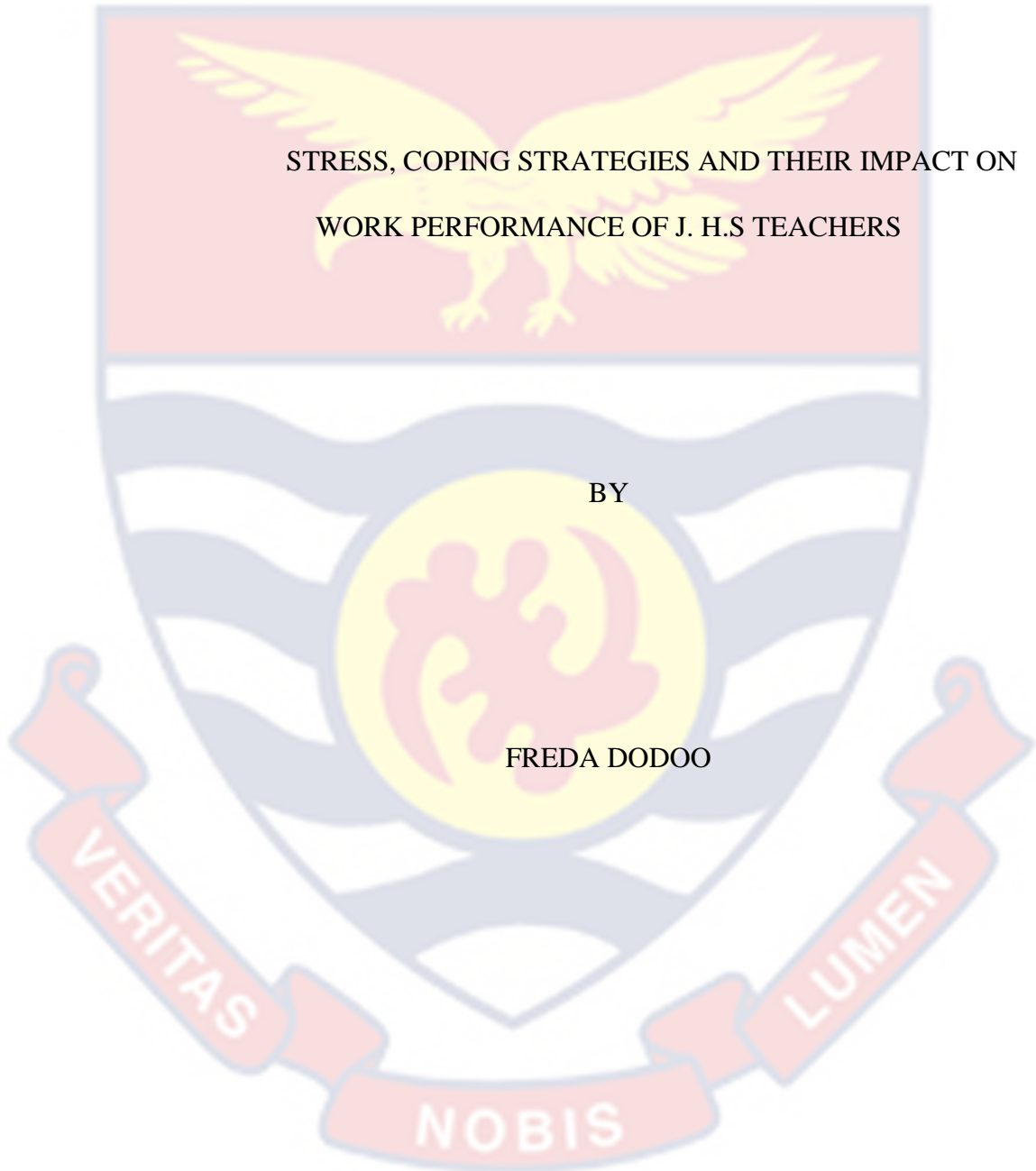UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

STRESS, COPING STRATEGIES AND THEIR IMPACT ON

WORK PERFORMANCE OF J. H.S TEACHERS

BY

FREDA DODOO

2023

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

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Thesis Submitted to the Department of Education and Psychology of the

Faculty of Educational Foundations, College of Education Studies, University

of Cape Coast in Partial Fulfilment of the Requirements for the Award of

Master of Philosophy Degree in Educational Psychology

JANUARY 2023

DECLARATION

Candidate's Declaration

I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own original research and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this university or elsewhere.

Candidate's Signature……………………………………….. Date………………
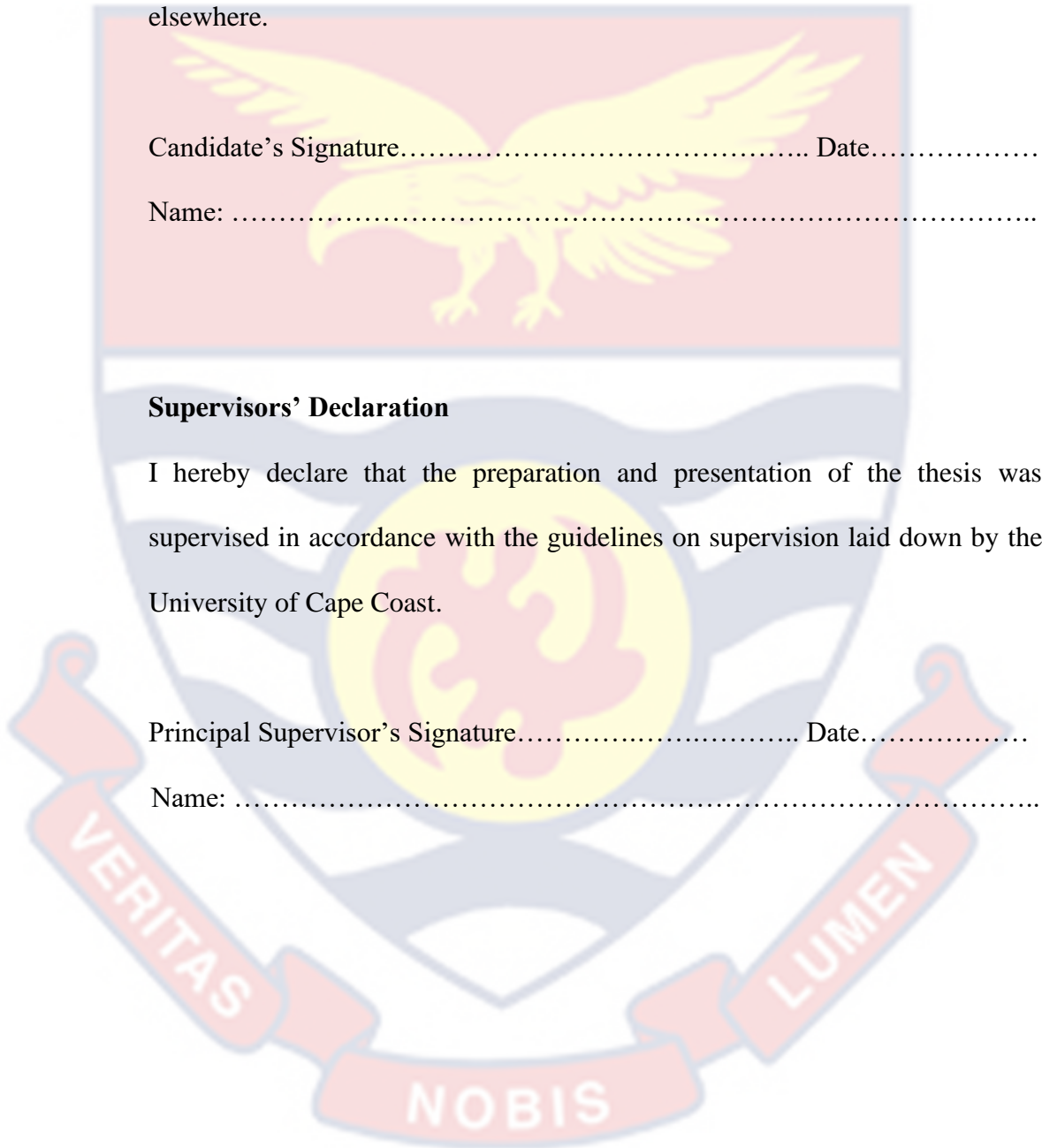
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Supervisors' Declaration

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of the thesis was supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision laid down by the University of Cape Coast.

Principal Supervisor's Signature………….…….……….. Date………………

Name: ……………………………………………………………………………..

ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study is to investigate stress, coping strategies and their impact on the work performance of J. H. S. teachers in Upper Denkyira East Municipality, in the Central Region of Ghana. The descriptive survey design was utilised. A total of 154 JHS teachers were engaged in the study using purposive and census sampling techniques. A questionnaire was used to collect data for the study. The validity and reliability of the questionnaire was ascertained in a pilot test before it was used for the actual data collection. Reliability coefficients were over the required 0.7. Research question one, two, and three were analysed using means and standard deviations. Regression analysis was used to test research hypothesis one. Research hypothesis two was analysed using Hayes moderation process. An independent t-test was used to test hypothesis three. JHS teachers experience high stress levels. This is mostly caused by inadequate salary, shortage of equipment and poor facilities, excessive workload and learners' impolite behaviours. To manage stress, JHS teachers manage their time, focus on the problem and see how it can be solve it. Although stress had a negative effect on work performance, the coping strategies used by teachers can reduce this effect. Also, males and females do not differ in relation to stress levels. School authorities in conjunction with the Ghana Education Service should ensure the JHS teachers receive adequate salaries, and adequate and appropriate infrastructure or facilities that are well furnished with equipment and other relevant material for teaching and learning.

