience. A teacher from Focus Group A expressed how simple tasks were made stressful by “forcing all teachers to do their diagnostics analysis on the computer”. Another teacher from the same group indicated that simple tasks were made problematic because of poor planning and ill timing. The demeanor of the group reflected a painful dissatisfaction with the inability to function in a relaxed working environment.

In the focus group interview sessions I attempted to ascertain as to whether any of the teachers present felt that their work was slightly or not stressful; and everyone (in both the groups) agreed that they felt frequently to always stressful. It was important to note that obtaining a participant who found the TWRS to be seldom or not stressful would have added an interesting dimension to the study but none of the participants admitted to this.

4.3.3 Causes of teacher work-related stress (TWRS)

Steyn and van Niekerk (2007) listed five broad sub themes into which the causes of teacher work-related stress may be grouped, namely, Professional demands , Interpersonal relationships, Role based stress, Career development, School factors and Home/work interface. The data from the questionnaire, as illustrated in Table IV, identifies Pupil Behaviour, Lack of Resources, Work Load, Expectations of managers, Implementing Policies and Bureaucratic Procedures as the main factors which the participants (teachers) found to be most stressful. These will be analysed and compared to the themes identified by Steyn and van Niekerk (2007), i.e. Professional demands, interpersonal relationship, career development and school factors. Although home/ work interface is acknowledged as an important cause of personal stress and impacts on teacher performance, it will not be pursued in this study because the focus of this study is work-related stress.

Table VI: Factors which Cause teacher work-related stress (TWRS)Key:

Level	Not stressful	Slightly(seldom) stressful	More often stressful than not	Frequently stressful	Always stressful
Rank	1	2	3	4	5

Factor		Rank (Level of stress)					Total (N/%)
		1	2	3	4	5	
Pupil Behaviour	N	4	2	3	2	14	25
	%	16	8	12	8	56	100
Lack of resources	N	2	3	3	5	12	25
	%	8	12	12	20	48	100
Time management (Due dates)	N	2	2	4	5	12	25
	%	8	8	16	20	48	100
Work load	N	0	0	6	5	14	25
	%	0	0	24	20	56	100
Expectations of managers	N	2	1	6	5	11	25
	%	8	4	24	20	44	100
Planning of lessons	N	12	2	5	3	3	25
	%	48	8	20	12	12	100
Safety and security at work	N	5	2	10	5	3	25
	%	20	8	40	20	12	100
Relationship with learners	N	12	6	2	3	2	25
	%	48	24	8	12	8	100
Relationship with colleagues	N	9	3	6	3	4	25
	%	36	12	24	12	16	100
Relationship with manager/s	N	5	5	8	4	3	25
	%	20	20	32	16	12	100
Job security	N	12	5	4	2	2	25
	%	48	20	16	8	8	100
Scope for Promotion	N	8	2	6	4	5	25
	%	32	8	24	16	20	100
Implementing policies	N	0	3	5	7	10	25
	%	0	12	20	28	40	100
Bureaucratic Procedures	N	1	2	2	5	15	25
	%	4	8	8	20	60	100

Adapted from Steyn & van Niekerk (2007.p166-167)

4.3.3.1 Poor Pupil Behaviour:

The data from table IV indicate that 86 % found poor pupil behaviour to be very stressful (more too always stressful). Fifty six percent of the respondents found poor pupil behaviour to be always stressful. The participants in both the focus groups were unanimous that poor pupil behaviour was very stressful. There was general agreement in both focus groups that whilst most learners are well behaved some (a significant) number are unruly and uncooperative. The teachers indicated that there exists a comprehensive code of conduct; however the implementation of this was viewed as problematic. Teachers expressed that the time to complete the lesson as dictated by the curriculum did not allow for teachers to spend time on addressing disciplinary issues. Teachers identified the possibility of managers who they (teachers) feel have sufficient time to address the issue of ill discipline. Some teachers indicated that they frequently found themselves feeling exhausted after teaching certain classes. A teacher from Focus Group B stated, “I am frequently left with a headache after seeing the 9A class and dread it when they come to me.”

There was agreement amongst the teachers from both the focus groups that the issue of pupil behaviour was of great concern and impacted negatively and directly on TWRS. Whilst teachers were concerned with this issue they expressed the feeling that they had very little control over the issue except referring it to the management and parent. The Departmental policy on corporal punishment, little or no parental involvement was cited as some of the main causes of pupil misbehaviour. The school management and involvement of the Governing Body were identified as agents for addressing this issue. There was firm belief that management does not adequately support the teachers in their quest for resolving this problem as highlighted by another teacher from Focus Group B “...problematic learners sent to the office for discipline issues, return to class unaffected and pleased with themselves.” Teachers are often blamed for the behaviour of the learners not just by managers but also other teachers who were favoured by management and enjoy special privileges. There was a strong indication that the teachers feel that much of their stress resulting from poor pupil discipline can be reduced by managers taking on greater responsibility and supporting the teachers change the learner culture. The issue of teachers assuming management roles and speaking down to fellow educators was viewed as favouritism and seems to be added reason for a negative view of management. Some teachers indicated that they dealt with issues of learner ill discipline by simple sending learners out of the class whilst they are teaching. The

teachers admitted that sending pupils out of the class was unacceptable but continued to do so as this enabled them (teachers) to focus on those learners who were interested and decreased their level of stress.

The need for management to take a more active role and be more stringent in implementing the schools code of conduct was viewed by the interviewees as a means to address the problem and in so doing relieve teacher work-related stress

4.3.3.2 Lack of Resources:

Eighty percent of the respondents (table IV) indicated that they found lack of resources very stressful. Teachers in both the interview groups unanimously agreed, that basic resources were lacking

“... chalk, dusters, door mats, overhead projectors, cupboards, window panes, pens and basic stationery for the teachers were lacking,” said one teacher from Focus Group A.

Another teacher from the same group added, “...there is only one paper punch and two staplers for all the teachers... ”.

“It is a mission to obtain duplicating paper, to run out worksheets for learners. We have to first find our HOD, and then he would have to find Mr. A, who is in charge of paper and almost always too busy to provide the paper speedily. We end up having to wait for days to obtain the paper,” explained a teacher from Focus Group B.

The above comments reflect the frustrations experienced by teachers as they cannot function effectively without the basic resources (as simple as the resource may be). It was clear that the interviewees were stressed by the lack of these resources and more especially by management’s indifferent attitude to the teacher’s needs, as indicated by a teacher from Focus Group B...

“...managers had access to virtually a computer each whereas over 30 teachers had to share 5 computers of which only 3 work (poorly too). The offices of management are filled with files bought with school funds but teachers who earn less are forced to buy their own files and stationery.”

The teachers in both the interview groups indicated that they felt insulted as there was no trust and the bureaucratic processes were discouraging.

A teacher from Focus Group B stated, “It is frustrating when you have to beg for paper, which is for the pupils and not for our personal use.”

The participants in both groups acknowledged that directly addressing the problems, or through the formation of staff representatives they may be able resolve the problem with the management. “The need to ensure that every teacher has the basic resources for them to function should probably be statutory,” said a teacher from Focus Group B.

The high level of stress resulting from the lack of resources was clearly indicated by the numerous examples cited by the teachers in the interview. The teachers were of the perception that the manner in which the resources are managed was as a result of mistrust by management, and that management was selfish in recognising their own needs and neglected that of the teachers.

4.3.3.3 Work Load:

Hundred percent of the respondents indicated that their work load was very stressful. This was fully supported by both the focus groups. There was consensus from both groups that teachers work load was unrealistic, this was supported by national and international research as indicated in Chapter Two. The volume of curriculum content, large number of assessment tasks, large class sizes (forty and more learners per class) and expected role functions added to the ever changing curriculum were strongly expressed as sources of frustration and stress.

Teachers expressed that even before they got to grips with new curriculum, it would be changed again. The short training sessions, inefficient trainers and almost immediate implementation of the curricular changes, unsettled teachers who claimed to feel “...frequently incompetent and ineffective.” The teachers indicated their disappointment in members of management who did little or nothing to assist them when faced with their dilemma (implementing the changes). A teacher from Focus Group B indicated that managers were more concerned with meeting their checklist of demands than assisting the teachers to become effective implementers of the curricular changes.

A teacher expressed that in his opinion “...managers were selfish and self serving...” When probed further he mentioned the issue of an impasse in the matter relating to teaching loads of

teachers and managers. The entire group (interviewed) agreed with him that there was an unfair distribution of teaching workload between level one teachers and managers.

The school teaching allocation indicated that Teachers teach about 45 periods (83%), HOD's teach 30 periods (50%), the deputies teach 20 periods (33,3%) and the principal does not teach (all of this is out of 60 periods in a two week cycle). The Employment of Educators Act 84 of 1996 (EEA) advocates that the ratio should be up to 90% for teachers, up to 80 % for HOD's and up to 60 % for Deputies and Principals.

The Employment of Educators Act 84 of 1996 indicates that the managers may carry a larger load but according to this Act the teachers at this site are not overloaded in terms of teaching allocation. Though, this may be so there is a need for the impasse with regard to teacher workload to be resolved and external objective ruling by the SEM is possibly the way to resolve and put the issue to rest. Until this is done teachers will continue to feel done by and build up anger and frustration towards management.

Heavy workloads and too little time (Kinman & Jones, 2003; Kyriacou, 2001), lack of resources, large classes, the effort to raise standards (Olivier & Venter, 2003) are stressors experienced by teachers. All of the above sub themes are categorised by Steyn and van Niekerk (2007) as stress caused by **Professional Demands**.

4.3.3.4 Expectations of Managers:

The questionnaire reveals that 88% of the respondents found expectations of managers to be very stressful (Table IV). Teachers (in the interview) indicated that managers did not recognise the difficulties that teachers experienced as a result of what they (teachers) perceived to be unfair workload distribution. A teacher from Focus Group B stated that they were required to prepare and mark nineteen pieces of work as part of the Continuous Based Assessment per class of over forty learners. They (teachers) also taught more than four different grades and were expected to plan and prepare for each class daily.

Poor planning by managers resulted in teachers being forced to make unrealistic deadlines, placing teachers under tremendous stress. The late confirmation and release of exam time table, unfair distribution of invigilation time were indicated as frustrating and led to teacher stress.

Better planning by managers, forming of teams with grade co-coordinators and dividing the work more equitably were mooted as solutions to the problem. Managers could assist by coaching, mentoring and developing teachers to cope with the curricular changes. A teacher indicated that managers themselves were battling to adjust to the numerous and frequent changes in curriculum. It was evident from the total agreement of the participants that they were of the opinion that teachers felt pressurised, as they were expected to adapt to the changes very quickly with little or no training. Equally frustrating as pointed out by a teacher from Focus Group b was that teachers are not consulted in the process of change. The management and leadership models outlined in Chapter III, earlier identifies those leadership which promotes effective management. In line with the need identified above (to reduce work related stress in teachers) one would recommend a collegial management model with a transformational leadership model.

