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MANAGING OCCUPATIONAL STRESS AMONG TEACHERS IN
PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN THE SOUTHERN SOUTH SUB –
REGION: BOTSWANA.

BY

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DATE: MARCH 2017

DECLARATION

I Emily Malope declare that this study is a true reflection of my work and all the sources that have been used and quoted are indicated and acknowledged in references section.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my late elder sisters Flora Mosimanegape and Matlafela Rose Kgotla, who inspired me. I cherish their memories and will forever be thankful to what I learnt from them. May their souls rest in peace.

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ABSTRACT

Occupational stress has been proven to be a phenomenon that is visible in different organisations and in this case schools are not exempted from this phenomenon. The aim of this study was to investigate management of occupational stress among teachers in primary schools in the Southern South sub- region of Botswana. The research's focus was to investigate the nature, causes and effects and how primary school teachers managed stress. The study was done in some of the primary schools in the Southern South Sub-Region as it was the area that was easily accessible for the researcher. Most of the schools in the area are remote and most of the learners are taken care of by either guardians or their grandparents.

The researcher utilised qualitative research design in this investigation as it allowed participants to freely express their views to produce a greater depth and detail of how they managed occupational stress. This gave the researcher an opportunity to have deeper understanding about the phenomenon under study. The researcher collected data through individual interviews and literature review, documents and raw data were used for analysis. Fourteen teachers from seven primary schools in the Sub- Region were purposively selected as they were deemed to have rich information about occupational stress.

The results suggested that occupational stress was predominant in primary schools within the sub-region and teachers perceived there was need to manage it so that the quality of education is not compromised. Environmental, organisational, professional demands and personal factors emerged as causes of occupational stress. Even though the research indicated that occupational stress could be good, teachers believed it mostly brought bad effects. Teachers also posited that occupational stress could pose individual and organisational effects if not managed properly. They also noted that it was critical to manage stress in the workplace and they perceived that individual and organisational approaches could be devised to manage it. Participants realised that the stressful situations within the school could be lessened if there were strategies which were put in place. They suggested that school managements need to improve their management strategies, and the education office could consult teachers in teaching and learning decision making as they are the cornerstone in providing quality education.

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CHAPTER 1: ORIENTATION



1.1 INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Stress is a phenomenon that is visible in all kinds of organisations. All different members of staff can potentially suffer from it. In a study conducted by Plattner and Mberengwa, (2010) the authors identify seventeen potential stressors and emphasise that stress is much more common in employees at lower levels of workplace hierarchies than positions where employees are in controlling positions. Sloan (2012:10) also indicates that “everybody has stress -both good and bad stress. It’s a simple fact of life”. Arthur, Waring, Coe and Hedges (2012:73) also state that, occupational stress and burnout are recognised phenomena which impact negatively on the delivery of services.

Stress is a dynamic and complex process where there is interaction of an individual and the internal and external events in his/her life (Chipiza, Majela, Mogapi and Mnthali, 2008:2). Van Deventer and Kruger (2010:49) define stress as, “to bind tight or press together”. The previous definitions of stress show that stress occurs when our bodies experience *tearing-off* when adjusting to the continuously changing environment (Chipiza, *et al.*, 2010:120). According to Potgieter, Pieterse and Landman, (cited by Werner, 2011:232) stress is how the body responds to demands and changes that compel it to adjust physically, mentally and emotionally. It is triggered by the situation that is taken as either a challenge or a threat to someone.

Even though stress is a general phenomenon, it has been emphasised that most stress is work related or occupational stress. Werner, (2011:23) explained work related stress as “an uncomfortable experience by an individual who is required to change his desired behaviour as a result of opportunities, constraints or demands related to important work objectives”. This explanation reflects that one can experience certain kinds of pressures or become uncomfortable in their own work situation because job demands change from time to time (Lussier, 2008: 43). These kinds of pressures have been categorised as stressors (Lussier, 2008: 43). Stressors are explained to be occurrences or incidents that need individuals to make physical, mental and emotional adjustments, Phindela, Mothibedi, and Smith, (2008: 4).

Montgomery (2004:1) regards teaching as one of the most stressful professions in the world. Jay (NY:1) buttresses Montgomery's observation by saying, "stress is currently a phenomenon that must be recognised and addressed in various professions and the teaching profession is no exception". The sentiment on occupational stress that further clarifies it is that, perceptions reveal that teachers do not just have roles of teaching only. In reality they perform several duties and responsibilities. It thus makes sense that as the demands on educators and school increase, so does the incidence of stress in the teaching profession (Schulze & Steyn, 2007:691). Jackson, (2004:2) further reflects that "teachers enter the profession with high expectations, a vision for the future, and a mission to educate children. The demands, pressures and conditions they work under can stifle this zeal and present obstacles to achieving their mission".

The Botswana education system like any other is also prone to stress. In a recent education magazine called *Educational Dialogue* it was said that stress in education at large is rampant and can provoke individuals' emotions (Ed writer, 2014a). The same magazine discusses stress related issues such as overtime and non-payment of teachers (ED writer, 2014b). Mokopanele (2013:4) also notes that people suffer from stress at work due to boredom, work overload, conflict and bad management practices.

The researcher attended a number of gatherings such as competitions, workshops and seminars in the Southern South Sub-Region (2014 National Teachers Day Celebrations in Nthwalang Secondary School, 2015 BOPSSA Athletics Competitions in GoodHope) and found that stress is one of the topics that always seem to emerge as a point of discussion. In a letter dated 3 March 2014, that was written by a teacher to a principal in one of the schools in the region, the teacher wrote about 'being humiliated' and 'enduring frustration' (Thebe 2014). At a Teachers Day Celebration, one of the Directors of Ceremonies, Tsholofelo, (2014) said, "we do need quality education like the previous speaker has said, but we cannot provide it if we have stress". Teacher quality is a crucial issue in education and for quality education, quality teachers are needed. Exceptional teachers teach not only the curriculum content, they encourage and motivate their learners and at the same time serve as role models regarding attitudes and social relationships (Kagiria & Amukowa, 2013:6).

The Southern South Sub-Region is an area that is situated in the Southern part of Botswana, and most of the villages in the Sub- Region share the border with South Africa. This is the

area where the researcher will be interviewing the teachers on how they manage occupational stress in their schools. Many times learners do not come to school because they have visited their relatives in South Africa. Some of the children from South Africa attend school in the Sub- Region. There are twenty- seven primary schools, four Junior Secondary Schools and one Senior Secondary School in the sub- region. The Sub- Region is the coldest compared with other regions in Botswana. It is different from other regions because most human settlements are isolated. It is the area where the researcher is working. The villages within this Sub- Region can be categorised as semi-urban, while a handful are remote. Most of the schools in the area have limited classrooms and this creates a set up where some of the learners are taught in the storerooms. Less than 50% of the schools do not have electricity. Teachers' accommodation can be described as reasonable, as most of the teachers have houses even though most of them are not well maintained. The academic performance of learners is of great concern as it has been declining for the past five years. Twenty-five public schools are under the supervision of the Chief Education Officer and the Principal Education Officer II. These schools are run by the government of Botswana, under the Ministry of Education, Skills and Development. The governance of the schools is guided by the Report on the National Commission on Education (1993:v).

1.2 PROBLEM STATEMENT AND RESEARCH QUESTIONS

In creating this section McMillan and Schumacher's (2010:64) advice specifically about the formulation of a qualitative research problem was heeded. They stated that it should not be too specific but represent, "an open- ended idea or purpose that identifies, in a broad way, the central phenomenon that will be investigated".

To identify such a problem the researcher firstly took note of the fact that most investigators focused on the reasons for the stress experienced by teachers but not on what leaders, including teachers themselves could do to manage or cope with such stress (Hoerr, 2005:15; Du Preez, 2003:28 and Arthur *et al.*, 2012:73). Schulze and Steyn, (2007:693) add to this thinking by discussing stressors in the professional lives of South African secondary school educators.

As indicated in the previous paragraph there was also a lot of raw data available from primary and secondary sources about teachers' stress that could be applied to Primary Schools in the

region under discussion. All this contributed to the formulation of the main research problem that was expressed as; *how is occupational stress managed among teachers in primary schools in the Southern South Sub-Region of Botswana?*

In order to break down the main problem into manageable units it was sub-divided into sub-problems, which were posed as the following research questions;

- What is the nature, causes and effects of occupational stress in education?
- How is occupational stress currently managed in education?
- What are the perceptions of participants in the region on the management of occupational stress among teachers?
- Which strategies can be implemented to improve occupational stress management among teachers in Primary schools in the Southern South Sub-Region of Botswana?

1.3 RESEARCH AIM AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The aim of this research was to investigate the management of occupational stress in Primary Schools in the Southern South Sub-Region in Botswana. The objectives were to:

- Determine the nature of stress and causes and effects of occupational stress in education.
- Determine how occupational stress can be managed in education.
- Determine the perceptions of participants in the region on the management of occupational stress among teachers.
- Determine the strategies that can be implemented to improve occupational stress management among teachers in Primary schools in the Southern South Sub-Region in Botswana.

1.4 DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS

- Occupational Stress

Occupational stress is explained as, “a major hazard for many workers” (uwf.edu-skass

document-occupation). Van Wyk (2004:2) explained occupational stress as the unbearable conditions that teachers go through because of the type of the work they do. From the two definitions one can term occupational stress as the chaotic physical or psychological state that relates to an occupational environment and leads to noticeable symptoms which can end up in ailments which will, at the end, hinder the progress of work in the work place.

- Employee Wellness

Employee wellness is said to be, “the employees’ state of optimised social, physical and mental health wellbeing” (Debeila, 2008:232). It is the way employees cope considering the challenges they meet daily in their workplace and it involves a holistic approach to looking after the physical, psychological and social status of well being of the employees in an organisation.

- Employee Assistance Programme (EAP)



Nagesar (2013:3) defines employee assistance programme as, “a mechanism for making counselling and other forms of assistance available to a designated workforce on a systematic and uniform basis, and to recognise standards”. The programme consists of support services that are provided to every employee that are intended to support in recognising and resolving teachers’ problems that have an effect on their job performance and productivity.

- Management of Occupational Stress

Management of occupational stress is taking action to avoid and handle negative organisational behaviour.

1.5 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

In this section, the research design and the methodology are discussed as two distinguishable aspects of empirical study.

1.5.1 Research Design

Qualitative research was used in this investigation. Lichtman (2013:7) defines qualitative research as, “a way of knowing in which a researcher gathers, organises and interprets

information obtained from humans using his eyes and ears as filters. It often involves in-depth interviews and/or observations of humans in natural, online, or social settings". The researchers' choice for this design was based on the fact that qualitative research produces greater depth and detail (Moswela, 2005:401). It enables participants to narrate their experiences with understanding and explain what is going on with their physical and emotional feelings in a meaningful way (Lichtman 2013:13). Another reason for selecting a qualitative investigation was that it enabled the researcher to understand the context within which the participants worked better.

1.5.2 Research Methodology

The methodology which the researcher used is described under the following sections: site selection, participant selection, data collection strategies, data analysis, data trustworthiness, researcher's role and ethical considerations.

1.5.2.1 Site selection

McMillan and Schumacher (2010:326) state that site selection is a stage, "in which a site is selected to locate people involved in a particular event". In this case, the research was done in the Southern South Sub-Region primary schools as described in paragraph 1 on page 2. Seven schools were involved. During the investigation, the researcher was a teacher in one of the schools in the sub- region. This was an advantage because the researcher was familiar with the area and was able to physically get to the schools without any difficulties. The researcher visited the participating schools to interview the teachers.

1.5.2.2 Participant Selection

According to McMillan and Schumacher (2010:129) participant selection or sampling is a procedure where a minute number of things or elements of a big population are used to make conclusions about the total population. The researcher used purposive sampling for the study; Maree (2010:178) has similar sentiments with McMillan and Schumacher and states, "this method of sampling is used in special situations where the sampling is done with a specific purpose in mind".

Out of the seven participating schools, the researcher selected two teachers from each school. A total of fourteen teachers were thus chosen to represent teachers in the sub- region.

Teachers from schools in the Sub-Region who had five years or more experience were selected for interviews. The idea with this purposeful selection was to choose those who had experienced stress over an extended period of time. These participants were considered to have rich information about stress and how it is managed.

1.5.2.3 Data Collection Strategies

A data collection strategy calls for the researcher to identify how data will be collected. The researcher used interviews and document analysis for data collection. The use of document analysis in particular was important as the documents brought a broader perspective on the phenomenon under study whereas the interviews enabled the researcher to learn one-on-one, the opinions, beliefs, views, and ideas from the participants.

1.5.2.4 Data Analysis

According to Punch (2006:52), qualitative data are mostly words, which we get by enquiring (interviewing), watching (observation) or reading (documents), or a number of combinations of these three activities. Patton in Merriam (2009:85) supports Punch's statement and emphasises that, "qualitative data consist of direct quotations from their experiences, opinions, feelings, and knowledge obtained through interviews; detailed descriptions of people's activities, behaviours, actions recorded in observations; and excerpts, quotations, or entire passages extracted from various types of documents".

The researcher transcribed the interviews and analysed the sampled documents (Check and Schut, 2012:299). One such transcribed interview has been included as a sample in the addendum. The researcher further identified important data and text from the literature by establishing four pre-determined categories as suggested by McMillan and Schumacher (2010:369), that assisted in understanding and interpreting the data. The process of coding is dealt with in paragraph 3.3.3.

1.5.2.5 Data Trustworthiness

Litchman (2013:292) believes that, "trustworthiness includes transparency of the process, data gathered for a purpose, search for multiple perspectives; change in the researcher and in practice, and the results that matter". This shows that trustworthiness is the acid test of data

analysis, findings and conclusion. Reliability and validity are also crucial aspects of trustworthiness in the study. Maree (2010:80) considers verification and validating of findings and dependability as the strategies which could be used to boost trustworthiness. The researcher used the following strategies:

- Verification and Validating Findings

Validity has been explained by McMillan and Schumacher (2010:330) as, “the degree of congruence between the explanations of the phenomena and the realities of the world,” and according to Briggs and Coleman (2012:82) validity is a criterion for the truthfulness of a study in terms of exactness of assumptions and the trustworthiness of the outcomes.

Data trustworthiness is an important aspect in qualitative research (Maree 2010:113). It was important for the researcher to make it a point that the research displayed a true reflection of the current situation in the area. The following measures were taken to ensure trustworthiness;

- i) The researcher showed the research notes to the individual interviewees for their confirmation directly after the interviews. This was done to ensure that what was recorded was reflected in the transcribed notes.
- ii) The participants got another opportunity to convince themselves that their views had been reported correctly by reading the transcribed versions of their individual interviews. Part of this was an opportunity to comment orally or in writing about the transcripts. This enabled the participants to identify aspects that could have been misinterpreted by the researcher.
- iii) Another step that was taken was the so-called *stakeholder checks* (Maree, 2010:114). As part of this step in enhancing the trustworthiness of the findings, the researcher allowed knowledgeable people such as the co- supervisor and one of the head teachers in the sub-region to comment or assess the findings, interpretations and conclusions of the research.

- Dependability

Litchman (2013:299) said “the term dependability emphasises the need for the researcher to account for the ever-changing context within which research occurs”.

The researcher therefore had to be convincing. The research findings were transcribed exactly as they were portrayed by the participants to avoid distorting the information. The researcher tried hard to get rid of any bias that might have been brought to the study by constantly reflecting on the research process.

- Triangulation

Triangulation is regarded as, “a process of using multiple perceptions to clarify meaning, verifying the repeatability of an observation or interpretation” (Maree, 2010:298). The researcher therefore used interviews and document analysis to discover the strategies teachers use to manage occupational stress. The researcher made sure that the data from the documents was similar to data collected during the interviews.

1.5.2.6 Researcher’s Role

The researcher generally facilitated all the proceedings within the study. Maree (2010:41) hinted that the role of the researcher in the study is to collaboratively partner with the participants so as to collect and analyse data to create understanding. The role of the researcher in this study was as follows:

- Preparing and structuring the interviews.
- Preparing the recording equipment for interview sessions.
- Scheduling appointments with the participants.
- Conducting interviews.
- Transcribing and analysing data.
- Triangulating data.

1.5.2.7 Ethical Considerations

According to Maree (2010:41) it is significant to emphasise ethical considerations in regard to the study. Punch (2006:56) had a similar view on ethical issues in research, pointing out that, “all research has ethical dimensions, and a good starting point for dealing with the ethical issues in the proposal is to realise that there are numerous stakeholders in your research”. A researcher’s ethical responsibilities include the overarching principles of academic integrity and honesty, and respect for other people.

Particular attention was paid to ensure overall integrity, worthiness and quality by adhering to the following ethical issues which were reflected by Punch (2006:56), Maree (2010:300) and Merriam (2009:162).

- Informed Consent

It is very important for participants to sign declaration indicating that they are willing to take part in the study (Merriam, 2009:162). Maree (2010:300) concurs by saying, “during the follow-up interview (face-to-face) the researcher will present the participant with a letter of consent, in which the research process will be described”. It was the responsibility of the researcher to ensure that participants participated voluntarily, making certain that they knew what they were getting themselves into. There was enough information about the study, its goals and procedures so that when they decided to be part of the study, they fully understood what to expect.

The researcher applied for a permit to conduct the research study from the Ministry of Education Skills and Development in Botswana. After the permit was granted, permission was thereafter sought from the Regional Education Department, the principals and the participants who were taking part in the study. Participants were given a letter to read and ask questions to get clarity on issues of concern. The researcher also made sure that the participants signed the letter after reading and understanding its contents. Assurance was given to the participants that they could withdraw at any time during the process if they wanted to.

- Privacy, confidentiality and anonymity



The concerns in regard to the privacy, confidentiality and anonymity of the participants were addressed by explaining how the information would be safeguarded and the way participants' or the institution's identity would be protected (Punch, 2006:56). According to Maree (2010:301) both the researcher and participant must have a clear understanding regarding the confidentiality of the results and findings of the study. All participants' information and responses shared during the study would be kept private and the results were presented in an anonymous manner in order to protect the identities of the participants.

In this study, the researchers' responsibility was to adhere to the ethics of confidentiality, privacy and anonymity. The participants' confidentiality was protected by ensuring that whatever was discussed during interviews would remain between the participant and the researcher. Using numbers instead of real names ensured that the participants' identity was not revealed. The participant as an individual had the right to privacy. Assurance was given to the participants that if they felt that they were not comfortable to reveal information, it was within their rights to refrain from doing so; the researcher did not pressurise the participant otherwise.

- Honesty and Trust

According to Creswell (2013:174), to gain support from participants, a qualitative researcher conveys to participants that they are participating in a study, explains the purpose of the study, and does not engage in deception about the nature of study. The researcher's obligation and commitment towards the study will show the participants how serious she is. Time consciousness and honouring appointments schedule will account for the level of honesty and trust the researcher portrays towards her participants. The researcher therefore committed herself fully and honoured appointments, and when there were constraints the participants were informed and rescheduling was done.

1.6 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, an explanation of stress was given as a dynamic and complex process where there is interaction of an individual and his internal and external events. Occupational stress was said to be an uncomfortable experience by any individual who is required to change his desired behaviour as a result of opportunities, constraints or demands related to important work objectives. Teaching was regarded as one of the most stressful professions in the world. It had been realised that teachers in Botswana also experience stress from different sources and platforms. The researcher realised that even though investigations were done, they centred on why teachers experienced stress but left out what they did to manage stressful situations or how they coped with stress. The researcher wanted to establish how teachers managed occupational stress among themselves in Southern South- Sub Region primary schools in Botswana.

