

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION, WINNEBA

**STRESS MANAGEMENT PRACTICES AMONG BASIC SCHOOL
TEACHERS AT GARU – TEMPANE DISTRICT IN THE UPPER EAST
REGION**



2018

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REGION**



**A Project Report in the Department of Educational Leadership, Faculty of
Education Communication Sciences, submitted to the School of Graduate
Studies, University of Education, Winneba, in partial fulfilment of the
requirements for award of Master of Arts (Educational leadership) degree**

DECEMBER, 2018

DECLARATION

STUDENT'S DECLARATION

I, GIFTY AWINI, declare that this Project Report, with the exception of quotations and references contained in published works which have all been 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 work were supervised in accordance with the guidelines for supervision of project report as laid down by the University of Education, Winneba.

NAME OF SUPERVISOR: DR. LYDIA OSEI- AMANKWAH

SIGNATURE:

DATE:

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DEDICATION

To my lovely husband, Mr Michael Dan Mbugri, My Children, Akubilla Aziz,
MbugriMarshall Awini, Mbugri Malex Awinimi and Mbugri Miriam Apusiwin.



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ABSTRACT

The study investigated stress management practices among teachers at Garu-Tempene district of the Upper East Region of Ghana. The objectives of the study were to find out major causes of stress, coping strategies and measures to manage stress among teachers. Three research questions were formulated to guide the study. Descriptive survey design was used for the study. The accessible population was basic schools teachers. Purposive sampling technique was used to select six public schools. The teachers were purposively selected as sample for the study. A sample of 60 teachers was used for the study. Questionnaire was the main instrument used for collecting data. Cronbach Alpha was used to analyze the pilot test and reliability coefficient of 0.72 was obtained. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequencies and percentages and the results were presented in tabular form. It was found out from the study that high number of students per teacher, frequent interruption on instructional hours, unattractive salary, lack of motivation and unfavourable working conditions were the major causes of stress among teachers. It was again revealed that good leadership style of head teachers, conducive working environment for teachers, provision of regular supervision, organisation of in-service training programmes for teachers were means by which teachers can cope with stress. It is therefore, recommended that head teachers should use appropriate leadership style to provide conducive working environment for teachers. The government should provide attractive motivation packages to teachers to relieve teacher from stress in order to impact positively on pupils achievement.

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background of the study

In recent times, there has been a growing belief that the experience of stress at work has unwelcome effects, both on the health and safety of workers and on the health and effectiveness of their organizations (Payne, 2001). This belief has been reflected not only in public and media interest, but also in increasing concern voiced by the trades unions and by scientific and professional organizations, including the International Labor Office. Particular concern has been expressed for the effects of stress on teaching professionals and, in particular, on teachers in the classroom. He concluded that teaching is, by its very nature, a “stressful” profession. In a similar vein, Harris (2001) observed that every day the teacher confronted with grief, stark suffering, and death as few other individuals do. A lot of teaching tasks are unrewarding and mundane. Many are, by normal standards, disgusting and distasteful. Some are simply frightening, others are often degrading. It is barely amazing that teachers experienced such tasks and events have been detailed to experience high intensities of stress. Their difficulties emerge to be further worsened by a range of organizational matters increasingly accepted as being active in the stress process (Harris, 2001).

Stress has been grouped as a stimulus or antecedent, as a response or consequence, and as an interaction. It has been deliberated from many diverse perspectives. For instance, Smith (2001) anticipated a physiological evaluation that supports considering the connection between stress and illness. On the contrary, Cox and Griffiths (1996) argued that a psychological view in which stress is has a particular relationship between the person and the environment.

Menzies (1960) recognized four sources of nervousness among teachers: decision making, student care, taking responsibility, and change. The teacher's responsibility has long been considered as stress-filled based upon the human suffering, physical labor, work hours, interpersonal relationships and staffing that are vital to the work teachers do. However, in the last three decades the work stress of teachers has been rising due to the increasing use of technology, continuing going up in health care costs and unrest in the work environment.

Stress is a common and costing setback in today's working environment. Smith (2001) indicated that majority of workers report high intensities of stress and are associated with considerable rises in health service utilization. He also indicated that stress is the main cause of labor turnover, absenteeism, conflict and accidents in any organization. It is against this background that this study seeks to examine the effects of stress on performance of teachers in the Garu – Tempane district. The questions that the study sought to answer are; what are some of the causes of stress among teachers at the Garu – Tempane district? What is the effect of stress on the performance of teachers at the Garu – Tempane district? What strategies could teachers use to cope with stress in the selected basic schools in the Garu – Tempane district?

Teachers are the cornerstone of the nation's educational sector, they do not only educate our children and provide them with sound moral values, but also serve as role models for good educational system. There is therefore adequate justification to study the effect of stress on the performance of teachers at Garu – Tempane. Such study will help the teachers to identify the causes of their stress and how to manage it and be able to deliver well to increase their performance.

Statement of the problem

Teacher stress is a major problem in all educational systems worldwide. The notion that some teachers lazy, unprofessional and take pay without being in the classroom constitutes a waste of resources. In addition, most educational system and schools then incur heavy costs by having to employ health professionals to cater for the health needs of teachers (Usman, Akhmadi & Suryadarma, 2007). Lately, teacher absenteeism due to stress has become a major cause for the abysmal performance of pupils at the BECE level in the Garu-Tempene district. A recent survey done by the Planning, Monitoring and Evaluation unit of the Garu-Tempene district revealed that on average one in every 10 teachers is absent due to stress from school every one time (PM&E, 2017). In Garu-Tempene, the Ministry of Education officials have indicated that teachers' stress is one of the challenges facing provision of quality education at the basic school level.

In the Garu-Tempene district, the 2014 School Report Card (SRC) has implicated headteachers at the basic level for being frequently stressed up. The alarming reports on teacher stress indicate a need for research to establish the main causes of teacher stress and to explore effective measures to reduce teacher stress in the district. This study therefore focused on investigating into what coping strategies for managing stress to stem the tide of teacher stress in basic schools in the Garu-Tempene District of the Upper East Region of Ghana.

Purpose of the Study

The study sought to investigate how teacher manage stress in the basic schools and to explore effective strategies for coping with teacher stress in the Garu – Tempene district in the Upper East Region of Ghana.

Objectives of the Study

The specific objectives of the study are:

1. to examine the major causes of stress among teachers in basic schools at the Garu-Tempane district
2. to examine coping strategies of stress in the selected basic schools at the Garu-Tempane district
3. Find out measures to improve management of stress in basic schools at the Garu-Tempane district

Research Questions

The following research questions guided the study:

1. What are the causes of stress among teachers in the three selected schools in the Garu-Tempane district?
2. What coping strategies do teachers adopt to manage stress in the Garu-Tempane district?
3. What measures could be adopted to improve management of stress in basic schools at the Garu-Tempane district?

Significance of the Study

The study attempted to examine those strategies that will help teachers manage stress effectively. The recommendations will help policy makers of basic schools to develop policies regarding teachers stress. Thus, the study has the potential to provide feedback to Ghana Education Service with regard to teacher stress in schools so as to find means of managing the situation. It is envisaged that the study

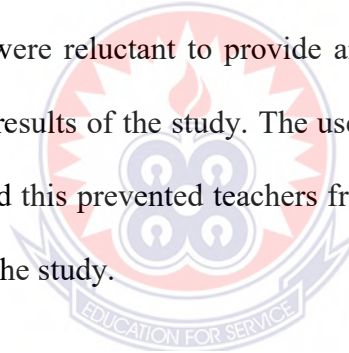
will help the district Education Service to organise training in stress management to help teachers curb the situation.

Delimitations of the Study

The study limited delimited to six public basic schools. The used Garu-Tempne District in the Upper East Region. Only teachers were involved in the study. Areas covered included causes of stress, coping strategies and measures to improve stress management.

Limitations of the study

The study used only teachers which mean the study was limited to a smaller sample. Some teachers were reluctant to provide answers to the questionnaire. This might have affected the results of the study. The use of likert scale type scale limited the flow of responses and this prevented teachers from providing vital information to enhance the outcome of the study.



Operational Definition of Terms

Burnout - Emotional, mental, or physical exhaustion that comes from job-related stress. Coping Strategies – Any social or material factor which helps teachers to overcome job-

related stressors.

Strain- Any unpleasant behavioral, psychological, or physiological outcome in a teacher. Stress- The body's non-specific response to a demand placed on job.

Stressor - An activity or event that causes stress.

Teacher Stress - Any characteristic within the school environment that poses threat to the teacher.

Organization of the Study

The research report was organised in five chapters. Chapter one presents the introduction of study consisting of the background, the statement of the problem, purpose and objectives of the research. It also presents the research questions, significance of the study, delimitations and the limitations of the study. Chapter two provides review of the literature which are related to the study. Chapter three gives description of the methodology used in the study. It comprised the research design, the population, sample and sampling technique, instrumentation, validity of the instrument, data collection procedure and methods of data analysis.