KEYWORDS

Stress

Coping strategies

Work performance

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DEDICATION

To my children, Jayden Brempong, Lebbeaus Osahene, Arianna Omama

and Brianna Ohemaa Bosomtwe.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

In today's dynamic and complex world, organizations face constant transformation and challenges, necessitating enhanced employee performance to withstand competitive pressures and rising work expectations. Employees play a fundamental role in the execution of an organization's mission and vision, serving as the backbone in meeting the evolving needs of clients. Consequently, understanding the factors influencing employee performance is important for organizational success. This research aims to explore the impact of stress on the work performance of public educators within the Upper Denkyira East Municipality, highlighting the significance of effective stress management strategies in enhancing employee performance.

Background to the Study

In today's rapidly changing and complex world, organizations are compelled to operate amidst constant transformation and challenges. It has become increasingly crucial for employees to enhance their performance to not only withstand competitive pressures and rising work expectations but also to ensure the organization's survival. Organizations encounter a variety of factors that disrupt the effective provision of the services they extend to their clients (Shet, Poddar, Samuel, & Dwivedi, 2021). For organizations to execute their mission and vision, the personnel working within the organization play a fundamental role and serve as a foundational support in meeting the constantly evolving requirements of clients (Verma, Kumar, Mittal, Gupta, & Hsu, 2021).

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The focus on employee job performance arises due to the documented evidence indicating a favourable connection between employee performance and organizational effectiveness (Owusu, 2012). Consequently, the competent performance of employees directly contributes to the overall success of the organization. Hence, there is a need to comprehend the factors influencing employee performance.

Moreover, organizations face a diverse range of factors that can impede the effective provision of the services they extend to their clients. To realize the goals they have set, organizations rely heavily on their staff, who play a crucial part in meeting the evolving demands of clients and form the fundamental support structure. This underscores the significance of employing strategies aimed at enhancing employee performance. According to Deadrick (2014), employee performance is seen as the dispersion of attained results, and evaluating performance can be done using diverse criteria that depict an employee's performance trends across a span of time. In order for the organization to assess its employees' performance, it is essential to establish essential performance indicators and benchmarks that are compared with the performance of each individual worker (Chirasha, Chipunza & Dzimbiri, 2018).

Evaluating and managing work performance is a crucial component of proficient human resource management, representing a highly desirable developmental approach within the HR domain (Bateman & Snell, 2007). The expression "employee performance" denotes an individual's accomplishment in

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their tasks following the invested effort, which is linked to having meaningful work, an involved role, and supportive colleagues or employers (Karakas, 2010).

Nevertheless, various elements have been identified to influence job performance. Some of these factors encompass job satisfaction, acknowledgment, and feelings of accomplishment, competitive compensation, as well as opportunities for training and growth (Bonsu & Kusi, 2014). Furthermore, work performance is directly impacted by factors such as organizational fairness, active involvement in tasks, and the motivation to serve the public (Jankingthong & Rurkkhum, 2012). Studies have also demonstrated that transformational leadership influences work performance through both direct pathways and indirect strategies (Jankingthong & Rurkkhum, 2012). Logically, a person with high motivation level on the work will succeed in his task/work (Bonsu & Kusi, 2014). One other factor that affects performance of employees is stress (Teo, Pick, Newton, Yeung, & Chang, 2013; Chao, Jou, Liao, & Kuo, 2015).

Stress is perceived as an adverse process involving emotional, cognitive, behavioural, and physiological reactions that arise when an individual attempts to cope with or manage stress-inducing factors (Bernstein, Penner, Stewart & Roy, 2008). Stress results from the inability of an organism, whether human or animal, to adequately respond to emotional or physical challenges, whether they are real or perceived. Stress is commonly acknowledged to produce two contrasting impacts on individuals: beneficial stress (eustress) and detrimental stress (distress). Han Selye observed that eustress presents individuals with challenges that inspire them to put in significant effort and achieve their objectives. On the other hand, distress

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arises from prolonged exposure to stress-inducing circumstances, leading to adverse health consequences (Kai-Wen, 2009). In a general sense, it can be inferred that moderate levels of stress contribute to enhancing individual performance, whereas excessive stress levels can result in diminished performance. Leaders and educators are directing their efforts towards work performance due to the potential decline in employees' performance when their levels of motivation decrease (Bonsu & Kusi, 2014).

Employees employ various strategies to orchestrate these adaptive reactions, operating at both systemic and cellular tiers. Consequently, stress directly impacts both the brain and the overall physiological structure. Failing to acclimate to stress can lead to impaired brain function, physical ailments, as well as a range of psychological struggles including depression, anxiety, discomfort, and exhaustion. From a physiological standpoint, conditions like reproductive issues, cardiovascular ailments, metabolic disorders, and gastrointestinal diseases arising from stress are influenced significantly by a combination of genetic and developmental elements that vary from individual to individual. However, there are instances when the symptoms of these diseases might exhibit similarities across individuals (Nandamuri & Gowthami, 2011).

Hence, stress can be described as a form of pressure exerted on an individual, potentially leading to strain. Strain arises when stress is not effectively managed, signifying a person's inability to cope with a encountered challenge or issue. For certain individuals, the impact of stress is slight, indicating their capacity

to withstand pressure. In contrast, for others, the impact is substantial and can have detrimental consequences.

Globally, numerous studies have demonstrated that various types of stress exhibit an adverse correlation with work performance. For instance, role ambiguity and role conflict display a negative association with the work performance of hotel employees (Akgunduz, 2015). Among nurses, work-related stress is linked to lower work performance (Li et al., 2017), and the performance of bank officers is significantly inversely related to both personal life stress and the balance between work and personal life (Kumari, Bajwa, & Priya, 2016).

Research conducted in South Africa further unveiled that stress predictors among educators in the region primarily encompassed factors such as excessive job demands (overload), limited opportunities for advancement, job insecurity, and a lack of control (Naidoo, Botha, & Bisschoff, 2013). In Tanzania, Suru and Mwampulo (2021) discovered that work-induced stress contributes to heightened rates of absenteeism, employee turnover, and subpar work performance within the teaching profession. Conversely, social interactions and engagement in religious activities have been identified as effective coping strategies to counterbalance job-related stress. In a related context, Waweru and Ndambuki (2021) determined that a significant degree of occupational stress is linked to an elevated workload.

Likewise, in Ghana, stress has been the subject of comprehensive investigation yielding diverse results. For example, Gyambrah, Sesay, and Amponsah (2017) identified anxiety, headaches, disrupted sleep patterns, and reduced appetite as the primary repercussions of stress experienced by students.

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Affum-Osei and Azunu (2016) similarly discovered that a considerable proportion of employees within a Ghanaian commercial bank experienced moderate to high levels of stress, with female employees exhibiting greater levels of occupational stress in comparison to their male colleagues. Moreover, their research revealed a notable connection between occupational stress and demographic factors such as gender, age, educational qualification, work experience, and marital status.

Adzakpah, Suuk, and Selorm (2016) revealed that nurses working at St. Dominic Hospital in Akwatia, Ghana, identified key sources of stress as insufficient motivation, inadequate staffing, managing a significant patient load independently, absence of breaks during shifts and dealing with challenging patients. Similarly, Kwaah and Essilfie (2017) noted that distance education students at the University of Cape Coast in Ghana employed diverse coping strategies for stress, predominantly relying on practices like prayer or meditation, as well as engaging in self-distracting activities such as watching television and listening to music. Other important coping strategies were emotional and instrumental support from family, friends and lecturers. Addison and Yankyera, (2015) found that female teachers in the West Akim Municipality of Ghana had high stress. Work overload and interpersonal relationships were the main causes of the stress of the female teachers. The majority of the female teachers strongly agreed that stress made them perform below standard.

Recent investigations demonstrated that coping strategies assume a significant moderating function in the relationship between work-related stress and overall well-being, as well as job satisfaction, within the nursing and administrative

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sectors (Gibbons, Dempster, & Moutray, 2011; Teo et al., 2013). Approaches like focusing on personal engagement, participating in extracurricular activities, employing positive reinterpretation and emotional expression, engaging in mentorship initiatives, utilizing appraisal systems, receiving career guidance, and seeking life coaching have been shown to effectively alleviate stress (Fares, Al Tabosh, Saadeddin, El Mouhayyar, & Aridi, 2016). This highlights that work-related stress constitutes a significant concern and has the potential to detrimentally impact work performance. Hence, it becomes imperative to investigate factors that could mitigate or counteract the adverse repercussions of work stress on work performance. This research delves into the impact of stress on the work performance of public educators within the Upper Denkyira East Municipality.

Statement of the Problem

Worldwide, studies on stress and work performance are not lacking. Numerous studies have been conducted to understand the effects of stress, coping strategies and performance. Many studies have focused on stress among health care workers (Gibbons, Dempster, & Moutray, 2011; Teo, et al., 2013; Chao et al., 2015; Fares, Al Tabosh, Saadeddin, El Mouhayyar, & Aridi, 2016; Hoboubi, Choobineh, Ghanavati, Keshavarzi, & Hosseini, 2017). Other studies have focused on stress and work performance of auditors (Marvian & Lariye Dashte Bayaz, 2015), and executive and non-executive employees of banks (Ismail, Saudin, Ismail, Samah, Bakar, & Aminudin, 2015).