All the above sub themes, poor relationships and learner motivation (Kinman & Jones, 2001), the poor discipline and behaviour problems (Olivier & Venter 2003, p.190), learners with emotional problems and learning difficulties (Steyn & van Niekerk, 2007) and relationship with other staff members, Heads of department or the principal may be stressful; and categorised into the theme : **Interpersonal relationships.**

Role Ambiguity

Stress may be experienced when teachers are not clear about their responsibilities, expectations and objectives (Steyn & van Niekerk, 2007). Role ambiguity occurs when duties and responsibilities are ambiguous and teachers have to fill too many roles. A teacher from Focus group A stated ...

“Teachers are required to serve as counselors, clerks, police, doctors and sports coaches to mention a few. Duties we were neither trained nor equipped to handle and roles which we find to be physically and emotionally demanding.”

The above statement was an indication of the various roles that these teachers play at school, roles for which they were not prepared and found stressful to handle. A teacher from Focus group B stated that she found it difficult to exercise pastoral care and police learners for the serious offences that the pupils commit. She indicated her solution to the dilemma of multiple roles she had to play was by “adopting a strict, no nonsense, and unfriendly approach.”

This cause of work-related stress may be categorised as Role based stress. This theme to a certain degree overlaps with the themes of interpersonal relationship and professional demands. Another teacher from Focus Group B stated,

“... problem of pupil behaviour was viewed by managers as weakness on the part of the teachers. They managers expected teachers to resolve pupil behaviour issues by investigating incidences of violence, bullying, pregnancy, lack of motivation, absconding, poor attendance and poor academic performance. Hence, teachers are expected to fulfill the roles of police, counselor, doctor and parent.”

This multiplicity in roles that teachers are forced to play without any training, which is expected and taken for granted by managers as a professional obligation by teachers, has been revealed as a major cause of teacher work-related stressor by this study. “I simply cannot cope with the roles expected of me, I go home feeling drained.” said one teacher from Focus Group A.

4.3.3.5 Implementing Policies and Bureaucratic Processes:

Eighty percent of the respondents in the questionnaire indicated that they found implementing policies and bureaucratic processes as very stressful. Teachers in both focus groups indicated that whenever they questioned management they would be informed that the managers were acting according to policy, “... even though there was no written evidence of some of the policies,” pointed out a teacher from Focus Group A. There was agreement that managers were not transparent and used the hierarchical structure of the organisation to avoid addressing the inconsistencies and bias. When probed about biasness, a teacher cited the case of unequal distribution of workloads between managers and also the fact that some teachers were given lower workloads because they performed administrative functions of the managers. This was viewed as unfair and unprofessional. Another teacher from Group B indicated that when she questioned her HOD he stated that it was not a departmental issue and refused to raise or discuss the issue with her. It was evident that the teachers had no forum to address their concerns, as put by teacher, “burning issues could not be discussed.”

Restrictive bureaucratic style of management, interfering parents, adverse working conditions, excessive rules, poor salaries and status of educators, all have the potential to act as stressors (Harris & Hartman, 2002, p.407; Koslowski, 1998, p.45). The general eradication

in the status of teachers by the shoddy treatment when negotiating conditions of service, resulting in loss of salary caused immense stress in teachers in the recent years. Forcing teachers to take to the streets was demeaning to many teachers especially those who have been serving the community for many years and the emotional impact is sure to last for a long of time.

4.3.3.6 Teacher Appraisal

Teacher appraisal was revealed as a source of stress during the focus group interviews. Teachers indicated that the appraisal process required them to identify and admit to highs and lows in their teaching performance, under the guise of development. A teacher from Focus Group B pointed out “...when I rated myself with a rating of three or four, written evidence and proof was required. I was then reminded of all the negative issues of my performance and was forced to settle for a lower score.” Another teacher added “...teachers in other departments were scored higher even though they were not as committed as we are, because their H.O.D. was not strict and petty.”

The input made by the participants indicated that there were serious concerns with regard to the implication of the teacher appraisal system. The perception of the appraisal system and manner in which it was administered seems to have created undue tensions amongst teachers and teacher stress. The appraisal system of being “put under the microscope by your H.O.D. while teaching your class” indicated the stress that teachers endured during classroom observation. These causes (sub themes I and II above may be categorised as (Theme IV) School Factors.

4.3.3.7 Career Development

Inadequate training (common reason for the untimely resignation of novice teachers) to meet the demands of; teaching (the content and methodology), continuous learning (grappling with the ever changing curriculum) and professional development owing to time constraints, may lead to stress (Adams, 1999). Job insecurity, appraisal linked to salary or possibility of promotion may also cause stress in educators. Interference by the Governing bodies that affect chances of upward mobility is sure to create stress in aspiring teachers

Questionnaire also revealed that Job security was an issue mainly for the younger and less experienced (under 5 years at the school) and Scope for promotion was of greater concern and stressful for the older and more experienced teachers. This indicated a relationship between years of teaching experience and stress factors. Thus, the rationale for addressing factors of TWRS needs to be directed differently for the different groups of work experience. Managers need to acknowledge these factors which are group specific and address them directly with the groups concerned.

From the respondents to the questionnaire here were seven novice and teachers who were relatively new to the organisation. One such teacher from Group B, indicated that she was at a total loss and that her first experience was shocking.

“I was interviewed, given the work schedules, a timetable and introduced to the staff. A member of staff (Level One Teachers teacher) took me to my classroom” said, the teacher when questioned about induction and mentoring.

The other teachers (in both groups) confirmed that practices of induction and mentoring do not exist at their school. The senior teachers also confirmed that they were not inducted into the school or the profession nor mentored.

It appeared to the researcher that policies and practices were expected to be learnt through teacher experience. The above and many similar responses indicated the need for proper induction of all teachers upon joining the organisation and for continued mentoring programmes to assist the teacher in coping with the challenges the encounter whilst performing their job. The issue of staff induction and mentoring will be elaborated in greater detail in (4.2.4.) perceived role of managers in addressing teacher work-related stress and detailed recommendations with regard to teacher induction and mentoring will be made in the Chapter Five, as it was not covered in the literature reviewed in Chapter 2.

4.3.3.8 Home/work Interface

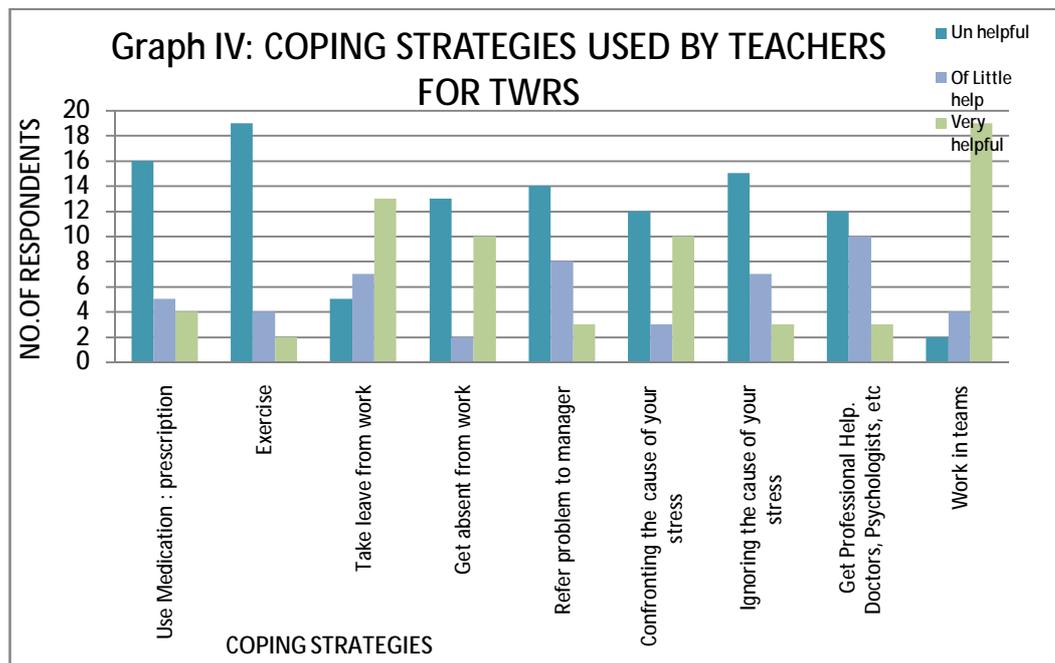
The high level of personal stress caused by their jobs, as well as the home life may become a significant source of stress. This happens when family life is adversely affected and the individual is trapped in a web of stress between work and home. The work and home stress may have a compound effect on the individual. In this instance the individual may resort to

alcohol or drugs for relief from the stressors. In the absence of positive intervention this may lead to a downward spiral and can ultimately lead to death by overdose or suicide.

This sub theme had not been fully pursued by the study, as indicated by the researcher that this study was aimed directly at the causes of stress in the work site. I do concede that considering the possible impact that this sub theme (group of factors) may have on the performance of teachers this assumption may be viewed as a limiting factor of this study.

However, the responses from the focus group interviews reveal that the factors responsible for teacher work-related stress cannot be neatly compartmentalised into the sub themes mentioned above. Pupil behaviour which Steyn and van Niekerk (2007), categorised as an interpersonal relationship stressor, impacted on the teacher’s ability to complete content (professional demand) and affected results (role based stress). Thus, indicating several cases in which these sub themes tend to overlap in terms of the impact they have on the teachers.

4.3.4 Strategies employed by teachers to cope with TWRS



From the questionnaire the most used coping strategies were working through teams 76 % , taking leave from work 5%, getting absent from work 40 % and confronting the cause of stress 40%. None of the respondents indicated any strategy other than those supplied in the questionnaire.

Teachers in both focus groups expressed their lack of coping strategies. Many teachers indicated that they were forced to remain at home in order to complete their work. "I am forced to stay at home and complete my marking in order to meet deadlines."

A teacher from focus group A stated that there were times when she could not meet the deadlines and would take sick leave. This, she said made her "feel morally wrong but I had no choice and was forced to do so". She said that it was easier to hand the medical certificate to her manager than to explain why her work was not completed.