Qualitative research design was used in this study. The researcher utilised qualitative research design as it produced a greater depth and detail of how teachers managed occupational stress. Participants were able to narrate their experiences according to how they understood them and what they meant. Different methodologies were used in this investigation. The researcher did the investigation in the Southern South Sub-Region primary schools as it was the area that was familiar and easily accessible for the researcher. Participants were purposively selected as the researcher wanted teachers who could provide rich information about management occupational stress. Fourteen teachers who had five or more years of teaching experience were selected from the seven primary schools. The researcher used interviews and documents analysis for data collection. With data analysis, literature study, transcribed interviews and sampled documents were analysed. Important texts were identified which assisted in understanding and interpreting data.

Verification and validating findings, dependability and triangulation were used during the investigation to ensure data trustworthiness. The researcher showed the research notes to the interviewees for confirmation. The researcher also transcribed the interviews verbatim to avoid distorting information, and document analysis was used for triangulation. The researcher paid particular attention to overall integrity by adhering to informed consent, privacy, confidentiality and anonymity, and honesty and trust as ethical considerations.

1.7 CHAPTER DIVISIONS

This study was divided into the following chapters.

Chapter 1: Introduction

This chapter gives the general overview of the study together with a statement of the problem and research questions, research aims and objectives, definition of concepts and chapter division.

Chapter 2: Literature Study

In this chapter outlining the literature review for the study is done. A theoretical exposition and definition of concepts as well as sections on the nature and causes of stress in education as well as stress management strategies form part of the outline.

Chapter 3: Research Methodology

Chapter Three describes the research process in detail. The different methods and the research design are identified and explained. The ways of collecting data and analysing it in are also addressed in this chapter.

Chapter 4: Analysis of Results

The analysis of the research findings are presented in this chapter and the findings of the study are portrayed.

Chapter 5: Summary of empirical results, Conclusions and Recommendations

This is the last chapter of the study where the researcher summarises the results of the study and conclusions are stated. Limitations and recommendations are also discussed.

The next chapter deals with the literature review.

CHAPTER 2

2. MANAGING OCCUPATIONAL STRESS AMONG TEACHERS IN PRIMARY SCHOOLS.

2.1 INTRODUCTION



According to Hofstee, (2015:91) a literature study is important, broad, and contextualised. It presents theory base to the reader, as it has a review of published work that is relevant to the investigation. It also presents investigated work. It is a significant factual summary of what has been done previously. Literature study outlines what other researchers have discovered concerning the intended area of study. It also gives the researcher an idea on how to construct the key perceptions and concepts of the research (Symon and Cassell, 2012:117; Maree 2010:26). Litchman (2013:172) expresses similar sentiments and states that “it is the writer’s responsibility to organise the material so that the reader can determine what has come before, what gaps there are in the literature, and how the new research can fill a hole”.

In this regard, some aspects in education that surround primary school teachers in their working lives have proven to bring about challenges which hinder the process of teaching and learning, while they are supposed to be the cornerstone of all activities that take place in school. Looock, Grobler, and Mestry (2009:18) have noted that “educators enter the profession with high expectations, a vision for the future, and a mission to educate our children. The demands, pressures and conditions they work under can stifle this zeal and present obstacles to achieving their mission”. The demands and the pressures aforementioned are associated with stress as there is belief that stress in the teaching profession increase when the demands on teaching and learning increase (Schulze and Steyn 2007:691). Some authors and researchers have indicated that stress is a phenomenon that is visible in all kinds of profession and teaching has not been an exception (Jay, NY: 1). Ngidi and Sibaya, (2002:7) support the former as they state that, there are studies which have been conducted in a number of countries with reports of teachers who have expressed the continued presence of occupational stress.

Loock *et al.* (2009:18), Schulze and Steyn (2007:691), Steyn and Van Niekerk (2013:212), Werner, (2011:232), Mapfumo, Chitsiko, and Cherishe, (2012:155) and Jay (NY: 1) are some of the authors who have reflected that stress is a reality in the teaching profession in their investigations. They further discuss theoretical models of stress and explain the nature of stress in detail and how it can be managed. In this literature review the examples of these and other authors will be followed in an attempt to put into perspective conceptual issues and the context of stress that is generally encountered in schools, and how the management of stress is conducted.

2.2 THEORETICAL MODELS OF STRESS

Different models of stress have been suggested by different researchers to describe occupational stress. Hughes, Ginnett, and Curphy, (2009:346) identified the A-B-C model of stress, while Nash (2002:37-40) identified the Torelli and Gmelch's Stress Model and the Stimulus and Response Stress Model. The Spielberger State-Trait (STP), the Transactional Process and the Job Demands-Control (JD-C) models of stress have been identified as well and explained by Mostert (2006:18-19). Schulze and Steyn (2007:692) have identified the Response-Based, the Transactional-Based and the Stimulus-Based models as a comprehensive exposition of stress models or theories. In this dissertation the same division is followed.

2.2.1 The Stimulus-Based Stress Model

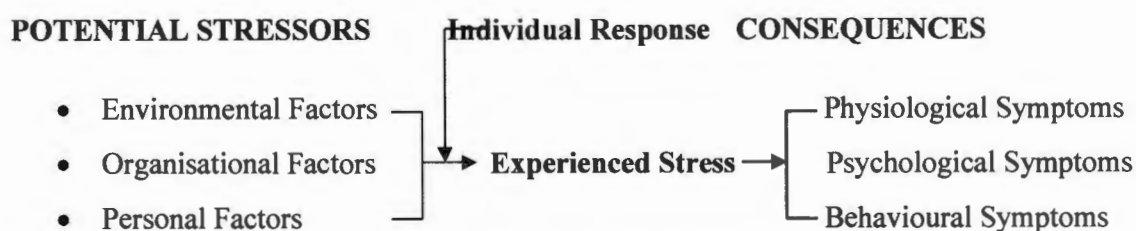
The Stimulus-Based Stress Model postulates stress as an environmental situation external to a person, which has a negative influence. The stress takes place when the demands that the person comes across surpass the elastic perimeter of the person's capability to adapt or survive (Schulze and Steyn, 2007:693). This model consists of three components which cause stress. These components are the external, the internal and how the external and the internal components relate with each other. Jay (NY: 5) asserts that the stimulus based stress model concept "relates to the comprehension of the nature of particular psychosocial stimuli that result in a perceived threat to one's physiological, psychological or social equilibrium". For the purpose of this study, this model puts into perspective the job pressures and lack of support as the stressors. The differences in personality traits therefore decide how occupational stressors are perceived and evaluated (Mostert, 2006:18).

This model therefore can be realised within the teaching profession as primary school teachers do reach a point where things become too much for them to handle. In addition, this kind of model can be associated with teachers as they also portray the different personality traits that can contribute to stressful situations which, in the end, interfere with their daily work.

2.2.2 The Response-Based Stress Model

The Response-Based Stress Model is a further model which will be used to explain the concepts of occupational stress in this discussion. In this model it is proposed that, an individual encounters potential stressors. The individual then has to decide how to cope and produce a variety of outcomes (Kreitner and Kinicki, 2007:599). Schulze and Steyn, (2007:692) have similar sentiments and note that, “this model describes stress in terms of the individual’s response to a disturbing stimulus. The focus is on physiological, psychological and behavioural reactions to stress”. This indicates that an individual who is exposed to continuous stressful situations may experience physiological, psychological and behavioural symptoms (Aquinas, 2009:163). The different personality traits that individuals possess will then call for unique responses, and then the physiological, psychological and behavioural consequences will be determined by the individuals’ response. In Figure 2.1 this model is exhibited.

Figure 2.1: The Response-Based Stress Model



(Adapted from Robbins and Judge, 2013:631 and Nash, 2002:40)

This model indicates that primary school teachers may react differently to the potential stressors which they come across in their daily lives. The environmental, organisational and personal stressors which trigger stress in the teachers have individual teachers responding differently; for example one teacher may be calm when encountering a potential stressor while another teacher may become anxious when encountering a similar potential stressor.

To elaborate, two teachers may react differently in a situation where there is shortage of resources; one teacher may easily find ways of improvising while the other may have difficulties with the situation. The potential stressors bring along physiological, psychological and behavioural consequences for the teachers.

2.2.3 The Transactional-Based Stress Model

According to the Transactional-Based Stress model an event does not necessarily cause stress in the individual. The model suggests that an individual is the determinant towards interpreting whether the situation is stressful. The model recommends “viewing stress as an individual phenomenon that is both interactive and situational. It implies that different individuals, when confronted with the same situation, may well respond differently” (Schulze and Steyn, 2007:693). Mostert (2006:19) has similar sentiments and states that, with this model stress depend highly on one’s cognitive consideration of the situation and the capability to cope. The A-B-C model demonstrates similarity with the transactional model. Hughes *et al.* (2009:346) also note in this regard that from the individual’s reaction after an event, the internal role played by the internal exchange of ideas or self-talk can be seen to be contributing to the feelings of stress. The internal exchange of ideas can either be reasonable or not reasonable, constructive or destructive and it will be up to the individual to control the feelings. While an individual encounters a stressful situation and decides how to cope in the Role- Based Model, with the Transactional Model, the individual is the one who perceives the situation to be stressful. This means that the same situation may be stressful for one individual and not for another (Luthans, 2011:286).

The Transactional-Based Model can be seen in the everyday life of primary school teachers as one teacher might feel stressed when the other teacher may not be stressed by the same situation. For example, some teachers do not have a problem with teaching a large number of learners while some teachers struggle to produce quality results when teaching many learners. One teacher may find the situation to be stressful while another teacher portrays positivity towards the situation.

These different theoretical conceptions can only be applied partially in practical situations in education. For example, it is important to note that the different theories or models are not mutually exclusive, as if only a particular one relates to a certain time or situation.

Theories or models are timeless and will always apply to a greater or lesser extent in different settings. This reality is applied in the following discussions on different aspects of stress as it pertains to occupational stress of teachers in particular.

2.3 THE NATURE OF OCCUPATIONAL STRESS

The stress phenomenon has been explained from different angles. Hughes *et al.* (2009:343) are of the opinion that managers are compelled to comprehend the nature of stress as the position they are holding can also be stressful. The authors note that the leader's stress can damage subordinates' performance. They define stress as "the process by which we perceive and respond to situations that challenge or threaten us". Steyn and Van Niekerk (2013:214) contend that stress is a disease that can physically kill an individual. This means that occupational stress can be seen as a major danger for teachers in schools. In this discussion the following aspects of occupational stress will be considered.

- Definition of occupational stress
- Signs and symptoms of occupational stress
- Causes of occupational stress
- Effects of occupational stress
- Managing occupational stress

2.3.1 Definition of Occupational Stress

As mentioned in Chapter One paragraph 1.1 stress is a dynamic and complex process where there is interaction of an individual with internal and external events in his/her life (Phindela *et al.*, 2008:2). Van Deventer and Kruger (2010:49) define stress as binding tightly or pressing hard together, while Lussier (2008:43) posits that it is "an emotional and/or physical reaction to environmental activities and events". Chipiza *et al.* (2010:120) add to these explanations and describe stress as what is happening when our bodies experience *tearing-off* when adjusting to the continuously changing environment. Stress in this case proves to be a situation that brings the body's physical and mental being into a strained state because of dynamic environmental expectations. According to Werner (2011:232) stress is the way the body responds to the demands and the dynamics that need it to adjust its mental, emotional and physical being.

This is triggered when the situation is taken as either a challenge or a threat to someone. Even though stress is a phenomenon that occurs widely in people's lives, Werner (2011:232) emphasises that most stress is work related and this work related stress is also termed occupational stress. Werner (2011:232) further explains occupational stress as "an uncomfortable experience by an individual who is required to change his desired behaviour as a result of opportunities, constraints or demands related to important work objectives". Phindela *et al.* (2008:25) also emphasize that there is stress in the workplace and reflect further that, many people consider the workplace as a stressful environment. What is clear from these definitions is that occupational stress is concerned with the individual pressures that workers endure with regard to their day-to-day activities in their respective workplaces, and the environment considerably contributes to the pressures.

For the purpose of this study occupational stress should be seen as a phenomenon that is experienced in primary schools by teachers in their day-to-day activities. It has to do with the personal reaction of the educators exposure to "extreme demands or other types of work pressure placed on them, resulting in unpleasant and negative emotions, such as frustration, anger, anxiety and depression" (Jay, NY: 5). Van Wyk (2004:2) defines occupational stress in terms of teacher stress. The researcher views stress in teachers as, the intolerable incidents they go through because of the kind of work they do. Examples of these incidents could be depression, anger, tension, frustration and anxiety. From these explanations one can conclude that occupational stress is the negative sensations experienced by primary school teachers regarding the nature of work in their working environments.

2.3.2 Signs and Symptoms of Occupational Stress

Various sources indicate that there are conditions which can alert people to be on their guard when they might be experiencing stress in their workplace. These conditions are called signs and symptoms of stress. It is very important to be able to realise when one experiences stress in the workplace and it is through these symptoms that one could come to that realisation. These symptoms can be viewed as behavioural, emotional, work-related and physical (Steyn and van Niekerk, 2013:223; Phindela *et al.*, 2008:20).



Werner (2011:231), Nahavandi, Denhardt, Denhardt and Aristigueta, (2015:172), Huczynski and Buchanan (2007:154), Botha (2013:85) and Lussier (2008:46) also note physical, psychological and behavioural aspects as possible signs and symptoms of occupational stress. Even though all these symptoms are related, this discussion will be based on Steyn and van Niekerk (2013) and Phindela *et al.*'s (2008) views and these have been specified in the following discussion.

The signs and symptoms of occupational stress have been grouped as:

- Behavioural

The behavioural symptoms of occupational stress are those which will be reflected by one's actions and they would be measurable and observable. Merlevede, Bridoux, and Vandamme, (2008:37) characterise behaviour as, "what can be observed by other people in our body posture, gestures, in our voice, muscle tension, breathing, etc". To come to the conclusion that one has behavioural symptoms, a display of change in ones actions like irritableness, heavy smoking, over or under eating, drug and alcohol abuse, anger, aggression and excess worrying will be visible. Some teachers who display these signs will at most times be angry with their learners and their colleagues and some will come to work drunk. The behaviour that people know tends to change for the worst.

- Emotional

The emotional signs of occupational stress will be shown by how one feels about a situation (Luthans, 2011:226). In en.m.wikipedia.org the term, emotions, has been explained as "a state of feeling that results in physical and psychological changes that influence our behaviour." Emotional outbursts, moodiness, temper tantrums, memory loss, hypersensitivity to criticism, not being motivated to go to work and forgetfulness will account for some of the emotions which are displayed by a person who is experiencing a stressful situation. Teachers also show these signs in some instances, and at times they absent themselves from work without valid reasons. Some go to the extent of throwing temper tantrums during calm situations; while some teachers will not submit their work and always give an excuse that they forgot the deadline for submission.

- Work-related

Gentry, (2007:271) notes that someone with work-related symptoms possesses counter productive work behaviour. He claims, “counter productive work behaviour is any behaviour by an employee that is intended to harm the organisation or its members”. Employees will reflect the work- related signs at work when their performances become different from how they usually perform. They will have more complaints, have little or no interest in their clients, have poor working relationships with colleagues; they will be accident prone and not meet the expected targets. These symptoms are usually noticed among teachers and the most common symptom is that of not meeting the expected target as most of the schools are not performing well. Meanwhile teachers cannot stop complaining.

- Physical

The physical signs of occupational stress are those which are visible on the body and they are concerned with the physical being of the person (en.m.wikipedia.org). The body experiences certain changes that occur and become noticeable (Mwamwenda, 1996:2,526). Gentry (2007:184) express similar sentiments affirming that the physical symptoms of stress are “the changes that occur in your body every time you feel stressed”. Excessive heartbeat, hypertension, bad breath, sleeping problems, stomach upsets and ulcers, watery eyes, excessive perspiring, headaches, and physiological fatigue are amongst the physical symptoms which can be experienced when one is under pressure. These signs can be seen among teachers as they have portrayed questionable physical well-being. This means that teachers are not physically fit as some have even proved this by their regular absences because they have to go for monthly check ups as they experience some of the aforementioned physical symptoms.

2.4 CAUSES OF OCCUPATIONAL STRESS

There is a notion that “the causes of stress are found in the environment, the individual, and the interaction between the two” (Aquinas, 2009:156). Lussier (2008:44) considers the causes of occupational stress as organisational climate, management behaviour, personality type and degree of job satisfaction. This exposition shows that organisations have an important role to play in the stress that individuals experience. The individual’s emotions and personal situation obviously also play a vital role in the way stress is experienced in the workplace.

The causes which have been identified by Aquinas and Lussier have been supported by the following writers: Debeila (2008:23), Nahavandi *et al.* (2015:170) and Werner (2011:235). Contrary to the previous authors' sentiments, Steyn and van Niekerk (2013:219-223) have identified the major causes of stress as general and work-related. They suggest change; social, emotional, environmental, financial, chemical, familial and biological factors; time utilisation, conflict, travel, personality type and negative thought patterns as the general causes. They propose work-related causes as, home/work interface, career development, interpersonal relationships, professional demands and role-based stress. Even if the authors differ, Steyn and van Niekerk's causes can be identified within the previously mentioned author's sentiments and below is a summary of the causes.

Table 2.1 shows sets of factors that cause occupational stress and the indications that fall within a particular set; these causes apply to education.

Table 2.1 Causes of Occupational Stress

Factors	Indications
Environmental	• Unpleasant physical conditions • Changing biological condition • Noise • Odours • Lack of resources • Absenteeism • Lack of transport
Organisational	• Autocratic managements • Poor decision making • Pressure to complete tasks • Lack of control • Lack professional development
Professional Demands/ Organisational Roles	• Heavy workloads • Role conflicts • Change • Limited time
Personal Factors	• Type A personality traits • Negative thought pattern • Emotional instability • Financial instability • Unstable social life • Poor relationships • Conflict

(Adapted from Aquinas, 2009:156; Lussier, 2008:44 and Steyn and Van Niekerk, 2013:219-223)

2.4.1 Environmental Factors

These factors entail physical conditions which are normally dangerous or unpleasant. According to Robbins, and Judge, (2010:534) as much as environmental insecurity influences the design of an organisation's structure, it also influences stress intensity among employees in that organisation. Insecurity is evidently the reason people are found to have difficulties in coping with organisational changes as this time employees are expected to do something in a certain manner and the next time it is a different story. Steyn and van Niekerk (2013:221) have noted similar sentiments when they affirm that "a restrictive and bureaucratic environment with low levels of participation, excessive rules and requirements in large schools, school culture, adverse working conditions, and salaries that are determined by the education system all have the potential to act as stressors". The school environment that is not conducive will display inconsistencies such as, poor heating and lighting, poor maintenance, lack of staff facilities and ancillary support, overcrowded classrooms and insufficient resources (Van Deventer and Kruger, 2010:53).



