University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION WINNEBA

TEACHER STRESS AND COMMITMENT IN THE FANTEAKWA DISTRICT

AMFO JOYCE

(8130140012)

A THESIS IN THE DEPARTMENT OF SOCIAL STUDIES, IN THE FACULTY OF SOCIAL SCIENCE. SUBMITTED TO THE SCHOOL OF GRADUATE STUDIES, UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION WINNEBA IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS FOR AWARD OF MASTER OF PHILOSOPHY IN SOCIAL STUDIES EDUCATION DEGREE

OCTOBER, 2015

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

DECLARATION

STUDENT'S DECLARATION

I, JOYCE AMFO, declare that this thesis, with the exception of quotations and references contained in the published works which have all being identified and duly acknowledged, is entirely my own original work, and it has not been submitted, either in part or whole, for another degree elsewhere.

SIGNATURE……

DATE……

SUPERVISOR'S DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of this thesis was supervised in accordance, with the guidance lines on the supervision of thesis as laid down by the University of Education, Winneba.

SUPERVISOR'S NAME: DR. JIM WEILER

SIGNATURE: …….....

DATE: …….

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

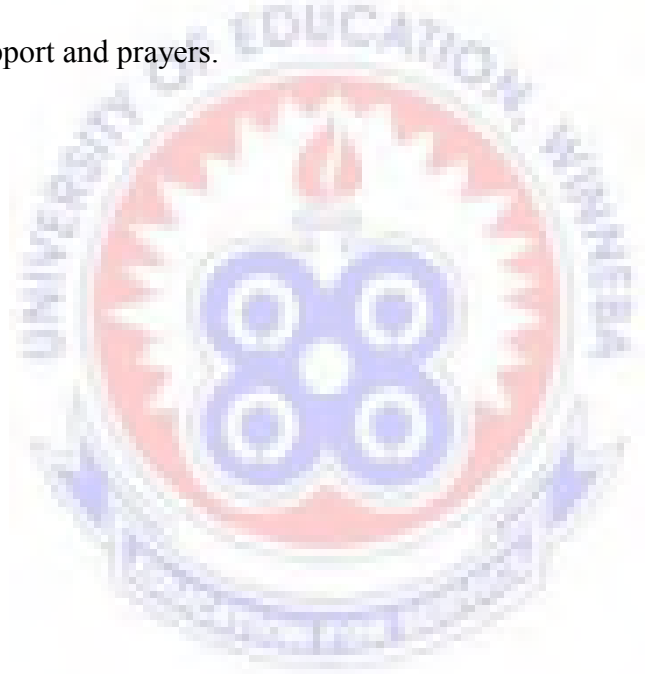
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I want to first acknowledge God Almighty for blessing me with the ideas and strength for this study. I will also like to acknowledge my adviser Dr. Jim Weiler for his immense contribution to my work. Thank you Dr. Weiler for your time, patience, for being very critical on research standards, for working so hard with me on my study and for helping me become the researcher that I am today. For his assistance I say God richly bless you Dr. Weiler, you the best supervisor ever. I also thank Ottu Ankra my friend and big brother for his support and encouragement, God richly bless you big brother. I will also like to thank Professor Bola Obebe for always been on my case to work hard at my thesis, thank you so much for your encouragement and support Baba. I would also like to acknowledge Mr Mohammed a lecturer in the University of Education Winneba for helping with literature on teacher commitment, it really helped change the face of my work. I will want to acknowledge the assistance of Mr Ayaaba, lecturer University of Education Winneba. And Mr Ignatius Obeng, lecturer University of Education Winneba for encouraging me to start the Masters Programme in the first. I like to acknowledge my friend and colleague Miss Okyerewaa Djandoh, for her support and for putting up with me throughout the program. To my friend and colleague Anderson Barnnet Augustus I am very grateful for your much appreciated criticism to my work and your time. And to my dear friend Abigail Twum, Jehovah bless you for your help. Last but certainly not the least I will like to thank Prophetess Bernice Adubea for her prayer and support may the God continue to exult you.

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to God, the love of my life and my saviour Jesus Christ. Moving on I dedicate this work to my parents Mr. Joseph Amfo Antwi and Madam Mercy Asabea God bless you for your love, your support and the pains of raising a child like me. Thank you Maa and Daa for understanding me and your invaluable contribution to my life. I also dedicate this work to Rev. Kwasi Kyei Baffour and Mrs. Lydia Kyei Baffour for their extreme love, understanding and kindness towards me. Finally I dedicate this work to my little brother Michael Asirifi Amfo thank you so much for your love, support and prayers.



University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

TABLE OF CONTENTS

DECLARATION ii

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS iii

DEDICATION iv

TABLE OF CONTENTS v

LIST OF FIGURES xv

ABSTRACT xvi

INTRODUCTION 1

1.1 Background 1

1.2 Research Problem 4

1.3 Purpose of the Study 7

1.4 Research objectives 7

1.5 Research questions 7

1.6 Delimitation of the study 8

1.7 Organization of the Study 8

CHAPTER TWO 11

LITERATURE REVIEW 11

2.1 Introduction 11

2.2 Definition of Stress 11

2.3 Theory of Stress 12

2.3.1 Stimulus-Based Perspective 12

2.3.2 Response Based- Perspective 13

2.3.3 The Interactionist/Transactional Perspective 14

2.4 Teacher Stress 15

2.5 Main Sources of Teacher Stress 16

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

2.5.1 Work Stressors 16

2.5.2 Organizational climate 26

2.5.3 Environmental Factors Societal 27

2.5.4 The Individual Factor 30

2.5.5 Biographical Factors Related To Stress 33

2.6 Manifestation of Stress 37

2.6.1 Physiological/Physical Manifestation 37

2.6.2 Psychological/Emotional and Manifestation 38

2.6.3 Behavioural manifestation of stress 38

2.7 Organizational Effects of Stress 38

2.7.1 Teacher Turnover Intentions 39

2.7.2 Drug Addiction 39

2.7.3 Burnout 40

2.8 Coping 41

2.8.1 Process- orientation Model 41

2.8.2 Problem-focused /Task Oriented Coping 42

2.8.3 Emotion- focused/ Emotion Oriented Coping 43

2.8.5 General Coping Skills Adopted by Teachers 44

2.9 Teacher Commitment 47

2.9.1Teacher Commitment as Passion 49

2.9.2 Teacher Commitment as an Investment of Extra Time 49

2.9.3 Teacher commitment as Focus on the Needs of Students 50

2.9.4 Teacher to Student Commitment as Maintaining Professional Knowledge 51

2.9.5 Teach Commitment as Transmitting Knowledge/Values 51

2.9.6 Teacher Commitment as Engagement with School Community 52

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

2.10 Relationship between Stress and Commitment....52
2.11 Conceptual Framework....54
Figure 1: Relationship between teacher stress and commitment....57
2.12 Gap in the literature....57
CHAPTER THREE....59
METHODOLOGY....59
3.1 Introduction....59
3.2 Research Methods....60
3.2.1 Qualitative Research Method....60
3.2.2 Justification of a Qualitative Study....61
3.2.3 Forms of Qualitative Research Methods....62
3.2.4 Case study....62
3.3 Study Setting....62
3.4 Population....63
3.5 Purposive Sampling....64
3.6 Data collection Instruments....64
3.6.1 Interviews....66
3.6.2 Observations....67
3.6.3 Document....68
3.7 Ethical Consideration....69
3.8 Data Analysis....69
Figure 2: Four steps in qualitative data analysis....72
3.9 Trustworthiness....72
3.9.1 Credibility....72
3.9.2 Dependability....74

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

3.9.3 Transferability 75

3.9.4 Confirmability 76

3. 10 Summary 77

CHAPTER FOUR 78

ETHAN: THE CASE OF HIGH STANDARDS 78

4.1 Introduction 78

4.2 Description of Ethan 78

4.3 Commitment without Stress 79

4.3.2 Professional development 79

4.3.3 Role model 80

4.3.4 Being There for Other teachers 80

4.4 Stress with Commitment 81

4.4.1 Definition of stress 81

4.4.2 Too Many Periods 81

4.4.3 Indiscipline in the School 81

4.4.4 Students Immorality 82

4.4.5 Lack of attention and motivation 83

4.4.6 Weak students 83

4.4.7 Intruders 84

4.4.8 Poor infrastructure 84

4.4.9 Personality 84

4.5 Coping Strategies 85

4.5.1 Escape 85

4.5.2 Therapy 85

4.5.3 Preparation 85

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

4.6 Discussion of Ethan's Stress, Commitment and Coping Strategies....86
CHAPTER FIVE....88
TRACY: THE CASE OF BEING STUCK....88
5.1 Introduction....88
5.2 Description of Tracy....88
5.3 Commitment without Stress....89
5.3.1 Passion....89
5.3.2 Transmitting Knowledge....89
5.3.3 Professional Development....89
5.3.4 Prestige....90
5.4 Stress with Commitment....90
5.4.1 Definition of Stress....90
5.4.2 Combining Work with Motherhood....90
5.4.3 Workload....92
5.4.4 Role conflict....92
5.4.5 Difficulty handling students....93
5.4.6 Conditions of Service....94
5.4.7 Transfer....95
5.5 Coping Strategies....95
5.5.1 Time management....96
5.5.2 Relaxation....96
5.5.3 Locking the door....96
5.5.4 Divine provision....96
5.6 Discussion of Tracy's Stress, Commitment and Coping Strategies....96
CHAPTER SIX....98

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

DAN: THE CASE OF OVER COMMITMENT 98

6.1 Introduction 98

6.2 Description of Dan 98

6.3 Commitment without stress 99

6.3.1 Focus on the needs of students 99

6.3.2 Passion 99

6.3.4 Being there for others 99

6.3.5 Prestige 100

6.4 Stress with Commitment 100

6.4.1 Definition of Stress 100

6.4.2 Disturbance 101

6.4.3 Conditions of service 102

6.4.4 Student‟s Apathy 103

6.4.5 Extra-curricular responsibilities 104

6.4.6 Family 104

6.4.7 Lack of Parental support 105

6.4.8 Workload 105

6.5 Coping Strategies 106

6.5.1 Entertainment 106

6.5.2 Exercise 107

6.5.3 Social Support 107

6.5.4 Planning 107

6.6 Discussion of Dan‟s Stress, Commitment and Coping Strategies 107

CHAPTER SEVEN 109

SHAUN: THE CASE OF NOT KNOWING STRESS 109

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

7.1 Introduction 109

7.2 Description of Shaun 109

7.3 Commitment without Stress 109

7.3.1 Transmitting Knowledge 109

7.3.2 Focus on students 110

7.3.4 Professional knowledge 111

7.4 Stress with Commitment 111

7.4.1 Definition of Stress 111

7.4.2 Being tired 112

7.4.3 Positive thinking 112

7.4.4 Family 112

7.4.5. Salary 113

7.4.5 Students Apathy 113

7.5 Coping Strategies 114

7.5.1 Positive thinking 114

7.5.2 Experience 114

7.5.3 Escape 115

7.5.4 Exercise 115

7.5.5 Planning 115

7.5.6 Prayer 116

7.6 Discussion of Shaun"s Stress, Commitment and Coping Strategies 116

SALLY: THE CASE OF RESPONSIBILITIES 117

8.1 Introduction 117

8.2 Description of Sally 117

8.3 Commitment without Stress 117

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

8.3.1 Engagement with the school community 117

8.3.2 Passion 118

8.3.3 Focus on Students 118

8.4.1 Too Many Periods 119

8.4.2 Inadequate Teachers 119

8.4.3 Taking work home 120

8.4.5 Role Conflict 121

8.4.6 Student"s Inattentiveness 121

8.4.7 Conditions of Service 122

8.5 Coping Strategies 124

8.5.1 Ignoring 124

8.5.2 Planning 124

8.5.3 Relaxation 124

8.6 Discussion of Sally"s Stress, Commitment and Coping Strategies 125

DISCUSSION 126

9.1 Introduction 126

9.2 Perception of Stress 126

9.2.1 Stimulus Perspective 126

9.2.2 Response-Based Perspective 127

9.2.3 Interactionist Perspective 128

9.3 Perception of Commitment 128

9.3.1 Passion 129

9.3.2 Investment of extra time 129

9.3.3 Focus on the Needs of Students 130

9.3.4 Transmitting Knowledge 131

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

9.3.5 Engagement with the School Community 132

9.3.6 Prestige 133

9.3.7 Being There For Others 133

9.3.8 Role model 134

9.3.9 Professional Development 134

9.4.2 Students‟ Misbehaviour 137

9.4.3 Workload 138

9.4.4 Inadequate Tools for Teaching and Learning 140

9.4.6 Responsibilities Outside School 142

9.5 Stress with Commitment 142

9.5.1 Transmission of Knowledge and Stress 143

9.5.2 Investment of Extra Time and Stress 143

9.5.3 Engagement with School Community and Stress 144

9.5.4 Needs of Learners and Stress 144

9.5.5 Relationship between Stress and Commitment 145

9.6 Coping Strategies 146

9.6.1 Problem- Focused 146

9.6.2 Emotion- Focused Coping 148

9.6.3 Avoidance Coping 150

9.7 Model of Teacher Stress and Commitment 151

Figure 3: Model of Teacher Stress and Commitment 152

10.1 Introduction 153

10.2 Review of Research Question 153

10.3 Contribution to Knowledge 155

10.3.1 Contribution to Theory 156

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

10.3.2 Offering Rich Insight 156

10.3.3 Implication for Research 158

10.3.4 Implications for Practice 158

10.3.5 Implication for Policy 159

10.4 Limitation of the study 159

10.5 Recommendations for Future Research 160

10.8 Conclusion 162

REFERENCES 164

APPENDIX 175

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure:	Page
1: Relationship between teacher stress and commitment	57
2: Four steps in qualitative data analysis	72
3: Model of teacher stress and commitment	152

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

ABSTRACT

The teaching profession is one of the most stressful jobs. Researchers have established that stress influences commitment negatively. In other cases, others have found that commitment serves as a buffer to stress. These studies on teacher commitment were mostly quantitatively driven, and few were situated in Ghana. The purpose of this study was to understand the relationship between teacher stress and commitment in the Fanteakwa District. The study further looked into how teacher perceive stress and commitment of S.H.S teachers, their experience and their coping strategies. The study also look at the relationship between teacher‟s stress and their commitment. The study used a qualitative research approach and a case study design. The study employed purposive sampling to select five (5) teachers for interviews and observations. The findings of the study showed that stress and commitment of teachers are interwoven. As a teacher demonstrates commitment his/her becomes evident. The findings also showed coping strategies serve as a buffer to excessive pressure from teacher stress. The study contributes to knowledge by the construction of a new model that connects teacher stress with commitment. The study also presents teacher stress and commitment from the context of a developing country like Ghana. The implications of the findings are that schools should create a supportive environment for teachers which recognizes the existence of stress that comes with commitment, rather than schools trying to eliminate the stress.

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Stress is found in every aspect of the human life. Whether at work, at home or in the social environment, an individual is most likely to experience stress. According to Blaug, Kenyon and Lekhi (2007 p.4) "Stress is everywhere." They explain that stress cannot be entirely eradicated from the human endeavour. Therefore, stress affects everybody despite one's "race, colour, or ethnicity, professional or academic background" (Esia-Donkoh, 2014 p.63). To further emphasize this assumption, Mathieu and Ivanoff (2006) postulate that the stress phenomenon "has become a common denominator in our fast paced complex society". This simply points to the idea that whether we like it or not, stress has become an "integral part of our daily lives" (Khoza, 2004 p.15) as human beings. Stress is therefore largely acknowledged as a universal phenomenon (Vigil, 2005; Blaug, Kenyon and Lekhi, 2007). To buttress this point Mathieu and Ivanoff (2006) conveys that human being can be totally liberated from stress when we no longer have breath and are dead. This seems to indicate that a certain amount of stress is needed to get the individual active and motivated.

Mundai (2010) debates, "An optimum amount of stress (called positive stress) is required to keep a person challenged" (p. 79). Therefore not all forms of stress are negative (Palmer and Hyman, (1993); Eres and Antanasoka, 2011). When an individual experiences low levels of stress, he/she is bound to get lazy and inactive. On the other hand, stress at an optimal level can keep an individual excited, motivated and increase a person's tendency to be very creative to ensure success in whatever activity or position the individual finds him/herself. (Nydegger, 2002; Schermerhorn,

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

Hunt and Osborn, 2000; Newton and Davis, 1997, cited in Eres and Antanasoska, 2011). Eres and Antanasoska (2011) seem to buy into the idea that stress at an optimal level helps an individual succeed in life. In other words, for an individual to be a successful achiever, s/he cannot escape some amount of stress. However exciting the prospects of positive stress are, the disadvantages of negative stress far outweigh the advantages posed by positive stress (Mundai, 2010).

Since stress is part of an individual's daily life (Mahmood, Nudrat, Zahoor and Zamir, 2013) it cannot be excluded from the work place. Several studies have pointed to the assumption that stress can be evident at the work place. They include McCarthy, Lambert and Reiser (2014); Nagra (2013); Kerr, Breen, Delaney, Kelly and Miller (2011); Khoza (2004) and Kyriacou (2001), who talk about stress in the teaching profession; Ibem, Anoskie, Azuh and Mosaku (2012); Campbell (2006), Lingard and Francis (2004), who talk about stress in construction workers and Lin (2006); Mojoyinola (2008); Kumar 2012), who researched into stress in nursing. Boardbridge (2002) and Mahmood et al. (2013) conducted a study of stress in managers, and Velnampy and Aravinthan, (2013) conducted a study of stress in banker. "Stress is therefore an unavoidable characteristics of life and work" (Mahmood, et al. 2013, p. 536). Simply put, stress is everywhere and in most cases unavoidable.

Researchers argue that individuals with a positive attitude towards work, and work under moderate stress are most likely to do better (Little, Simons and Nelsons, 1981 in Eres and Antanasoska, 2011) than those who work under constant high levels of stress, for example teachers. This is because studies have shown that the consequences of high levels of stress include health problems, low work performance, turnover (Pei and Guoli, 2007 in Dean, 2010). Fisher (2011) also corroborates that "the teaching profession is a highly stressful career" (p. 4). It is difficult therefore to

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

place the teaching profession among professions that felt "moderate" stress. The teaching profession has over the years, from the review of literature, been reported as one of the most stressful jobs, (Nagra, 2013; Fisher, 2011; Bearschank, 2010; Khoza and Milner, 2008; Khoza 2004; Kyriacou, 2001) as "compared to other professions" (Dean, 2010, p. 5). Researchers, such as Whitehead (2001), Oliver and Venter (2003); Kerr et al. (2011), Steyn and Kamper (2008), Curtaz (2009), Montgomery and Rupp (2005), Jaiyeoba and Jibril (2008) Kyriacou and Chien (2004), affirm the assumptions that the teaching profession is considered as one of the most stressful job in the world. Lambert, O" Donnell, Kusherman, Mccarthy (2006) cited in Fisher (2011) substantiates that "for centuries, teaching has been characterized as a profession that is emotionally taxing and potentially frustrating" (p. 3). McCarthy, Lambert, Crowe, and McCarthy (2010) emphasize that "teaching is widely acknowledge to be a demanding profession" (p.7). From literature, it is evident that of all the studies on work stress, teaching has been identified as most stressful compared to other professions (Karaj and Rapti, 2013; Blaug, Kenyon and Lekhi, 2007; Collingridge, 2008; Ghamrawi and Jammal, 2013; Mulholland, MacKinlay and Sproule, 2013).

Tuettemann and Punch (2005) postulate that no matter the level at which a teacher teaches, s/he is exposed to high degrees of stress. Fisher (2011), states in his study that, "poor working conditions, pursuing a job outside of the teaching profession, poor student behaviour, and excessive number of task are the main contributory factors of teacher stress." (p.4). McCarthy (2010) also identifies "high level of instructional and non- instructional duties, large classes, and low salaries" as stressors that teachers experience (p.308). Coming to terms with this piece of information prompted the researcher to investigate the concept of stress as it pertains to the teachers in the Fanteakwa District.

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

Dunham and Varma (1998) postulate that "Teachers are at a high risk of stress" (McCarthy et al. 2010, p.306), therefore the need to adopt coping skills or strategies to deal with stress in the work and personal or social lives of teachers. Betoret (2006) expresses the opinion that when an individual's coping mechanisms are inappropriate stress occurs. Huge (2001) cited in McCarthy et al., (2010) suggest that it is very important to avert the possible negative effect of stress for the sake of the teacher, the school environment and the students. This seems to suggest that coping or stress management strategies ought to be put in place to deflect the negative effects of stress on not only the teacher but the students as well, since research has indicated that when teachers are stressed it in the long run affect students as well (Collingridge, 2008; Farber, 2000).

Folkman and Moskowitz (2004) reflect that coping with stress involves an "attempt to manage, control, reduce, deal or learn to tolerate the threats that lead to stress" (Esia-Donkoh, p. 67). People make a habit of coping with stress without necessary being aware of it (Folkman and Moskowitz, 2004). As a result, there was the need for a study to describe the relationship between teachers' stress and their commitment in the Fanteakwa District.

1.2 Research Problem

The phenomenon of stress has been investigated into in different professions including the teaching profession. According to McCarthy et al. (2010) over the past years all the studies conducted on teacher stress have pointed to it as a problem. They, therefore, emphasise that "teacher stress remains a pernicious and persistent problem" (McCarthy et al., 2010 p. 307). And "it has been a common finding that educators experience higher levels of stress than any professional groups" (DeJesus and

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

Conboy, 2001 in Steyn and Kamper, 2006 p.113). Different researchers from different parts of the globe have researched into teacher stress. McCarthy et al. (2010), who conducted their study in the U.S.A, Lhospital, and Gregory (2009), who conducted their study in South Africa, Adeoye, Aliu and Solademi (2012) who conducted their study in (Nigeria) all point to the teaching profession as stressful. On the other hand Kerr et al. (2012) who conducted their study of teacher stress in Ireland, Mushtaq (2011) who conducted his study in Pakistan, and Chan, Chen and Chong (2010) researching on teacher stress in China, Jepson and Forest (2006) in the U.K., Kyriacou and Chien 2004, in Taiwan, Burchielli and Bartram (2006) in Australia Nagra and Arora (2013) (India) all point to the prevalence of teacher stress in their various studies. This goes to say that no matter the side of the globe one finds him/herself, the teacher is prone to stress. Kyriacou (2001) who is a leading researcher on teacher stress confirms the assertion that the profession of teaching is a "highly stressful profession" (p. 29).

What contributes or pass as stressors as exposed by different researchers include "poor working conditions, poor student behaviour, lack of administrative support, excessive task" (Fisher, 2011 p.4) " lack of recognition for good work, personal insults from colleagues, inadequate salary, excessive paper work, poorly motivated colleagues" (Milner and Khoza, 2008 p. 168), pupil misbehaviour, time and resources constraints, professional recognition, relationship with others, curriculum demand and work over load (Tang and Yeung, 1999). These factors that cause teacher stress seem to vary from one context to the other. Michael, Court, and Petal (2009) postulate that stress manifest itself differently in individuals and work places. They further add that studying work stress in diverse contexts will assist in the in-depth understanding of the phenomenon of job stress and help to mitigate the effect of stress (Michael et

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

al., 2009). The researcher therefore decided to conduct a case study of teacher stress and commitment in the Fanteakwa District. This would help the researcher explore the stressors that are particular to the teachers in the Fanteakwa District. The study would further bridge the gap in literature on teacher stress and commitment in the Fanteakwa District and Ghana in general since the literature on teacher stress and commitment in Ghana is quite scanty.

The review of literature indicate the majority of the studies on stress were mainly focused on the work stress of teachers. (Adeoye et al., 2012, Kerr et al. 2011, Milner and Khoza, 2008; Ahrendse, 2008; Schulze and Steyn, 2007) without looking at the stress that comes from the family or the social life of the teachers.

Stressor have been proven by studies to have dire consequences on the health and retention of teachers. These effects or consequences of stress include "less morale in staff members, job dissatisfaction, regular absenteeism, negative health or ill health, job turn over, teacher apathy (Khan, Shah, Khan, and Gul, 2012 ; Ahrendse, 2008; Blaug, Kenyon and Lenkhi, 2007). Kerr et al. (2011) explains that "teachers with poorer coping skills had more frequent absence from work and were more likely to leave the profession" (p.29).

Looking at stress and commitment it came to light that there are a few studies that directly link teacher stress to teacher commitment (Chapman, 2013; Jepson and Forest, 2006; Borg, Falzon and Ridings, 1991). Some of these studies show that teacher stress has a negative effect on teacher commitment, thus teachers with high levels of stress were less committed (Borg, Falzon, and Riding, 1991). While other researchers postulate that the relationship between teacher stress and commitment is not significant (Coladarci, 1992), others also establish a rather positive relationship between teacher stress and commitment meaning teachers with high commitment

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

experience high stress (Chapman, 2013). From the literature there seem to be conflicting studies on what is the relationship between teacher stress and commitment. The stress of teachers in Ghana could be different as compared to teacher stress in the western world because it is generally known that teachers in developing countries like Ghana turn to work under deplorable working conditions than their counterparts in the western/developed world. The researcher was motivated to find out what constituted stress for teachers in Ghana. The Fanteakwa District was chosen for this study because it is one District that represented the average nature of schools in Ghana.

1.3 Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study was to describe the relationship between teachers‟ stress and their commitment.

1.4 Research objectives

The objectives of this study were to:

1. understand the meanings teachers‟ ascribe to stress and commitment.
2. describe teachers experience with stress.
3. examine the coping strategies that teachers adopt in dealing with their stress.
4. describe the relationship between teachers‟ stress and commitment.

1.5 Research questions

The followings research questions were derived from the objectives of the study.

1. How do teachers explain stress and commitment?
2. What are the stress experience of teachers?
3. What are the coping strategies that teachers adopt in dealing with their stress?
4. What is the relationship between stress and teacher commitment?

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

1.6 Delimitation of the study

The scope of this study encompasses teachers in senior high schools in the Fanteakwa District in the Easter Region. It would have been ideal to cover all the senior high schools in the District perhaps the whole region but the study was however delimited to only public senior high schools. Out of three, one school was selected for the study. In spite of the scope of the study, the findings and recommendations from this study could be adapted by areas of similar characteristics in the region and outside the region.

1.7 Organization of the Study

This study is divided into ten chapters, consisting of an introduction, a literature review, methodology, data presentation, analysis and discussion of findings, and summary, conclusions and recommendations. The outline of the study are as follows.

The first chapter looked at the introduction which includes: the background of the study; statement of the problem; purpose or objectives of the study; research questions; significance of the study; delimitation; and organization of the study.

The second chapter of this research focused mainly on a thorough review of relevant related literature on teacher stress, coping strategies and teacher commitment. It also features the conceptual framework for the study. The literature review enabled the researcher to familiarize herself with literature on teacher stress, teacher commitment and coping strategies employed by teachers to deal with stress. The detailed review of the literature also helped the researcher to identify the various gaps in the literature that helped inform this study.

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

Further, chapter three describes the research methodology which comprises the research design; that is the qualitative research method and the case study approach, population, sample and sampling techniques, data collection instrument and data analysis.

Chapter four offered the data on Ethan. This chapter began with a description of Ethan. This was followed by the commitment of the respondent without stress. The next section presented the commitment of respondent with stress. The coping strategies of respondent was presented next. And the chapter ended with a discussion of the stress, commitment and coping of Ethan.

Chapter five of this study presents the findings of Tracy. It began with a description of Tracy. This was followed by the commitment of the respondent without stress. The next section presented the commitment of the respondent with stress. The coping strategies of the respondent was presented next. The chapter ended with a discussion of the stress, commitment and coping of Tracy.

Chapter six presented data on Dan. The chapter began with a description of the case. This was followed by a section that presented the commitment of the respondent without stress. The next section presented the commitment of Dan with stress. The section that followed looked at the coping strategies of the respondent. The chapter ended with a discussion of the stress, commitment and coping of Dan.

Chapter seven presents the findings of Shaun. This chapter also began with the description of Shaun. It continued with the commitment of the respondent without

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

stress. The next section presented the commitment of Shaun with stress. The coping strategies of Dan was presented next. And the chapter ended with a discussion of the stress, commitment and coping of the respondent.

Chapter eight of this study presents data on Sally. The chapter began with a description of Sally. This was followed by the commitment of Sally without stress. The next section presented the commitment of respondent with stress. The coping strategies of Sally was presented next. And the chapter ended with a discussion of the stress, commitment and coping of Sally.

Chapter nine included the analysis, and discussion of the findings of the study. The individual cases represented in the findings were analysed in detail in line with the major themes generated from the findings. A cross analysis of the findings of the cases was done as well, in line with the purpose of the research, the research questions and literature review in the chapter two of this study.

The final chapter that is Chapter ten, included the summary, conclusions, and recommendations arising from the study for future research based on the limitations and of the study.

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the concepts and theories relevant to the objectives of the study. This chapter therefore reviews literature on the definition and theories of stress, teacher stress, causes of teacher stress, coping strategies, teacher commitment and the relationship between teacher stress and commitment.

2.2 Definition of Stress

Stress can be defined as "any objective condition or any change in the work environment that is perceived as potentially harmful, threatening, challenging, or frustrating, or any set of circumstances related to work that requires change in the individual's ongoing life pattern" (Blaug, Kenyon and Lenkhi, 2007, p. 4). In this definition, Blaug et al. (2007) view stress as elements in the environment of an individual that put extreme strain or pressure on an individual.

Selye (1956,) opined that stress is "A neutral physiological phenomenon, in terms of the non-specific response of the human body to any demand" (Alghaswyneh, 2012, p. 33). This definition of stress seems to point to stress as the response of the body to strain or pressure.

In the words of Folkman (2010) stress is a "situation that is appraised by the individual as personally significant and as having demands that exceed the person's resources" (p. 901). This definition of stress seems to point to stress as a subjective phenomenon. A stressful situation is one that an individual sees as stressful and cannot cope with it, hence this was the definition of stress adopted for the current study.

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

2.3 Theory of Stress

Looking at the different definitions presented, researchers like Whitehead (2001), Steyn and Kamper (2006), Bearschank (2010) and Alghaswyneh (2012) have developed three categories. They are: the Response-based perspective; Stimulus-based perspective; and the Interactionist/ Transactional perspective. Each will be discussed below.

2.3.1 Stimulus-Based Perspective

In this approach stress as a stimulus is seen as an event, situation or object in the environment that has negative effects on an individual (Whitehead, 2001). In this school of thought, researchers have focused on stress as a phenomenon that is found in or belongs in an individual"s environment (Whitehead, 2001; Steyn and Kamper, 2006). These researchers clarify that in this school of thought, stress is usually viewed as a disruptive environmental agent. Simply put, this approach sees stress as anything in the environment that puts strain or pressure on an individual, and it unusually affects their physical, mental health and wellbeing. Potential stressful stimuli may include noise, poverty, having a disability, flood, racism and earthquake (Whitehead, 2001). However, the stimulus-based approach has been criticized as concentrating only on the things in the environment perceived to be stressful without considering the views and experiences of individuals who are present in the environment. According to Whitehead (2001) the stimulus-based approach is accused of not taking into consideration individual difference in response to stress. In short, the researchers who ascribe to this perspective conclude that individuals are stressed based on stressors they might identify with in their environment.

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

2.3.2 Response Based- Perspective

Under this approach stress is viewed as an individual‟s reactions to things or situations considered as a threat or disruptive in their environment (Whitehead, 2001; Steyn and Kamper, 2006). Whitehead (2001) stated that in measuring stress under the stimulus response model researcher mostly look at the behavioural, psychological and physiological responses of an individual to conclude whether they are stressed or not. These response include symptoms such as anxiety, over eating, blood pressure, frustration, headache, excessive smoking, weight loss, insomnia and anger (Whitehead, 2001; Wilson and Hall, 2002). This approach to stress also see stress as the feeling of being under pressure (Whitehead, 2001). Whitehead further states that stress in light of the response- base perspective concentrates mainly on how stress materialize in an individual. A major proponent of this theory, is Selye (1956) cited in Whitehead (2001) defines stress as "the specific response of the body to any demand made upon it" p. 19.

