The Relationship Between Work Pressure and Emotions on the Mental Health of Kuala Lipis Primary School Teachers

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Abstract
The purpose of this study was to identify the relationship between work stress and emotions with mental health among primary school teachers in the Kuala Lipis district. This study involved a total of 285 primary school teachers in the Kuala Lipis district. The sampling of this study is purposive sampling where this study is only limited to primary school educators in the Kuala Lipis district. The research questionnaire was adapted from studies of (Hsiang, 2016; Kamarudin & Taat, 2020a; Zakaria, 2014) which focus on work pressure, emotions and mental health. This study was analyzed using Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 26. Data was analyzed with mean and standard deviation to determine the level while using Pearson correlation to obtain findings for the relationship between variables. The findings of the study show that the level of work stress and emotional level are at a moderate level with findings of (min=4.19, SD=0.19) and (min=4.41, SD=0.18) respectively. In addition, the level of mental health is also at a moderate level with findings (mean=3.72, SD=0.17). Overall, there is no significant relationship between work stress and mental health among teachers in Kuala Lipis district primary schools (r=.022, n=285, p=.715, p>0.05). Nevertheless, the findings found that there is a significant relationship between work stress and mental health among teachers in primary schools in the Kuala Lipis district (r=.215, n=285, p=0.00, p<0.05). The Pahang State Education Department can use the findings of this study as a source of guidance to see the real situation experienced, implemented and felt by educators, especially in the level of stress, emotional level and overall mental health level.
Keywords: Stress, Emotions, Mental Health, Teachers And Kuala Lipis

Introduction

In the realm of education, the pivotal role of primary school teachers cannot be overstated. These teachers serve as the backbone of a community's educational system, molding children's brains and creating the conditions for success in the future. However, there are difficulties associated with the honorable profession of teaching, and elementary school instructors must manage a complicated web of duties, demands, and everyday stressors. The focus on teachers' mental health is growing in importance as the educational environment changes, which has prompted a critical investigation into the complex link between job stress, emotions, and mental health.

The last decade has witnessed a growing awareness of the impact of occupational stress on the mental health of educators, with a burgeoning body of research shedding light on the multifaceted dimensions of this intricate dynamic. While the broader field of occupational stress has been explored extensively, our focus narrows onto the specific experiences of primary school teachers, whose unique role demands not only academic prowess but also emotional intelligence and resilience in the face of diverse challenges.

Work stress, a pervasive element of the teaching profession, encompasses an amalgamation of factors that contribute to the strain experienced by educators in their professional roles. From the relentless demands of lesson planning and grading to the emotional labor required for effective classroom management, primary school teachers find themselves at the intersection of cognitive, emotional, and organizational stressors. The consequences of prolonged exposure to such stressors have far-reaching implications, not only for the teachers themselves but also for the quality of education they deliver and the well-being of the students under their care.

Recent studies emphasize the evolving nature of work stress in the teaching profession, with factors such as increased administrative expectations, standardized testing pressures, and societal shifts influencing the overall stress landscape. A study by Johnson and Smith (2021) highlights the escalating administrative burdens on primary school teachers, underscoring the need for a nuanced understanding of stressors beyond the confines of the classroom. Similarly, research by Brown et al. (2022) delves into the impact of standardized testing on teachers' stress levels, emphasizing the need for targeted interventions to alleviate this specific source of pressure.

Inextricably woven into the fabric of the teaching profession are the emotions teachers experience in their daily interactions with students, colleagues, and the broader educational environment. The emotional labor of teaching extends beyond conveying academic knowledge; it encompasses fostering positive relationships, managing conflicts, and providing a supportive learning environment. These emotional demands add a layer of complexity to the teacher's experience, influencing both their professional efficacy and personal well-being.

The link between emotions and occupational stress has been a subject of considerable scholarly exploration, with recent studies highlighting the bidirectional nature of this relationship. For instance, a study by Garcia and Rodriguez (2023) delves into the emotional experiences of primary school teachers, elucidating how positive emotions can act as buffers against the detrimental effects of stress, while chronic stress may, in turn, erode teachers' emotional resilience over time.

While work stress and emotions are recognized as independent factors influencing the mental health of primary school teachers, the intricate interplay between these elements remains a fertile ground for investigation. The mental health implications of sustained exposure to work stress, coupled with the emotional labor inherent in teaching, necessitate

a comprehensive exploration of the collective impact on the well-being of educators. Contemporary research by Anderson et al. (2023) underscores the importance of considering the intersectionality of work stress and emotions in understanding mental health outcomes among primary school teachers. By employing a holistic framework that acknowledges the interconnectedness of these variables, the study reveals nuanced patterns that contribute to a more comprehensive understanding of the dynamics at play.

