OCCUPATIONAL STRESS AMONG TEACHERS IN THE GOVERNMENT AIDED CHINESE COMMITTEE PRIMARY SCHOOLS (GRADE A) IN ZONE TWO URBAN DISTRICT AREA OF KUCHING, SARAWAK

Chin Ngien Siong

Kota Samarahan
2002
OCCUPATIONAL STRESS AMONG TEACHERS IN THE GOVERNMENT AIDED CHINESE COMMITTEE PRIMARY SCHOOLS (GRADE A) IN ZONE TWO URBAN DISTRICT AREA OF KUCHING, SARAWAK

By

Chin Ngien Siong

A Research Paper Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirement For the Degree of Corporate Master in Business Administration Faculty of Economics and Business Universiti Malaysia Sarawak 2002
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHAPTER</th>
<th>INTRODUCTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>Introduction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>Statement of Problem</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>Objective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.3</td>
<td>Specific Objectives</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.4</td>
<td>Research Questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5</td>
<td>Significance of Study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>Limitation of the Study</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.7</td>
<td>Definition of Terms</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.8</td>
<td>Conclusion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CHAPTER</th>
<th>LITERATURE REVIEW</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2.1</td>
<td>Definitions of Stress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>Teacher Stress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.3</td>
<td>Model of Teacher Stress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>Sources of Stress in Teaching</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.5</td>
<td>The Prevalence of Teacher Stress</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.6</td>
<td>Conclusion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Chapter III  RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>3.1</td>
<td>Research Framework</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.2</td>
<td>Population and Sample</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.3</td>
<td>Research Instrument</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.4</td>
<td>Pre-testing of the Instrument</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.5</td>
<td>Collection of Data</td>
<td>31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.6</td>
<td>Analysis of Data</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>Conclusion</td>
<td>32</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Chapter IV  FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>Findings</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1.1</td>
<td>Respondents’ Demographic Characteristics</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1.1.1</td>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>33</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1.1.2</td>
<td>Age</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1.1.3</td>
<td>Race</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1.1.4</td>
<td>Marital Status</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1.1.5</td>
<td>Academic Qualification</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1.1.6</td>
<td>Teaching Category</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1.1.7</td>
<td>Teaching Experience</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1.1.8</td>
<td>Teaching Subjects</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1.1.9</td>
<td>Level of Pupils</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1.1.10</td>
<td>Class category</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1.2</td>
<td>Levels of occupational stress among teachers</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1.3</td>
<td>Factors affecting teacher’s occupational stress</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1.4</td>
<td>Difference in the stress level by gender</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1.5</td>
<td>Difference in the stress level and marital status</td>
<td>42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1.6</td>
<td>Difference in the stress level and academic qualification</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1.7</td>
<td>Difference in stress level and age group</td>
<td>43</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.1.8 Difference in the stress level and teaching workload ........................ 46
4.1.9 Difference in stress level and teaching experience ....................... 48
4.2 Conclusion ............................................. 49

Chapter V  CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS
5.1 The Research Outcome ......................... 51
5.2 Recommendations ................................. 53
5.2.1 Teachers ............................................. 54
5.2.2 Headmasters/Headmistress..... 55
5.2.3 School ............................ 56
5.2.4 State Education Department ... 57
5.3 Recommendations For Future Research 58
5.4 Summary ................................. 59

BIBLIOGRAPHY ............................................ 60

APPENDIXES

Appendix A  Research Questionnaire/Borang Kajian Selidik......................... 69
I certify that I have supervised and read this study and that in my opinion it conforms to acceptable standards of scholarly presentation and is fully adequate, in scope and quality, as a research paper for the degree of Corporate Master in Business and Administration.

Supervisor: Professor Ibrahim Mamat

This research paper was submitted to the Faculty of Economics and Business, UNIMAS and is accepted as partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Corporate Master of Economics and Business.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Shazali Abu Mansor
Dean, FEB,
UNIMAS
DECLARATION AND COPYRIGHT

Name                      : Chin Ngien Siong
Matric Number             : 00 - 02 - 0467

I hereby declare that this research is the result of my own investigations, except where otherwise stated. Other sources are acknowledged by footnotes giving explicit references and a bibliography is appended.

Signature                 : ........................................
Date                       : 28. MAC. 2002.