A major pitfall in this assumption or idea is that different stressors promote the same reactions from individuals. But research has shown so far that individuals respond point to stressors differently. What may cause a for example anxiety a frustration in one person may not cause the same level or degrade of anxiety in another. Or in some cases that very situation may as well not generate any anxiety at all. Lastly the response to stress has been criticized for its disengagement from factors in the environment that causes stress.

(Whitehead, 2001, relays that (Selye, 1956) mentions that every stressor acting as stimulus maybe different but they generate the same responses from the tissues and organs within a human body Selye (1956), named this the General Adaptation Syndrome (GAS)

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

G.A.S as propounded by Selye (1956) has three main stages, they are the alarm reaction, the stage of resistance and the stage of exhaustion (Whitehead, 2001). The alarm stage is activated when an individual is exposed to stressor, it is marked closely by the stage of resistance which entails the body's total reaction to stressors in an effort to adapt to the stressor. (Whitehead, 2001). The final stage of the G.A.S by Selye (1956) is the stage of exhaustion, which happens when the adaptive strategies employed by the body is depleted. Whitehead (2001), reports that the body during this period experience a decline in its resistance to stress. This she reports leads to the physiological breakdown of the body leaving it highly vulnerable to infections.

2.3.3 The Interactionist/Transactional Perspective

The interactionist perspective essentially highlights on how individuals perceive and react to situations which may or may not be "forced upon them" and this approach also speak of a "lack of fit" or a mismatch with an individuals and his/her environment (Steyn and Kamper, 2006). This approach to stress views stress interactive and situation bound (Wilson and Hall, 2002). It goes to highlight that individuals react distinctively when faced with similar potentially stressful situations (Steyn and Kamper, 2006). The interactionist theory therefore seem to be an incorporation of the stimulus and response based perspective (Whitehead, 2001; Alghaswyneh, 2012; Wilson and Hall, 2002). These authors argue that this contemporary approach of viewing stress does not see it as statistic that is as a stimulus or response but as a changing interaction between the individual, their environment and the capabilities of the individual to deal with their stress experience. The transactional perspective is seen as a modification to the interactionist theory. (Whitehead, 2001; Alghaswyneh, 2012). In the transactional perspective the underlining" assumption is that mental states or structures determine the presence or

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

absence of stress" (Whitehead, 2001 p. 24). The transactional perspective see stress as neither engrained in the environment or the individual, but rather "in the interrelationship between the potential source of stress and the individual's perception" of the event or situation and the individuals "subjective" response (Steyn and Kamper, 2006 p. 3.). Wilson and Hall (2002) are of the view that self-appraisal adds an extra dimension to the interactive model in this situation to make it the transactional approach. There are mainly two main categories in the self-appraisal they are primary and secondary appraisal. In a potential stressful situation an individual assess or appraise the situation or event to determine whether the situation or event is stressful. When the individual recognizes a situation as stressful s/he moves to the secondary appraisal (Steyn and Kamper, 2006). In the secondary appraisal the individual establishes s/he is under stress and picks a coping strategy or skill that will help them deal with the stress (Steyn and Kamper, 2006). For this study the researcher ascribes to the transactional perspective, where stress is based on how an individual perceives a given situation, due to their experience and or the coping strategies they have in place. This perspective to stress is much prefer because it present a border and more dynamic perspective of stress. This perspective will aid in better understanding of the complex phenomenon called stress

2.4 Teacher Stress

Kyriacou (2001) defines teacher stress as "the experience by a teacher of unpleasant, negative motions, such as anger, anxiety, tension, frustration or depression, resulting from some aspect of their work as a teacher" (p. 28).

More so, teacher stress refers to

> "A situation where the teachers are exposed to certain unwanted environmental factors, which

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

> either exists within the educational institution (internal factors) or exists outside the educational institution (external factors), these factors hamper the normal routine life of teachers by negatively affecting their performance at work" (Khan et al., 2012 p. 23).

For teacher stress the researcher has adopted the definition of Khan et al. (2012) This definition to teacher stress was preferred for this study because it does not view teacher stress as emanating only from the school environment. But moves a step to look at elements outside the school environment that causes stress for teachers. That is unlike Kyriacou's definition to stress that appear to concentrate only on factors in the work life of teachers that cause them stress.

2.5 Main Sources of Teacher Stress

Factors causing stress vary from on situation to the other (Khan et al., 2012). I will describe some of the major factors of teacher stress below.

2.5.1 Work Stressors

2.5.1.1Word Demand

Steyn and Kamper (2006) inform that mainly the teaching profession is one that is characterized by many work demands that appears to predict stressful situations and event for teachers. According to Bearschank (2010) work demand indicates the duties that an employee has to perform. Bearschank (2010) brief that work demands has organization, physical and social forms. In order to deal with stress coming from job demand or demand on the job, (Bearschank, 2010) advises that teachers have to properly develop themselves, by undergoing training to help them cope with stress

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

and reduce to an optimal level. Ahrendse (2008) explained that many researchers have pointed to the relationship that exist between teacher work demand and their stress. Dunham (1972) explains that, working with very little demands would possibly result in an individual‟s poor performance at whatever task the person performs (Ahrendse, 2008). Dunham (1972) further explains that increasing job demands, may very well stimulate and energize an individual to be most effective in his/ her performance. But Dunham (1972) cautions that when the increasing demands on the job goes beyond the coping capabilities of an individual it could result in "high levels of anxiety, poor concentration and reduced effectiveness in one‟s work" (Ahrendse, 2008 p. 29). And finally on the extreme end Dunham (1972) explains that continuous increase in work demands without enough resources available for the individual to cope with, would eventually lead to "fatigue, exhaustion and burnout" (Ahrendse, 2008 p. 29)

2.5.1.2 Career Development

An important part of career development as mentioned by Steyn and Kamper (2006) was professional training, they revealed that training that was relevant to the teaching profession was needed to ensure teachers are able to meet the ever changing face of the teaching profession. Writers like Adams (1999) and Jacobsson, Pousette and Thylefors (2001), clarify that insufficient training of teachers can lead to teacher stress (Steyn and Kamper, 2006). These researchers added that it was equally stressful for teachers when they have further their education to make them more skilful at their professions. This they said was especially when the teacher is faced with a very busy schedule with which he/she has to allocate between duties as a teacher, added administrative and social duties plus continuous learning for whatever upgrade in knowledge and promotion they are after (Steyn and Kamper, 2006). Steyn and

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

Kamper (2006) postulate that in the career development of teachers they cannot successful go through without the appraisal of their performance. They concluded that performance appraisal of teaching can be stressful due to steps in the process of performance appraisal and how such appraisal systems are implemented. Rout and Rout (2002) adds that, this is specially the cases when the results of these performance appraisal can impact on promotion and salaries of educators (Steyn and Kamper, 2006).

Wisniewski and Gargiulo (1997), add that when teachers are not opportune to receive adequate training on a variety of programs, they may experience an increase in their stress, since they are not in a position (adequately trained to deal with such skills) to deal with the ever increasing demands of teaching.

2.5.1.3 Job control/decision

Lack of participation in decision making in the opinion of Jones, Schanbroeck and Xie (2001) leads to teacher stress. Job control is the degree at which one selects a behaviour that facilitates the completion of task. That is behavioural control and or having qualities in the work place that allows employees to make decision or be part of the decision making process in their organization (Bearschank, 2010). A study by Brown and Harvey, (2006) estimates that in work places where employees had little control when it came to decision making in the working environment, they experienced much stress as compared to the workers that had a hand in making decisions pertaining to their working environment (Bearschank, 2010).

2.5.1.4 Role Based Stressors

Role based stressor in the opinion of Steyn and Kamper (2006) role based "exists when educators do not have clarity on their responsibility, expectations or work

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

objectives" (p. 122).These researchers report that role based stressors include role ambiguity and role conflict. Role conflict and role ambiguity has been cited by several researchers as sources of stress for teachers (Kyriacou, 2001; Steyn and Kamper, 2006; and Motseke, 1998)

2.5.1.4.1 Role Ambiguity

In the view of Johns (1996) role ambiguity happens in a situation whereby a workers are not clear on their roles, the goals they have to attain and the method by which to attain them. (Bearschank, 2010). Michael, Court and Petal (2009) relates that "role ambiguity expresses the ambivalence that is to be expected when role expectations are not clear due to lack of information about the role and the work entails". From this role ambiguity, seems to refer to the uncertainty that surrounds the duties an employee is expected to perform, due to too little information about the detail of their work. Michaels et al. (2009) reports that when this happens employers do not know where to channel their efforts. And whether the outcome of the role they perform will be considered successful or seem as a failure by their superiors. This signifies that another feature of role ambiguity would be worker being unable to project the outcomes of the activities they carry out. "Role ambiguity occurs when the responsibilities and duties are ambiguous and unclear", which may be due to a "lack of information needed to perform a certain role" (Steyn and Kamper, 2006 p. 122). Role ambiguity in teaching is also seen in a teacher‟s interaction with his/her colleagues the student are the school authorities. In this regard teachers have to play multiple roles, one hand become, a manager, social worker, resource provider, and in another breath become an examiner, secretary and a reflective teacher who is to ensure his/her students perform credibly (Motseke 1998).

Whitehead (2001) in her study concluded that role ambiguity in the schools she

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

sampled was not openly observed. This was because the teachers stated that they knew what was expected of them when it came to their roles and responsibilities. Whitehead (2001) also explained that the teachers used their staff meetings as a platform to clarify issue they were confused about. And as a result role ambiguity did not constitute any form of stress the sample in her study, although her study came up with a high-level of stress in teachers in New Zealand.

Karasek (1979), cited in Michael et al. (2009) however reports that, role ambiguity make employees feel they are not in control and identified this as very substantial contributory factor to a worker stress.

2.5.1.4.2 Role conflict

Michael et al. (2009) makes it known that role conflict has to do with discrepancies associated with the expected roles of a worker. Role conflict therefore occurs when information given to the teacher of his/her roles and duties "conflicts with the reality of the daily professional life" (Schulze and Steyn, 2003 p 694). Schulze and Steyn (2003) gave an example that when teachers have to meet the needs of their student and are yet still meet with very restrictive teaching method it reflects role conflict. According to Billingsley and Cross (1992) role conflict is a source of worry for teachers who had students with special needs in their classrooms. They conducted that as the stress of these teachers due to role conflict increased the professional commitment of these teachers reduced significantly as well (Younghusband, 2005).

2.5.1.5 Workload

Arikewuyo (2004) indicates that a work overload is a situation where a worker is expected to produce tangible results over a small period of time. Researchers have stated workload as the possibly the greatest source of stress for teacher (Dunham, 1999 cited in Motseke, 1998). Ngobeni (2006) adds that in general workload stress

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

refers to overload of teachers where they are to take up roles and responsibilities than is possible for them to handle effectively. Motseke (1998), expressed that in both quantitative and qualitative workload duties such as extramural activities, teaching in class, marking, and being present at meetings are some examples of workload. Kersaint et al. (2007) stated in their study that heavy workload, like completion of syllabus and marking of papers were considered as source of stress, for teachers (Alghaswyneh, 2012). Kyriacou and Chien (2004) also point to the same assertion in their study in Taiwan found out their heavy workload was the main source of stress for teachers. Alghaswyneh (2012) states that teachers taking on additional periods and administrative duties stated these as element contributing to their workload and ultimately their stress experience.

Arikewuyo (2004) conducted a quantitative study with a sample of 400 teachers on the stress and stress management strategies adopted by Nigerian teachers. Arikewuyo (2004) expressed that the issue of inadequate teachers continue to plunge the Nigerian educational system. As a result of the inadequate number of teachers, much workload has been placed on the teachers available. To conclude the literature on teacher stress seem to indicate that heavy workload has been known to have negative effect on teacher in terms of increasing their levels of stress (Black, 2003; Naylor 2001; Taris et al., 2001, cited in Younghusband, 2005).

2.5.1.6 Interpersonal Relationship

Researchers point to the idea that a positive relationship between colleagues can help avert the negative effect of job strain, while a negative relationship among teachers on the same staff can possibly be a major source of stress for educators, and contribute to their stress experience (Motseke, 1998). It would therefore be helpful for teachers to render support to their colleagues that is worthwhile to help build a stress free

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

teaching environment. The stressors that are mainly associated with teachers and their colleagues include "conflicting educational philosophies, conflicting personalities, seeing other teachers as not pulling their weight, staff cliques, collegial backstabbing, seeing other teacher relationships with student as inappropriate, poor system of communication and trying to maintain happy working relationships between warring factions" (Brown and Ralph, 1992; Zehm and Kottler, 1993; Motseke, 1998 p. 97).

Apart from the relationship between teachers and their colleagues being a potential source of stress for them, the relationship between principals and teachers have been known to play a very significant role in teachers stress (Motseke, 1998). Alghaswyneh (2012) study of Tawjihi teachers in Jordan adds to the assertion that the relationship between teachers and head teachers form part of the factors that lead to teacher stress. Alghaswyneh (2012) contends that the head teachers having a positive relationship with teachers and providing needed support is essential to help prevent the high degree of stress felt by the teachers. The teachers admitted that when the head teacher discriminates amongst them it was a huge source of worry and strain as it affects them negatively (Alghaswyneh, 2012).Cockburn (1996) concurs, to this assertion when he provides that good relations, and a school environment that is joyful would help not only reduce teacher stress, but that of the head teacher as well.

2.5.1.7 Home-work Interface

Duxbury and Higgins (2003) examined the main challenges employees face in relations with their job and family life. They conducted a survey of 31,571, individuals from 100 public, private, and non-profit organization and companies in Canada. From the questionnaires administered these researchers found out that majority of the respondents were heavily overloaded when it came to their duties at

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

their work places, and a significant number of the respondents (28%) reported that their duties at the work place interfered with their responsibilities at home or to their family. And 10% of the sample expressed that their duties in the home hindered their responsibilities at the workplace. The study also reflected that the workers showed an inability to effectively balance the demands coming from work and those coming from the workplace. The authors therefore discussed that there was a significant correlation between(workers been unable to balance demand from home and work place) with a decrease in family and life satisfaction, lower level of commitment, decrease in work performance, higher rate of absenteeism, increase in turnover of workers, increase in stress related sickness, and higher occurrence of perceived stress.

Reddy and Anuradha (2013) study of teachers in the Vellore District established that under home-work interface, teachers in the secondary schools felt stress due to financial problems they were facing in their homes. In total three hundred and twenty seven (327) teachers were selected using simple random sampling. The authors revealed some of the teachers had problems concentrating during lesson due to the needs of their family they are unable to meet and tension they had with their spouses. Equally stressful for teachers in the study was their insufficient salaries, distraction over the health of spouses and children, concerns over the education of their children while in school.

2.5.1.8 Job Security

The fear of been demoted and the fear of losing one"s job has been noted by these researchers (Cooper et al 2001, and Olivier and Venter, 2003, Rout and Rout, 2002) as a potential sources of stress for teachers (Steyn and Kamper, 2006). Bearschank (2010) postulates "Job security refers to the prospect of job loss or redundancy…"

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

(p.47). Steyn and Kamper (2006) offers that a very important element of individuals in different careers or occupations has to do with the possibility that one may loss his/her job in future or the possibility of been laid off. In Ghana it is general known in the education sector that, since the upgrade of the teacher training colleges to the tertiary level, most the teachers with their first degree teaching there have been given a time limit with which to further their studies for an M.Phil. in their subject area. If there are unable to meet the time limit they would be laid-off to the secondary schools and basic education unit. This as a result has placed much pressure, on the teachers in the colleges of education to go for master degree programs. These teachers in the Ghanaian training colleges have to combine studies with teaching in school and travelling long distance for lectures, this seem to be a huge source of stress for them. Naidoo, Botha and Bisscoff (2013) conducted a study on educators in Kwazulu-Natal in South Africa, a sample of 368 teachers were selected through stratified random sampling. As part of their key findings Naidoo et al. (2013) postulate that on the issue of job security teachers in the Kwazulu-Natal District do not need to be continuously assured of their job security. They further explained that although job security was established as a stressor the teachers in their study did not "experience job insecurity per se" (Naidoo et al. p. 185).

2.5.1.9 Remuneration

Motseke (1998) estimates that studies conducted in the western world and those done in South Africa all point to inadequate salaries as one of the highest sources of stress for teachers. The poor salaries of teachers has been known to create financial difficulties for teachers, which in turn negatively impacts on their morale and attitude towards work. Cacha (1981) inform that when teachers are given inadequate salaries,

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

they begin to feel that their status in the social and economic sense is gradually eroding. Cacha adds they also feel that they are being taken advantage of by the government and organizations in charge of regulating their salaries (Motseke, 1998).

The study of Tawjihi teachers by Alghaswyneh (2012) affirms that inadequate salaries, promotion system and the relatively low status of teachers was often described by the teachers in her study as a major source of stress. Alghaswyneh revealed that the teachers in her study felt that individuals in different careers climbed the career ladder for higher promotion, but in the case of teachers, a teacher always stayed a teacher no matter their experience, qualifications or the number of years they have worked. The researcher also found out that both male and female teachers found felt their salaries were inadequate.

Al-Mahamadi (1990) reports that teachers come under severe strain from debt due to their low salaries, this he revealed brings about financial difficulties in the family which push these teachers to go in search of alternative source of income to supplement their salaries (Alghaswyneh, 2012). Al-Mahamadi (1990) affirms that extra jobs eats into the time meant for teachers to relax, and prepare for class (Alghaswyneh, 2012). Naidoo et al. (2013) on the other hand, reported their finding disagreed with the widely held assumption that low salaries was a sources of stress for teachers. Their study revealed the teachers were content with the salaries they received.

2.5.1.10 Job Satisfaction

Chapman (2013), defines job satisfaction as "A pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one‟s job or job experiences" (p. 8). This means that job satisfaction denotes pleasant or joyous feelings associated with an individual‟s work and workplace. Chapman (2013), in a quantitative study in Ireland discussed the

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

relationship between teachers, self-efficacy, job satisfaction and stress with teacher career commitment. A sample size of ninety-three (93) primary school teachers were selected for school the study. Chapman's study found out that there was a significant negative correlation between teacher stress and job satisfaction. Chapman indicated from her study that teachers with high career commitment experience less stress. She stated this was because teachers in her study were more satisfied with their jobs.

Mwamweda (1995) and Moana and Pears (2005) cautions that the teaching profession is in peril if the teachers in the profession continue to remain dissatisfied with their work, these authors also warn that teachers are dissatisfied with their work it leads to stress and eventual burnout, when the stress of teacher are left unattended to (Bearschank, 2010).

2.5.2 Organizational climate

Organizational climate refers to the "…shared perceptions of organizational policies, practices and procedures, formal and informal indicative of the organizations goals and appropriate means to goal attainment" (Oi-ling, 2002 cited in Khoza 2004). Organizational climate also entails the "shared perception of the way things are around here" (Milner and Khoza, 2008 p.158). Organizational climate therefore refers to the norms that characteristics a particular organization. The features or characteristics of an organization and the kind of perception it employees have about it can therefore influence the organizational commitment of that particular organization. Hemingway and Smith's study in 1999, uncovered that organizational climate dimensions that are favourable to employee help lower their stress levels.

2.5.2.1 School Climate

Hoy and Miskal (1987) defines school climate to be "the set of internal characteristics that distinguishes one school from another and influences the behaviour of people"

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

(Milner and Khoza, 2008 p. 158). Milner and Khoza (2008) postulate that a healthy organizational environment has elements or features that can assist individuals in the institutions deal with challenges. They continue by saying that school climate that is healthy is pervaded by a positive relationship between students, administrative staff and teachers (Milner and Khoza 2008). Milner and Khoza (2008) teachers in a healthy school climate, teacher like teaching, like their colleague teachers and their school. They also state such a climate is also accompanied by students who are achievement driven when it comes to their academic lives. Van Zyl and Pietersen (1999) cited in Khoza (2004) conducted a quantitative study in South Africa. The study was to examine the effects that school climate had on teachers in the secondary schools and their level of stress. The results of the study indicated that teachers were highly stressed due to elements found in their work environment, such as limited autonomy, insufficient recognition, and inadequate opportunities available for these teachers to be creative or innovative. (Capel, Heilbronn, Leask, and Turner, 2004) specify that been a part of any given organization especially a school could potentially add up to an individual‟s stress. They stated that this was especially where certain aspects of the organization and or individuals were not been effective, in the execution of their work.

2.5.3 Environmental Factors Societal

Environmental /or societal factors that determine teaching stress, according to Motseke (1998), involves the economy, the family, the society and finally the community.

2.5.3.1 The community

With the community being a stressor to teacher, Motseke (1998) explains that, living conditions of teachers in township may increase the stress experience of teachers.

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

Motseke (1998), state that teachers exposed to garbage-cluttered streets and increased crime in neighbourhoods experience stress because of the kind of environment these teachers are exposed to. Bearschank (2010) also state that teachers who are living in high crime neighbourhood are not spared from the stress that result from the crimes around them. And strain of always looking behind their heads because of the possibility of being attacked by criminals. Kyriacou and Chien (2004) in their study explained that teachers felt the "public"s attitude and misunderstanding about the primary teachers" workload made a major contribution to the stress of teachers in Taiwan.

2.5.3.2 Politics

Motseke (1998), speculates that a situation where some teachers associations are seem as being favoured by the government over others can causes division among teacher in a particularly, state or country. This division seem to cause stress among teachers. Motseke (1998), gave the reasons that teachers who are seen to be recognized by the government seem to get their grievances across. He gave an in instance that in South Africa during the 1990s the National Professional Teachers Organization of South Africa (NAPTOSA) were seem as a tool for government oppression and hence were victimized by their own students. And those (the teacher unions) that were not seen as affiliates of the government, like (The South African Democratic Teachers" Union) were not recognized by the government didn"t seem to get their grievance across to them. Because these teacher were labeled as being in league with the opposition. In view of this, it can be said that politics has the potential to influence teacher stress. Motseke (1998), mentioned that apart from the division in the union of teachers another political, interference in education that is stressing teacher s has to do with the

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

government abolition of corporal punishment from schools. The abolishment of corporal punishment has taken the teachers authority and their ability to ensure students discipline in schools (Motseke, 1998). Even though, research point out that corporal punishment could be overdone sometimes by teachers, the same researchers point out that the teachers felt that corporal punishment was one of the most effective ways of dealing with student misbehaviour. (Citizen, 1996; Vista, 1996; Sentsho, 1996; Volksblad, 1997 cited Motseke, 1998)

2.5.3.3 Family values

A breakdown of the family values in the society increases the teachers‟ experience of stress (Motseke, 1998). Marital issues or ethic and the gradual change in the traditional family system from the extended family system to the nuclear family system is now known to impact negatively on teacher stress. Motseke (1998) express that divorce from change in marital systems in the Africa and the nuclear family replacing the extended family system most often leave students unattended to and unkept. Mothers are also leaving their traditional roles of being in the house as home keepers and are now working, and are been labeled as “career women” their jobs seemingly gives them little room to cater for their family (Mclean, 1979 cited in Motseke, 1998). The concerned teachers who interacts with students almost daily are left to look out for these students. The teacher sometimes have to play the role of a mother to students whose parents are not readily available because of their work or because they divorced and are going through issues. The teachers often have to take the extra responsibility of counselling the students and even feed them at times when they get to know the kind of situation or trouble their learners find themselves (Brenda ,1994 cited Motseke 1998).

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

2.5.3.4 Low Status of Teachers

Research by Honig (1986) revealed the teaching profession pleases teachers in the category of "low socio-economic status" as compared to other personnel from other professions, this has been report by increase teachers stress (Motseke, 1998). The relatively "low socio-economic" status of teachers was affirmed to bring about "financial problems", and "interfere with the effective functioning of the family and financial insecurity" (Motseke, 1998 p.100). A study conducted in the U.K. on head teachers by Copper and Kelly (1993) indicated that among other things the head teachers stated that their comparatively "low status" to that of teachers in higher education institutions, added to their stress. The head teachers expressed that the overall perception of society that their work in the primary was not as demanding as those teachers in the higher education institutions, were part of the factors the researchers established were contributing to the stress of these teachers (Copper and Kelly, 1993).

2.5.4 The Individual Factor

Eloff and Engelbrecht (2001); Harris and Hartman (2002) explains that the individual possesses certain characteristics that when employed in the work place and in life generally, it influences how people view and react to stress (Steyn and Kamper, 2006). The underlining assumption here is that different people handle stress differently. These individual factors that various researchers have stated may influence the stress experience of teachers include the following: personality types, self –esteem and social support.

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

2.5.4.1 Personality Types

It seems certain individuals would probably interpret situations, events or happenings in their life in a more stress provoking fashion than others (Naidoo et al. 2009). Researchers have mainly identified two personality types that is Type A personality and Type B personality (Naidoo et al. 2009; Schulze and Steyn 2007, Bearschank 2010). According to Steyn and Kamper (2006) people with type A trait are competitive, goal or achievement driven people, who continuously "struggle" to accomplish much with less time or within a limited time frame. Type A individual are often described as highly completive sometimes aggressive, restless, impatient, hastily, accompanied by explosive speech (Naidoo et al. 2009). Naidoo et al. (2013) describes Type A individuals in the category of persons who are most likely to interpret a situation more stressful as compare to the Type B individuals. Type B individual are known to be "easy going, take difficulties in stride, spent time on what they do and maintain a careful balance between events and actions demanding their energy" (Naidoo et al. 2009p.181). General it seems like type B individual are patient, they are careful, handle difficulties well, spend much needed time on profitable venture, and they generally handle stress very well. On the contrary Mo (1991) cited in Lam Yee Mei (2006) contacted a study in Hong Kong to examine the relationship between teacher stress, burnout, personality and social support, she concluded that educators who had Type A personality attributes were less susceptible or open to stress. Meaning that those with type A personality were better able to withstand and properly managed their stress. Kyriacou (1997) adds that teachers who do not carry unrealistic demands of their work are better able to handle their stress effectively (Alghaswyneh 2012).

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

2.5.4.2 Social Support

Social support according to Steyn and Kamper (2006) is the assistance that individuals receives or gets from people. It could be in the form of help and support from the school administration or colleges. Steyn and Kamper have cited studies by (Adams, 2001; Engelbrecht and Eloff, 2001; Jonas and Jacobsson et al., 2001) that account that social support is a critical component of the school environment, that when put into use would help soften the stress experienced by teachers.

Younghusband (2005) conducted a qualitative study specifically, a grounded theory study of teacher in Newfoundland, to explore the stress experiences of teachers. The study revealed that the teacher acknowledge that support from their colleges helped serve as a butter against stress coming from the pressure and high demands of the teaching profession. The social support as summarized by the researcher included "being able to discuss work with people who understood, were empathetic and provided emotional support."

2.5.4.3 Self- esteem

Self- esteem in the view of Nelson and Quick (2006) refers to "an individual's general feeling of self-worth" (Bearschank 2010, p. 52). Self-esteem therefore denoted the ways in which one is conscious of his/her personality, skills and abilities. Self- esteem refers to the way individuals perceive themselves. Steyn and Kamper (2006) in their study cited Cooper et al., 1990; Josi et al., 2000) who assert that individuals with positive or high self- esteem are less likely to experience stress due to events or situation in the environment, whereas persons, known to have negative or low self-esteem turn to be easily stressed, due to unconducive situation or event in the environment (Steyn and Kamper, 2006). Byrne (1992), who conducted a study on the self-esteem of educators also uncovered that teachers with high self-esteem have a

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

low tendency of been stressed out as compared to teachers with low self-esteem, who tend to be most vulnerable to stress (Bearschank 2010).

2.5.4.4 Self-efficacy

Self-efficacy refers to a person‟s ability to produce certain actions and the belief that he/she is able to perform a task or cope with stress (Schulze and Steyn 2007, p. 695). Self-efficacy therefore means or points to a person‟s confidence in his/ her competency to effectively get work done and or deal with stress. Motseke (1998) asserts that teachers who have low confidence due to inadequate training and less experience doubt their capabilities when it comes to communicating with learners in an efficient way. A study by Tang (2001) cited by Steyn and Kamper (2006) sought to examine the relationship between teacher self – efficacy and the extreme end of stress (burnout) amongst Chinese teachers. Tang‟s study showed a strong negative significant association of the Chinese teachers‟ self- efficacy to burnout and their mental wellbeing (Steyn and Kamper, 2006). This means that inadequate self-efficacy of the Chinese teachers in Tang‟s caused an increase of the incidence of burnout. Alghaswyneh (2012) advises that a teacher‟s mastery of the subject matter they teach, their confidence and their preparedness to answer questions would help them manage their stress to an optimal level. But when teachers do not demonstrate these abilities at work, Alghaswyneh (2012) found out that they come under unbearable stress.

2.5.5 Biographical Factors Related To Stress

Biographical factors that influence the stress experience of teachers has to do with their age, gender, marital status, and years of experience.

2.5.5.1 Gender

Steyn and Kamper (2006) postulate that the swift increase in social change, has

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

influenced the roles of women in the family and the society at large. In their article, they gave an overview of studies on teachers stress mainly in South Africa. In this summary of various studies, they stated several reoccurring causes of teacher stress. Among the once they mentioned was gender. In their article, Steyn and Kamper (2006) pointed the studies of (Hawe et al., 2001; Ngibi and Sibaya, 2002; Rout and Rout, 2002) who indicated that, female teachers were reported to have experienced more stress as compared to their male counterparts. Rout and Rout (2002) cited Steyn and Kamper (2006) stated that female teachers experienced much stress due to their dedication not to not only their work in school but to domestic chores which, they state usually conflicts with their work demands and increase their stress experience. Reddy and Anuradha (2013) in their study established through a t test that there was difference with gender and stress significant at 0.01. This goes to say that the occupational stress experienced by men and women in the teaching profession differ. The study found a mean of (153.59) for male teachers and (134.10) for female teacher. This meant that according to Reddy and Anuradha (2013) the male teachers in the profession were experiencing more stress than the female teacher"s present in their study. In a comparative study conducted by Eres and Atanasoska (2011) of teachers in Macedonia and Turkey, the study made use of 416 teachers from, Turkey and 213 from Macedonia. In all 629 teachers were randomly selected for the study. A total of 289 female teachers were used for the study us against 240 male teachers. The main aim of the study was to compare the stress level of teachers from varied economic and socio-cultural environment. The study concluded that stress levels of teachers in Turkey who were male was higher than the female teachers. Whereas in Macedonia the authors revealed that there was no significant relationship between the stress of male and female teacher.

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

2.5.5.2 Age

There has been conflicting results of studies that examine the age of teachers in relation to their stress experience (Steyn and Kamper, 2006). Some of the authors assert that younger teachers experienced higher levels of stress that is those below the age of thirty (30) (Jonas, 2001 cited in Steyn and Kamper, 2006). Jacobsson et al. (2001) however reveals that an increase in the age of teachers, was linked to higher job demand, which they expressed increases the stress of teacher (Steyn and Kamper, 2006).

Anandasayanan and Subramaniam (2012) conducted a study of school in Sri Lanka in the Jaffna District on teacher‟s work related stress. A hundred and fifty (150) teachers were selected using random sampling. As part of their study they measured the demographic features of respondents in relation to stress. In Anandasayanan and Subramaniam‟s study they stated teachers between ages of 26 to 35 had lower levels of stress as compare to teachers who were in the age range of 55 and above. They stated these older teachers experienced relatively high levels of stress.