In Chapter four presented results and discussions of findings. Chapter five provides the summary of the major findings, conclusions, recommendations and suggestions for further research.



CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This chapter discusses the literature related to stress and coping strategies among school teachers. It consists of information from the casual observations and scholarly works concerning stress among teachers nationally and internationally. This discussion has been categorized into three sub-themes for the purpose of establishing the theoretical framework for the current study. These sub themes were derived from the research questions as follows:

- a. concept of stress
- b. major causes of stress among teachers in schools,
- c. coping strategies teachers can adopt to minimise stress
- d. measures to improve stress management

The theory behind the study is that stress exists among teachers in the Garu-Tempne District which are caused by certain factors and that these factors have to be dealt with by strategies to stem the tide of stress on teachers. In order to establish the theoretical framework and put the current study into perspective, the views of researchers and experts in the field have been brought to bear on this assumption. These views are based on themes derived from the research questions and are discussed below.

The Concept of Stress

The basic concept is that stress relates both to an individual's perception of the demands being made on them and to their perception of their capability to meet those demands. A mismatch will mean that an individual's stress threshold is exceeded,

triggering a stress response (Clancy & McVicar, 2002). An individual's stress threshold, sometimes referred to as stress 'hardiness', is likely to be dependent upon their characteristics, experiences and coping mechanisms, and also on the circumstances under which demands are being made. A single event, therefore, may not necessarily constitute a source of stress for all teachers, or for a particular individual at all times, and may have a variable impact depending upon the extent of the mismatch. Stress is usually defined from a "demand perception response" perspective (Bartlett, 2000). Bartlett integrated this view into a cognitive theory of stress that has become the most widely applied theory in the study occupational stress and stress management.

Assessing stress is likely to be very difficult in an occupation as diverse and challenging as health care, yet the effectiveness of organizational interventions to reduce or eliminate sources of stress depends upon a sound understanding of the stress phenomenon for teachers.

According to him, it is a dangerous potentiality, harmful/unpleasant external situation/conditions (stressors) that produce stress reaction; and secondly the internal thought judgment, emotional state and physiological process that are evoked by stressful stimuli. Stress is the state of an organism; it is perceived that its well-being is endangered and it must direct all its energies to its protection (Ryhal and Singh, 1996).

This research reviews the implications of the subjective aspects of stress perception for teachers and managers, are a professional group most likely to report very high levels of workplace stress (Smith, 2000). Assessment is further complicated because the term stress is often use too simplistically. Negative connotations are usually ascribed to the term, yet some stress responses are of positive benefit (Bartlett,

2000). “Eustress” is a term commonly applied to these more positive responses, whilst the term “distress” appropriately describes negative aspects. Stress, therefore, is viewed as a continuum along which an individual may pass, from feelings of eustress to those of mild/moderate distress, to those of severe distress.

Smith (2001) said occupational stress is a circumstance occurring from the relations of individuals and their works and characterized by changes in individuals that force them to depart from their usual functioning. The author argued that job load creates severe stress between managers and workers. If a manager cannot deal with the increased responsibilities it may show the way to several psychological and physical disorders between them.

Harris (2001) recognized four kinds of role conflict: Inter sender role conflict, Intra-sender role conflict, Role overload and Person- role conflict. Role concepts proposes that job connected stress is related with interpersonal, structural and personal variables. There is proof that role incumbents with high degrees of role ambiguity also respond to situations with depression, anxiety, lower self-esteem, physical symptoms, organizational commitment and lower levels of job involvement, and perceptions of lower performance on the part of the superiors (Harris, 2001). Lack of useful consultation and communication, lack of involvement in the decision making procedure, unjustified limits on behaviour, office politics and no sense of belonging are recognized as potential sources of stressors.

Stress is frequently developed when a personal is assigned a lot of responsibility with no proper delegation of power and authority. Interpersonal factors like functional dependence, group cohesiveness, relative authority, communication frequency, and organizational distance linking the role sender and the focal people are significant subjects in organizational behavior. Stress develops when a person feels

he/she is not capable to carry out the role assigned to him efficiently. The person feels that he/she lacks skill, knowledge and training on performing that role (Harris, 2001).

Occupational stress is a progressively more significant occupational health setback and an important cause of economic loss. Occupational stress could produce both physiologic disabilities and overt psychological. Nevertheless, it could also cause subtle signs of morbidity that can influence productivity and personal wellbeing (Murphy, 1992). A job stressed person is possible to have increased absenteeism, greater job dissatisfaction, and increased frequency of smoking and drinking, amplify in negative psychological symptoms and self-esteem and reduced aspirations.

Major Causes of Stress

The discussion on this theme centers on the concept of stress and some major causes of stress among teachers. The discussion on these subheadings is propelled by the assumption that some level of stress exists among teachers in the Garu-Tempane District of the upper East Region of Ghana. Stress often comes about when teachers have difficulty negotiating various aspects of interactions with students (Hepburn & Brown, 2001) or from any circumstances that are considered too demanding, depriving of time and interfering with instruction (Blasé, 1986). Stress can best be explained by categorizing factors into first and second order stressors. First order stressors directly interfere with teacher effort and can include student apathy, student disruption or discipline, poor student attendance, high student number to teacher ratios (large classes), paperwork, prep work, irresponsible colleagues, obtrusive supervisors, lack of effective leadership such as assistant principals or principals, and seemingly non-supportive parents. Stressors that occur most frequently tend to be organizational issues dealing with students, administration, other teachers, and other

work relationships (Blasé, 1986). Second order stressors do not interfere directly with teacher effort and can include issues such as low salary, emotional fatigue, frustration, helplessness, stagnation, boredom, and lack of motivation or enthusiasm (Blasé, 1986).

Stress among teachers can also be grouped into three categories: role demands, instructional problems, and interpersonal relationships (Sutton, 1984). Role related stress is said to be the difference between teachers' role expectations and their actual experiences within that role (Pettegrew & Wolf, 1982). Role demand stressors include ambiguity, overload, conflict (Sutton, 1984), preparedness, and non-participation (Pettegrew & Wolf, 1982). Organizational characteristics such as policies, structure and processes can also be categorized as role demand stressors (Bacharach; Bauer & Conley, 1986). Instructional problems or task stress identifies problems associated with a variety of specific tasks that teachers must perform in their teaching role (Pettegrew & Wolf, 1982). Instructional problems can include difficulties with student discipline, competence, inappropriate procedures for student placement, instruction, inadequate standardized tests, grading systems (Sutton, 1984), notification of unsatisfactory work performance, being physically threatened by students (Pettegrew & Wolf, 1982) and dangerous working conditions (Bacharach, Bauer, & Conley, 1986). Interpersonal relationships refer to relationships teachers have with fellow professionals or community members within the educational environment. Network interaction and supervision may also fall into this category (Bacharach; Bauer & Conley, 1986). The most common stressors in this group are conflict with other staff members, and a lack of social support from supervisors and coworkers (Sutton, 1984). Causes of teacher stress can also be broken down into environmental and individual stressors. Most stressors can be found in the work environment and they include unfavourable working conditions, heavy workloads,

organizational problems, paucity of resources, lack of support autonomy and decision making. The work environment also includes physical stressors such as task-related noise, crowding, the size of the classroom and or school, safety or youth violence, as well as administrative pressures such as support from managers and role ambiguity (Hastings & Bham, 2003). Individual characteristics include the unique attributes of teachers such as personality, age, gender, demographic background, the ability to establish and maintain supportive networks, cognitive evaluation of stressors, the ability to cope, type of teacher, and job dissatisfaction (Guglielmi & Tatro, 1998). Individual stress can also be associated with the compatibility between personal and educational values, ambition to succeed, sensitivity threshold, competitiveness, multiple roles for women teachers (such as parent, caretaker, homemaker, and teacher), and perfection (Bachkirova, 2005).

A major source of teacher stress can be directly attributed to the students. Through survey and interview responses, teachers most commonly refer to students as being responsible for most of their stress (Hastings & Bham, 2003). Stress resulting from student discipline is associated with teachers having to play the different roles of babysitters, police officers, or even harsh authoritarians, which can cause role demand overload (Blasé, 1986). Most teachers view disrespectful behaviour, student attentiveness, and sociability as the most stressful student misbehaviours (Hastings & Bham, 2003). Griffith, Steptoe, and Cropley (1999) found that primary classroom teachers suffer more stress than secondary teachers. Primary teachers are responsible for one class throughout the entire school year which makes teachers not only responsible for educational activities, but for moral and social development as well. More responsibility, along with work pressure and student misbehaviour, cause primary classroom teachers to have the highest level of stress. These behaviours

along with student discipline management, student apathy, student achievement, and student absences all result in teachers experiencing increased stress (Blasé, 1986).