4.3.4.1 Use of Medication

This strategy was frowned upon by most teachers from both focus groups. Questionnaire revealed that only 8% used medication to cope with TWRS. Most participants in both the focus groups did not admit to resorting to medication for relief from TWRS. However, one teacher from Focus Group A stated that "after teaching the Grade 9A class, I have a headache and take tablets to relieve myself." Another teacher from the same group responded that, "she frequently request for headache tablets from me which I also carry to school for migraine. I also experience the need for headache tablets (she removed a vial of Stilplane from her bag and showed it to all in the room)." She went on to admit that in trying to cope with her work difficulties and role as a new mother she had to be admitted to hospital for depression. She is still on medication and has to take a daily dose of Activan and often goes for physiotherapy because she experiences muscular pains which she attributes to "work tension".

The extent of the use of medication was not evident in the questionnaire, however the ambience of the focus group interview, the probing and possibly the accepted trust in the interviewer allowed for greater disclosure on the use of medication without any ethical violation. This revealed to the researcher two areas of concern, firstly, the extent of teacher work-related stress at the school and secondly, the fear of disclosing the use of medication. This indicated the possibility that more teachers were using medication to cope with teacher work-related stress than admitted.

When questioned as to whether teachers made managers aware of the physiological effect of TWRS that teachers were experiencing. There was a resounding, "No" from all

participants. A teacher from Focus Group B explained that she would state flu as the reason for her illness as she did not want the managers to think that she is weak and a drug user.

The above response suggests that this teacher viewed management as being judgemental and not as a source of relief from their work-related stress. When asked as to why she would think as she had indicated, she responded

“... During appraisal, it will be picked on and I will definitely be scored low because of what I said.”

I then probed into the relationship between teacher appraisal and teacher work-related stress (which was discussed under school factors which cause stress 4.2.3)

4.3.4.2 Leave from School

Forty eight percent of the respondents in the questionnaire that they would use leave from school as a means to cope with TWRS. Leave from school was viewed by teachers in both the focus groups as unacceptable as put by one teacher from Group A, that “the problem will still be there...” (Referring to the cause of stress). Another teacher from Group A indicated that leave was not easily granted and therefore they could only request leave in “extreme case”. One responded from Group B said, “some teachers were frequently granted leave. Another respondent stated that members of management and teachers, who were friends of managers, take leave frequently burdening the other teachers with relief teaching.” When asked whether this indicated that the granting of leave from school was not a fair process. Most teachers agreed by nodding their heads. When ask about their feelings as a result of this unfairness. A teacher from Group responded, “Well that’s why we stay away.” She added, that “some teachers and managers arrive frequently late to school and no action is taken against them, that is why I sometimes prefer to stay at home if I am delayed in the morning, instead of going late to school.”

4.3.4.3 Working through Teams

Seventy eight percent of the respondents to the questionnaire indicated that working through teams helped reduced their work related stress. The teachers in both focus groups agreed that this was the most viable and effective means of coping with teacher work-related stress. They indicated that team work enabled them to lighten their work load as they "... shared in the preparation of assessment task." They also found solace in sharing their burdens, "...and sometimes a listening ear is sufficient to bring me back to sanity..." as expressed one teacher from Group B.

In the questionnaire some participants indicated that teams only worked when "...all members were prepared to share the work equally." Working in teams may result in difference of opinions, personality clashes, domination by some individuals as well as indifferent attitude of some members, thus becomes a burden on others.

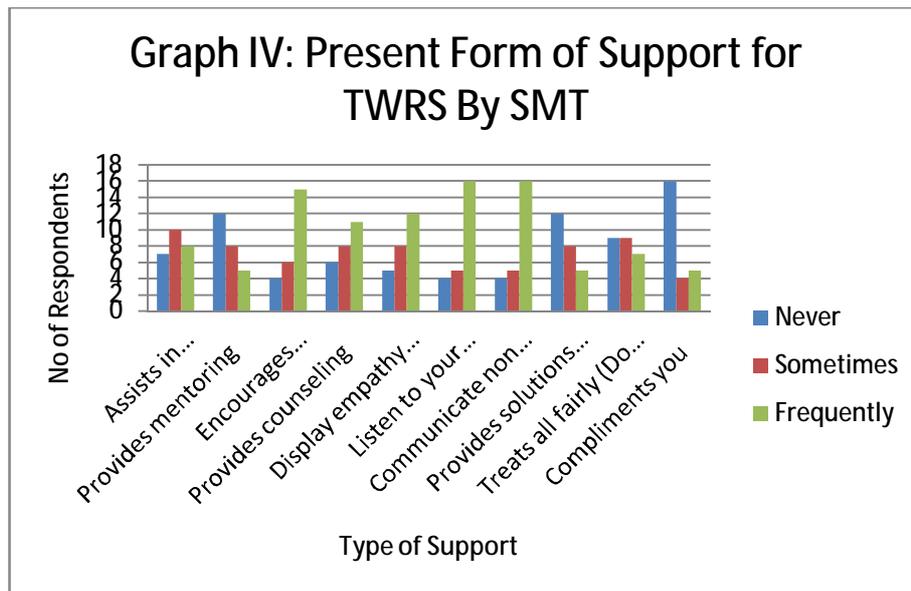
4.3.4.4 Controlling the cause of Work-related stress

Forty percent of the teachers indicated via the questionnaire, that they were able to cope by confronting the cause of their work-related stress. However, in both focus group interviews teachers agreed that they had little control over the causes of their work-related stress and made desperate attempts to cope.

One participant from Focus Group A indicated that, she was often not aware that she was stressed. She stated that she felt that "there was probably something wrong" (ill) with her when she could not complete tasks timeously. This would infer that teachers would not knowingly be able to control the stress and would probably resort to strategies like getting absent or taking leave from work in order to cope with the stressor.

A participant from Group B stated, "I had flu for three times this year and that it would take months to get better. Often we do not recognise that we were stressed and assumed that they were unwell as a result of natural causes (influenza, colds, etc); and in most case would treat these symptoms without contemplating the cause for the frequency or the duration of the illness."

4.3.5 Current Role played by the SMT in addressing TWRS

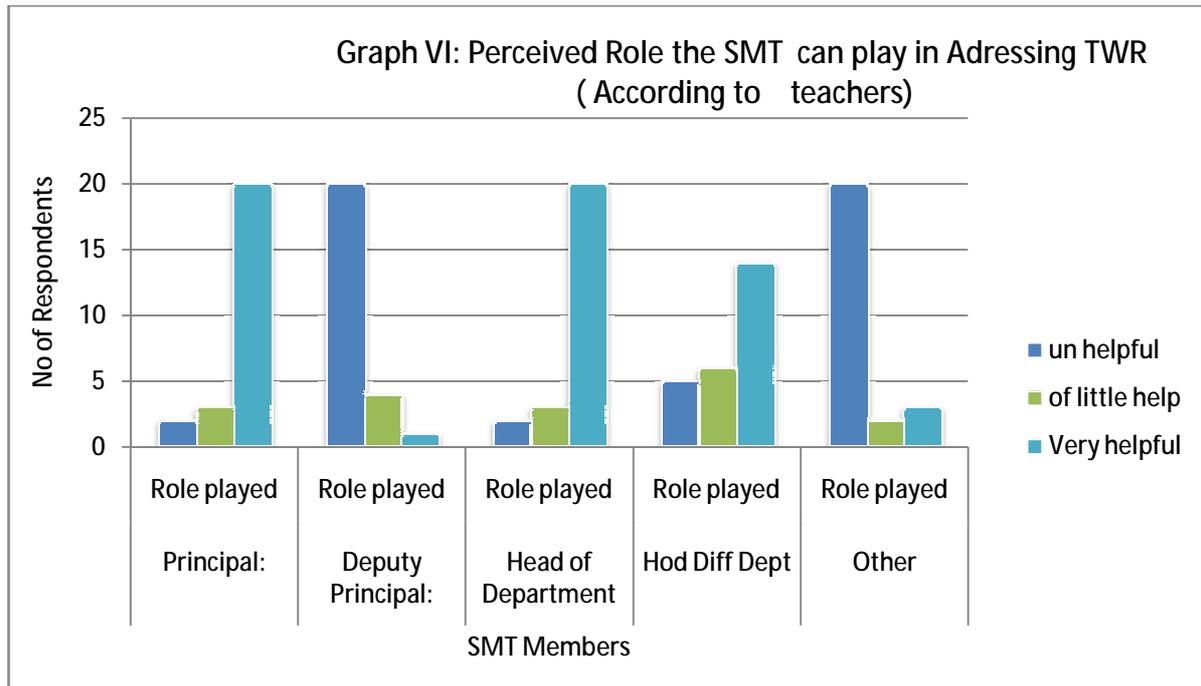


The teachers in both the focus group interviews agreed with the responses in the questionnaire that the managers helped them cope with their work-related stress by encouraging teamwork, some managers would listen to their (teachers) complaints, would not communicate aggressively and also display some degree of empathy. There was agreement that not all the managers were helpful. A participant from Group B commented that some managers were “merciless and self serving.” When I probed further, another participant from Group B replied, “no one wants to listen, all issues according to my HOD must be referred to the correct forum for discussion.”

The input from both groups indicated a high degree of frustration as the teachers felt that they were denied access to make input with regard to work-related issues caused their stress.

Data from both the questionnaire and interview suggest that teachers unanimous in their feeling that managers were not very helpful in addressing the teacher’s work-related stress. This would surely have a dire effect on the teacher’s mental and physical state, hence affecting the quality of teaching and learning at the school.

4.3.6 Role the teachers believe the SMT can play in addressing TWRS



The responses to the questionnaire and the interview indicated that there was agreement that the principal (80%) and the HOD (80%) to which the teacher belonged could play a vital role in addressing the work-related stress of the teachers. Teachers in the interview cited adopting an open door policy, listening and empathy, demonstrating strong leadership by being fair and transparent, would certainly decrease the teachers work-related stress.

“The role functions of management amongst others are to provide support and motivate teachers” said, a participant from Group A. There was agreement in both interview groups that some managers did provide support and motivation, however, most managers were said to be concerned with their own issues and cared less about the plight of the teachers.

There was indication that teachers were of the view that their departmental head and principal were directly responsible for addressing their work-related stress. This however did not imply that they (the principal and departmental head) were the cause of the teacher work-related stress, all the time.

The functional roles of managers to induct and mentor teachers were identified as the fundamental means for managers to address and to a greater degree relieve teacher work-related stress. There was unanimous confirmation that induction and mentoring does not exist and support for programmes of induction and mentoring is essential as most of the causes of

teacher work-related stress may be addressed. In light of this revelation the researcher chose to focus on these two emerging issues, with more specific reference to the novice and teachers new to the organisation.