© Copyright by Chin Ngien Siong and
University Malaysia Sarawak
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My first note of appreciation goes to my supervisor, Professor Ibrahim Mamat. He was instrumental in writing the research paper and keeping this endeavor in proper perspective. His constructive evaluation made the realization of this research paper much more bearable.

I offer my thanks to Mr. Kenny Pui Ted Chin, the headmaster of SJK Chung Hua No. 1, Mr. Tay Jui Kwang, the headmaster of SJK Chung Hua No. 3, Mrs. Lily Kong, the headmistress of SJK Chung Hua No. 4 ½ and Mr. Chong Kian Tze, the headmaster of SJK Chung Hua Stampin for their invaluable help in the administration of the research questionnaires.

I am also grateful to all my friends and course-mates at UNIMAS who provided me with moral support, encouragement and assistance in my quest for knowledge. A special thank you is offered to Mr. Speedy Bena who provides keen insights at the early and later stages of the research and providing useful comments and suggestions.

I am also thankful to my parents who were a source of inspiration in my endeavour and determined to see me succeed in life. My deepest appreciation is also directed to my wife, Liaw Hui Chee who have provide me with the learning experiences of managing family and work roles effectively.
# LIST OF TABLES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE</th>
<th>PAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Reliability Coefficients of Variable at Pre-test</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.1</td>
<td>Distribution of Respondents by Gender</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>Distribution of Respondents by Age</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3</td>
<td>Distribution of Respondents by Race</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>Distribution of Respondents by Marital Status</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>Distribution of Respondents by Qualification</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>Distribution of Respondents by Teaching Category</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.7</td>
<td>Distribution of Respondents by Teaching Experience</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.8</td>
<td>Distribution of Respondents by Subjects</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.9</td>
<td>Distribution of Respondents by Level of Pupils</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.10</td>
<td>Distribution of Respondents by Class Category</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.11</td>
<td>Frequency of Stress Level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.12</td>
<td>Result of Correlation Analysis between stress level and stressors</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4.13 Stepwise Linear Regression .................................................. 40
4.14 Descriptive score on stress level based on gender ............... 41
4.15 Descriptive score on stress level based on marital status ................. 42
4.16 Descriptive score on stress level based on academic qualification .................................................. 43
4.17 Result of one-way ANOVA for significant differences in stress level between age group ................. 44
4.18 Result of one-way ANOVA for significant differences in stress level between teachers’ workload ................. 47
4.19 Result of one-way ANOVA for significant differences in stress level and teaching experience .......... 48
LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURES PAGE

1 A Model of Teacher Stress .......................... 12
2 The Occupational Stress Model ..................... 13
3 Theoretical Framework of the Research ............. 27
ABSTRACT

Numerous studies have shown that teachers serve one of the most stressful occupations. This study sought to contribute to a better understanding of occupational stress in teaching by investigating the level of stress, the main stressors, and the differences within the level of stress based on demographic variables. One hundred classroom teachers from three government aided Chinese Committee primary schools/Chung Hua in zone two urban district area of Kuching participated in this study. A self-administrated questionnaire was selected as a mode of data collection. All instruments used in the thesis were adaptation and modification of previously developed instruments by Safinat binti Atan (1998) and Travers and Cooper (1996). The descriptive, frequency and percentage, correlation analysis, linear regression, t-test and one-way ANOVA were utilized to analyze the data. The results showed that the majority of the teachers (95%) experienced mild or low stress, 5% experienced moderate level of stress and no teachers experiencing high level of stress. The results also showed that all the stress factors related to job intrinsic, role in organization, organizational structure, relationship at the workplace and career development affect teacher stress. The most dominant factor affecting teachers stress is the factor related to role in the organization. In addition, the study revealed no significant differences in the level of stress by the demographic variables of gender, marital status, academic qualification, teaching workload and years of teaching experience. There is a significant difference in the level of stress among the teachers of different age groups. The researcher hopes that the results of the study can be used by the relevant higher authorities to design effective stress management programs to prevent the negative effects of stress among the teachers.
ABSTRAK

berharap agar kajian ini dapat diguna pakai oleh golongan tertentu dalam merangka pengurusan tekanan kerja di kalangan guru-guru seterusnya.
Chapter One
INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

Teachers in our society are finding themselves under increasing pressures nowadays. There are greater demands, more complex responsibilities, and an expanding knowledge base, which is continually being upgraded. The rapid societal changes have also led to a new and varied expectation of teachers, often accompanied by a sense of role ambiguity. The net effect of this situation is decreased personnel and professional satisfaction.