Types of Stress

Lyle, Miller & Smith (2008) agree that, stress management can be complicated and confusing because there are different types of stress - acute stress, episodic acute stress, and chronic stress. Each has its own characteristics, symptoms, duration and treatment approaches. Acute stress is the most common form of stress. It comes from demands and pressures of the recent past and anticipated demands and pressures of the near future. Acute stress is thrilling and exciting in small doses, but too much is exhausting. A fast run down a challenging ski slope, for example, is exhilarating early in the day. That same ski run late in the day is taxing and wearing. Skiing beyond your limits can lead to falls and broken bones. By the same token, overdoing on short-term stress can lead to psychological distress, tension headaches, upset stomach and other symptoms.

Fortunately, acute stress symptoms are recognized by most people. It's a laundry list of what has gone awry in their lives: the auto accident that crumpled the car fender, the loss of an important contract, a deadline they're rushing to meet, their child's occasional problems at school and so on. Acute stress does not have enough time to do the extensive damage associated with long-term stress. The most common symptoms are:

- i. Emotional distress - some combination of anger or irritability, anxiety and depression, the three stress emotions.

- ii. Muscular problems including tension headache, back pain, jaw pain and the muscular tensions that lead to pulled muscles and tendon and ligament problems.
- iii. Stomach, gut and bowel problems such as heartburn, acid stomach, flatulence, diarrhoea, constipation and irritable bowel syndrome.
- iv. Transient over arousal leads to elevation in blood pressure, rapid heartbeat, sweaty palms, heart palpitations, dizziness, migraine headaches, cold hands or feet, shortness of breath and chest pain. Acute stress can crop up in anyone's life, and it is highly treatable and manageable.

Episodic acute stress manifest when people suffer acute stress frequently, whose lives are so disordered that they are studies in chaos and crisis. They are always in a rush, but always late. If something can go wrong, it does. They take on too much, have too many irons in the fire, and can't organize the slew of self-inflicted demands and pressures clamouring for their attention. They seem perpetually in the clutches of acute stress.

It is common for people with acute stress reactions to be over aroused, short-tempered, irritable, anxious and tense. Often, they describe themselves as having "a lot of nervous energy." Always in a hurry, they tend to be abrupt, and sometimes their irritability comes across as hostility. Interpersonal relationships deteriorate rapidly when others respond with real hostility. The workplace becomes a very stressful place for them.

The cardiac prone, "Type A" personality described by cardiologists, Meter Friedman & Ray Rosenman (2008) is similar to an extreme case of episodic acute stress. Type A's have an "excessive competitive drive, aggressiveness, impatience,

and a harrying sense of time urgency." In addition, there is a "free-floating, but well-rationalized form of hostility, and almost always a deep-seated insecurity." Such personality characteristics would seem to create frequent episodes of acute stress for the Type A individual. Friedman and Rosenman (2008) found Type A's to be much more likely to develop coronary heart disease than Type B's, who show an opposite pattern of behaviour.

Another form of episodic acute stress comes from ceaseless worry. "Worry warts" see disaster around every corner and pessimistically forecast catastrophe in every situation. The world is a dangerous, unrewarding, punitive place where something awful is always about to happen. These "awfulizers" also tend to be overaroused and tense, but are more anxious and depressed than angry and hostile.

The symptoms of episodic acute stress are the symptoms of extended overarousal: persistent tension headaches, migraines, hypertension, chest pain and heart disease. Treating episodic acute stress requires intervention on a number of levels, generally requiring professional help, which may take many months.

Often, lifestyle and personality issues are so ingrained and habitual with these individuals that they see nothing wrong with the way they conduct their lives. They blame their woes on other people and external events. Frequently, they see their lifestyle, their patterns of interacting with others, and their ways of perceiving the world as part and parcel of who and what they are. Sufferers can be fiercely resistant to change. Only the promise of relief from pain and discomfort of their symptoms can keep them in treatment and on track in their recovery program.

While acute stress can be thrilling and exciting, chronic stress is not. This is the grinding stress that wears people away day after day, year after year. Chronic

stress destroys bodies, minds and lives. It wreaks havoc through long-term attrition. It's the stress of poverty, of dysfunctional families, of being trapped in an unhappy marriage or in a despised job or career. It's the stress that the never-ending "troubles" have brought to the people of Northern Ireland, the tensions of the Middle East have brought to the Arab and Jew, and the endless ethnic rivalries that have been brought to the people of Eastern Europe and the former Soviet Union. Chronic stress comes when a person never sees a way out of a miserable situation. It's the stress of unrelenting demands and pressures for seemingly interminable periods of time. With no hope, the individual gives up searching for solutions.

Some chronic stresses stem from traumatic, early childhood experiences that become internalized and remain forever painful and present. Some experiences profoundly affect personality. A view of the world, or a belief system, is created that causes unending stress for the individual (e.g., the world is a threatening place, people will find out you are a pretender, you must be perfect at all times). When personality or deep-seated convictions and beliefs must be reformulated, recovery requires active self-examination, often with professional help.

The worst aspect of chronic stress is that people get used to it. They forget it's there. People are immediately aware of acute stress because it is new; they ignore chronic stress because it is old, familiar, and sometimes, almost comfortable.

Chronic stress kills through suicide, violence, heart attack, stroke and, perhaps, even cancer. People wear down to a final, fatal breakdown. Since physical and mental resources are depleted through long-term attrition, the symptoms of chronic stress are difficult to treat and may require extended medical as well as behavioural treatment and stress management.

Effects of Stress on the Performance of Teachers

This research question is based on the assumptions that stress among teachers affect the performance of teachers in the selected schools in the Garu-Tempene District. The effect on the teacher's performance takes many different forms.

The factors that causes stress may pressurize the victims in may dimensions. The effect may be positive or negative in nature. Positive outcome stimulates the affected person to work more and negative outcome reduces the physical and mental health of the stress affected persons.

Fimian and Santoro (1983) indicated six strongest disturbing signs in their study. They include: hardly disconnection of job from private life, allowing social and professional performance to worsen, abnormal sleeping, dealing with students only as a scholar, unfriendly gesture and acting self-protective towards co-workers and students. They further pointed that most days of sick like persistent virus and stomach disorders were influenced by stress related causes only.

Wilkinson's (1988) found that antagonism moved into students and co-workers are a common indirect behavioural response to stress. Rash behaviour, restlessness, emotional explosions, extreme eating or loss of hunger, taking medicines, excessive drinking/smoking, non-appearance in work and unsteady service history are the behaviour related outcomes of implied stress. Buwalda and Kok (1991) found a direct and positive relationship between stress and ill health of teachers and reported that 35.7% of the samples endured some sort of sick health as a result of their teaching duties and responsibilities. King and Peart (1992) explored that depression, chest pains and physical collapses were reported by some teachers as reactions to stress.

Marais (1992) conducted a study in Orange Free State and Cape Province on the stress factors experienced by teachers with a purpose to recognize the factors that

creates stress among teachers in various teaching conditions. The results showed that 63.7% of the teachers experienced the skewed responses of nervousness, anxiety and exhaustion resulted by stress.

Sargio, Guglienin and Kristin Tatron's (cited in Jayashree & Nayak, 2008) studied on teachers' stress and health and identified the aspects causing stress and burnouts. They found that inappropriate reward system, risky working conditions, heavy strain in job and condensed satisfactions in job are the key reasons of stress and it accordingly affected the health of teachers. Mbokodi (1995) found that 23% high result showed school teachers experience health problems and/or family disagreements as a result of their harsh work requirements and only 17% of low result showed teachers experience the above said problems. It gives the impression that the high work pressure leads the possibility of worsen physical responses.

Friedman and Rosenman (cited in Devarajan 2011) found that middle age people experienced depression symptoms and there is a direct relation between stress and coronary heart diseases. Saptoe (2000) identified that teachers don't involve themselves in consumption of alcohol, drugs and prescribed drugs to fight against stress. It is conceived that the existence of high levels of stress has connected to the symptoms of mental and emotional irritation.

Mc Murray Nelson K (2000) explored that home/family problems leads to problems origin in work spot and pressurize one another are the exposed sources for women physicians' stress than their male counterparts in US hospitals/clinics. It showed that 75% of female doctors experienced stress in work place. Kiecolt et al (cited in Devarajan, 2011) in their study on stress and immune system found that stress affects the resistant system harshly.

The above empirical literature certainly show that stress affect the health of individuals in many ways. Different researchers explored the different outcomes of stress. Depending upon the environmental factors outcomes of stress may vary person to person.