Existing literature highlights an adverse link between elevated stress levels and employee performance, spanning various types of workers. The impact of stress

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is markedly influenced by an individual's unique characteristics. Those with a heightened capacity to endure stress tend to excel under such conditions. Consequently, individuals adept at managing their stress tend to exhibit effective functionality. Conversely, individuals with limited stress tolerance struggle to perform optimally within their work environment.

Although, a number of studies have been conducted on stress and coping strategies in Ghana, very little has been done on the stress, coping strategies and employee performance of public JHS teachers in Ghana, most especially in the Upper Denkyira East Municipality. Several research focused largely on how stress, in general, affects health workers or students whiles ignoring JHS teachers, particularly in the post-COVID-19 era where most teachers have had to adapt to the use of online education. This clearly shows that stress among workers is a major concern worldwide and literature on stress is not lacking, however, there is inadequate research on stress, coping strategies and employee performance of teachers.

Furthermore the increase in illegal mining (galamsey) in Ghana, and the engagement of young children in these activities have made it necessary for teachers to employ means of getting these students back into school. In some cases, per the researcher's observation as a teacher, teachers have had to make follow ups to homes of students who miss school to engage in illegal mining. In some situations, it becomes necessary for teachers to engage in extra tuition for these students in order for them to catch up with their colleagues. The current study,

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therefore, seeks to find out if these situations causes stress and whether stress experienced by public JHS teachers affect their work performance.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study is to investigate stress levels, coping strategies and their impact on the work performance of J. H. S. teachers in Upper Denkyira East Municipality.

Specific Objectives

1. Identify the stress levels of public JHS teachers.

2. Examine the perceived causes of stress among public JHS teachers.

3. Find out the coping strategies adopted by public JHS teachers.

4. Identify the impact of stress on the work performance of public JHS teachers.

5. Identify the moderating role of coping strategies in the relationship between stress and work performance of public JHS teachers.

6. Identify gender differences in stress among public JHS teachers.

Research Questions

1. What are the stress levels of JHS teachers in the Upper Denkyira East Municipality?

2. What are the perceived causes of stress among JHS teachers in the Upper Denkyira East Municipality?

3. What stress coping strategies are adopted by JHS teachers in the Upper Denkyira East Municipality?

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Research Hypotheses

1. H_0: There is no statistically significant impact of stress on the work performance of JHS teachers in the Upper Denkyira East Municipality.

   H_1: There is a statistically significant impact of stress on work performance of JHS teachers in the Upper Denkyira East Municipality.

2. H_0: coping strategies will not mediate the relationship between stress and work performance of public JHS teachers in the Upper Denkyira East Municipality

   H_1: coping strategies will mediate the relationship between stress and work performance of public JHS teachers in the Upper Denkyira East Municipality

3. H_0: There is no statistically significant gender difference in the stress of JHS teachers in the Upper Denkyira East Municipality.

   H_1: There is a statistically significant gender difference in the stress of JHS teachers in the Upper Denkyira East Municipality.

Significance of the Study

Findings from this study will be helpful in several ways. Since this study sort to find out the stress that JHS teachers go through and their coping strategies, then the findings will enlighten all teachers about coping strategies to be adopted in dealing with stress. Furthermore, the cause of stress will be highlighted, as such, heads of schools and counsellors, as well as teachers, will find strategies in preventing work place stress. Findings from this study will assist stakeholders like Ghana Education Services to know how to address factors that cause stress which

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consequently affects teachers work performances. It will also help in policy formulation. The Ghana Educational Service and the Ministry of Education can create policies informed by diverse strategies derived from the research to alleviate workplace stress. In conclusion, this study will add to the existing body of knowledge concerning the influence of stress on work performance.

Delimitation(s)

Even though the study could have examined other factors that affect teachers' work performance, this research is delimited to stress, coping strategies and their impact on work performance. There are several municipalities in Ghana, but this study is delimited to the Upper Denkyira East Municipality. The study is further delimited to JHS teachers within this municipality.

Limitations

The use of questionnaires could potentially encourage dishonesty among teachers, which is one of the study's limitations. Because the questionnaires were given to the respondents, and the respondents were given the opportunity to fill them out at their own leisure, it is possible that some of the respondents' answers were affected by the responses of their fellow workers. Results from self-report measures are only as good as the information the participants honestly report. This is because the validity of the measures is dependent on the accuracy of the responses.

Definition of Terms

Stress: This pertains to the outcome when an organism, be it human or animal, does not react suitably to emotional or physical challenges, whether real or perceived.

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Coping strategies: These encompass psychological strategies that individuals employ to navigate thoughts, emotions, and behaviours they encounter when facing different levels of stress and adverse circumstances.

Work performance: This involves assessing the extent to which an employee meets specific and implicit criteria, objectives, and priorities effectively.

Organisation of the Study

The research was broken down into five different chapters for easy reading. In the first chapter, you will find an overview of the study, a problem statement, the objectives of the study, research questions and hypotheses, a delimitation of the study, a limitation of the study, a definition of terms, and an organisation of the study. In addition, significant theoretical, conceptual, and empirical literatures are discussed in Chapter Two. These are the kinds of literature that informed the design and execution of the study. The approach that was utilised for the study is discussed in Chapter Three. This chapter also details the research design, population, sample, and the procedure for sampling. The chapter also includes the research instrument, the validity and reliability of the instrument. Furthermore, the chapter includes the pretesting of the instrument for data collection, as well as the procedure for data analysis. Chapter Four of the study focuses on the analyses and discussion of the findings. This chapter examines the respondents' background characteristics. The research questions and hypotheses served as guides for the analyses that were carried out. The findings, interpretation, and recommendations derived from the research are presented in the fifth chapter. This chapter also made a suggestion for a potential area for additional research.

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CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

The central aim of this study was to investigate the stress encountered by educators employed in the Junior High Schools (J.H.S.) within the Upper Denkyira East Municipality. This section offers a comprehensive exploration of the relevant theories, key concepts, and notable past research. It encompasses the theoretical overview, the conceptual examination, and the empirical analysis.

Theoretical Framework

Within the theoretical examination, the study delved into significant stress theories, including Lazarus and Folkman's Transactional Model of stress, as well as Selye's General Adaptation Syndrome.

Transactional Theory of Stress and Coping

Lazarus and Folkman (1984) characterize stress as a concept that revolves around relationships rather than being a distinct external trigger or a predetermined sequence of physiological, behavioural, or personal reactions. In line with Lazarus and Folkman (1984), stress is not simply a unilateral external influence; rather, it is a dynamic "transaction" that occurs between individuals and their surroundings. They argued that a person's ability to cope and adapt to challenges and difficulties is a result of the interactions that take place between the individual and their surrounding environment. Lazarus (1993) introduced two essential concepts in his theory: appraisal, which involves how individuals assess the importance of events

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for their well-being, and coping, which refers to the strategies individuals use, both mentally and behaviourally, to handle specific challenges.

He characterizes "psychological stress" as the interplay between an individual and their surroundings, where the individual perceives the circumstance as impactful for their overall well-being, and the demands placed upon them surpass their available coping strategies. This delineation underscores the importance of two core strategies within the interaction between an individual and their environment: cognitive appraisal and coping. These strategies play pivotal roles in shaping how individuals undergo and manage stress.

This idea is based on the belief that emotional experiences, like stress, are shaped by the expectations individuals have regarding the importance and consequences of a specific situation. This concept is crucial in explaining why there are differences among individuals in the nature, strength, and duration of emotional reactions, even when faced with objectively comparable circumstances. The underlying premise is that the resultant emotional state is influenced, prolonged, and ultimately altered by a unique set of evaluations. These assessments are, in return, affected by a range of factors, encompassing both individual characteristics and situational circumstances.

On the individual side, important factors involve motivational tendencies, objectives, principles, and general anticipations. On the situational end, pertinent factors comprise the foreseeability, manageability, and immediacy of a potential stress-inducing occurrence. Within this theory, two essential categories of evaluation are identified: primary appraisal and secondary appraisal (Lazarus,

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1974). Primary appraisal encompasses the assessment of whether an event that holds significance for an individual's well-being has taken place, while secondary appraisal involves evaluating the coping strategies that can be employed to address the situation.

In accordance with the transactional model of stress and coping, stress is understood as an evaluation or assessment of the situations we encounter. According to this model, individuals undergo two rounds of appraisal before encountering and reacting to stress. In the initial appraisal, we evaluate a situation to gauge its relevance and importance to us. We deliberate on whether it holds the potential for advantageous or adverse outcomes. If we determine that the situation lacks relevance and is unlikely to yield either benefits or harm, we generally remain unaffected and do not perceive it as inducing stress. However, if the situation is judged to be of significance, the subsequent step is to evaluate whether it holds the potential for being advantageous or detrimental to us. In the event that we perceive it as potentially detrimental, we proceed to a secondary assessment. Throughout these assessments, we assess our capacity to manage the given situation by taking into account elements such as the degree of risk, ambiguity, and complexity, in conjunction with our perceived access to available resources. These resources might encompass factors like social backing and individual proficiency. When we are of the opinion that the requirements imposed by the situation surpass the resources at our disposal, we encounter adverse stress.