According to Castetter (1996) in Steyn and van Niekerk (2008, p.206), staff induction is defined as “the organisation’s effort to enable and assist various categories of new staff members to adjust effectively to their work environment with the minimum of disruption and as quickly as possible, so that the organisation’s functioning can proceed as effectively as possible”. Induction may thus be viewed as the process which enables the new recruit to become familiar with the new organisation or when a member of staff takes up a new position with new responsibilities. No induction or poor induction programme, as indicated by teachers in the focus groups, would most certainly create work-related stress.

The smooth transition into an organisation with unfamiliar personnel, numerous policies and procedures may prove to be daunting for many new recruits and more especially novice teachers. Steyn and van Niekerk (2008) identified the following as potential problem areas for novice teachers:

A participant from Focus Group B indicated that he was overwhelmed when he entered the class. “Desks lined to the teachers table and the chalk board, room filled with about forty five unruly learners greeted me on entering my first class in this school,” expressed the participant.

“There is no space for the teacher to move in the class in order to maintain control and monitor the learners work,” said another participant from Group B, who went on to say, “...I did not experience such conditions as a pupil nor in my training was I prepared for such a reality.”

When faced with the demands of teaching in the classroom, and the gap between their ideals and reality, many beginning educators experience the full force of this reality shock (Koetsier & Wubbels, 1995, in Steyn & van Niekerk, 2008, p.207). Reality shock results from not being prepared for the demands of teaching (Whittaker, 2001, p.2). Confronted by unknown learners and staff, an unknown curriculum, unknown policies, procedures and unfamiliar norms and traditions in both the classroom and school (Whittaker, 2001, p.2), is sure to result in shock which may take up to two or three years to overcome. Information overload is a common experience of novice teachers resulting in reality shock. A participant from Focus

Group A stated that he was forced to work under these conditions which leave highly stress out at the end of each day. However, he believes that he does the best that he can do under the conditions that exist, but admits that this has definitely affected his ability to function at the level he is capable of and desires.

Another participant from Focus Group A, indicated that she did not know about absentee file and records, educator portfolio, how to mark registers and compile the statistics required by the school administration. She admitted that she was embarrassed to frequently ask other teachers and the managers, as they would “think lowly” of her, is what she expressed.

Novice teachers often complain that pre-service training does not equip them to deal with the realities of the profession. According to Mazibuko (1999, p. 598 in Steyn & van Niekerk, 2008, p 208) the beginning teachers find themselves lacking sufficient knowledge and skills for lesson preparation, teaching methods and assessment, pacing of lessons; and keeping up with the paperwork and classroom administration. Whitaker (2001, p.2) recognises that sometimes beginning teachers are simply unable to transfer the theory they learnt in pre-service training to what is what is done on a practical basis in the classroom. Managers ought to ensure that novice or teachers new to the organisation are properly inducted and supported through mentors (which may be senior or more experienced teachers).

Three teachers from both focus groups, who are relatively new to the organisation, indicated that they do not go to the staffroom. They all chose to remain in their classroom during the breaks. The reason for this was that they felt more at ease and comfortable with the learners instead of the staff. According to Mohr and Townsend (2001, p. 10. in Steyn & van Niekerk, 2008, p. 208) “isolation is characterised by geographic and professional isolation. In the school environment, teachers spend most of the day alone with learners (isolated from adult contact).” New teacher may also experience social isolation from close knit staff groups and victims of existing staff problems (Capel, 1998). Further to this, the arrival of new staff may affect the staff structure, cause professional jealousy and differences may arise; resulting in social isolation of the new teacher. According to Whitaker (2001) communication with colleagues, managers and supervisors is something educators experience as a need.

All of the abovementioned factors impact negatively on the new recruit and their smooth induction into the organisation and profession.

Mentoring is often associated with induction. However, according to Coleman (1997) induction is likely to be assisted with a degree of formal or informal mentoring by one or more people who are given, or take the responsibility for such initiation. According to Kram (1993) in Coleman (1997, p 160), “mentor relationship is that of an experienced adult in mid-life giving both career and psychological support to a young person entering the adult world., specifically the world of work.” The role of the mentor may be likened to that of a ‘counselor’, and a ‘coach’ and is more generally seen as ‘peer support’ (Bush, Coleman, Wall & West-Burnham, 1996). This role function of management was identified by a teacher from focus Group A, as one of the ways in which managers may relieve the work-related stress, to which the relatively younger teachers in both groups agreed.

Mentoring like induction is not restricted to novice teachers and trainee teachers but also middle managers and principals. A participant from Group B stated that even managers needed mentoring. He said, “They (managers) too were stressed.”

From the responses it seemed that teachers agreed that managers were expected to be effective mentors and needed to know what effective mentoring is.

4.4 Relationship between Theory and Data

Most transactional theorists, as indicated by Cox (1994), focus on the cognitive processes and emotional reactions underpinning individual’s interaction with their environment. Stress is viewed by these theorists as a problematic transaction between individuals and their environment. The data gathered in this study, from the work environment supports this theory of stress being a problematic interaction between individuals and their work environment. Elements from the work environment, in this case, the school, had been identified by the researcher, had been put forward to participants to either affirm, repudiate or to add other elements. The data revealed a resounding affirmation to most elements as being problematic and viewed as causes of teacher work-related stress.

According to Bush and Middlewood (1997) “Trying to understand stress is by no means an easy task.” Bush and Middlewood (1997) recommend that before looking for a definition for stress, we should consider what happens when a person becomes stressed. Umstot (1988) asserts that organisational consequence of work-related stress may be divided into; performance (poor), satisfaction (low), commitment (high absenteeism, tardiness) and quality of relationships (distrust, suspicion, low consideration). All of these claims made by Umstot

(1988) were identified by the data from the questionnaire and focus group interviews and supported by the analysis of the questionnaire through frequency tables and content analysis of data derived from the two focus group interviews in this study.

The notion forwarded by Bush and Middlewood (1997) indicating that appraisal is the evaluation process that gives person-environment transactions their meaning and the fact that managers are expected to appraise teachers emphasises the focus of the study (to highlight the role of management in addressing teacher work-related stress). The appraisal process involves monitoring the transaction and recognition of the problem in the person-environment transactions. This theory encompasses life events as well as work-related stress indicating that the individual teacher has the ultimate role in addressing their level of stress. The fact that this study did not focus on life events outside the school does not imply that the researcher does not concede the importance of the home elements and the impact thereof on the organisation (school), but deliberately chose to focus directly on the work-related stress within the confines of the organisation. This to an extent may be viewed as a limiting factor; however it was purposefully done, and in the view of the researcher, does not compromise the findings of the study and the subsequent conclusions formulated.

The modern view of stress reaction having its origins in the 'fight or flight' model that occurred when prehistoric humans were faced with a frightening situation, and the hormonal reaction to equip the body to prepare for the danger in the wild is now being used for action in social predicaments. The reaction in these instances, is frequently nonviolent, however, the signs (raised blood pressure, sick feeling in the stomach) are the same (Bush & Milwood, 1997). Many participants in the interview process attested to this, confirming the physiological and sometimes psychological effects of teacher work-related stress. The dilemma to take leave from school when stressed or to get absent from school in attempting to recover from the symptoms of work-related stress was emphasised in the interview process, even though many participants in the questionnaire did not indicate this. In the questionnaire most participants correctly commented that taking leave or staying at home did not remove the cause of their stress. The problem would still exist on their return to work. Despite acknowledging this, most participants indicated that they do take leave and get absent as a means of dealing or coping with their work-related stress.

4.5 Conclusion

The aim of this study was to explore the role of teachers and managers in addressing teacher work-related stress in an urban school in KwaZulu-Natal. The research design was structured using questionnaire and focus group interviews to illicit teacher's responses to the focus of the study by answering the research questions.

The findings reveal that 80% of the teachers are highly stressed and only 20% are not seriously affected by TWRS. The findings indentify various causes of teacher work-related stress, which were categorised and presented as themes and sub themes; and the degree to which these affect teachers. Also revealed in the study are the various means that teachers seek to use to cope with work-related stress and the perception of teachers on the role of managers in addressing teacher work-related stress.

The next chapter summarises the main findings and the information gathered in this chapter. It also makes recommendations and highlights related issues for future research and policy decisions.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter provides a summary of the study, presents the main findings of the questionnaire and focus group interviews, outlines the main conclusions emanating from the findings, and offers recommendations on strategies that can be employed teachers and managers in addressing teacher work-related stress; and puts forward recommendations with regard to related issues for future research on TWRS.

5.2 Summary of the study

As mentioned earlier this study sought to explore teacher work-related stress in a single urban secondary school in the Umlazi District in KwaZulu-Natal. The study was motivated by personal experience as a teacher for over twenty years during which I endured extremely high level of TWRS. Now as a manager I need to understand and help others cope with TWRS. The research report unfolds through five chapters. In Chapter One I highlighted the background and purpose of this study, the research problem, the research questions, the rationale for the research, summary of research aims, ethical issues, limitations of the study, research plan, proposed layout of the study . Chapter Two was divided into two main parts in which literature on stress and leadership and management were discussed. Some of the theories reviewed are Interactional Theories (Person Fit–environment Theory and Job Demand/Decision Latitude Theory); Transactional Theory of Stress and selected theories of Leader and Management. Chapter Three outlined the research methodology. The study was qualitative and interpretive using a case study design with the use of a questionnaire and two focus group interviews. In Chapter Four the data collected was presented in tables and graphs and analysed using frequency counts, percentages and underwent content analysis to develop meaning to teachers experiences with TWRS. Chapter Five below presents the findings of the study and makes recommendations for future research and policy changes .

5.3 Main findings of the study

Emerging from the study are the main findings which are summarised below according to the research questions

Research Question One: What cause/s teachers in schools to become stressed?

The data resoundingly indicate a very high level of work-related stress experienced by teachers at the case site (school). Data from this research and literature reviewed in chapter 2 supports the notion that teacher work-related stress has a severe negative impact on organisations in general and this site specifically.

Having established the level of stress to be very high, the study progressed in search of the causes of teacher work-related stress. Guided by literature the questionnaire was designed and administered to all Level One Teachers. The findings of which revealed professional demands (work load, expectations of managers), role based ambiguity, interpersonal relationship, school factors and home/work interface to be the main causes of stress.

Research Question Two: How do teachers seek to cope with work-related stress?

The various means that teachers used in their attempt to cope with teacher work-related stress were identified by the questionnaire and expounded during the focus group interview. The focus group interview allowed the researcher to obtain insight on the use of medication in attempting to cope with teacher work-related stress. This information was not revealed in the questionnaire and came to light only as a result of probing during the interview and as a result of the dynamics of the group structure, after one educator disclosed their use of medication many of the other teachers admitted to their use of medication. Thus, the large number of teachers that use medication to cope indicated the level and seriousness of teacher work-related stress and their fear of disclosing this information. Taking leave from school, getting absent, confronting the cause of stress and working through teams were the main ways in which teachers sought to cope with work-related stress. Exercise and professional help were not high on the list of coping strategies, but what was evident was that in some cases when the level of stress was unbearable professional assistance was sought.