Coping strategies of stress

Dealing with problems or difficulties in a calm and appropriate manner is commonly referred to as coping. How a teacher copes with stress in the school environment affects the impact of stress on their psychological well-being and on physiological response (Griffith, Steptoe, & Cropley, 1999). Coping behaviours or resources come in the form of physical, psychological, social, or material factors and help teachers overcome job-related stressors and achieve their valued outcomes with students (Blasé, 1982). Common positive strategies teachers use to alleviate stress include exercise, social resources, avoidance, reading, hobbies, movement, and meditation (Gulwadi, 2006). These coping strategies used by teachers affect their outlook on the situation, thereby altering the perception of stress (Griffith; Steptoe; & Cropley, 1999). To alter the perception of stress, teachers may invoke inward or outward coping strategies. Inward strategies, such as concentrating on something narrow in the field of stimuli around oneself, include seeking stillness and focus. Outward strategies, such as exercise, involve seeking connections, distractions, and movement (Gulwadi, 2006). Although there are many common coping strategies available, most teachers rely on social support, active planning, restorative experiences, and suppression of competing behaviours.

Social support can reduce the impact of stressors on teachers' well-being, job satisfaction, and physical illness risk. Teachers seek support from family, friends, and colleagues in order to receive advice, discuss feelings, get emotional support, get

sympathy and understanding, and to talk about their feelings. Teachers who have more support within their personal lives tend to experience less stress in the workplace (Griffith; Steptoe; & Cropley, 1999). Active planning, although a part of the normal workload, allows teachers to take their mind off stress and focus on their work. The process of active planning involves concentrating efforts, developing a plan, taking some action, coming up with strategies, trying to take steps, and doing what has to be done in order to keep their attention on the students rather than the stressor (Griffith; Steptoe; & Cropley, 1999).

Restorative coping experiences refer to teachers being able to release stress in places away from the school environment. Places chosen by teachers reflect qualities that are helpful in offsetting the effects of the source of stress. The places teachers choose most often that make them feel better when stressed include home, nature related outdoor places, city places, churches, and cafes. These environments are helpful in relieving stress because they provide teachers with sensory conditions, social contact, props, and nature related environmental features, which can help teachers alleviate stress (Gulwadi, 2006).

Along with restorative experiences, teachers may choose to employ environmental coping resources. Teachers' awareness of possible environmental conditions can be a very valuable coping resource. A person's ability to know the potential surrounding environment can be used as a resource. Their knack to change these settings, in order to achieve personal goals is referred to as environmental competence. The most common environmental resources that are easily available to teachers include time, money, social ties, organizational resources, and physical environmental resources such as locations that teacher's access and use for their spatial and sensory properties (Gulwadi, 2006). Some people, either intentionally or unintentionally, employ negative coping strategies to deal with stress. Negative

coping strategies are common responses to stress and feelings of being overwhelmed. Although these strategies can provide temporary stress relief, they can cause more stress in the long run (Crisis Intervention & Suicide Prevention Centre of British Columbia, 2010). Negative coping strategies can include unhealthy behaviours, distractions, violence, and withdrawal. Unhealthy behaviours such as smoking, drinking alcohol, excessively over/under eating, and drug abuse are sometimes used to relieve stress. Distractions such as television, computer, and filling up schedules to avoid facing problems are common ways to avoid stress. Violence such as angry outbursts, lashing out, and physical violence often come about if a situation becomes too stressful. Showing signs of withdrawal such as sleeping, procrastinating, withdrawing from family, friends, and activities, and disengagement are ways in which people try to remove stress from their lives (Helpguide, 2010).

Disengagement refers to teachers giving up on the goals in which the stressor is interfering with. Teachers who are disengaged resort to negative coping skills such as not trying, engaging in other activities, day dreaming, sleeping, watching television, and reducing their efforts in the classroom. Disengagement can be applied immediately and without the help of others, but is only a short-term solution. In the long run, disengagement can lead to teachers having cumulating workloads, disruptive classes, and feelings of lowered self-esteem and helplessness (Griffith, Steptoe, & Cropley, 1999). Suppression of competing behaviors refers to teachers putting aside all activities in their lives so that they can concentrate solely on work. Teachers have a tendency to prevent distraction, focus more on work tasks, prevent outside interferences, and concentrate more on their thoughts on work in order to suppress competing activities. Lessening the demand of other aspects of life and only focusing on work leads to teachers having an increased perception of stress levels, which prevents them from taking time to relax (Griffith; Steptoe; & Cropley, 1999).

Several coping strategies have been suggested by many authorities in stress management. The strategies discussed below have research evidence. Problem-focused coping is defined as tackling a problem directly (Lazarus; & Folkman, 1984). In the teacher literature, problem-focused coping has been described in many ways. For example, Olf, (1993) used the term “active problem solving” to describe how one might utilize strategies such as considering various solutions to address the problem directly, coming up with a direct intervention to solve the problem, and perceiving the problem as challenging. Presumably, viewing the problem as a challenge leads to more active problem-solving techniques, whereas viewing the problem as a threat may lead to avoiding dealing with the problem all together. In a similar vein, Innes and Kitto (1989) used the term “active behavioural strategies” to describe dealing directly with the event and its consequences through the use of overt behavioral strategies such as seeking professional help to deal with a problem. Further, when describing problem-focused coping techniques.

Admiraal (1996) described problem-focused coping in terms of “intervening” as an attempt to change the situation, such as when a teacher approaches students to urge them to work quietly. Problem-focused coping is typically associated with positive outcomes for teachers, as it tends to alleviate psychological distress (Chan, 1998) and teachers themselves report it to be the most effective coping strategy (Litt & Turk, 1985). In addition, higher amounts of task-oriented coping predicted a stronger sense of personal accomplishment (Griva & Joeke, 2003; Pascual, 2003; Pomaki & Anagnostopoulou, 2003; Rasku & Kinnunen, 2003), and lower levels of depersonalization (Griva & Joeke, 2003; Pascual, 2003; Pomaki & Anagnostopoulou, 2003; Rasku & Kinnunen, 2003), whereas lower amounts of task-oriented coping has been found to lead to more physical symptoms related to burnout

(Griva & Joeke, 2003; Innes & Kitto, 1989). Further, problem-focused coping has been found to be negatively associated with disengagement (Griffith, 1999) and somatic complaints (Rasku & Kinnunen, 2003), and positively associated with job satisfaction (Griva & Joeke, 2003; Pomaki & Anagnostopoulou, 2003). Together, these findings suggest that problem-focused coping may have salutary effects for teachers, or, the reverse could be true since the results are based largely on correlations.

In the literature, avoidant coping has been conceptualized as attempting to withdraw from a stressful event without dealing directly with the problem. Many descriptive terms have been utilized to measure avoidance-oriented coping, including avoidance and passive expectancies (e.g., “resigning oneself to the situation,” “trying to avoid difficult situations,” and “awaiting the consequences” (Olf, 1993), passive wishful thinking (e.g., “had fantasies or wishes about outcome,” “daydreamed a better time or place,” “wished the situation would go away,” and “wished could change feeling or event”; Chan, 1994; 1998), distancing (e.g., “I behaved as nothing would have happened,” or “I tried to forget everything”; Peklaj & Puklek, 2001), displacement (e.g., “think of other things,” “blame others,” “deny that the problem exists,” “avoidance,” and “try to carry on”; Freeman, 1987), avoidance of thinking (Salo, 1995), denial (Shen, 2009), mental and behavioral disengagement (e.g., “turn to other activities,” “stop trying,” “daydream,” “give up,” “sleep,” “give up attempt,” “watch TV,” and “reduce effort”; Griffith, 1999), and ignoring (e.g., “Teacher goes on with the lesson”; Admiraal (1996). Regardless of how many terms are used to describe avoidance, it all seems to come down to turning one’s attention away from the stressful event and/or hoping the situation will resolve itself. It may be that, due to this failure to act to resolve the situation, avoidance is typically viewed as a

maladaptive coping strategy. In the teaching literature avoidant coping tends to be associated with negative outcomes. For example, Chan (1998) reported that in contrast to problem-focused coping, avoidant coping tends to exacerbate psychological distress. In addition, teachers who use more avoidant coping are reported to be less satisfied with the outcome and tend to view problems as recurrent (Green & Ross, 1996). Further, avoidant coping has been found to be positively associated with somatic complaints (Pomaki & Anagnostopoulou, 2003) and emotional exhaustion (Rasku & Kinnunen, 2003). Finally, two studies found that not only does avoidant coping contribute to an increase in physical symptoms, but also is predictive of more burnout in teachers (Griva & Joeke, 2003; Innes & Kitto, 1989). However, it could once again be the reciprocal effect since the results are based largely on correlations.

Emotion-focused coping can be conceptualized as attempting to express or deal with emotions arising during a stressful situation. Similar to the ways of coping described thus far, strategies involving emotion-focused coping have been investigated in a variety of ways. Examples include seeking social support for emotional reasons (Shen, 2009; Griffith et. al., 1999), expressing emotions (e.g., “showing an emotional expressive reaction towards problems” (Olf 1993), find an emotional prop (e.g., “express feelings,” “talk to others to get emotional support,” “relax”; Freeman, 1987), positive reappraisal (e.g., “I have changed and became more mature”; Peklaj & Puklek, 2001), and active cognitive coping (e.g., “trying to see the positive side” (Innes & Kitto, 1989).