This is the stage at which individuals commence implementing coping strategies to navigate and address the stress. In the context of primary appraisal,

three elements are recognized: firstly, goal relevance, which characterizes the degree to which an encounter pertains to matters that hold significance for the individual. Secondly, goal congruence establishes the degree to which an incident aligns with individual objectives. Finally, the form of ego-involvement designates facets of personal dedication, including self-worth, ethical principles, ego-ideal, or ego-identity (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). In a parallel manner, within the secondary appraisal phase, three constituents come to light.

Firstly, "attribution of responsibility" arises from an individual's evaluation of the party accountable for a given occurrence. Secondly, "capacity for coping" pertains to a person's assessment of the feasibility of adopting specific cognitive or behavioural tactics that could bring about a constructive influence on a situation of personal relevance. Lastly, "anticipated future outcomes" encompass the assessment of how the situation is projected to unfold with regard to its alignment or discrepancy with individual objectives.

Distinct combinations of primary and secondary appraisal patterns give rise to various types of stress. Lazarus and Folkman (1984) distinguish three types: "harm," "threat," and "challenge. The three types of stress, namely "harm," "threat," and "challenge," are each associated with specific emotional reactions. "Harm" stress is characterized by the psychological damage or loss that has already occurred. "Threat" stress, on the other hand, involves the anticipation of imminent harm. Lastly, "challenge" stress arises from demands that a person feels capable and confident about mastering. These distinct categories of psychological stress are

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closely intertwined with specific emotional responses, underscoring the strong connection between the fields of stress and emotions.

This study is anchored in the transactional theory of stress and coping, a fundamental framework that throws a revealing light on the complex nature of stress within the teaching profession. This theory recognises that the stress teachers experience is not solely a result of external pressures. Instead, it is deeply influenced by how teachers personally interpret, expect, and evaluate specific situations. The challenges teachers confront, whether they involve handling high-stakes exams, limited resources, heavy workloads, coping with crowded classrooms, or navigating financial constraints, are not uniform stressors. Rather, they act as triggers that link with teachers' individual belief systems, values, and past experiences, ultimately shaping the distinct stress responses they undergo.

For instance, considering the stress triggered by high-stakes exams, it is not just a reaction to the exams themselves but a culmination of how teachers view the importance of their students' performance, the potential implications for their professional competence, and the broader impact on the educational process. Similarly, the strain stemming from inadequate teaching materials is not just about the scarcity of resources, it is closely linked to how teachers perceive their ability to effectively share knowledge and cater to the diverse needs of their students. The Transactional Theory emphasizes the crucial role of cognitive and emotional evaluations in shaping stress experiences. This sheds light on the array of responses teachers show when faced with similar challenges. Understanding this dynamic is

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important as it sets the stage for a comprehensive exploration of teachers' stress and the strategies they use to cope.

Given how significantly these stressors can impact teachers' productivity, job satisfaction, and overall performance, it is essential to delve into the coping strategies they employ. By analysing the coping strategies, from seeking social support and employing problem-solving techniques to practicing mindfulness, this study uncovers the multifaceted ways educators navigate their stressors. This exploration not only contributes to designing targeted interventions and support systems, but also empowers educational institutions to create an environment that recognizes, addresses, and eases the diverse stressors faced by teachers. Rooted in the Transactional Theory, this study holds the potential to enhance teachers' well-being, elevate job satisfaction, and overall contributions to the education landscape.

General Adaptation Syndrome Stress Theory

The widespread recognition of the stress concept in both scientific circles and the mass media can largely be attributed to the contributions of the endocrinologist, Hans Selye. Through a series of animal studies, he observed that subjecting animals to various intense and prolonged stimulus events, such as heat, cold, or toxic agents, could lead to the manifestation of common effects that were not specific to any particular stimulus event. Furthermore, apart from the nonspecific physiological changes that occur in the body, each stimulus also elicits its specific effect; for instance, heat leads to vasodilation, and cold results in vasoconstriction. According to Selye, these non-specifically induced changes collectively form the characteristic and specific response pattern of systemic stress.

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Selye (1985) defines stress as a state that manifests as a syndrome encompassing all the non-specifically induced alterations within a biological system.

According to Selye's theory, stress persists in an individual throughout the entire duration of exposure to a nonspecific demand. He differentiated between acute stress, which refers to the immediate response to a specific stressor, and the overall response to stressors applied chronically, which he termed "general adaptation syndrome." This condition is also commonly referred to as "Selye's Syndrome" in the literature. The general adaptation syndrome involves dividing the overall response to stress into three distinct phases: the alarm reaction, the stage of resistance, and the stage of exhaustion. When individuals encounter a stressor, they initially experience surprise or being taken off guard. Subsequently, they make efforts to maintain a state of equilibrium by resisting the impact of the stressor. However, with prolonged exposure, they eventually succumb to exhaustion while trying to cope with the stressor.

Stress is not merely a psychological term but rather a carefully orchestrated sequence of events that occurs in response to various challenges. It is a universal experience that individuals go through during times of illness. This concept of stress is fundamentally different from the fight-or-flight response associated with acute stress when facing perceived threats. In acute stress, the release of neurotransmitters from the sympathetic and central nervous systems, along with hormones from the adrenal cortex and medulla, as well as other endocrine glands like the pituitary, play a crucial role in mediating the body's response.

The stereotypical response pattern known as the "General Adaptation Syndrome" (GAS) unfolds in three stages. Firstly, the "alarm reaction" consists of two phases: the initial shock phase and the subsequent counter shock phase. During the shock phase, the body displays autonomic excitability, an increased release of adrenaline, and the development of gastrointestinal ulceration. In the counter shock phase, defensive processes start to operate, and there is an observable increase in adrenocortical activity.

Secondly, if the noxious stimulation persists, the organism enters the "stage of resistance." In this stage, the symptoms that were observed during the alarm reaction diminish, suggesting that the organism is adapting to the stressor. However, even though the organism becomes more resistant to the specific stressor, it simultaneously becomes less resistant to other types of stressors. If the aversive stimulation continues without respite, the stage of resistance eventually transitions to the stage of exhaustion. At this point, the organism's ability to adapt to the stressor becomes depleted, and the symptoms observed in the initial alarm reaction re-emerge. However, in this stage, the organism can no longer maintain resistance to the stressor. Irreversible tissue damages become evident, and if the stimulation persists further, the organism's survival is jeopardized, leading to potential death.

Selye (1950) proposed that any stimuli that trigger stress pose a threat to life unless the individual responds with appropriate adaptive reactions. Similarly, any situation that poses a threat to life results in both stress and adaptive responses. The ability to adapt and display resilience in the face of stress is a crucial

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requirement for survival, and it is evident in the functioning of every vital organ and process.

This theoretical framework, rooted in the General Adaptation Syndrome (GAS) Stress Theory, offers a profound insight into how teachers navigate the stress within their educational roles. The GAS Stress Theory posits that teachers, like individuals in any other domain, traverse a series of distinct phases when confronted with stress. The first phase, the alarm reaction, signifies the initial shock and immediate response triggered by the introduction of a stressor. When teachers encounter new challenges or increased workloads, this phase manifests as heightened awareness and a surge of efforts to address the emerging demands. Moving beyond this initial response, teachers' transition into the stage of resistance, a phase marked by adaptation and coping strategies. During this phase, educators draw upon their experience, skills, and support networks to maintain a semblance of equilibrium while managing the persistent stressors.

The physiological responses tend to normalize, reflecting the body's endeavour to accommodate stress while minimizing its detrimental effects. Nevertheless, if stressors persist unabated, the journey advances into the stage of exhaustion. This final phase exposes the cumulative toll of prolonged stress, both physiologically and psychologically, potentially compromising teachers' well-being and job performance. Recognizing and intervening during the stage of resistance is crucial, as it presents a strategic opportunity to provide tailored support and resources that prevent the descent into exhaustion, thereby safeguarding teachers' overall health and work effectiveness.

In essence, the GAS Stress Theory provides a compelling narrative for comprehending teachers' stress responses as a multifaceted journey through the alarm reaction, stage of resistance, and stage of exhaustion. By contextualizing teachers' experiences within this framework, educational institutions can proactively devise strategies to bolster teacher well-being and resilience. This understanding underscores the significance of timely interventions and resource allocation to equip teachers with effective stress management tools during the critical phase of resistance. By doing so, educational systems can foster an environment where teachers thrive, enabling them to navigate challenges, sustain their passion for teaching, and maintain optimal job performance, ultimately benefiting both educators and the students they serve.

Synthesis of the Transactional Theory of Stress and Coping (Lazarus and Folkman, 1984) and the General Adaptation Syndrome (GAS) Stress Theory (Selye, 1985)

The Transactional Theory of Stress and Coping, pioneered by Lazarus and Folkman in 1984, underscores that stress is not solely an external trigger or a predetermined physiological reaction but rather a dynamic interaction between individuals and their environment. This theory highlights the importance of cognitive appraisal and coping strategies in shaping how individuals experience and manage stress. Stress is perceived as a result of the evaluation process wherein individuals assess the significance of events for their well-being and determine whether their coping resources are sufficient to meet the demands of the situation. Primary and secondary appraisal stages within this framework dictate the nature of

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stress experienced—whether it's perceived as harm, threat, or challenge-leading to specific emotional reactions. This theory provides valuable insights into the interplay between individual expectations, environmental demands, and coping strategies, making it an essential foundation for understanding stress among teachers.

