

A Self-Assessment: Stress and Teaching Health

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Abstract- This study sought to assess if stress in teaching is present among Secondary Health Teachers in the Schools Division of the City of Meycauayan and determine its causes and consequences. It used a self-made survey questionnaire with interview questions to describe how teachers assess their stress levels and analyze how it affects their teaching performance as Health Teachers.

The data gathered were analyzed through quantitative and qualitative methods. The percentage was used to describe the level of stress in teaching among Secondary Health Teachers, self-assessment of Health Teachers as to how stress is affecting their teaching performance and student achievement, and the facilitating and hindering factors that may influence their stay in the Department of Education or for them to leave DepEd due to stress. Word Statistics through the NVivo application was used to describe the qualitative data gathered from the interview of teachers.

The quantitative and qualitative data gathered from this study both revealed that the Top 2 sources of stress in teaching among Health Teachers and the top 2 most valid reasons for them to leave the Department of Education were 'Extra Paperwork or so much paper works' and 'Time Constraints for extra work'.

Index Terms— Stress, Teaching Health, Self-assessment, Performance Factors

I. INTRODUCTION

Common sense dictates that Teaching Health, which is part of the subject Music, Arts, Physical Education, and Health (MAPEH), requires a Health teacher who is Physically, Emotionally, Psychologically, Spiritually, and Intellectually (PEPSI) healthy.

Being healthy in all the mentioned aspects – PEPSI, sums up the holistic well-being of a Health teacher. It includes a sound mind, body, and spirit. This healthy condition of a Health teacher will make a great impact or influence on the teaching of Health.

Both learners and Health teachers will surely benefit from this holistic well-being of Health teachers. On the part of teachers, teaching can be more rewarding and satisfying with a sound mind, body, and spirit. On the part of learners, the teaching-learning process can be more beneficial and enjoyable, thus resulting in better learning outcomes.

But what could happen if it was the other way around? What if Health Teachers are experiencing stress? How will this condition affect the teaching-learning process? Will this lead to teaching problems? If yes, then better teaching-learning

outcomes can be compromised, and even worse is the domino effect – learners may also be stressed.

Thus, the physical, emotional, psychological, spiritual, and intellectual health of Health Teachers are of great importance and can be a source of the problem that may affect the teaching-learning outcomes as well as student achievement, not only in the specific subject mentioned earlier, which is Health but also in other subjects.

As the holistic well-being of Health Teachers may influence learning outcomes, this research will be conducted to study relationships between the presence of stress on teachers, its possible consequences, and its influence on students' learning outcomes. It will describe how Health Teachers view their state of holistic health through self-assessment whether they are stressed in teaching and if they are, what are the facilitating and hindering factors that may influence their stay in the Department of Education or for them to leave DepEd.

II. RELATED STUDIES AND RESEARCH

The journal article of Peter London (2007) stresses the importance of giving your whole self, that is holistically including your mind, body, and spirit in teaching to achieve an authentic teaching and produce authentic learning. The overall health then of a Health teacher is of utmost importance in teaching and in achieving better learning outcomes on the part of the learners. This is commonly termed as a holistic approach to teaching. The article further illustrates the kind of education that will result as an outcome of unsound mind, body, and spirit. This article has justified the importance of a sound mind, body and spirit in teaching, and I would say especially in teaching Health Education. Therefore, an effective and efficient Health teacher requires holistic health in such aspects as physical, emotional, psychological, spiritual, and intellectual health for these might greatly affect the teaching-learning process and learning outcomes. How then can a teacher effectively and efficiently teach, if the teacher himself or herself is experiencing stress in teaching?

The purpose of the study by Gunnel Colnerud (2013) is to find out if moral stress is relevant to teaching practice and why teachers are expressing that they are burdened by their work. While the book of Jack Dunham (2002) emphasizes that the primary measure to cope with stress in teaching is to accept the very presence of stress in teaching, which has been difficult on

the part of the teacher experiencing stress because people around them especially the school organization, who usually believe that stress can be considered as a personal weakness and professional incompetence. The next step according to Dunham (2002) is to clearly define the context of the stress being referred to and experienced by the teacher to clearly describe stress in teaching. The book enumerates the usual stressors in teaching such as extra paperwork, spending a lot of time on extra work, extra pressures on everyday teaching and unpleasant relationships with co-teachers, superiors, or parents.