2.4.2 Organisational Factors

Kreitner and Kinicki (2007:600) identify these factors as group-level causes and argue that, "group level stressors are caused by group dynamics and managerial behaviour. Managers create stress for employees by exhibiting inconsistent behaviours, failing to provide support... focusing on negatives while ignoring good performance". Lussier (2008:45) concurs and states that rigid control during oppressive leadership is likely to generate excessive stress, and a lot of workers believe the managers are the cause of stress. In this kind of management set up, some supervisors display negative behaviours to a point of abuse and thus employees are sometimes driven to a point of poor decision making. Buttrressing the latter statement, it has been noted that, "there is no shortage of factors within an organisation that can cause stress. Pressures to avoid errors or complete tasks in a limited time, work overload, a demanding and insensitive boss and unpleasant co-workers are a few examples" (Robbins & Judge, 2013:632). Duze: (2012:112) has commented that the school needs good instructional leadership for teaching and learning to be successful, however, it is unfortunate that in practice the learning culture within the school is not as it should be. Khumalo (2012:37-39) also indicates that principals who are stressed experience job dissatisfaction. If there is high level of stress there will be less job satisfaction and vice-versa.

2.4.3 Organisational Roles

Organisational roles can be taken as what an individual is expected to do in an organisation. Robins and Judge, (2013:632) suggest that these demands are related to the strains placed on the individual as a function of a certain task he plays in the organisation. Role conflicts generate anticipation that is usually very difficult to reconcile or satisfy. It is normally a set up where one has an overload of work to do and this normally takes place when employees are expected to do more than they can actually do. This ambiguity and conflicting set up for employees may also bring about confusion as they normally end up not being sure what to do (Aquinas, 2009:157). Interpersonal demands are the pressures that emanate from colleagues. Nahavandi *et al.* (2015: 182) suggest that, “work also can become stressful when we encounter interpersonal conflicts. Both the quality of relationships and the availability of support from peers, supervisors and others in the organisation can influence stress levels”. Lack of resources in organisations has been regarded as a cause of stress too. According Steyn and Van Niekerk (2013:220) shortage of resources and continuous change associated with matters such as the effort to raise standards are also difficulties educators have to deal with. Regarding teaching and learning, lack of classrooms or teaching space and the constant change of the curriculum among others, can be taken as examples of the organisational roles that cause occupational stress.

The factors have been categorised as task demands, role ambiguity and conflict demands, interpersonal demands and workload (Nahavandi *et al.*, 2015:180; Robbins and Judge, 2013:632). Task demands are the intrinsic nature of the work a person does. Jackson (2004:2) reflects that the demands, pressures and the conditions teachers work under can demoralise them and lead to poor performance. Task demands are said to be factors that identify what has to be done. Aquinas (2009:157) affirms that task demands include an individual’s work, his working condition and the physical work design. Even though this is supposed to be the case, employees experience lack of control over their mandate and this has proven to evoke stress. Nahavandi *et al.* (2015:183) concur and comment that, “when workers lack a sense of control, because of either the lack of autonomy or the lack of opportunity to participate in decisions that affect them, stress often results. It is not difficult to imagine becoming stressed under conditions where you have important responsibilities but lack the freedom to make choices or the opportunity to influence how the work is done”.

Teachers are faced with instances where they are not able to make their own decisions to solve their organisational problems. In most cases decisions are made from education offices which, most of the time; do not meet teacher's expectations, thus creating unnecessary stress for them.

The organisational work load demands are also presumed to cause stress for the people in the workplace. Nahavandi *et al.* (2015:183) have stated that, "workload demands can vary not only with the amount of work but also with the difficulty of the work. Very low work complexity can lead to boredom, and very high work complexity can lead to fatigue, anxiety, and stress". Realisation that there is a heavy workload, but little time may cause stress in educators. They normally do not have enough time to cover their work nor meet the learner's needs, more so where the learner- teacher ratio is huge.

2.4.4 Personal Factors

According to Aquinas (2009:158) the same stressful actions may lead to distress and tension for one person and stimulation and healthy outcomes for another. "The degree to which stressors affect us is caused, in part, by our personality type. Since stress comes from within, the things we do can cause us stress," (Lussier, 2008:45). Personal factors thus lie within different individual approaches to stress. Some people will thrive in stressful situations while others will be overwhelmed by the same set-up. Personality type can be seen as the main factor that makes people approach stressful situations differently. Type A personality has been identified by Werner (2011:245), Nahavandi *et al.* (2015:179), Lussier (2008:45), Huczynski and Buchanan (2007:151), Robins *et al.* (2013:220) and Campbell (2010:536), as the type that is more exposed to stressful situations as the people are fast moving, high achievers, highly irritable, impatient, extremely alert, perfectionists, competitive and preoccupied with work. Type B personality characters are believed to be less likely to endure stress as they are easy-going, relaxed, and emotionally stable and prefer a steady pace of work. An observation has been made that, even though teachers report that their personal strain is created by the work they do, they also allege that their social life is a major source of stress. This proves that it is not only the workplace that brings stressful situations to employees; their unstable social lives also contribute adversely. One will realise that the unique characters within teachers make them react differently towards the same situation.

For example, there are teachers who will get stressed because there is lack of resources in the school while some will see this as a challenge for them to be creative and produce their own materials.

Though different causes of stress have been identified in organisations at large, the school as an organisation has proven not to be an exception as the following authors and researchers have revealed the causes within; Khumalo (2012:35), Mostert (2006:21), Van Wyk (2004:19), Jay (NY:8), Schulze & Steyn (2007:1), Kokkinos (2007:230), Milner and Khoza (2008:157), Van der Westhuizen (2004:327), Steyn and Van Niekerk (2013:220), Van Deventer and Kruger (2010:53), and Brown and Schulze (2002:8). Ngidi and Sibaya (2002:8) have pointed out in their research that “conditions under which black teachers work in schools are demoralising, as the black teacher has to cope with poor physical conditions such as overcrowding, inadequate equipment and lack of facilities”. In other research findings concerning teacher stress, it was concluded that the causes of stress were visible within the participating schools as teachers indicated similar causes (Milner and Khoza, 2008: 162).

2.5 EFFECTS OF OCCUPATIONAL STRESS

Even though stress is thought to bring about certain kinds of pressures, it is not always considered to be bad as indicated in different researches. In Mapfumo *et al.* (2012:156) it has been stated that stress is not always negative. There is also good stress that can improve inspiration and attempt and this kind of stress is believed to contribute to professional growth and development. An emphasis on this statement is buttressed by the following note; “stress is not necessarily bad in and of itself. Although stress is typically discussed in a negative context, it also has a positive value. It’s an opportunity when it offers potential gain” (Robbins and Judge, 2013:630). Nash (2002:34) has also noted that “stress can be divided into 2 categories, namely eustress and distress. Eustress is positive stress experienced which results in feelings of happiness and satisfaction, while distress is negative stress experienced and associated with feelings of fear, anxiety and worry”. In short, one can say that stress does not necessarily always bring bad results or consequences; it can bring positive results when a person uses it as a motivation to succeed in what they are doing or want to achieve; and it brings negative impact when it is chronic or at a residual stage (Steyn and Van Niekerk, 2013:218). Although stress is considered to be good to a certain extent, most authors have detailed that stress brings more negatives than positives.

This discussion will be focused on the negative consequences of occupational stress as it seems the negative consequences are the ones which are experienced in the workplace, hence the supporting information from most authors and researchers. This therefore, compelled the researcher to put into perspective the adverse effects of occupational stress so that teachers would be aware of the phenomenon that might contribute to poor performance in education.

The effects of stress have been classified as individual and organisational. Under individual consequences, there are the physical, psychological and behavioural effects (Aquinas, 2009:163; Nahavandi *et al.*, 2015:175; Robbins *et al.*; 2010:537; Steyn and Van Niekerk, 2013:223). This means that stress can bring serious negative effects to the employees as individuals and to the organisation as a place where individuals meet to do certain duties (Steyn and Van Niekerk, 2013:225).



2.5.1 Individual Effects

An individual who is exposed to continual strain may experience physiological, psychological and behavioural symptoms (Aquinas, 2009:163). Werner (2011: 245) has commented that, a group of different major life events can significantly increase our chances for potential ailments. What happens in our daily lives may result in a very strong association between physical life stressors and mental disorders. This suggests that stress may cause physiological effects as Robbins *et al.* (2010:537) hints that “one recent study linked stressful job demands to increased susceptibility to upper respiratory illnesses and poor immune system functioning, especially for individuals who had low self-efficacy”. Supporting Robbins *et al.*’s statement, there is a notion that, numerous medical ailments have stress related factors. The majority of the ailments entail stroke, backaches, peptic ulcers, headaches and heart diseases (Aquinas, 2009:163). It means that the physiological symptoms are a result of the physical ailments which can be brought about by stress on an individual, and employees who get sick will therefore likely be absent from work.

Robbins and Judge (2013:635) say “stress shows itself in other psychological states, for instance, tension, anxiety, irritability, boredom, and procrastination”. This statement reflects that an individual with these psychological symptoms might experience aggression depending on their personality type. An aggravated employee may display melodramatic behaviour over apparently harmless situations at work.

The frustration/aggression assumption clarifies the dynamic which makes a worker lash out vocally or physically at others at work (Werner, 2011:242). Huczynski and Buchanan (2007:154) also explain that stress has an influence in our ability to think. It is also believed that stress impede our concentration, reaction to criticism, attention span and decision making.

The behavioural aspects concerning stress are taken as one of the individual consequences. Aquinas (2009:164) has revealed that, behavioural problems are ranked as the third form of individual distress. The problems include among others, different kinds of substance abuse, violence and accidents. Employees who display these behavioural aspects may also show productivity changes, absenteeism and change of profession. Nahavandi *et al.* (2015:177) have also noted that “stress can lead to behaviour that interferes with our relationships with others. We might become irritable, less patient, angry or withdrawn. We might lash out to others or react out of proportion to the situation”. This kind of behaviour can affect the way we relate with our peers, friends and families, and a stressed employee can never produce good results at work. All the effects of individual stress might result in personal suffering.

2.5.2 Organisational Effects

Nahavandi *et al.*, (2015:178) are of the view that job dissatisfaction is connected to stress as well. In most organisations, employees who find themselves with too many stressful work encounters might experience burnout. There is a statement that explains occupational burnout as “a condition where the employee’s coping resources have been consumed by work and life demands, to the point of poor job performance and exhaustion” (Werner, 2011:242). Workers who are normally affected by burnout are those who have extreme expectations for success even though their capabilities are restricted to a certain level. According to Looock *et al.* (2009:19) burnout is a result of stress within the educators. Extreme exhaustion is seen as an increasing problem in the teaching profession. Some researchers found out that some of the most resourceful and talented educators have left the profession due to burnout. Aquinas (2009:164) is also of the view that organisational distress accounts for low morale, dissatisfaction, communication breakdowns and troubled working relationships. Among other organisational stress effects which have been noted in the literature are conflicts, absenteeism, tardiness, strikes, regular grievances and poor quality results.

Teachers from schools at large are not exempted from experiencing these individual and organisational effects of stress, the primary school teachers inclusive. Van Der Westhuizen (2004:330) indicates that a stressful situation “is often accompanied by feelings of panic or a realisation of physiological changes such as increased heartbeat, hyperventilation or sweaty palms”. Mostert (2006:68) also found out many years ago that teachers in institutions experienced the effects of stress.

2.6 MANAGING OCCUPATIONAL STRESS

Several authors emphasise that stress has important consequences for the workplace (Aquinas, 2009:164; Lussier, 2008:46; Nahavandi *et al.*, 2015:186; Robbins and Judge, 2013:636-640; Werner, 2011:249; Kreitner and Kinicki, 2007:606). Stress compels individuals and organisations to take action to avoid and handle negative organisational behaviour. Nahavandi *et al.* (2015:186) states that “recognising and evaluating how stress is influencing both our own performance and that of others is the first step in using stress constructively and avoiding its destructive aspects”. Steyn and van Niekerk, (2013:226) are also of the view that stress should be managed as a top priority and that a simple matter such as failing to meet deadlines can lead to something as serious as a heart attack. Approaches to the management of stress can normally be distinguished as either individual or of an organisational nature. In tabular form these approaches can be set out as follows:

Table 2.2 Stress Management Approaches

Individual Approaches	• Eliminating or modifying stressors in the environment. • Changing our perception of stressors. • Changing our own stress-producing behaviour. • Changing aspects of our lifestyles. • Regular practice of relaxation techniques. • Expressing our concerns in a supportive environment. • Being emotionally intelligent.
Organisational Approaches	• Recognising stress. • Clarifying roles and goal setting. • Recognising employees' personality type. • Management training. • Implementing Assistant Employee Programmes (AEP). • Proper design of work. • Organisational communication • Conflict management

(Adapted from Steyn and Van Niekerk, 2013:226; Nahavandi *et al.*, 2015:186; Aquinas, 2009:164 and Werner, 2011:250)

2.6.1 Individual Approaches

Nahavandi *et al.* (2015:186) assert that individual approaches to stress management serve the purpose of eliminating and/or modifying stressors in the environment, changing perception of stressors, time management and planning, changing the aspects of our lifestyles, regular practice of relaxation techniques, expressing our concerns in a supportive environment and being emotionally intelligent. Steyn and Van Niekerk (2013:226) mention that stressor elimination within a work environment is in the first place the responsibility of individuals. The approaches which have been mentioned in Table 2.2 offer solutions in the form of ways in which stressors can be managed at an individual level. These approaches or techniques are indicated in the right hand column of Table 2.2.

Another important aspect of individual stress management is that individuals can change the way they perceive circumstances. Through cognitive restructuring, people are able to stop unreasonable and depressing thoughts and replace them with more encouraging and healthy mental approach Werner (2011:250). Jay (NY) is also of the view that, our unique differences are ideal for understanding various types of stress in the workplace. This means that stress among teachers differs, a setting that cultivates stress for one teacher, may not be stressful for another teacher. This statement is indicative of the fact that individuals can change the way they see stress by being actively on the lookout for positive aspects in a situation. Steyn and Van Niekerk (2013:227) emphasize that “we need to become aware of our thoughts and manage them in a positive way, because negative thoughts are a constant source of stress. Taking a positive view of something and adopting a positive thinking pattern can alter our perceptions of at least some stressors”. The latter statement aligns with Jays’ view as it shows that our individual differences can enable individuals to alter the way they perceive stress. Positive thinking also contributes a lot in helping individuals to deal with stress and Lussier (2008:47) encourages individual workers to be hopeful and think positively as this can be learnt. The author emphasises that making positive self-statements will help an individual to deal with stress. If individuals are able to admit that no one is perfect and admit to their mistakes and learn from them, they should be happier and become positive thinkers. This has been buttressed in the statement that; “realistic optimism is better than misguided optimism. Only by honestly and pragmatically assessing what is happening can we develop realistic and constructive responses” (Nahavandi *et al.*, 2015:189).

Individuals need to be on guard against self-producing stress with their own behaviour (Aquinas, 2009:164). Steyn and Van Niekerk (2013:227) made an important observation in this regard when they commented that time is a crucial aspect that disorganises employees. Similarly, Aquinas (2009:164) says “a practical way to manage stress is to better control your use of time. Many people manage their time poorly. The well- organised employee can often accomplish twice as much as the person who is poorly organised”. In another notion it has been reflected that, managing time is pivotal in stress reduction, and individuals who practice time management efficiently are more productive (Steyn and Van Niekerk, 2013:227). Bennet (1997:138) concurs that time management reduces stress by noting that, better competence in using time management lessens stress.

Werner (2011:251) buttresses Bennet's views on time management and notes that proper planning and managing time are critical skills in dealing with a stressful job. He goes on to suggest that one has to identify daily or weekly activities and attend to them according to importance and urgency, as this will bring satisfaction in being able to accomplish the necessary goals in time, hence avoiding disorderliness that cultivate stress. It is also important to have clear goals and review them frequently.

Lifestyle also plays a crucial role in determining an individual's well-being and physical health. Steyn and Van Niekerk, (2013:227) note that individuals need to change certain aspects of their lifestyles. It is a well-known fact that there are employees who never take decent vacation. In addition, these people have the tendency of taking excess work home after work. Werner (2011:252) is of a similar view and advises that "planned rests periods after a period of high stress is a useful technique. This could be used hourly, daily; weekly... personal time leave time out (e.g. lunchtime gym session) or paid sabbaticals are used frequently for this purpose". Sabbatical leave for a certain period of time as has been indicated might be important if the annual leave is not sufficient to allow sufficient rejuvenation. It is a must for every employee to step back a little from work as continuous working can exhaust the worker and end up leading to burnout. According to Robbins and Judge (2013:639) sabbaticals ranging from duration of few weeks to several months allow employees to travel, relax, or pursue personal projects that consume time beyond normal vacations. There should be a balance between work and non-work activities so that employees have either minimal-stress or stress free lifestyles.

Individuals can also reduce their own stress levels by practicing relaxation techniques regularly. Werner (2011:252) mentions that, exercising physically is utilised in constructing and preserving stress fitness. Researchers indicated that physicians have recommended non-competitive physical exercise, such as aerobics, walking, jogging, swimming, and riding a bicycle, as a means of dealing with extreme stress level (Robbins and Judge, 2013:637). Steyn and Van Niekerk (2013:227) support the previous statements when they revealed that, "people who exercise are less likely to worry and become upset over events and problems. Besides reducing the risk of heart attacks, exercise makes people feel more relaxed, more self-confident and more optimistic". It is believed that exercising can also calm the mind and revitalise the body.

The exercises which can be done are walking, jogging, swimming, biking, dancing and yoga; while relaxation activities include slowing down and having fun, laughing, resting and getting enough sleep, praying, watching TV, listening to music, meditating and reading (Lussier, 2008:46). Robbins and Judge, (2013:638) have similar sentiments as they have promoted intense relaxation for 15 to 20 minutes in a day to release stress and bring a sense of peace. This kind of relaxation will also bring positive changes in physiological factors that are experienced during a stressful situation.

Another way of managing individual stress is by sharing our concerns in supportive environments. (Steyn and van Niekerk, 2013:227) note that, turning to others for support and assistance is one of the critical human responses to stress management. Robbins and Judge (2013:638) support the latter when they note that “friends, family or work colleagues can provide an outlet when stress levels become excessive. Expanding your social support network provides someone to hear your problems and offer a more objective perspective on a stressful situation than your own”. Individuals cannot work in isolation as they need social support to be able to cope with stress. We need other people other than ourselves; be it friends or family to help us cope with stress so that we are able to talk about different issues or do something different which does not involve our work. Having positive relationships with our co- workers or supervisors can also provide emotional, structural, purposeful and tangible support (Nahavandi, *et al.*, 2015:190).

Emotional intelligence is said to be related to the capability of dealing with the following: personalities, managing emotions, being cautious of individuals’ emotions or self-awareness, being able to build relationships, self motivation and empathy (Lussier, 2008:49). Nahavandi *et al.* (2015:190) state that “while emotional regulation can cause stress, it can also be important to smoothing the cycles of social interaction. It is not hard to imagine how lack of emotional regulation, resulting in all people expressing all their emotions at all times, might make social interaction quite difficult”. For the school to have less or no stress it needs individuals who are emotionally intelligent as they will particularly pay attention to managing their emotions, and they will be able to understand the emotions of their colleagues. Emotional intelligence also helps individuals to know and manage themselves better. An emotionally intelligent person is usually positive and able to empathise.

An emotionally intelligent employee will be able to identify a negative vibe even where there is no communication, and is able to learn competencies which are needed to build good relationships (Steyn and Van Niekerk, 2013:228-229). Robbins and Judge (2013:170) are of a similar opinion as they have made an observation that the emotional stability dimension often labelled by its converse, neuroticism taps a person's ability to withstand stress. People with optimistic emotional stability are likely to be peaceful, self-confident and safe.