On the other hand, the General Adaptation Syndrome (GAS) Stress Theory, proposed by Hans Selye, introduces a comprehensive model to explain the body's response to stressors. Selye's theory emphasizes the physiological responses to stress and the body's attempt to maintain equilibrium through three stages: alarm reaction, stage of resistance, and stage of exhaustion. This theory presents stress as a multi-stage process that initially triggers a physiological shock response, followed by adaptive efforts to cope with the stressor, and eventually culminating in exhaustion if stress persists. By integrating this perspective, we gain insights into how teachers navigate the different phases of stress as they encounter various challenges in their profession.

Combining these theories provides a holistic understanding of stress experienced by teachers. The Transactional Theory highlights the cognitive and emotional aspects of stress, emphasizing the importance of individual perceptions and coping strategies. Meanwhile, the GAS Stress Theory offers a physiological perspective on how stress impacts the body's adaptive responses. Together, they emphasize that stress is a complex, multifaceted phenomenon influenced by cognitive evaluations, emotional responses, and physiological reactions, making it

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crucial to address teachers' stress comprehensively to enhance their well-being and job performance.

Conceptual Review

Stress

Stress is an unpleasant aspect of human life, and it has been defined in various ways by different authors. Ongori (2007) described stress as the pressures placed on individuals that they must cope with, and these pressures can impact their physical, psychological, and behavioural well-being. On the other hand, according to Keinan and Malach-Pines (2007), stress arises when there is a perceived incongruity between a person's capacity to handle the demands imposed by the environment and their actual ability to do so. This means that regardless of an individual's capabilities, there are environmental or social demands that they must meet. The inability to meet these demands leads to discomfort and results in experiencing stress.

Hans Selye provided the initial and broadest definition of stress. According to him, stress refers to the body's overall response to any demand placed upon it (Fink, 2010). Selye emphasized that it was appropriate to maintain the use of the term "stress" to describe any nonspecific reaction to various demands. He argued that stress should not be equated solely with emotional arousal or neural tension, as it can be observed in instances such as during or in response to anaesthesia in both humans and animals, and even in plants and microbes that lack a nervous system.

Furthermore, Vermut and Steensman (2005) defined stress as a situation where there is a discrepancy or mismatch between the demands posed by the

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environment (referred to as stressors) and an individual's ability to effectively cope with or meet those demands. Similarly, Mani (2010) described stress as the negative response experienced by individuals when they face excessive pressure or various types of demands. This occurs when a person finds themselves in a situation that feels overwhelming, and they perceive it as beyond their ability to handle effectively.

Stress is attracting growing interest from various fields such as medicine, counselling, psychology, and educational administration. It profoundly impacts nearly every aspect of life and is considered a substantial contributor to the development of diseases. Its detrimental effects on both mental and physical health can lead to a complete breakdown of one's system. Stress is recognized as a significant factor in the emergence of various major psychological issues, such as loss of appetite, memory problems, absent-mindedness, depression, frustration, nervousness, and high blood pressure (Hayward, 1998).

Stress is an inherent and advantageous aspect of teaching. It can motivate instructors to work harder, maintain their focus, and devote themselves to their teaching instead of engaging in other pursuits. However, when teachers become excessively burdened with work, it can hinder their effectiveness in the classroom. Therefore, it is crucial to differentiate between stress that supports and enhances teachers' performance in their educational role and stress that obstructs their ability to teach successfully.

Symptoms and signs of stress

Stress goes beyond being solely a physical response; it can also impact human emotions, behaviour, and cognition (Dangi et al., 2020). Just as different individuals experience stress from diverse factors, the way stress affects people can vary significantly. The extent and type of symptoms experienced in each aspect-emotions, behaviour, and cognition-can differ based on the individual and the specific source of stress they are facing. Table 1 summarizes the many symptoms that may manifest in someone who is stressed. Certain indicators of stress might be mistaken for those of other illnesses. To appropriately detect whether someone is suffering stress, it is vital to understand how it affects them. According to the American Psychological Association, some of the most prevalent indications and symptoms include the following:

Table 1: Signs and symptoms of stress

Physical Symptoms	Emotional Symptoms
I. Irregular bowel movements Involuntary twitching or shaking	I. Less than normal patience
	II. Feelings of sadness and/or depression
II. Irregular or missed periods	III. Feelings of being overwhelmed
III. Getting sick more often than normal	IV. Restlessness
	V. Reduced or eliminated desire for
IV. Reduced libido	activities once enjoyed or regularly done
V. Chest pain with or without tachycardia	VI. Irritability
	VII. Sense of isolation

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VI.Headaches

VII.Nausea

VIII.Muscle aches

IX.Trouble sleeping

X.Heartburn or indigestion

XI.Fatigue

XII.Flushed skin

XIII.Clenched teeth

XIV.Unusual changes in weight.

VIII.   Trouble coping with life's issues

IX.   More frequent or extreme

pessimistic attitude

Cognitive Symptoms	Behavioural Symptoms
I. Impaired concentration	I. Change in eating habits
II. Trouble with remembering things, such as homework assignments or deadlines	II. Change in sleeping habits
	III. New or increased use of drugs, tobacco or drugs
III. Chronic worrying	IV. Nail biting
IV. Anxious thoughts or feelings	V. Pacing
	VI. Abnormal failure or delay to complete everyday responsibilities
V. Reduced or impaired judgment Impaired speech (mumbling or stuttering)	VII. Significant change in school or work performance
VI. Repetitive or unwanted thoughts	VIII. Unusual desire for social isolation
	IX. Frequent lying

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| X. Trouble getting along with peers, such |
| as co-workers, classmates or teacher. |

Source: Hunsley, Elliott and Therrien, (2014).

Though stress is a universal human experience, it was discovered that defining and quantifying it is challenging because there has been no universally accepted definition of stress" and "people have very varied opinions about what stress is. Additionally, researchers believe that a definition of stress would be inadequate without include beneficial stress (referred to as eustress), its bodily repercussions, or the body's natural fight-or-flight reaction. Stress may be classified into many degrees depending on the current context.

Levels of stress

Acute stress

The most common form of stress experienced by every individual at various points in their lives is acute stress. This type of stress emerges due to immediate or anticipated stressors (Yasmin, Khalil, & Mazhar, 2020). Acute stress has the potential to be both advantageous and detrimental. It manifests swiftly due to unforeseen or distressing events. Typically, it diminishes rapidly, either spontaneously or as the distressing situation abates. Acute stress is not commonly linked to significant health implications. Positive acute stress can emerge from the anticipation of a pleasurable event. Being engaged in a car accident gives rise to adverse acute stress. As long as this form of acute stress is not prolonged or doesn't occur frequently, there is no harm in encountering it. This type of stress is widespread and readily identifiable. Symptoms of acute stress encompass stomach

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unease, acid reflux, diarrhoea, heightened blood pressure and rapid heartbeat, breathlessness or chest discomfort, headaches, lower back pain, and jaw discomfort. Given its prevalence and short-lived nature, acute stress is generally uncomplicated to handle and resolve.

Episodic stress

Episodic stress denotes a type of stress that recurs in a repetitive manner. Essentially, individuals grappling with episodic stress often find themselves consistently inundated by it and encounter challenges in managing it effectively. This form of stress tends to resurface on a frequent basis, sometimes following a recognizable pattern. Those experiencing episodic stress are almost continually caught in a state of heightened tension, frequently experiencing emotions of anger and apprehension, and may be susceptible to ongoing anxiety. It is characterized by a sense of unease and disquietude regarding events impacting oneself or others in the vicinity. The symptoms of episodic stress resemble those of acute stress, although they might exhibit greater intensity or prolonged duration.

As per the American Psychology Association (APA) in 2020, certain indications of prolonged episodic stress encompass persistent headaches or migraines, elevated blood pressure, and cardiovascular ailments. Individuals undergoing episodic stress often regard it as an integral facet of their daily existence and might not fully comprehend the potential harm it can inflict. Reports indicate that individuals with episodic stress might encounter challenges in seeking therapeutic assistance due to their familiarity with the symptoms, which they perceive as ordinary.

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Chronic stress

Chronic stress can be likened to ongoing pressure that consistently weighs you down. When faced with a seemingly insoluble challenge and there appears to be no resolution in sight, an individual is susceptible to experiencing chronic stress. It often emerges from circumstances that evoke feelings of hopelessness and helplessness, such as a challenging marriage, a toxic work environment, or financial hardship. This form of stress eventually takes a toll on one's well-being and can lead to cardiovascular issues, strokes, and even the development of cancer. Conversely, addressing chronic stress calls for seeking professional help. Managing chronic stress can be challenging and typically demands the involvement of an expert to ensure sustainable recovery (World Health Organization, 2020).

Types of stress

Social scientist and management consultant Dr. Karl Albrecht classified stress into four categories: time-related, anticipatory, situational, and encounter stress (Kraag, Zeegers, Kok, Hosman, & Abu-Saad, 2006). Although these diverse categories can manifest in various settings, spanning workplaces to family dynamics, they hold particular relevance within the realm of a teacher's life.

Time stress

Time-related stress occurs when an individual becomes anxious about the progression of time, especially when they perceive insufficient time to fulfil important tasks. This commonly arises when individuals fear missing deadlines or arriving late for meetings or appointments. In the context of a teacher's role, various instances can trigger time-related stress. For instance, educators might worry about

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being tardy for class or returning home late after providing extra instruction. Teachers may also have stress about their workload or the quality of their classwork, which may be tough to adjust to.