Another book by Russell Joseph (2005) cites suggestions and recommendations in coping with stress in teaching. The book claims that stress really exists in teaching and enumerates ways of coping with it. In fact, in several studies, stress is already present as early as the pre-service years of student teachers. Although, the usual findings are their level of stress as compared to those already old in the service is lower. The research of Stavroula Kaldi (2009) yields the same findings as the study of Robert Klassen and Ming Ming Chiu (2011) wherein they found out that pre-service teachers or student teachers display higher commitment and lower stress. But it seems that the longer teachers stay in the teaching profession, the level of their teaching-related stress also increases as yielded by the study of Ruth Harmsen et.al (2018) on the relationship between beginning teachers' stress causes, stress responses, teaching behavior, and attrition. The results showed that beginning teachers have high levels of stress due to students and superiors.

This is confirmed in the study of Mariya Aftab, et.al (2012), wherein it was found that occupational stress is higher among teachers with 6-10 years of teaching experience and lower among teachers with 0-5 years of teaching experience. Indeed, many studies have focused on the presence of stress in teaching as discussed in the research article of Maria Clelia Zurlo, et.al (2007) on occupational stress and its determinants among Italian schoolteachers. A similar study is that of Li-fang Zhang (2009) on occupational stress and teaching approaches among Chinese academics where it also focuses on the presence of stress at work and how it affects the use of teaching approaches.

The study of Tony Bowers (2004) is also similar to the research of Zurlo, et.al (2007) as it considers the effects of stressful working conditions on both physical and mental health of teachers. Another similar study that considers the effects of teacher stress is the research of Teri Wood and Chris McCarthy (2018) wherein they describe the early symptoms of stress and burnout. They have also explored various studies and polls that reveal the high levels of stress among teachers nowadays. Statistics on teacher stress revealed that 61% of teachers say that their work is always or often stressful and over 50% say that their level of enthusiasm has become lesser as compared to the time when they are new in teaching. They also enumerate the consequences of teacher stress as suggested by the data gathered. Such consequences include teacher resignation because of stress. Student achievement and teacher health have also been found to be negatively correlated wherein as teacher stress becomes higher, student achievement becomes lower.

Another research by Greenberg, et.al (2016) also considers the causes and consequences of teacher stress and health on teachers, students, and schools. This study recognizes the crucial role of teachers in shaping the lives of their country's children. It

claims that teachers not only facilitate learning but also influence a child's social and emotional development. It recognizes teaching as the most stressful occupation in the United States. It narrates how stress is affecting teacher health and well-being, which leads to teacher burnout, lack of engagement, job dissatisfaction, poor performance, and many others. It further claims that stress has negative consequences for teachers and produces poor learning outcomes among students and burdens for schools. It enumerates four main sources of teacher stress, which are poor leadership in schools, higher job demands, limited work resources, and teacher social and emotional competence.

It is really then a big problem if teacher stress is already affecting their teaching because it will have an impact on learners, specifically on the learners' academic achievement as what was found out in the study of Wood and McCarthy (2018) that as teacher stress becomes higher, student achievement becomes lower. The results of the research of Greenberg, et.al (2016) mentioned that stress also produces poor learning outcomes among students.

Another study by Consuelo Mameli and Luisa Molinari (2017) analyzes the role played by teaching interactive practices in predicting teacher burnout, which is associated with stress in teaching. The study found that teacher-centered practices and flexibility are a predictor of burnout or stress. Assessing burnout or stress has also been the focus of several measuring instruments like the widely used Maslach Burnout Inventory as analyzed in the meta-analytic reliability generalization study by Raimundo Aguayo, et.al (2011). This scale measures three dimensions: emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and personal accomplishment.

Furthermore, teaching-related stress is also present at different levels. This is the focus of the study by Alyas Qadeer Tahir (2011). The study investigated all the factors causing stress to teachers working at all levels. The presence of stress in primary schools is confirmed in the study of Anis Salwa Abdullah, et.al (2019) wherein it identified the influencing factors of teacher stress such as students' misbehavior, workload, professional recognition, time and resources constraints, interpersonal relationship, technology training and support, facilities and curriculum exposure constraints, and technology literacy. Stress is also present among secondary teachers in the study of Aftab, et.al (2012) wherein it was found that male secondary teachers experience higher occupational stress than female teachers. Stress is also present among College Teachers in Pakistan in the study of Tahir (2011). It can be summarized from the various studies and research that stress is present among teachers from primary to college levels and from pre-service teachers, to beginning teachers and to more experienced teachers.