2.5.5.3 Marital Status

Saufi, Thai, Seok and Eranza (2013) studied married female teachers to investigate the impact of organizational and extra-organizational factors on their work stress. A total of 127 married female teachers were selected for the study. In their work Saufi et al. (2013) revealed that married female teachers experienced low levels of stress. They explained that this was because from their analysis the stress levels perceived to have been experienced by the married female teachers had a mean of 2.47 with a standard deviation of 0.50. That, is Saufi et al. (2013) established that the standard deviation and mean of the married women was a reflection of their lower levels of stress. In line with this assertion Anandasayanan and Subramaniam (2012) found in

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

their study that married teachers experienced low levels of stress as compared to unmarried people, who the authors reported experienced high levels of stress.

On the contrary Eres and Atanasoska‟s study (2011) discovered that the level of stress of married teachers in Macedonia were higher as compared to that of unmarried teachers whereas with the teachers in Turkey the researchers stated there was no significant differences between the stress experienced by married teachers and unmarried teachers.

2.5.5.4 Years of Experience Related to Stress

Bearschank (2010) discusses that a person‟s former experience could leave that individual more vulnerable to stress or make them better prepared to face any stressful situation. A study conducted by Campbell, Green–Reese and Johnson (2001) revealed that the experiences gained through a number of years of teaching as not related significantly to teacher stress (Bearschank, 2010). Coetzee and Rothman (2005) on the other hand stated that there was a significant relationship between the years of experience of a teacher to their stress. From their study Coetzee and Rothman (2005) the teachers having (five) 5 years or more experiences in the study revealed higher levels of stress for them as compared to the teacher who has years less than five, in their school. The authors also stated that teachers who had 10 years of working experience in the study indicated a higher level of stress and with incidents of psychological health issue. The psychological ill-health symptoms the researchers identified include “panic attacks, constant irritability/angry round swishy, tiredness, inability to cope and avoidance of other people” (p. 51). The next section of the study discusses how stress manifests itself in individuals.

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

2.6 Manifestation of Stress

Manifestation of stress according to Motseke (1998) are basically "signs and symptoms of stress" (p.102). To get a clearer view of what stress manifestations constitute it import to establish what symptoms mean. Symptoms refers to what "patients or sufferers" think, act and feel that they view as unusual or what "observers" or "doctors" see when they are examining their patient or suffers" (Caputo, 1991 cited in Motseke, p. 102).

Stress is considered subjective to several researchers (Cranwell-Ward, 1990; Kruger, 1992 cited in Motseke 1998). These authors postulate that due to the unique nature of stress, it manifests itself different to individuals. Even though stress manifestations differ among individuals having prolong exposure to stress, may come with certain abnormal responses or illness. The manifestation of stress has been divided into physiological, psychological and behavioural symptoms (Motseke, 1998; Naidoo et al., 2013; Collingridge, 2008 Ahrendse, 2008).

2.6.1 Physiological/Physical Manifestation

Naidoo et al. (2013) posit that manifestations of stress that affects an individual's well-being physically is known reveals the philological manifestation of stress. These symptoms include "high blood pressure, headaches, heart disease, musculoskeletal immune system, and gastrointestinal problems, changes in metabolic rates" (Motseke, 1998 p. 102; Naidoo et al., 2013 p.181; Collingridge, 2008; Bearschank, 2010 p.56) Research by medical experts have established that stress in general increases an individual's susceptibility to illness and the idea that many sickness are usually stress related (Cranwell-Ward 1990 cited in Motseke 1998). As result of stress fatal illness like heart failure, cancers and kidney failure, may occur, not so fatal once like "mild headaches, skin disease and frequency of the need to urinate" may also occur (Ferreira

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

1994; Steyn 1992 cited in Motseke 1998 P. 103).

2.6.2 Psychological/Emotional and Manifestation

Psychological manifestation of stress may lead to teachers being emotionally unstable, and moody, (Newstrom and Davis 2004 cited in Naidoo et al. 2013). This moodiness and emotional instability of teachers, Newstrom and Davis (2004) reports induces negative reactions from these stressed teachers to learners and colleague teachers. The emotional/psychological manifestations of stress include "irritability anxiety depression anger, low self-esteem, inability to concentrate, tension, apathy, boredom, over sensitivity to criticism" (Steyn and Kamper 2006 p.127; Bearschank 2010, p.50. Motseke, 1998 p. 105)

2.6.3 Behavioural manifestation of stress

Individuals who are exposed to severe stress, are usually accompanied by changes in their attitudes. These behavioural problems may include poor sleeping habit, excessive eating/loss of appetite arriving late at work/absenteeism, avoiding contact with people, drug abuse, aggressiveness and alcohol abuse (Cranwell-Ward, 1990 cited in Motseke, 1998). In the school (Bearl, 1990 and Ferreira, 1994) explains that teachers exposed to higher degrees of stress, may display behaviour disorders which may include "antagonism towards students, colleagues and the authorities, poor productivity, poor discipline methods , poor involvement in school activities" (Motseke p. 104).

2.7 Organizational Effects of Stress

According to Steyn and Kamper (2006) the effects of stress on organizations were "tardiness absenteeism, missing deadlines, forgetting appointments and making unnecessary mistakes". In education organizational consequences of stress include

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

teacher turnover intentions, drug abuse, teacher burnout, and withdrawal.

2.7.1 Teacher Turnover Intentions

According to Xaba (2003) "Turnover refers to the movement of employees out of the organizational boundaries" (Bearschank, 2010 p.57). Oosthnize and Van der Bij (2007) conducted a study of schools in Cape Town. The study showed a large number of the teachers that is about 35% males in the sample and 42% of females had the intention of leaving the teaching profession (Bearschank 2010). The teacher had this intention because they reported from the study that they felt symptoms of depression and anxiety due to workplace stress.

A study of teachers in the George Region conducted by Olivier and Venter (2003) was aimed at determining the level of stress of educators. The authors conducted the study as a quantity ones with a sample size of 132 teachers. Olivier and Venter (2003) reported that more than 20% of the teachers reported that they suffered from severe or high levels of stress. This warns that a large number of teachers "approximately one out of five" were severely stressed. The authors discussed that some of the teachers reflected the need and the intention to leave the profession because of psychological and health issues.

2.7.2 Drug Addiction

Drug addiction refers to a physiological condition or state that makes an individual over depend on drugs like alcohol and tobacco (Bearschank 2010, Naidoo et al. 2013). Palmer et al. (2006) explains that individuals who smoke or drink alcohol may intensify their habit, when such individuals come under severe stress (Naidoo et al. 2013). Oosthuizen and Van der Bijl (2007) conducted a study in the northern suburbs of Cape Town to examine the stress doctors and teachers experience and the coping

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

strategies they employed (Bearschank 2010). This study by Oosthuizen and Van der Bijl (2007) established that 16% of teachers and 15% of doctors from their study used alcohol to deal with stress. In the study the researcher made use of 200 teachers, and disclosed that 16% out of the two hundred (200) teachers disclosed they drank alcohol and 17% out of them admitted to smoking when under stress.

2.7.3 Burnout

In the opinion of Motseke (1998) teacher burnout is defined as "the syndrome resulting from prolong, constant and intensive stress and is primarily characterized by physical, emotional and attitudinal exhaustion" (Motseke 1998 p.13). This emotional exhaustion could result in the negative attitudes of individuals that is individual having a negative self-concept instead of a positive one, towards their life, their jobs and other people (Motseke 1998). When educator refer to experiencing burnout they point to the feeling or state of "being consumed, empty, alienated washed, let down and even used up" (Gold 1984; Halpin and Halpin, 1985 cited in Motseke, 1998 p. 14).

Jepson and Forest (2006) discuss that when stress is experienced over a period of time it leads to burnout. They therefore define burn out as "a feeling a physical, emotional and mental exhaustion, resulting from chronic state and stress at work" (Jepson and Forest 2006 p. 184). Whitehead, 2001 cited a study by Maslach (1996) that examined 73 different studies of burnout in the United States from different professions including teaching. In Maslach's study teachers came out as the ones having the highest levels of emotional exhaustion as compared to the six (6) other professions involved in the study. Teacher were also found with the highest level of depersonalization in comparison to the other profession in the study.

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

2.8 Coping

Parker and Endler (1996) cited in Folkman and Moskowitz (2000) states that coping functions to help regulate stress and the management situations or events leading to stress. Gupta and Derevensky (2001) expresses that "coping refers to the thoughts and behaviours people use to manage the internal and external demands of stressful events" (p.7). In other words coping state the process where individuals adopt attitudes that enables them deal with stress. Coping refers to on individual's efforts to regulate stressful situations (Lazarus and Folkman 1984 cited in Avero, Corace, Endler and Calvor 2002). Lazarus (1993) defines coping as "a person's ongoing efforts in thought and action to manage specific demands appraised as taxing or overwhelming" (p. 8). Lazarus (1993) clarifies that "coping" is highly contextual" and for coping to be effective, coping styles or strategies ought to be used at different times and in various situations (p.8). Therefore for this study the researcher has adopted the definition of coping by Lazarus (1993). Among the common reoccurring coping strategies in the literature were emotion- focused and problem- focused coping strategies by (Lazarus (2000); Lazarus (1991); Folkman and Moskowitz (2000) task oriented, emotion oriented coping and avoidant coping by (Parker and Endler 1990 cited in Avero et al. (2002).

2.8.1 Process- orientation Model

Lazarus and Folk (1984) came up with process- oriented model of coping which brought out two main coping styles, namely, problem-focused coping and emotion-focused coping (Avero et al. 2002). Avero et al. (2002) explains that current research has added another coping style to the dual coping style propounded by Lazarus and Folkman which is avoidance coping by Endler and Parker (1990, 1991). In problem -

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

focused or task oriented coping an individual makes an effort to change events or situations that cause them to experience stress. And emotion focused or emotion oriented coping helps individuals deal with emotional distress associated which stressful events or situations; the third coping style, which is avoidance coping involve activities and cognitive changes aimed at avoiding a stressful situation (Endler and Parker1999 cited in Avero et al. 2003). Problem-focused coping and emotion focused coping are thought as synonymous to task oriented coping and emotion-oriented coping by Avero et al. (2003) since they seem to connote or explain the same thing. Kyriacou (2001) also speaks about direct action and palliative coping, which are also synonymous to problem focused and emotion focused coping. Concurring to this assertion are authors like Forte- Ferreira, Perio, Gonzalez-Morales and Martin (2006) who also thought that direct action and palliative coping were synonymous to problem focused and emotion focused coping by their definition and meaning as well (Harlow, 2008).

2.8.2 Problem-focused /Task Oriented Coping

In problem-focused coping, Lazarus (1993) states that "if a person's relationship with the environment is changed by coping action the condition of psychological stress may also be changed for the better"(p.4). This means that problem focused coping is a purposive action by individuals channelled at eliminating the source of individuals stress in their environment or reducing the stress to the barest minimum. This could include an individual taking proactive steps in changing certain things in their environment to help them deal with stress. Devonport and Lane (2006) mention that problem-focused coping strategies are used to change circumstances or event that is causing stress to an individual. Example of such strategies include planning and increase in efforts. Problem focused coping are usually adopted in situation that an

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

individual appraises as changeable or when the actions of an individual can change a stressful situation for the better (Avero et al., 2003).

2.8.3 Emotion- focused/ Emotion Oriented Coping

Avero et al. (2003) explains that emotion focused coping is adopted when an individual views a situation that causes stress as unchangeable. It therefore appears that emotion focused coping is used when an individual cannot change an event or situation creating stress. Vigil (2005) adds that the emotion-focused coping "… consists of individual's effort to control the emotional distress associated with a situation" (p.4). Devonport and Lane (2006) posit that emotion focused coping are used to regulate emotions associated with situation or events an individual assess as stressful. The strategies in emotion-focused coping are venting, to accept what the realities are in a situation, expelling pent- up emotions through exercise or through talking and meditation, seeking support from fiends family and colleagues (Devonport and Lane 2006; Vigil, 2005).

2.8.4 Avoidance

Avoidance coping is usual used in situation that is seen as uncontrollable (Avero et al., 2003). In avoidance coping Aero et al. (2003) states "You just don't let the problem bother you and focus on something more interesting" (p.846). Endler and Parker (1999) postulates that avoidance coping involves "activities and cognitive changes aimed at avoiding a stressful situation" (Avero et al., 2003 p.844). The strategies in avoidance coping therefore would include people tuning out of stressful circumstances and distancing ones from stressful situations. Avero et al. (2003) warns that this kind of coping is maladaptive or dysfunctional since, they warn that using avoidance over a long period of time would only go to increase an individual's stress.

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

2.8.5 General Coping Skills Adopted by Teachers

These general coping skills can fall under the three main coping strategies stated above (problem- focused, emotion- focused and avoidance coping. These coping stress were discussed in term of what researcher and various studies have found on them.

2.8.5.1 Exercise

Exercise according to Alghaswyneh (2012), is one of the most common strategies use to compact stress in the eastern and western world. Selye (1965) postulate that stress is a physiological processes that makes the body become aware it is has come under attack (Motseke, 1998). Selye (1956) continues by saying that due to the tension created by stress there is the discharges of glucose and fatty substances by the body, which becomes hazardous to the health of individuals if they are unable to utilize it through exercise. Physical exercise help individuals to take in the proper amount of oxygen required to burn the glucose and fatty substances released by the body when under stress (Motseke, 1998). Atkinson (1988), and Otto (1989) points that physical exercise puts teachers in a positive physical, mental and emotional state (Motseke, 1998). This is mainly becomes physical exercise has the advantage of releasing tension in the muscles and nerves of the teacher who partake in it (Motseke, 1998). Example of physical exercise my include walking, swimming, running, dancing, jogging and other sporting activities such as, football, golf and tennis staying active doing household chores. Madini (2005) reveals that individuals who do not take part in physical exercise are more vulnerable to pressure resulting from stress as compared to individuals who exercise often.

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

2.8.5.2 Prayer

Prayer is generally known as communication between man and God. Madini (2005) reveals that praying and reading of the Holy Qur"an are the strategies Muslims adopt when they are grieving, anxious, going through hardship, or when they encounter problems. Prayer and recitation of the Qur"an has been know help individuals relax, experience peace, and happiness and a feeling of serenity (Saker 2004 cited in Alghaswyneh 2012). Buys et al. (2009) cited in Bearschank (2010) conducted a study that indicated, teachers mentioned that when they have problems with students in their schools they resort to prayer. Buys et al. (2009) reported that the teachers believe that when they pray for their learners, God hears them and responses to their prayer.

2.8.5.3 Planning

Hadji (2010) posit that positive and timely planning by teachers helps reduce their stress levels significantly. In a quantitative study by Hadji (2010) 553 teacher took part in the study. The aim of the study was to examine the occupational stress of secondary school teachers in Cyprus specifically in the Nicosia area and ways in which they manage them. From the study 527 out of 553 teachers said that good and timely planning helped reduce their stress experience significantly.

Bearschank (2009) mentions that in coping with stress from work, home and personal lives, teachers are of the convection that planning ahead is extremely essential. Buys et al. (2009) cautions that teachers should plan their activities ahead so that their work will not accumulate all at once, where they will find themselves under much pressure (Bearschank 2009).

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

2.8.5.4 Humour

Even though Kuger (1992) in his study cited in Motseke (1998) established that there is no significant relationship between humour and stress. There is a general assumption that humour has a way of making a problem not look so threatening and lead to the revaluation of what an individual might label as a stressful situation or event (Gray and Freeman, 1987 cited in Motseke 1998). Motseke (1998) explains that teachers, may jest about student's misbehaviour, not reaching their goals, politicians, and even school authorities. Motseke (1998) establishes that this happens when teacher cannot reach their goal nor "revenge themselves", they therefore use humour to conciliate their hurt resulting from stressful events (p. 113).

2.8.5.5 Self-awareness

Motseke (1998) opines that in order to successfully deal with stress, it start with "Self-knowledge" p. 106. Self-knowledge makes a person aware that to deal with stress s/he has to change the kind of perception they have about things (Sutherland and Cooper 1990).For instance untimely promotion could be the real source of stress for a teacher, but s/he may feel it is safer to point inadequate teaching and learning materials as the causes of their stress. Self- knowledge will therefore serves to bring the real sources of an individual's stress into focus (Motseke 1998). Bringing the sources of an individual's stress into perspective will aid in strategies needed to address their stress (Motseke 1998). Corey (2005) confirms this when he states that self-awareness helps reduce teachers stress by assisting them manage their day – to-day activities effectively (Bearschank 2010).

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

2.8.5.6 Relaxation

Motseke (1998) explains the electrochemical reactions as a result of stress experienced by the human body causes the fibres in the muscles to contract. Humphrey and Humphrey (1986) reveals that, it is important to consciously and progressively, relax tensed muscle, which should begin with the muscles in the face, hands and feet going on to the entire body (Motseke, 1998). This Humphrey and Humphrey state will help individuals cope effectively with stress (Motseke, 1998). According to Atkinson (1988) and Otto (1986) meditation is a very useful technique for relaxation, they maintain that meditation over a long period of time may result in emotional and physical relaxation (Motseke, 1998). Atkinson and Otto revealed that meditation help teachers distant themselves from their pressure, problems, and help them avoid any kind of panic (Motseke 1998). To conclude in dealing with stress teacher ought to pick a variety of coping strategies as and even it is relevant to their situation as advised by Lazarus (1999). The next section discusses literature on teacher commitment

2.9 Teacher Commitment

Commitment is used to describe attributes that are desirable in a teacher, and it is usually used to differentiate between teachers who are "caring and devoted" to their job to those who often place their "personal interests and needs first" (Crosswell, 2006 p. 32).

For this study the researcher needed a concept or theory on teacher commitment that was based on teachers‟ perception, hence the study used the concept of teacher commitment as propounded by Elliot and Crosswell (2001) and Crosswell (2006). Elliot and Crosswell (2001) came up with six (6) dimensions of teacher commitment. They explained that these six distinct but "interconnected" categories of teacher

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

commitment include teacher commitment as: passion, focus on the individual needs of students, an investment of time outside of contact hours with students, a responsibility to impart knowledge, attitudes, values and beliefs, maintaining professional knowledge, and as engagement with the school community. Their study found that even though "the mainstream" current literature conceptualize teacher commitment in relation to external factors (such as students) they also make significant links to personal passions "which include ideology, value and beliefs". Elliot and Crosswell (2001 p.5)

What authors like (Bolger and Somech 2004; Talbert and McLaughlin 1993; Lee and Henderson 2006; Jepson and Forest 2006; Noordin, Rashid, Aripin, and Darus, 2010) all have in common when it comes to the literature on teacher commitment is that they evaluate teacher commitment in terms of organizational commitment as opined by Meyer and Allen (1990). And because the work of teachers are within an organization that is the school it is possible for teacher commitment to be discussed in the light of organizational dimension such as affective, continuous and normative commitment as propounded by Allen and Meyer 1990(Crosswell 2006). However, Crosswell (2006), adds that to view teacher commitment in the light of organizational commitment by Meyer and Allen's model alone presents a rather narrow view of teacher commitment as it ignores many factors that are integral to teaching itself" (Crosswell, 2006 p.34). As a result "an extended view of teacher commitment is necessary" (Crosswell 2006, p. 34.). This is mainly because there are other desirable attribute teacher possesses that could be labeled as commitment that cannot be noted in the dimensions of commitment presented by Meyer and Allen (1990). Crosswell (2006) notes. "… since teachers work is not limited to the classroom, the concept of commitment needs to be also considered in a broader context" (Crosswell 2006, p. 35)

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

2.9.1Teacher Commitment as Passion

Croswell (2006) describe teacher commitment as passion in view of teachers having or exhibiting "emotional involvement or a love" for the teaching profession or a particular aspects of the teaching profession (p.113). Teachers" commitment as passion is also made manifest when they place great value on the teaching profession or some aspect of it. Croswell (2006) conducted a study of teachers in Queensland, to explore the view of teacher on teacher commitment. From Crosswell study teachers who saw commitment as passion believed that a teacher who was committed to the profession should be someone who had love for his/her job and really enjoyed doing his/her work wells. As a result it important for teachers who are passionate about their job to have a certain degree of "positive emotional attachment to their job" (Elliot and Crosswell p.6) Another notion that Crosswell discusses that came under teacher"s commitment as passion was the idea that, the teachers interviewed stated that to be a passionate teacher one has to derive a great deal of satisfaction from the teaching profession or certain aspect of the profession. The next underlying notion presented in Croswell"s study was the assumption that, passion and or love was what motivated and sustained teachers in the teaching profession despite the difficulties they may encounter in their work.

2.9.2 Teacher Commitment as an Investment of Extra Time

In this category Crosswell (2006) discusses teacher commitment as investment of extra time of the teachers outside official contact hours designated hours for teaching activities. This category describes a committed teacher as not only getting involved with students during the "expected contact hours" but teachers who ascribe to this perspective believe that committed teachers should go the extra mile to invest their time when necessary outside working hour to perform their roles effectively as

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

teachers (Crosswell and Elliot p. 6 Crosswell 2006). Croswell's study identified two main categories of investment of time, they include "investment of time as visible time spent at school", and "investment of time as invisible time spent at home" (p.119).The teachers who had this perception of commitment believed that a committed teachers should put in a little bit more of their time and effort even after school to work with students and staff.

2.9.3 Teacher commitment as Focus on the Needs of Students

This perspective describes teacher commitment "as focus on the individual of the student" (Elliot and Crosswell 2004 p.6). In this perspective teacher commitment, is described as teachers having a sharp focused on the academic and emotional needs of students (Elliot and Crosswell, 2004). In the opinion of Crosswell (2006) "These teachers are concerned with emotional and academic progress of their charges" (p. 221). The teachers in Croswell's study who hold this perception to teacher commitment are of the opinion that a committed teacher should focus on and cater for the students who have been placed in their charge, by seeing to the varied needs of learners (academic and emotional needs). Crosswell (2006) cautions that in their commitment to the needs of students teachers may very well put the needs of the learners above theirs. Crosswell explains that such teachers may even invest "person resource" (time and money) in abide to help their students. Finally Crosswell (2006) states that such teacher are easily identified by "their approach and their sensitivity" to students (p.127).

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

2.9.4 Teacher to Student Commitment as Maintaining Professional Knowledge

This category depicts teacher commitment as the maintenances of professional knowledge and on-going professional learning (Elliot and Crosswell 2004). Crosswell adds that in this category committed teachers have to up-date their knowledge in their profession and subject areas. Teachers who ascribe to this conception of teaching commitment see professional development as part of their responsibility (Crosswell and Elliot 2004, Crosswell 2006). Apart from bettering themselves in, their profession and subject area teacher in this category "are willing to share with and learn from their colleagues" (Elliot and Crosswell 2004 p.7).

2.9.5 Teach Commitment as Transmitting Knowledge/Values

The next category Crosswell (2006) describes is teacher commitment as passing down certain values, knowledge, belief and attitudes to students. Teachers who ascribe to this dimension of teacher commitment take pride in facilitating the development of useful knowledge and skills in their students, not just for exams but to prepare them for the future (Crosswell 2006, Elliot and Crosswell 2004). Crosswell (2006) in her study divided this dimensions of teacher commitment into two main parts. They are "transmitting set knowledge or core skills" and "transmitting attitudes, values and beliefs". In the first type (transmitting of set knowledge or core skills) the teacher as part of their commitment have the mind-set that it is a major duty of theirs to impart into their student a set of knowledge and skills that are "specific" to the teachers subject area. Or in some cases it could be general knowledge and skills the teacher views as relevant. The second one has to do with transmitting attitudes, values and beliefs. The respondent in Croswell's study insists that committed teachers should not only pass on knowledge, but impart certain values, attitudes and beliefs to the

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

students. The teachers also mentions such values and beliefs should be that which a teacher regards as important or at least attitudes that would count in the future of their students.

2.9.6 Teacher Commitment as Engagement with School Community

This category as opined by Crosswell (2006), is viewed in the light of a teachers willingness to interact with the both the school the community and the wider community outside the school. The teachers who hold this notion of commitment believe a teacher should get involved with the professional environment by taking up responsibilities in not only the classroom but the school and the community in which the school exist (Crosswell, 2006). Another variance in the commitment of teachers in this category has to do with the continuance and stability of teachers. This means a committed teacher will be willing to stay in a particular school over a long period of time (Crosswell 2006). This is mainly because teachers in that category believe that continuance and stability is essential for the health and success of the school community. Crosswell (2006) adds that this view of teacher commitment was commonly expressed by part of his sample that lived in the rural areas.

2.10 Relationship between Stress and Commitment

On the issue of the relationship between stress and commitment some researchers have indicated a negative significant relationship between job stress and job commitment (Griffin, Hogan, Lambert Tucker-Gail and Baker, 2009; Khatibi, Asadi and Hamidi, 2009; Azizi, Noordin, Halimah, Jamaludin, and Ramali, 2012; Velampy, 2013,). This means that as the stress of workers “increase” their job commitment decreases. And as their job stress reduces their job commitment increase. (Khatibi et al. p. 276). On job stress and commitment specific to teacher Khatibi et al. (2009)

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

conducted a study of teachers in National Olympic and Paralympic Academy (NOPA) in this quantitative study 50 respondents were used for the study. The main aim of this quantitative study was to examine the relationship between job stress and organizational commitment among teachers in National Olympic and Paralympic Academy (NOPA). Job stress questionnaire (JSQ) and organizational commitment questionnaire were used to gather the data. The results of the study from Khatibi et al. (2009) revealed a significant negative relationship between job stress and organizational commitment. The results from Khatibi et al. (2009) therefore meant that as the employees' job stress increases, their commitment to organization decreases and vice versa.

Chapman (2013) conducted a cross- sectional quantitative study the purpose of Chapman‟s study was to examine the factor impacting on teacher stress. She therefore investigated the relationship between teacher career commitment and variance like self-efficacy teacher stress and job satisfaction. Chapman (2013) used the Fimain Teacher Stress Inventory, the teacher Self efficacy Scale and The Job Satisfaction survey to collect data from a sample population of 93 teachers. The analysis of data from Chapman study indicated that that individual teachers with high career commitment experience less stress. She stated this was because teachers who were less stressed were more satisfied with their jobs, hence their commitment. But on the other hand, a study by Jepson and Forest (2006) indicated that teachers with high job commitment experienced high levels of stress. In this study Jepson and Forest (2006) the snowball technique sampled from U.K. ninety-five (95) respondent from different schools from the nation. The aim of the study was to examine the impact of individual factors and organizational commitment on teacher‟s stress. Their study found a negative relationship between stress experienced by teachers and their organizational

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

commitment. They that discussed that as the stress of these teacher increase so did their commitment. Jepson and Forest stated this was because individual factors such as personality type moderated the impact of stress on the teachers. The literature on teacher stress and commitment are therefore contradictory they do not point to similar conclusions. It is therefore the aim of the researcher to understand the complex relationship between teacher stress and commitment in the Fanteakwa District. And the coping strategies employed by these teachers.

2.11 Conceptual Framework

The researcher has proposed a conceptual model of the relationship between teacher stress, coping and teacher commitment. The figure below was develop as a result of a thorough examination of literature and studies of the variables and concepts; teacher stress, coping and teacher commitment of this study. The researcher has not come across a model that takes into account all the variables of the study (teacher stress, coping and teacher commitment). This means that the researcher has to predict the relationship that will under line teacher stress to commitment.

From the diagram there are several stress factors that point to the stress experienced by teacher. studied by several authors have pointed to pupils lack of motivation, maintaining discipline, learner behaviour, workload and time pressure ,being evaluated by others, home-work interface, dealing with colleagues, lack of support from colleagues, self-esteem and status, poor salary of teachers, dealing with administration and management, role conflict and ambiguity, large class sizes, poor working conditions as a major source of stress for teachers Kyriacou (2001); Olivier and Venter (2003), Steyn and Kamper (2006); Khoza and Milner (2008); Harlow (2008), Alghaswyneh (2012); Ncube and Tshabalala (2013). These stress experience

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

of teachers are found in both quantitative and qualitative studies.

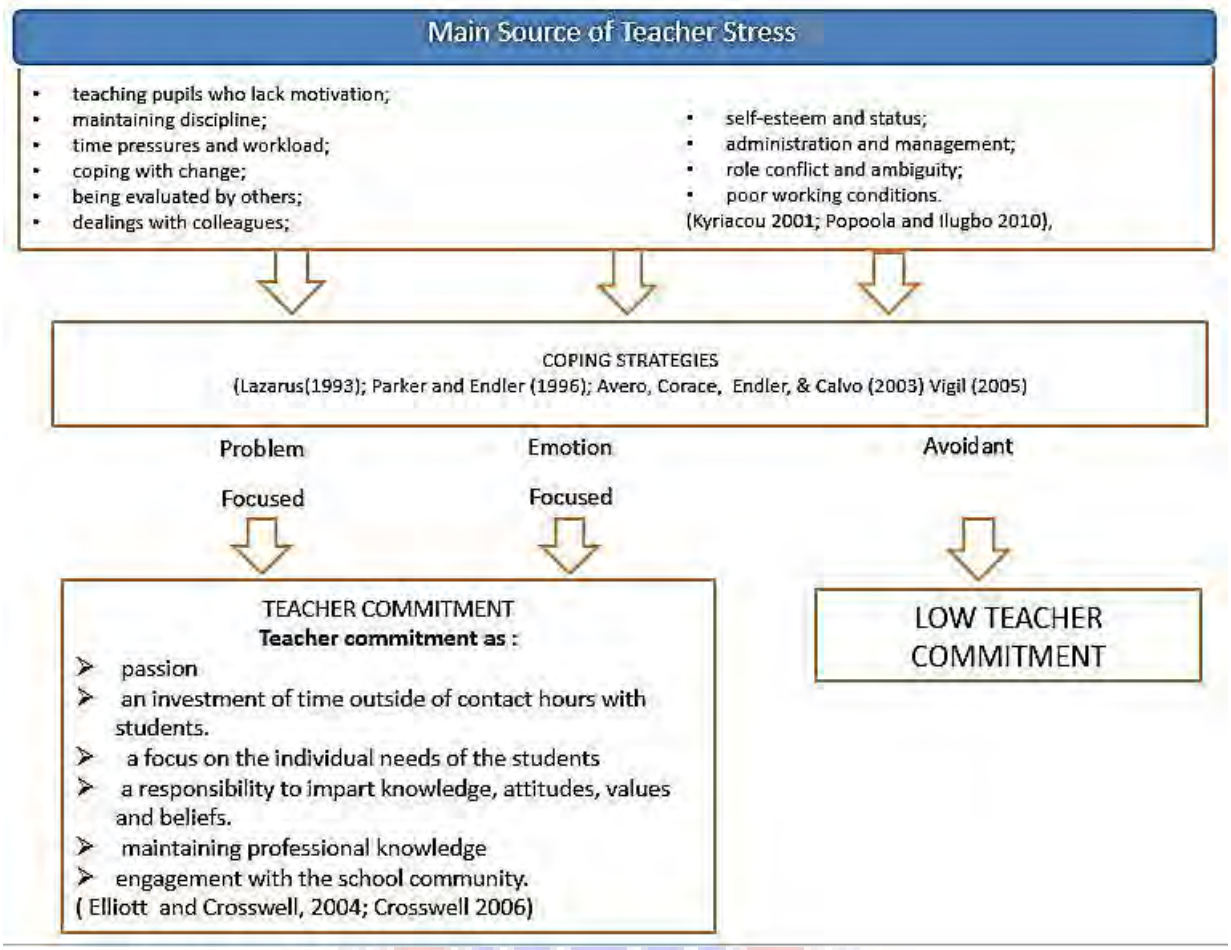
The study approach to examining the coping mechanisms employed by teachers was based on Lazarus and Folkman model of stress and coping that is the Transactional model of stress and coping by Lazarus and Folkman (1984). The Transactional model discussed that when an individual is confronted with a situation or event he/she goes through two main process of cognitive appraisal namely primary appraisal and secondary appraisal (Montgomery and Rupp 2005; Devonport and Lane, 2006). In the primary appraisal a situation or an event may either be viewed as non-threatening or stressful, this usually depends upon the particular situation at hand and the individual involved. If the situation is considered as stressful it moves to the next stage which is secondary appraisal. In the secondary appraisal the individual will assess personal and environment resources to assist him/her address the stressful situation (Montgomery and Rupp 2005 and Devonport and Lane 2006). Simple put "primary appraisal refers to the appraisal of the stressful character of the situation, whereas secondary appraisal refers to the evaluation of an individual's capacity to confront the situation" (Montgomery and Rupp 2005 p. 461). Through cognitive appraisal strategies both behavioural and cognitive are adopted to confront a situation that is considered stressful (Montgomery and Rupp, 2005; Devonport and Lane, 2006). These strategies as propounded by Lazarus and Folkman(1984) are problem-focused coping and emotion focused coping and more recently research has come out with a third coping strategy called avoidance coping by Endler and Parker (1999) (Lazarus, 1993; Montgomery and Rupp 2005; Devonport and Lane, 2006; Avero et al., 2003). From the figure below it was conceptualized that when teachers are faced with stressful event, ranging from student misbehaviour, to lack of support from the administration, heavy workload and family problems, the teacher may choose to deal with this stress

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

using either emotion-focused, problem- focused or avoidance style of coping. Problem-focused coping and emotion-focused coping are used to change stressful events and situation or control the emotions surrounding stressful events. And these coping strategies (problem-focused coping and emotion-focused) can be used by teachers to effectively deal with theirs stress and increases their commitment and passion towards their work (Montgomery and Rupp, 2005). The study conceptualizes that as a result of applying emotion focused, problem-focused and avoidance coping, a person may experience a great deal of varied emotional reactions "Coping affects subsequent stress reactions...." (Lazarus, 1993 p.8). These emotional reaction can either be positive or negative. From the figure below, positive coping mechanisms like problem-focused or emotion- focused coping, would lead to or translate into positive emotional feeling towards the teaching profession and sustain a teacher commitment. On the other hand when teachers pick what the researcher classifies as negative coping strategies (avoidance coping) it could in the long term lead to negative emotional feeling such as depression. Avoidance coping may work to reduce the teacher stress in the short term Endler and Parker (1999 cited in Avero et al., 2002). This means in the long term avoidance not help since avoiding ones problem, stressful events or not thinking about it on or even distancing oneself form a problem will not help solve it, but the stress usually accumulates. The model below conceptualizes that when teachers choose to distance themselves from situation or an aspect of their vocation that they appraise as stressful then the teacher has low commitment or lack commitment. Since research has shown that stress in a big part of a teachers career when teachers deal successful with their stress they are able to optimize a potential negative stress energy to give off their best. By optimizing their stress energy teachers are able to stay committed to their profession. In that they able

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

to effectively engage with the school environment, focus on the needs of the students,



Source: Authors construct

2.12 Gap in the literature

From the previous studies of teacher stress, commitment and coping, it was identified that there was a wide gap. As most of the studies conducted were foreign to the Ghanaian context, the literature found mostly was in the developed countries. It is therefore essential that more studies be conducted in the context of developing countries especially in African countries to validate and add to the findings of the existing studies. This is because even though stress was found in teachers of the developed world the factors causing teacher stress in Africa specifically Ghana might be different. This is dues to the general challenges facing the educational system of

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

third world countries like Ghana. Taal (1995) discovered that the teaching profession in third world countries were plagued with shortage of teaching materials, overloaded classrooms, insanitary, unsafe conditions and heavy workload (Arikewuyo 2004). Some of these challenges do not apply to the western world. The only study the researcher came across that is directly related to teacher stress and coping in Ghana was the work of Schroeder, Akotia, and Apekey, (2001) cited in (Arikewuyo 2004). In the African countries, South Africa has the lead on research on teacher stress with authors like Motseke (1998) Olivier and Venter (2003), Steyn and Kamper (2006), Khoza and Milner (2008).