In addition, Off and colleagues (1993) used the term “comforting cognitions,” describing it as including self-encouragement, positive reframing, and thinking about the problem in a reasonable way. This seems to fit under the umbrella of emotion-

focused coping, as it appears to be using thought processes to regulate emotions aroused by the stressful experience.

Much like avoidant coping, emotion-focused coping is typically associated with negative outcomes for teachers attempting to deal with stress in this manner. For example, higher levels of emotion-focused coping have been reported to be a predictor of somatic complaints and emotional exhaustion (Griva & Joeke, 2003; Pascual, 2003; Pomaki & Anagnostopoulou, 2003; Rasku & Kinnunen, 2003; Verhoeven, 2003). In addition, in contrast to problem-focused coping, emotion-focused coping lead to more depersonalization (Pascual, 2003; Rasku & Kinnunen, 2003; Verhoeven, 2003) and had a negative association with personal accomplishment (Pascual, 2003; Rasku & Kinnunen, 2003) and job satisfaction (Pascual, 2003; Pomaki & Anagnostopoulou, 2003; Rasku & Kinnunen, 2003). It should be noted, however, that in one study low levels of emotion-focused coping have been found to be associated with high personal accomplishment (Verhoeven, 2003) which may actually lead to an increase in job satisfaction.

Social Support

Social support is often included in problem-focused coping or emotion-focused coping measures, depending upon what aspect of support one is utilizing. For example, seeking social support for instrumental reasons is included in the category of problem-focused coping, as the individual is going to another as a direct attempt at changing the circumstances of the stressful event. In contrast, seeking social support for emotional reasons sometimes falls under the classification of emotion-focused coping, as the individual is seeking emotional support from another individual or group of individuals.

The descriptive terms provided above gave a clear indication as to which category each type of support seeking would fall under. Examples of such terms were, coping by drawing on professional support example turning to external authorities, and turning to the psychological service of the school, Coping by education example participating in teacher training, searching for literature which gives me advice and talking about it in a supervision group, express feelings and seek support, and seek support and ventilation example talk to someone about feelings, talk to someone to find out more, let feelings out, and ask advice from a relative or friend. In all, eight studies used some form of seeking support without determining whether it was for emotional or instrumental reasons. Much like problem solving, social support is typically associated with positive outcomes in the teacher stress and coping literature. It has been suggested that support from colleagues can assist in coping in two ways, first, through the enactment of formal roles, and second, through developing camaraderie with colleagues by uniting in the struggle with the large number of difficult students (Freeman, 1987). Indeed, an increase in social support has been shown to lead to the use of more adaptive coping strategies and less maladaptive ones. Shen (2009) reported that the use of more social support was predictive of a greater use of active coping and positive thinking. In contrast, less use of social support has been found to be associated with an increase in disengagement (Griffith, 1999 & Shen, 2009), including both mental and behavioural disengagement (Shen, 2009). Together, these results indicate that social support can have salutary effects for teachers who are attempting to cope with stress.

Some studies have indicated that social support has been associated with positive outcomes for teachers, regardless of whether it is perceived or sought out by the individual. Dick and Wagner (2001) reported that perceiving greater principal

support can reduce the perception of both workload and mobbing (described as certain kinds of terrorizing at the workplace by colleagues or principals), and the perception of more global social support turned out to be a moderator between stress and strain, suggesting that social support may help to reduce physical symptoms associated with stress. Similarly, seeking social support has been found to be negatively associated with negative affect and disengagement (Griffith, 1999), and teachers who attended workshops as a means of social support reported lower levels of burnout. In addition, Schweitzer and Dobrich (2003) found that there was a strong positive correlation between self-reported health and both coping by seeking support and coping by education. Interestingly, no such correlation was found between self-reported health and coping by drawing on professional support.

Although the studies mentioned above indicate social support is associated with positive outcomes, some studies have shown otherwise. For example, in spite of the finding that teachers reported seeking support as one of the most effective means of coping (Litt & Turk, 1985). Teachers who reported discussing difficulties with colleagues and friends more often were more burned out (Seidman & Zager, 1991). Similarly, Salo (1995) reported that teachers who made greater use of the support of friends had more depressed moods and exhaustion in December than at the start of the school year. It may be that teachers who had more problems at work or were more depressed and exhausted were also more likely to turn to friends for social support.

It is also worth noting that, plans and tactics used to overcome stress are known as stress coping strategies. Different individuals adopt different coping strategies to combat the stress. In general, physical preparation, psychological or mental preparation, usage of clinical methods, involvement in spiritual things and

negative behavioural changes are the common coping strategies practiced by different peoples. Given below are some of the literature relating to such strategies.

Sahu and Mishra (1995) discovered the life stress and coping styles among teachers with 120 male and 120 female teachers as samples. They found that male teachers adopted emotion-centric strategies while female teachers adopted only issue-centric strategies to combat the stress. Gaur and Dhawan (2000) scrutinized the correlation between works associated stressors and adaptation pattern among women professionals. A sample of 30 teachers, 30 doctors, 30 bank officers and 30 bureaucrats were participated. They found that low ranking cluster in job or low age cluster is significantly dynamic in coping stress. Active liveliness, humour, more funniness and more initiatives are taken by these clusters of employees as contrasted to middle aged and senior age clusters or high level of employment position.

Harshpinder and Aujla (2001) explored the various physical stress management strategies adopted by women. Outcomes indicated that working women were practicing recording the happenings in personal diary, using customary furniture and high fibre diet as contrasted to non-working women. These groups did not differ significantly in the other coping strategies.

Hasnain (2001) on role stress and coping strategies in different occupational groups constituting 20 engineers, 20 managers and 20 teachers found that there is no significant difference found in the coping strategies of engineers, managers and teachers. They all were practicing the approaching strategy frequently than avoidance.

Khan et al, (2005) carried out a study on stress coping methods between male and female teachers with high and low job stress. There was no significant difference was found between the male and female teachers on different stress coping methods

except humour. Teachers have practiced a wide range of strategies mostly practical or lively and some are dysfunctional or submissive like self-disruption and use of humour. Both the gender did not give reaction to alcohol dimension of coping strategy.

Nayak (2008) found that most of the teachers put their feet up (53%), water treatment like hot water bath (46%), prioritize the demands (46%) and avoiding hurting reminders to lessen and overcome their stress. None of the female teachers were consuming tobacco, alcohol and mood shifting drugs as a stress reliever. Female teachers were adopting psychological stress coping strategies more as compared to males and difference in mean scores was found to be significant statistically.

Different scholars identified and suggested different methods of stress coping strategies practiced by the teachers in different areas. Coping strategy is more psychological than physical. We have found that by some teachers' humour and excessive sleeping tactics relieved their stress. They are mostly not turned up for negative remedies like consumption of drugs, tobacco and alcohol. This shows that even when the teachers suffer vigorously by stress they are not selecting a negative way of coping up with stress.

Summary of Literature Review

The review of literature explained concept of stress, types of stress, causes of stress, effects of stress and coping strategies. The literature again examined earlier studies conducted in stress management and how these studies are different from the present study. The areas discussed in the literature are related to this study. The study followed issues emerged from the literature.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODS AND METHODOLOGY

This chapter presents the procedures and techniques that were employed to carry out the study. It describes the research design, the population, the sample and sampling procedures, development of the instrument validity and reliability of the instrument, data collection procedure and data analysis plan.

Research Design

Polit and Hungler (1999) as cited by (Cokello, 2019) describe the research design as a blueprint, or outline, for conducting the study in such a way that maximum control will be exercised over factors that could interfere with the validity of the research results. The research design is the researcher's overall plan for obtaining answers to the research questions guiding the study. Burns and Grove (2001) state that designing a study helps researchers to plan and implement the study in a way that will help them obtain the intended results, thus increasing the chances of obtaining information that could be associated with the real situation. This study used descriptive design to identify, analyse and describe factors contributing to teacher stress in the Garu – Tempane district of the Upper East Region.

Population

Polit and Hungler (1999) define a population as the totality of all subjects that conform to a set of specifications, comprising the entire group of persons that is of interest to the researcher and to whom the research results can be generalised. Mertens (2005) defines population as the group of people the researcher wants to use in the research. In line with this definition, the target population for the study was all

teachers in basic schools at the Garu- Tempene district. The accessible population was on teachers in six public basic schools. Basic school teachers were chosen for the study because one often hears the teachers complaining of the stress they are experiencing in the schools.

Eligibility criteria specify the characteristics that people in the population must possess in order to be included in the study (Polit & Hungler 1999). In this study, the participants had to be teachers who had work for at least three years. The school should have been in existence over a decade.