Research Question Three: What do teachers believe managers can do in schools to reduce work-related stress in teachers?

The data revealed that teachers are under the perception that managers (their HOD and the principal) can play a major role in addressing teacher work-related stress. There is a strong indication that the teachers feel that at present, managers are not doing enough to assist teachers in dealing with teacher work-related stress. The two main roles identified in the study were that of induction (newly qualified and teachers new to the school) and mentoring of all teachers. These two roles will be discussed under recommendations

5.4 Conclusion

This study was guided by one key research question. Having analysed the data gathered in response to the research questions I was able to draw the following conclusions.

1. Teachers in schools are highly stressed. Much of the stress is work related. The level of teacher work related stress has a negative impact on the quality of teaching and efficiency of the organisation (high leave taking and absenteeism of teachers).
2. The causes of teacher work-related stress range from poor time management on the part of the individual based on character Type (A or B), school factors, career development, and lack of resources, interpersonal relationships and home/work interface. Many of which can be controlled by the individual. Inability to deal with most of the stressors identified by the teachers in this study stems from teachers lacking knowledge of their rights and the protocols to be followed in order to maintain professionalism.
3. Teachers seek various ways to cope with the symptoms of work related stress with little thought on addressing the stressor directly. The reason for this is probably that they are unaware that they are suffering from stress and tend to attribute the symptoms of stress as that of natural sickness. Hence, only temporary relief is achieved and the problem exacerbated. Working through teams, confronting the stressor are some of the recommended means to cope.

4. From the data it is evident that teachers tend to always blame and find fault with management. Whilst managers are viewed by teachers as the cause of much TWRS, teachers believe that the principal and the HOD (directly involved in the supervision of the teacher) can play important roles in addressing TWRS.

The ability of teachers to function in a completely stress free work environment may not be possible; however, every effort in reducing teacher work-related stress should be encouraged. Aside from the literature reviewed the negative impact of high teacher work-related stress on the quality of teaching and learning, as well as the organisation culture cannot be over emphasized. Teacher work-related stress as indicated in the literature may have serious physiological and psychological effect on teachers, which may impact directly on their ability to function effectively in the class or indirectly by means of poor attendance. This study by identifying possible causes of teacher work-related stress affords managers in particular to take cognizance of these stressors and to strategise for neutralising the effect of these factors. Proper planning, fair treatment, open channels for communication and effective management style are some of the suggestions forwarded by teachers in this study. Management attitude and style can have a major impact on reducing TWRS.

5.5 Recommendations

5.5.1 Recognise the presence of stress: In order for stress to be managed there is the need for recognising the presence of stress in the individual as well as in the organisation. Stress can be infectious (Hindle, 1998). Thus hands on collegial and participative management styles would allow for recognition of TWRS. It is important for managers to recognise Type A characteristics in teachers.

5.5.2 Design work to minimise peoples stress level: This allow for teachers to spend more time on effective teaching instead of unnecessary administrative tasks. Reduce administrative duties by effective management. Create effective time management plans for individuals within reasonable time line of the organisation.

5.5.3 Create channels for communication. Teachers must be provided with opportunities to raise issues or concerns. A participative leadership style would encourage open dialogue and prevent the accumulation of stressful situations which would lead to organisational stress. Participation in decision making reduces stress and is beneficial to both the individual and the organisation (Steyn & van Niekerk, 2008).

The data suggest a great need for effective induction and mentoring programs if teacher work-related stress is to be reduced and managed. The issues of induction and mentoring was not covered in the Literature Review (Chapter Two), but emerged strongly from the data in chapter Four. It is for this reason that I chose to discuss induction and mentoring in greater detail as part of my recommendations.

5.5.4 Induction:

5.5.4.1 Formulate a Framework for an Effective Induction Programme

The data highlighted the need for formulating a framework for an effective Induction programme as outlined below.

According to Canter and Canter (1999); Heyns (2000) and Whitaker (2001), in Steyn & van Niekerk (2008), staff induction programmes usually include the following:

- Ø *Matters relating to the school:* school culture, mission, vision statement policies, curricular and administration services offered by the school...)
- Ø *Staff related matters:* schools organisational structure, work allocation, job requirements.
- Ø *Teaching and the school's curriculum:* Classroom management, academic area, policies, teaching paradigm.
- Ø *Learner related matters:* classroom discipline, communication, how to deal with problematic learners and behaviour problems
- Ø *Educator-parent relationships:* Difficulties in working and communicating with parents.
- Ø *Physical and financial resources:* novice teachers should be acquainted with the school buildings, equipment and resources

Ø **Administration:** workloads, such as attendance register, assessment forms, stock register. These may be frustrating to the novice teacher.

5.5.4.2 Create an Induction Programme

The new staff members should receive help in the form of a planned induction programme. Brock and Grady (1998, p.181) suggests an induction process comprising of the following steps:

Step 1: Welcome

New recruit is made to feel welcomed and valued by their colleagues. They receive a warm reception.

Step 2: Initial Assistance

Experienced educators who are willing and have time are selected to work with the new teacher. After being trained, each mentor is assigned to a new teacher.

Step 3: Orientation Phase

The needs of the new teacher may be divided into those that are critical in the early year and those that occur late on. Orientation is to provide the teacher with new information which is essential. Information overload must be avoided as this could lead to stress.

Step 4: Needs Assessment

Individual teachers may have unique needs which require periodic needs assessment. professional development workshops must consider the new teacher.

Step 5: Ongoing Assistance and Development

Developmental induction is aimed at helping the new teachers to develop and refine those skills that they lack or need. According to Brock and Grady (1997, pp. 48-50), the following strategies may prove to be effective:

- Ø **Periodic meetings with the Principal:** feedback from the principal is critical to the beginner for the understanding their roles and responsibilities. There is a need for affirmation of the degree of their success or correction if necessary.
- Ø **Support from mentors**
- Ø **Informational meetings:** repeat of information given during the induction and answer question with regard to information given to the new teacher.
- Ø **Seminars and skills training:** topics appropriate to new teachers
- Ø **Peer observations:** learn from peers by observation, broaden their horizon.
- Ø **Social Functions:** to provide the new teacher to form relationship with colleagues and team building activities will help break social isolation

5.5.5 Introduce effective Mentoring

Whilst mentoring is often used with induction, the impact of mentoring may go beyond an induction process to become embedded in wider professional development. In this way mentoring can “extend the use of effective feedback, dialogue and target setting skills through a system of continuous professional development and support” (Smith, 1996, p.110. in Coleman, 1997).The benefit of a mentor is that there is someone on site who the teacher can talk to ; who has been at the school for more than a couple of years; who can hopefully give realistic guidelines as to what you might be achieving; who may know the schools strategies and routine and is clearly helpful.

Other benefits of mentoring to newly qualified teachers (NQT) range from:

- Ø Having a ‘sounding board’ of an experienced member of staff ,but one who is non-judgemental;
- Ø Being offered guidance and reassurance;
- Ø Receiving constructive feedback on progress
- Ø Having the opportunity to be observed whilst teaching

Types of mentoring activities

Earley and Kinder (1994, pp. 70-76) identified the following types of mentor activities:

- Ø Mentor as classroom support (mentor acts as an additional teacher)

- Ø Mentor as classroom analyst (mentor observes and comments on the practice of NQT).
- Ø Mentor as collaborative planner (mentor and NQT have joint curriculum planning sessions).
- Ø Mentor as an informationalist (mentor provides necessary knowledge, skills and shares experience with NQT).
- Ø Mentor as welfare monitor (provide support and psychological assistance, motivation)

Through the abovementioned types of mentoring many of the factors earlier identified as causes of teacher work-related stress may be addressed and possibly relieved. The importance of mentoring and a structured mentorship programme to the organisation and the profession, not merely for work-related stress, but as a whole, cannot be overemphasized, yet mentoring in our education system has been reduced to block sessions for student teachers and supervision by the subject heads in the school. Coleman (1997) identified the following factors which may affect mentoring:

Training of mentors

Training is important for the successful mentoring, “For mentoring to be successful, both the mentors and protégé should be prepared”, (Louw, 1995, p. 25 in Coleman 1997.). Daresh and Playko (1992, p.25) revealed in their research that “... even when individuals want to serve as mentors possess all the desirable characteristics of effective mentors, they still need additional training to carry out the important role”. Coleman *et al* (1996) identified the ability to listen and the personal qualities of openness and approachability as the most valued qualities of mentors. Whilst some teachers may be naturally equipped with the skills of mentoring, According to Coleman (1997); Sampson and Yeoman (1994, p .207) point out that “we cannot rely on this on this stock of natural talent” implying that training of mentors is essential.

The duties of most senior teachers and managers does not allow for sufficient time to implement the process of mentoring. Bush *et al* (1996, p. 127) “... that has got to be built in from the start and if it is not built in you end up with a situation where the thing has just drifted” imply that time should be made within the school timetable for mentoring. Simply expecting teachers to volunteer their services and sacrifice personal time for mentoring is definitely a tall order.

The constantly changing curriculum, high workloads and increased discipline problems in schools is taxing to teachers and managers; and as a result very few are willing to serve as mentors in proper mentorship programmes. Provision in terms of incentives (lower teaching time, non form...) may be a means by which staff may be encouraged to serve as mentors

Staff in educational organisations would continue to change as a result of promotions, transfers, resignations, and retirements and sometimes as a result of illness or death. Hence, new personnel will be required to fill the resultant vacancies. If the organisation is to function efficiently and the teachers to experience low or manageable of work-related stress then the transition of the new recruit into the organisation must be expedited by effective programmes of induction and mentoring. The successful adaptation of the new incumbent to the organisation depends largely on the quality of the induction and mentoring programme of the organisation.

There is a need for induction and mentoring to be used as means for managers to address teacher work-related stress, especially that of those teachers who have just entered the profession or is new to the organisation. This is not only supported by literature as mentioned above but also from the responses of the teachers interviewed.

5.6 Recommendations with regard to related issues for future research

On the basis of the literature reviewed and the main findings made earlier in this chapter, this section will refer to recommendations for future research

This study presents the view of Level One Teachers teacher at a single secondary school. It reveals the depth of the problem as well as the impact of teacher work-related stress on the school as indicated by the literature reviewed. This study identifies only some of the causes of work related. It provides thought for expanding the research field to include more schools and teachers in order to obtain a wider perspective on the issue of teacher work-related stress and may possibly allow for generalisation and theory formulation.