Also most of the literature was based on quantitative studies. Majority of the studies on teacher commitment used quantitative methods, these researchers often rely on the theory of organizational commitment as propounded by Allen and Meyer (1990). And researcher like Jepson and Forest (2006), Chapman (2013) and Khatibi et al. (2009) seek to "quantify" teacher commitment other than to explore teacher commitment from the of view teacher point. Exploring teacher commitment using the qualitative methods would allow the researcher to understand and explain the complex underpinnings of teacher commitment.

2.13 Summary

Chapter looked at the theories underling stress and the various definitions to stress. The literature also looked at the different factor that were responsible for teacher stress experience. This chapter also examined teacher commitment and the relationship between teacher stress and commitment. The chapter concludes with the conceptual framework for the study.

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

Chapter two, the previous chapter, examined the literature relevant to the study. This chapter discusses the methodology used for the study. The chapter commences by discussing the research design adopted for the study and the justification for the choice of a qualitative research method. The chapter advances to discuss the case study as the appropriate approach for the research under study. The next section of the chapter puts the study in context by describing the setting and the population intended for the study. This chapter also discusses the sampling techniques used to draw out the sample from the population. Subsequently the chapter discusses the instrument used for the collection of data and the techniques employed in the analysis of data.

In the view of Creswell (2009), "Research designs are plans and the procedures for research that span the decision from broad assumptions to detailed methods of data collection and analysis" (p. 4). This means that a research design reveals the detailed plans and step-by-step process that a researcher adopts to collect and analyze data. Agyedu, Donkor and Obeng, (2011) refer to research design as "the overall plan employed by the researcher to obtain answers to the, research question" (p.16). Kothari (2004) is cited as saying that of that "a research design is the arrangement of conditions for collection and analysis of data in a manner that aims to combine relevance to the research purpose with economy in procedure" (p.31). The research design therefore serves as a guide to the collection, measuring and analysis phase of a research study.

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

3.2 Research Methods

There are several classifications of research methods but the most common one as propagated by Creswell (2009) are qualitative, quantitative and mixed methods. Creswell (2009) advises that the qualitative and quantitative research methods should not be viewed as opposing sides but rather that they represent diverse ends of a continuum. Mixed Methods would be situated in "the middle of this continuum" because it combines elements of both qualitative and quantitative research methods. The main difference underlining qualitative and quantitative research is that while qualitative research uses words and open ended questions, quantitative research uses numbers and closed–ended questions through hypotheses and questionnaires (Creswell, 2009).

3.2.1 Qualitative Research Method

In the words of Myer (1997), "Qualitative research methods are designed to help researchers understand people and the social contexts within which they live" (p. 241). Creswell (2009) adds that a qualitative research is a "means of exploring and understanding the meaning individuals or groups ascribe to a social or human problem" (p.4.). He further adds that in order to explore and better understand any social or human problem the qualitative researcher has to collect data from the participants environment, generate themes from the data collected and ascribe meaning to the data, this will help the researcher unravel the complexities of any given situation (Creswell, 2009). Merriam (2009) adds that qualitative research involves "understanding the meaning people have constructed, that is how people make sense of their world and the experience they have in the world."(p.13).This therefore points to the idea that people ascribe different meanings to different things and situations based on their culture, level of education and orientation. According to

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

Nkwi, Nyamongo and Rayan (2001) a "qualitative research involves any research that uses data that do not indicate ordinal values" (AbuMeteir, 2014, p.4). Simply put, in qualitative research the kind of data the researcher generates are largely in words and not numbers, it there involves working with "text, images or sounds" (AbuMeteir 2014 p.4).

3.2.2 Justification of a Qualitative Study

Meyer (1997) notes that the need for a qualitative research stems from the idea that "if there is one thing that distinguishes humans from the natural world, it is our ability to talk" (p.9). If participants are made to express themselves verbally, then the researcher can understand and give meaning to issues pertaining to the participants setting and context. Since the researcher wants to explore the perceptions teachers in the Fanteakwa District hold concerning their stress and commitment, the choice of a qualitative research method is very appropriate.

The next underlining reason for the choice of a qualitative study, is its ability to effectively describe complex situation and processes (AbuMeteir, 2014). Creswell (2009) states that qualitative research focuses on "individual meaning and the importance of rendering the complexity of a situation". As a result the researcher sought to get the respondents individual meaning on stress and commitment.

Qualitative research ensures a rigorous investigation into a concept, event or individual under study, this means a qualitative researcher leaves no stone unturned in their exploration of any given situation (AbuMeteir 2014). Exploration "entails investigating topics or issue among the study population that are investigator (rather than population) initiated". (AbuMeteir 2014 p. 24). The researcher wanted to understand the relationship between teacher stress and commitment hence the choice of a qualitative approach was most appropriate for the study.

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

3.2.3 Forms of Qualitative Research Methods

Several writers have pointed to different strategies or approaches to doing qualitative research (Creswell 2009; Merriam 200; Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill 2009; AbuMeteir 2014). Creswell (2009) points out five main types, they are ethnography grounded theory, case studies phenomenological research and narrative research. Merriam (2009), mentions six approaches namely, basic qualitative research, phenomenology, grounded theory, ethnography, narrative analysis and critical qualitative research. For this study the researcher adopted a case study.

3.2.4 Case study

Creswell (2009) opined, "Case studies are strategy of inquiry in which the researcher explores in depth a program, event, activity, process or one or more individuals" (p. 12). According to Merriam (2009), "A case study is a description and analysis of a bounded systems" (p. 40). The bounded system represents the case or the cases the researcher intends to explore. For instance it could be selecting a particular individual or program for an in depth study, in the case of this study five S.H.S teachers in the Fanteakwa District.

3.3 Study Setting

The setting of the study will be in the Fanteakwa District of the Eastern Region of Ghana. The Fanteakwa District was established in 1988 by Legislative Instrument 1411 with Begoro as its capital (District Composite Budget, 2012). The Fanteakwa District forms part of the twenty-six (26) municipalities and Districts in the Eastern Region of Ghana. The District has its administrative capital at Begoro. Fanteakwa lies within longitudes 0°32.5‟ West and 0°10‟ East and latitudes 6° 15‟ North and 6° 40‟ North. It is bounded to the North by the Volta Lake, to the North- West by the Kwahu-

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

South District, South- West by the East Akim Municipal, Lower Manya Krobo District to the East and to the South East by Yilo Krobo District (Fanteakwa District, 2006).

With Begoro as its District capital, it has an estimated population of 23,070 (18,200 in 1984) while the total District population stands at 103,711 (1997) and about 74934 (1984) and 86,154 in 2012 with a growth rate of 3.7 percent, according to the 2000 Population and Housing Census Report (Ghana Districts). "The Fanteakwa District is located exactly at the middle of the Eastern Region. With a total land area of 1150 sq.km, Fanteakwa District occupies 7.68% of the total land area within the Region (18310 sq.km) and constitutes 0.48% of the total land area in Ghana (Ghana Districts- A respository of all districts in the republic of Ghana, 2006)

There are 326 educational institutions scattered in the District, 79 pre-schools 110 primary schools, 54 Junior High, three(3) Senior High schools and one(1) Vocational Institution. Ownership of schools in the District is either public or private (Fanteakwa District 2006). In all, there are73 public, and 6 pre-schools, 103 public and 7 private primary schools, 53 J.H.S, one (1) private J.H.S, (three) 3 Public S.H.S one(1) vocational school in the District (Fanteakwa District, 2006). The District Composite Budget (2012) expressed school participation rate of the District is 53% compared to the national figure of 60% (Fanteakwa District, 2006).

3.4 Population

The population of the study is S.H.S. teachers in the Fanteakwa District; they are about 200 in number. Out of the three S.H.S in the District one was chosen for the study due to time constraints and the readiness of teachers in the chosen school to cooperate with the researcher.

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

3.5 Purposive Sampling

Creswell (2009) indicates, "The idea behind qualitative research is to purposefully select participants or site or documents or visual materials that will best help the researcher understand the problem and the research question" (p.178). It is therefore imperative for the researcher to choose a sample that will assist the researcher answer the research questions in study. Mays and Pope (1995) relate that qualitative researchers are more likely to choose non- probabilistic sampling methods as their interests lie in understanding social processes not achieving statically representativeness. Mays and Pope (1995) mentions that non-random sampling, i.e. purposive sampling, helps the researcher focus out the particular area under study. Bowling (2002) posit that purposive sampling is a non-random method of selecting participants mainly because they hold knowledge relevant to the study.

For the current study, the researcher, through purposive sampling, selected five teachers who had extra-curricular responsibilities and those who had taught more than a year for the study. The aim was to ensure that the researcher used teachers who were experienced and actively involved with their responsibilities in and out of school. Targgrat (2007) states that in purposive sampling only cases with specific characteristics are chosen. The characteristics can make for a range in the population or it can be a feature that is peculiar. This also informed the researcher decision to pick the five teachers for the present study.

3.6 Data collection Instruments

According to Creswell**,** Hanson, Clark and Morales (2007) "A case study research is a qualitative approach in which the investigator explores a bounded system (cases) over time…" (p. 245). They append that when conducting a case study a researcher has to derive information from different sources "through detailed in-depth data collection"

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

(Creswell et al., 2007. p 245). These sources Creswell et al. (2007) informs that it includes "observation, interviews, audio-visual material, and documents and reports", they emphasis that the account of a case study ought to be descriptive based on the themes derived from the study (p.245)

Creswell (2009) described qualitative researchers as a key instrument in collecting data. He specifies they have to collect data through observing participants" behavior, examining documents or interviewing participants and suggests the researcher should do well to accomplish this by themselves. Qualitative researchers therefore have to gather various forms of data from interviews, observations, and documents than rely on one data source (Creswell 2009). Since "cases" found in a case study are time and activity bound, the researcher, therefore, needs to collects data using different forms of data collection instruments over a given time frame (Creswell, 2009 p. 12). For this study the researcher used interviews, observations and documents to collect data. The interviews became the major source for data collection and the observation and documents were used to support data from the interviews.

Patton (2002) in Merriam (2009) reflects that qualitative data consists of "direct quotation from people about their experiences, opinions, feelings and knowledge" (p. 85). This "knowledge" Merriam (2009) rehashes is derived from interviews; that is what people say about themselves, an event or concepts, or through observations; "detailed description of peoples activities, actions and behaviors" and from "excerpts, quotations or entire passages" obtained from documents (p. 85). In this study, the researcher collected data through interviews, observations and documents. Data collection in sum involves "asking, watching and reviewing" events and situations that a researcher intends to investigate (Meriam, 2009 p.85).

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

3.6.1 Interviews

DeMarrais (2004) define interviews as "a process in which a researcher and participant engage in a conversation focused on questions related to the study" (p. 55). An interview seems to connote the process in which the researcher interacts with his/her respondents on the main themes or questions associated with his/her study. Saunders et al. (2009) classifies interviews into structured, semi structured and unstructured interviews, based on their formality and structure. Structured interviews are formal with a rigid set of question, semi-structured less formal question based on themes of a study, and unstructured interviews are informal and spontaneous. Based on the assumption that the individual or respondents define the world differently and in a unique way" (Meriam, 2009 p. 90), the study made use of semi- structured interviews that is more flexible and allows the researcher to ask question with the context of the respondents in mind. In semi-structured interviews the researcher has a list of themes and questions to cover (Saunders et al. 2009) and since it was the intention of the researcher to explore the concept of stress, commitment and it underlining relationship the semi-structured interview was appropriate for this task. The researcher conducted a face-to-face interview with the respondents. Each interview lasted for between 35 to 50 minutes. Before the day of the interview, the researcher asked permission from the school administration and the teachers. The researcher also explained what the study was about and the purpose of the study. The researcher told the respondents, the study was not compulsory and that they could back out at any time. The researcher also informed the respondents of how she was going to protect their identity by using pseudonyms instead. With the permission of the respondents the researcher recorded the interviews while taking notes in a book. The researcher referred to these notes to ask questions that were not highlighted in the

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

interview guide. The interviews mostly took place on the premises of the school. Except when the respondents were observed at home or in church and had to be asked question on things the researcher observed. Questions were asked on the activities the respondent engaged in, in and out of school that they considered stressful. They were also asked about the coping strategies they adopted. And what their opinion on teacher commitment was. And what they did that point to their stress as teachers. The interview guide is located in the appendix.

3.6.2 Observations

Creswell (2009) posits that, "Qualitative observations are field notes on the behavior and activities of individuals at the research site" (p.122). This means that the researcher, as part of conducting observations, records or writes down all activities at the study location or setting that are relevant to the study. In the opinion of Saunders et al. (2009), observation techniques involve the systematic observation, recording, description, analysis and interpretation of people's behavior. This means that observation connotes the orderly taking down notes on the behavior of cases that also reflect the thoughts, analysis and rendering of the researcher. Even though observations can be the main technique for collecting data it can also play a supplementary role, (Foundation of Qualitative Research , 2008). For this study, observation was used to supplement data gathered from interviews. According to Bogdan and Biklen (2007) observations can be very useful in documenting the body language of participants and contextual data in a study whose data is predominately interviews. In this the researcher observed the teachers before they were interviewed for the first time. That is after permission was sought from the school administration and the teachers themselves.

The second time was after the interview; the researcher went back to seek

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

clarifications on some of the answers the teachers gave. The researcher observed them while they taught in class. And had the privilege to go and visit the teachers in their homes, in the dormitory for teacher who were house parents, and the homes of the teacher who were not house parents. For one respondent whose house could not be accessed, he was observed at church because he happened to be an elder of a church. The researcher basically followed the respondent around to observe and record in her journal the things the respondents did, that spoke of their commitment and stress. Especially the once they did not speak about during the interview.

3.6.3 Document

Creswell (2009) submits that documents collected by a qualitative researcher may either be public or private. The public documents include: newspapers, minutes of meetings and official reports. The private document may include: personal journals, dairies letters and emails (Creswell 2009). For this study document were used because they provided written evidence for the researcher. In most of the visits of the researcher to the respondents, they were informed by phone conversation when the researcher would be present, except for the last visit. So the document that were reviewed were the teachers‟ attendance book and teachers‟ class attendance book. The attendance book monitors the presence of teachers in the school. These books were closely monitored by the assistant head master of academics and form masters and it was kept in the assistance headmaster‟s office as well. This helped the researcher monitor the presence of teacher in the school to perform their duties they spoke so passionately about. The researcher looked at how many days the respondents were absent from school. And how many days the respondents missed. This is because the researcher was of the opinion that no matter how committed a teacher seem to be it does not count when s/he is not present in school or in class. The researcher was of

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

the opinion that a committed teacher should at least be regular at school. The researcher took the classes the respondent taught went through the attendance books allocated to these teachers one after the other and ticked it down in a table whenever a teacher was absent from a class.

3.7 Ethical Consideration

Creswell (2009) discusses many factors that need to be taken into consideration when it comes to ethics in research. One issue Creswell warns researchers to look out for is confidentiality. By this, a researcher must protect the identities of their respondents. Therefore for this study the researcher made use of pseudonyms, and made sure not to include the real names of the participants nor any identifying characteristics. The researcher explained this to the participant and made them aware that apart from their real names not being mention, the name of their school was also left out as well.

More so, Creswell (2009) advised researchers to make it a point to "gaining agreement from individuals in authority" (p. 90). For this study, a letter obtained from the Department of Social Studies Education from the University of Education, Winneba, was given to the administration of the school used for the study. The researcher summited the letter personally. And with the consent of the head teacher, the researcher scheduled interview dates with the respondents. Creswell (2009) also asks researcher to respect the sites and participant of their study. With that in mind, the researcher planned her visits in a way that would not interfere in the activities of the respondents or became an unwanted nuisance.

3.8 Data Analysis

Green, Willis, Hughes, Small, Welch, Gibbs and Daly (2007), submit that data analysis entails "systematically" making meaning out of a "database" by going back

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

and forth with "immersion, coding, categorizing, and creation of themes" (p. 545). Data analysis is therefore the "process of examining the information collected and transforming it into a coherent account of what was found" (Green et al., 2007 p. 545). It means that data analysis involves, the step by step procedure which stipulates how the findings and conclusions of a researcher work was arrived at. Green et al.(2007) suggest four steps a researcher could following in the process of data analysis they are immersion in data, coding, creating categories and finally identifying themes.

Immersion according to Green et al. (2007) requires complete absorption in the data. Also, it involves continuous reading of the "interview scripts, contextual data and listing to recordings of the interviews" (Green et al 2007 p. 547). With this in mind, the researcher conducted the interviews herself. Thus, the researcher was able to give a detailed account of the respondents" body gestures, their confidence, their hesitations and the tone with which they answer questions. Their gestures were observed and recorded alongside the interviews. The researcher transcribed the recorded interviews verbatim in the language of the interviewees; English language their official language at work. The researcher listened to and read the interviews several times.

The next step in the data analysis was coding. This process involves assigning codes to the interview or observation transcripts the researcher had. "Codes are descriptive labels that are applied to segments of the transcripts" (Green et al., 2007, p.546). Coding is the procedure of examining and organizing the data from interviews alone with the whole dataset obtained by the researcher (Green et al., 2007). Green et al. (2007) explains that coding is the process of sorting and associating tags to phrases,

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

sentences and or paragraphs. The researcher for the current study began the process of coding by assigning codes to data, trying to understand what the participants are saying or get across in the interview transcripts. Some of the codes came from the literature the researcher had reviewed and others were generated from the transcripts of the interview.

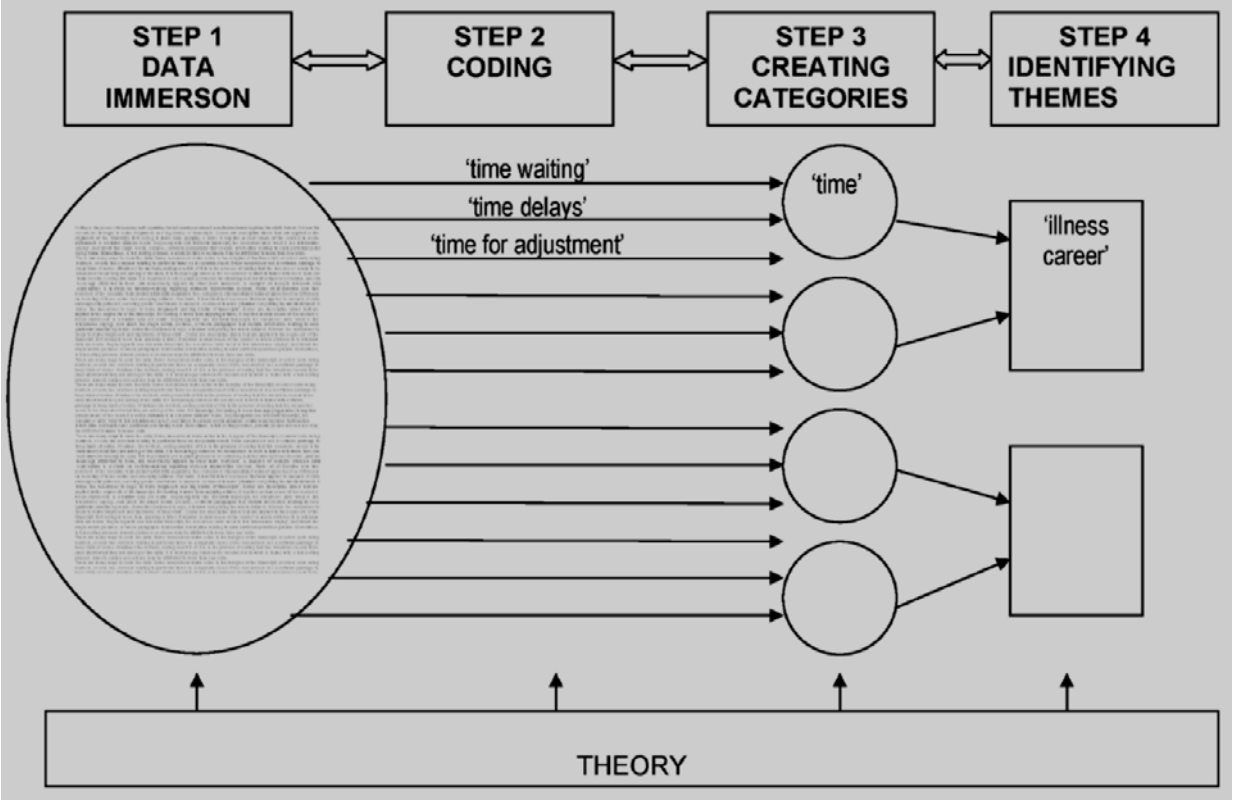
The researcher placed the interview transcripts in a table and applied letter code to segments of the transcripts. Examples of codes were os-outside social; ow – outside work, p-passion, e-extra, es – escape, r- relaxing. After that the researcher used colors to code specific paragraphs sentences or phrase that caught the researcher attention. For example red was for stress; yellow was for commitment and blue was for coping. As the researcher had much information about the topic under study, the researcher added some few codes, and each code was defined. The creation of code for the interview transcript lead me to the next process.

The next step as suggested by Green et al. (2007) adopted in this study was the creation of categories. For this study the researcher linked codes that had being generated to form coherent categories. For instance os-outside social; ow – outside work were discussed and link together under stress, p-passion; e-extra codes were discussed under commitment and es – escape; r- relaxing codes were discussed under coping.

The final step in the analysis process for the current study was the identification of themes (Green et al., 2007). This stage went beyond simply explaining the categories or the issues that the researcher is investigating into (Green et al 2007). The current study explained the data with the conceptual framework and literature that were relevant to the study. So for instance the researcher discussed the theme of

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

commitment with stress, commitment without stress and coping as a buffer to stress.



Source: (Green et al. 2007, Fig. 1)

3.9 Trustworthiness

This section explains how the researcher ensure that the finding of the study were authentic and trustworthy. Merriam (2009) explains that in qualitative research concepts like "credibility, transferability dependability, and confirmability, substitutes for internal validity, reliability, and objectivity in quantitative research.

3.9.1 Credibility

Credibility, which Merriam (2009) states was first propounded by Lincoln and Guba (1985), reflects how "credible" the findings of a study are given the "data presented" (p.213). Merriam (2009) advises that triangulation by the use of multiple methods of data collection and multiple sources of data can help increase the credibility of a qualitative study. So for this study the researcher, as suggested by Merriam (2009), compared and made a point to cross check data collected from interviews,

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

observations and documents before the researcher came out with the final interpretation of the findings of the study. The researcher had to also return to ask follow-up questions regarding some of the answers the respondents gave. This gave the researcher a more elaborate explanation of the concept under study in the context of the respondents.

Another strategy Merriam (2009) suggests qualitative researchers use to ensure credibility has to do with what Merriam call "respondent validation". Merriam (2009) indicates that as part of respondent validation the researcher has to go back to participants and verify from them whether the interpretation they gave of the data taken from them "ring true" or it is exactly what they meant. Maxwell (2005) stated that this will help the researcher avoid misinterpretation of the data and has the added benefit of assisting the researcher avoid any biases. In this study the researcher briefly explained to each participants the interpretation given to the data the researcher collected from them. Much to the researcher relief, not many corrections were made to the interpretations of the study by respondents. For instance because Sally stated that she had 16 periods at the time of the interview, the researcher assumed she even worked under the standard periods for Ghana Education Service (G.E.S). But Sally said she state 16 periods because the first year students were not in yet. But on the second visit the first year students were in and she estimated her periods to be between 28 to 30 periods in a week. Meaning she taught close to 29 hours a week not the 15 hours per week I had documented.

Merriam (2009) also postulates that "adequate engagement with data collection" helps to further advance the course of credibility in a qualitative study (p.219). This she explains involves spending enough time collecting your data. The researcher with this in mind collected the data herself, transcribed the data verbatim in the language of the

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

respondents; in the English language their professional language. To the advantage of the researcher, the respondents were all teachers with at least a bachelor‟s degree and they could communicate fluently in the English Language. The researcher also paid several calculated visits to the setting to observe and sometimes interact with the participants.

During the data analysis stage the researcher made it a point to find variance or things (statements, events, and implications) that run contrary to the norm in the interpretation of the data as advised by Merriam (2009). Taking a critical look at the findings of the study, the researcher made mention of themes and individual perspective that were contrary to the major findings. In this study the researcher was privilege to come across a respondent; Shaun who believed he was not stressed out and could not be stressed out. Whereas research and has established the idea that stress is an integrate part of human existence, and no one can hide from it except, of course, if the person is dead (Mathieu and Ivanoff, 2006; Steyn and Kamper, 2008, Esia-Donkoh, 2014). Shaun‟s opinion runs contrary to research and could be considered a variance which the researcher factored into the study. Patton (2002; in Merriam, 2009) affirms that “looking for data that support alternative explanations” and finding strong evidence to that data increases confidence in the finding of the study (p. 219). Purposefully seeking out variance as expressed by Merriam (2009) challenges the researcher do away with biases and assists in stamping the credibility of the study.

3.9.2 Dependability

More so, the issue of dependability or consistency of the research study also comes into play when conducting a qualitative study. Dependability refers to the extent at which the results of a research study are consistent with data collected (Merriam

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

2009). When looking at the dependability of a qualitative research Lincoln and Guba (1985) postulates the most important question for the researcher to answer or look into is "whether the results are consistent with the data collected" (Merriam, 2009, p. 221). Therefore this means that, in order to arrive at a stage where a study can be labeled as dependable, the findings presented by the researcher must be in line with the data brought forward. Apart from data triangulation suggested by Merriam (2009) which the researcher ensured by collecting data using multiple data collection instruments; specifically, interviews, observations and documents. Merriam (2009) adds that researchers should use what she calls an "audit trail" to help attain dependability of results. She posits that the audit trail in a qualitative research involves describing in "… detail how data were collected, how categories were derived and how decisions were made throughout the inquiry" (p. 223). To ensure dependability, the researcher gave detail information as to how the study was conducted in this chapter of the study. The researcher indicated all the process she went through, in the write up. The researcher showed her adviser her data and how she generated the codes for the interpretation of the findings of the study in the chapter four to nine of her study.

3.9.3 Transferability

Transferability points to the extent at which the findings of a study can apply to a similar situations (Guba and Lincoln 1985, in Merriam 2009). Merriam (2009) maintains that, to ensure transferability in a qualitative study, she advises the qualitative researcher to make use of "rich thick description" in reporting the study (p. 227). Thick description in qualitative study involve giving elaborate details and painting a clear picture of the processes that lead to the findings of the study. Rich thick descriptions aid in transferability of a study, and it is found in the researcher's

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

ability to give detailed description of the setting and participants (Merriam, 2009). In the end, the readers of the study are the ones who may decide whether or not the context of the study is similar to theirs. The use of thick descriptions would help the readers of the study assess the similarity between their setting or context and that of the study (Merriam 2009). To ensure transferability in the current study, the researcher reported into elaborate detail, the description of the setting of the study in the methodology section. The researcher also gave a detailed description of each of the individual respondents of the case study when presenting the findings of the study in the chapter four (4) to eight (8) of the current study. The study gave an elaborate all-encompassing presentation of the findings on the study and provided direct quotations from the interviews, observations made by the researcher and document examined as evidence to support the interpretation of the finding.

3.9.4 Confirmability

Confirmability is often used in place of the term objectivity in qualitative research (Whitehead, 2001). Qualitative researchers, refer to conformability in a qualitative study as the ability of other researchers to reach similar conclusions given the same data (Whitehead, 2001). Meaning the data collected by a researcher should reflect similar interpretations when another person analyses the data. In the view of Lincoln and Guba (1985) the conformability translates into the "degree with which the method and data were shown to reflect and further the researcher's self-interest or the researcher's bias" (Whitehead, 2001 p.113). For the present study, the researcher explains the theoretical orientation the researcher subscribes to in the methodology section of the study. The researcher also states her "biases" by stating her use of qualitative research method over quantitative research method. The researcher explains this into detail in methodology section. By stating the choice of the

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

qualitative method (case study) the decisions of the researcher would be understood from her view point and considered justifiable. Also by leaving enough records of data in this study, the researcher‟s logic in the argument of findings and can be followed and understood (Taggart, 2007; Whitehead, 2001)

3. 10 Summary

The chapter explained the methodology that underpins the study. This chapter also outlined the research methods that aided in addressing the research questions. The chapter discussed the choice of a qualitative study and justified the choice of a case study. This was followed by a discussion on the data collection techniques and data analysis employed for the study. The chapter ends with a discussion on the trustworthiness of the study.