The district has 30 public basic schools and 307 teachers (District Education Directorate, 2018). The accessible population was 83 teachers from six selected basic schools which have been in existence over a decade were used. The researcher should have used all the teachers in the district to enhance generalization of findings but it was deemed appropriate to make the study more manageable and practicable by using the accessible population. Best and Kahn (1989) supported this assertion when they said that to study a whole population and arrive at generalization would be impracticable if not impossible. It was based on Best and Kahn's advice that the researcher used only public schools.

Sample and Sampling Technique

Purposive was used to select six schools which have been in existence over a decade in the district. All teachers from the six schools were automatically included as sample for the study. Kane (1995) have said that purposive sampling does not involve randomly selected samples in that respondents are deliberately chosen because of some qualities that interest the researcher. A total of 83 teachers formed the sample size for the study.

Research Instrument

The questionnaire was the main instrument used to collect data. Questionnaire was used because of its advantages of providing quantifiable data. It is also less expensive in gathering information and more feasible in reaching a larger population. The questionnaire forms a logical and easy option of collecting information from a wide range of people, especially if they can read and write (Wisker, 2001).

However, some weaknesses of the questionnaire are that it is hurriedly filled by respondents. Respondents sometimes fail to provide correct information since it delves into private matters. In spite of these weaknesses the researchers considered questionnaire as appropriate to gather data on teachers stress management practices.

The questionnaire consisted of four sections. Section A requested information on respondents biographic data, section B asked respondents views on major causes of stress. Section C demanded responses on coping strategies and section D asked means of improving stress management among teachers. The questionnaire was mostly likert type scale items and it ranges from strongly agree to strongly disagree. Likert-type scale were also used to collect data from teachers in the selected schools. Likert-type scale was used because Sarantakos (1998) postulates that likert type scale allows responses to be ranked and it is easy to construct. The questionnaire was based on the literature review.

Validity of the Research Instrument

Validity refers to the degree to which an instrument measures what it is supposed to be measuring (Uys & Basson, 1991). Face validity was achieved by contacting my supervisor to find out whether the items on the questionnaire measure the intended purpose. She also found out whether the items cover all the research

questions. The supervisor analyzed the unclear and ambiguous items (content validity) and found out the extent to which the items measure specific construct (construct validity), (Ary, Jacobs & Razavieh, 1990). The scrutiny of the items helped the researcher to reconstruct, reframe and delete items which were unclear and misleading.

Reliability of the Research Instrument

Reliability refers to the degree of consistency or accuracy with which an instrument measures the attribute it is designed to measure (Polit & Hungler 1997 & Uys & Basson 1991). If a study results are reliable, it means that the same results would be obtained if the study were to be replicated by other researchers using the same method. A pre-test using 30 teachers from Gbanterago basic school which has similar characteristics as that of the main was conducted. Cronbach's Alpha (α) was used to determine the reliability coefficient of the questionnaire. From the analysis, reliability coefficient of 0.72 was obtained.

Data Collection Procedure

The researcher personally administered the questionnaire in all the six schools for the study on 8th February, 2018 during normal school hours. The reason being that, the researcher wanted to ensure more cooperation from respondents and high rate of return of the questionnaire. An introductory letter was written by the Head of department, University of Education Winneba, Kumasi campus. The letter was delivered to school heads at Garu-Tempene district. In the letter the purpose of the study was stated and cooperation of the school authorities was sought. The researcher obtained permission and support from the teachers of the schools to conduct the study.

The researcher met the teachers and explained the objectives of the study to them. The researcher established rapport with the teachers to make them feel at home. Respondents were assured that the study was strictly for academic purpose and that utmost confidentiality would be observed. The respondents were furnished with accurate information on the procedures for the completion of the questionnaire. The researcher availed herself to explain those items which were not clear to respondents. The respondents were given one week to respond to the questionnaire. The researcher distributed 83 questionnaires to be completed by the teachers. Out of the 83 questionnaire distributed 60 were retrieved putting the response rate at 77%. The respondents were given one week to complete the questionnaire.

Data Analysis

Data from the questionnaire were edited for consistency and coded for entry into the computer. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the data with the help of analytical soft known as Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The results were presented using frequencies and percentages. All the three research questions were answered using percentages and frequencies.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This chapter presents analysis and discussion of data gathered on stress management of basic school teachers in the Garu – Tempene District in the Upper East Region. The main objective of the study was to find out coping strategies of stress among teachers of basic schools. Data were gathered from 60 teachers through the use of purpose sampling technique. Questionnaire was the main instrument used to gather data. The interpretation of the data was done with the use of frequency tables and percentages. The first section of the analysis focused on discussion of personal data of teachers. The second section was the discussion of the main data guided by the three research questions.

This part of the research has been grouped under four main sections. These were:

1. Personal data of teachers
2. Major causes of stress
3. Coping strategies of stress
4. Measures to improve management of stress

Personal Data of Teachers

The personal data of teachers such as age, sex and professional qualification were analyzed. The respondents' personal data were needed to help the researcher know the type of respondents used in the study. The first part of the discussion was based on the sex of respondents used in the study. The findings are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Gender of respondents

Gender	Number	Percentage
Male	38	63.3
Female	22	36.7
Total	60	100

Source: Field Survey, 2019.

Results from Table 1 revealed that 63.3% of the teachers were males and 36.7% were females. This means that there are more male teachers in the basic schools at Garu Tempene district than female teachers. It could be concluded that the views of male teachers dominate in the study.

Professional Qualification

Teachers Views on professional qualification were sought. This was required to know the educational attainment of respondents used in the study. Table 2 presents the results.

Table 2: Professional Qualification

Qualification	N	%
Diploma	40	66.7
First degree	18	30.0
Second degree	2	3.3
Total	60	100

Source: field survey, 2018.

As indicated in Table 2, 66.7% majority of the teachers were diplomats, 30.0% were first degree holders and 3.3% were second degree holders. From the analysis, it

could be concluded that majority of the teachers had minimum requirement for teaching in basic schools. Hence qualification was not a contributing factor to teachers stress.

Age of Respondents

The age of respondents was required to know the age attainment of teachers. Table 3 presents details.

Table 3: Age of Respondents

Age	No.	%
20-25 years	10	16.7
26-31 years	21	35.0
32-37 years	19	31.7
38-43 years	8	13.3
44-49 years	2	3.3
Total	60	100

Source: field survey 2018

From Table, majority of teachers (35%) were within the age range of 26-31 years. Over 31.7% fell within the age range of 32-37 years. About 16.7% were within the age range of 20-25 years. The least percentage of teachers, 3.3% were within 44 - 49 years. The result means that majority of the respondents have attained age 26-31 years. This implies that the teachers are old enough be in better position to provide the needed information about their stress in the schools.

Research Question 1: What are the major causes of stress among junior high school teachers at Gar-Tempne district?

The research sought opinions of teachers on major causes of stress among teachers.

Details are provided in Table 4.

Table 4: Major Causes of Stress

Items	Strongly Agree		Agree		Uncertain		Disagree		Strongly disagree		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Frequent interruptions on instructional hours	20	33.3	21	35	4	18.3	7	11.7	1	1.7	60	100
High number of students per teacher	32	53.3	21	35	2	3.3	5	8.3	0	0	60	100
Lack of respect from supervisors	16	26.7	22	36.7	8	13.3	11	18.3	3	5.0	60	100
Unattractive salary	28	46.7	18	30.0	4	6.7	7	11.7	3	5.0	60	100
Emotional fatigue	19	31.7	28	46.7	7	11.7	5	8.3	1	1.7	60	100
Lack of motivation	26	43.3	21	35.0	5	8.3	7	11.7	1	1.7	60	100
Working for long hours	23	38.3	18	30.0	4	6.7	14	23.3	7	11.7	60	100
Autonomy over work	18	30.0	14	23.3	16	26.7	9	15.0	3	5.0	60	100
Unfavourable working conditions	23	38.3	29	48.3	4	6.7	4	6.7	0	0	60	100
Lack of infrastructure	18	30.0	24	40.0	5	8.3	10	16.7	3	5.0	60	100
Poor relationship with colleague	7	11.7	26	43.3	7	11.7	16	26.7	4	6.7	60	100
Walking for long distance	19	31.7	25	41.7	3	5.0	11	18.3	2	3.3	60	100
High demands of work	15	25.0	28	46.7	7	11.7	7	11.7	3	5.0	60	100

Source field survey, 2018.

A critical analysis of the data presented in Table 4 revealed that 21(35%) of the teachers “agreed” they experienced frequent interruptions on instructional hours. A considerable number of respondents, 30(33.3%) “strongly agreed” teachers experienced stress while 11 (18.3%) remained uncertain about the statement. Over 7(11.7%) of the teachers indicated “disagreed” to the statement. Only (1.7%) of the “strongly” disagreed” to the statement. From the analysis, it can be said that majority of the teachers lesson are frequently interrupted during instruction and this put them under stress. The implication is that instructional hours will not be effectively used and they will have to work overtime which make them become stress up.