2.6.2 Organisational Approaches

Organisational approaches have to do with the fact that occupational stress can and should be managed in institutions by people with managerial responsibilities. Many authors are of the view that occupational stress can be managed. An example is Bennett (1997:134) who has noted that "stress is seemingly endemic to modern organisational life. Nevertheless, certain measures can be taken by organisations to minimise the degrees of stress experienced by their employees". Robbins *et al.* (2013:638) and Aquinas (2009:166) have suggested organisational communication, redesigning jobs, sabbaticals, organisational culture, goal setting and employee wellness programmes as organisational stress management strategies. Steyn and Van Niekerk (2013:226), Nahavandi *et al.* (2015:186) and Werner (2011:250) on the other hand, have identified the following approaches; recognising stress, clarifying roles and goal setting, recognising the personality type of employees, executing management training, organising wellness programmes and designing work properly as the approaches which could be used to manage occupational stress. The rest of this discussion will be based on the following organisational management approaches: Recognising stress, clarifying roles and goal setting, recognising employees' personality type, management training, reducing stress levels on workers/ wellness programmes, proper design of work, proper communication and conflict management.

Nahavandi *et al.*, (2015:186) have stated that "recognising and evaluating how stress is influencing both our performance and that of others is the first step in using stress constructively and avoiding its destructive aspects. As a starting point we need to be sufficiently self-aware to first recognise the symptoms of stress". In agreement is Botha's (2013:88) view that teachers as individuals must make an effort in classifying what they consider to be intolerable behaviour concerning learners, co-workers and parents.

Nahavandi *et al.* and Botha's statements indicate that it is necessary to recognise occupational stress so that it is managed. Managers who are able to recognise a stressful situation in their organisations are in a better position to acknowledge it and prevent implications which can arise from the situation.

Clarifying roles and goal setting have been identified as a way of managing stress. Werner (2011:252) is of the view that "role classification and goal setting are critical managerial functions. The employee needs clarification of individual job responsibilities and performance feedback". Robbins and Judge (2013:639) are of a similar view asserting that individuals perform better when they have specific and challenging goals and receive feedback on their progress toward these goals. Goals can reduce stress and provide motivation. Role clarification and goal setting are important in the sense that employees have an understanding of what is expected from them; knowing the expectations enables them to commit to the goals as well as experience minimal stress. Perceiving stressors as challenges rather than obstacles become effortless. This will also enable the employees to set themselves achievable goals which will motivate them, reduce role conflict and uncertainty which employees are often subjected to (Aquinas, 2009:166).

Another aspect of managing occupational stress has to do with manager's ability to notice the different types of their employees' personalities, especially Type A people. Bennett (1997:135) indicates that "the dangers confronting Type A individuals include the possibilities of executive burnout, of becoming over-competitive, and of becoming hypercritical of other people's efforts. Equally, however, they do achieve their targets on time and are constantly trying to improve their performances". Steyn and Van Niekerk's, (2013:230) advised employees to always be conscious of the behaviour patterns in themselves and others that indicate possible Type A personalities. It is important that when one thinks that a person is Type A, they should offer extra opportunities for the person to learn about stress reduction. This clearly indicates that managers have a responsibility towards their employees, concerning the employees' personalities, in an organisation as the personalities will, in a way, dictate the stress levels. Being emotionally intelligent will determine a manager's ability to accurately identify an employee's personality, and thus afford an opportunity to provide help in reducing stress for the individual.

The possibility of managers being able to control stress levels within Type A personalities lies within the fact that management is the centre of all the activities that take place within the organisation (Aquinas, 2009:166; Werner, 2011:246). It has been noted that “management can help Type A people, however, by not overloading them with work despite their apparent eagerness to take an ever-increasing workload. Managers need to help rather than unthinkingly exploit Type A individuals” (Kreitner and Kinicki, 2007:605). Van Der Westhuizen (2004:337) has also indicated that it is critical to recognise the personality type of employees and concurs with Bennett (1997), Steyn and Van Niekerk, Werner, Aquinas and Kreitner and Kinicki by noting that, the principal as the leader in the school is compelled to observe the stress level within his teachers and come up with strategies to use if the individual’s stress level proves to be escalating.

Another way of managing organisational stress is by executing management training. Van Der Westhuizen (2004:337), Steyn and Van Niekerk (2013:230) and Nahavandi *et al.* (2015:193) have indicated that management training is vital in managing organisational stress. According to Nahavandi *et al.* (2015:193) training programmes can assist employees deal with stress by emphasising the significance of happiness and a positive attitude. Steyn and Van Niekerk, (2013:230) are of a similar view as they reveal that managers in organisations should be properly trained as poor management is a main cause of employee stress. The necessity of training managers to be able to properly manage their organisation lies within the fact that they are pivotal to all the activities that take place within their organisation. Being able to manage the schools properly will allow the implementation of stress management plans, proper conflict resolution, accuracy in decision making and the ability to accomplish work in time. This will allow for a conducive setup to deal with people positively and achieve stress reduction. Training can also be extended to the whole staff so that they are able to deal with stress positively (Botha, 2013:92; Steyn and Van Niekerk, 2013:230). Van Der Westhuizen (2004:337) has also noted that management development is important, stating, “present management training and development programmes for present and aspiring candidates in positions of leadership within the school. During these short courses, facets with principals and subordinate leaders experiencing the most problems must be emphasised”.

Stress management in an organisation can also be achieved by coming up with stress reducing strategies in workers and this can be done by ensuring employee wellness through the implementation of Employee Assistance Programmes (EAPs). These programmes are said to have “the explicit aim of improving the quality of life of all its employees and their families by providing greater support and helping to alleviate the impact of everyday work and personal problems” (Bila and Roestenburg, 2011). EAPs are recommended by schools to assist employees tackle personal and health related problems. EAPs are important in managing stress as they are accomplishment adjusting programmes which are intended to identify the symptoms of stress in employees. These wellness programmes have been advocated for by Werner (2011:253), Robbins and Judge (2013:639) and Kreitner and Kinicki (2007:607). Robbins and Judge (2013:639) suggest that wellness programmes “typically provide workshops to help people quit smoking, control alcohol use, lose weight, eat better and develop a regular exercise program; they focus on the employee’s total physical and mental condition. Some help employees improve their psychological health as well”. Werner (2011:253) concurs with Robbins and Judge by observing that wellness programmes fall under the work-related health care programme for workers and that the focus is based on the development of emotional, physical and spiritual wellness of employees. These programmes can be very helpful as they can equip employees with coping strategies if they are faced with stressful situations. They also help employees by urging them to take full responsibility of their physical and mental well being. During wellness activities, employees are encouraged to practice healthy lifestyles and are taught how they can live healthy lives (Kreitner and Kinicki, 2007:607).

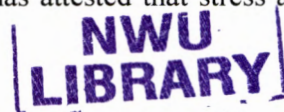
Job redesigning is a strategy that lessens stress, and it calls for autonomous behaviour within the employee. A responsible employee will also be improved by this strategy, and this will enhance adequate feedback and redefined meaning of work within employees. If managers utilise this strategy, their workplace will endure limited stress. Robbins and Judge (2013:639) buttress this when they say “managers should consider increasing employee involvement in decision making, because evidence clearly shows that increases in employee empowerment reduce psychological strain”. To be able to accomplish the latter, it has been suggested that, managerial actions should be designed to suit the particular school and to support the staff in their work, rather than be based on regional or nationwide model (Botha, 2013:89).

Redesigning jobs may empower the employees and when employees are empowered, they are able to do their jobs generously, as such the job will be well executed and positive results will be realised. Werner (2011:253) has also indicated that redesigning job is a crucial element in managing stress in organisations as he has stated that, “job design changes can enrich or enlarge jobs and will assist in reducing stressors related to autonomy, routineness and complexity”.

Organisational communication is defined as, “the process by which information is exchanged and understood by two or more people, usually with the intent to motivate or influence behaviour” (Werner, 2011:253). It is the person’s ability to send the message and articulate it so that the listener is able to comprehend either the words or the intentions (Steyn and Van Niekerk, 2013:143). Organisational communication therefore, is very important as a stress management factor as it allows employees to know what is expected out of them. Communication also reduces role uncertainty and role conflict (Aquinas, 2009:166). Where there is communication, employees would not have disorganised views, it therefore means that communication gives shape and clarity to employee views. Robbins and Judge (2013:639) are of similar sentiments as they say “increasing organisational communication with employees reduces uncertainty by lessening role ambiguity and role conflict. Given the importance that perceptions play in moderating the stress-response relationship, management can also use effective communications as a means to shape employee perceptions”. Greenwald (2008:259) has also reflected that communication is an important factor of managing stress. Communication and decision making are believed to be lively procedures which are necessary for an organisation’s functioning. It entails spreading information among individuals and subunits. Decision making uses information to set direction and resolve problems. Effortless decision making that has been induced by proper communication therefore generates a less stressful situation, which in turn will make problem solving painless.

Since conflict is viewed as an action that is intended to hinder the success of some other person’s aims (Van Deventer & Kruger, 2008:26), it is important that it is managed in an organisation as its definition has revealed that it can generate stress for the individuals. So managing it can be taken as an organisational factor that can help in managing stress.

Loock *et al.* (2009:43) are of a similar view as they submit that “conflict arises when two or more people have incompatible goals and one or both believe that the behaviour of the other prevents their achieving their own goals”. Aquinas (2009: 285) has noted personality as one of the personal factors that can cause conflict and points out that personality conflicts are realities in organisations. To anticipate that you will like all your co-workers may be a naïve expectation. One personality trait that many people may find difficult to deal with is abrasiveness. Abrasive individuals generate stress and strain for those they live with. Conflict management in this regard is a crucial factor when managing stress as conflict conveys hostility and aggression. An aggressive employee always creates a hostile situation for other colleagues, and this might end up leading to increased absenteeism and turnover (Steyn and Van Niekerk, 2013:200). Hostility and aggression can be associated with Type A personalities that need close monitoring and assistance so that they are able to identify their personalities and therefore acknowledge the assistance they are given by their supervisors. Luthans (2011:280) suggests that stress and conflict have similarities even though they have different causes and management strategies. The author has attested that stress and conflict cannot be divorced from each other.



Different authors and researchers have indicated that stress can be managed in schools. The management strategies which teachers have used are the individual and organisational approaches. Steyn and Van Niekerk, (2013:230) have a list of useful hints which school managers can use to reduce stress in their schools within the individuals and in the workplace. They suggest some management strategies which have been illustrated in Table 2.2. In their research on stressors in the professional lives of South African secondary school educators, Schulze and Steyn (2007:705) have argued that the results of their findings “indicate the responsibility of individual school management teams and the Department of Education improving educators’ working environment”. This implies that management of stress in schools is a crucial factor that can bring about positive results and better physiological, psychological and behavioural wellbeing for teachers. Van Deventer and Kruger (2010:54) have also shown that stress needs to be managed among teachers as they stress that stress management should be part of every educator’s everyday routine as well as every school’s operational planning. Other researchers who indicated that managing stress in schools is a necessary factor are Khumalo (2012:182) and Mapfumo *et al.* (2012:156). They all advocate for proper management for the success of education.

2.7 CONCLUSION

In conclusion, several definitions of stress were given in this discussion. All were congruent to the conclusion that occupational stress is an incident which is not comfortable for any employee who is expected to alter or modify the desired behaviour because of the demand, opportunities and the constrictions of the school. Different models of stress were discovered and three models were selected and used in this study. The models were as follows; the Response –Based Model, the Transactional-Based Model and the Stimulus-Based Model.

The signs and symptoms of stress were classified as behavioural, emotional, work-related and physical. An individual who is showing behavioural symptoms of stress will smoke heavily, display eating disorders, show a lot of anger, be irritated easily and worry unnecessarily. One who displays emotional stress will be moody, have temper tantrums, forget easily, sensitive to criticism and experience memory loss. The physical symptoms of stress would be displayed by an individual who, is fatigued, has watery eyes, has high blood pressure, experiences regular or severe headaches, is not able to sleep and has stomach upsets and ulcers. With work-related stress symptoms, an individual will be accident prone, not meet the expected targets, complain excessively about work, have poor working relationships with co-workers and have limited interest in clients.

The factors that cause stress were perceived as environmental, organisational, professional demands and personal. The environmental factors involved the physical conditions which are usually dangerous or not pleasant. Overcrowded classrooms, lack of staff facilities, poor maintenance, poor heating and lighting systems, and insufficient resources were emphasised as the irregularities which indicate a stressful environment. The organisational stress factors entailed changes in managerial behaviour, negative behaviour, abuse which ends up leading to poor decision making, work overload, unpleasant colleagues and job dissatisfaction. Organisational roles as stress factors can be exemplified by an employee that has an overload of work even though he cannot do it. Other examples of these stress factors were said to be conflict demands, interpersonal demands, task demands and role ambiguity. With the personal factors, it was indicated that, the extent to which stressors affect us is caused, in part, by our personality type. Since stress comes from within, the things we do cause us stress. Type A personalities were identified as being more prone to stress as they have the traits which can lead to stressful situations even though it could be otherwise.

The effects of stress which were discussed were classified as individual and organisational. Within the individual class, behavioural, physical/physiological and psychological effects were noted. The physiological effects were said to be those which would be visible on the individual, and they were said to be heart diseases, headaches, strokes, backaches to mention a few. It was stated that stress could lead to behaviour that interferes with our relationships with others. The behaviours which normally affect our relations with others were identified as impatience, irritableness, anger, lashing out, tension and low self-esteem. Organisational effects of stress were to do with the results that are brought by stress within the organisation. The effects of occupational stress have been identified as absenteeism, conflicts, regular grievances, tardiness, high staff turnover, forgetting appointments and strikes.

Finally, it has been recorded by different authors and researchers that stress is manageable. The individual and organisational approaches have been identified as stress management strategies. Under the individual approaches, changing our lifestyles, proper planning, regular relaxation techniques, eliminating stressors in the environment, expressing our concerns and being emotionally intelligent were pointed out as stress management techniques. With organisational approaches, most of the authors have noted proper communication, goal setting, redesigning job, sabbatical leaves, recognising stress, management training, conflict management and wellness programmes as strategies which can be utilised to minimise stress.

The next chapter deals with research design and methodologies.

CHAPTER 3

3. RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGIES

3.1 INTRODUCTION

According to Bazeley (2014:8) research methods are the tools utilised by a researcher to investigate a problem and to find out what is going on during the investigation. He expounds on methodologies as “the theories of how enquiry should proceed embracing philosophy, assumptions about validity, and sometimes preferred methods”. This means that the researcher had to refine and extend the theories used in this study. This was done by clarification of existing concepts and allowing grasping of better understanding of modern complexities. In this regard the methods and methodologies for this study were untangled for better understanding of the conceptual issues. Methodology therefore set the limitations on how the study was to be conducted to get to the bottom of the phenomenon.

Gray (2009:27) posits that “the choice of research methodology is determined by a combination of several factors – for example, whether the researcher believes that there is some sort of external ‘truth’ out there that needs discovering, or whether the task of research is to explore and unpick people’s multiple perspectives in natural, field settings”. It rests upon the researcher to find out about the different methodologies available and to determine the ones most suitable for the investigation.

Since the purpose of this dissertation was to investigate what teachers and their leaders did to manage occupational stress in primary schools in the Southern South Sub- Region of Botswana, the researcher came up with the research design, the methodologies, the limitations and the ethical considerations which explained the proceedings of the whole research (Hofstee, 2015:112).

3.2 RESEARCH DESIGN



According to Flick (2014:112) research design is “a plan for collecting and analysing evidence that will make it possible for the investigator to answer whatever questions which had been posed. The design of an investigation touches almost all aspects of the research, from the minute details”. This is the section where the researcher had to identify and explain in detail the overall approach which was utilised to investigate the phenomenon.

The design portrays the method which the researcher used to carry out the study, and indicates the general plan for the whole process (Hofstee, 2015:113; McMillan and Schumacher, 2010:20). McMillan and Schumacher (2010:20) classify research designs as, qualitative, quantitative, mixed method and analytic. The most consistently used are said to be quantitative and qualitative. The researcher compared these two research designs although qualitative research design will be the focal point of the study.

3.2.1 Quantitative versus Qualitative Research Design

O'Leary (2014:120) has noted that "quantitative and qualitative have come to represent a whole set of assumptions that can unfortunately dichotomise methods and limit the potential of researchers to build holistic understandings". This means that even though different research designs have disparities, they both have a similar goal of working towards knowledge production. The disparities between the two mentioned research designs are in the fact that quantitative research design relies on measurement to compare and analyse the different variables, while qualitative design analyses and interprets the phenomenon under study to get a deeper meaning. While quantitative research design develops knowledge through a post-positivist approach, qualitative research allows a constructivist position where people are given the opportunity to share their individual experiences. In quantitative research the questions asked by researchers are more precise and constricted, combined with a large and normally random sample, whereas broad research questions that are used to determine understanding are usually used in qualitative research. The sample size in qualitative research is usually small based on purposeful selection considering the experience of the participants as a selection tool (Maree, 2010:257- 259).

Garegae (2008: 50) suggests that "the use of phenomenological interviewing made it possible for the researcher to discuss teacher's issues that are important to them and the meaning that they attach to culture and student discipline". This statement puts into perspective the fact that the researcher wanted to understand how teachers manage occupational stress in their schools through their experiences by using qualitative research design. The researcher wanted the participants to share their experiences through interviewing by creating a scenario where they were able to talk openly and freely about their day-to-day encounters concerning management of occupational stress.

The researcher's choice was confirmed to be a resourceful approach by Bukola and Alonge (2011:235), Lekange (2010: 44), Aboagye (NY: 92), Samuel and Van Wyk (2008: 142), and Van Wyk and Pelsner (2014:835).

3.2.2 Qualitative Research Design

As explained in the previous paragraph, this type of research design can be seen as “the research that produces descriptive data- generally, the participant's own written or spoken words pertaining to their experience or perception. Usually no numbers or counts are assigned to these observations” (Brynard *et al.*, 2014:39). Seen this way, qualitative research design is a design that provides a comprehensive description of how humans understand a phenomenon. This research design is focused on identifying the phenomenon under study, looking at the perception of the people who are taking part in the study (Ary *et al.*, 2006:24). In line with the above explanations the research design for this particular study displays the following characteristics:

- The research is focused on quality.
- It is associated with field work.
- The goal of investigation is to understand the phenomenon under study.
- Its sample is small and purposeful.
- The researcher is the primary tool of data collection as she conducted the interviews and observed and analysed the documents.
- The primary mode of data analysis is interpretation and narrative description.
- The findings are comprehensive and descriptive.

3.3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

According to Robson (2011: 528) methodology is the theoretical, political and philosophical backgrounds to social research and their implications for the study practice and for the use of particular research methods. Another definition of methodology that concurs with Robson's definition is that “methodology is a theory of how inquiry should precede embracing philosophy, assumptions about validity, and sometimes preferred methods” (Bazeley, 2014:8). Methodology thus outlines the whole process of the research and what the researcher intends to do to carry out the research study.

In this part of the research the methods which were used to execute the empirical study are reflected. In broad terms participant selection, data collection strategies and data analysis form part of the methodology.