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

CHAPTER FOUR

ETHAN: THE CASE OF HIGH STANDARDS

4.1 Introduction

The findings of the study are divided into five parts or chapters. Each part will talk about one respondent. In this chapter, I show how Ethan represents his stress and commitment as an effort to meet high standards. I show how for Ethan stress and commitment are interwoven. First, I describe Ethan, then explain the aspect of his profession that he was committed to that did not cause him stress. I proceed to describe aspects of his job that led to his stress with commitment. Moving on, I explain the coping strategies Ethan adopted to deal with his stress. The final section in this chapter discusses Ethan‟s stress, commitment and coping.

In the following chapters I discuss the cases of Tracy, Dan, Shaun, and Sally.

4.2 Description of Ethan

Ethan had taught in his school for four years. He came in as a national service person four years ago and was recruited to teach history and social studies. Ethan was tall, very dark and a bit on the chubby side. He also spotted a beard. He was 28 years old, not married and an elder in his church. He was very idealistic, and he was not shy about it; actually he was very vocal about it. He had firm beliefs in good morals and the need for students to live a morally upright life. He also expressed his need to be morally upright and to be disciplined in all spheres of his life.

Ethan said what motivated him to be a teacher was his desire to be a voice for the youth and to be someone who was worthy of emulation. He was very confident, eloquent and assertive. He was always seen smiling, and he dressed smartly, he was well spoken and very polite. Ethan was often seen in the staff common room at the

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

same table. He was often seen there writing something, typically lesson notes or marking student‟s scripts. When he was not in class or engaged with his students, he was usually there. As a reason why he chose the teaching profession, he said, “I was looking at being a voice for the young generation and also being a role model. I am looking at it in terms of morality.”

4.3 Commitment without Stress

4.3.1 Passion

Ethan demonstrated his commitment in terms of passion. He developed a deep emotional attachment towards his job and his students. Seeing students improve was his passion. He stated, “It is my passion. I just want to see our children move on to the next level. I just want to have a meaningful impact in their lives.” Caring for students was not a part of his stress. “Checking on the moral lives of student to some extent. I don‟t feel tired when I am doing that one.”

4.3.2 Professional development

As part of Ethan‟s commitment to professional development as a teacher, he said he was proactive in keeping himself up to date with current relevant knowledge from his subject area. Ethan stated that he conducted a wide range of research on the subject areas he taught. Ethan indicated that he went to teachers he thought were more experienced than he was for help sometimes because was not a professional teacher.

> “I look at the various researches I have to do to teach my students, I‟m always fishing out for information.” Ethan stated for instance that “They (colleague teacher) do help, since am not a

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

> professional teacher there are some techniques that I lack so I do consult them on ways of handling my class."

4.3.3 Role model

In Ethan‟s commitment to live up to high moral standards, Ethan stated that, he was determined be a good role model for his students by living a "morally upright life". He revealed that, his convictions were that

> "Over the years it seem the people who are telling the students to be more up right happen to elderly so the youth do not see any collation between them because they think they have already lived their lives, so there is no need, but if they should see some one young, up and coming telling them the essence of morality I think the message turns to go more. And I‟m very passionate about it".

Ethan was not only so willing to talk to students about morals all the time, he was willing to be a mentor and a role model.

4.3.4 Being There for Other teachers

Ethan showed his commitment when he stated that he went to the classroom to help out students and to stand in for teachers when there was no teacher in the class.

> "Whenever a teacher is not around I have to move to the class and go and help out there and they would do the same for me."

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

4.4 Stress with Commitment

4.4.1 Definition of stress

All of Ethan's commitment was not stress-free. Stress did play a role in his daily life. Ethan defined stress as "being tired or being under pressure to perform and also when you evaluate your input to your output and it does not tally." In this definition, stress seemed to point his pressure to maintain a high standard. He described the feeling of strain or frustration when he is faced with a situation where his hard efforts do not yield expected results. The first part of his definition pointed to stress as response to stimulus; where he communicated what he felt to indicate he was stressed. And the second part referred to stress as being a stimulus where he talks about the pressure he felt when trying to attain his goals. In the following subsections, I will describe the various stress experience of Ethan and the stress that comes with it.

4.4.2 Too Many Periods

In maintaining high academic standards in his students, Ethan showed his commitment transmitting knowledge to his students he therefore had to stand and teach for several hours a week. Ethan complained he taught 25 periods in a week which amounted to about 19 hours of teaching in a week. "I would say number one standing for real long hours on your feet 25 periods a week, and each period is 45mins." Ethan assumed that standing in the class for several hours has contributed to his ill health, as he stated he was having back pains for standing for so many hours a week. "And it has its own toll on my health especially my back". He pointedly said "the most stressful activity has to do with the standing and talking for several hours."

4.4.3 Indiscipline in the School

Ethan was compelled due to his determination to ensure high disciplinary standards in

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

the school to enforce discipline at all times. Ethan mentioned students misbehaved in loitering aimlessly about on the school compound when they are supposed to be in class.

> "Normally there is time for everything, at times it is very surprising when students have to be told to go to their classroom. I took it upon myself to go round and sack students into the classroom. They will wait and see me before they start running. The rate at which students go out to the ladies or gents is a bit alarming".

The researcher on a second visit to the school saw Ethan carrying a cane chasing the students from the school canteen to their classroom while other teachers looked on. Ethan elaborated that after school he went back to the school for prep supervision. In this Ethan in collaboration with other teachers made sure that students were not disturbing or idling about during prep. Again by ensuring that the school environment looked put together and disciplined it pointed Ethan's, commitment the school environment.

4.4.4 Students Immorality

Another factor that stressed Ethan had to do with what he described as "student's active involvement in immorality". What Ethan considered as the immoral attitudes of the students seemed to leave him disappointed because of the high moral standards he has set for himself and expects of his student. He described immorality as students being in unhealthy relationships. "The other thing has to do with students' active involvement in immorality, as it takes place during prep or after prep, at times when I come for prep supervision you see something like that going on, and after prep their

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

unwillingness to go back to the dormitory and sleep". Over here Ethan talks about been stressed out due to the low morals of his student. Ethan"s effort to correct the students and make time for them highlighted his commitment spending time outside official contact hours with his students. "I pay particular attention to their academic and moral life; the need to live a morally upright life."

4.4.5 Lack of attention and motivation

Ethan in his desire to transmit useful knowledge to his students, was confronted with inattentive and unmotivated students. During lessons, the student"s lack of attention and lack of motivation to study stressed Ethan. "At times after teaching believing that they (the students) might have learnt something, but you ask questions and they cannot answer." This was particularly true for Ethan because of the high standards he expects of his students in their academic lives. This behaviour of his students he said made him feel as if the effort he puts into facilitating students learning were yielding no results.

4.4.6 Weak students

Ethan also pointed out that the calibre of students they have in their school was a big problem and really stressed him out. He stated, "I will also say the materials or the sort of students we have is another issue. It might surprise you to know that there are students here who cannot spell their names without making a mistake". The difficulty for Ethan was the students had low academic standard, instead of building on the knowledge the students already have he had to go back and teach students word and sentence constructions. Ethan also expressed that due to the ability levels of his students he had to "…repeat yourself over again, at the end of the term you will realize that work done is virtual small not enough to test them about" He expressed how very tedious it was to teach these student to meet high academic standards for

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

WACE. Ethan‟s efforts in helping weak students acquire knowledge pointed to his commitment as transmitting knowledge to his students.

4.4.7 Intruders

In order to maintain a conducive learning atmosphere in the school Ethan taught it was necessary to rid the school environment of strangers. Also Ethan expressed his frustrating over “The rate at which outsiders‟ troop into our school is one, the gate men have to see to it but they don‟t so the teachers have to take it up.” It appears Ethan had to take up sacking of intruders, as part of his commitment to the school environment and maintaining high standards in the school.

4.4.8 Poor infrastructure

Ethan also talked about the poor infrastructure in the school. Ethan enumerated that, “The infrastructure sometime when it is raining you can‟t teach because the classrooms leaks and it really becomes a problem.” A close inspection of the school buildings revealed they were built halfway with a roof on it. Therefore in a bid to transmit relevant knowledge to his students, Ethan was faced with poor conditions of service. This poor condition of service in the form of poor infrastructure stressed Ethan out since it did not fit into the high standards in educational infrastructure.

4.4.9 Personality

Ethan‟s personality spoke of an individual who was achievement driven and expects high standards in all his endeavour. When he was unable to see these high standard or get the best out of his endeavours he experiences stress. Ethan appeared to exhibit traits of a Type A personality, his stress fundamental stems from the idea that “…there are certain things I expect from the various endeavours that I engage myself in and if maybe I don‟t get the maximum results I get stress up”.

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

4.5 Coping Strategies

Ethan coped with his stress in three major ways, that is: escape, therapy, and preparation. I will discuss each of these strategies for Ethan.

4.5.1 Escape

One of the coping mechanism Ethan employed was taking a day off to relax and be by himself. Or rest a bit after class. It seemed that in here Ethan employs relaxation and solitude to keep him balanced.

> "I have a day off within the course of the week so I have a day off so with that I keep to myself and relax. Thursdays, I have only two periods, but on Wednesdays I am completely free."

4.5.2 Therapy

At other times, he stated he attended prayer sessions to help him deal with stress. In this it seemed that communicating to a higher God and knowing He would give Ethan the strength needed for each day appear to put him at ease.

> "I can go and visit or read. And we have prayer sessions which I sometimes attend."

He also talked about water therapy, where he believed taking in much water would help his body keep clam. "… when I am stressed I drink a lot of water and relax".

4.5.3 Preparation

The final coping strategy Ethan said he employed was planning his activities ahead of time. He said that in church he coped with his stress by delegating some of the responsibilities to certain groups in the church through strategic planning.

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

> "Apart from that there are other ministries in the church that has being entrusted in my care. The evangelism ministry and the youth ministry. We have devised a beautiful course of action so to every week we have a particular ministry that might be on the move in terms of a particular activity that will be held then we will go in to help."

4.6 Discussion of Ethan's Stress, Commitment and Coping Strategies

Ethan"s stress basically stemmed from his desire and effort to see high standards in all aspects of his social and moral life and that of his students.

It ensuring high standards in the students and the school environment Ethan was committed to certain aspect of teaching that increased his stress. This established that Ethan"s commitment was interwoven with his stress.

Moreover, it seem most of the activities that Ethan was committed to, that caused him to experience stress were self-imposed. For instance his stress coming from student"s low morals, indiscipline of students, concern for student"s academic lives and stress from checking on intruders were all self-imposed. And because most of these stressful activities were self-imposed Ethan could escape from them for a while.

The coping strategies Ethan employed to deal with his stress had both element of positive and negative coping. The positive element were problem focused and emotion focused coping. The problem focused strategy Ethan adopted was planning his activity well which helped him stay on top of stressful situations. The emotion focused strategy he adopt was therapy to regulate the emotions associated with his

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

stress. And the negative element in Ethan coping was avoidance, where he choose to escape by taking a day off to it in a way helped him free his mind of any stressful experiences.

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

CHAPTER FIVE

TRACY: THE CASE OF BEING STUCK

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter also, I focus on another case. Here, I will show how Tracy represents her stress as being stuck in situations that are stressful, but she cannot get out. I present how Tracy's stress and commitment goes hand in hand. I first begin by describing Tracy, in the next section of the chapter, I present aspects of Tracy's commitment that does not come with stress. I will follow that up with Tracy's stress experience that comes with her commitment. The next section shows the coping strategies Tracy adopted in dealing with her stress, I then discuss Tracy's stress commitment and coping strategies.

5.2 Description of Tracy

Tracy was a 34 year old lady with three kids, had an MEd in education and had a strong belief in the law of Nemesis – that whatever you do will reflect back at you some day. Tracy was a house mistress and very jovial; she seemed to enjoy the company of other teachers; she loved to chat with her staff members. She was usually seen under the teacher's summer hut chatting heartedly. She had hopes of going to do a Master of Philosophy in English Language to make her more versatile. Her impetus to be a teacher came from a teacher who was her role model when she was in primary four. She seemed very proud of the teaching profession and the fact that she was a teacher. She stated that her love for the teaching profession was grounded in the assumption that just like someone taught her, she would teach others.

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

5.3 Commitment without Stress

5.3.1 Passion

Tracy's commitment as passion and love for the teaching profession was made manifest when she spoke of the positive emotions she felt towards her job and her love for the job. In her candid opinion, Tracy thought the teaching profession was a noble profession and she was passionate about it. "Yes I have the passion for it. Just like someone taught me I will also teach someone".

She further expressed her profound love for teaching when as she stated that,

> "Because I love the subject, it is all about the Bible, it helps me to know more about scripture, Christian living and other things so apart from teaching the students to write their examination it also me in my spiritual life."

5.3.2 Transmitting Knowledge

Tracy admitted not feeling tired when imparting knowledge to her students; that is by actively delivering lessons she felt no stress. This seemed to say that her commitment to transferring knowledge to her student yielded no stress at all she seemed to say. "Even though we are preparing them for exams we are also preparing them for life".

5.3.3 Professional Development

On the subject of commitment to professional knowledge, Tracy articulated that she wanted to go for her M.Phil. in English Language. She also made it clear that in sharing what she knows with her colleagues, reading, and researching on the topics she intended to teach her students she was stress free. "We have been allocated the various classes, but we coordinate in terms of syllabus, right now WAEC has brought

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

a new syllabus and GES has also brought one. Even though we are preparing them for exams we are also preparing them for life." Be sure to get rid of all the highlights.

5.3.4 Prestige

Tracy submitted another dimension of her commitment was born out of prestige that came with the teaching profession. Tracy said teachers were admired by the town folk. And especially since Tracy was a woman. Tracy said she felt proud when people who were once students of hers mentions her name or their school for their hard work and commitment when they make it in future. "People just admire you. It is in future when you see that students that you have taught and how the person introduces him or herself to society and talks about the place he/ she schooled, some even go to the extent of mentioning the names of teachers who helped them in school."

5.4 Stress with Commitment

5.4.1 Definition of Stress

Tracy defined stress as "a situation where you find yourself to be over working and you feel it". Her definition seemed to tilt to the interactionist perspective. Where stress is believed to be situation bound, by emphasizing on "you" she presents stress as situation bound. Where a situation is stressful when "you" perceive it to be so meaning that individuals react to stress differently. In this definition, stress seemed to point to Tracy feeling stressed because she was stuck in a situation that she could not get out. In the following subsections, I will describe the various stress experiences of Tracy and the stress that came with it.

5.4.2 Combining Work with Motherhood

Combining her responsibilities as a mother to a new born baby, her duties as a house mistress and that of a class teacher was very stressful for Tracy. When Tracy went to

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

class she stated that she left her baby with a lady who worked at the school cafeteria. Tracy created the impression that her concentration was divided between the class and her child, which caused much strain. Tracy believed if she was able to transfer out of the school to Koforidua, her mum would take care of her baby and she would not feel so stressed.

> "I have a baby who is 1 year, 7 months old I will leave her with my mum because I cannot combine the work here waking up at four, see to it they do their work ..."

Tracy also said she had to send her baby to the class when it was time for her to invigilate students who were writing their exams. She mentioned, "During the examination the woman who takes care of here for me was not around so in the morning I would have to carry her and go and invigilate." Tracy explained she experience much stress since she has to keep an eye on the student so that they do not cheat and she also had to ensure that her baby does not cry to disturb the students who are writing their papers. Tracy's shows here commitment here to by being present for exams invigilation.

In balancing her work with motherhood Tracy complained she was stressed due to inadequate sleep. She explained that she slept at 12:00 mid-night and got up at 4 am as a result she had about four hours of sleep. She said getting up early ensured that she was able to supervise all her students and get ready for class. This was a stressful situation she could not get out of because she was stuck in her school.

> "I have short hours of sleep you sleep about four hours and she(Tracy's baby) was breastfeeding

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

> too she will suck especially at midnight so you would not sleep at and 4:30am I have to wake up but what can I do?"

5.4.3 Workload

Tracy referred to her responsibilities as a house parent as the most stressful. To ensure the students have done their chore well Tracy stated had to

> "…go around the dormitory and ensure that the students have cleaned their plots and laid their beds, check the bath room toilet everywhere and I must do that before I come for morning devotion at 6:30. You have to wake up with them at 4:00 with the rising bell and make sure they do their work because you have to inspect before you leave the dormitory."

Tracy said she did all this carrying her baby. Tracy's commitment was shown in her constant presence to supervise student's work.

5.4.4 Role conflict

Tracy stated that once in a while her duties as a house mistress sometimes take her away from the classroom. She stated this was sometimes stressful but she said the trick was to be back before the instructional time was over. Hence in Tracy's commitment to engaging with the school environment and to transmitting knowledge to her students she was stressed and her concentration was divided. "Once in a while, but after that you have to go back. It will eat into the instructional time, but you have to be there before the time ends."

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

5.4.5 Difficulty handling students

According Tracy, with the sort of student she had, she always had to be present when they were cleaning or working. Tracy pointed out that the students were a bit difficult to handle observing that without her active presence and supervision the students would simply not work. Tracey's devotion to her job, and the school environment was made clearer when she added that even when it was raining she had to go to the dormitory to supervise her students otherwise there would be no work done on the part of the students.

> "But today for instance we had to break classes and ensure that the student work, with these students you have to be on them to ensure they do their work the moment you leave them they will also stop working. When it even raining and there is something to be done in the house you have to stand there and see to it that they have done it before you leave."

Moving on, Tracy stated that student excess noise making was a big challenge to her, and it was increasing her stress experience when dealing with difficult students.

> "… when the bell goes for light out you will hear them disturbing the other problem is we are in the same dormitory with the students so they will be disturbing and make a lot of noise… even when you are sleeping you will wake up."

She explained that the noise can be so loud that the intensity of could wake her up from her sleep. In her commitment to the school environment Tracy accepted the

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

position of a house mistress. Her position mandates her to share the same dormitory with the students so that she can be readily reached by her students she was unable to do anything about the noise by her students because as the house parent she was stuck in the dormitory with the ever noisy students.

Throwing more lights on her stress experience as a house mistress, Tracy said that when students are sick they do not usually report to the school clinic.

> "When someone is sick during the day time they would not say anything but they will wait in the night around 11:00pm before they will come banging at your door that someone is dying. Then you have to wake up as if you are a doctor."

Waking up in the middle of the night due to emergencies from students was stressful for her.

5.4.6 Conditions of Service

Tracy confessed to experiencing stress in the classroom. The problem then was, because of lack of chairs for teachers she had to stand for several hours. It therefore appeared that Tracy's commitment to transmitting knowledge to her students was increasing her stress experience because of poor infrastructure in her school. Then again she could not get out because she could not transfer out of the school. "… you go to class and there is no chair to sit on you have to stand for the whole time while teaching especially if you have three periods it is two hours"

Adding to Tracy's stress was the salary given to her as a teacher. She expressed that the salary given to her was meagre and she would have to live on a tight budget to work with the salary throughout the month. The other down side she expressed was the policy in the school that does not allow teachers who are resident on campus to

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

sell to the students. It seems she wanted to sell to supplement her income but because she was stuck in the school she could not.

> "I can't tell if it is a policy in all schools but if you are a resident teacher you not supposed to sell anything on campus not even ice water. Outside you can do it, but if you are staying here you are not to sell."

5.4.7 Transfer

It was frustrating for Tracy that there was a band on transfer of education workers. Tracy has a child and she was of the view that she would have been a bit free of stress when transferred to Koforidua. In Tracy's estimation since her mum was in Koforidua she would help her cater for her baby.

> "If I get the chance I will leave, because I have been here for five years. I have a baby who is 1 year, 7 months old I will leave her with my mum… Because I have no relatives here...."

I think some of these overlap and could be combined, e.g. a few deal with balancing family with work, several deal with all the additional responsibilities she has, and some seem to focus on being stuck.

5.5 Coping Strategies

Tracy coped with her stress by using strategies such as time management, relaxation, locking her door, and by divine provision. I will discuss each below.

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

5.5.1 Time management

In dealing with the stressful experiences or situation she encounters she adopted time management. She seem to indicate that she was able to have an upper hand over stressful situations when she was able to manage her time most efficiently by planning ahead. “We are all managers we are all managing.”

5.5.2 Relaxation

Tracy stated that when the going got tough for her she took time out to relax on the sofa or under the staff summer hut to free her mind. “I just have to relax, I forget about everything, be in the sofa or come and sit under the summer hut and relax.”

5.5.3 Locking the door

Also Tracy said when things got out of hand, she avoided whatever seemed to be the cause of her stress. “The children do come and bang the door but I don‟t mind them and I lock my door, I would not be sleeping but I will not mind them. So I just forget about them.”

5.5.4 Divine provision

Tracy also seemed to believe that she was able to have strength and motivation to deal with her stress through divine provision. Tracy was of the believe God has given her the strength as a mother to deal with every challenge she would encounter. “God has given us the grace to do it. As a woman the moment you give birth everything around you changes, you can‟t sleep and it becomes normal with you.”

5.6 Discussion of Tracy’s Stress, Commitment and Coping Strategies

The stress of Tracy primarily came from being stuck, at a social and working environment that she did not want to be in. Her stress also came from combining her work with motherhood without help. Apparently none of her relatives (husband or

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

mother) were at her teaching post to help her out. And transferring out of the school was impossible thereby compounding her stress.

The several extra-curricular responsibilities Tracy had to perform as a house mistress was a major source of stress for her. Tracy‟s continuous stay in her current school meant that she had to contend with supervising very difficult students to ensure they do their chores. And she had to tolerate disturbance from the students because her residence was in the girl‟s dormitory which was very stressful for her. That was why it was concluded that the activities leading to Tracy‟s stress were imposed by virtue of her position as house mistress. And because it was imposed she had to do it whether she was up to it or not.

Tracy‟s commitment was seen as inevitably interwoven with her stress. This meant that where Tracy commitment seen her stress was seen there as well. For instance from her commitment to the school environment Tracy‟s stress came from student‟s disturbance due to where her residence was situated.

With the coping strategies Tracy employed in dealing with her stress, some were positive and some not so positive. The problem focused strategy Tracy employed was time management there was also emotion focused strategies which were divine profession and relaxation, they were positive and worked well for her. She felt relaxation after school helped put her in a good frame of mind. By divine provision Tracy felt she had been blessed with the strength to combine work with motherhood. The negative one which was avoidance included Tracy locking her door; locking out the student. Locking her door meant she was avoiding her problems, secondly the source of stress her did not go away. But locking her door afforded her the opportunity to take a break and come back more at ease and in a better frame of mind to deal with her stress.

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

CHAPTER SIX

DAN: THE CASE OF OVER COMMITMENT

6.1 Introduction

In this chapter I show how Dan represents his stress and commitment as over-commitment to his school, students and his father. I show how Dan‟s stress and commitment are interwoven. First, I describe Dan; I explain the aspects of his profession that he was committed to that did not cause him stress. I describe aspects of his job that speaks of his stress in relation to his commitment. I then explain the coping strategies Dan adopted to deal with his stress. The final section in this chapter discusses his stress, commitment and coping.

6.2 Description of Dan

Dan was an economics teacher who had a B.Ed. in social science, he had ambitions of furthering his education and was married with two kids. He was also a house parent. He was confident in his abilities as a teacher. He was well respected by his colleagues and the leadership of the school. Dan had an air of charisma around him, and everyone seemed to listen to him when he spoke. At the time of the interview, Dan had work for 19 years as a teacher. He said he began his teaching career in 1995. A surprising feature in Dan was that he stammered, but this did not discourage him from teaching and being the best at what he did.

> “Although I stammer, God has given me a way to go about it. I‟m always happy when I go to the classroom; I‟m like a lion when I go to the classroom.”

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

6.3 Commitment without stress

6.3.1 Focus on the needs of students

Dan's was also committed to the needs (academic and social) of his students. As he stated that he was helping his student acquire knowledge that would not only help them in their present circumstance to pass exams, but he believed they could use this knowledge of economics to manage their lives in future.

> "I tell my student that God is the first economist. Economics is managing recourses and I am already trying to manage myself very well so I just want to help others and I suggest that economics be made a compulsory subject for all school because, if it is made a core it well help them manage themselves better."

6.3.2 Passion

Dan's said he had so much interest in teaching and enjoys it. Dan's love and enthusiasm seemed to point positive emotional attachment towards the teaching profession. "I do not know of any other work that could give me the joy I am experiencing now."

6.3.4 Being there for others

Dan was a part of a community of teachers, he therefore seemed to believe that being available to help colleague teachers formed an important part of his commitment as a teacher. "It all about the love for the work and it also because they respect me. They give me that respect, and it is like we always stand for each other."

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

6.3.5 Prestige

Dan expressed that he was committed to teaching because it brought him respect and prestige. He felt that parents and student turn to respect him very much because he gave off his best to the students to ensure the students understood whatever he taught. On the researchers last visit to the school Dan talked about five girls he mentored who all had gotten five A's in the their WAEC results this year(2015). And Dan was very proud to share this information with the researcher.

> "My students respect me. Sometimes students give teachers bad names but I have not heard my students give me any bad name even if they give me a name it is on that is ok like, professor, Nii Mankye, and I feel big and I know they respect me so I also want to help them out when my students pass I feel very great and proud. When they take their grade away I will be with the glory at least."

6.4 Stress with Commitment

6.4.1 Definition of Stress

> To Dan, "Stress is when you over work your body and the mind psychologically, and it looks as if you are not happy at the end of it all, after going through the day it will go a long way to affect you."

Dan's definition of stress seem to conform to that of the response-base theory perspective. In Dan's definition of stress he stated that the symptoms that manifest in his body due to situations or events makes him know he was stressed or not. This definition also pointed to Dan's stress coming from over commitment to certain

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

aspects of his life and his profession. In the following subsections, I will describe the various stress experiences of Dan and the commitment that came with it.

6.4.2 Disturbance

Dan‟s stress seem to come from his over commitment to the school environment.

> "As for the stress factors a lot because after teaching, working and trying to rest a bit you hear student knocking on your door and we keep money too for them, their pocket money especially the first years who are new in the system and they will not allow you to rest they will be knocking at your door 24/7 and sometimes there is a problem, fighting they will call on you to go and settle issues, so we do not get time to rest actually it is very bad and sometimes if you do not take care you will become angry and begin to sack them."

Dan, has accepted accommodation on campus while he could live comfortably in town with his wife and kids and would not be disturbed by students. On a visit to Dan‟s house the researcher realized the student constant knocking was a nuisance. On precisely the second visit to the school the respondent and researcher left for his house in the boys‟ dormitory right after the end of classes that day. The students streamed in and out of his house with a variety of complains and request. It ranged from house captains who came for keys to their store room for cutlass for grounds work, to students who were there to pay their house dues, and students who had problems with colleagues or teachers that needed Dan‟s help.

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

6.4.3 Conditions of service

Dan stated that sometimes he goes to the class to teach and a chalk or marker cannot be found.

> "The teaching is sometimes stressful, we do not have the TLM like sometimes you go to the classroom and you do not have a marker, sometime chalk cannot be found, which is a bit stressful because you might have prepared for a class and you are not able to finish it becomes arrears which makes it stressful."

He mentioned that it was especially frustrating when as committed teacher he was prepared to teach and there were no tools to aid him. Dan said, he was unable to finish lessons and in his view it became "arrears" that he had to find time to settle. And because of Dan's high sense of commitment to transmitting knowledge to his students he got stressed when he was unable to finish his lessons.

Elaborating further on his stress, Dan mentioned his salary was inadequate. Dan explained that apart from his immediate family he was responsible for his dad and mum.

> "If you look at the salary it is not enough at all… As I said with my father every two weeks I buy fish amounting to hundred Ghana cedi because he does not eat fatty stuff, so I buy this expensive fish plus some fruits for him, and my mum is also alive, … "

Over here Dan commitment to his father and job is causing him stress. Dan's stress was also because his salary was not enough, and he did not have any spare time on his hand for another job, while dividing his attention between his job and his dad.

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

6.4.4 Student's Apathy

Dan pointed he has observed that some of his students were weak academically "but others are plainly not serious." about their academic work. He mentioned they would refuse to write a test based on a flimsy excuse, such as not having an exercise book. But when they took the test Dan said they would wait for the brilliant ones to finish so that they copy from them. This situation was particularly stressful for because his was committed to transmitting knowledge to his students. Dan pointed out that he created an enjoyable and very conducive environment for his student, by organizing his lessons in a way that students enjoyed. "So times after teaching you give assignment and what I have identified is that those who are not serious will wait for those who are serious to finish…."

> "…everything about me is fun whenever I get to the classroom, I don't joke but whatever I do is to the benefit of my students so that they will understand me well. I have devised some strategies that help me to impact whatever I want to, to the students."

As a teacher committed to transferring knowledge to his student Dan communicated that, it worried him when he went to class and found more than half of the class were not available for the lesson. Dan mentioned this was mainly because they had to be sacked from the class for their school fees. And as part of his commitment to the school environment he had to sack students even though the absence of his students was stressful for him.

> "I'm selected as a member of the committee for the

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

> collection of school fees I"m currently doing that, though this role does interfere with my lessons and I am not alone in this." "…most students will be sacked from the classroom because they have not paid their fees".

6.4.5 Extra-curricular responsibilities

Dan stated that extra-curricular activities which he was engaged in was very stressful.

> "…but with the extracurricular responsibilities, like checking for students to weed their plots, sometimes dining food might not be ready, sometimes some teachers will be organizing extra classes which keeps students from work and it makes organizing students for work very difficult. To me the extracurricular activities are more stressful than teaching."

Dan mentioned that supervising students to work him worn out but not teaching per se.

6.4.6 Family

Dan said the only thing that increased his stress experience outside work was that his father was now very old and he solely depended on him for his needs.

> "Only thing is that my father is very old and I have become the life wire, he calls me sometimes I have to leave here and go home, and take care of him sometimes my presence alone encourages him. So my father too is a factor and commuting between Accra and here is not easy twice a week. I have to go

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

> that if it is weekdays after school, I have to go and come early dawn, in order to come for class so that is also another factor."

It seem his commitment to his father and the school has left him torn and stressed out.

6.4.7 Lack of Parental support

In Dan's commitment to seeing to the needs (academic and social) of his students he was faced with having to go to the neighbouring community of the school to sack students back to school to study. Dan implied that he had to keep doing this over and over again because he was concerned about the fact that students were not serious with their academic lives. Dan said it was stressful for him that he on numerous occasions had incurred the displeasure of parents, when he was ensuring student stayed in school.

> "…. so it seemed the parental care is very weak …here is the case students run to the various homes and the people do not care. You can see particular rooms in a house where mothers and fathers will be there and that has about 6 to 7 seven student in there, but the parents do not care. And if you go there to maybe go there to sack them you see that they are not happy as if you are worrying them, it look as if there level of understanding of education is very low, it is a problem".

6.4.8 Workload

On the last visit to the school, Dan complained that his workload had increased because so many of the teachers in his department had gone back to school for their M.Ed. He explained that they would be in the school for at least two more months and he would have to take over the teaching and marking of students work. Another aspect

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

of his workload was that in his commitment to professional knowledge Dan had signed up to be an examiner. He included that it was very stressful because he had to combine marking several exam papers with his duties as a class teacher and several other extra-curricular activities. Dan mentioned that though he was delighted he could share the knowledge he got from the exams coordination, and the chief examiner reports with his colleagues, he indicated the activity was still stressful for him. "Sometimes it is very stressful combing the marking, with the classroom work and the other extra curriculum activities..." Over here Dan's stress emanated from his over commitment. In that he was committed to the school environment, to professional development, to the academic needs of the students and being there for colleague teachers by taking up their classes.