From Table 4, it was revealed that majority of the teachers 32(53.3%) out of the total number “strongly agreed” that the number of students per teacher was high while 21(35%) of them “agreed” to the statement. Two teachers (3.3%) were “uncertain” about the statement and five teachers representing (8.3%) “disagreed” to the statement. None of the respondents indicated “Strongly disagree” to the statement. The result means that, high number of students per teacher is a cause of teachers stress based on analysis of the finding. The implication is that, effective teaching will not be achieved because teachers will find it difficult to attend to individual students and this will put them under stress.

In addition, a close look at Table 4, revealed that 22(36.7%)”agreed” to the statement that lack of respect from supervisors caused teachers stress. About 16 (26.7%) of the respondents “strongly agreed” to the statement. The least percentage of teachers, 3(5%) “strongly disagreed” to the statement that lack of respect from supervisors caused stress. This means that majority of teachers are not accorded respect during supervision by supervisors. The implication is that teachers will lose

their integrity and may not be able to give out their best to the students as expected and as a result be under stress.

Moreover, a close examination of the scores displayed on the Table 4 indicated that 28(46.7%) of the teachers “strongly agreed” that unattractive salary caused stress. About 18 respondents representing (30%) “agreed” to the statement. Four respondents (6.7%) indicated “uncertain” to the statement. Seven respondents (11.7%) “disagreed” and only 3 (5%) “strongly disagreed” that unattractive salary was a caused to teachers stress. The result means that majority of the teachers receive unattractive salary which causes stress among them. The implication is that teachers output of work will be very low because they are de-motivated and it will result to stress among them.

Results from Table 4 revealed that majority 28(46.7%) of the respondents “agreed” that emotional fatigue of teachers caused stress. About 19(31.7 %) of them “strongly agreed” to the statement. Seven respondent representing (11.7%) were “uncertain” about the issue of emotional fatigue. Five (8.3%) respondents “disagreed” and only 1(1.7%) “strongly disagreed” that emotional fatigue of teachers caused teachers stress. This means that emotional fatigue is a cause of teachers stress. This implies that teachers will perform very low as they are emotionally depressed and this will affect the overall goal of the schools.

More so, results showed that 26(43.3%) of the respondents “strongly agreed” that lack of motivation for teachers caused stress in them. About 21(35%) “agreed” to the statement. Seven (11.7) of them “disagreed” while 5 (8.35) of respondents were “uncertain” that lack of motivation caused teachers stress. Only one teacher representing (1.7%) “strongly disagreed” that lack of motivation for teachers caused stress. This means that majority of teachers are not motivated in teaching. The

implication is that teachers will be stressed up and they will fail to show greater commitment to teaching.

On the issue of working for long hours, 23(38.3%) of the respondents “strongly agreed” that they worked for longer hours. About 18(30%) of the respondents “agreed” to the fact that longer hours of work is a cause of stress to them. About 14(23.3%) of the respondents “disagreed” that working for longer hours was a cause of stress. Four teachers (6.7%) indicated that they were uncertain to the statement. Only one respondent representing (1.7%) “strongly disagreed” to the statement. The result means that working for long hours is a cause of stress of the teachers. This implies that teachers will be tired and become inactive in class as they work for long hours.

On the degree of autonomy over work, 18(30%) “strongly agreed” about the statement, 16(26.7%) were “uncertain” as to whether the degree of autonomy over work caused teachers stress while 14(23.3%) “agreed” to the statement. Only three respondents representing (5%) “strongly disagreed” to the statement. It could be deduced from the results that teachers have autonomy over work and therefore, degree of autonomy is not a cause to their stress. This implies teachers will bring to bear their knowledge and expertise on teaching and their initiative will be enhanced.

Responses on unfavourable working conditions showed that 29(49.3%) of the respondents “agreed” that unfavourable working condition was a cause to teachers stress. 23(38.3%) of them “strongly agreed” to the statement while four respondents representing (6.7%) “disagreed” to the statement. None of the respondents indicated “strongly disagree”. This means that unfavourable working condition is a cause to teachers stress. The implication is that teachers will become insecure and their focus on teaching will be shifted.

Findings again revealed that 24(40%) of the respondents “agreed” that lack of infrastructure was a cause to teachers’ stress. Over 18(3%) of the respondents “strongly agreed” to the statement. About 10 (16.7%) of the respondents “disagreed” while 5(8.3 %) of them remained about the statement. Only 3 respondents representing (5%) “strongly disagreed” that lack of infrastructure was a cause of stress. The results means that lack of infrastructure is a cause to teachers stress. This implies that teachers will not feel comfortable during teaching and the expected outcome of the teaching will be not achieved.

On the question of poor relationship with colleagues at work place, 26(43.3%) of respondents “agreed” to the statement. Over 16(26.7%) of them “disagreed” while 7 (11.7%) of them “strongly agreed”. The least percentage of teachers, (6.7 %) “strongly disagreed” that poor relationship with colleague was a cause of stress. It could be concluded from the analysis that majority of the teachers have poor relationship with colleagues. This implies that teachers will not cooperate with each other and the benefits that are accrued from team work may be lacking therefore leading to stress among teachers.

On high demands of work, over 28(46.7%) of the respondents “agreed” that high demands of work caused stress in teachers. About 15(25%) of them “strongly agreed” to the statement. About 7(11.7%) teachers “disagreed” to the statement. The least percentage of respondents (5%), “strongly disagreed” to the statement. From the result, it could be concluded that high demands of teaching put teachers under stress and this sometimes results in low quality of teaching. The finding is in line with Blase (1986) assertion that organizational issues dealing students, administration, other work relationship causes stress among teachers. Sutton (1984) said that role demands, instructional problems and inter personal relationship cause stress among teachers.

Research Question 2: What coping strategies are used to manage stress among basic school teachers in Garu –Tempane district?

This question sought teachers views on coping strategies to reduce stress among teachers.

Findings are provided in Table 5.

Table 5: Coping strategies of stress

Items	Strongly agree		Agree		Uncertain		Disagree		Strongly disagree		Total	
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Good leadership style of heads provides conducive working environment for teachers	34	56.7	20	33.7	4	6.2	1	1.7	1	1.7	60	100
Provision of regular supervision	13	21.7	32	53.3	7	11.7	6	10.0	2	3.3	60	100
Organisation of in-service training	25	41.7	27	43.3	3	5.0	2	3.3	4	6.7	60	100
Provision of motivation	27	45.0	25	41.7	3	5.0	3	5.0	2	3.3	60	100
Advance planning allows teachers to take their minds off stress	18	30.0	32	53.3	6	10.0	3	5.0	1	1.7	60	100
Social support reduces stress	19	31.7	28	46.7	8	13.3	4	6.7	1	1.7	60	100
Awareness of environmental conditions	18	30.0	27	45.0	9	15.0	2	3.3	4	6.7	60	100

Source field survey, 2018

Findings from Table 5 showed that 34(56.7 %) of the respondents “strongly agreed” that good leadership style of head teachers provided conducive working environment for teachers. About 20 (33.3%) of them “agreed” to the statement. Four

respondents (6.7%) were uncertain as to whether good leadership style of heads provided conducive working environment for teachers. One respondent strongly disagree to the statement. From the analysis, it could said that good leadership style of heads creates conducive environment which help teachers cope with stress.

Moreover, 32(53.3%) of the respondents “agreed” that provision of regular supervision of teachers by the head teachers was a coping strategy of stress. About 13 (21.7%) of the respondents “strongly agreed” to the statement while 7 (11.7%) were “uncertain” about the statement. Only 2(3.3%) of the respondents “strongly disagreed” that provision of regular supervision by head teachers was a coping strategy of stress among teachers. This means that supervision provides feedback which helps teachers to manage work related stress.

In addition, 26(43.3%) “agreed” that organisation of in-services training programmes for teachers helped teachers to cope with stress in various schools. About 25(41.7%) “strongly agreed” to the statement. Four respondents (6.7%) indicated “strongly disagreed” to the statement. Over 3 (5%) were “uncertain” as to whether organisations of in-service training was a coping strategy for teachers stress. Only 2 (3.3%) of the respondents “disagreed” to the statement the organisation of in-service training programmes was a coping strategy of stress. The analysis means that majority of the teachers consider in-service training programmes as a coping strategy of stress. This implies that teachers will be up-dated on current information about their work they will be prevent them experiencing stress as a result of lack of information to work with.

From Table 5, 27(45%) of the teachers “strongly agreed” that provision of motivation for teachers enabled them coped with stress. As much as 25(41.7%) of the respondents “agreed” to the statement. Three respondents (5%) were “uncertain”

about the statement. Only 2 teachers (3.3%) “strongly disagreed” that provision of motivation for teacher was a coping strategy of stress for teachers. The result means that a majority of the teachers receive motivation from heads and this helps them cope with stress. The implication is that teachers will be less stressful since their efforts are rewarded.