According to Teacherline figures (2001) from the last two years (1999-2000) reveal that 200,000 teachers have experienced stress, 100,000 have suffered stress related to Ofsted inspections; 85,000 have experienced aggression from pupils and 58,000 aggression from parents; 40,000 have suffered protracted sickness as a result of stress. Levels of depression are also significantly higher than in most other professions. Studies of the teaching profession have indicated that teaching may be one of the most stressful of all occupations, following air traffic controllers and surgeons. A recent nationwide investigation into stress among teachers in the UK found that teachers reported stress-related manifestations which were far higher than those the population norms and other comparable occupational groups (Travers, C.J. and Cooper, C.L., 1996). Cox and Brockley's (1984) comparisons of teachers with non-teachers found that 67 per cent of teachers reported that work was the main source of stress for them, as opposed to 35 per cent of the non-teachers claimed to have no stress while only 11 per cent of teachers made this claim. The extent of the problem of teacher stress is further emphasized by Kahn (1978) finding that the number of male teachers dying while approaching the end of a career in teaching had doubled in the previous ten years and the number qualifying for a breakdown pension had more than trebled.

The number of teachers retiring on grounds of ill health has doubled since the introduction of the national curriculum in UK. Nearly 5,000 teachers under the age of 60 in England and Wales retired on ill health grounds in 1992/93 compared with just over 2,500 in 1987/88. The teaching unions blame the strain of larger classes and continuing upheaval in the curriculum, as well as deteriorating pupil behavior. A vast number of studies in the relevant literature identifying the main job stressors
facing teachers. The bulk of evidence points to specific factors that are responsible for high levels of psychological pressure for teachers, such as: high ratio between teacher-pupils, limited progress of pupils, heavy workload, role overload and role conflict, relationships with colleagues/poor working environment, insufficient salary, status, time/resource difficulties, professional recognition needs (Borg et al. 1991; Kyriacou & Sutcliffe, 1979; Travers & Cooper, 1996).

Primary school teachers suffer more stress than secondary school teachers, deputy head teachers and headteachers, according to a study. According the study done by the educational researchers (1999) in UK who questioned and monitored the stress levels of 780 primary and secondary teachers in 126 south London schools revealed it was the primary teachers who reported the highest levels of stress. The study also revealed that highly stressed teachers let work dominate their lives to such an extent that instead of coping with their stress, they brought work home, cutting back on their social and family lives. The study, published in the British Journal of Psychology also revealed that the teachers’ blood pressure levels and heart rates are found to be much higher throughout the evening than those of teachers who reported feeling less stressed and female teachers were more stressed than their male colleagues.

In Malaysia as we can see changing demands and pressures by constant new Government initiatives, introduction of new subjects, signing of a good conduct agreement that include monitoring of teachers’ performance in the classroom from the public, problems of social inclusion, disruptive pupils, heavy workload, lack of respect for the profession, teachers held in low esteem and the expectation amongst the general public that teachers should be responsible for solving moral and social problems that is happening now. Over the years, we have seen a growing disillusionment in teaching, and underlying lack of support and recognition for the contributions teachers make to society in Malaysia.

According to the recent statistics (2000), there are 15,736 primary schools teachers teaching in 1,250 primary schools of all types (Government schools, aided mission schools, aided chinese committee schools, aided private committee schools and unaided schools) throughout Sarawak as compared to only 9,149 secondary school teachers teaching in 163 secondary schools of all types. Whereas for the aided chinese committee schools (zone two), there are 788 teachers teaching in 33 chinese schools throughout Kuching urban district.
1.1 Statement of the Problem

The stressfulness of teaching as an occupation is widely recognized and a survey of the literature has shown that the last two decades have witnessed a proliferation of research studies on occupational stress among the educational personnel, and that interest in this area has not abated. Unfortunately, little is known about occupational stress in many developing societies like in Malaysia because a preponderance of these studies have been carried out in industrialized and developed societies where conditions may be dissimilar to those obtaining in developing societies like in Malaysia. Hence, the present study has been prompted by the fact that little is known about the nature of occupational stress in developing societies, such as Sarawak, Malaysia.