6.5 Coping Strategies

The coping strategies Dan adopted to manage his stress were entertaining himself, exercise, getting help from friend and family, and planning. I will discuss each below.

6.5.1 Entertainment

In looking at Dan's coping, he stated that he had many electrical gadgets in his home. As a result he entertained himself with it by listening to music or watching a movie. "In my room I have a computer and lot of gadgets"

Sometime Dan said that he resorted to humour to address his stress. He said some of his students were very skilled when it came to telling jokes. He explained he had a good laugh whenever he talked to them. "Some of the students are very skilful, some can sing and crack jokes, I bring them to make me laugh, and sometimes I take delight in the attitudes of the students"

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

6.5.2 Exercise

Dan said sometimes he left the comfort of his room to watch students play football on the school field for entertainment or played football with them to ease him of his stress. "And we have a field here so sometimes I will go to the field and watch them play football or join them."

6.5.3 Social Support

Also Dan explained that he got much help from his wife when dealing with stress. He particularly stated that in terms of stress from his finances he got help from his wife's family. "I get a lot of help; my wife is coming from a wealthy home… So the family also supports us". And from his position as a secretary to the Ga chief, Dan stated that he gained financial assistance from that avenue as well. "My father is a Ga from the royal family; I am a secretary to the chief, so sometimes I get financial help from there."

6.5.4 Planning

Dan expressed that planning ahead and making sure to stick with the plan helped him cope with situation which would have otherwise been over-whelming.

> "…but when you position yourself in a such a way that you pick 10 papers and mark then go about your work in that order you don't feel it, but if you want to be on it mark it that one is stressful."

This points out that planning his activities carefully help Dan to manage his stress most effectively.

6.6 Discussion of Dan's Stress, Commitment and Coping Strategies

Dan's stress mainly stemmed from what could best be described as Dan's over

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

commitment to the school, his students and his family; his dad. Dan had taken up ensuring quality classroom teaching and learning, ensuring discipline on the school compound plus his active engagement in extracurricular responsibilities. He was an examiner and took the classes of colleagues in his department who when to school. Dan seem to be a jack of all trades when it came to responding to several responsibilities in the school. His several responsibilities and obligations spoke of Dan stress and his comment, and establishes that Dan"s stress was interwoven with his commitment.

Dan"s stress was imposed by the responsibilities he was committed to due to his position as a house master and as a result he could not get out of them. But then the coping strategies Dan used to deal with his stress were mainly positive coping strategies which were problem focused coping and emotion focused coping which helped to keep Dan balanced. The problem focused coping strategy he used was planning. And the emotion focused coping were exercise, entertainment and social support. These coping strategies worked well for Dan as it helped him deal with the pressure and strain coming from the stress of over commitment.

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

CHAPTER SEVEN

SHAUN: THE CASE OF NOT KNOWING STRESS

7.1 Introduction

In this chapter I show how Shaun represents his stress and commitment in the light of Shaun not knowing stress. I show how for Shaun stress and commitment are interwoven. First, I describe Shaun, I explain the aspect of his profession that he was committed to that did not cause him stress. I then proceed to describe aspects of his job that spoke of his stress and commitment. Moving on I explain the coping strategies Shaun adopted to deal with his stress. The final section in this chapter discusses Shaun's stress, commitment and coping.

7.2 Description of Shaun

Shaun was a teacher who had taught for 21 years. He was married with three kids and was pursuing an M.Phil. programme in science education. He taught biology in his school. He looked very organized. Shaun seem to know what he was about for example when it came to teaching and dealing with his students. He was also very social and chatty. He always seemed to be on the move from one place to the other except when teaching. He always seem to have a smile on his face and very friendly to all the teachers.

7.3 Commitment without Stress

7.3.1 Transmitting Knowledge

With the strong conviction that transformation of the society came through education, Shaun stated that he was very committed to transmitting knowledge to his students. Even when he wanted to leave the school for the central region he did not because he

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

thought his students needed him "I wanted to leave this year, after marking the script of my students I decided to be with them another year. I will leave to be with my family they are in the central region."

7.3.2 Focus on students

Shaun appeared to be have placed much value on the individual students placed in his care. He was of the belief that focusing on the various needs of students was central to teaching.

> "I like touching lives, a teachers job is to touch lives positively, it gives me joy that may be a student had a challenge and through my teaching I"m able to help them overcome to become a better person that is what I normally do."

By focusing on the needs of the students (emotional/ academic) Shaun stated there would be a transformation of students and the society in general. "I like transforming lives, transformation of the society comes from education".

Also Shaun said he was challenged by the students who come to the school, with low grade. He said he was challenged and dedicated to helping them improve academically. This speaks of Shaun"s commitment to the academic needs of his students. Shaun was of the strong convection that commitment to the academic needs of his student was, what was keeping him in the teaching profession. "it is the students that will keep me here, apart from that…"

7.3.3 Passion

Shaun expressed great love for his job, which pointed to the passion he had for teaching. Apart from professing his love for his profession, he expressed that he enjoyed every minute of the day he spends at his job. It therefore came as no surprise

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

he had been teaching for twenty (20) years. “I enjoy teaching and wherever it takes me to which ever level I am ok”. Shaun said he did not see any stress in his job. He said he saw his job as a challenge that he consistently needed to get on top of. Beside he said apart from seeing his job as a challenge he absolutely enjoyed it so no stress for him from his work.

> “I enjoy what I do so I don‟t see any stress; I see my job as a challenge no matter how hectic it can be it more like a challenge I have to overcome but not stress. So no stress for me.”

> “….there will be a major transformation when they go into the world that is why I love teaching.”

7.3.4 Professional knowledge

Moreover, commitment to maintaining professional knowledge was seen in his zeal for professional development. As a result Shaun had enrolled in school for an M.Phil. in Science Education. “Yes, I am a masters student pursuing M.Phil. Science Education”

7.4 Stress with Commitment

7.4.1 Definition of Stress

Shaun‟s seem to view stress as “being tired”. This was due to the idea that throughout the interview he used words like “being tired”, often to describe situations in which he felt much strain. Though he seem uncertain whether he was stressed or not the notion of being tired pointed to stress as a response to stimulus or pressure felt from Shaun‟s working environment. Shaun stated that he felt tired after a hectic day of teaching in the school he works in.

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

7.4.2 Being tired

He added that his orientation was that when duty calls he did what he was supposed to do without thinking about the stress that might be involved in it. And he included that it was usually when he gets home from work that he mostly realized he was tired. "It when I get home that I realize I am tired but when, I"m at work everything is forgotten

> "My orientation is that duty calls I do it I don"t see stress in any of it. I enjoy what I do so I am not stressed up. It is when I get home that I realize that I am tired that is all…. I won"t say all my activities are stress free. I would not even know how to define stress"

7.4.3 Positive thinking

Shaun said he did not know what stress was. And he stated that had a positive mind set and worrying about stress was a waste of time. In his commitment to his job Shaun said he adopted to meet the challenging demands of his job. And he did not think of the stress that came with his job.

> "That is what I don"t even know. I adopt and I don"t allow things to pull me down, I will never allow anything to pull me down it is a waste of time. If something happens I ask myself what is the positive way out of this a positive way out and I move forward. And I always say what you hear is what you become .if you think negatively the negative things will come and positively the same I have tried and it works all the time so I don"t waste time."

7.4.4 Family

Shaun stated that he did not face much stress outside of school either. He explained this was because his family was not with him at his teaching post. But on my last visit

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

and a follow up to the interview, Shaun who was previously adamant about calling himself stressed admitted to experiencing stress from the home because his teenage son was misbehaving. And he therefore had to find time and set him straight.

7.4.5. Salary

At least when it came to the issue of his salary, Shaun did not hide his anxiety, as he expressed clear frustration over the fact that his salary appeared inadequate for him. He explained that he had a family whose needs he could barely met with the kind of salary he received as a teacher. More so Shaun stands out to be a teacher who totally was committed to his job, enjoys and loves it very much, but complained bitterly about his salary.

> "It can't be enough, I have a family and considering the economic situation it is not enough. I have to school fees to pay, I have a family to cater for and myself, I have to pay rent, and pay light bill so 1000 Ghana can't be enough."

7.4.5 Students Apathy

In Shaun's commitment to transmitting knowledge to his students he was met with students who did not "want to pick something" from what he taught them, basically the students seemed to be inattentive and unserious.

> "My concern is the children, I want them to pick something from what we teach them but they are not responding that is. The kind of work teachers here put in and what the students bring out at the end of their year does not tally".

Even though he does not admit to been stressed over this the tension on his face as he

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

spoke and the deep concern for the students was not missed.

7.5 Coping Strategies

The coping strategies Shaun employed were positive thinking planning, experience, prayer, humour, exercise and escape to deal with being tired. I will discuss each below.

7.5.1 Positive thinking

To begin with Shaun stated that during working days, he knew the day was going to get hectic and as a result he would psych himself up to deal with every potential stress situation he would face. "I know on a typical day I will be tired I move from one class to the other, but I have planned for it, I am aware that today I will be tired so mentally I"m ready for it."

7.5.2 Experience

Shaun also expressed that as an individual he does not allow anything to frustrate him. He added that when he saw a problem, he made certain to find a way of dealing with it, and move on with his life. Shaun seemed to say that 21years of experience in teaching had taught him not to worry so much about the attitudes of his students. It seemed that Shaun had seen so much of such distressful situations that it no longer puzzled or bothered him.

> "It is something that I have seen for several years so as a person nothing really baffles me, I take everything with a pinch of salt when I see a problem I try to find a way forward and I live my life"

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

7.5.3 Escape

Shaun explained when he got home and felt tired he laid down to relax and tune everything off by forgetting about any situation or event that got him tired in the course of the working day.

> "I lay on my bed and relax put everything off".

> "When I am tired I take it easy, and anything that will frustrate me I don't want it, if stress is frustration I don't allow things to frustrate me."

At other times Shaun stated that in dealing with situations that are tiring he uses distraction, or resorted to things that would help distract him from feeling worn out. He stated this worked for him in especially coping with being tired after work. "It is when I get home that I realize that I am tired that is all or I find something to do to engage me. It is just something I have created this is what I do let me do it."

It appeared Shaun used humour to deal with stress as well. Shaun stated that when he felt a little down he moved to anyplace and or person and had a good laugh. With humour it appear Shaun could escape from "being tired", as it distract him from feeling tired. "I move around to anywhere I can laugh on campus, anywhere I will find someone to say something for me to laugh."

7.5.4 Exercise

Shaun said he exercises to help him unwind, he mentioned that after class when he feels tired he takes a walk, and he admitted this helped him relax. "in the house I go for evening walks, if I have to do something it is my research work."

7.5.5 Planning

Shaun explained that if he had a hectic day ahead of him he planned ahead of time.

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

He stated that planning ahead, before a potentially stressful day helps him to adopt to every given situation. "… but I have planned for it, I am aware that today I will be tired so mentally I'm ready for it."

7.5.6 Prayer

Moving on, Shaun said he believed his strength came from God. And as a result he prayed to God for strength for each day. Shaun also implied that with God being the source of his strength he can overcome any difficult situation he might encounter. "…I pray to God for strength each day."

7.6 Discussion of Shaun's Stress, Commitment and Coping Strategies

Shaun stated as an individual, he did not allow things to pull him down and saw every difficulty as a challenge. Shaun had difficulties establishing whether he was stressed or not, but said it when he went home after work he felt tired.

Shaun commitment also seem to be interwoven with Shaun's state of "being tired". He stated that in his commitment to transmitting knowledge to his students he was faced with student's apathy. Shaun mentioned his salary was a problem for him.

In dealing with "being tired" Shaun said the coping strategies he employed were mostly positive with emotion focused and problem focused coping which worked well for him. With the emotion focused coping the strategies Shaun employed were humour, escape; relaxation distraction, prayer, and exercise. As well as problem focused coping which were positive thinking, planning and drawing from experience.

Shaun's stress seem not to be much because he did not have much extra-curricular responsibilities. Why Shaun was not sure whether he was stressed or not stemmed from the idea that he had little extracurricular responsibilities as stated earlier and an array of positive coping strategies that helped him deal effectively when he felt tired.

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

CHAPTER EIGHT

SALLY: THE CASE OF RESPONSIBILITIES

8.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I show Sally's stress is due to several responsibilities she was engaged in. I present how Sally's stress and commitment went hand in hand. I first begin by describing Sally, in the next section I present aspects of Sally's commitment that did not come with stress. I follow that up with Sally's stress experiences that came with her commitment. The next section shows the coping strategies Sally adopted in dealing with her stress, I then discuss Sally's stress, commitment and coping strategies.

8.2 Description of Sally

Sally was a married woman with three kids. Sally appeared very serious with her work and she was the H.O.D of the English department. And in her speech, she always had a way of getting right to the point or to the heart of matters as she seemed to be a very honest person. Also she had a positive rapport with other teachers. Through informal conversation the researcher was informed that she was well respected for her seriousness when it comes to her job and her professionalism.

8.3 Commitment without Stress

8.3.1 Engagement with the school community

Sally stated that not all her actions that pointed to her commitment were stressful. She said in engaging with the school environment, as part of her commitment, she goes round to supervise the teachers in her department. " I am less stressed when I am performing my duties as the HOD, because the teachers under me are doing their jobs,

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

when it is time for them to present their lesson notes, scheme of work they do that."

8.3.2 Passion

Sally said she believed that teaching came to her innately that is a kind of an in born gift or trait she inherited from her mum. "It's an in born gift my mother was a teacher so, I think I took it from my mother". It appeared because of her conception of teaching as a gift Sally had positive emotional attachment towards her job. This positive emotion attachment to her profession pointed to her passion for teaching. And Sally professes her love for the teaching profession when she stated that "I love teaching English language".

"It is also my passion, I have the flare for teaching so it is my passion"

8.3.3 Focus on Students

Sally's commitment to the academic needs of her students was seen in her zeal at focusing on students who came to the school with poor grades but had the potentially to be better. She stated that she was inspired by the progress of these students accumulated, to keep helping them improve academically.

> "Some of them, the grades they came from the basic with from the basic education, when you go through it you realize that they have improved and are potential that we could help. That makes me to be committed to them."

> "Am committed to them because I want to transform their lives, what they do here can influence their future."

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

8.4 Stress with Commitment

In defining stress Sally stated, "Stress, I will say is the excessive pressure exerted by work load both at work place and in the home." Sally definition pointed to the pressure of having several responsibilities that are weighing her down. Sally definition pointed to stress as being an external strain or force that came from either the home or the work place. Sally also seemed to ascribe to the school of thought that believed stress to be an external pressure or stimulus from the environment. In the following subsections I will describe the various stress experiences of Sally and the commitment that came with it.

8.4.1 Too Many Periods

Sally pointed out that her workload had increased more than usual. Sally indicated that as part of her commitment to transmitting knowledge to her students Sally had taken up 7 extra periods. This led to Sally teaching about 30 periods in a week which was equivalent to about 20 hours per a week. Her periods she stated would increase by an extra seven when the first year students in her school arrive. With these seven extra periods, Sally stated that no one wanted because of the extra stress and responsibility that came with it. "In a week, for now, it is 28-30, now that the form ones are not in but the standard for every teacher is 21 periods by GES." She did took the take the extra periods because she did not want to add to the stress of the stress of any of her colleagues because she knew they were already loaded with extra periods. She also expressed that "…I have seven period that no one wants so it but I have to take it as a leader."

8.4.2 Inadequate Teachers

Adding to her stress Sally stated that the teachers in her department were inadequate.

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

"I have seven periods ahead as a head of department because our department lacks teachers." Sally stated that for the entire school with a student population of close to two thousand students, the school had only 6 English teachers. In the light of that she said. "As the head of department am supposed to be overseeing other teachers but I have seven period that no one wants, so I have to take it as a leader." Therefore in Sally's commitment to transmitting knowledge to her students her stress experience has increased. Sally stress therefore seem to come from her responsibilities towards her student, her school and trying to show she was up to the task as a leader.

8.4.3 Taking work home

Sally indicated taking care of her kids and seeing to their upkeep as the major stressor outside of work. She added that had to take work home as well.

> "…when I get home as a mother I have to take care of my kids and see to their wellbeing but I have lesson notes to prepare, exercise to mark, you have questions to set, because I am teaching throughout the day I can't mark, and have to do that after school and it affects me in the house."

Sally's commitment to investment of her time outside contact hours was made clear, also coming to light was her stress born out of her responsibilities to her family and her students. Issue seems to be competing interests for her attention.

8.4.4 Checking on students and teachers

Sally stated that apart from having to teach her lessons, she had to check on the

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

attendance of both students and teachers in the class she had been assigned to, as a form mistress. More stressful for Sally was the situation where her colleagues would be on campus but would not go to class. Sally mentioned she would have go around and call them to duty. Then again Sally commitment to the school environment was seen so was her stress as a result of seeing to the execution of her responsibilities as a form mistress and an H.O.D. "I'm a form mistress. I have to attend to my class, check on their attendance and to check whether every teacher who was supposed to teach that day was able to make it. Every day I have to visit their class."

8.4.5 Role Conflict

The lady revealed that it was very stressful for her to be a subject teacher, HOD for the English department and a form mistress all at the same time. These responsibilities pointed to her commitment to the school environment and to transmitting knowledge to her students. She explained that sometimes she ignored some of her duties while at other times, her duties as a form mistress prevents her from being effective in the class while teaching. "Being a form mistress stresses me most because sometimes, something happens in your class there is a theft or fight they will have to come and call you the form mistress"

"It is very stressful but sometimes you have to ignore some …" by so doing it will help her see to her other responsibilities.

Combine the ones dealing with stress from her responsibilities as a leader in the school

8.4.6 Student's Inattentiveness

Sally also pointed to students' lack of attention and students sleeping while class was in session as another stressful thing. Sally stated that "Because of the intervention

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

class the students get tired easily so after 12noon when you are teaching most of them do pay attention, most of them will be sleeping especially after the launch break..."Also Sally stated that when she asked her students questions on what she taught them, they were mostly unable to answer, this she stated contributed immensely to her experience of stress. Sally explained that during the last two periods of the day, she felt no effective teaching and learning went on. "It is very stressful especially in the last period you do not see any effectiveness, by then you are very tired so you just sit down and do a little comprehension, because you are tired and you are a human being so…" Then again Sally's stress came from her commitment to the school environment and commitment to transmitting knowledge to her students by being present for intervention classes.

These two could be combined to focus on the teaching aspect… interestingly, not much was discussed about the stress of actually teaching

8.4.7 Conditions of Service

On the stress factors she faced in school, Sally stated that

"Sometimes you do not get the teaching and learning materials, sometimes a simple marker they give a marker for a whole week which is not enough and text books for the kids to learn especially when we are teaching comprehension and summary we need a passage to read."

The researcher observed in the Sally's class that the crowed classroom had to allow for three or in some instances four students to share the same textbook. The researcher observed some of the students straining their neck just to catch a glimpse at the passage they were reading. Over here also Sally stress seem to come from her responsibility for imparting knowledge to the students which was hindered by inadequate teaching resources.

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

Sally also stated that the distance from the teacher‟s bungalow in town to campus was too far apart and that it constituted another form of stress for her. She mentioned paying of taxi fare as a huge drain on her already insufficient salary. When the researcher paid a visit to Sally in her home; (accommodation provide by the school). It was observed that seven families share one compound. Sally‟s family had to share facilities like toilet and the bathroom with the other families. And because plywood separated one room from the other any noise from Sally‟s room was carried to the next one and vice versa hence there was little room for privacy. “The distance from school is also a problem you have to board a vehicle in the morning you pay one cedi and when you are leaving you pay another one cedi.”

Further on Sally said that her salary given as a graduate teacher was woeful insufficient and mentioned it constituted another source of stress for her. Sally said she was unable to supplement her income by doing any other job because of her responsibilities at school and the home. The researcher observed that Sally‟s mother was sick, had partial memory loss and could do very little. The researcher also deduced that Sally‟s mum‟s sickness added an extra drain to her already inadequate salary. Sally‟s responsibilities towards her family and school left her stressed out because she could not supplement her income with any other job because her commitment to them.

> “It‟s not enough at all even look at the bus fare alone, every day for five days just calculate and even the food that you will eat and your kids will also go to school the money you give them for lunch, their school fees, their books, rent, utility bill, and looking at my schedule I have no time to do any other things. No extra income is coming from anywhere.”

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

8.5 Coping Strategies

In coping with her stress Sally strategies included ignoring some of her responsibilities, planning, and relaxation. I will discuss each below.

8.5.1 Ignoring

In order to cope with stress Sally said she ignored some of her duties in order to stay balanced and have time for other pending responsibilities.

> "… but sometimes you have to ignore some like visiting the class I do it twice a week I don't do it every day because I can't go and leave my class to inspect whether the teachers are there or not when I have to go and teach."

Sally said at home she sometimes left the house chore for her husband so she could make it as early for intervention classes at 6:00 on the school campus. It appears Sally priorities her responsibilities and see to the most pending once.

8.5.2 Planning

Sally stated, she planned ahead of time in order to effectively deal with her stress. As a result she said she made it a point to utilize her weekends very well. "I make sure I use my weekends well especially the Saturdays so that I prepare all my food and keep it in the fridge do my washing and a whole lot of things so that…" Sally also stated that she planned her lessons a head of time so she would know which day to teach for instance English comprehension, English summary or English grammar.

8.5.3 Relaxation

At other times she said she resorted to relaxation to help cope with her stress. After a hectic and stressful week at work and home, with an equally stressful Saturday, Sally

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

said she used Sundays for relaxing. "…Sunday's after church is for relaxation". Apparently Sally stated she relaxes by sleeping off or just laying down to rest.

8.6 Discussion of Sally's Stress, Commitment and Coping Strategies

Sally's stress basically came from performing several duties at a time. Sally had several responsibilities that were weighing her down all at a go. These were responsibilities from her working environment and the home. These responsibilities causing her stress were also representative of her stress and commitment. As result it was reasoned that Sally's stress and commitment were interwoven.

The stress Sally experienced seemed to be imposed on her, because these stressors came from her responsibilities as the H.O.D., a form mistress and her duties as a mother. And because she took her work seriously.

The coping strategies Sally employed were both positive and negative. The positive coping strategies were both problem focused and emotion focused coping strategies. The problem focused coping for Tracy was planning ahead of time. The emotion focused strategy was relaxation. And the negative coping strategy which was avoidance coping involved Tracy ignoring some of her responsibilities. And although avoiding her problem was not the best coping strategy to use, ignoring some of her responsibilities gave Sally a much needed breather to be able to regroup and face responsibilities squarely. This did not in any way mean she was not committed to the responsibilities is ignored, it only meant that she needed a break so that her stress would not develop into a state of burnout.

CHAPTER NINE

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

DISCUSSION

9.1 Introduction

This chapter discusses the major findings of the study, in relation to current, related literature, in order to address the research questions. The chapter begins by discussing teachers‟ perceptions of stress and commitment. Then, I describe the stress experiences of the teachers in relation to the literature on sources of teacher stress. The next section of the chapter discusses teachers‟ stress and commitment as interwoven. I then discuss the coping strategies teachers employed as it falls under the three main coping strategies (problem focused; emotion focused and avoidance coping). In the final section I present a model of teacher stress with commitment in relation to the finding of the study.

9.2 Perception of Stress

All the teachers from the study gave an indication that they were stressed. As a result three different perspectives were evident from the research findings. These standpoints were the stimulus perspective, response-based perspective, and the interactionist perspective.

9.2.1 Stimulus Perspective

The findings revealed that some of the teachers; Sally and Ethan saw stress as an external pressure or stimulus from the environment. For instance Ethan stated stress was “being under pressure to perform...” This pointed to the Ethan‟s pressure to maintain a high moral standards. Sally also mentioned that, “Stress, I will say is the excessive pressure exerted by work load both at work place and in the home.” These perceptions of stress fall in line with stress as defined Blaug et al. (2007). They stipulate that

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

> "any objective condition or any change in the work environment that is perceived as potentially harmful, threatening, challenging, or frustrating, or any set of circumstances related to work that requires change in the individual's ongoing life pattern" (Blaug et al., 2007, p. 4).

Sally and Ethan in describing their stress as stimulus, talked about pressure from the school environment, their homes and their social lives. Unlike the definition of Blaug et al. (2007), which only saw teachers stress as emanating from their work environment, Sally and Ethan spoke of stress as pressure coming from the home and social lives as well.

9.2.2 Response-Based Perspective

Dan and Shaun saw stress as to be a situations in which they felt pressured or felt much strain. To Dan,

> "Stress is when you over work your body and the mind psychologically, and it looks as if you are not happy at the end of it all, after going through the day it will go a long way to affect you."

They indicated that the symptoms that manifest in their bodies were testaments to their stress. Dan used words like "being tired", often to describe situations in which he felt pressured or much strain. This meant that for these teachers the body's response to a situation or event helped them establish that they were stressed or not. Selye (1956,) expresses a similar perspective to stress. He therefore defined stress as "A neutral physiological phenomenon, in terms of the non-specific response of the human body to any demand" (Alghaswyneh, 2012, p. 33). The respondents who tilted to this

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

perspective of stress were committed to several responsibilities and as result were overworked and felt it.

9.2.3 Interactionist Perspective

Interestingly for this perspective only one teacher held to this view point. The individual was Tracy and she saw stress as situation bound. Tracy defined stress as "a situation where you find yourself to be over working and you feel it." By emphasizing on "you" Tracy presents stress as situation bound. Where a situation is stressful when "you" perceive it to be so, meaning that individuals react to stress differently. Affirming Tracy's view was Folkman (2010) who expressed that stress is a "situation that is appraised by the individual as personally significant and as having demands that exceed the person's resources" (p. 901). This definition of stress was in line with Tracy's opinion of stress been a subjective phenomenon.

9.3 Perception of Commitment

The findings of this study established that all the teachers did not perceive commitment to refer to one thing or tilt to only one aspect of their career but saw commitment as multi-dimensional. The perception of teacher commitment as multi-dimensional was supported by Elliot and Croswell (2001), Croswell (2006), and Sugden (2013) who elicited the same opinion from their study. These authors theorized the very nature of teacher commitment is multidimensional and that it "ranged across several dimensions" (Sugden, 2013 p. 165). Fox (1964) also evoked a similar line of thought when he revealed that committed teachers in many ways differ from each other. From the finding of this study the dimensions of teacher commitment were, commitment as; passion, investment of extra time, focus on the needs of student; transmission of knowledge, engagement with the school community,

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

professional development, being a role model, being there for others, and prestige.

9.3.1 Passion

With teacher commitment as passion all the teachers ascribed to this dimension of teacher commitment. They all had so much interest in teaching and plainly enjoyed doing it. Teacher after teacher professed their love and how they derived great joy from teaching. Ethan said

> "It is my passion. I just want to see our children move on to the next level. I just want to have a meaningful impact in their lives." Tracy also said "Yes I have the passion for it. Just like someone taught me I will also teach someone". Dan adds that "I do not know of any other work that could give me the joy I am experiencing now." Shaun specifies that "I enjoy teaching and wherever it takes me to which ever level I am ok". Sally maintains that "I love teaching English language". "It is also my passion, I have the flare for teaching so it is my passion"

The findings of Croswell (2006) lends support to the notion of teacher commitment as passion. She revealed that most of the teachers in her study thought they were passionate educators. She mentioned this was because they had a strong emotional connection to the profession. Fox (1964) adds that a committed teacher has the "desire to be a good teacher" and such a teacher "enjoys working with children and the youth" (p.19). By this Fox (1964) also lend support to teacher commitment as passion.

9.3.2 Investment of extra time

The findings of this study showed that teachers spent extra time outside official

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

contact hours on students. In doing this the teachers showed their commitment as investment of extra time outside official contact hours. For example Sally took scripts home to mark. And Ethan took time out of his break to check on student's indiscipline. Ethan also exhibited this dimension of his commitment when he took time out, outside of school hours to advise students on their moral and academic lives. Sugden (2013) stated that the teachers in his study exhibited their commitment by "going the extra mile" "being there for the kids" and "working long hours, often with a sense of acceptance" (p. 160). Croswell (2006) reported that teacher commitment as investment of extra time should not be viewed only in terms of visible time spent in school by teachers. But it should also be viewed in terms of invisible time spend by teachers on their job at home. In this study it was evident that teachers to scripts home to mark often, they also prepared their lesson notes at home, and this pointed to the teachers spending invisible time on their job.

9.3.3 Focus on the Needs of Students

The teachers in the current study were committed to the needs (academic and social) of to their students. The teachers like Sally and Shaun placed much value on the students in their charge. Sally and Shaun were also challenged to assist students who come to the school with poor grades but had the potentially to be better. Sally commented that

> "Some of them, the grades they came from the basic with from the basic education, when you go through it you realize that they have improved and are potential that we could help. That makes me to be committed to them."

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

This finding was echoed by Croswell (2006), as she stated that teachers who recognized teacher commitment as focus on the needs of the students were concerned with the academic and social progress of their students. By focusing on the emotional and academic needs of the students, the teachers in this study perceived there would be a transformation in the lives of their students. The teachers also believed they could positively influence the lives of their students which would lead to the transformation of the larger society in future. Shaun remarked

> "I like touching lives, a teachers job is to touch lives positively, it gives me joy that may be a student had a challenge and through my teaching I"m able to help them overcome to become a better person that is what I normally do."

In discussing what he calls the characteristics of a good teacher, Fox (1964) reasons that a committed teacher is willing to ensure that each of his/ her students develop his/ her full potential. Sugden (2013) adds that the "child- centered" dimension of teacher commitment was evident in his study. In this he explains that teachers showed a high level of awareness of the social needs of students, they turned to put their students first, they also worked hard to ensure good performance and achievement of their students.

9.3.4 Transmitting Knowledge

All the teachers in the current study were actively committed to imparting knowledge to their students with the strong conviction that transformation of the society came through education. For instance Shaun stated that "I like transforming lives, transformation of the society comes from education". Dan also added

> "…everything about me is fun whenever I get to

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

> the classroom, I don‟t joke but whatever I do is to the benefit of my students so that they will understand me well. I have devised some strategies that help me to impact whatever I want to, to the students."

In describing the characteristics of a committed teacher, Fox (1964) specifies that "Perhaps the most important characteristic of the committed teacher is that he wants to teach and he wants do this well." Croswell (2006) confirms this dimension of teacher commitment when she found from her study that committed teachers consider the transmission of knowledge values, attitudes and beliefs a very important responsibility of theirs.

9.3.5 Engagement with the School Community

In their commitment to engage with the school environment, the teachers like Dan, Sally, Ethan and Tracy were involved in extracurricular activities by supervising students, checking students‟ indiscipline and ensuring the school was conducive for learning. Ethan mentioned that

> "I took it upon myself to go round and sack student into the classroom. They will wait and see me before they start running. The rate at which students go out to the ladies or gents is a bit alarming".

Tracy reported that

> "…part of the duties of the house mistress is to go around the dormitory and ensure that the students have cleaned their plots and laid their beds, check the bath

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

> room toilet everywhere and I must do that before I come for morning devotion at 6:30. You have to wake up with them at 4:00 with the rising bell and make sure they do their work because you have to inspect before you leave the dormitory."

Croswell (2006) confirms that teachers who conceptualize teacher comment as engagement with the school community discuss that their responsibilities goes beyond classroom teaching. In the current study the teachers were willingly involved with activities outside classroom teaching. This took the form of teachers being part of the committees in the school, or checking indiscipline of students on the school campus. Their willingness to engage with the school community was also evident when the teachers took positions as house parent to supervise students on extra-curricular activities.