Furthermore, as many as 32(53.3%) of the teachers “agreed” that advance planning allowed teachers to take their minds off stress and focus on work. About 18(30%) “strongly agreed” to the statement while 3(5 %) “disagreed” Only (1.75) “strongly disagreed” that advance planning allowed teachers to take their minds off stress and focus on work. From the analysis, it could be deduced that advance planning support teachers to cope with stress. The implication is that teachers will work within time and avoid stress.

As revealed in Table 5, the largest proportion of respondents, 28(46.7%) “agreed” that social support was a coping strategy for teachers. Over 19 respondents (31.7%) “strongly agreed” to the statement. 8 (13.3%) were “uncertain” that social support of teachers was a strategy for coping with stress. Four respondents (6.7%) “disagreed” to statement. Only 1(1.7%) “strongly disagreed” that social support reduced stress in teachers. A close examination of the analysis shows that majority of the respondents agreed to the fact that social support can help teachers cope with stress. This implies that teachers need social support from communities the teach in, in order to cope with stress.

Similarly, 27(45%) of teachers claimed that teachers awareness of possible environmental conditions was a valuable coping strategy. About 18 (30%) “strongly agreed” that the teachers awareness of possible environmental conditions was a coping strategy for stress. Over 9(15%) of them were “uncertain” as to whether

teachers awareness of possible environment conditions is a valuable coping strategy while 4 (6.7%) respondents indicated “strongly disagreed” to the statement. Only two respondents, (3.3%) “disagreed” to the statement that teachers awareness of possible environmental condition was a valuable coping strategy for stress. From the analysis, it could be said that majority of the respondents are aware of possible environmental conditions as a valuable coping strategy of teachers stress. This implies that teacher are informed of possible environmental conditions in the schools and this will enable them manage stress. This finding is in agreement with Griffith, Steptoe and Cropliy (1999) that teachers who have more support within their personal lives tend to experience less stress.

Research Question 3: what measures could be adopted to improve management of stress among basic school teachers in Garu-Tempane district?

Respondent were requested to indicate possible measures to improve stress management among teachers. The suggestions from respondent were grouped into seven areas. Table 6 presents the results.

Tables 6: Measures to improve management of stress

Items	N	%
A serene working environment	4	6.7
Good relationship between teachers and heads	81	30.0
Heads should share responsibility to teachers	3	5.0
Improve working conditions of teachers	9	15.0
Provisions of adequate teaching and learning materials	6	10.0
Large class size should be reduced to normal	6	10.0
Teachers should be motivated	14	23.3
Total	60	100

Source: field survey, 2008.

As shown in Table 6, the highest number of respondents, 81(30%) suggested that good relationship between teachers and heads enabled teachers to improve management stress. The next highest percentage of teachers, 14(23.3%) disclosed that motivation of teachers will enable them improve on their management techniques of stress. Moreover, 9(15%) of the respondents suggested that there should be improvement in working conditions of teachers to enable them acquire the needed support to manage work issues bothering them. Again, 6(10%) of the respondents suggested that provision of adequate teaching and learning materials improve management of stress. The respondents suggested normal class size improves management of work related stress. About 4(6.7%) suggested that a serene working environment should be given the necessary attention to avoid environmental hazards.

Finally, the least percentage of respondents 3(5%) suggested that heads should share responsibility to teachers to always make them feel that they are part of the school administration and reduce boredom in them. It could be concluded from the analyses that majority of the respondents regard good relationship between heads and teachers as a means of improving teachers' management of stress. This implies that teachers will operate in healthy work environment which will promote team work among teachers and manage their stress level.

Summary of Results

In summary, this chapter has provided answers to three research questions. Findings revealed that high number of students per teacher, frequent interruption on instructional hours, unattractive salary, lack of motivation and unfavourable working conditions were the major causes of stress among teachers. Good leadership style of head teachers conducive working environment for teachers, provision of regular supervision, organisation of in-service training programmes for teachers emerged as ways by which teachers can cope with stress. Measures found to improve management of stress included motivation of teachers and improved working conditions for teachers

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

This chapter summarizes the findings of the study, conclusions drawn, recommendations made and suggestions for further research.

Overview of the Study

The study investigated stress management practices among teachers of Garu-Tempene district of the Upper East Region of Ghana. The objectives of the study were to find out major causes of stress and measures to improve management of stress among teachers. Three research questions were formulated to guide the study. Descriptive survey design was used for the study. The study involved basic school teacher in the Garu-Tempene district of the Upper East Region of Ghana. The purposive sampling technique was used to select the teachers. A sample size of 60 teachers was used for the study.

The main instrument used for the collecting of data was questionnaire. Reliability co-efficient of 0.72 was obtained from the pilot test using Cronbach Alpha for the analysis. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics the results were presented using frequencies and percentages.

Summary of key findings

A considerable number of findings emanated from the study. They included:

1. On major causes of stress, it was found out that, high number of students per teacher, frequent interruption on instructional hours, unattractive salary, lack of

motivation and unfavourable working conditions were the major causes of stress among teachers.

2. On coping strategies, other aspects included: provision of motivation for teachers was also revealed as means of supporting teachers cope with stress. It was revealed from the study that advance planning, social support, teachers awareness of environmental conditions are coping strategies used by.

3. On measure to improve management of stress, it was found out that good relationship between teachers and heads of schools enables teachers to improve on management of stress among teachers. Other measures found to improve management of stress include motivation of teachers and improved working conditions for teachers

Conclusions

Based on the finding of the study, the following conclusions were made.

It could be concluded from the findings that stress is caused by a lot of factors including instructional interruptions, lack of motivation and unattractive salaries. These factors prevent teachers from working effectively to achieve the goals of education. It could be said that teachers aware of the environment and making advanced preparation could relieve them from stress. It could again be concluded that improved working conditions and good relationship with head teachers could boost teachers' moral to work up to expectations.

Recommendations

From the exposure gained from the following recommendations are made in the expectation that they would make coping strategy of stress an important exercise for teachers.

1. It was realized from the study that provision of regular supervision of teachers by school heads was not adequate. Based on this, the researcher wish to recommend that the heads and circuit supervisors intensify that their supervision with teachers to help find their challenges and help solve them.
2. The head need to constantly find out from teachers when they sit lonely and there a change in their mood.
3. Organisation of workshops and in-service training programmes should be intensify in order to help teachers cope with their stress.
4. It is again, recommended that head teachers should use appropriate leadership style to provide conducive working environment for teachers.
5. The government should provide attractive motivation packages to teachers to relive teacher from stress in order to impact positively on pupils achievement

Suggestions for Further Studies

The study should be replicated in other districts to confirm or refute the findings of this study. Future study should be conducted in tertiary institutions using senior members to indicate similar or different findings.

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APPENDIX A

UNIVERSITY OF EDUCATION DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP

STRESS MANAGEMENT QUESTIONNAIRE FOR TEACHERS

Effective management of stress has been identified as an important tool to increase in all activities. This questionnaire is designed purposely to draw out information that will enable the researcher to carry a study on coping strategies of stress amount teachers of Basic Schools in Garu-Tempane Distric of Upper East Region.

Please, kindly answer the following questions. You are assured that any information provided will be kept strictly confidential.

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Please, tick (✓) as appropriate

1. Age
2. Gender: Male () Female ()
3. Professional Qualification: Diploma () First-degree () Second-degree ()

SECTION B

Major causes of Stress

Please, read the following statements relating to major causes of teacher stress and then indicate the extent to which you agree or disagree with each statement by ticking the appropriate box using the key below:

5-Strongly Agree, 4 -Agree, 3-Uncertain, 2-Disagree, 1-Strongly Disagree

	Major Causes of stress	SA	A	U	D	SD
4	Frequent interceptions over instructional hours.					
5	High number of students per teacher ratio.					
6	Lack of respect from supervisors.					
7	Unattractive salary of teachers.					
8	Emotional fatigue of teachers.					
9	Lack of motivation for teachers.					
10	Working for long hours.					
11	Degree of autonomy over work.					
12	Unfavourable working conditions.					
13	Lack of infrastructure in the school.					
14	Poor work relationship with colleagues.					
15	Walking long distance to school.					
16	High demands of work.					

SECTION C

The items below are descriptions of how teachers cope with stress. Please, read each item and decide whether you agree or disagree with the statements.

	Coping strategies of stress	SA	A	U	D	SD
17	Good leadership style of the head teacher provides conducive working environment for teachers.					
18	Provision of regular supervision of teachers by the head teacher.					
19	Organisation of in-service training programmes for teachers.					

20	Provision of motivation for teachers.					
21	Advance planning allows teachers to take their minds off stress and focus on their work.					
22	Support personal lives tend to experience less stress in the work place.					
23	Social support can reduce the stress on teachers.					
24	Low demands of work.					
25	Teachers awareness of possible environmental conditions is a valuable coping strategy.					

SECTION D

Suggest possible measures that you think can reduce stress in the school system.

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Thank you for completing this questionnaire.