The study identified causes of teacher work-related stress; this paves the way for researchers to study and formulate theories and practices for reducing the effect of these stressors in schools. The data reveal that teachers have not developed effective strategies in coping with work-related stress; perhaps future studies on coping strategies may shed light with this regard.

This study also indicates that managers presently are not adequately addressing teacher work-related stress and teachers are of the opinion that the managers can play a pivotal role in addressing the issue. Hence, the scope for investigating how managers can assist in reducing teacher work-related stress may be undertaken. The effect of management styles on teacher work-related stress as well as that of organisational culture and structure may also be investigated.

The perspective presented is that of teachers, managers have not been allowed to present their perspective on the causes, as well as the role of managers in addressing teacher work-related stress. A future study may present the managers perspective.

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APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS

Instructions:

1. Please complete all questions in the space provided.
2. Should you have a problem or difficulty in answering any question, please consult me, or comment thereof, at the end of the questionnaire?

Section A: Biographical Detail (Personal Details of Respondent)

Please **cross (X)** to indicate your response to the question, in the space provided.

4.2. Gender

Male	Female

4.3. Age (in years)

Below 30	30-39	40-49	50-59	60 and above

4.4. Teaching Experience in years

Below 5	6-10	11-15	16-20	21-25	26-30	31-40	Above 40

4.5. Experience (in present school) in years

Below 5	6-10	11-15	16-20	21-25	26-30	31-40	Above 40

Section B

5. Level of stress

Use the following key to rank your level of work-related stress.

2.1. How stressful is your work?

Level	Not stressful	Slightly(seldom) stressful	More often stressful than not	Frequently stressful	Always stressful
Rank	1	2	3	4	5
Response					

2.2. Using the key from (2.1.) above, place a cross (x) in the column that best describes the cause and level of your work-related stress. Comment on any cause if necessary. You may use the back of this sheet if the space provided is insufficient.

Factor	Rank (Level of stress)					Comment (If necessary)
	1	2	3	4	5	
Pupil Behaviour						
Lack of resources						
Time management (Due dates)						
Work load						
Expectations of managers						
Planning of lessons						
Safety and security at work						
Relationship with learners						
Relationship with colleagues						
Relationship with manager/s						
Job security						
Scope for Promotion						
Implementin g policies						
Bureaucratic Procedures						
Other: (list)						

Adapted from Steyn &van Niekerk (2007.p166-167)

SECTION C: (Coping Strategies)

3. Coping Strategies:

Place a tick in the column which best describes how you cope with work-related stress. Feel free to comment on any strategy. You may use the back of this sheet if the space provided is insufficient.

Coping Strategy	Un helpful	Little help	Very helpful	Comment
Use Medication : prescription				
Exercise				
Take leave from work				
Get absent from work				
Refer problem to manager				
Confronting the cause of your stress				
Ignoring the cause of your stress				
Get Professional Help. Doctors, Psychologists, etc				
Work in teams				
<i>N.B. The above coping strategies have been adapted from Steyn and van Niekerk(2008,p.186)</i>				
(Any Other)				

SECTION D: ROLE OF (SMT) MANAGERS

4.1. Rate the managers from your school (according to the scale provided) on the role you feel that your manager may play in addressing your work-related stress? Please elaborate as to why you have rated them accordingly.

Manager	Un helpful	Of Little help	Very helpful	Elaborate and explain how the manager can address your work-related stress.
Principal				
Deputy Principal				
Head of Department (To which you belong)				
Head of Department (Not from your department)				
Other				

E. General

5. Comment on any aspect/s from sections A, B, C or D.

Thank you for co-operation and participation in this study.

APPENDIX B

FOCUS GROUP QUESTION SCHEDULE

Questions will be asked by interviewer and audio and written recordings will be made.

Introduction:

Thank all for taking the time and making the effort in contributing to the study. You are reminded that participation in this study is voluntary and you may withdraw at any stage. No correct names will be used and all members have to be sworn to secrecy in terms of participation and written consent must be provided.

I hope that the discussion will yield data to answer the research questions and in so doing assist in our understanding and providing means to cope with work-related stress in teachers.

Question Schedule

1. Experiences of stress:

- a. Do you experience work-related stress?
- b. What are some of the indications that you are stressed?

2. Key causes of work-related stress.

- a. In your experience what would you say are some of the causes of work-related stress?

Focus on

- Ø Teaching and learning
- Ø Planning ,organising and coordinating
- Ø Professional Development
- Ø Policies and Practices
- Ø Human relationships at work

3. Effects of work-related stress.

- a. How does work-related stress affect you personally?
- b. How does work-related stress affect your functioning at school?
- c. How does teacher's work-related stress affect the school?

4. Coping with stress.

- a. How do you cope with work-related stress?
- b. How successful are you in coping with work-related stress?

5. Role of managers in addressing work-related stress of teachers.

- a. What role do you think that managers can play in the creation/ relief of work-related stress?
 - b. How successful are the managers (at your school) in addressing your work-related stress?
6. **General:** Are there any other input you would like to make with regarding to the role of teachers and managers in addressing work relate stress of teachers.
7. **Conclusion:** Thank you for your participation

APPENDIX C
REQUEST FOR PARTICIPATION

64 Elburn
7 Wolseley Road
Morningside
4092
6th October 2012

The Participant

..... Secondary School

Dear Participant

RE: REQUEST FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION

I am a master's student conducting a research project entitled: The role of teachers and managers (SMT) in addressing teacher work related stress.

I humbly appeal to you to participate in this study by consenting to be a member of a focus group which will comprise only of level one educator's from your school. The interview will be conducted at your school at a convenient day and time after school.

Note to participants:

Your identity will not be divulged under any circumstance.

Participation is voluntary and you may withdraw from the study at any time.

You would be shown the findings prior to it being submitted to ensure that your contribution is accurate and acceptable to you.

All responses will be treated with strict confidentiality.

You will not be forced to disclose information you do not want revealed.

Written notes and audio recordings will be done and stored in my personal safe for five years and thereafter incinerated.

This study is supervised by Professor Vitallis Chikoko, Tel. 031 260 2639.

My contact: cell 00837844601; Email address: jayce.padayachee966@gmail.com

I thank you in advance

Yours Sincerely

Jayce Padayachee

If you understand the request and agree to participate, please sign the declaration form below.

.....

DECLARATION FORM

I..... (Full name of participant) hereby confirm that I have read and understood the contents of this document and the nature of the study; and consent to participate in the study.

I understand that I am a liberty to withdraw from the project at any time, should I desire.

.....

.....

Signature

Date

APPENDIX D

64 Elburn
7 Wolseley Road
Morningside
4092
6th October 2012

The Principal

..... Secondary School

Dear Sir,

RE: REQUEST TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN YOUR SCHOOL

I am a master's student conducting a research project entitled: The role of teachers and managers (SMT) in addressing teacher work related stress.

I humbly appeal to you to permit me to conduct my study at your school. The study will only involve level on teachers who will be required to complete a questionnaire and selected teachers to participate in two focus group interviews which will be conducted after school. Teachers may withdraw from the study at anytime.

Focus group interviews will be conducted to gather data on their experiences of work-related stress. All information (names of participants and school) will not be revealed.

I hope that the findings from this study will be beneficial to the teachers and the school as a whole.

My contact details and that of my supervisor are below. Should you require any clarification please do not hesitate to contact me or my supervisor?

This study is supervised by Professor Vitallis Chikoko, Tel. 031 260 2639.

My contact: cell 00837844601; Email address: jayce.padayachee966@gmail.com

I thank you in advance

Yours Sincerely

Jayce Padayachee

If you understand the request and agree to permit the study, please sign the consent form below.

.....

CONSENT FORM

I..... (Full name of PRINCIPAL) hereby confirm that I have read and understood the contents of this document and the nature of the study; and consent to the study being undertaken in my school.

.....

.....

Signature

Date

APPENDIX E



Application for Permission to Conduct Research in KwaZulu Natal Department of Education Institutions

1. Applicants Details

Title: Mr. Surname: PADAYACHEE
Name(s) Of Applicant(s): DHANABALAN Email: jayce.padayachee966@gmail.com
Tel No: 031-2080895 Fax: _____ Cell: 0837844601
Postal Address: 64 Elburn, 7 Wolseley Road, Morningside, 4091

2. Proposed Research Title:

Mapping the causes of stress : The role of managers in addressing work related stress in teachers

3. Have you applied for permission to conduct this research or any other research within the KZNDoe institutions?

Yes	No
	x

If "yes", please state reference Number: N/A

4. Is the proposed research part of a tertiary qualification?

Yes	No
X	

If "yes"

Name of tertiary institution: UNIVERSITY OF KZN- EDGEWOOD

Faculty and or School: EDUCATION

Qualification: MASTERS IN EDUCATION

Name of Supervisor: PROF.V. CHIKOKO

Supervisors Signature: _____

5. Briefly state the Research Background

A common thread that weaves through the discontent amongst teachers is claimed to be the high level of stress in schools. The high level of teacher absenteeism and leave taking by teachers, as well as the high rate of sick leave taken by teachers for stress related conditions is of grave concern. The impact of teacher absenteeism translates directly into a loss of teaching time. The effect of the cumulative loss of teaching time over the year by a single teacher added to that by other teachers in the school which teach a child in a single year cannot be recovered nor can the impact be overcome.

According to the Department of Education teacher absenteeism, casual leave from school and late arrival at school is high on the list of serious concerns. In the school environment stress does not only affect the individual teacher or manager, but also the school as organisation. Stressed workers would definitely not be able to perform at their peak and deliver the quality of service which would be expected. Some of the results of stress on teachers ,aside from irregular attendance at work , are lack of preparation, high level of work disorganization, reduced tolerance of others, violent behaviour, unpredictable mood swings inability to keep up with deadlines are but a few of the many symptoms.

The quality of teaching and learning is sure to be directly affected when teachers are stressed. It is in the interest of all role players that teacher stress and more specific work related stress need to be minimised and carefully monitored and managed. Thus, changing the organisation and its environment in ways that will reduce stress and make it more manageable will result in changes that benefit all stakeholders and the organisation as a whole (Steyn & van Niekerk, 2008).

This research project will focus on the professional relationships between school managers (SMT) and their teaching staff. It explores the perceptions of secondary school teachers, on the role of managers in addressing stress amongst teachers.

I am the Head of the Department of Mathematics and Science at a public secondary school and a member of the school SMT. As the head of a department I am tasked to manage fifteen teachers and I am directly responsible for the quality of teaching rendered by these teachers. Aside from my managerial responsibilities I teach classes and share the difficulties experienced by teachers not just in the classroom but in the school as a whole.