In addition, stress has been mentioned to influence teachers' health and student achievement as cited by Wood and McCarthy (2018) and Greenberg, et.al (2016). It is then of paramount importance to investigate the well-being of Health Teachers in the Schools Division of City of Meycauyan and find out if they are experiencing stress in teaching, what are its causes and consequences and if students' achievement is affected. It will primarily assess the consequences of stress in teaching to learners and teachers themselves, specifically the facilitating and

hindering factors that may influence their stay in the Department of Education or for them to leave DepEd.

III. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The major concern of this study is to assess if stress in teaching is present among Secondary Health Teachers in the Schools Division of City of Meycauayan and what are its causes and consequences.

Specifically, it sought the answer to the following questions:

1. Is stress in teaching present among Secondary Health Teachers and what is its level?
2. Based on the self-assessment of Health Teachers, is stress affecting teaching performance and student achievement?
3. What are the facilitating and hindering factors that may influence their stay in the Department of Education or for them to leave DepEd due to stress?
4. What Health Program can be proposed to address the presence of stress in teaching among Secondary Health Teachers?

IV. METHOD

This study used Mixed methods as both quantitative and qualitative data were gathered from the self-made questionnaire. Purposive sampling was employed in this study wherein all 70 Health Teachers in the eight (8) Junior High Schools in the Schools Division of the City of Meycauayan were included as respondents of this study.

The self-made questionnaire has four parts. Part I is a 10-item survey on the sources of stress in the teaching of Secondary Health Teachers in the Schools Division of the City of Meycauayan. Part II is a 10-item survey on the effects of stress in teaching and among students. Part III is a 10-item survey on the facilitating and hindering factors for Secondary Health Teachers to stay or leave the Department of Education. Parts I-III served as the sources of quantitative data. Part IV is composed of 5-item Interview Questions that served as the source of qualitative data to support the quantitative data. The quantitative data that came from the first-third part of the questionnaire was analyzed through Descriptive Statistics, specifically Percentages.

The qualitative data from the fourth part of the questionnaire based on the answers from the interview questions by Health teachers were analyzed through Word Statistics using NVivo application. This data was used to support the quantitative data of this study.

V. DISCUSSION OF RESULTS

Part I – The results showed that the most common rating given by teachers in each item of Part I of the self-made questionnaire is **Moderate** except for Items 3-5 which were given a rating of **Not at all** and **Very low to low** and Items 1-2 which were both rated as **High**. Based on teachers' self-assessment as revealed by the quantitative data, the **Top 2** sources of stress in teaching were '**Extra Paperwork or so many paper works**' and '**Time Constraints for extra work**'. The Top 3-7 sources of stress in teaching among Secondary Health Teachers were 'Extra pressures on everyday teaching', 'Limited work resources', 'Higher job demands', 'Students'

'misbehaviors', and 'Poor leadership'. 'Unpleasant relationships with parents', 'Unpleasant relationships with co-teachers, and 'Unpleasant relationships with superiors' were assessed as the Top 8-10 sources of stress in teaching among Secondary Health Teachers in the Schools Division of City of Meycauayan.

Part II – A closer look at the quantitative data showed that all 10 items were rated **highly** by teacher-respondents. This meant that all 10 items in Part II of the self-made questionnaire can be **highly** affected by Teacher-stress.

Part III - From the Top 10 factors ranging from **Very important** to **Average importance**, it turned out that '**salary**' ranked **1st** as a very important factor for teacher-respondents to stay or leave the Department of Education. This was followed by 'relationship with co-workers' and 'presence of opportunities for professional growth'. Next in rank were 'Relationship with the School Head', 'Relationship with Parents', and 'Rewards and Incentives, Merit and Promotion System', which received equal scores. 'Types and behaviors of students' landed in Rank 7. 'Teaching Load and assignment of tasks not related to teaching' and 'Paper Works' landed in Ranks 8 and 9, respectively. Teacher-respondents have placed 'Activities not related to teaching and type of curriculum' in Rank 10.

Part IV - The common reasons given by teacher-respondents for them to stay in the Department of Education (DepEd) were the love and passion for teaching, having job security, a permanent job, the security of tenure, salary, and learners while the common reasons for them to leave DepEd were too much paper works, activities not related to teaching, salary, and work stress. The common things suggested by teacher-respondents to be changed or improved in DepEd were to reduce paper works and teachers' load, change in promotion system, increase salary, and change the congested curriculum. The common causes of the stress of Health Teachers were paper works, extra paper works, poor behavior of students, reports, printing jobs, low salaries, and activities not related to teaching.