Anticipatory stress

This type of stress can manifest itself in both vague and definite ways. If one has a feeling of foreboding or fear of the future in general, this is a more ambiguous form. In contrast to time-related and anticipatory stress, this type of stress occurs suddenly and without notice, if at all. Indeed, one may have been completely unprepared for the circumstance. This type of stress can occur in a variety of settings, from an argument with a co-worker to nearly colliding with a car.

Encounter stress

When a person is nervous about seeing particular persons, either alone or in a group, encounter stress occurs. An individual might find it challenging to spend time with certain people due to personal discomfort or difficulties in communication. Regardless of the specific reason, there's something about this individual or group that creates unease for the teacher. Additionally, stress can arise when one has spent an excessive amount of time with others and is feeling emotionally drained, even if they generally enjoy being around them.

Teachers may experience stress in a variety of scenarios, from imposing headmasters to strange parents. Additionally, you may only have this sensation with one individual for a little period of time.

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Work Performance

Work performance reflects the employee's overall perception of his or her behaviour and contribution to the organization's success (McCloy, Campel & Cudeck, 1994). According to Aguinis (2009), performance does not include the outcomes of an employee's behaviour, but merely the behaviours themselves. Performance refers to an employee's behaviour or actions, not to the products or consequences of their task. Performance is a complex concept that can be divided into different aspects. At its core, one can differentiate between the process aspect of performance, which involves behavioural actions, and the anticipated outcome aspect of performance (Borman & Motowidlo, 1997). The term "behaviour" signifies the actions undertaken by individuals to accomplish a task, while the term "outcome" pertains to the results stemming from an individual's job-related actions (Campbell, 1990).

Evidently, there exists a connection between behavioural engagement and anticipated outcomes within the workplace (Borman & Motowidlo, 1997). Job performance pertains to the execution of tasks within a job role. It serves as a method to achieve objectives within a job, role, or organizational context (Campbell, 1990), rather than being the final outcome of individual actions within the job. Campbell (1990) contends that job performance is a multifaceted endeavour rather than a solitary action (p. 704). Distinguishing job performance from the outcomes of the work, such as accomplishments and productivity, is essential.

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Task performance encompasses behaviours that are explicitly related to the job, encompassing essential work responsibilities as outlined in the job description (Pradhan & Jena, 2017). Task performance necessitates an elevated cognitive capacity and is primarily supported by factors such as task knowledge (the essential technical understanding or principles required for effective job execution and the capability to handle multiple tasks), task skill (the utilization of technical knowledge to independently accomplish tasks), and task habits (an inherent capacity to react to assigned tasks in a manner that either enhances or hampers performance) (Conway, 1999).

Consequently, the primary factors that forecast task performance are job proficiency and prior experience (Pradhan & Jena, 2017). In an organizational context, task performance involves a mutual agreement between a manager and a subordinate to fulfil a designated task. The implementation of assigned tasks is categorized into two groups: technical-administrative task performance and leadership task performance. Technical-administrative task performance involves the essential job execution that encompasses activities like planning, coordinating, and overseeing daily tasks utilizing technical expertise and business acumen. Meanwhile, leadership task performance encompasses tasks such as establishing strategic objectives, adhering to suitable performance benchmarks, motivating and guiding subordinates to fulfil designated tasks through encouragement, recognition, and constructive feedback (Borman & Brush, 1993; Tripathy, 2014).

Borman and Motowidlo (1997) provided a definition of job performance within the framework of task performance, describing it as "the effectiveness

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demonstrated by job incumbents as they fulfil their designated duties in a way that advances the organization's mission while also appropriately benefiting both the organization and the individual. Werner (1994) synthesized preceding ideas about task performance by connecting it to formal rewards within an organization. He described it as the exhibited capability and conduct that influences the immediate creation of products or services, or any form of endeavour that lends indirect assistance to the fundamental technical procedures of the organization.

Adaptive performance pertains to an individual's ability to modify and endorse a shifting job role within a dynamic professional setting (Neal & Hesketh, 1999). The emergence of numerous novel occupations due to technological advancements mandates that employees engage in fresh learning and equip themselves to adeptly respond to changes (Griffin, Parker, & Mason, 2010). Moreover, professionals need to modify their interpersonal behaviours to suit evolving circumstances, ensuring effective interaction with a diverse array of colleagues and subordinates.

Contextual performance represents a form of prosocial conduct demonstrated by individuals within a professional setting. These behaviours are foreseen from employees, even though they are not explicitly outlined in the job description. Such unspoken anticipations are termed prosocial or extra-role behaviours. Succinctly, Motowidlo (2003) defined it as conduct that is (i) executed by a member of an organization, (ii) aimed at an individual, group, or organization with whom the member interacts while fulfilling their organizational role, and (iii)

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ultimately, performed with the intention of advancing the betterment of the individual, group, or organization.

Contextual performance constitutes an outlook encompassing actions such as willingly taking on additional responsibilities, aiding colleagues with challenging assignments, sustaining enthusiasm in the workplace, collaborating with others during challenging situations, sharing crucial resources and information to foster organizational growth, adhering to established protocols and guidelines, and endorsing organizational choices that lead to favourable improvements (Coleman & Borman, 2000). This form of behaviour contributes to the cultivation of a stimulating organizational culture and atmosphere, thereby enhancing individual productivity and overall organizational performance. To aid organizations in the process of recruiting suitable employees, the suggestion is to incorporate personality assessments and group discussions to evaluate a potential candidate's aptitude for contextual performance, alongside proficiency tests (such as ability and experience assessments) to evaluate task performance.

Drawing from the insights of the aforementioned studies, performance encompasses a spectrum of behaviours stemming from an individual's technical expertise (comprehensive understanding of their specialized domain), skilfulness and flexibility (competence in executing tasks while adapting to varying circumstances), and interpersonal interactions (fostering teamwork, loyalty, and interconnectedness). These behaviours, which were previously dissected in various models, are believed to contribute to broader organizational outcomes such as

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enhanced productivity, heightened customer satisfaction, organizational advancement, and growth, among others.

Empirical Review

Stress levels of teachers

Agai-Demjaha, Bislimovska, and Mijakoski (2015) carried out a cross-sectional study using a descriptive-analytical model across nine elementary schools in Skopje, Republic of Macedonia. The study involved 300 teachers employed in these nine elementary schools. The assessment of the participants involved the utilization of a specifically devised questionnaire. The study's findings revealed that a majority of the surveyed teachers regarded their work-related stress as being at a moderate level. Furthermore, the outcomes indicated that teachers possessing university education were notably more inclined to associate their workplace with heightened stress in comparison to their counterparts with a high level of education (13.48% vs. 9.4%). Additionally, the researchers noted that there was no substantial variance in stress levels between newly appointed teachers and those with more experience.

Çoklar, Efilti, Sahin, and Akçay (2016) conducted a study to explore the levels of techno-stress experienced by teachers during these activities. The researchers administered a techno-stress scale for teachers to a group of 370 teachers from various educational levels and disciplines during the academic year 2015-2016. The target population for this study encompassed all teachers employed within the central districts of Konya province, Turkey, during the academic year 2015-2016. Based on the findings from the study, the overall techno-

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stress levels among teachers were categorized as moderate. When examining the specific sub-scales, teachers exhibited a moderate level of techno-stress related to the learning-teaching process, technical issues, and social aspects. However, their techno-stress levels were relatively lower in relation to their profession and personal concerns.

Ismail and Noor (2016) undertook a study to examine the occurrence of occupational stress within the academic staff of a research university. The researchers aimed to explore the connections and relationships between stress and job-related factors such as career development, research, teaching, and interpersonal relationships. A single research university in Malaysia was chosen randomly for the study. A cross-sectional study was carried out, and participants were selected using a randomized stratified sampling approach. A total of 380 academic staff members were included in the study, and they were provided with self-administered questionnaires, namely the Depression, Anxiety and Stress Scale-21 (DASS-21) and the Stress Sources Questionnaires (SSQ). This distribution of questionnaires took place over the period from March to May 2012. The employed statistical analyses encompassed Chi-square tests, independent t-tests, and Pearson Correlation. The response rate achieved was 81.1%. The outcomes of the study revealed that the prevalence of stress among the participants amounted to 22.1%.

Darmody and Smyth (2016) investigated the elements linked to occupational stress and job satisfaction within Irish primary school principals. The role of a school principal has grown more intricate and demanding in the past few decades. The study utilized data from Growing up in Ireland, a nationally

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representative survey of nine-year-old children in Ireland. To investigate the combined influence of individual and school-related factors on stress and job satisfaction among primary school principals in Ireland, a multivariate analysis approach was employed. The analyses conducted in this study relied on the input from principals in a total of 898 schools. The findings of the research highlight that a notable proportion of primary school principals in Ireland experience low levels of job satisfaction and report feelings of job-related stress. Through regression analysis, it was determined that job satisfaction and occupational stress are intertwined with a intricate combination of individual attributes, work conditions, and the broader school environment, including the teacher climate.

Shivendra and Kumar (2016) carried out a research project aimed at comparing the levels of job satisfaction and occupational stress among teachers in government, semi-government, and private schools. The study focused on 75 Physical Education Teachers from various schools under the UP Board in the Varanasi region of North India, selected randomly as participants for this investigation. The study included subjects with ages ranging from 25 to 38 years, specifically targeting teachers with 3 to 5 years of job experience. The findings of the study indicated that private school teachers experienced higher levels of occupational stress (measuring 111.20) in comparison to government school teachers (103.28) and semi-government school teachers (106.48). The study's findings suggest that a noteworthy and inverse correlation exists between job satisfaction and occupational stress among physical education teachers in the Varanasi region.