The researcher approached this investigation within an interpretivist paradigm, with the aim to reflect the so-called, lived experiences of the participants. More specifically, interviews were conducted with the participants so as to comprehend what they think about occupational stress and how it can be managed on a daily basis. This entailed the composition of 'thick descriptions' of teachers' experiences within their natural working environment settings. The researcher's main focus in using this kind of methodology was to understand and explain the stress experienced by teachers through interviews and by analysing an extensive range of related documents.

3.3.1 Participant Selection

McMillan and Schumacher (2010: 129) define participant selection or sampling as "a process of using a small number of items or parts of a larger population to make conclusions about the whole population". Sampling is thus a process where a small number of people within a larger group are chosen to represent the whole group. Sampling is important in the study since it gives the researcher the opportunity to communicate directly with a representative group of teachers in the area. The researcher feels that a fair amount of data was accumulated in this process.

Merriam (2009:77) as well as Maree (2010: 79) indicate that qualitative research is generally based on non- probability and purposive sampling rather than probability or random sampling approaches like in quantitative research. Purposive sampling is considered important in this research project because the researcher wanted to select particular representative and informative elements from the population about the topic of interest. Purposeful sampling was chosen based on the possibility of strong links with the research aims. It therefore allowed the researcher to select the participants deemed relevant for the study. Maree (2010:178) posed similar sentiments by saying "this method of sampling is used in special situations where the sampling is done with a specific purpose in mind".

Teachers who had continuously taught for five or more years in the Southern South Sub-Region were chosen as participants because they had obviously accumulated more experience on occupational stress and its management than teachers who had only taught in the region for a short period of time. The Sub Region has 27 primary schools and a total of approximately 230 teachers and, the researcher selected seven schools from the 27 and two teachers with five or more years of teaching experience from each selected school were interviewed, thus giving the sample of 14 teachers. Only 7 schools were selected due to the fact that they were easily accessible to the researcher and that would enable the researcher to conduct the research within the constraints of time and budget. The sample size was determined based on De Vos *et al.*'s (2011: 358) assertion that ideally, a minimum of twelve interviews is needed to create stability among the views in the sample.

3.3.2 Data Collection Strategies

According to Hofstee (2015:57), the researcher needs to have pieces of information which will explain the phenomenon under study and should be able to also identify how data will be collected. Merriam (2009:77) identified the data collection strategies as interviews, documents, and observations. The researcher used documents and interviews as data collection strategies in the study. The use of documents was important as they conveyed a broad perspective on how teachers managed occupational stress and the interviews enabled the researcher to learn about the opinions, beliefs, views, ideas and the manners of the participants towards work-related stress.



3.3.2.1 Interviews

Maree (2010:5) defines an interview as, "a two way conversation in which the interviewer asks the participant questions to collect data and learn about the ideas, beliefs, views, opinions and behaviours of the participant". Lichtman (2013:189) considers interviewing as a conversation with purpose. This means that an interview is an exchange of words between researcher and the participant in regard to the research study. The types of interviews are open-ended, semi-structured and structured (Maree, 2010:5).

The researcher used semi-structured individual interviews to gather data for the study. The choice of this type of interview was based on the fact that it allowed one-on-one interaction between the researcher and the participants, which encouraged the participants to demonstrate their understanding of occupational stress and its management. By using semi structured interviewing the researcher included flexible questions as part of the prepared list of questions which addressed occupational stress and management strategies. The researcher verbally asked the questions and noted down the responses. The idea of semi structured interview questions was introduced when the researcher allowed participants to seek clearance on the exact meaning of the question. The researcher explained questions that were not clear and thus probed deeper for better understanding.

3.3.2.2 Documents

The use of documents was necessitated by the need to expound on the information obtained during interviews since some important issues might not have been picked up during the interviews. The idea behind the use of documents was to focus on all types of written communications that could shed light on the phenomenon being investigated. The researcher made notes every time stress issues were predominantly discussed during the interviews. In addition sources such as official and mass media documents like minute books, field journals, personal/ official letters and newspapers were used.

3.3.3 Data Analysis

Punch's (2006:52) definition of data analysis that was quoted in paragraph 1.5.2.4 stated that "qualitative data are most likely to be words, which we get by asking (interviewing), watching (observation) or reading (documents), or some combination of these three activities". Merriam (2009:85) supports Punch's statement affirming that, "qualitative data consist of direct quotations from their experiences, opinions, feelings, and knowledge obtained through interviews; detailed descriptions of people's activities, behaviours, actions recorded in observations; and excerpts, quotations, or entire passages extracted from various types of documents". The researcher utilised the content analysis to understand and interpret the participant's perspectives on occupational stress and its management. This was done as the research from an interpretivist stance contends that knowledge is construed by descriptions of people's intentions, beliefs, values and reasons.

It has been noted that content analysis is a procedure of looking at data from diverse angles with a view to identifying the keys in the transcript that will assist us to comprehend and interpret raw data (Maree, 2010:101).

The process of data analysis in this dissertation started during the literature study and while determining the research objectives as discussed in Chapters 1 and 2. As such data analysis was actually started during and even before data collection process. During the data collection phase data analysis was continued. The researcher first established preliminary categories of data which after much scrutiny became the four categories that are mentioned in paragraph 4.3. (McMillan and Schumacher, 2010:369). As explained by Nieuwenhuis (2008:109) “you will start with a list of categories in advance, and then search for data for these topics”. The researcher followed this process and searched for data for text that matched, explained and analysed the categories or themes in a detailed way. As explained by Nieuwenhuis (2008:109) this data analysis process can be seen as applying *a-priori* codes. The researcher conducted this process in a systematic way by analysing the transcribed interviews one by one. Each individual interview was read properly and then re-read with the aim to select codes to fit one or more of the categories. After repeating this process for each interview the selected codes were grouped and phrased to match the categories. The categories were then described as explained in Chapter 4, paragraph 4.3.

3.4 ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Details on the theoretical aspects concerning the ethical considerations for study are addressed in paragraph 1.5.2.7. Maree (2010:41) suggests that “it is important to highlight ethical considerations in regard to the research” and Punch (2006:56) has a similar view and points out that “all research has ethical dimensions, and a good starting point for dealing with the ethical considerations in the proposal is to realise that there are numerous stakeholders in your research”. It is emphasized that a researcher’s ethical responsibilities include the overarching principles of academic integrity and honesty, and respect for the people. As Maree and Punch have recommended, this researcher was obliged to follow certain principles during the research process. The quality, worthiness and integrity of the study were reflected by adhering to the following ethical issues: informed consent, privacy, confidentiality, anonymity and trustworthiness. (Punch, 2006:2006; Maree, 2009:300; Merriam, 2009:162; De Vos *et al.*, 2011:115).

3.4.1 Informed Consent

Before proceeding with the study, the researcher applied for a certificate from the University to undertake the study by completing the North West University Ethics forms and presenting the research plan at the meeting (Addendum A as an example of the approval certificate). A letter was subsequently written to the Ministry of Education Skills and Development in Botswana requesting a research permit before collecting the data (Addendum B). After the certificate was received, the researcher wrote to the Regional Director to request permission to collect data from the schools (Addendum C as an example). Letters were then written to the school principals requesting permission to interview the teachers and an example is shown in Addendum D.

In light of the fact that De Vos *et al.* (2011:117) says “written informed consent becomes a necessary condition rather than a luxury or an impediment. Emphasis must be placed on accurate and complete information, so that subjects will fully comprehend the details of the investigation and consequently be able to make a voluntary, thoroughly reasoned decision about their possible participation”, the researcher made the participants aware of the importance of interviews. Individual letters were written to each participant requesting their permission to participate in the study and to explain the whole process of the investigation. In the letter, participants were notified that participating in the study was solely a voluntary choice and that they could at any point stop participation without any legal consequence. When the interview started, the researcher explained verbally what the interview was all about and asked participants if they were still willing to participate. All the participants signed the consent letters (Addendum E as an example).

3.4.2 Privacy, Confidentiality and Anonymity

The researcher had to consider the issue of privacy, confidentiality and anonymity regarding the information received. The researcher promised the school and the participants that their names were not going to be revealed. The researcher used numbers in place of the names of schools and teachers' real names. Teachers were also told that if they felt a question made them feel uncomfortable they had the right to not disclose any information on that point. In such instances the researcher did not in any way pressurise the participants to reveal information they were not willing to share.



3.4.3 Honesty and Trust

To gain support from the participants, a qualitative researcher has to convey to the participants that they are participating in a study and has to explain the purpose of the study without engaging in any kind of deception about the nature of the study (Creswell, 2009:174). This researcher was careful not to mislead participants by misrepresenting facts or withholding information from them. An attempt was made to build trust by being honest with the participants throughout the whole process and by explaining different aspects of the research in details to them. The participants' identities were kept anonymous as promised. The researcher also made sure that appointments with participants were honoured by availing herself for scheduled appointments.

3.5 DATA TRUSTWORTHINESS

Data trustworthiness is explained in more detail in paragraph 1.5.2.5. Litchman (2013:292) asserts that "trustworthiness includes transparency of the process, data gathered for a purpose, search for multiple perspectives; change in the researcher and in practice, and the results that matter". This shows that trustworthiness is the acid test of data analysis, findings and conclusion. There should also be reliability and validity as they are crucial aspects of trustworthiness. Maree (2010:80) identifies verification and validating findings, dependability, stakeholder checks, and triangulation as the strategies which could be used to boost trustworthiness. The researcher used the following strategies to ensure trustworthiness:

3.5.1 Verification and Validating Findings

Validity is explained by McMillan and Schumacher (2010:330) as, "the congruence between the explanations of the phenomena and the realities of the world". Since the findings are a critically important aspect of the data analysis process, the researcher attempted to obtain authentic information. The researcher replayed the recorded interviews to the participants to verify issues which proved complex.

3.5.2 Dependability

Litchman (2013:299) says “the term dependability emphasises the need for the researcher to account for the ever-changing context within which research occurs”. The researcher therefore ensured that she portrayed a convincing and positive image when meeting the participants. The findings were further transcribed on a word-for-word basis to ensure that information was not distorted.

3.5.3 Stakeholder Checks

Another step that was taken to ensure data trustworthiness was so-called stakeholder checks. In this regard the researcher allowed knowledgeable people like the supervisor and one of the principals within the sub - region to comment or assess the findings, interpretations and conclusions of the research.

3.5.4 Triangulation

Maree (2010: 298) reveals that triangulation is regarded as “a process of using multiple perceptions to clarify meaning, verifying the repeatability of an observation or interpretation”. The researcher used interviews and document analysis to discover the strategies teachers use to manage occupational stress. The researcher cross checked the data from the documents with the data collected during the interviews.

3.6 CONCLUSION

All in all, as the researcher wanted to find the beliefs surrounding occupational stress and its management from Southern South Sub- Region teachers, the researcher utilised a qualitative research design and allowed the participants to explain occupational stress through their own experiences.

The research methods utilised were participant selection, data collection and data analysis. Participants' selection was based on the notion that, qualitative study is usually based on non-probability and purposive sampling. The researcher selected the participants using purposive sampling as the focus was on teachers who had five or more years teaching experience. Out of 27 primary schools in the Southern South Sub-Region, seven primary schools were selected and two teachers from each of the seven schools were interviewed.

Data collection strategies which were utilised in the research were semi-structured individual interviews and documents analysis. The interviews were one-on-one interactions between the researcher and participants. Semi structured questions were asked to allow flexibility. The documents which were put to use were minute books, journals, log books, wellness policy, personal/ official letters and newspapers. The utilisation of the documents by the researcher was motivated by the idea that, a wide range of documents on stress related issues were available and a diversity of classifications of source of document study was found in relevant literature. Phenomenological content analysis was utilised in this study and data was transcribed and coded, after which it was clustered into similar topics and organised for easier summary. Triangulation was facilitated through the use of interviews and documents.

The next chapter deals with the empirical results.

CHAPTER 4

4. ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In the previous chapter the design and methodologies which were employed in this research were discussed, considering that the main problem of this investigation related to how occupational stress is managed among teachers in primary schools in the Southern South Sub- Region. In this chapter the data that was collected through documents and interviews were analysed. The similarities and the differences of data obtained in the literature review and from the documents and interviews were brought into perspective and applied to the management of stress in schools in the Sub-Region.

4.1.1 Characteristics of Schools



Schools	Group	Number of Teachers	Number of Learners
1	3	8	64
2	3	8	78
3	3	8	54
4	1	23	583
5	3	8	285
6	2	15	319
7	3	8	98

The above table suggests that most of the schools which were used as samples were group 3 schools, from schools which host a few learners (double figures) to schools which host more learners (triple figures). The number of learners determines the number of teachers, and the quota used to be 1 teacher to 40 learners. These figures changes yearly.

4.1.2 Characteristic of Participants

Gender	Age Range	Qualification	Standard Teaching	Position(s) Held	Experience
T1- F	30-39	Diploma in Primary Education	5	Teacher	10
T2- F	50-59	Diploma in Primary Education	3	Senior Teacher Guidance and Counselling	33
T3- F	30-39	Diploma in Primary Education	3	Teacher	7
T4- F	40-49	Diploma in Primary Education	4	Teacher	19
T5- F	30-39	Diploma in Primary Education	6	Teacher	8
T6- F	30-39	Diploma in Primary Education	5	Teacher	12
T7- F	40-49	Diploma in Primary Education	6	Teacher	20
T8- M	40-49	Advanced Certificate in Education	4	Teacher	24
T9-F	30-39	Diploma in Primary Education	5	Teacher	6
T10-F	40-49	Diploma in Primary Education	3	Head of Department Infant	26
T11-F	50-59	Diploma in Primary Education	2	Teacher	31
T12-F	30-39	Advanced Certificate in Education	3	Head of Department Learning Difficulties	16
T13-F	50-59	Diploma in Primary Education	6	Teacher	30
T14-F	40-49	Bachelor of Education Honours	6	Teacher	14

Table 4.1.2 reflects the characteristics of the participants. 14 participants were interviewed, who had ages ranging from 30-59. The majority of participants had ages ranging from 30-39 and 40-49, with the qualifications of Diploma in Primary Education. A lesser number of teachers had degree qualifications. The classes which they were teaching ranged from standard 3 to 6.

None of the participants were teaching standard 1, 2 and 7. More of the participants were teaching standard 3. Even though participants had teaching experience which ranged from 6 to 33 years, the majority held the lowest position in the teaching profession.

4.2 REALISATION OF THE ETHICAL MEASURES

The information obtained from documents such as personal letters, minute book, staff development record book and educational magazines used were recorded in a field journal which was kept by the researcher. Throughout the research process, the researcher noted everything that was in line with occupational stress management in the field journal and together with the information that was gathered from the documents. The researcher formulated interview questions which were also used to collect data (paragraph 3.3.2.1). They were used as a guide for the researcher during the interview sessions to ask each participant similar questions. The researcher personally handed letters to the school heads in some of the schools within the sub-region that requested teachers who had continuously taught for five or more years in the sub-region to take part. The school heads were left with the consent forms for the participants to read and understand what the request was about. The head teachers gave the researcher feedback with the dates of the interviews as the researcher relied on the participants to suggest the dates which were appropriate for them to avoid inconveniences. The interview schedule was then drawn up (an example in Addendum F).

The researcher followed the schedule and personally interviewed the participants. The interview was one-on-one interaction that lasted between 1 and 2 hours where the researcher started with self-introduction. Participants were given time to get clarity concerning the consent form before the interview started and they signed. During the interview, the researcher recorded those who were comfortable with the set up and took notes to record the participants' views by writing them down. The researcher used the interview questions in Addendum G to read a question for the participant, and Addendum H reflects a sample of one the interviews that took place. Where participants needed clarity, the researcher explained. For those who consented to be recorded, the recordings were done simultaneously with noting of the responses and after that the researcher played the recordings for the participant to validate the views.

For the participants who were not comfortable with being recorded, the researcher read out the views which were noted during the interview to find out if there could have been any misconception.

To protect the participants' identity, the researcher did not write the names of schools and teachers who were taking part, instead, numbers were used as explained in paragraph 3.4.2. The researcher explained to each participant that they had to feel free and not answer any questions which they were not comfortable with. The researcher gave the research to one of the principals within the Sub-Region to assess the researches' findings, interpretations and conclusions of the research during data analysis process and before compiling the whole research. The completed transcriptions were given to two different people to also code to check if there was correlation with the researcher's coding.

4.3 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

After collecting data from the participants, the researcher transcribed it manually and coded it after selecting themes/ categories from the objectives of the study, the documents and the literature review. An example of one of the transcribed interviews is shown in Addendum I. The following themes were selected,

- Occupational stress
- Causes and effects of occupational stress
- Management of teachers stress
- Strategies for occupational stress management

4.3.1 Occupational Stress

The participants understood that the term occupational stress deals with the tension, pressure, strain or stress that they experience as teachers. As such this tension affects them in their personal lives and in their school lives. They experience that the extra stress have an influence in their relaxed behaviour towards work. Additional stress also affects teachers' productivity, their health, and their behaviour at school as well as their emotions.

More importantly stress could also manifest as nervous tension in individual teachers, with the result that some have indicated to their principals that they are not prepared to engage in 'normal school work' such as cultural and sport activities. In this way the extra tension that teachers were subjected to have led to unhealthy conflict at some schools. Other participants remarked however in this regard that not all conflict that emanated from stress can be regarded as 'bad'. They said that some teachers are just lazy and would use stress as an excuse not to be involved in any additional school activities. Some form of conflict or threat or reprimand could however force these teachers, in a nice way, to accept their share of additional activities.

A further important aspect of occupational stress that was emphasised by the teachers as participants is that stress sometimes influences their performance in class in a negative way. A teacher who experienced high levels of stress indicated that if one is stressed they cannot manage their work, especially if the work is difficult for the children (Participant 2). Participant 9 further indicated in this regard that, *the challenges we meet on a daily basis at the work place can cause you not to teach well enough*. The close relationship between good and effective teaching on one side and stress on the other side is thus a crucial aspect of occupational stress that came out clearly from the interviews. In addition, participant 7 perceived that occupational stress is a state that is not good for anyone as it can create unproductive situations for teachers.

The participants' views on occupational stress as explained in the previous two paragraphs are in line with the literature. For example, Werner (2011:232) emphasised that most stress experienced by teachers is work-related. It was also stated in paragraph 2.3.1 that, many people consider the workplace as a stressful environment and that occupational stress can be equated with the individual pressures that workers endure with regard to their day-to-day activities in their respective workplaces. As emphasised in the literature review by Aquinas (2009:164), teachers also believed occupational stress to be an unfavourable condition at the workplace which hinders productivity. Participant 13 described occupational stress as, *the difficult situations that are endured in the workplace that hinders production*. Recognition of stress in the schools has been noted as some of the speakers at official events would mention something about stress.

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An example of such was during Teachers Day celebrations where one of the Directors of Ceremony mentioned that quality education was vital even though it cannot be provided in the presence of stress.

4.3.2 Causes and Effects of Occupational Stress

It is evident that the causes and effects of occupational stress are regarded as crucial aspects of occupational stress.