Research has supported the view that teaching is stressful (Dworkin, A.G., Haney, C.A., Dworkin, R.J. and Telschow, R.L. (1990) and this stress has increased as the relationship between society and education has become more complex (Esteve, J.M, 1989). As a result of social change, teachers in the aided chinese committee primary schools face increased parental and community expectations for the outcomes and standards of education and the relevance of the curriculum. The international concern with teacher stress stems from the mounting evidence that prolonged stress can lead to both mental and physical ill-health and also a concern that this problem will impair the quality of teaching. Stress can affect teachers’ job satisfaction, absenteeism, work turnover (Borg, 1991) and their effectiveness with pupils (Blase, 1986). Stress can also result in mental and physical illness and impair the working relationship between teachers and students as well as the overall qualities of teaching (Kyriacou, 1987). Teachers often lower their level of time and energy in involvement as a result of stress (Blasé, 1982, 1986). Prolonged stress can result in burnout (Blase, 1986; Faber, 1984a, 1984b). Consequences of burnout include diminished job satisfaction, reduced teacher-pupil rapport and pupil motivation, and decreased teacher effectiveness in meeting educational goals (Kyriacou & Sutcliffe, 1978b).

Although several teacher stress research has been carried out in Malaysia especially secondary school teachers, studies of stress in teachers in aided chinese committee primary schools occupy no prominent status in the general teacher stress literature in Malaysia. Several studies have been initiated in Malaysia to address its causes and they have shown that occupational stress has been a growing concern among the teachers. Suseela, M (1994) has found that about 36.8% of the
respondents to be in an extreme stressful state. Whereas according to a study done by Safinat binti Atan (1998), revealed that 39.7 per cent of the respondents found teaching moderately stressful and those in an extreme stressful state account for 3%. Research done by Abang Mat Ali (1998) had found that 49 per cent of the respondents from Zone A secondary school in Kuching/Samarahan Division are moderately stressed and about 21.3 per cent are extremely stress. Whereas in Sibu Division has showed similar results with about 44.2 per cent of the respondents are moderately stress and 24.4% are in extreme stress condition (Yong Choo Ting, 1998). This showed that teachers in Sarawak may also be in a similar state as other teachers in the rest of the world which are suffering from the levels of anxiety, depression and stress equivalent to or above that of mental health outpatients.

Concern over job stress among the government aided chinese committee primary school teachers remain very limited in the whole country as reflected by the lack of empirical data and study on the subject, especially among teachers in chinese committee primary schools, including Sarawak. Evidently, to date there has been no study being conducted among teachers serving in the chinese primary school in Kuching, Sarawak. However, relevant research evidence derived from studies conducted in secondary schools in Malaysia showed that the teachers are experiencing stress and demonstrated high level of emotional exhaustion. As such the stress experienced by the aided chinese committee primary school teachers could be much higher that of the secondary schools teachers due to work overloads, the misbehavior of pupils, pressure from the headmasters, chinese committee primary school board, education officers, parents and public expectations to get results. Thus, a high proportion of teachers who remain in their job freely admit their dissatisfaction and distress and are concerns that the stress they experienced might indirectly affect their mental health and may affect classroom performance and interactions with pupils and others which in turn may even hinder the process of learning in school.

Therefore, there is a need to undertake a study of this nature in order to generate empirical data on the area of study. As such the main purpose of the present study is to determine the levels of stress and to identify that factors that contribute to the occupational stress among teachers in the aided chinese committee primary schools. Such data will be of value to policy and decision makers, and to school administrators and their professional organizations so that remedial actions and preventive measurers can be planned.
Whereas according to a
that 39.7 per cent of the
and those in an extreme
Abang Mat Ali (1998)
from Zone A secondary
ately stressed and about
bw Division has showed
pondents are moderately
Yong Choo Ting, 1998).
be in a similar state as
suffering from the levels
or above that of mental

government aided chinese
limited in the whole
study on the subject,
committee primary schools,
been no study being
ese primary school in
evidence derived from
aysia showed that the
high level of emotional
by the aided chinese
ich higher that of the
is , the misbehavior of
mittee primary school
ctions to get results.
their job freely admit
as that the stress they
health and may affect
als and others which in

study of this nature in
udy. As such the main
levels of stress and to
pational stress among
chools. Such data will
school administrators
medial actions and

1.2 Objective

The objective of this study is to investigate occupational stress among the government aided chinese committee primary school teachers (Grade A) in zone two urban district area of Kuching city.