The high expectations of parents, politicians and departmental officials are directed through principals and departmental managers to teachers. The high expectations, frequent changes in curriculum and policies together with lack of resources and support has placed immense stress on teachers. The element of change as a result of political pressure arising from transformation from an apartheid state to a democratic one, coupled

with the changing world view and economics, has impacted on our system of education. It is through the lens of managing change that the role of SMT in managing work related stress of teachers will be viewed.

In secondary schools the public and political interest in the results of the matric examinations has placed immense stress not only on the learner but the teacher and the school. Schools are ranked according to the results and categorised into underperforming school when the pass rate is below fifty percent. Teachers and managers in the underperforming schools then come under the microscope and are indirectly blamed for the poor results. The stress experience by teachers in preparing learners for the matric examinations is evident by the numerous hours spent after school, weekends and during the holidays.

The question that arises is how do we reduce and work related stress as teachers and managers. The presence of stress seem to be unavoidable but can it be reduced, if yes then how; and if not how can it be managed. This research hope to identify the causes of teacher work related stress and attempt to explore the role of managers in reducing and managing teachers work related stress.

6. What is the main research question(s)

KEY RESEARCH QUESTION

What role do managers play in addressing work related stress in teachers?

Research Questions:

1. What cause/s teachers in schools to become stressed?
2. How do teachers perceive the SMT's role in addressing work related stress?

7. Methodology including sampling procedures and the people to be included in the sample:

This research project seeks to explore the professional relationship between school managers and teaching staff. The methodology employed is of a qualitative nature as it explores the beliefs, values and systems constructed within the school as a learning organisation.

A case study will be done. Yin (2009) lists the three conditions which determine the use of a case study approach, to be firstly, the form of a research question (how, why?); secondly, the study does not require any control of behavioural events and finally, focuses on contemporary events. According to Yin (2009, p.9) exploratory questions deals with “operational links needing to be traced over time, rather than mere frequencies or incidence.” As my study explores the perceptions of secondary school teachers on the role of managers in addressing work related stress meets all of the above conditions, my decision to use a case study approach is justified.

According to Cohen, *et al.* (2007, p.352) “the number of types of interview given is frequently a function of the sources one reads.” and cites six types of interviews. Bogdan and Biklen (1992) added semi-structured interviews as a method for data collection.

To obtain the necessary data I elect to use personal semi structured interviews. An interview is a two way conversation in which the interviewer (usually the researcher) asks the participant questions, in order to collect data to learn about the ideas, beliefs, views, opinions and behaviours about the participant. The very nature of interviewing involves both visual and verbal contact between the interviewee (respondent) and the interviewer (researcher) and as such may have positive or negative impact on the data obtained (a challenge to the research).

This research would employ a semi-structured approach. The rationale for this is that the researcher acknowledges the fact that he is not an experienced interviewer and a prepared interview schedule would provide a much needed guidance and uniformity in conducting the interview. Audio recording would be used to allow the interviewer to focus on the responses and be free from immediate writing of the responses.

Method of sample selection:

I will choose to use the secondary school in which I teach as the research site because it is most convenient and meets my need for investigating an urban, working class secondary public school. I would be able to easily obtain the permission of the principal to conduct the research, the teachers would be obliging and would be honest, venue for the interview would be easily accessible (the conference room at school); time and cost would not be a problem as the interviews would be conducted during free periods, after school or during

the breaks. Written consent could be easily obtained from the principal and teachers.

There are five departments in this school; with five heads of departments and each with about six teachers. I would choose to interview one teacher from each of the four departments. I would randomly select one male and one female per department.

A thick description of the context within which the school functions will be provided in keeping the style for case studies as outlined by Manion *et al* (2007). The study will be supported by a review of documents from the school via a questionnaire which will be completed by the principal or the deputy principal of the school. Five teachers from the school (one from each department) will be selected randomly and interviewed. A semi structured interview will be conducted and the responses audio recorded as well as notes will be taken by the interviewer. An interview schedule will be used to ensure that key questions are posed to all respondents and will allow for the interviewer to probe responses for greater depth or clarity.

8. What contribution will the proposed study make to the education, health, safety, welfare of the learners and to the education system as a whole?: _____
- Reduce work related stress amongst teachers.
 - Provide insight for managers to assist stressed teachers.
 - Assist managers to lower teacher work related stress
 - Improve teacher attendance and reduce taking of leave from school by teachers.
 - Improve the teacher morale.
 - Improve manager teacher relationship.
 - Improve the quality of teaching and learning in schools.

9. KZN Department of Education Schools or Institutions from which sample will be drawn – If the list is long please attach at the end of the form

--	--	--

10. Research data collection instruments: *(Note: a list and only a brief description is required here - the actual instruments must be attached):*

Questionnaire (Completed by Principal)

Interview Schedule

11. Procedure for obtaining consent of participants and where appropriate parents or guardians:

Letters of consent from the Principal and teachers participating in the investigation.

12. Procedure to maintain confidentiality (if applicable): _____

No real names will be disclosed or published (pseudo names will be used). Interviews will be conducted individually and privately.

13. Questions or issues with the potential to be intrusive, upsetting or incriminating to participants (if applicable). NONE

14. Additional support available to participants in the event of disturbance resulting from intrusive questions or issues (if applicable): _____

None required

15. Research Timelines

July 2012 to 1 December 2012

16. Declaration

I hereby agree to comply with the relevant ethical conduct to ensure that participants' privacy and the confidentiality of records and other critical information.

I _____ declare that the above information is true and correct

Signature of Applicant

Date

17. Agreement to provide and to grant the KwaZulu Natal Department of Education the right to publish a summary of the report.

I/We agree to provide the KwaZulu Natal Department of Education with a copy of any report or dissertation written on the basis of information gained through the research activities described in this application.

I/We grant the KwaZulu Natal Department of Education the right to publish an edited summary of this report or dissertation using the print or electronic media.

Signature of Applicant(s)

Date

Appendices of Tables

Table VI: Current Role the SMT plays in addressing TRS

Support	Level of Support offered by SMT (Principal, Deputy and HOD)		
	Never	Sometimes	Frequently
Assists in professional development	7	10	8
Provides mentoring	12	8	5
Encourages Teamwork	4	6	15
Provides counseling	6	8	11
Display empathy when addressing your concerns/problems	5	8	12
Listen to your concern/s	4	5	16
Communicate non aggressively	4	5	16
Provides solutions to your issues/concerns	12	8	5
Treats all fairly (Do not display favouritism)	9	9	7
Compliments you	16	4	5
Other			

Table V: Factors which Cause teacher work-related stress (TWRS)

Factor		Rank (Level of stress)					N
		1	2	3	4	5	
Pupil Behaviour	N	4	2	3	2	14	25
	%	16	8	12	8	56	100
Lack of resources	N	2	3	3	5	12	25
	%	8	12	12	20	48	100
Time management (Due dates)	N	2	2	4	5	12	25
	%	8	8	16	20	48	100
Work load	N	0	0	6	5	14	25
	%	0	0	24	20	56	100
Expectations of managers	N	2	1	6	5	11	25
	%	8	4	24	20	44	100
Planning of lessons	%	12	2	5	3	3	25
		48	8	20	12	12	100
Safety and security at work	N	5	2	10	5	3	25
	%	20	8	40	20	12	100
Relationship with learners	N	12	6	2	3	2	25
	%	48	24	8	12	8	100
Relationship with colleagues	N	9	3	6	3	4	25
	%	36	12	24	12	16	100
Relationship with manager/s	N	5	5	8	4	3	25
	%	20	20	32	16	12	100
Job security	N	12	5	4	2	2	25
	%	48	20	16	8	8	100
Scope for Promotion	N	8	2	6	4	5	25
	%	32	8	24	16	20	100
Implementing policies	N	0	3	5	7	10	25
	%	0	12	20	28	40	100
Bureaucratic Procedures	N	1	2	2	5	15	25
	%	4	8	8	20	60	100

Adapted from Steyn & van Niekerk (2007.p166-167)

Key for above table

Level	Not stressful	Slightly(seldom) stressful	More often stressful than not	Frequently stressful	Always stressful	Total
Rank	1	2	3	4	5	

Table V: Strategies employed by teachers to cope with TWRS

Coping Strategy		Un helpful	Of Little help	Very helpful	N
Use Medication : prescription	N	16	5	4	25
	%	64	20	16	100
Exercise	N	19	4	2	25
	%	76	16	8	100
Take leave from work	N	5	7	13	25
	%	20	28	52	100
Get absent from work	N	13	2	10	25
	%	52	8	40	100
Refer problem to manager	N	14	8	3	25
	%	56	32	12	100
Confronting the cause of your stress	N	12	3	10	25
	%	48	12	40	100
Ignoring the cause of your stress	N	15	7	3	25
	%	60	28	12	100
Get Professional Help. Doctors, Psychologists,	N	12	10	3	25
	%	48	40	12	100
Work in teams	N	2	4	19	25
	%	8	16	76	100

Table VI: Current Role the SMT plays in addressing TRS

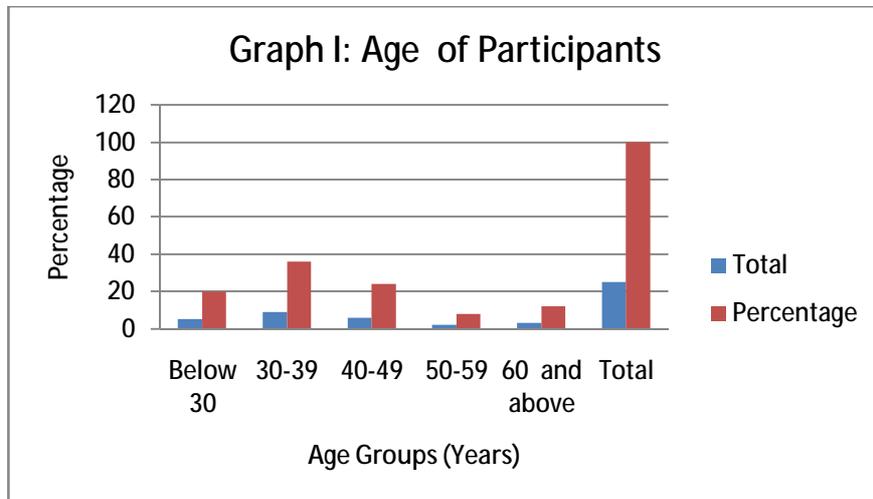
Firer, S. (2002). 'The right staff'. <i>People dynamics</i> , 20Support	Level of Support offered by SMT (Principal, Deputy and HOD)		
	Never	Sometimes	Frequently
Assists in professional development	7	10	8
Provides mentoring	12	8	5
Encourages Teamwork	4	6	15
Provides counseling	6	8	11
Display empathy when addressing your concerns/problems	5	8	12
Listen to your concern/s	4	5	16
Communicate non aggressively	4	5	16
Provides solutions to your issues/concerns	12	8	5
Treats all fairly (Do not display favouritism)	9	9	7
Compliments you	16	4	5