4.3.2.1 Causes of Occupational Stress

It has been indicated that occupational stress is caused by organisational, environmental and personal factors. Organisational and managerial factors came out as the most dominant causes of occupational stress. Most of the school management team operations are seen to be hindering the development of the schools thus creating stressful situations for the workers. Some of the poor management practices which were noted within the workplace were lack of confidentiality, poor conflict management, lack of transparency, lack of consultation, unequal or unfair treatment, poor communication, insensitive supervisors, excessive workload and new syllabuses, which participants thought to be too difficult for the learners, resulting in poor performance. The participants strongly felt that these poor management practices were hindering the performance in schools and created stress for teachers. The perception was also that professional development and progression among teachers was stagnant and also created stress for teachers. Participants indicated further that it was not easy for teachers to upgrade to the next professional level even after working for many years before going to school, compared to other professions. Teachers felt that some of the policies were not favourable even for those who were willing to sponsor themselves to upgrade. They complained that the procedures they had to follow were exhausting and lacked motivation.

Environmental factors were described as causes which emanated from unpleasant physical conditions. They were seen as overstay (teaching in one school for a very long time), social problems, lack of parental involvement, unconducive environment, different cultural backgrounds, child headed families, child abuse and poverty. The participants indicated lack of parental involvement and overstay as predominant causes of stress. They believed that to stay or work in one place for a very long time was emotionally stressful and chances of teachers neglecting their work out of frustration were likely.

The different personalities that teachers have, were believed to be the personal factors which cause workplace stress. Teachers said that some of their colleagues and principals portrayed personal behaviours which cause stress. The participants noted unprofessional behaviour, ill health, gossiping, poor working relationships between colleagues, unbalanced personal lives with work and unnecessary competition between class teachers as personal factors.

One presenter in a wellness workshop held in one of the primary schools said financial constraints experienced by teachers caused them a lot of stress. Personal or institutional financial stress is a situation that caused stress for teachers and participant 13 buttressed this by saying, *the little money that we are earning also bring financial constraints and thus contributes to our stress*. Lack of resources was another organisational factor that was seen as a cause of stress for teachers. The concern about lack of resources was proven as the most common by participants. It was evident that most of the primary schools lacked resources and materials which compelled teachers to improvise during teaching and learning. A report from the head teacher during a staff meeting in one of the primary schools revealed that during the head teachers' meeting held in January 2011, the head teachers informed representatives from the education office that lack of the resources, especially duplicating machines was among the challenges of academic performance. Participant 10 emphasised this by stating that *lack of resources is a very big challenge. If you tell the children without anything to show them it becomes a problem*.

It is evident that causes of occupational stress emanate from environmental, organisational, professional demands and personal factors as enumerated by different authors shown in Table 2.1. Furthermore, the participants' views on the causes of occupational stress were also organisational, environmental and personal factors. Aquinas (2009:156) noted that "the causes of stress are found in the environment, the individual and the interaction between the two". Kealafilwe, (2016:5) highlighted what teachers in the sub region were concerned about poor communication as a cause for stress saying, "the south region in its entirety is vast and its vastness needs diverse approaches to information dissemination". Teachers believed that poor conflict management that was visible in schools created nervous tensions which led to stress. One teacher's concern was that "sometimes I believe the way conflict between teachers in our school is handled is not proper. Supervisors like taking sides even when the case is straightforward and I believe this causes stress".

To emphasise this, Morupisi, (2012:11) indicated that stress can lead to fights. According to Nahavandi *et al.* (2015:183) “when workers lack a sense of control because of either the lack of autonomy or lack of opportunity to participate in decisions that affect them, stress often results”. Nahavandi’s sentiments were emphasised by one of the teachers in one of the primary school staff meetings in 2015. The teacher said, “it does not help if our supervisors make decisions for us without consultation. It is so frustrating because my feeling is that teachers are in the best position to know what will suit them as they are hands on. If the situation continues like this, there would not be any improvement of results in schools”. Nahavandi’s sentiments and the latter proved that lack of consultation could also cause stress for teachers.

4.3.2.2 Effects of Occupational Stress



The views concerning the effects of occupational stress portrayed positive and negative results. The participant’s perceptions were that even though occupational stress had positive effects, negative effects prevailed over them and the negative effects conveyed noticeable setbacks within the schools. The participants indicated that these effects could be seen in the schools or individuals within the schools. Thus occupational stress is has both organisational and individual effects. It was highlighted that teachers who encountered stressful situations at work tended to get exhausted often and perform poorly. Furthermore, teachers viewed the organisational effects of occupational stress as poor performance, failure to meet institutional targets, poor working environment, teacher turnover, strikes, low morale, conflicts which leads to divisions, emotional disorders, absenteeism and unruly behaviour among staff members. Another concern that was brought to light by teachers was that stressed teachers may experience behavioural, physiological and psychological signs. These problems indicated the individual effects of occupational stress. The physiological signs were explained to be related with physical illnesses while the psychological signs relayed the individual’s actions displayed by teachers at work. The individual effects of occupational stress were viewed as sources of the burden of personal suffering.

Participants indicated that occupational stress had some positive effects but were quick to point out that the negative effects were dominant. The concern was that everyone in the school was affected by stress either directly or indirectly.

Participant 1 noted that, *the effects of stress impact on everyone and an example is that if a class is not performing well somewhere, it affects the whole school*. Participant 2 strengthened the opinion by saying, *you cannot avoid stress because you can be given an underperforming class which was taught by someone who was stressed and the class failed due to the teachers' stress*. Participants voiced similar sentiments that distress in schools lowers productivity levels and in this case it means that learners' performance will be very low. One of the participants stated that, *stressed teachers end up being unproductive, if you are stressed your emotions tend not to allow you to do anything that is constructive. You cannot teach learners while you are in a state of bitterness, its taxing and exhausting and this may lead to poor performance*. From the way the teacher stressed the view, it would make sense to conclude that stressed teachers become too emotional to the extent that they become impatient. To reinforce this, participant 4 declared that stressed teachers *end up fighting everyone even the children in the classroom*. Participants also highlighted that stressed teachers would do their work slowly to a point where too much work had been accumulated unnecessarily. There was belief that stress could lead to unnecessary strikes which could lead to loss of salaries and in extreme cases, loss of jobs. On the other hand, some teachers left the teaching profession because of job dissatisfaction and one of the teachers noted that, *stress could lead to teacher turnover, teachers are leaving this job for other jobs and you will find that it's the most hardworking and productive ones who leave this profession, I know a number of teachers who have left*.

According to Robbins and Judge (2013:630) it has been noted that "stress is not necessarily bad in and of itself. Although stress is typically discussed in a negative content, it also has a positive value. It's an opportunity when it offers potential gain". Robbins and Judge's sentiments signify that stress is not always bad, it can bring positive results. Teachers also perceived stress as good motivation towards accomplishment of certain institutional goals. Participant 5 shared similar views by saying that even though teachers experience stress, some of it encourages them to do their work so that supervisors do not find any fault with them. An example given was, *in a case where the supervisor is not consulting and demands to see the records without prior consultation, we do our work so that when it happens, we hand over to disappoint them because some of these supervisors seem to be fault finders*.

They do not supervise to build us; they do so to find our faults. Positive stress was said to be eustress, which brings excitement and motivation, and one teacher indicated that working under stressful situations was exciting. Teachers and authors concluded that even though occupational stress could be good, it brought more negatives than positives. These effects were classified as individual and organisational (Steyn and Van Niekerk, 2013:225). The individual effects of occupational stress were perceived to be boredom, tension, irritability, poor decision making, lack of concentration, substance abuse and violence, among others. One participant expressed similar sentiments by stating that, *stress can lead to emotional disorders, for instance teachers get moody, easily irritated. Some isolate themselves from others or become very quiet, they do not want to socialise even though they are known to be social people* (Participant 13). Participant 13's sentiments confirm those of one teacher in a school based wellness workshop who highlighted that teachers who experienced stress normally withdrew from others and mostly did unexpected things. Aquinas (2009:164) noted that organisational distress accounted for low morale, dissatisfaction, communication breakdowns and troubled working relationships. (Tlhaselo, 2011:1) reported that teachers in primary and secondary schools took part in a massive strike and schools had to close temporarily. Moipolai (2011:7) also reported that the conflict that erupted from the employer and the employee led to the massive public strike which lasted for six weeks. The previous reports indicate that conflict could lead to scenarios which might lead to compromising of the quality of education. Obviously, if the teachers do not come to school, there will be back log which will be strenuous for teachers.

4.3.3 Management of Teachers' Stress

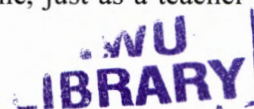
The participants showed an understanding of management of stress and emphasised the importance of being able to recognise stress so that it can be dealt with timeously. They perceived that individuals and organisations need to deal with occupational stress. These were considered as befitting approaches to managing occupational stress and have been discussed as follows:

4.3.3.1 Individual Approaches

The individual approaches to stress management were viewed as the tactics which individual teachers could employ to deal with their individual stresses. Participants indicated that the way individual teachers perceived stressful situations was not the same. They believed that one teacher could be stressed by the situation that would not stress another teacher, and this meant that even the way teachers managed their work stress would be different. One teacher would prefer to read and relax while the other teacher would play any sport or play music to alleviate the stress. The activities which they suggested towards stress management also included relaxing and meditating. They considered that teachers needed to relax to unwind as this could help them to clear their heads and think positively. Participants also believed that proper communication could ease the tensions which are normally visible among teachers. They stressed that sometimes teachers think that as long as they communicate, things would be alright but they ignore the importance of choosing the right words. Participants thought that tolerant teachers were stress free in most cases as they usually think positively and rationally. According to the teachers' views, being able to open up and avoiding talking about other teachers also helped to manage stressful situations for individual teachers.

Participants emphasised that managing stress was vital for everyone in the achievement of positive outcomes for the institution. Participant 10 stressed that teachers could manage stressful situations differently when stating that, *I believe to alleviate stress will come differently for teachers, what will work for one does not mean it will work for the other even though there are various ways of alleviating stress*. One teacher's perception was that if teachers opened up and shared their problems they could find ways of solving their problems. Participant 2 shared the latter's view by saying, *talking about stressful situation helps, I always tell my colleagues how I feel and it always helps as I get different experiences of dealing with the situation*. This means that sharing can bring a lot of relief options where one could pick the option that suits them better to alleviate the stressful situation at hand. Teachers also believed that for teaching and learning to be successful there was a need to improvise where possible; lending and borrowing could also relieve the situation where lack of resources is prevalent. Participant 14 encouraged an open minded state where the teacher deals with both sides of the coin.

Teachers also felt that self-motivation could be important in managing stress at work and Participant 10 suggested that one could *try by all means to avoid stressful situation. I normally motivate myself to do things the right way, and this helps me to avoid stress in so many instances.* Participants felt that taking time off work and going for a holiday was also a stress relieving individual approach, and this could help teachers to clear their minds and rejuvenate such that when they start the new term they are energised. It was also deemed important that teachers avoid taking their work home as the family needed time together and that time could not be compromised by doing school work at home, just as a teacher could not take personal work to school.



The last two paragraphs reflect Steyn and Van Niekerk's (2013:226) notion that stress should be managed as a top priority. In paragraph 2.6 Table 2.2 different authors have characterised individual and organisational approaches that could help to alleviate stress. Morupisi (2012:12) also highlighted ways such as exercising, eating healthy foods and trying not to worry about things one cannot change, as stress reducing techniques. While Morupisi emphasised exercising, Participant 5 also held a similar view that, *doing physical activities like jogging, talent shows can help in relieving stressful situations.* Authors in the literature and the participants put forward the same opinion that physical activities could be utilised to construct and preserve stress fitness. Exercising is also believed to revitalise the body and calm the mind. On the other hand reading was also believed to help individual teachers to reduce their stress as, similar to exercising, it was believed to relax the mind. Kealafilwe (2016:18) believes "when you are down, read a novel with a happy ending to lift your spirits". Participant 12 also felt that "to alleviate stress one could meditate, do yoga, exercise, if teachers were paid enough they could even take a vacation, reading and playing music and doing sports". Although participants could emphasise time management as a way of alleviating stress, Menyatso (2012:15) indicates that time is a valuable resource that needs to be used to support the accomplishment of set goals. The writer affirms Bennet (1997:138) who advises that "greater time efficiency in the use of time management reduce stress". Time management as suggested, accounts for proper planning and employees who manage time efficiently become more productive and organised.

It is a skill that is believed to bring satisfaction as a teacher who manages time accordingly becomes orderly, resulting in easier and timely achievement of set goals.

4.3.3.2 Organisational Approaches

The participants perceived that as much as teachers could manage work stress individually, they could also manage it as a school. Teachers could make an effort to recognise stress within the school so that it is appropriately managed. Everyone in the school is expected to learn to come up with ways which could reduce stress in the institution, especially the managers. Since participants believed that reducing stress in schools was possible, they understood that proper communication was vital as it gave order and clarity to the teachers' views. In that regard, communication was viewed as one of the organisational approaches of managing stress. Teachers also viewed proper conflict management as an approach that could be used to manage occupational stress. They emphasized that avoiding conflict as most head teachers preferred, did not solve anything but created a lot of stress for teachers. Their belief was that conflict would always be there but the way it was solved determined the level of stress and as such, teachers felt that supervisors had to be firm and solve conflicts within the school amicably. Another view which was stressed by participants was that team work was an important element which could assist in alleviating stress in the school. Working collaboratively as a team was seen as a motivating factor especially for teachers who underperformed. Sharing of ideas and skills that improve teaching and learning is normally done in team work. Participants also viewed intervention as a good stress managing approach. They recognised that as much as the institution could not avoid stressful situations, where there was intervention it showed that colleagues cared for each other. Another important organisational approach the participants underscored was management training. They felt that most of the supervisors did not possess the managerial skills and this contributed to poor management which was visible in most schools.

Furthermore from the interviews, it was revealed that teachers could improvise where possible. Participant 14 advised that teachers could, *improvise where possible to reduce stress in the work place*. However one participant's concern was that some teachers improvised to the extent of using their personal finances and this could create a possibility of financial stress for teachers, considering the low salaries they are paid. Participant 6 viewed autonomous decision making as the best possible choice for dealing with stress in the work place because an autonomous atmosphere normally conveys honesty. There was a belief that most teachers rely on others' opinions when making decisions. A participant said, *I always advice teachers to do the things they will be answerable for and not to please anyone as sometimes teachers tend to do things only because they had influence of a group and when things turn around they are unable to justify their actions or explain why they did what they did*. One participant concurred with participant 6's opinion stating that if the school management team enhanced consultation where teachers would be free to voice their concerns, the school could run smoothly as this could reduce unnecessary conflicts which mostly created stressful situations for the teachers.

As previously stated, teachers firmly believed that intervention alleviated stress for teachers. They stressed that supervisors and teachers who created sound intervention strategies for their colleagues created a stress free environment. Participant 9 said, *I believe for stress to be minimal in school, intervention strategies could be put in place and this intervention could be done either by individual teachers or management as long as stress is reduced*. Participant 11 also confirmed that intervention was vital for the school as it could build a calm environment where everyone would want to work, by stating that, *once the school head had a misunderstanding with the deputy and I had to talk to them to stop what they were doing as it was not benefiting the institution and unprofessional. I felt that someone had to intervene, especially that they were the most superior and older. I was glad because my intervention worked at the end*. Teachers further emphasised that equal and fair treatment by management could help in alleviating stress in schools. They deemed favouritism as a challenge that needed to be eradicated and Participant 8 believed that, *managers could alleviate stress for teachers by completely bringing an end to favouritism in the school*.

Participants together with authors in the literature review concurred that stress could be alleviated using organisational approaches. They stressed that people with managerial responsibilities were better positioned to alleviate stress than individual teachers. They suggested that a supervisor who managed to identify a stressful situation should be able to acknowledge and address it, to prevent the outcomes which could take place. Steyn and Van Niekerk, (2013:230) states that “managers need to be well trained, since poor management is a major cause of employee stress,” and Participant 5 buttressed the statement by suggesting that the department of education should train leaders in management, to alleviate teachers’ stress. Another organisational approach that was highlighted by authors in both literature review and the participants was good communication. Kealafilwe (2016:5) indicated that though the region is vast, it needed varied approaches to information dissemination so that every teacher is informed. Proper communication would result in the reduction of role uncertainty and role conflict.

Teachers also noted that proper consultation within the school could help in managing stress. According to teachers, consultation as one of the good management strategies within organisations would give teachers a chance to discuss their ideas and choose those which could sustain the school. Participant 13 said, *superiors from any level should consult teachers because they understand problems better than anyone as they encounter them firsthand. They should not make decisions for teachers because most of the decisions they make never work.* Teachers and authors also believed that emotional intelligence would help limit stress within the school. If teachers and managers were emotionally intelligent, they would be able to identify the personalities of their colleagues, especially type A personalities, and they would provide extra opportunities for them to learn about stress reduction.

In the literature review it was revealed that wellness programmes in schools could be used to manage stress through the implementation of Employee Assistance Programmes, but the indication was that some schools did not have any wellness programmes. Participants who were familiar with wellness programmes indicated that the programmes were not functional as time was not enough to schedule for them. Werner, (2011:253) noted that, “wellness programmes fall under the occupational health care programme for workers. The focus is on improvement of emotional, physical and spiritual wellness of employees”.

In this statement Werner postulated that wellness programmes could improve teachers' wellbeing and a healthy and emotionally stable teacher would produce good results.

4.3.4 Strategies for Occupational Stress Management.

The participants realised that the stressful situations within the school could be lessened if there were alleviation strategies which were put in place. They believed that the strategies could be implemented by the schools and the education office. A summary of their views is outlined in the table that follows:

Table 4.1 Perceptions of participants on strategies which could be used to alleviate stress in Primary Schools.

Strategies which could be implemented by the Education Office	Strategies which could be implemented by the Schools
• Having consultative meeting with teachers. • Developing infrastructure that concerns teaching and learning. • Giving teaching and learning materials priority. • Having motivational talks with teachers once in a while. • Regular visitation to schools by education officers to hear grievances and addressing them. • Holding workshops regularly or seminars on stress management for schools. • Training teachers on coping strategies. • Appointing trained or qualified personnel who teachers can consult when they are faced with stressful situation. • Adhering to transfer policy. • Making stress management training essential for supervisors. • Empowering teachers. • Conducting researches on stress issues. • Coming up with Employee Assistance Programmes and adhering to them. • Providing free services for teachers which can help alleviate stress. • Developing favourable policies for further studies.	• Implementing wellness programmes. • Developing sound intervention strategies. • Having proper communication policies. • Developing sound strategic plans and adhering to them. • Benchmarking on good stress relieving techniques. • Practicing team work and cooperation • Practising good management. • Treating members of staff equally. • Distributing teaching materials equally and fairly. • Opening up to staff members and sharing ideas. 

From the table above participants believed that schools and the education office could devise some strategies that could help in reducing stress for teachers. They believed schools lacked personnel that had been trained to help teachers deal with stressful situations they encountered at work.

One participant remarked that they did not have anyone who was trained to help teachers deal with stress and it was up to individual teachers to see how they dealt with their stressful situations. On the contrary participant 4 said, *I would say guidance teacher and the school head are responsible for dealing with teachers' stress but in our case I have never seen guidance teacher dealing with teachers' issues normally its children's issues*. Unlike in most schools, a few schools had guidance teachers to deal with teachers' stress even though they were not trained in stress management. Another participant highlighted that the guidance teacher was responsible for managing stress but the same teacher created most of the stressful situations in the school and teachers ended up going to the head teacher. Teachers believed that regular motivational talks with members of staff could help in stressful situations and Participant 7 remarked that, *having motivational talks as one of the strategies that help in alleviating stress might help*. Participants also felt that the education office could adhere to the policies they normally develop to avoid uncertainties.