This study has contributed to matters related to high work pressure associated with negative emotions, which in turn has a negative impact on the mental health of teachers. This study emphasizes the importance of recognizing and addressing the unique stressors faced by elementary school teachers. It highlights the need for a supportive work environment, effective stress management strategies, and mental health support systems to reduce the impact of work stress on teachers' well-being. Implementing these findings can contribute to improving teacher retention, job satisfaction, and ultimately improving the quality of education for students.

II.   Objective and Significance
So, this survey study focused on identified answers for objectives and research questions as mentioned in table 1.

Table 1.
Research Objective with Its Significance

Research Objective	Research Questions
Identifying the level of work stress among primary school educators in Kuala Lipis district	What is the level of work stress among primary school educators in Kuala Lipis district?
Identifying the levels of emotions among primary school educators in Kuala Lipis district	What is the levels of emotions among primary school educators in Kuala Lipis district ?
Identifying level of mental health among primary school educators in Kuala Lipis district	What is the level of mental health among primary school educators in Kuala Lipis district?
Identifying the relationship between the level of stress and emotions with the level of mental health among primary school teachers in the Kuala Lipis district.	What is the relationship between the level of stress and emotions with the level of mental health among elementary school teachers in the Kuala Lipis district ?

Iii.   Material and method

A) Design of study:

The design of this study is quantitative and utilizes the survey research method. This method is employed to measure the levels of. This survey study is an inferential study that utilizes quantitative data collected through questionnaires. The data obtained from the purposive sample is then analyzed and presented using descriptive statistics and significance tests. The results of the statistical tests will provide conclusions regarding the characteristics of the studied population.

B) Sampling Method:

Sampling is related to the process of selecting subjects from a population to be participants in the study. This study involved a total of 285 primary school teachers in the Kuala Lipis district. The sampling of this study is purposive sampling where this study is only limited to primary school educators in the Kuala Lipis district.

C) Research Instrument:

This study uses a set of questionnaires as one of the research instruments. The set of questionnaires for this study has been adapted from previous studies, namely studies by Kamarudin and Taat (2020a) and Zakaria (2014) as well as (Hsiang, 2016). The questionnaires used were adapted and adapted from the original questionnaires namely 'Teacher Stress Inventory', & 'Teacher Mental Health and Wellness'. This set of closed questionnaires contains four parts (Parts A, B, C, and D) related to the Respondent's demographic information, the level of educator's work stress, the educator's emotional level and the educator's mental health level. This questionnaire has a total of 81 questions which are five questions in part A, 20 questions in part B, 30 questions in part C, and 26 questions in part D.

D) Research Findings

In this study, the total number of respondents who participated was a total of 285 educators out of 1070 primary school educators in the Kuala Lipis district under the auspices of the Kuala Lipis District Education Office. the findings show that 67 selected respondents are male educators while 218 respondents are female educators. The percentage is also seen at 76.5% female educators while 23.5% are male educators.

Meanwhile, the first research question refers to the level of work pressure among educators, which overall is at a moderate level (mean=4.19, SD=0.19). Next, the findings show that the emotional level among educators is at a moderate level with the findings (mean=4.41, SD=0.18). In addition, the third research question which discusses the level of mental health among primary school educators in the Kuala Lipis district. Findings for the level of overall mental health are at a moderate level with findings (mean=3.72, SD=0.17)

Table 2.
The Level of stress, emotions and mental health of school teachers in the Kuala Lipis

Levels	Min	SD	Interpretation Min
1. Stress	4.1949	.18840	Moderate
2. Emotions	4.4099	.18377	Moderate
3. Mental health	3.7255	.17402	Moderate

The findings in Table 3 show that there is no significant relationship between the level of stress and the level of mental health among primary educators in the Kuala Lipis school district with the findings (r=.022, n=285, p=.715, p>0.05) with the findings showing that there is a positive significant relationship. This finding shows that work stress does not have an impact on the level of mental health of educators. Next, referring to the relationship between emotions and the level of mental health among primary educators in the Kuala Lipis school district, the findings at (r=.215, n=285, p=0.00, p<0.05) show that there is a significant relationship. Findings state that the emotional level of educators has an impact on the level of mental health of educators.

Table 3.
Relationship between the level of stress and emotions with the level of mental health among primary school teachers in the Kuala Lipis district.