1.3 Specific Objectives

The specific objectives are as follows:

1. Investigates the level of stress the government aided chinese committee primary school teachers are under stress in their work.
2. Examine the stress factors that are perceived by the primary teachers to be stressful.
3. Investigate the demographic differences of the primary teachers to the level of stress among the government aided chinese committee primary school teachers in the urban district area of Kuching.

1.4 Research Questions

The research questions to be addressed are:

1. What is the level of occupational stress experienced by the government aided chinese committee primary school teachers in Kuching?
2. What are the factors that affects teacher’s occupational stress in chinese primary school in Kuching?
3. Is there any difference in the level of occupational stress between male and female teachers?
4. Is there any differences in the level of occupational stress between married and single teachers?
5. Is there any difference in the level of occupational stress among the different age groups of teachers?
6. Is there any difference in the level of occupational stress among teachers who are graduate and non-graduate?
7. Is there any difference in the level of occupational stress among teachers with different workload?
8. Is there any difference in the level of occupational stress among teachers with different numbers of years of teaching experience?
1.5 Significance of the study

The study is to investigate what are the sources of stress experienced by the Chinese primary school teachers which they felt were most stressful and examines the teachers' perceived level of stress in the government aided Chinese committee primary schools. Stress on the job is costly and is reflected in a lower productive efficiency in the organization. Stress has shown to reduce employee motivation and the physical ability to perform task well (Tuettemann, E and Punch, K.F., 1992). The importance of this study lies in its contribution to the understanding of occupational stress in Chinese primary school teachers and to be recognize than their own stress which they are experiencing and may be able to manage stress that may keep work stress at bay, help them to deal better with the complexities of teaching, feel better about themselves, and may become more effective at what they know how to do.

The findings may also help the education department and the Chinese school board of committee and the school administrators be aware of this situation and the adverse effects of stress on the teachers job performance, absenteeism, job dissatisfaction, declining morale of teachers, early retirement and the teachers' health. The identification of these factors which lead to stress may help the education department, the school administrators and the Chinese school board of committee to form suggestions and propositions for the most effective stress intervention that may offer a wide range of techniques and strategies for managing stress and preventing burnout of teachers. The findings derived from this study will help the school administrators and the school boards to plan to reduce the level of stress and pressures that the teachers are currently facing in their respective schools to enable them to perform their role more admirably which indirectly may increase the quality of teaching.

1.6 Limitation of the study

This study will be carried out only in three aided government Chinese committee primary schools and not all the aides Chinese committee primary schools in Kuching. This study will only be conducted on the teachers currently serving in the primary schools. This study only identify and examines the factors of occupational stress among the government aided Chinese committee primary schools' teachers in Kuching. The findings derived from this study is limited to the population of teachers in the three aided Chinese committee primary schools in Kuching.
Kuching and may not be generalized to other aided chinese committee primary schools, government primary schools, aided mission schools, aided private committee schools and unaidered primary schools within or outside the study area. Since there is no single, predominating causes of stress in teaching and stress is a subjective phenomenon, it is measured by the teachers’ perceptions rather than by more objective observational techniques. There might be possibility of some differences from the aspect of the school administrators and the chinese board of committee and the work and cultural environment would differs from one school to another such as government primary schools or aided private committee schools in urban or rural locations.

1.7 Definition of terms

1.7.1 Occupational Stress
refers to “any characteristic of job environment which poses a threat to the individual, either excessive demands or insufficient supplies to meet his needs” (French et al., 1982). It is a condition, which occurs when there is perceived (real or imagined) imbalance between situational demands and a person’s ability to respond adequately to the demand.

1.7.2 Stressor
refers to a stimulus or factors with the potential to cause stress (External/internal)

1.7.3 Aided Chinese Committee Primary Schools
refers to Chinese committee primary schools that are provided aids(teachers and teaching materials) by the government and also has a board of committee that run the schools.

1.7.4 Teachers
refers to all the trained teachers in all the three Chung Hua chinese primary schools with a certificate or diploma in teaching.