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Jani (2017) conducted a comparative study on the stress levels of primary school teachers in government and private schools in the Narla and Bhawanipatna Block of District Kalahandi. The sample comprised 100 teachers, with an equal representation of 50 teachers from government and private schools. The researchers employed a Teachers' Stress Scale that was developed, standardized, and administered for the study. The results indicated that, overall, primary school teachers exhibited high levels of stress. Furthermore, the study revealed that private primary school teachers exhibited notably higher levels of stress when compared to their government primary school counterparts. The findings indicated that out of the total, 65% of primary school teachers were classified as highly stressed, emphasizing the significant prevalence of high stress levels in this group. These findings clearly demonstrate a substantial disparity in the stress levels experienced by government and private primary school teachers. The study reveals that private primary school teachers face significantly higher stress levels compared to their counterparts in government primary schools.

Desouky and Allam (2017) conducted a study to investigate the occurrence of occupational stress, depression, and anxiety among teachers in Egypt. They carried out a cross-sectional study involving a total of 568 Egyptian teachers. The participants completed a questionnaire covering personal information, and assessments for occupational stress, anxiety, and depression were conducted using the Arabic version of the Occupational Stress Index (OSI), as well as the validated Arabic versions of the Taylor Manifest Anxiety Scale and the Beck Depression Inventory (BDI). The study revealed that among the teachers surveyed, the

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prevalence rates for occupational stress, anxiety, and depression were 100%, 67.5%, and 23.2% respectively. The research identified teaching as a particularly stressful profession for Egyptian teachers, and there was a notable but weak positive correlation between the scores for occupational stress and the scores for anxiety and depression. Additionally, the study found that teachers who reported inadequate salaries had a significantly higher prevalence of occupational stress.

Buckley, Abbott, and Franey (2017) conducted a study that delved into the personal experiences of stress among teachers, the support strategies they suggest within school settings to manage stress, and whether variations in stress levels exist based on factors such as: a) being a primary or secondary teacher, and b) being a newly qualified or experienced teacher. The study employed interpretative phenomenological analysis (IPA) as its methodology. A purposive sample of ten participants was selected for the study, including five primary teachers and five secondary teachers from schools in the Cork region of Ireland. The researchers conducted ten semi-structured interviews as part of the study. The findings from these interviews indicated that teachers hold varying perspectives on stress, and a notable factor contributing to teacher stress is the individual's perception of themselves. A majority of the interviewed teachers expressed that they experienced stress in their job roles. Most teachers, regardless of whether they worked in primary or secondary schools and whether they were recently qualified or experienced, reported that their job led to stress. Notably, the extent of stress varied among individuals and was influenced by their personal perception of stress.

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Alson (2019) conducted a study aiming to explore the origins of stress among teachers, encompassing work-related, emotional, and personal factors, as well as their coping strategies. The research employed purposive sampling to select teachers who had openly shared their experiences of workplace stress. Data collection occurred during teachers' break times, fostering a relaxed environment in the faculty room. Data were collected over a week from a group consisting of thirty-one female and eleven male Basic Education teachers. This represented a significant portion, amounting to ninety-eight percent (98%), of the teachers at Kapayapaan National High School located in Calamba City, Laguna province, Philippines. Teachers faced stress arising from unsafe working conditions, insufficient materials and resources for effective task completion, a sense of heightened supervision, and demands for high outputs imposed by the administration. Additionally, a substantial personal stress factor stemmed from inadequate financial security.

Teachers held the belief that their salaries were inadequate to meet their requirements, even though the government agency asserted that teacher salaries exceeded the poverty threshold as indicated by the Philippine Economic Index survey. This situation was occasionally aggravated by contradictory directives. Personal stress frequently arose from sheer exhaustion at the conclusion of the day, occasionally leading to visible emotional outbursts. While stress affects individuals regardless of their gender and age, each person developed their own cognitive strategies focused on their thoughts to manage and cope with stress.

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Liu and Yan (2020) conducted a study to investigate anxiety and stress levels among in-service university teachers in China, as well as the associations with demographic factors. The research involved 256 teachers from different universities in China who completed the Demographic Questionnaire, the Teaching Anxiety Scale, and the Teacher Stress Inventory. Data analysis indicated that the surveyed participants experienced considerable stress, although they generally exhibited lower levels of anxiety related to teaching. The study found noteworthy negative correlations between teacher stress and professional title. Furthermore, the professional title and age of the teachers emerged as strong predictors for teaching anxiety, while years of teaching, overall teaching anxiety, and its specific aspects were robust predictors for teacher stress.

Owusu (2021) conducted a study to evaluate the levels of occupational stress, burnout, job dissatisfaction, and turnover intentions among Senior High School teachers in the Cape Coast Metropolis. The research employed a descriptive survey design, utilizing the census method to encompass all 520 teachers across chosen public Senior High Schools in the Cape Coast Metropolis. The research tool employed was a questionnaire. For data analysis, descriptive statistics such as frequencies and percentages, as well as inferential statistics including Pearson Product Moment Correlation, independent samples t-test, regression, and ANOVA, were used. The study's results indicated that the teachers involved in the research experienced levels of occupational stress, burnout, job dissatisfaction, and turnover intentions ranging from low to moderate. Furthermore, the research identified a noteworthy association between occupational stress and burnout among teachers in

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the Cape Coast Metropolis. Additionally, the study's findings demonstrated that occupational stress significantly influenced turnover intentions among teachers. However, burnout did not have a substantial impact on turnover intentions among the teachers who were part of the study. Based

Ozamiz-Etxebarria, Idoiaga Mondragon, Bueno-Notivol, Pérez-Moreno, and Santabárbara (2021) conducted a comprehensive search on Medline and PubMed for research articles pertaining to the prevalence of depression, anxiety, stress, and burnout among teachers. The search covered the period from 1 December 2019 to 15 June 2021. The sample sizes in the identified studies varied, ranging from 100 to 88,611 participants. The mean age of participants in the five studies ranged from 31.4 to 43.9 years. All of the studies included both male and female participants, with the percentage of women in the samples ranging from 32% to 80All of the studies in the review employed online questionnaires as their research instrument. Among the studies that provided information on their sampling methodology, none used randomized methods; they all employed non-randomized approaches. Response rates were reported in five studies, with percentages ranging from 11% to 99%. The analysis encompassed a total of eight studies. The findings from these studies revealed that teachers reported experiencing levels of anxiety (17%), depression (19%), and stress (30%). Notably, there was a higher prevalence of anxiety reported among teachers in Asia compared to other continents. Additionally, the research indicated that anxiety levels were higher among teachers in school settings as opposed to those in university settings. Nevertheless, the research indicated that stress levels were more elevated among

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teachers in university settings in comparison to those in schools. Importantly, there were no statistically significant differences observed in terms of gender and age concerning any of the symptoms examined.

Ssenyonga and Hecker (2021) investigated whether factors beyond those related to schools, such as job perceptions encompassing work-related pressure, perceived school climate, and teaching challenges, contribute to teachers' experience of stress. The study was carried out using a representative sample of 291 teachers from 12 public secondary schools in southwestern Uganda, who participated by completing self-administered questionnaires Owusu, (2021) assessed occupational stress, burnout, job dissatisfaction and turnover intentions among Senior High School teachers in the Cape Coast Metropolis. The descriptive survey design was used for the study. The census method was used to involve all the 520 teachers in the selected public Senior High Schools in the Cape Coast Metropolis.

Owusu (2021) conducted an evaluation of occupational stress, burnout, job dissatisfaction, and turnover intentions among teachers in Senior High Schools within the Cape Coast Metropolis. The study employed a descriptive survey design, and the entire population of 520 teachers from chosen public Senior High Schools in the Cape Coast Metropolis was included using the census method. A questionnaire was utilized as the research tool. The data analysis encompassed descriptive statistics such as frequencies and percentages, as well as inferential statistics including Pearson Product Moment Correlation, independent samples t-test, regression, and ANOVA. The study's outcomes indicated that the participating

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teachers displayed varying degrees of occupational stress, burnout, job dissatisfaction, and turnover intentions, which generally fell within the categories of low to moderate levels.

Furthermore, the research highlighted a noteworthy correlation between occupational stress and burnout among teachers in the Cape Coast Metropolis. Additionally, the findings indicated that there was no significant association between burnout and job dissatisfaction among Senior High School teachers in the Cape Coast Metropolis. Nonetheless, a noteworthy correlation was observed between burnout and turnover intentions among the surveyed teachers. Moreover, the study's results demonstrated that occupational stress exerted a significant influence on turnover intentions among teachers; however, burnout did not exhibit a significant impact on turnover intentions within the examined group of educators. In light of the outcomes and deductions made, it is advisable that the Ghana Education Service (GES) and similar organizations take deliberate steps to reshape teachers' classroom duties with the aim of alleviating the occupational stress, burnout, and turnover intentions that teachers encounter in their professional roles.

Causes of Stress among Teachers

In 2015, Skaalvik and Skaalvik conducted a research endeavor to delve into the perceptions of Norwegian teachers pertaining to job satisfaction, work-related stress, its ramifications, and the coping strategies they employed. The research utilized qualitative interviews, involving 30 active teachers and four retired ones. The outcomes indicated that the participants generally reported high levels of job satisfaction; however, they also encountered substantial stress and fatigue within

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their profession. Although they expressed contentment with their jobs, all 34 individuals acknowledged encountering difficulties and stress in their capacities as teachers. The teachers' comments concerning the origins of stress were classified into six primary categories: 1) Heavy workload and time constraints, 2) Adjusting teaching to meet students' requirements, 3) Disruptive behaviour of students, 4) Conflicts in values and lack of independence, 5) Issues related to teamwork, and 6) Limited professional status.