Table VII: Role the teachers believe the SMT can play in addressing TWRS

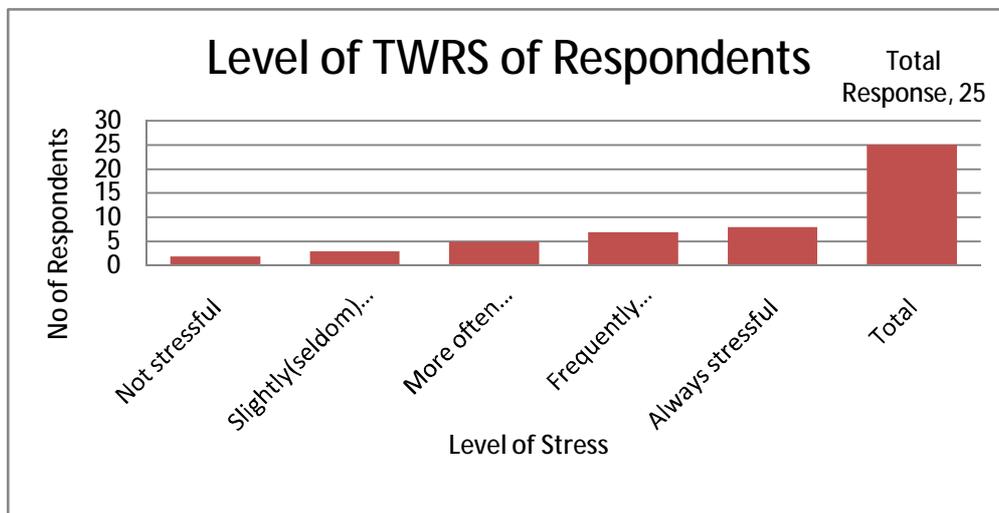
Manager		Un helpful	Of Little help	Very helpful	N
Principal:	N	20	3	2	25
	%	80	12	8	100
Deputy Principal:	N	20	4	1	25
	%	80	16	4	100
Head of Department (To which you belong):	N	2	3	20	25
	%	8	12	80	100
Head of Department (Not from your department)	N	5	6	14	25
	%	20	24	56	100
Other	N	20	2	3	25
	%	80	8	12	100

APPENDIX OF GRAPHS

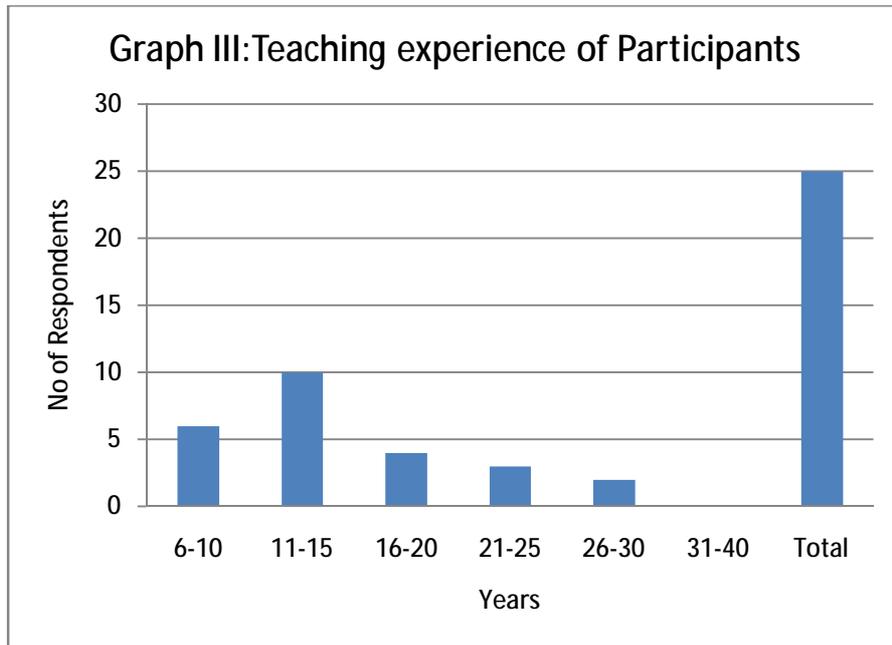
GRAPH I



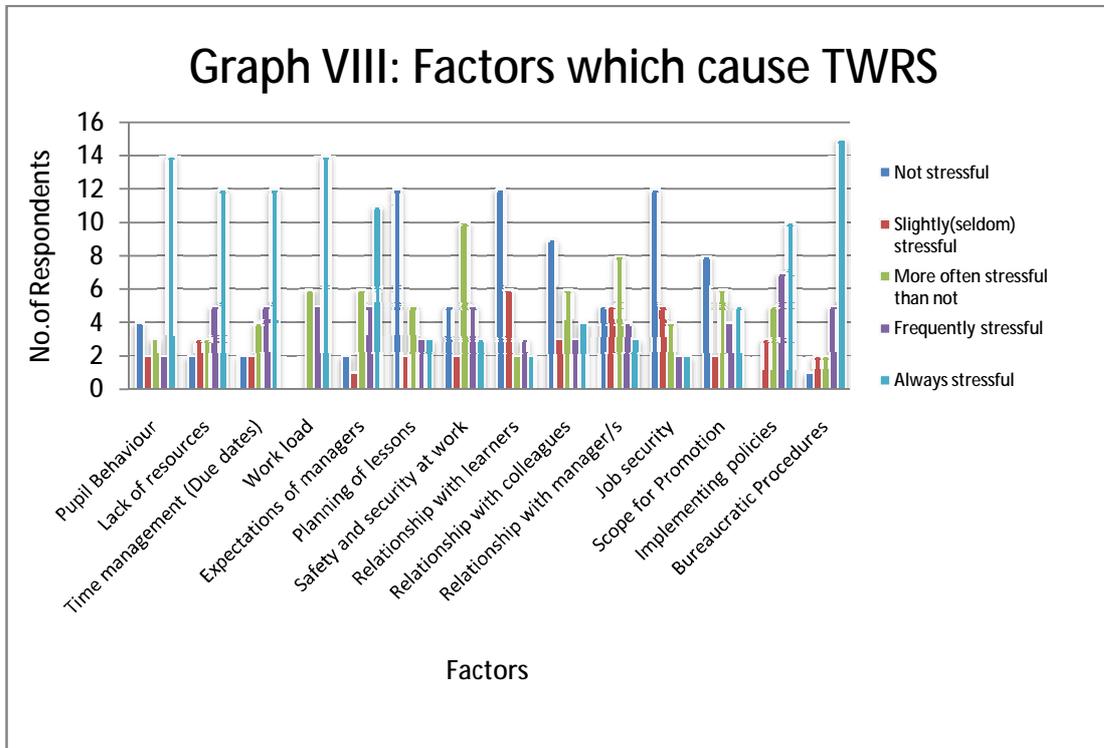
GRAPH II



GRAPH III



GRAPH IV





kzn education

Department:
Education
KWAZULU-NATAL

Enquiries: Sibusiso Alwar

Tel: 033 341 8610

Ref.:214/8/287

Mr Dhanabalan Padayachee

7 Woisley Road
Morningside
4091

Dear Mr Padayachee

PERMISSION TO CONDUCT RESEARCH IN THE KZN DoE INSTITUTIONS

Your application to conduct research entitled: **Mapping the causes of Stress: The Role of Managers in Addressing work related stress in Teachers in the Mpumalanga-Mozambique Department of Education Institutions** has been received.

- The conditions of the approval are as follows:
1. The researcher will make all the arrangements concerning the research.
 2. The researcher must ensure that Educator and learning programmes are not interrupted.
 3. Interviews are not conducted during the time of writing examinations in schools.
 4. Learners, Educators, Schools and Institutions are not identifiable in any way from the results of the research.
 5. A copy of this letter is submitted to District Managers, Principals and Heads of Institutions where the research is to be conducted.
 6. The period of investigation is limited to the period from 01 August 2012 to 31 December 2012.
 7. Your research and interviews will be limited to the schools you have proposed and approved by the Head of Department. Please note that Principals, Educators, Departmental Officials and Learners are not to be identified in any way from the results of the research.
 8. Upon completion of the research, a brief summary of the findings, recommendations or a full report / dissertation / thesis must be submitted to the research office at the Department of Education, P.O. Box 1110, Pietermaritzburg, 6001.
 10. Please note that your research and interviews will be limited to the following schools and institutions:

10.1


Mcebisi D. Goniwe
Head of Department: Education

24-08-2012
Date

*...dedicated to service and performance
beyond the call of duty.*



No. 0000

28 Aug. 2012 16:21



UNIVERSITY OF
KWAZULU-NATAL
INYUVESI
YAKWAZULU-NATALI

26 September 2012

Mr Dhamabelan Padayachee 8116866
School of Education, Leadership, Management & Policy
Edgewood Campus

Dear Mr Padayachee

Protocol reference number: HSS/0635/012M

Project title: Mapping the causes of stress in teachers: The role of school leadership in addressing work related stress

EXPEDITED APPROVAL

This letter serves to notify you that your application in connection with the above has now been granted full approval following your response to queries raised by the Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee.

Any alteration/s to the approved research protocol i.e. Questionnaire/Interview Schedule, Informed Consent Form, Title of the Project, Location of the Study, Research Approach/Methods must be reviewed and approved through an amendment /modification prior to its implementation. In case you have further queries, please quote the above reference number. PLEASE NOTE: Research data should be securely stored in the school/department for a period of 5 years

Best wishes for the successful completion of your research protocol.

Yours faithfully

Professor Steven Collings (Chair)

/pk

cc Supervisor Professor Vitalis Chikoko
cc Academic Leader Dr D Davids
cc School Admin. Mrs S Naicker

Professor S Collings (Chair)
Humanities & Social Sc Research Ethics Committee
Westville Campus, Govan Mbeki Building
Postal Address: Private Bag X54001, Durban, 4000, South Africa
Telephone: +27 (0)31 260 3567/8350 Facsimile: +27 (0)31 260 4609 Email: ximbcp@ukzn.ac.za / snyman@ukzn.ac.za
Founding Campuses: ■ Edgewood ■ Howard College ■ Medical School ■ Pietermaritzburg ■ Westville



INSPIRING GREATNESS