VI. CONCLUSIONS

- 1.) Based on the Secondary Health Teachers' assessment, the stress in teaching was present among them and they described its level as Moderate to High.
- 2.) Based on the self-assessment of Health Teachers, it turned out that the 10 situations or conditions in Part 2 of the self-made questionnaire were rated highly by teacher-respondents as to their effects on teaching performance and student achievement.
- 3.) The facilitating and hindering factors that may influence teachers' stay in the Department of Education or for them to leave DepEd due to stress were 'Salary', 'Relationship with co-workers', 'Presence of opportunities for professional growth', 'Relationship with the School Head', 'Relationship with Parents', 'Rewards and Incentives, Merit and Promotion System', 'Types and behaviors of students', 'Teaching Load and assignment of tasks not related to teaching' and 'Paper Works', 'Activities not related to teaching and type of curriculum'.
- 4.) The identified causes of stress among Health Teachers can be addressed by the Department of Education and the government like 'Extra Paperwork or so much paper works' and 'Time Constraints for extra work'.

VII. RECOMMENDATIONS

1.) As the results showed that the Top 2 sources of stress in teaching were ‘Extra Paperwork or so much paper works’ and ‘Time Constraints for extra work’, it would be wise to reduce these paper works. These paper works have been consuming the quality time of teachers which should have been dedicatedly allotted to teaching.

2.) As teacher burnout, teacher job satisfaction, teaching performance, teaching strategies, and approaches, teaching practices, teaching accomplishments, student performance, teaching-learning process, learning outcomes, and student achievement were all found to be highly affected by teacher stress, solutions to address the causes of teacher-stress should be considered by DepEd.

3.) As the top 1 facilitating and hindering factor that may influence teachers’ stay in the Department of Education or for them to leave DepEd due to stress was ‘Salary’, the national government should address this concern as soon as possible.

APPENDIX

Questionnaire

Part I: Sources of Stress in Teaching

As a Health teacher, please assess to what level the following situations or factors are causing stress in your teaching. Check the appropriate column of your answer based on the scale below.

- 1 - Not at all 2 - Very Low to Low 3 - Moderate
4 - High 5 - Very High

No	Possible Causes of Stress	1	2	3	4	5
1	Extra Paperwork or so much paper works					
2	Time Constraints for extra work					
3	Unpleasant relationships with parents					
4	Unpleasant relationships with co-teachers					
5	Unpleasant relationships with superiors					
6	Higher job demands					
7	Limited work resources					
8	Poor leadership					
9	Students’ misbehaviors					
10	Extra pressures on everyday teaching					

Part II: Effects of Stress on Teaching and Students

As a Health teacher, please assess what level of stress affects or influences the following situations or conditions. Check the appropriate column of your answer based on the scale below.

- 1 - Not at all 2 - Very Low to Low 3 - Moderate
4 - High 5 - Very High

No.	Effects of Stress	1	2	3	4	5
1.	Teacher Burnout					
2.	Teacher Job Satisfaction					
3.	Teaching Performance					
4.	Teaching Strategies and Approaches					
5.	Teaching Practices					
6.	Teaching Accomplishments					
7.	Student Performance					
8.	Teaching-Learning Process					
9.	Learning Outcomes					
10.	Student Achievement					

Part III: Facilitating and Hindering Factors to Stay or Leave the Department of Education

As a Health teacher, please rate the importance of the following items for you to stay or leave the DepEd. Check the appropriate column of your answer based on the scale below.

- 1-Least Important 2-Less Important 3-Average
4- Important 5-Very Important

No	Facilitating and Hindering Factors	1	2	3	4	5
1.	Salary					
2.	Teaching Load and assignment of tasks not related to teaching					
3.	Paper Works					
4.	Activities not related to teaching and type of curriculum					
5.	Relationship with co-workers					
6.	Relationship with the School Head					
7.	Relationship with Parents					
8.	Rewards and Incentives, Merit and Promotion System					
9.	Types and behaviors of students					
10.	Presence of opportunities for professional growth					

Part IV: Interview Questions

Please answer the following questions based on your personal views, beliefs, and experiences. There are no right or wrong answers.

1. What could be your most valid reason to stay in DepEd?
2. What could be your most valid reason for you to decide to leave DepEd?
3. List things that you want to be changed or improved in DepEd.
4. What things in teaching make you feel stressed?

Given the chance to transfer to another job with the same salary and benefits, would you leave DepEd? Answer simply with Yes or No.

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