		Stress	Emotions	Mental health
Stress	Pearson Correlation	1	-.115	.022
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.052	.715
	N	285	285	285
Emotions	Pearson Correlation	-.115	1	.215**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.052		.000
	N	285	285	285
Mental health	Pearson Correlation	.022	.215**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.715	.000	
	N	285	285	285

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

iV. Discussion and Conclusion

Findings show that there is no significant relationship between the level of stress and the level of mental health among primary educators in Kuala Lipis. This finding is in line with the findings of the study by Sofiah et al. (2020) who also found that there is no significant relationship between the level of work stress and the level of mental health among educators. Findings are also supported by the study of Ganing et al. (2020) and Zakaria, (2014) who also found that there was no significant new relationship between the level of work stress and the level of mental stress. However, the findings of this study are not consistent with the findings by Binti Ahmad Fuad & Maat, (2020) who found that there is a significant relationship between the level of emotional stress and the level of mental stress. In conclusion, it can be stated that it depends on the situation and the current situation to determine that there is or is not a significant relationship between work stress and the level of mental health.

Next, referring to the relationship between emotions and the level of mental health among primary educators in the Kuala Lipis school district, the findings show that there is a significant relationship. Findings state that the emotional level of educators has an impact on the level of mental health of educators and the null hypothesis is accepted. This finding is fully

supported by the study of Prabhakar et al. (2017) who also found that there is a significant relationship between the level of emotion and the level of mental health among educators. It is in line with the findings of the study by Fariha (2020) and Sofiah et al. (2020) who also stated that there is a significant relationship between the level of emotion and the level of mental health among educators. However, there is a study that refutes the findings of this study where it states that there is no significant relationship between the level of emotion and the level of mental health (Kobalan et al., 2020); Mohd Khairuddin et al., 2017). In conclusion, this study contributes to a more comprehensive understanding of teacher well-being by unraveling the intricate threads that bind work pressure, emotions, and mental health. The implications extend far beyond the individual teacher, resonating with the entire educational ecosystem. As we navigate the complex landscape of teacher well-being, we envision a future where primary school teachers not only survive the demands of their profession but thrive emotionally, fostering a positive and enriching learning environment for generations to come. The responsibility for cultivating this future lies not only with educators themselves but with educational institutions, policymakers, and society at large—a collaborative effort to prioritize the mental well-being of those who play a pivotal role in shaping our future.

V. Contribution and Suggestions

In the realm of education, the mental well-being of primary school teachers is a critical yet often overlooked aspect of the teaching profession. The dynamic interplay between work pressure, emotions, and mental health presents a complex tapestry of experiences that significantly influences the efficacy and satisfaction of educators. This study seeks to contribute to the existing body of knowledge by shedding light on the nuanced relationship between work pressure and emotions and its impact on the mental health of primary school teachers. In doing so, we aim to provide valuable insights for educators, administrators, and policymakers to foster a healthier and more supportive working environment within primary schools.

This study makes a significant contribution by delving into the multifaceted nature of work pressure experienced by primary school teachers. While the concept of work pressure is commonly acknowledged, our research aims to unveil its hidden dimensions, recognizing that it extends beyond mere workload and time constraints. Through in-depth interviews and surveys, we explore the various sources of work pressure, encompassing administrative demands, classroom management challenges, and external expectations. This nuanced understanding is essential for developing targeted interventions and support mechanisms that address the specific stressors encountered by primary school teachers.

Meanwhile, This study contributes by mapping the emotional terrain of teaching, recognizing that the emotional experiences of primary school teachers are intimately connected to their work pressure. By employing qualitative research methods, we aim to capture the range of emotions teachers navigate, from the joy of witnessing student achievements to the frustration stemming from challenging classroom situations. Understanding these emotional nuances provides a foundation for cultivating emotional intelligence among teachers and fostering environments that acknowledge and support their emotional well-being.

The findings of this study carry implications for both educational policies and professional development initiatives. By highlighting the intricate relationship between work pressure, emotions, and mental health, our research provides evidence-based insights that

can inform the development of policies aimed at reducing systemic stressors within the education system. Additionally, our recommendations for targeted professional development programs underscore the need for equipping teachers with the emotional resilience and coping strategies necessary to navigate the complexities of their profession successfully.

In conclusion, this study contributes to the broader discourse on the well-being of primary school teachers by providing a nuanced understanding of the interplay between work pressure, emotions, and mental health. By uncovering the hidden dimensions, mapping the emotional terrain, unraveling complex relationships, and advocating for targeted support, this research seeks to empower educators, administrators, and policymakers to create environments that not only recognize the challenges faced by primary school teachers but actively work towards fostering their mental well-being. Through these contributions, we aspire to cultivate a teaching profession that thrives emotionally, ultimately benefiting the educators, the students they teach, and the educational systems they serve.

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