From Kedikilwe's Commission of Inquiry in Education (1994:8), it emerged that "the most serious problem that is a concern to Government is the commission's finding that the educational achievement at this level is indeed declining". It was explained that the reasons for the declining level of achievement was the failure to put in place measures that mitigate the negative effects of the policies. This observation by the commission matched the participants' concern that policies were not adhered to. Therefore adhering to policies in place, was seen as a strategy that could reduce stress in schools. Another strategy that was indicated by Menyatso (2012:14) was time management. Some of the teachers in the study lacked time management skills, and it was proposed that good planning and organisation would be good for teachers as their days at work would be well arranged and the day activities done accordingly. Bila and Roestenburg (2011:67) suggested the implementation of Employee Assistance Programme to improve the quality of life for teachers and help alleviate the impact of everyday work and personal problems. One participant buttressed Bila and Roestenburg by saying *even though I do not understand the Employee Assistance Programmes I believe they could be used as stress relieving strategies*. Participant 12 remarked, *I believe that conducting research to find out what stresses teachers could be one of the strategies that help to lighten stress*.

The participant's notion reflected the need for research to highlight teachers' stressful situation, and seek management solutions. Another strategy which teachers believed could help was training teachers on coping strategies. This made sense as some stressful situations like conflict could not be avoided, and if teachers understood the coping mechanisms, it would help either to do away with stress completely or reduce it.

4.4 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, the researcher dealt with analysis of results. In realising the ethical measures, the researcher adhered to what was revealed in Chapter 3 paragraph 3.4. The researcher collected data from participants by having one-on-one interviews. Some of the participants consented to be recorded while some did not as they felt uncomfortable with the set up. The researcher transcribed the interviews manually and decoded them. Four themes were selected and analysed. Participants showed an understanding of occupational stress and perceived it as stress experienced at the workplace. Teachers believed that stress at work could impact work in a negative way and the causes of stress were believed to originate from the organisation, the environment and individual teachers. There was belief that organisational factors were the dominant causes of stress. The effects of occupational stress were found to have positive and negative results. The participants concurred that stress had more negative effects than positive effects. Some of the negative effects reflected were physical illnesses, failure to meet institutional targets, poor performance, conflicts and teacher turnover, among others. Teachers believed that stress at work could be managed by individual teachers and organisations. They noted relaxing, mediating, reading, and opening up as individual approaches to stress management, and perceived organisational approaches to managing stress as proper communication and conflict management. Good management practices were perceived as the best way to deal with stress in schools. Some strategies which could be devised to reduce occupational stress were outlined in Table 4.1.

The next chapter shall deal with the conclusions, findings, recommendations and limitations of the study.

CHAPTER 5

5. CONCLUSIONS, FINDINGS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

5.1 INTRODUCTION



In the previous chapter analysis of data and empirical findings were presented and discussed. In this chapter conclusion, findings on research questions from literature, interviews and documents, recommendations, limitations and summary of the study are presented and highlighted. Recommendations are made in combination with views from the literature review, participants' view point and that of the researcher. In this study the researcher wanted to understand how teachers in Southern South primary schools manage occupational stress. The researcher employed the qualitative research design to obtain in-depth details of occupational stress within the sub-region. The methodologies which were used were data collection strategies, data analysis, data trustworthiness, researcher's role and ethical considerations. The researcher therefore collected data from seven primary schools within the sub-region. Two teachers were purposefully selected from each of the seven schools and were interviewed.

The researcher's aim was to collect data from experienced teachers, thus it was imperative for the participants to have five or more of teaching experience. In-depth interviews were done during the afternoons and the researcher visited the participants at their respective schools to collect data. The researcher used a qualitative method as it enabled the participants to explain how they managed occupational stress the way they perceived. The researcher scheduled the interview with one participant at a time where questions were asked verbally and answers were given and recordings were taken for participants who consented. During this time, the researcher, as the interviewer noted the responses. Each interview took approximately 2 hours. Occupational stress was viewed as the uncomfortable experiences that teachers come across at school which hinder from executing their duties to their full potential, thus, leading to poor performance. From the literature review, participants and documents, it was shown that causes of stress came from individual teachers and the organisation, and stress was also seen to have more negative effects than positive.

Teachers within the sub – region indicated that stress could be managed and they came up with numerous ways the strategies that could help reduce it.

5.2 CONCLUSIONS

Paragraph 1.1 of this study drew attention to the fact that the Botswana Education system is prone to stress. Stress as a phenomenon that is visible in different organisations generates occupational stress which was explained as the demands, pressures and conditions that teachers work under which present obstacles to achieving their mission (Jackson, 2004:2). The demands on teachers and the growth of schools make the incidence of stress in the teaching profession grow. The research was done in the Southern South Sub-Region that is located in the Southern part of Botswana and has the geographical formation that includes villages only. Evidence that was visible in primary schools about teachers' stress led to the formulation of the problem: *how is occupational stress managed among teachers in primary schools in the Southern South Sub- Region of Botswana*. The research questions and the aim of the study have been provided in paragraphs 1.2 and 1.3 respectively. The defined concepts were dealt with in paragraph 1.4. The concepts were Occupational Stress, Employee Wellness, Employee Assistance Programme and Management of Occupational Stress. Paragraph 1.5 discussed the research design and the methodology. Qualitative design was selected as the design as it was considered important for the teachers to explain occupational stress as they perceived it. In paragraph 1.5.2.6 the researcher's role was outlined and the ethical considerations of the study were reflected and discussed in paragraph 1.5.2.7.

Chapter two of the study reviewed the literature in regard to management of occupational stress in primary schools. Researchers and authors stressed the importance of understanding stress as a phenomenon that could be visible in schools. The theoretical models of stress which were used in the study to describe occupational stress were discussed in paragraph 2.2. Schulze and Steyn (2007:692) pointed out that the three models could be applied partially in practical situations in education. Paragraph 2.3 outlined the concept of occupational stress and Werner (2011:232) explained it as "an uncomfortable experience by an individual who is required to change his desired behaviour as a result of opportunities, constraints or demands related to important work objectives".

The signs, causes and effects of occupational stress were also discussed in paragraphs 2.3.2, 2.4 and 2.5. The causes of occupational stress which applied to education were grouped as environmental, organisational, professional demands and personal factors as indicated in Table 2.1. With the effects of stress, it was noted that even though stress is perceived to bring different pressures, it is not always bad and some researchers believed that there was good stress that could enhance motivation and effort and as such contribute to professional growth and development (Mapfumo *et al.*, 2012:156). Even though researchers believed stress to be good to a certain extent, most detailed it as bringing more negatives than positives. Paragraph 2.5 put into perspective the bad effects of occupational stress so that teachers would be aware of the phenomenon that might contribute to poor performance in education. It was revealed that the effects could be noticed within individuals and the organisation as a whole. Paragraph 2.6 dealt with the management of occupational stress which could be taken as the essence of the study. Authors and researchers revealed that the approaches to stress management could be distinguished as individual or organisational. Table 2.2 grouped both individual and organisational approaches to stress management. The individual approaches were seen as those which offered solutions to stress elimination from the individual level while organisational approaches compels people with managerial positions to curb stress in the organisation.

Paragraphs 3.2 and 3.3 in Chapter 3 revealed the research design and the methodology used in this study. A comparison between quantitative and qualitative research designs was done and the researcher employed qualitative research design as it made it possible for the researcher to answer the research questions posed in paragraph 1.2. It also allowed participants to fully describe their experiences concerning management of occupational stress. Participant selection, data collection strategies and data analysis formed part of the methodology. Purposive sampling was chosen for this study based strong links with the research aim, and allowing the researcher to select the participants who had experienced stress five years continuously in the sub-region. The need for the researcher to have pieces of information which explained the phenomenon under study necessitated the use of interviews and documents as data collecting strategies. Paragraph 3.3.2 explains the strategies in detail. When analysing data the researcher's intention was to make sense of it so that the phenomenon is understood and paragraph 3.3.3 explains how data was analysed in the study.

The idea behind realising the ethical consideration was to enhance quality, integrity and worthiness of the study and informed consent, privacy, confidentiality, anonymity and trustworthiness were utilised as ethical measures. The ethical measures have been clarified in paragraph 3.4 while paragraph 3.5 clarified data trustworthiness in the study. The realisation of data trustworthiness compelled transparency and search of multiple perspectives during the process (Litchman, 2013:292) and thus the production of results mattered.

Chapter 4 dealt with analysis of data which was collected through the use of documents and interviews. Paragraph 4.2 explained the realisation of ethical measures. The researcher outlined the whole process taken to observe the ethical measures which were noted in Chapter 3 paragraph 3.4. It was imperative to protect the identity of the schools and the participants hence the use of numbers instead of real names. Paragraph 4.3 detailed the discussion of the findings. The researcher selected occupational stress, causes and effects of occupational stress, management of teachers' stress and strategies for occupational stress management as themes for discussion after coding data that was collected. Participants showed an understanding of occupational stress and had similar views with the concepts from literature review. The participants' views concerning the causes of occupational stress were reflected in paragraph 4.3.2.1. The causes were seen to come from the environment, organisation and individual teachers. In paragraph 4.3.2.2, the effects of occupational stress were noted and the views concerning the effects portrayed positive and negative results, though the conclusion was that the negatives outweighed the positives. Management of teachers' stress was believed to be possible as participants revealed that individual and organisational approaches could be utilised to alleviate stress and paragraph 4.3.3 elaborated on the participants' and the literature perspectives. Paragraph 4.3.4 dealt with the strategies of occupational stress management and in Table 4.1 perceptions of participants on strategies which could be used to alleviate stress in Primary Schools were outlined. Teachers felt that coming up with sound strategies either by the schools or the education office could be vital in alleviating teachers' stress and thus creating an opportunity to produce good results.

In Chapter 5 conclusions, findings, recommendations and limitations of the study were presented.

5.3 FINDINGS

In this section, the study's major findings are furnished. The discussions are drawn from the literature review, documents analysis and data interpretation. The discussions follow the main themes that emerged from the research questions, coding and the reduction of data through the qualitative research paradigm. The findings indicate whether the aim and objectives of the study have been realised. The findings are discussed in accordance with the research questions in the rest of this section.



The objectives of the study are:

- Determine the nature of stress and causes of occupational stress in education.
- Determine how occupational stress can be managed in education.
- Determine the perceptions of participants in the region on the management of occupational stress among teachers.
- Determine the strategies that can be implemented to improve occupational stress management among teachers in Primary schools in the Southern South Sub-Region in Botswana.

5.3.1 Findings on the nature of stress and causes and effects of occupational stress in education.

The objective sought to investigate the nature of stress, its causes and effects and the general conception was that occupational stress had to do with the experience which individual workers had that brought constraints towards achieving the institutional objectives. The results indicated that an individual worker could experience stress and show behavioural, emotional, physical and work related signs. Some of the signs which could be visible were; frustrations, moodiness, poor performance, weight loss, too much work, change of syllabus, innovations which did not have anything to do with teaching and learning, lack of or being denied the use of available resources, shortage of personnel, poor management, poor performance, overstaying, lack of parental involvement, child abuse, poverty, ill-health and financial constraints. The perception pertaining to the causes of occupational stress indicated that the dominant causes of stress were organisational compared to environmental and personal factors.

The causes of occupational stress which were indicated are outlined in table 5.1. The general conception concerning the nature and causes of occupational stress in education is that occupational stress is predominant among primary school teachers and it posed effects which could either be positive or negative. The effects were believed to be visible on organisations and on individual teachers. Participants and researchers' conception was that the negative effects of occupational stress were more dominant than the positive effects, and Table 5.2 gives the summary of the effects which were revealed.

Table 5.1 The Causes of Occupational Stress

Organisational Factors	Environmental Factors	Personal Factors
• Too much work • Change of syllabus • Lack of resources • Lack of professional development • Lack of progression • Poor conflict management • Poor performance • Unpleasing teachers welfare • Unnecessary innovations • Poor management practices • Lack of team work • Lack of confidentiality • Poor communication	• Overstaying • Social problems • Lack of parental involvement • The environment • Different cultures • Child headed families • Child abuse • Poverty	• Financial constraints • Poor working relationships • Talking behind teachers • Personalities • Unprofessional behaviour • Ill health • Bootlicking

Table 5.2: The Effects of Occupational Stress

Organisational Effects of Occupational Stress	Individual Effects of Stress
• Poor performance • Failure to meet organisational targets • Poor working environment • Teacher turnover • Strikes/ • Low morale • Conflicts • Absenteeism	• Physical illnesses • Frustrations • Emotional disorders • Psychological trauma • Withdrawal • Lack of interest in work • Financial constraints • Exhaustion • Eating disorders

5.3.2 Findings on how occupational stress can be managed in education.

This objective aimed at finding out how occupational stress could be managed in education and the findings were that teachers and different authors and researchers confirmed the possibility of managing occupational stress through sound individual and organisational ways. They strongly believed that dealing with stress in the workplace could bring positive results for individuals and the institution. The following were participants' perceptions on ways which could be brought into play to manage stress:

- Changing our lifestyles
- Being emotionally intelligent
- Practicing relaxation techniques
- Going through management training
- Managing conflict
- Being able to recognize stress
- Practicing positive organisational communication
- Implementing wellness programmes
- Avoiding stressful situations

- Learning to calm down
- Going for counseling
- Being tolerant
- Proper budgeting and adherence to budget
- Developing action plans and following them

5.3.3 Findings on the perceptions of participants in the sub-region on the management of occupational stress among teachers.

Objective 3 sought to discover the perceptions of participants in the sub-region on the management of occupational stress among teachers. It was apparent that teachers in the sub-region were aware of the existence of occupational stress and they proved its existence by noting that they experienced it as well as their colleagues. Participants pointed out occupational stress as more destructive than having positive effects. Teachers reflected that colleagues and management were sources of stress and the fact that teachers got ill because they had extreme stressful situations accounting for absenteeism which could not be avoided. They pointed out that to manage this stressful situation other teachers were forced to stand in for the absent teacher but work overload was created at the same time. Participants also indicated that they intervened in stressful situations in their schools to help ease tensions. They believed that interventions play an important part in relieving stress. Participants felt that stress management was given little attention in the sub- region, especially by managers and education officers. They were not clear who was responsible for stress management programmes in schools. They believed that a lot had to be done to alleviate stress in individual teachers and organisations. They also believed that if the education office could minimise imposing unrealistic demands and start consulting teachers, the sub- region could start producing quality results.

5.3.4 Findings on the strategies that can be implemented to improve occupational stress management among teachers in Primary schools in the Southern South Sub-Region in Botswana.

Objective 4 was aimed at discovering the perceptions of participants in the sub-region on the strategies that can be implemented to improve occupational stress management among teachers in Primary schools in the Southern South Sub-Region in Botswana. Participants outlined the strategies which they thought could help alleviate occupational stress among teachers. They listed numerous strategies which could be implemented by school management and the education department. The table below summarises their perceptions on the strategies:

Table 5.3 Strategies which can be used to alleviate stress in schools.

Department of Education Strategies	Organisations Strategies
• Having consultative meetings with teachers • Developing infrastructure and everything that concerns teaching and learning • Having motivational talks once in a while with teachers • Having management workshops for Senior Management Team • Regular visitation to schools by education officers to hear grievances and addressing them • Holding workshops or seminars on stress management for schools • Training teachers on coping or avoidance strategies • Appointing trained or qualified personnel who teachers can consult when they are faced with stressful situation • Adhere to transfer policy • Making stress management essential for managers • Empowering teachers • Conducting researches on stress issues • Coming up with Employee Assistance Programmes • Providing free services for teachers which can help alleviate stress	• Implementing wellness programmes • Coming up with intervention strategies • Having proper communication practices • Developing sound strategic plans and adhering to them • Following action plans and developing some where there are none • Benchmarking on good stress relieving techniques from other schools • Cooperation • Implementing strategies and programmes that alleviate stress

5.4 RECOMMENDATIONS

The following recommendations could be made to the school management, the department of education and to the teachers in the Southern South Sub-Region to try and help alleviate the stress that teachers are experiencing in their schools.

5.4.1 Recommendations to the School Management

- The school management should consider the stressful situations teachers endure and embrace them.
- The school management should practise the following; good supervision, fair treatment of teachers, attend to teachers' welfare, consult, be transparent but not compromising confidentiality, establish proper communication strategies, solve conflicts amicably, work as teams, behave professionally and attend self-empowering seminars and workshops.
- The school management should also recommend teachers for promotions whenever they are due in a fair manner.
- Managers in schools should avoid favouritism at all cost.
- School based motivational workshops should be done regularly to inspire and motivate teachers.

5.4.2 Recommendations to the Department of Education

- The Education Department has to help the schools to be aware of occupational stress and help individual schools by sponsoring school based workshops relating to management of stress.
- It could also develop policies which could help in the implementation of stress alleviating strategies.
- The Education Department could provide the necessary teaching and learning resources in time and equitably.
- Appointing qualified personnel who could assist teachers in the sub-region with their stressful situations, especially those which emanate from the organisation.
- The department should also consider coming up with consultative strategies with the schools and adhering to them.

5.4.3 Recommendations to the Individual Teachers

- Teachers could capacitate themselves with information on management of occupational stress issues so that their psychosocial well-being is kept in balance.
- They could also learn more about personality types such that they are able to deal with individual colleagues in a manner that will not create stressful situations for them.
- Teachers could also avoid working as individuals and work as a team and enhance their professionalism to improve their organisations.
- They could also plan their activities and adhere to the plans.
- Teachers could communicate professionally to avoid creating unnecessary conflicts.
- They could also organise their work to avoid taking it home.
- Teachers could take part in social activities that relieve stress.

5.4.4 Recommendations for Further Research



Further research could be done in the following areas;

- Poor leadership as a contributing factor to teachers' stress in education.
- The contribution of Senior Managers to stress in education.
- The effects of teacher overstay in schools.
- Financial management as a stress alleviating strategy in education.

5.5 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

- This study was limited to Southern South Primary schools only and teachers from other schools in Botswana might have different perceptions on management of stress in education.
- Travelling from one school to the other was difficult as it cost a lot of money.
- Some of the schools were not that receptive.
- The researcher realised that some of the participants might be holding back information during interviews.

5.6 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, the conclusions, findings, recommendations and limitations of the study were discussed. The conclusions summarised the contents of the chapters within the study. In the findings it was demonstrated that stress is the phenomenon that is visible among primary teachers. Occupational stress was said to be stress experienced at the workplace and was caused by environmental, organisational and personal factors. The participants within the sub-region proved that occupational stress could be managed through sound individual and organisational strategies. They felt that the way occupational stress was managed in the sub-region was not given the attention it deserved. Teachers suggested strategies which school management teams and the department of education could implement to alleviate stress among teachers in the sub-region, and the researcher made recommendations for the school management teams, department of education, teachers and recommendations for further studies.

The empirical study started with Chapter 1 where the researcher discussed the problem statement, research aim and objectives and the questions. In chapter 2 the researcher reviewed the literature with the intent of finding out what other researchers had to say about management of occupational stress in primary schools. The research methods and methodology were outlined in Chapter 3 and qualitative design was used in the study. Chapter 4 reflected results analysis and literature. Interviews and documents were utilised in the process. The last chapter dealt with the conclusions, findings, recommendations and limitations.