9.3.6 Prestige

The teachers who fell into this dimension of teacher commitment were committed to the teaching profession because of the prestige that came with. The teachers who were Dan and Tracy stated they were admired by the town folk and were respected by parents, students and other colleague teachers. This was especially because Dan and Tracy who house parents. As house parents, the parents of students, placed their children in their care. Fox (1964) revealed that a committed teacher enjoys his/her work with students and colleagues and every member of the community knows. And as a result he/ she generates admiration and respect.

9.3.7 Being There For Others

The Ethan, and Dan exhibited their commitment by being there for their colleague

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

teachers. By standing in for them when they were not available. And by this showed they support each other. Ethan elaborated that "Whenever a teacher is not around I have to move to the class and go and help out there and they would do the same for me." Not much has been discussed on this dimension of teacher commitment in the literature. Instead there is much literature on the negative relationship between teachers and their colleagues. It would therefore be helpful for teachers to render support to their colleagues that is worthwhile to help build a supportive teaching environment (Motseke, 1998).

9.3.8 Role model

The teacher who ascribed to this dimension of teacher commitment was willing to live a life worthy of emulation. Ethan was therefore committed to been a good role model for his students by living a "morally upright life". This finding conformed to that of Fox (1964) who stated that "perhaps no single facet of a teacher's personality is more important than his moral character" (p.20)

Fox (1964) speculates that young students are mostly in their formative years and teachers are very likely to influence the outcome of their characters. He further contends that committed teachers have an obligation to the moral lives of the students. In this Fox (1964) cites Max Lerner as he stated that "the faculty does have a moral role to play in the life of a student far more important than any disciplinary role it may have" (p. 19). Then again not much is written on teachers exhibiting their commitment as being good role models to their students.

9.3.9 Professional Development

The evidence arising from this study indicated that in their commitment to professional development all the teachers were proactive in keeping themselves up to

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

date with current relevant knowledge from their subject area. Croswell (2006) confirms teacher commitment as maintaining professional knowledge. Croswell (2006) sustains that teachers who are committed to maintaining professional knowledge considers it their responsibility to persistently update themselves with knowledge on their profession and subject area. From the findings of this study all the teachers were zealous about furthering their education. For instance Ethan, Tracy and Shaun were pursuing their M. Phil. Sally and Dan expressed the desire to do same. Sugden (2013) concurs to this assertion when he affirms that "commitment may take the form of gaining and developing professional knowledge" (p.162). More so, some of the teachers (Dan and Sally) were dedicated WAEC examiners and as such were delighted to sharing knowledge they acquired from exams coordination and from the chief examiners report with their colleagues. All the teachers reported they did adequate research on the topics they intended to teach before teaching them.

9.4 Stress Experiences of Teachers

The stress experience of the teachers in this study were varied. As a result they have been divided into six major themes. They are stress from extra-curricular responsibilities, workload, students" misbehaviour, inadequate teaching and learning resources, remuneration and stress experienced from responsibilities outside the school environment.

9.4.1 Extra- Curricular Responsibilities

Most of the teachers that is, Dan, Tracy, Sally and Ethan reported they were stressed the most when they performed extra-curricular responsibilities. The extra-curricular

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

activities these teachers in the study said increased their stress experience were mainly supervision of student"s work on campus and in their dormitories. For in instance, Dan stated that

> "As for teaching it has become my hobby so I do not find any stress in that, but with the extracurricular responsibilities, like checking for students to weed their plots, sometimes dining food might not be ready, sometimes some teachers will be organizing extra classes which keeps students from work and it makes organizing students for work very difficult. To me the extracurricular activities are more stressful than teaching."

Contrary to the findings of this study, Motseke (1998) found that the teachers in his study were less stressed when engaging in extra-curricular activities. The reason for his conclusion stems from the idea that the teachers in his study spend approximately two hours a week on extra-curricular activities with adequate facilities in their school. From the current study however, the teachers spend several hours in the morning supervising student work. The teachers had to get up early so they could perform their extra-curricular responsibilities and then prepare for class. In overseeing students, teachers who were house parents had taken up resident in the dormitory with their student. The teachers complained of excessive noise making and disturbance by student. The students were noted to constantly knock on their door and even call on these teacher at ungodly hours. Younghusband (2005) agrees with the findings of this study when he discusses that the extra-curricular activities place an added demand, on teachers which they found to be stressful. He discussed that not only does the extra-curricular activities add to their responsibilities they worried over the time spent on these activities and for been held accountable if anything should happen to the

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

students under their supervision.

Another stressful part of extra- curricular activities for the teachers in this study was that, the extra-curricular duties sometimes took the teachers away from class leading to role conflict.

9.4.2 Students' Misbehaviour

The stress experience of all the teachers, Dan, Sally, Ethan, and Shaun and Tracy was increased by student indiscipline and apathy. Concerning student‟s indiscipline for instance, Ethan said it stress him up that he had to chase loitering students to their classroom every day. All of the teachers in this study expressed, as a result of the students behaviour they had to be constantly supervised by the teachers which was stressful for them. Tracy felt students were not discipline when it came to working on the school compound. Tracy and Dan stated their stress came from difficulty in handling students. It was stressful for Tracy that the students could not work on their own and they always had to be supervised. Dan stated he was stressed when he had to sack students who run out of school back to the classroom. The teachers in the study of Younghusband (2005) also saw it as stressful for them to be patrolling the corridors of the school and superintend over the school yard and bussing of students.

In looking further at student misbehaviour as a source of teacher stress, some of the teachers in this study also expressed their stress and disappointment over students‟ involvement in immoral and unhealthy relationships. Younghusband (2005) postulate that the teachers experienced stress from managing student‟s disruptive behaviour. The teachers had to spend substantial amount of time managing students disruptive behave according to Younghusband (2005) this detracted teacher from effective teaching. Dan elaborated that his stress experience was further increased when he incurred the displeasure of parents when he corrected the students.

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

Another aspect of student indiscipline that stressed the teachers out in the current study was students‟ lack of motivation to learn, their inattentiveness in the classroom and their apathy. (Naylor, 2001) researched into student‟s apathy and stated that it was challenging for teachers to constantly motivate students to learn. Naylor (2001) further explained that educators are under intense pressure to retain students in school and help them achievement their best in terms of their academic. This he describes as impossible when some students hold very little interest in academic work. The teachers in this study expressed their stress was further escalated by students‟ absenteeism. They expressed their frustration over students choosing to skip lesson for no tangible reasons.

9.4.3 Workload

More so, from this study the teachers; Dan, Sally, Tracy and Ethan complained their stress emanated from heavy workload. They expressed their stress came from too many periods, too many students, too many scripts to mark and too little teachers (inadequate teachers). For instance Sally stated she had to take up seven (7) extra periods in addition to the 30 periods she already had because their department lacked teachers. They had only six English teachers for a student population of about 1700. Adding to this Arikewuyo (2004) expressed that the issue of inadequate teachers continue to plunge the Nigerian educational system. And as a result of the inadequate number of teachers, much workload has been placed on the teachers available (Arikewuyo, 2004).

Motseke (1998) stated that teachers who taught more than 40 periods per week were stressed while teachers who taught less than 40 periods a week were less stressed. Motseke (1998) assertions does not agree with the finding of this study. This could be

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

because the teachers in his study had smaller classes; 30 student per a class as compared to this study, in which the teachers had double that amount of students; (at least 65 students per class). The other reason for his assertion was the teachers in his study had less minutes in one period as compared to the present study were teachers had to teach for 45 minutes every given period.

Further on, the teachers in the current study said their stress increased with the absence of their colleagues. The teachers felt that when colleague teachers left their post for sandwich programs their classes becomes their responsibility. Ahrendse (2008) stated the teachers in his study complained of an increase in their heavy workload when they had to invigilate the classes of their absentee colleagues. He asserted that this was especially when the absent teachers in question were not sick.

From the findings of this study, adding to the stress experience of teachers was the ability level of their student. Ethan for example stated some of his students could hardly write their names correctly and lacked basic skills in wording, spelling, and word and sentence contraction. His workload increased because he had to put in extra work on the students to prepare them for WACE and the tertiary institution. Ahrendse (2008) conducted a study of three under- resourced senior high schools in Western Cape. He was cited as saying that learner's lack of basic reading and writing skills was increasing the workload of teachers greatly and it caused them a great deal of stress. Ahrendse (2008) stated that teachers had heavy workload but yet "teachers still have to contend with learners who cannot even write or read" (p. 64).

The teachers in this study particularly the female teachers; Tracy and Sally felt stressed because their workload was spilling into their time at home. Time which was meant to be spent taking care of their families. Sally commented that

"when I get home as a mother I have to take care

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

> of my kids and see to their wellbeing but I have lesson notes to prepare, exercise to mark, you have questions to set, because I am teaching throughout the day I can't mark, and have to do that after school and it affects me in the house."

Kyriacou and Chien (2004) also pointed to the same assertion in their study in Taiwan, when they found out the heavy workload was the main source of stress for teachers, not only female teachers.

9.4.4 Inadequate Tools for Teaching and Learning

From the findings the teachers; Sally, Tracy, Ethan and Dan stated they were stressed from the poor infrastructure in their school and the inadequate teaching and learning resources. Evidence from study indicated that the school buildings were not weather friendly and it became difficult for teachers to teach under extreme weather conditions. Ethan enumerated that, "The infrastructure sometime when it is raining you can't teach because the classrooms leaks and it really becomes a problem." Another stressful situation for all these teachers was that there were no chairs for them in the classrooms. This made it stressful for them having to stand for hours teaching. Another evidence to the stress experienced by teachers in this study was the inadequate supply of teaching and learning resources. Sally stated that

> "Sometimes you do not get the teaching and learning materials, sometimes a simple marker they give a marker for a whole week which is not enough and text books for the kids to learn especially when we are teaching comprehension and summary we need a passage to read."

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

The findings of Younghusband (2005) concurs to the finding of this study when she reported that the teachers in her study felt extremely stressed when they had to deal with inadequate resources in school. She stated for instance that inadequate text books for students, the use of outdated text books, inadequate space, inadequate equipment and supplies as adding to the pressure of teachers.

9.4.5 Remuneration

The participants in this study were stressed as they had poor salaries. All the teachers indicated that their salaries were not enough to take care of their needs and that of their family. Having to live on a very tight budget for the whole month stressed the teachers out. Shaun pointed out that

> "It can't be enough, I have a family and considering the economic situation it is not enough. I have to school fees to pay, I have a family to cater for and myself, I have to pay rent, and pay light bill so 1000 Ghana can't be enough."

The study of Tawjihi teachers by Alghaswyneh (2012) affirms that inadequate salaries, promotion system and the relatively low status of teachers was often described by the teachers in her study as a major source of stress. Alghaswyneh revealed the teachers in her study felt that individuals in different careers climbed the career ladder for higher promotion, but in the case of teachers, a teacher always stayed a teacher no matter their experience, qualifications or the number of years they have worked. The current study found that both male and female teachers found their salaries were inadequate. Naidoo et al. (2013) on the other hand, reported that their findings disagreed with the widely held assumption that low salaries was causing teachers to be stressed. Their study revealed the teachers were content with the

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

salaries they received.

9.4.6 Responsibilities Outside School

There was evidence from this study to support that teachers; Sally, Tracy, Dan and Shaun were stressed from various factors and responsibilities present in their homes. The factors that caused teachers to experience stress out of school were poor accommodation, the distance between their homes to the school, and stress coming from their families. For instance Sally stated the distance to school form her resident to campus was a challenge for her. She mentioned it was particularly stressful for her because she had to spend much of her salary on taxi fare.

Evidence from the study indicated that the accommodation provided by the school for teachers outside campus, at the school‟s old site was overcrowded. The teachers were stressed because several families had to share limited facilities like the bathroom and toilet. Alghaswyneh (2012) conveyed that the accommodation provided for teachers in her study was a huge source of stress to them. The participants from Alghaswyneh‟s study revealed they experienced stress because the accommodation they were given by the school lacked basic facilities and the conditions of the residence were very poor.

The issues emanating from the families of the teachers also increased their stress experience. In that they had to deal with a variety of responsibilities to their families. Sally and Dan‟s stress came from taking care of ailing parents on a meagre salary. Tracy and Sally were stressed combing motherhood with teaching. And Shaun experienced stress form checking on his wayward teenage son.

9.5 Stress with Commitment

The finding brought to light that the stress and commitment of teachers was interwoven.

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

9.5.1 Transmission of Knowledge and Stress

In their commitment to transmitting knowledge to students, some of the teachers; Dan and Sally in the current study had taken on extra classes so the students will not have to do without teachers. The teachers considered this as stressful because more classes meant heavier workload. The teachers also had to contend with poor infrastructure and teaching students who lacked attention and motivation to learn. Heavy workload, teaching students who lack motivation and poor working conditions have frequently being established as some of the major sources of stress for teachers (Kyriacou, 2001; Ngobeni, 2006; Ozturk, 2011). In this study teachers were actively committed to imparting knowledge to their students with the strong conviction that transformation of the society came through knowledge from education.

9.5.2 Investment of Extra Time and Stress

From the findings of the study, teacher commitment as investment of extra time outside official contact hours with on the job was evident. This was confirmed by the study of (Croswell, 2006) who indicated that the proof of teacher commitment as investment of extra time could be viewed in two main ways. They were visible time spent on campus or invisible time off campus (Croswell 2006). From the findings of this study the teachers like Sally, invested extra time when she took scripts home to mark, prepared lesson notes, and took time out, outside school hours to advise students on their moral and academic lives. By committing extra time to their work the Ethan and Dan were faced with stress from having to constantly address student's immoral behaviours and student's misbehaviour. Younghusband (2005) affirmed from her study that teachers labeled the countless hours spent outside official school time as stressful since it increased the pressure they felt. She further indicated from her study that the teachers ever so often felt "resentful" when their jobs "encroached" on their

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

personal time (Younghusband, 2005 p. 144). Even though the respondents in this current study did not show any resentment for committing extra time into their work, they stated it added to their stress just like the respondent in Younghusband‟s study.

9.5.3 Engagement with School Community and Stress

The teachers; Dan, Ethan, Tracy, Sally from the present study showed they were committed to the school environment where they taught. From this study the activities which spoke of the teachers‟ commitment to their school environment involved teachers being part of committees in the school, supervising student work and checking indiscipline of students on the school campus. The commitment of these teachers like Dan and Tracy was also seen in their willingness to engage with the school community when they took positions as house parents. The stress these teachers encountered while staying committed to the school environment were heavy workload, student‟s disturbance, difficulty handling students checking intruders, student‟s indiscipline, combing motherhood with teaching, role conflict, inadequate salary checking on teachers and students, short hours of sleep and stress from extra-curricular responsibilities. Alghaswyneh (2012) from her study reported that the teachers taking on additional periods and administrative duties stated their responsibilities contributed to their workload and ultimately their stress experience.

9.5.4 Needs of Learners and Stress

The current research established that all the teachers were commitment to the needs (social and academic) of the students. By focusing on the needs of students, the findings of this study revealed that the teachers were stressed by students‟ apathy, lack of parental support, student‟s absenteeism and inadequate teaching and learning resources. A similar concern was raised by teachers in the study of Younghusband (2005) when the teachers said they were stressed because they had to manage the

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

many social and emotional needs learners brought to the school. The teachers stated in Younghusband"s study that their students had enormous difficulties that often required their attention, as sometime these difficulties went outside the scope of teaching and learning. Younghusband"s study affirmed that teachers are stressed when committed to focusing on the social and academic needs of their students.

9.5.5 Relationship between Stress and Commitment

This study uncovered that the stress and commitment of all the teachers were interwoven, one not necessarily proceeding the other. This means that teachers" commitment was seen in most of the things the teachers were engaged in, that they found stressful. Also the stress of teachers brought to light their commitment. Therefore the same avenues and responsibilities teachers were involved with created both stress and commitment for teachers. It can therefore be inferred from the findings of this study that as the stress of teachers increased so did their commitment and vice versa. This was in line with the work of Jepson and Forest (2006) who in their study found a negative relationship between stress experienced by teachers and their organizational commitment. They discussed that as the stress of these teachers increased so did their commitment. Jepson and Forest stated this was because individual factors such as personality type moderated the impact of stress on the teachers. And contrary to the findings of this study was the findings of Chapman (2013). Chapman indicated from her study that teachers with high career commitment experience less stress. She stated this was because teachers in her study were more satisfied with their jobs.

The study also found that some the stress experience of teachers were mandatary and imposed by virtue of the positions they hold in their school. For instance Dan and Tracy were house parents and were mandated to supervise and inspect work done by

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

student. They also had to perform other extra-curricular responsibilities. There was also Sally, who was a form mistress and H.O.D. of the English department. With Sally also, due to her position she had to supervise teachers and with that she could hardly overlook. There was also another aspect of her commitment and stress that was self-imposed for instance she took up seven extra periods no teacher in her department wanted because she was concerned for the academic progress of her students. With Ethan the activities that stressed him most were self-imposed because he had no formal obligation to perform these responsibilities. He was committed to ensuring discipline on the school compound and discipline in the moral and academic lives of students.

9.6 Coping Strategies

The teachers employed coping strategies to deal with their stress these were positive thinking, preparation, experience, humour, prayer, entertainment, social support, and escape. The coping strategies outlined from the findings of the study can be grouped into three that is problem- focused coping, emotion-focused coping and avoidance coping. In problem focused coping the strategies were positive thinking, experience and preparation. With emotion-focused coping the strategies were humour, prayer, and entertainment. In avoidance coping the strategy categorized under it were escape and relaxation.

9.6.1 Problem- Focused

Problem focused coping are usually adopted in situations that an individual appraises as changeable or when the actions of an individual can change a situation for the better (Avero et al., 2003). This means that problem focused coping is a purposive action by individuals channelled at eliminating the source of individuals stress in their

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

environment or reducing the stress to the barest minimum. Positive thinking falls under problem focused coping because it put the individual in a state of mind to build up strategies to deal with their stress. By not focusing on the negative effect of stress and by positive thinking for instance, Shaun was able to cope his stress. Shaun elaborates from the study that he dealt with his stress by mentally preparing himself to face hectic and challenging days. This echoed the findings of Ahrendse (2008) who found it very admirable that the teachers in his study resorted to positive thinking when dealing with their stress. And through positive thinking they found positive ways out of stressful situations.

Another problem focused coping element employed by the teachers in this study was drawing on their experiences. The teachers were better able to deal with their stress because of the experience they have had so far as teachers. For instance Shaun had taught for the past 21 years, and therefore drew on his experiences to help him deal with challenging situations. He insisted he did not allow challenging situations to pull down but rather he focused on positive thinking and finding solutions to stressful events. Kilinc, Recepoglu and Kosar (2015) postulate that the greater the teaching experience of teachers, the more they opt for controlling themselves and using positive approaches and behaviours when faced with stressful situations. Kilinc et al. (2015) suggested from their study that teachers who had 11- 20 or above years of working experience were temperate and calmer when faced with challenges as compared to teachers who had 1-10 years of working experience.

Moving on, another problem focused coping strategy the teachers; Dan, Tracy, Sally, Shaun, Ethan in the current study adopted was preparation. Planning ahead of time and been prepared for events and happenings in and out of school helped these teachers cope with their stress. In their preparation they planned ahead and made

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

certain to manage their time well. The findings of the study was in line with Hadji (2010) who posits that positive and timely planning by teachers help reduce their stress levels significantly.

9.6.2 Emotion- Focused Coping

Vigil (2005) opine that the emotion-focused coping "… consists of individual's effort to control the emotional distress associated with a situation" (p.4). Devonport and Lane (2006) posit that emotion focused coping are used to regulate emotions associated with situation or events an individual assess as stressful. Avero et al. (2003) explains that emotion focused coping is adopted when situations that cause stress are viewed as unchangeable Ethan, Dan, Tracy, and Shaun used prayer which falls in the emotion focused coping category to deal with their stress. The finding revealed that the teachers felt at easy when they prayed. They felt that they had given their burdens they could not change to a Supreme Being who can do all things. Buys et al. (2009) cited in Bearschank (2010) confirms the finding of this study when they mentioned that teachers when faced with problems from students resort to prayer. Buys et al. (2009) reported that the teachers believe that when they pray for their learners, God hears them and responses to their prayer thereby reducing their stress. But on the contrary the teachers in the current study did not talk about praying for their students, but mentioned they prayed for themselves instead, for strength to deal with their stress.

Entertainment also forms part of emotion focused coping. For example Dan stated entertaining himself with music and movies was part of the coping strategies he employed to deal with his stress as a teacher. Ahrendse (2006) found from his study that many of the teachers used music to combat their stress.

The teachers also resorted to support from family and friends to deal with stressful

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

situations. For instance Dan explained that he got much help from his wife when dealing with stress. Sally also acknowledged the help of her husband when dealing with stress from household chores. Younghusband (2005) conducted a study that showed that teachers acknowledged support from their colleges, helped serve as a buffer against stress.

Dan and Shaun from the findings of the study used humour in coping with their stress. When these teachers were stressed out, having a good laugh helped easy them of tension. Dan mentioned he also entertained himself with students who were funny and could tell jokes to make him laugh. Shaun on the other hand commented that "I move around to anywhere I can laugh on campus, anywhere I will find someone to say something for me to laugh." This means humour helped teachers regulate the emotion associated with stress, this goes to say that humour falls into the category of emotion focused coping. Although Kuger (1992) cited in Motseke (1998) established that there is no significant relationship between humour and stress in his study. Kerr et al. (2011) in their study of Ireland secondary school teachers, accounted that teachers diverted attention from stress using humour.

Finally the findings of this study indicated that Dan and Shaun felt better and were able to keep their stress in check when they exercised. These exercises included running, walking and playing football. Selye (1965) postulate that stress is a physiological processes that makes the body become aware it has come under attack (Motseke, 1998). Selye (1956) continues by saying that due to the tension created by stress there is the discharges of glucose and fatty substances by the body, which becomes hazardous to the health of individuals if they are unable to utilise it through exercise. Physical exercise help individuals to take in the proper amount of oxygen required to burn the glucose and fatty substances released by the body when under

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

stress (Motseke, 1998). Ahrendse (2008) discussed that the teachers in his study exercised through yoga and other sporting activities to help minimize their stress.

9.6.3 Avoidance Coping

Endler and Parker (1999) postulates that avoidance coping involves "activities and cognitive changes aimed at avoiding a stressful situation" (Avero et al., 2003 p.844). Avoidance coping is usual used in situation that is seen as uncontrollable (Avero et al., 2003). Ethan from the findings of this study used avoidance coping by taking a day or two off from school when he had no lessons. This was clearly to escape when he could from the stress he felt. The teachers like Tracy and Shaun who used escape to cope with their stress, also did this by seeking solitude and forgetting about whatever situation caused him/ her stress.

Also Sally stated she escaped from her stress by ignoring some of her responsibilities. Sally mentioned she ignored some of her responsibilities so she could prioritized and deal with the most pending ones. Ahrendse (2008) confirmed the findings of the current study when he found out from his research that some of the teachers ignored their stress and problems as a way of coping. Ahrendse (2008) concluded avoidance coping was negative. The current study however revealed otherwise, avoidance was a way for the teachers to have a break, catch their breath and regroup to face their challenges. Atkinson (1988) and Otto (1986) revealed that when teachers are able to distant themselves from their pressure and problems it helps them avoid any kind of panic that may be a result of their stress (Motseke, 1998).

Another aspect of avoidance coping employed by the teachers (Tracy, Ethan, and Sally) in this study was relaxation. The findings indicated the teachers when stressed, would lay down on their sofa forget about everything that caused them stress

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

throughout the day to relax. The teachers also stated they employed the relaxation technique by tuning everything out and sleeping off. From this submission relaxation also creates a way of escape for the teachers from their stress. Humphrey and Humphrey (1986) reveals that, it is important to consciously and progressively, relax tensed muscle, which should begin with muscles in the face, hands, feet going on to the entire body when stressed (Motseke, 1998). This Humphrey and Humphrey added will help individuals cope effectively with stress (Motseke, 1998).

9.7 Model of Teacher Stress and Commitment

The conceptual framework of the study reflected that a teacher"s choice of coping; problem- focused coping and emotion-focused coping on one side or avoidance coping on the other would determine whether the teachers are committed or not, when faced with stressful situations. The findings of the study however indicated that stress and commitment of teachers are interwoven, they are like two sides of the same coin and go hand in hand. Another interesting inference that can be made from this study was that the coping strategies used by the teachers served as a buffer against the extreme end of stress but not a determining factor to teachers being committed or not. This is demonstrated in the diagram below. As a result the coping strategies used when dealing with stress; problem focused coping, emotion focused coping or avoidance coping was used by teachers to ease their stress to an optimal level and make their stress manageable. That is the coping strategies helped the teachers ease the pressure of stress mounted on them daily. But it did not mean the teachers who choose avoidance coping were not committed as conceptualized at the beginning of the study.

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

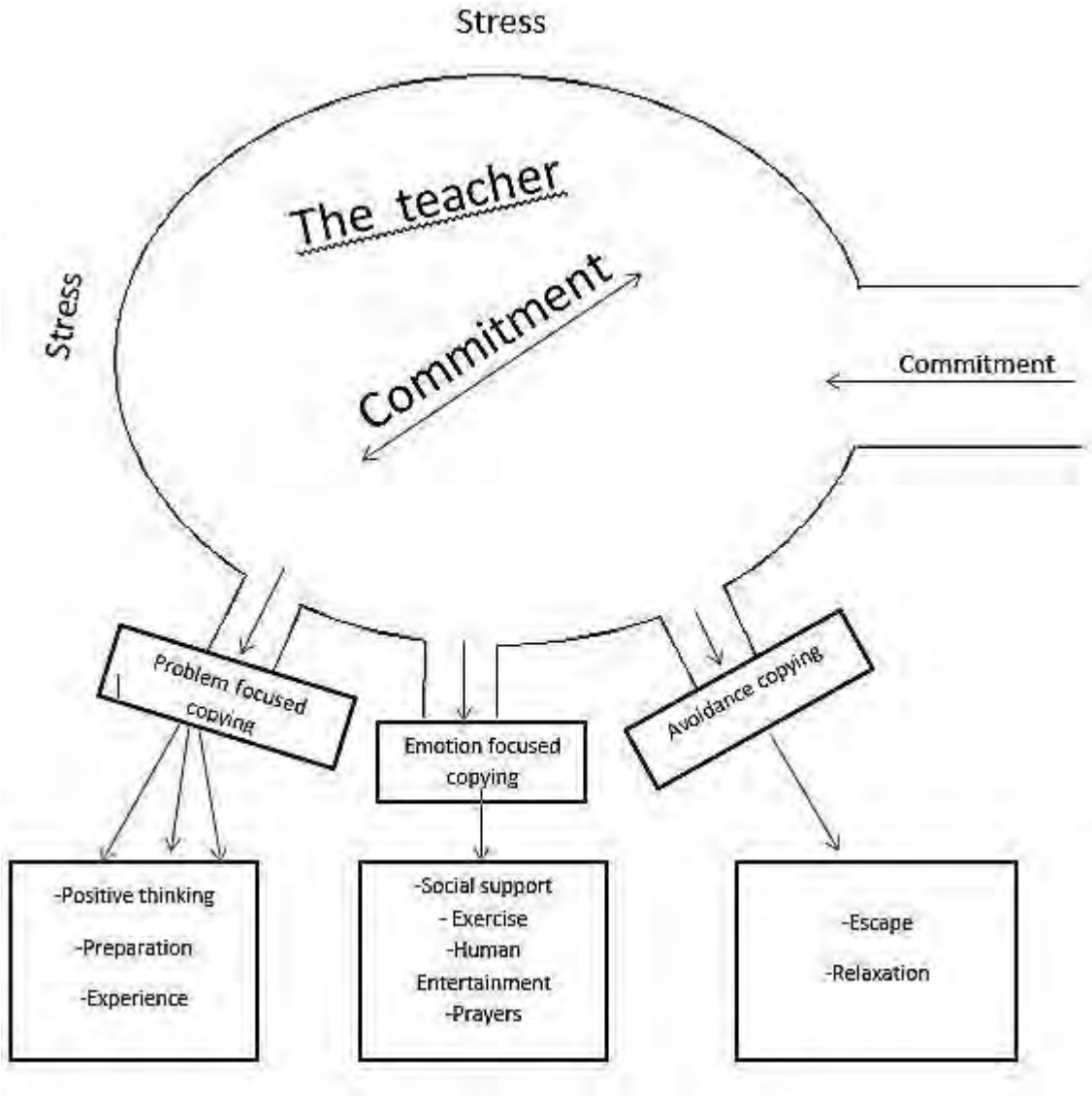


Figure 3: Model of Teacher Stress and Commitment

Source: Authors construct

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

CHAPTER TEN

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 Introduction

This chapter provides the summary of the current study and interprets its contribution to knowledge, examines the research implications, offers recommendations, in addition presents the limitations of the study and overall conclusions. The chapter begins with a review of the research questions of the study and how these questions were addressed by the study. The next section discusses the contribution of the study to knowledge, offering rich insight and the description of specific implications to research, policy and practice. Moving on the chapter discusses the limitations of the study and presents recommendations for future research. The chapter ends with an overall conclusion of the study.

10.2 Review of Research Question

The purpose of the study was to describe the relationship between teachers‟ stress and their commitment. The study was set as a case study in the Fanteakwa District. This study sought a better understanding of teacher commitment using literature on teacher commitment as proposed by Elliot and Crosswell (2002). This was significant because Elliot and Crosswell (2002) presented a conceptualization of teacher commitment that was unique to the teaching profession. From a review of the literature it was discovered that the research on teacher stress and commitment were mainly quantitative studies and left the voice of the teachers out. As a result most of the literature on teacher commitment used organisational commitment to “measure” teacher commitment again leaving out the voice of teachers. Also teacher stress and commitment has received little attention from developing countries like Ghana.

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

Finally, there is the issue that the teaching profession is unique in many ways hence the need to explore the perception of teacher commitment based on a theory or model of teacher commitment.

In order to achieve the purpose of the study and solve the research problem, the study was guided by four research questions, they were:

1. How do teachers perceive stress and commitment?
2. What are the stress experiences of teachers?
3. What are the coping strategies that teachers adopt in dealing with their stress?
4. What is the relationship between teacher stress and commitment?

The research questions of the study were addressed as follows:

- Chapter two (2) reviewed important literature on the theories underlining stress and the various definitions to stress. The literature also looked at the different factors that were responsible for the teacher,,s stress experience. The literature also examined relevant studies on teacher commitment and the relationship between teacher stress and commitment. The chapter discussed the conceptual framework for the study. The literature review ended by highlighting the research gaps in the literature.
- Chapter three (3) of this study examined the research methodology and discussed the research method for the study. The chapter discussed the choice of a qualitative study and justified the choice of a case study. This was followed by a discussion on the data collection techniques and data analysis employed for the study. The chapter ended with a discussion on the trustworthiness of the study.
- Chapter four to eight (4- 8) presented the empirical finding of the study. Each of these chapters carried a rigorous discussion of a case. These chapters

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

presenting the findings of the study began with a description of the case. This was followed by the commitment of the respondents without stress. The next section presented the commitment of respondents with stress. The coping strategies of respondents were presented next. And each chapter ended with a discussion of the stress, commitment and coping of the respondents.

- Chapter nine (9) of this study discussed the findings of the study with relevant literature, in order to answer the research questions. The stress experience of teachers discussed in this chapter were stress due to extra-curricular responsibilities, remuneration, student's misbehaviour, responsibilities outside school, workload and inadequate tools for teaching and learning. The stress perception of teachers discussed were stress as stimulus, response to stimulus and stress in the interactionist perspective. The perception of commitment discussed were commitment as focus on the needs of student; passion, transmission of knowledge, engagement with the school community, investment of extra time, as professional development, being a role model, being there for others, and commitment as prestige. The discussion also presented teacher stress and commitment as interwoven. The final section of the discussion examined the new model of teacher stress and commitment as proposed from the current study.