1.7.5 Chung Hua Primary School
refers to chinese primary school whose medium of instruction is in Mandarin.

1.7.6 Grade A
refers to schools whose enrolment of pupils are over 800 in the urban area.
1.7.7 Zone Two Primary School
refers to the cluster of primary schools that is within one area which has been identified by the state education department for specific purpose.

1.7.8 Graduate teacher
refers to a teacher who has a first degree from any recognized universities (local or foreign).

1.7.9 Non-graduate teacher
refers to a teacher who has either a diploma/certificate in teaching or has a STPM/SPM certificate.

1.8 Summary

This chapter has discussed on the statement of problem, the objectives and the research questions of this research. The significance and limitations of this study were then discussed followed by the definition of terms.
Chapter Two
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. Definitions of Stress

The chapter is divided into the following subjects such as the definition of stress, teacher stress, model of stress, sources of stress in teaching and the prevalence of stress in teaching.

Hans Selye (1974); father of modern stress found that stress is caused by physiological, psychological and environmental demands. When confronted with stressors, the body creates extra energy, and stress occurs because our bodies do not use up all the extra energy that has been created. Seyle (1974, 1980) first described this reaction in 1936 and named it the General Adaptation Syndrome. The General Adaptation Syndrome include 3 distinct stages (a) alarm reaction, (b) stage of resistance, and (c) stage of exhaustion. Our bodies are alerted and activated during the first stage, and stress levels are the highest during this stage. The body’s defenses attempt to adapt during the second stage and stress levels begin to reduce. The stage of exhaustion happens when the body’s defenses toward stress become totally depleted. It is during this stage that physical and mental breakdown occurs, individual performance plummets, and illness develops (Selye, H., 1974). He defines stress as ‘the nonspecific response of the body to any demand made upon it’ (1974, p.14). Selye (1976, 1980) used the term eustress to describe good or productive amount of stress and distress to describe bad stress. Productivity levels decrease when individuals are over or under stressed (Alley, 1980). A limitation of this definition is that it conceptualize stress as something that affects people in an almost mindless reflex like way, and doesn’t take into account the intellectual or cognitive evolutions of the situation.

Researchers described stress in the 1950s as “response to internal or external processes which reach those thresholds levels that strains its physical and psychological integration capacities to; or beyond their limit.
In the 1970s, Lazarus (1978) suggested that an individual’s stress reaction “depends on how the person interprets or appraises (consciously or unconsciously) the significance of a harmful, threatening or challenging event.” Lazarus’s work disagrees with that of others who see stress simply as environmental pressures. Instead, “the intensity of the stress experiences is determined significantly by how well a person feels he or she can cope with an identified threat. If a person is unsure of his/her coping abilities, they are likely to feel helpless and overwhelmed.”

Cox (1978) repeated the idea of looking at stress as simply either environmental pressures or as physiological responses. And his fellow researchers suggested that stress can best be understood as ‘part of a complex and dynamic system of transaction between the person and his (or her) environment.” Cox further criticized the mechanical model of stress: “Men and their organizations are not machines….Stress has to be perceived or recognized by man. A machine, however does not have to recognize the load or stress placed upon it.”

According to Travers and Cooper (1996), it is important for us to understand clearly what we mean by the term “stress”, because “the major problem for anyone attempting to read and understand about stress is that it has taken on many different meanings, which are sometimes contradictory and confusing.’ Durham (1992) advocates that three approaches can be used to understand the nature of stress in teaching. The first approach looks at the external pressures exerted on teachers in schools. Teachers have their limits to stress. In other words, ‘stress is a set of causes, not a set of symptoms’(p.1). The second one focuses on the forms of reactions taken by teachers in response to pressures. From this perspective, stress is defined as ‘an unpleasant emotional state’. The third one is the interactional approach that emphasizes the need to identify the sources of stress and the behavior that they adopt to tackle stress. Therefore, Durham (1992) defines stress as “a process of behavioral, emotional, mental, and physical reactions caused by prolonged, increasing or new pressures which are significantly greater than coping stress’.

In fact, before the 1990s, the concept of teacher stress was mainly defined by the cause-and-effect approach. Durham’s (1992) new insights, which propose a third emphasis on coping strategies that teachers can adopt to tackle stress problems. The rationale of the interactional approach is that, in order to understand stress, more attention should be given to problem-solving and coping behavior. This third approach by