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ADDENDUM A: ETHICS APPROVAL CERTIFICATE



NORTH-WEST UNIVERSITY
YUNIBESITHI YA BOKONE-BOPHIRIMA
NOORDWES-UNIVERSITEIT

Private Bag X6001, Potchefstroom,
South Africa, 2520

Tel: (018) 299-4900

Faks: (018) 299-4910

Web: <http://www.nwu.ac.za>

Institutional Research Ethics Regulatory Committee

Tel: +27 18 299 4849

Email: Ethics@nwu.ac.za

ETHICS APPROVAL CERTIFICATE OF PROJECT

Based on approval by the Human Sciences Research Ethics Committee (HSREC) on 27/10/2016, the North-West University Institutional Research Ethics Regulatory Committee (NWU-IRERC) hereby approves your project as indicated below. This implies that the NWU-IRERC grants its permission that, provided the special conditions specified below are met and pending any other authorisation that may be necessary, the project may be initiated, using the ethics number below.

Project title: Managing occupational stress among teachers in the Southern South Sub Region primary schools in Botswana.																
Project Leader/Supervisor: Prof C van Wyk & Dr AMF Pelsier																
Student: E Malope																
Ethics number:	<table border="1"><tr><td>N</td><td>W</td><td>U</td><td>-</td><td>0</td><td>0</td><td>3</td><td>0</td><td>4</td><td>-</td><td>1</td><td>6</td><td>-</td><td>A</td><td>9</td></tr></table>	N	W	U	-	0	0	3	0	4	-	1	6	-	A	9
N	W	U	-	0	0	3	0	4	-	1	6	-	A	9		
Institution: Project Number: Year: Status:																
Status: 1 = Registration; 2 = Re-Registration; 3 = Professional Accreditation; 4 = Authorisation																
Application Type: Master Application																
Commencement date: 2016-08-15	Expiry date: 2019-08-15															
Risk:	N/A															

Special conditions of the approval (if applicable):

- Translation of the informed consent document to the languages applicable to the study participants should be submitted to the HRREC (if applicable).
- Any research at governmental or private institutions, permission must still be obtained from relevant authorities and provided to the HRREC. Ethics approval is required BEFORE approval can be obtained from these authorities.

General conditions:

While this ethics approval is subject to all declarations, undertakings and agreements incorporated and signed in the application form, please note the following:

- The project leader (principal investigator) must report in the prescribed format to the NWU-IRERC via HRREC:
 - annually (or as otherwise requested) on the progress of the project, and upon completion of the project
 - without any delay in case of any adverse event (or any matter that interrupts sound ethical principles) during the course of the project.
 - Annually a number of projects may be randomly selected for an external audit.
- The approval applies strictly to the protocol as stipulated in the application form. Would any changes to the protocol be deemed necessary during the course of the project, the project leader must apply for approval of these changes at the HRREC. Would there be deviation from the project protocol without the necessary approval of such changes, the ethics approval is immediately and automatically forfeited.
- The date of approval indicates the first date that the project may be started. Would the project have to continue after the expiry date, a new application must be made to the NWU-IRERC via HRREC and new approval received before or on the expiry date.
- In the interest of ethical responsibility the NWU-IRERC and HRREC retains the right to:
 - request access to any information or data at any time during the course or after completion of the project;
 - to ask further questions, seek additional information, require further modification or monitor the conduct of your research or the informed consent process.
 - withdraw or postpone approval if:
 - any unethical principles or practices of the project are revealed or suspected.
 - it becomes apparent that any relevant information was withheld from the HRREC or that information has been false or misrepresented.
 - the required annual report and reporting of adverse events was not done timely and accurately,
 - new institutional rules, national legislation or international conventions deem it necessary.
- HRREC can be contacted for further information via Estie.Erntoeh@nwu.ac.za or 018 289 2873.

The IRERC would like to remain at your service as scientist and researcher, and wishes you well with your project. Please do not hesitate to contact the IRERC or HRREC for any further enquiries or requests for assistance.

Yours sincerely

Prof LA

Digitally signed by

Du Plessis

Prof LA Du Plessis

Date: 2016.11.02

08:04:23 +02'00'

Prof Linda du Plessis

Chair NWU Institutional Research Ethics Regulatory Committee (IRERC)

ADDENDUM B: MINISTRY OF EDUCATION RESEARCH PERMIT

TELEPHONE (027) 3655469
TELEX: 2944 THUTO BD
FAX: 3185167

REF: DPRS 7/1/5 XXVI (86)



REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
AND SKILLS DEVELOPMENT
PRIVATE BAG 005
GABORONE

26th July 2016

Ms Emily Malope
PO Box 274
Lobatse

Dear Madam

RE: PERMIT TO CONDUCT A RESEARCH STUDY

This serves to grant you permission to conduct your study in the sampled areas in Botswana to address the following research objectives/questions /topic:

Managing Occupational stress among teachers in Primary Schools in the Southern south sub-region: Botswana.

It is of paramount importance to seek Assent and Consent from the Director of Southern region, School Heads and teachers of selected seven (7) Primary Schools that you are going to collect data from. We hope that you will conduct your study as stated in your proposal and that you will adhere to research ethics. Failure to comply with the above stated, will result in immediate termination of the research permit. The validity of the permit is from 26th July 2016 to 25th July 2017.

You are requested to submit a copy of your final report of the study as stated in the Research Guidelines (para 4.5 - 4.6, 2007) to the Ministry of Education and Skills Development, in the Department of Educational Planning and Research Services, Botswana.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Sir Wonder Masebola'.

Sir Wonder Masebola
For/Permanent Secretary

ADDENDUM C: REGIONAL DIRECTOR LETTER OF PERMISSION

TELEPHONE (267) 5441876



DIRECTOR (SOUTHERN REGION)
MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND SKILLS
DEVELOPMENT
PRIVATE BAG 003
KANYE

FAX: (267) 5441880 / 5442042

5th August 2016

Emily Malope
Ramtlabama Primary
P O Box 122
Pitsane

Ufs: School Head _____

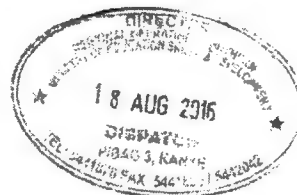
RE: Request for permission to Carry out research

This letter refers to contents of a letter dated 2nd August 2016, in which you request for permission to collect data.

Initial permission was Granted in letter Ref: DPKS 7/1/5 XXV1 (86).

Permission is granted provided you share findings with this office.

G Mmusi for –Director Regional Operations



ADDENDUM D: LETTER OF REQUEST FOR PERMISSION FROM SCHOOLS

Ramatlabama Primary School
P O Box 122
Pitsane
Botswana

05 August 2016

The School Head

Dear Sir/ Madam

RE: REQUEST FOR PERMISSION TO COLLECT DATA IN YOUR SCHOOL.

I am requesting your office to grant me permission to collect data from your school.

I am a part student doing Degree in Masters in Educational Management with the North – West University in Mafikeng, South Africa. The research is a requirement by the university to complete my degree and my research topic is **Managing Occupational Stress Among Teachers in Primary Schools in the Southern South Sub-Region: Botswana.**

I hope my request will be successful.

Thank you.

Yours faithfully

Emily Malope (Miss)
ID NO: 774420804
Contact No: 71842196/ 73225022

ADDENDUM E: SCHOOL CONSENT FORM FOR PARTICIPANTS (QUALITATIVE)

RESEARCHER: Emily Malope

CONTACT DETAILS: +267 71842196

The faculty of Education's Higher Degrees Ethical Committee of the North-West University has given approval for this research project. You are by this note invited to consider participating in this research study. The research project is focused on investigating the management of occupational stress among teachers in the Southern South Sub-Region Primary schools. In particular the study will help in better occupational stress management approaches for teacher's discipline that would be applicable to the field of educational management.

For ethical reasons, you deserve to be well-informed of your rights to participate in this research project. If you agree to participate in this research after reading the following, please sign this consent form.

- The researcher will request to use a tape recorder during the interview process in order to gather accurately complete information as note-taking may not be sufficient.
- Everything you say will be strictly confidential.
- You are guaranteed anonymity. No information pertaining to your identity as a participant or that your of school will be revealed.
- The information you provide will be used solely for educational purposes.
- The interview activity will take approximately 45-60 minutes.
- Your participation in this research is voluntary.
- You can decide to withdraw your participation at any stage of the interview process.
- You pledge to provide this investigation with the most honest information to the best of your knowledge and ability.



I have read the information provided in this informed consent form. I voluntarily agree to participate in this investigation.

Participant

Date

ADDENDUM F: INTERVIEW SCHEDULE FOR SCHOOLS

SCHOOL	DATE	TIME
School 1 Teacher 1 Teacher 2	9 August 2016 9 August 2016	1430hrs – 1630hrs 1630hrs – 1730hrs
School 2 Teacher 3 Teacher 4	15 August 2016 15 August 2016	1300hrs – 1430hrs 1430hrs – 1530hrs
School 3 Teacher 5 Teacher 6	17 August 2016 17 August 2016	1330hrs – 1500hrs 1500hrs – 1630hrs
School 4 Teacher 7 Teacher 8	22 August 2016 22 August 2016	1300hrs – 1400hrs 1400hrs – 1530hrs
School 5 Teacher 9 Teacher 10	23 August 2016 23 August 2016	1400hrs – 1530hrs 1530hrs – 1700hrs
School 6 Teacher 11 Teacher 12	25 August 2016 25 August 2016	1300hrs – 1430hrs 1430hrs – 1600hrs
School 7 Teacher 13 Teacher 14	29 August 2016 05 September 2016	1500hrs - 1630hrs 1400hrs – 1530hrs

ADDENDUM G: INTERVIEW QUESTIONS

MANAGING OCCUPATIONAL STRESS AMONG TEACHERS IN THE SOUTHERN SOUTH SUB- REGION PRIMARY SCHOOLS: BOTSWANA.

INTERVIEW QUESTIONS FOR TEACHERS

1. What is your understanding about occupational stress? What is it?
2. What are the reasons for teachers stress?
3. Do you experience job related stress? How do you experience occupational stress?

How do you cope?
4. What are the effects of teachers stress? Do these effects impact on teachers and other staff members in the school?
5. In your position do you have any involvement with teachers stress? How is your involvement?
6. Give a few examples where you had to intervene with a stressful situation.
7. What can teachers do to alleviate occupational stress in themselves?
8. Are there any systems to assist teachers to alleviate stress? Give examples.
9. Do you know anything about the Employee Assistance Programme? Is it implemented in your school?
10. Do you experience occupational stress only negatively? Explain your answer?
11. Can you give me examples of work related stressful situations and how it was resolved or how you resolved it?
12. How do your colleagues experience work related stress? Which management strategies do they use to alleviate it for themselves and their colleagues?

13. Who is responsible for the management of teachers stress in your school?
14. Did anyone have training in the resolving or managing teachers stress?
15. What do you recommend that the department do to alleviate teachers stress?
16. What do you normally do to manage a stressful situation?

**NWU
LIBRARY**

ADDENDUM H: INTERVIEW SAMPLE

TEACHER 14

I: Interviewer

R: Respondent

QUESTION 1

I: What is your understanding about occupational stress?

R: Its work related stress is that it?

QUESTION 2

I: What are the reasons for teachers' stress?

R: Poor management *heish* (sighs and pauses) mmmm (shaking head)

Their welfares are not taken into consideration

Unfairness in the workplace

Dictatorship style of managers

Having to work under pressure

QUESTION 3

I: Do you experience job related stress? If so, how do you experience it?

R: (quickly and loudly) JOB? obviously (write that it in capital letters).

Hmm how does it have to do with the cause?

Inequality in the work place

Poor management

Lack of parental involvement in their children's learning

Congested syllabus with abstract content that makes it difficult for learners to grasp

Lack of resources and sometimes it is not even possible to improvise.

QUESTION 4

I: What are the effects of teachers' stress? Do these effects impact on teachers and other staff members in the school?

R: poor results for learners

Aggressiveness in the workplace or lack of respect (some teachers can insult others)

Causes illnesses like bipolar (laughs) it is there I have seen it, cardiovascular illnesses, migraine, hypertension.

Definitely (write that with bolded capitals and exclamation).

QUESTION 5

I: In your position do you have any involvement with teachers' stress? If so, how is your involvement?

R: hmm (pause) *nna ga ke itse* maybe I do not know those who do not want to work I become stress on them maybe.

QUESTION 6

I: Give a few examples where you had to intervene with a stressful situation.

R: I am just a committee member in one of the committees in the school and the coordinator does not execute his duties as expected and I always push to an extend of apologising to the staff every time things did not go well which is always the case in this situation. This helps as teachers always understand when I apologies on behalf of the committee even the situation repeats year in and year out.

A time when the learner never wrote homework when given by one teacher and the teacher sent the child back home to call the parent who never came. The parent came and hurled the insult to the teacher in front of the learners; I had to calm the situation even though both the teacher and the parent did not want to calm down. The matter was taken to the office where I was called and we ended calming the situation. The teacher had to take the child to the clinic and the parent apologised that he did not come to school when asked to.

QUESTION 7

I: What can teachers do to alleviate occupational stress in themselves?

R: (mumbling) just to tolerate the situation

Learn to calm down

Go for counselling (therapy)

Be open minded and learn to deal with both side of the coin

One on one discussion whereby there is a misunderstanding (pause) clear the mist as early as possible

Never leave any stone unturned (laughs) whatever that means

Stand up for what you know is right

Improvise where possible

Exercise because this can rectify most things

QUESTION 8

I: Are there any systems to assist teachers to alleviate stress? If there are any, give examples.

R: NO but they are supposed to

QUESTION 9

I: Do you know anything about the Employee Assistance Programme? If you do, is it implemented in your school?

R: NO

QUESTION 10

I: Do you experience occupational stress only negatively? Explain your answer.

R: NO

Stressful supervisors sometimes curb some bad habits like back log, laziness

QUESTION 11

I: How do your colleagues experience work related stress? Which management strategies do they use to alleviate it for themselves and their colleagues?

R: They are treated unfairly

There is no equality

Lack of confidentiality

Lack of respect

Poor accommodation

Poor welfare of teachers

Poor management

(Strategies)

Some ignore the situations

By blaming others

Calming themselves down

Being diplomatic/ professional and strategic

QUESTION 12

I: Who is responsible for management of teachers' stress in your school?

R: according to my understanding it's supposed to be the guidance teacher but she is the one who causes all the stress

QUESTION 13

I: Did anyone have training in the resolving or managing teachers' stress?

R: (silence) I do not know

QUESTION 14

I: What do you recommend that the department do to alleviate teachers' stress?

R: educating all teachers so that they are able to deal with oncoming problems and know how to deal with them

Work shopping us

Taking us to school to do stress management hmm I do not know

We could be given free services that alleviate stress



Communication from the office should reach all teachers equally, it should be balanced

Establish wellness programmes across the schools

We need psychics to release the emotional tension so that we deal with stressful matters accordingly

ADDENDUM I: TRANSCRIBED INTERVIEW FOR TEACHER 10

Reflective Notes	Interviewer: what is your understanding of occupational stress?	Codes
Emotion noted	Respondent: <i>I think it is the stress that comes from the field of work, those <u>difficulties</u> that come from work stress.</i> Interviewer: What are the reasons for teacher's stress?	Challenges
Emotion noted again	Respondent: <i>Hmm results (pause) when children are <u>not performing</u> at work it stresses us out. Even our <u>work itself</u> stresses us out when it is a lot. The nature of work is also stressful by nature, for example if you have to attend to pressing social issues after maybe taking the leave for the day or few hours of the day you end up coming to work out of pity as we are handling small children.</i>	Poor performance Work demands
Firmness expressed	<i><u>Difficult</u> parents, parents lack understanding of how things are done. They sometimes refuse to do the things they are supposed to do because of lack of understanding. For example some of the parents would not assist a child with their homework with the mentality that they will be helping the teacher to do the work she was hired to do, they will say (pause and shaking head) teachers want us to do the work that they are paid to do.</i> <i><u>Lack of resources</u> is a very big challenge. If you tell the children without anything to show them it becomes a problem.</i> Interviewer: Do you experience job related stress?	Poor working relationship Cause of stress
Quick and alarmed reaction	Respondent: <i>Yes</i> Interviewer: How do you experience it?	
Painful reaction	Respondent: <i><u>Poor performance</u> (Pause) Learners may show understanding during teaching and learning but when it comes to</i>	Effect of stress

Pain noted	<i>results they fail</i> (serious face) Interviewer: What are the effects of stress? Respondent: <i>hmm</i> (Pause) <u>it affects performance and our physical and emotional health.</u> <u>We end up spending personal resources which at the end cause financial stress.</u>	Effects of stress Effects of stress Financial constraints
Quick response	Interviewer: do these effects impact on teachers and other staff members? Respondent: <i>I think they do.</i>	
Stressing firmly	Interviewer: in your position do you have any involvement with teacher's stress? Respondent: <u>Yes</u> Interviewer: How is your involvement?	Organisational cause
Unprofessional behaviour noted	Respondent: <u>When I am absent my learners have tendencies of making noise for other learners hence stressing other teachers.</u> <u>When I am not teaching learners properly the other teacher will suffer because of my incompetent tendency.</u> Interviewer: Give a few examples where you had to intervene with a stressful situation. Respondent (Pause) <u>helping other teachers to look for appropriate teaching methods.</u> Interviewer: What can teachers do to alleviate stress in themselves? Respondent: <i>I believe to alleviate stress will come differently for teachers, what will work for one does not mean it will work for the other even though there are various ways of alleviating stress.</i> Interviewer: Are there any systems that assist teachers to alleviate stress?	Cause of stress Effects of stress Cause of stress Stress alleviating strategy Individual differences Different alleviating strategies
Reluctance noted	Respondent: <i>I once heard that there is wellness in other schools but here we do not have that</i> (looks up for a while and sighs)	Stress alleviating strategy

Showing interest	Interviewer: Do you know anything about Employee Assistance Programme? Respondent: <i>No</i> Interviewer: Do you experience occupational stress only negatively? Respondent: <i>No</i> Interviewer: Explain your answer.	
A little concern noted	Respondent: <i>Our supervisors have tendency of <u>pushing us from one point to the other</u> and you will tell yourself that you will do your work and at the end the results come out positive.</i> <i>Even the poor performance one, you stress and end up coming with better strategies on <u>improving results.</u></i> Interviewer: How do your colleagues experience work related stress?	Organisational cause of stress Stress alleviating strategy
Concern and anger noted	Respondent: <i><u>Lack of promotions</u>, some have more than 20 years of work experience but they are not promoted and sometimes management have <u>unprofessional tendency like favouritism</u> (pause) you know it is usually demoralising.</i> <i><u>Lack of resources.</u></i> Interviewer: Which management strategies do they use to alleviate it for themselves and their colleagues?	Cause of stress Poor management as organisational cause of stress Cause of stress
Emotion noted	Respondent: <i><u>accepting</u> that things are not going well especially the promotion issue. The look for <u>intervention</u> from the school management (as if it helps)</i> Interviewer: Who is responsible for management of teachers' stress in your school?	Personal alleviating strategy Organisational strategy
Mixed emotions	Respondent: (silence) <i>immediate supervisors</i> Interviewer: Did anyone have training in the resolving or managing teachers' stress?	

Quick and stressed response	Respondent: <i>No</i>	
Reflecting seriousness	Interviewer: What do you recommend that the department do to alleviate teachers' stress? Respondent: <i>Hey I wish there could be a professionally trained person that teachers can see in a confidential set up because teachers have tendencies of not practicing confidentiality. I do not know what causes that.</i>	