10.3 Contribution to Knowledge

According to Yin (1989) there are four main ways a case study research can contribute to knowledge (Walsham, 1995). They are "*the development of concepts, the generation of theory, the drawing of specific implications, and the contribution of rich insight*" (Walsham, 1995 p. 79). Therefore based on this premise the study shows how

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

it contributes to knowledge by offering a new model of teacher stress and commitment. The study also provides rich insight, and draws on specific implications which involves implications for policy, practice and research.

10.3.1 Contribution to Theory

Myers (1997) asserts that a case study"s contribution to theory can be ascertained when the researcher has been able to bring about or apply a new concept or theory. The current study contributed to theory by proposing a conceptual framework at the beginning of the study. The framework brought concepts of teacher stress by Kyriacou (2001), concepts of coping (problem focused, emotion focused and avoidance coping) from Lazarus (1993); Endler and Parker (1999). And later in the study generated a new model of teacher stress and commitment based on the interpretations of the findings of the study. This new model of stress and commitment (see figure 3) issued that teacher stress and commitment are interwoven. Where the stress of teachers can be seen their commitment can be found as well. And that teacher commitment does not serve as a buffer to stress but instead it is inevitably connected to teacher stress they like two side to a coin, going side by side. The model specifies that coping serves as a buffer to stress, where the various coping strategies whether avoidant coping, problem focused coping or emotion focused coping served as a channel for the pressure that comes from teacher stress due to their commitment to escape. When teachers are able to use coping strategies it effectively helps them to manage their stress to an optimal level to prevent a state of burnout.

10.3.2 Offering Rich Insight

The current study offers rich insight into stress and commitment of teachers in the Fanteakwa District. The study looked into the concept of teacher commitment as it

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

pertains to the teaching environment not as organizational commitment. This was based on the idea that the teaching profession is unique which has many variables that cannot be found in other professions. The current study found that the perception of teacher commitment were teacher commitment as passion, investment of extra time, focus on the needs of students, professional development, transmission of knowledge, prestige, being a role model and commitment as being there for others. This means that some aspects of the commitment which has already been stated earlier as interwoven with stress, comes from the heart of the teachers where, it was not mandatory for them to be committed to certain aspect of the teaching profession. And another which is that some aspect of teacher commitment were mandatory by virtues of the responsibilities as teachers.

This study discovered that the stress experience of teachers were due to extra-curricular responsibilities, work overload, remuneration, students misbehaviour and responsibilities outside the school. The study also found that the teachers applied a variety of coping strategies to manage their stress. These strategies were exercise, planning, escape, experience, relaxation, prayer and entertainment. This study on teacher stress and commitment uncovered that the stress and commitment of teachers are interwoven, one not necessarily taking place before the other. The study also found that some of the stress experience of teachers were imposed by virtue of the positions they held in their school, hence their responsibilities were mandatary. The other part of the stress they experienced was rather self-imposed and not mandatary. The teachers whose stress were self-imposed were under no obligation to perform these responsibilities that increased their stress experience and as such the teachers could not easily escape them.

The study offered insight into the idea that coping can influence the outcome of the

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

relationship between stress and commitment of teachers. This variable of coping was missing in the studies that examined the relationship between stress and commitment. This study offered that coping strategies served as a buffer against the effects of teacher stress. All the various coping strategies employed by the teachers in the study were effective as they all contributed to making the stress of teachers manageable and they were mostly effective when combined. And it was inferred from the study that as the stress of teachers increased so did their commitment and vice versa.

10.3.3 Implication for Research

Concerning the issue of research, this study would be beneficial in adding relevant knowledge to teacher stress and its relationship to teacher commitment in schools. The study revealed that the combination of the various copings strategies help teachers to effectively deal with their stress. The study provided new insight into stress and commitment and established that stress and commitment are interwoven. This study therefore adds to the body of knowledge by bridging the gap when it comes to research on teacher stress and commitment in developing countries like Ghana and specifically in the Fanteakwa District. Also the empirical findings of this research would serve as literature for future studies that would be conducted in the area of teacher stress and its relationship with teacher commitment in Ghana.

10.3.4 Implications for Practice

Concerning practice, the study would create the awareness in schools that teacher stress and commitment are inevitably interwoven. This means schools should be prepared to help teachers manage their stress if they want committed teachers. The schools for starter should do away with the mind-set of eliminating stress because that would mean eliminating commitment, and rather adopt strategies that would help teachers manage their stress. For instance the schools could organise stress

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

management workshops for their teachers. The school should also encourage teacher to talk about their stress so that they can collectively find ways of helping teacher manage their stress.

10.3.5 Implication for Policy

In looking at the researcher‟s concern to policy, this study on stress in the school among teachers can provide insight into the phenomenon of teacher stress and commitment. This study would help stakeholders (Ministry of education, Ghana Education Service) to better understand the phenomenon of teacher stress and address in their plans to see to the concern of teacher remuneration, teacher accommodation and inadequate teaching and learning material available to teachers, that influences stress the of teacher but does not influence their commitment positively. In all the study could inform stakeholders of education to implement plans to create a supportive atmosphere for teachers in schools.

10.4 Limitation of the study

The study was conducted as a case study. There is a high possibility that findings from case studies could be influenced by the personal opinions and beliefs of the researcher, leading to subjectivity (Muijs, 2004). I had developed some understandings and had some preconceived notions about the behaviour of some respondents in the context of the study. The researcher began with the notion that the teachers in the District had less work demands and were absent often. This view was informed by the researcher seeing some the teachers driving taxis and others selling goods during school hours. Therefore, there could have been the temptation of allowing the interpretation of the interview data to fit these preconceptions rather than allowing the data to speak for itself. Being aware of this, I deliberately “avoided relying on initial intuitive interpretations rooted in my own personal experience” as

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

advised by Davis (2002, p.7). The researcher reported the study based on the evidence found in the field while conducting the study.

Another limitation of this study was related to the sampling of the population of the study. Only five teachers in one senior high school was used because of time, financial constraints and other practicalities, such as interviewees cancelling at the last minute. Although participants from the other schools in the District could have been added, the researcher was limited by time to produce her research work, as a result she had to forgo some of the schools.

10.5 Recommendations for Future Research

This section of the current study elaborates on recommendations for future research. Evidently, it is not feasible to outline every potential avenue worthy of further research. Hence, the following has been found above all relevant, interesting and significant for future research.

In the first place, this study was conducted as a case study that focused on one school. For future research, it is recommended that a multiple case study including other schools should be conducted. Comparing, for instance the stress and commitment of a public school with a private school could help provide a broader perspective of the phenomenon of teacher stress and teacher commitment.

More so, future studies could look at a quantitative approach in order to fully test the generalizability of the outcomes of the current study over a wider population. The current outcomes of this study could be built up into a survey instrument for the collection of data nationwide. Even though a majority of studies on teacher stress and commitment employs the use of surveys, they were mostly inclined to be based on the organizational commitment instrument. A national context for this study would enhance the finding of the current study.

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

For future research, the effects of teacher stress could be investigated. The current study looked at the perception of teacher stress and commitment and the underling relationship that exists between them. Since the phenomenon of teacher stress and commitment are rarely investigated within the Ghanaian context such a study could help contribute to knowledge.

Finally it would be valuable to research teachers over a long period to ascertain if their stress and commitment changes throughout the course of their career. The findings of such a study would give an in-depth view of teacher stress and commitment at various stages in the career of teachers so that policy makers could address it in an effort to make the teaching profession more supportive for teachers.

10.6 Recommendation for Practice

It is recommended that the teacher who have extracurricular responsibilities, like the house masters, mistress and H.O.D be given fewer teaching time. When this is done these teacher will better manage stress coming from all accepts of the teaching profession. The head teachers and management of schools could organise retreat and forum which would allow the teacher to relax and share ideas on the things that stress them out and strategies they could adopt to better deal with their stress.

10.7 Recommendation for Policy

It is further recommended that policies should be made to ensure that all teachers at least, have a day off to destress. It has been established from this study that even on weekends teachers send their work home, they are occupied with it in addition to their house hold chores and managing stress from their social live and other commitments. The GES and the Ministry of Education should as a result institute a policies to give teachers a day off in every week to better manage their stress.

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

10.8 Conclusion

The present study began with the aim to understand the relationship between teacher stress and commitment in the Fanteakwa District. The study further looked at the perception of stress and commitment of teachers. Also this study looked into the stress experience of teacher and the coping strategies used by teacher to cope with their stress.

The findings of the study found that stress and commitment are interwoven. That is as the teachers engaged in activities that were stressful their commitment was seen and vice versa. It was also inferred from this study that as the stress of teachers increase so do their commitment. And as their commitment increased so did their stress. It is therefore essential for schools to note and prepare for teacher stress if they demand the commitment of teachers. School should endeavour to create a supportive working environment for teachers but not think of eliminating stress. This is because it was inferred from the study that eliminating stress could also mean getting rid of commitment.

The study also found against popular assumption in literature that teachers among other things perceived their commitment to mean being there for others, being a role model and in the light of their commitment born out of prestige.

The teachers used various coping strategies which fell under three main types of coping. That is, problem focused, emotion focused and avoidance coping. The study also found that a combination of the various coping strategies used to deal with stress helps in the effective management of stress. This study discovered one coping strategy is not more important or effective than the other but they all play a part in making teachers stress manageable. The findings of the study also presents that the various coping strategies instead of teacher commitment severed as a buffer to the feeling of

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

excessive strain and pressure that teachers come under as they exhibit their commitment.

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

REFERENCES

AbuMeteir, M. (2014, June 8). *Qualitative Research.* Retrieved from Sage Publications: sagepub.com

Adeoye, A. O., Aliu, A., and Solademi, A. (2012). Comparative Analysis of Factors Responsible for Job Stress in a Selected Public and Private University in Nigeria. *Greener Journal of Social Sciences 2(3)*, 115-120.

Agyedu, G. O., Donkor, F, and Obeng, S. (2011). *Teach yourself research methods.* Kumasi: University Press.

Ahrendse, G. C. (2008, November). Learning To Manage Workplace Stress As Practiced By Teachers At Three Under-Resourced Western Cape High Schools. Cape Town, South Africa.

Alghaswyneh, S. A. (2012, March). Teacher stress among Tawjihi teachers in Jordan and their adopted coping strategies to reduce stress. Huddersfield, Jordan.

Anandasayanan, S., and Subramaniam, V. A. (2013, March). Effect Of Stress On Teachers‟ Performance With Special Reference To Jaffna District Schools. Jaffna, Sri Lanka.

Arikewuyo, M. O. (2004). Stress management strategies of secondary school teachers in Nigeria. *Educational Research 46(2)*, 195-207.

Averoa, P., Coraceb, K. M., Endler, N. S., and Calvoa, M. G. (2003). Coping styles and threat processing. *Personality and Individual Differences vol. 35*, 843–861.

Bearschank, D. (2010, May). Sources Of Stress For Teachers At High Risk Secondary Schools In The Western Cape. Cape Town, South Africa.

Betoret, F. D. (2006). Stressors, Self-Efficacy, Coping Resources, and Burnout among Secondary School Teachers in Spain. *Educational Psychology: An International Journal of Experimental Educational Psychology*, 519-539.

Blaug, R., Kenyon, A., and Lekhi, R. (2007). *Stress at Work.* London: the work foundation.

Bogdan, R. C., and Biklen, S. K. (2007). *ualitative research for education :*

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

Anintroduction to theories and methods. Boston: Pearson.

Boglera, R., and Somech, A. (2004). Influence of teacher empowerment on teachers‟ organizational commitment, professional commitment and organizational citizenship behavior in schools. *Teaching and Teacher Education 20 (2004)* , 277–289.

Borg, M., Falzon, J., and Riding, R. (1991). Stress in teaching: A study of occupational and its determinants, job satisfaction and career commitment among primary school teachers. *Educational Psychology vol.11*, 59-75.

Bowling, A. (2002). *Research Methods in Health: Investigating Health and Health Services*. Buckingham: Open University Press.

Broadbridge, A. (2002). Retail managers: their work stressors and coping strategies. *Journal of Retailing and Consumer Services vol.9* , 173–183.

Burchielli, R., and Bartram, T. (2006). Like an iceberg floating alone‟: A case study of teacher stress at a Victorian primary school. *Australian Journal of Education 50(3)* , 312–327.

Campbell, F. (2006, September 27). Occupational Stress in the Construction Industry. Berkshire,, U.K.

Capel, S., Heilbronn, R., Leask, M., and Turner, T. (2004). *Starting to Teach in the Secondary School: A Companion for the Newly Qualified Teacher 2nd (ed)*. New York: Routledge.

Chan, A. H., Chen, K., and Chong, E. Y. (2010). Work Stress of Teachers from Primary and Secondary Schools in Hong Kong. *Proceedings ofthe International MultiConference and Computer Scientis Vol. 3*, 5-8.

Chapman, A.-M. (2013, April). Determinants of Career Commitment in Primary School Teachers in Ireland; Self-Efficacy, Stress and Job Satisfaction. Dublin, Ireland.

Cockburn, A. (1996). *Teaching under pressure: looking at primary teachers' stress*. London and Washington, D.C.: Falmer Press.

Coetzee, S., and Rothmann, S. (2005). Occupational Stress, Organisational Commitment And Ill-Health Of Employees At A Higher Education Institution

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

In South Africa. *SA Journal of Industrial Psychology 31 (1)*, 47-54.

Coladarci, T. (1992). Teachers' Sense of Efficacy and Commitment to Teaching. *Journal of Experimental Education 60(4)*, 323-337.

Collingridge, D. S. (2008). Phenomenological Insight on Being Hindered From Fulfilling One‟s Primary Responsibility to Educate Students. *The Alberta Journal of Educational ResearchVol. 54, No. 1,*, 112-123.

Cooper, C., and Kelly, M. (1993). Occupational Stress of Head Teachers: A National UK Study. *British Journal of Educational Psychology 73 (1)* , 130-143.

Creswell, J. W. (2009). *Research design, qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods.* California: Sage Publcations.

Creswell, J. W., Hanson, W. E., Plano, V. L., and Morales, A. (2007, July 14). *Qualitative Research Designs: Selection and Implementation* . Retrieved from http://tcp.sagepub.com/cgi/content/abstract/35/2/236.

Crosswell, L. (2006, June). Understanding teacher stress in time of change. Queensland, Australia.

Curtaz, D. M. (2009, October). Perceived Causes Of Stress And Burnout As Reported By Elementary Teachers At An Urban School. Sacramento, California, United Stated of America.

Davis, L. N. (2002, June 8). Should We Consider Alternative Incentives For Basic Research? Patents Vs. Prizes. Copenhagen/Elsinore.

Dean, E. J. (2010, December). Exploring The Individual Contributory Personality Factors Of Stress: A Survey Of Washington State Elementary Teachers. Washington , United States of America.

DeMarrais, K. (2004). *Qualitative Interview Studies: Learning thrFoundations for Research- Methods of inquiry in Education and the Social Sciences.* New Jersey: Laurence Erlbaum Associates.

Devonport, T. J., and Lane, A. M. (2006). Cognitive Appraisal of Dissertation Stress Aomg Undergraduate Students. *The Psychological Record vol. 56*, 259-266.

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

Duxbury, L., and Higgins, C. (2003). *Work-Life Conflict in Canada in the New.* Ottawa: A status report for Health Canada.

Elliott, B., and Crosswell, L. (2001). Commitment to teaching: Australian perspectives on the interplays of the professional and the personal in teachers' lives. *Paper presented at the International Symposium on Teacher Commitment at the European Conference on Eduactional Research.* Lille.

Eres, F., and Atanasoska, T. (2011). Occupational Stress of Teachers: A Comparative Study Between Turkey and Macedonia. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science 1(7)*, 59-65.

Esia-Donkoh, K. (2014). Stress Coping Strategies of 2012/2013 Final Year Sandwich Students of The Department of Basic Education, University Of Education, Winneba (Uew), Ghana. *International Journal of Education Learning and Development 2(1)*, p.63-76.

Fanteakwa District, A. (2006, September 7). *Fanteakwa District Assemby*. Retrieved from Fanteakwa District Assemby Web site: http://www.fanteakwa.ghanadistricts.gov.gh/.

Farber, B. A. (2000). Treatment Strategies for Different Types of Teacher Burnout. *JCLP/In Session: Psychotherapy in Practice 56(5),* , 675–689 .

Fisher, M. H. (2011). Factors Influencing Stress, Burnout, and Retention of Secondary. *Current Issues in Education, 14(1).*, 1-36.

Folkman, S. (2010). Stress, coping, and hope. *Psycho-Oncology 19*, 901–908 .

Folkman, S., and Moskowitz, J. T. (2004). Positive Affect and the Other Side of Coping. *American Psychologist 55(6)*, 647-654.

Foundation of Qualitative Research . (2008, June 27). Retrieved from www.isite.Havard.edu/icb.

Fox, R. (1964, May 24). *The "Committed" Teacher. Educational leadership.* Retrieved from www.ascd.org/ASCD/pdf/journals/ed_lead/el_196410_fox.pdf

Ghamrawi, N., and Jammal, K. (2013). Teacher Turnover: Impact of School Leadership and Other Factors. *International Journal of Educational Research*

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

and Technology 4(1), 68 -78.

Ghana Districts- A respository of all districts in the republic of Ghana. (2006, March 27). Retrieved from District, Capitals and MMDCEs: http://ghanadistricts.com/home/

Green, J., Willis, K., Hughes, E., Small, R., Welch, N., Gibbs, L., and Daly, J. (2007). Generating best evidence from qualitative research:the role of data analysis. *Australian And New Zealand Journal Of Public Health 31(6)*, 545-550.

Griffin, M. L., Hogan, N. L., Lambert, E. G., Tucker-Gail, K. A., and Baker, D. N. (2010). Job Involvement, Job Stress, Job Satisfaction, and Organizational Commitment and the Burnout of Correctional Staff. *Criminology and Penology 37(2)*, 239-255.

Gupta, R., and Derevensky, J. L. (2001, August). An Examination Of The Differential Coping Styles Of Adolescents With Gambling Problems. Montreal, Ontario, Canada.

Hadji, G. (2010, July). Occupational Stress In Secondary Education In Cyprus: Causes, Symptoms, Consequences And Stress Management. Nicosia, Cyprus.

Harlow, P. (2008, August). Stress, Coping, Job Satisfaction, and Experience in Teachers. New Brunswick, Atlantic Canada.

Hemingway, M. A., and Smith, C. S. (1999). Organizational climate and occupational stressors as predictors of withdrawal behaviours and injuries in nurses . *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology 72(3)* , 285–299.

Hemmingway, M. A., and Smith, C. S. (1999). Organisational climate and stress as predictors of withdrawal behaviours and injuries in nurses. *Journal of Occupational and Organisational Psychology vol. 77*, 285-299.

Ibem, E. A., Azuh, D. E., and Mosaku, T. (2011). Work Stress among Professionals in the Building Construction Industry in Nigeria. *Australasian Journalof Construction Economics and Building 11 (3)*, 45-57.

Jaiyeoba, A. O., and Jibril, M. A. (2008). Sources of Occupational Stress among Secondary School Administrators in Kano State, Nigeria. *An International Multidisciplinary Journal, Ethiopia*, 116-129.

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

Jepson, E., and Forrest, S. (2006). Individual contributory factors in teacher stress: The role of achievement striving and occupational commitment. *British Journal of Educational Psychology (7)*, 183–197.

Karaj, S., and Rapti, E. (2013). Teacher Job Stress In Albania: Examining The Role Of Students‟ Classroom Disruptive Behavior And Other Factors In The School Context. *Problems of Educationin the 21st Century vol. 54*, 14-21.

Kerr, R. A., Breen, J., Delaney, M., Kelly, C., and Miller, K. (2011). A Qualitative study of workplace stress and coping in Secondary school teachers in Ireland. *Irish Journal of Applied Social Studies 11(1)*, 27-38.

Khan, A., Shah, I. M., Khan, S., and Gul, S. (2012). Teachers‟ Stress, Performance and Resources The Moderating Effects of Resources on Stress and Performance. *International Review of Social Sciences and Humanities 2(2)* , 21-29.

Khatibi, A., Asadi, H., and Hamidi, M. (2009). The Relationship Between Job Stress and Organizational Commitment in National Olympic and Paralympic Academy. *World Journal of Sport Sciences 2 (4)*, 272-278.

Khoza, H. R. (2004, December 9). A Comparison of Teacher Stress Commitment and School Climates in Schools with Different Success Rates. Witwatersrand, South Africa.

Kılınc, A., Recepoglu, E., and Kosar, S. (2015). Examining Primary School Teachers‟ Coping Styles with Stress According to Different Variables. *PEGEM Journal of Education and Instruction 5(1)*, 1-14.

Kothari, C. R. (2004). *Research Methodology : Methods and Techniques*. New Delhi: New Age International Publishers.

Kumar, N. R. (2011). Stress and Coping Strategies among Nursing Students. *Nursing and Midwifery Research Journal, 7(4)*, 141-151.

Kyriacou, C. (2001). Teacher Stress: directions for future research. *Educational Review 53(1)*, 27–35.

Kyriacou, C., and Chien, P.-Y. (2004). Teacher stress in Taiwanese primary schools. *Journal of Educational Enquiry 5(2)*, 86-104.

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

Lam Yee Mei, L. (2006, August). Teacher stress encountered by Hong Kong secondary and primary school teachers:Similarity and Disparity. Hong Kong, China.

Lazarus, R. (1993). Coping theory and research: past, present, and future. *Psychosomatic Medicine- Washington Vol. 55* , 234-247.

Lazarus, R. S. (1999). *Stress and emotion: A new synthesis.* New York: Springer.

Lazarus, R. S. (2000). Toward Better Research on Stress and Coping. *American Psychologist 55 (6)*, 665 -673.

Lhospital, A. S., and Gregory, A. (2009). Changes In Teacher Stress Through Participation In Pre-Referral Intervention Teams. *Psychology in the Schools 46(10)*, 1098-1111.

Lin, C. K. (2006, August). Perceived stress and coping strategies of baccalaureate nursing students in clinical practice. Hong Kong.

Lingard, H., and Francis, V. (2004). The work-life experiences of office and site-based employees in the Australian construction industry. *Construction Management and Economics vol. 22* , 991-1002.

Madini, M. (2005, June). An Investigation into Female Kindergarten Teachers‟ Stress in Saudi Arabia. East Anglia., UK.

Mahmood, A., Zamir, S., Saira, Q.-u.-A. N., and Zahoor, F. (2013). Impact of Age and Level of Experience on Occupational Stress of Academic Managers at Higher Educational Level. *Mediterranean Journal of Social Sciences 4(1)*, 535-541.

Matthieu, M. M., and Ivanoff, A. (2006). Using Stress, Appraisal, and Coping Theories in. *Brief Treatment and Crisis Intervention 6(4)*, 337-348.

Maxwell, J. A. (2005). *Qualitative research design : An interactive approach 2(ed).* Thousand Oaks: CA: Sage.

Mays, N., and Pope, C. (1995, July 8). Qualitative Research: Rigour and qualitative research. *BMJ 311(6997)*, 109-112. Retrieved from Foundation of Qualitative Research: www.isite.Havard.edu/icb

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

McCarthy, C. J., Lambert, R. G., and Reiser, J. (2014). Vocational Concerns of Elementary Teachers: Stress Job Satisfaction and Occupational Commitment. *Journal of Employment Counseling vol. 51*, 59-74.

McCarthy, C. J., Lambert, R. G., Crowe, E. W., and McCarthy, C. J. (2010). Coping, Stress, and Job Satisfaction as Predictors of Advanced Placement Statistics Teachers"Intention to Leave the Field. *NASSP Bulletin 94(4)*, 306-326.

Merriam, S. (2009). *Qualitative research: A guide to design and implementation.* . San Francisco: CA: Jossey-Bass.

Michael, O., Court, D., and Petal, P. (2009). Job stress and organizational commitment among mentoring coordinators. *International Journal of Educational Management 23 (3)* , 266-288.

Milner, K., and Khoza, H. (2008). A comparison of teacher stress and school climate across schools with different matric success rates. *South African Journal of Educationvol. 28*, 155- 173.

Mojoyinola, J. K. (2008). Effects of Job Stress on Health, Personal and Work Behaviour of Nurses in Public Hospitals in Ibadan Metropolis, Nigeria. *Ethno-Med. 2(2)*, 143-148.

Montgomery, C., and Rupp, A. A. (2005). A Meta-analysis for Exploring the Diverse Causes and Effects of Stress in Teachers. *Canadian Journal Of Education 28(3)* , 458-486.

Motseke, M. J. (1998, November). Factors Contributing To Teacher Stress In Township Secondary Schools. Pretoria, South Africa.

Muijs, D. (2004). *Doing Quantitative Research in Education with SPSS.* Thousand Oaks, California: SAGE Publications Inc.

Mulholland, R., McKinlay, A., and Sproule, J. (2013). Teacher Interrupted Work Stress, Strain, and Teaching Role. *SAGE Journals 7(3)*, 1-13.

Mundia, L. (2010). Brunei Trainee Teachers" Coping Strategies for Stressful Situations. *International Journal of Psychological Studies 2 (9)*, 79-88.

Mushtaq, R. (2011). Teacher Stress: The Sources Of Teacher Stress And Their

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

Consequences. *International Journal Of Research In Commerce, It and Management 1(6)*, 54-60.

Myers, M. D. (1997). Qualitative research in information systems . *MIS Quarterly* , 241-242.

Nagra, V. (2013). Occupational Stress Among Teacher Educators. *Global Online Electronic International Interdisciplinary Research Journal 2(2)*, 12-23.

Nagra, V., and Arora, S. (2013). Occupational Stress And Health Among Teacher Educators. *International Journal of Advanced Research in Management and Social Sciences 2(8)*, 1-13.

Naidoo, K., Botha, C. J., and Bisschoff, C. A. (2013). Causes of Stress in Public Schools and its Impact on Work Performance of Educators. *Journal of Social Science 34(2)*, 177-190.

Naylor, C. (2001). *Teacher workload and stress: An international perspective on human costs and systemic failure.* . BCTF research report, BC Teachers‟ Federation, Section III.

Ncube, A. C., and Tshabalala, T. (2013). Factors Contributing To The Causes Of Work Related Stress And Its Impact On Performance Of Teachers In Nkayi District. *Nova Journal of Medical and Biological Sciences 1(1)* , 15-23.

Ngobeni, H. W. (2006, November 29). The Role Of The Head Of Department In Alleviating Work Related Teacher Stress In Primary Schools. North West Province, South Africa.

Noordin, F., Rashid, R. M., Ghani, R., Aripin, R., and Darus, Z. (2010). Teacher Professionalisation And Organisational Commitment: Evidence From Malaysia. *International Business and Economics Research Journal 9(2)*, 49-57.

Olivier, M., and Venter, D. (2003). The extent and causes of stress in teachers in the George region. *South African Journal of Education 23(3)*, 186-192.

Ozturk, G. (2011). *Public Primary School Teachers' Perceptions of Their Working Conditions and Job Stress: Cases from Istanbul and Stockholm.* Stockholm: Institute of International Education.

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

Reddy, G. L., and Anuradha, R. V. (2013). Occupational Stress of Higher Secondary Teachers Working in Vellore District. *International Journal of Educational Planning and Administration 3(1)*, 9-24.

Saufi, R. A., Thai, L. K., Seok, C. B., and Eranza, D. R. (2013). The Effects Of Organisational Factors And Extra-Organisational Factors On Work Stress. *Journal of the Asian Academy of Applied Business 2 (1)*, 20-32.

Saunders, M., Lewis, P., and Thornhill, A. (2009). *Research methods for business students fifth edition.* Harlow: Pearson Education Limited.

Schulze, S., and Steyn, T. (2007). Stressors in the professional lives of South African secondary school educators. *South African Journal of Education vol. 27* , 691–707.

Steyn, G., and Kamper, G. (2006). and (2006). Understanding occupational stress among educators: An overview. . *African Education Review, 3(1),* , 113-133.

Sugden, R. (2013, May 17). *Turning to Teaching The Commitment of Teachers with Previous Careers In Times of Teacher Work Intensication.* Retrieved from DurhamE-Theses Online: http://etheses.dur.ac.uk/10598/.

Sutherland, V., and Cooper, C. (1990., September). Understanding stress: A psychological perspective for health professionals. London, United Kingdom.

Taggart, N. (2007, March 27). The Educational and Pyschiological Support of Educators To Include Learners from Child-Headed Homes In Urban Classrooms . Johannesburg, South Africa.

Talbert, J., and McLaughlin, M. (1993). Teacher Professionalism in Local School Contexts. *American Journal of Education vol.102*, 123–153.

Tang, T. O., and Yeung, A. S. (1999, February 24). Hong Kong Teachers' Sources of Stress, Burnout, and Job Satisfaction. Hong Kong,, China.

Tuettemann, E., and Punch, K. F. (2005). Teachers‟ psychological distress: The ameliorating effects of control over the work environment. *Educational Review 44(2)*, 181–194.

Velnampy, T., and Aravinthan, S. (2013). Occupational Stress and Organizational Commitment in Private Banks: A Sri Lankan Experience. *European Journal of Business and Management 5 (7)*, 254-267.

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

Vigil, M. (2005, June 14). Stress Perception, Stressful Experiences and Stress Management Strategies. A Comparative Case Study of Swedish and Peruvian Teacher Students. Stockholm, Sweden.

Walsham, G. (1995). Interpretive case studies in IS research: nature and method. *European Journal of Information Systems vol. 4* , 74–81.

Whitehead, A. J. (2001, June). Teacher Burnout : A Study of Occupational Stress and Burnout in New Zealand School Teachers. Albany, New Zealand.

Wilson, V., and Hall, J. (2002). Running twice as fast? A review of literature on teachers‟ stress. *Scottish Educational Review 34(2)*, 175-187.

Wisniewski, L., and Gargiulo, R. (1997). Occupational stress and burnout among special educators: A review of the literature. *The Journal of Special Education 31(3)*, 325-346.

Younghusband, L. J. (2005, May). High School Teachers‟ Perceptions of Their Working Environment in Newfoundland: A Grounded Theory Study. Newfoundland, Canada.

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

APPENDIX

INTERVIEW GUIDE

Background

1. Tell me about yourself?
2. What is you educational qualification?
3. Any plans of furthering it?
4. What about your marital status?
5. Do you have any children?
6. How many years have you worked as a teacher?
7. What about this school how many years?
8. Any other thing you want to say?
9. What motivated you to become a teacher?

Place in the school

10. How many periods do you have in a week?
11. What is your subject area?
12. Do you have colleagues in your subject area
13. Do they help?
14. Describe a typical day?
15. Which of these periods would you say you are less busy?
16. How many periods do you have in a week?
17. What other activities or responsibilities do u have in the school?
18. What would you say are the stress factors you face or experience in school?
    i. What activities do you find most stressful
    ii. What activities do you find to be stress free?
    iii. Does this pull you away from the school or the classroom?
19. What are the stress factors outside school that you are facing?
20. What are the things you are concerned about outside school?
21. How do you balance it?
22. Would you say you are often stressed?
23. How would you define stress?

Coping mechanism

24. How do you cope with the stress?
25. When you are not teaching what are you doing?
    1. Do you stay on campus or do you leave

What is the amount given to you as a teacher?

26. Is the salary given to you as teacher enough for you?
    i. Your needs, your family

University of Education,Winneba http://ir.uew.edu.gh

Commitment

27. Do I conclude you have a lot of interest in teaching?
28. How committed are you to the following:
    i. The school
    ii. Teaching/ profession
    iii. Subject area
    iv. Colleagues
    v. The administration
    vi. Students
    vii. What has influenced your commitment?
29. Has anyone questioned your commitment?
30. What numbers of years do you plan to remain a teacher?
31. How long do you plan to teach in this school?
32. If you pursue or further your education will you come back and teach?