In 2016, a study was carried out by Adu and Okeke to investigate the causes of stress among preschool educators within the East London Education District. The research employed a survey research design and involved the random selection of 133 pre-school educators as respondents. During 2016, researchers Adu and Okeke conducted a study aimed at examining the factors contributing to stress among pre-school educators in the East London Education District. They utilized a survey research design and randomly selected 133 pre-school educators as participants for their study.

The study's results revealed that the main origins of stress among pre-school educators stemmed from insufficient support during teaching and the heavy load of duties and responsibilities they were tasked with. Furthermore, the outcomes implied that addressing disinterested students, the persistent pressure to be accountable, handling student misbehaviour, engaging in school-related work at home, and facing limited opportunities for relaxation were notable stress-inducing factors for pre-school educators. The study's conclusion underscores the concerning nature of the identified stress factors, underscoring the pressing requirement for

intervention to mitigate the influence of stress on the psychological and social well-being of educators.

In 2016, a study was conducted by Issah, Abubakari, and Wuptiga to examine the relationship between the state of academic facilities and teachers' job stress at Tamale Polytechnic in Ghana. The researchers adopted a case study methodology, delving deeply into a particular tertiary institution. Employing a quantitative research approach, they used accidental sampling to select participants from the broader population of interest.

The study employed a questionnaire as its main data collection tool, and among the 114 questionnaires collected, the response rate was 82.6%. The results revealed a substantial connection between the state of educational facilities and the origins of academic stress encountered by teachers. Additionally, the hypothesis testing outcomes underscored that the condition of school facilities significantly impacted teachers' job-related stress. The study's final remarks highlighted that the lack of adequate academic facilities not only hinders educational effectiveness but also burdens teachers and the existing resources with undue stress. As a suggested course of action, the study proposed that the institution should prioritize the enhancement of facilities and resources that cater to the requirements of both faculty and students.

In 2017, Mérida-López, Extremera, and Rey conducted a cross-sectional survey using questionnaires. They employed correlation matrices and hierarchical regression models to analyse the collected data. The study recruited participants through the help of psychology students from the University of Malaga, using an

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incidental sampling method. Teachers who expressed their willingness to take part in the study were included as participants. The study contacted approximately 900 teachers from various educational centres located in southern Spain, specifically in Malaga. The self-administered questionnaires were distributed in a paper-and-pencil format with written instructions. From the sample of Spanish teachers, consisting of 336 participants (185 female), from various grade levels, the surveys were completed, yielding a response rate of 40%. The study's findings revealed a positive correlation between role ambiguity and role conflict with symptoms of depression, anxiety, and stress.

The research results indicated that the ability to regulate emotions (ERA) was linked to lower scores in depression, anxiety, and stress symptoms among teachers, and this impact was more significant than the influence of role ambiguity and role conflict. The age of the teachers did not show a significant predictive relationship with stress scores. However, Uncertainty about roles and conflicts in roles were identified as significant factors explaining a considerable portion of the variance in stress levels among teachers. Therefore, the study concluded that role ambiguity and role conflict were indeed causes of stress among educators.

In 2018, Harmsen, Helms-Lorenz, Maulana, and Van Veen conducted a research study that aimed to examine the relationships between perceived causes of stress, reactions to stress, observed teaching behaviour, and attrition rates among novice teachers. The study involved the participation of 143 novice teachers who were surveyed using the Questionnaire on the Experience and Evaluation of Work for Beginning Teachers (QEEW-BT). The sample consisted of beginning teachers

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(BTs) with an average age of 28 years and a standard deviation of 7. The participants in the study were selected from 61 distinct secondary school sites in the Netherlands. The data collection process spanned a duration of two months. It's important to note that participation in the study was completely voluntary, and all individuals who took part provided their informed consent.

The findings of the study revealed a notable and positive correlation between perceived high psychological task demands and negative student-related factors with the perception of tension. To put it differently, beginning teachers who encountered greater psychological task demands and negative pupil aspects reported higher levels of tension. Collectively, the combination of perceived negative pupil aspects and high psychological task demands explained around 42% of the variation in tension experienced by these novice teachers. Moreover, the study revealed a noteworthy and positive correlation between perceived negative pupil aspects and adverse emotional reactions. This suggests that when teachers have strained relationships with pupils and encounter more instances of pupil misbehaviour, they are more likely to experience negative emotions and a reduced sense of job satisfaction in their work. Perceived negative pupil aspects were identified as accounting for approximately 22% of the variability in perceived negative emotions among novice teachers. Furthermore, both perceived negative social aspects and negative pupil aspects exhibited significant and positive associations with perceived feelings of dissatisfaction. To put it differently, higher levels of negative social aspects and negative pupil aspects experienced by novice teachers are linked to increased feelings of discontent. Collectively, these perceived

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negative social aspects and negative pupil aspects contribute to explaining around 35% of the variation in discontent among novice teachers.

In 2018, Haydon, Leko, and Stevens conducted a qualitative case study to explore the factors contributing to teacher stress and the strategies teachers used to cope with it. The researchers collected interview data over a span of three years, utilizing a standardized interview protocol with consistent questions throughout the study. The study involved 16 special education teachers, comprising 13 females and three males, who were of Caucasian ethnicity. These teachers worked in various urban and suburban settings within a large, Midwestern metropolitan region. The most commonly cited sources of stress among the participants were administrative interactions, challenges posed by individual students, teacher perceptions, and state mandates.

In 2019, Alson conducted research to examine and appraise the origins and level of job-related stress, along with the coping strategies utilized by teachers, and how these factors relate to their performance in their rolesThe research sample encompassed 98% of teachers employed at Kapayapaan National High School in Calamba City, Laguna province, Philippines. To gather information on the origins and magnitude of occupational stress, coping approaches, and the job performance of teachers, a self-designed questionnaire was employed.

The study's findings revealed that teachers experienced significant levels of occupational stress. The data indicated that teachers' stress levels were relatively high. The sources of stress were attributed to various work-related factors, including excessive paperwork, additional non-teaching responsibilities, large class

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sizes, and dealing with incompetent superiors. Personal factors, such as interpersonal relationships, also contributed to the teachers' stress. Additionally, economic factors, such as inadequate salary and the high cost of living, added to the overall stress experienced by teachers.

Coping Strategies Adopted by Teachers in Dealing with Stress

In 2021, a qualitative study was undertaken by Skaalvik and Skaalvik to explore the perceptions of primary and middle school teachers concerning the demands of their jobs, their reactions to these demands, and the methods they used to cope. The research included six teachers employed in elementary and middle schools in Norway. The teachers reported encountering a multitude of job demands, resulting in heightened stress levels and emotional fatigue. A significant number of the demands cited by the teachers were associated with the structural and organizational elements of the schools. The examination also revealed five primary coping strategies that the teachers utilized to manage these demands. These strategies encompassed behaviours such as conscientious work, participation in rejuvenating activities, efforts to minimize workload, adaptation of job responsibilities, and the pursuit of assistance and support.

In 2019, Hussain, Zulfqar, and Aziz conducted a survey-based exploratory study to examine the stress coping strategies and approaches employed by school teachers, taking into account their perceived stress levels. They used a self-developed questionnaire based on the COPE inventory for this purpose. The sample consisted of 400 school teachers with diverse backgrounds, working in both public and private sectors, randomly selected from two districts in Punjab, India. The study

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found that 60% of the teachers perceived a high or very high level of stress. Among the coping strategies used by the teachers, the most common ones were 'turning to religion,' 'positive reinterpretation,' and 'planning' to actively solve the problem. These strategies were frequently utilized by the teachers to cope with the stress they experienced. Most of the participants in the study predominantly relied on problem-oriented and emotion-oriented coping strategies to deal with their stress. Additionally, the findings indicated that as the level of stress increased, teachers were more inclined to use problem-oriented and emotion-oriented approaches rather than avoidance and social-support strategies.

In 2016, Raymond and Hassan conducted a research study aiming to investigate the sources of occupational stress and the coping strategies adopted by technology education teachers in higher education institutions situated in the states of Niger and Kaduna. The study encompassed a population of 87 technology education teachers. For data collection, the researchers designed a 76-item questionnaire called the Occupational Stress and Management Strategies Questionnaire (OSMSQ). This instrument was specifically developed by the researchers for the purpose of the study. The OSMSQ underwent a face validation process by three experts from the Department of Industrial and Technology Education at the Federal University of Technology Minna, Niger State. Additionally, a trial test of the instrument was conducted at Federal Polytechnic Kauran-Namoda, Zamfara state. The reliability of the questionnaire was assessed using the Cronbach alpha method, yielding a coefficient of 0.76.The study's findings revealed that technology education teachers faced various occupational

stressors, including issues related to epileptic power supply, handling large class sizes for teaching and evaluation, having a heavy workload in their job area, and frequent attendance at school meetings, among others. Furthermore, the research identified stress management strategies such as cultivating positive hobbies, enhancing communication skills, and developing emotional intelligence among technology education teachers. In light of these outcomes, the following recommendations were put forth: (1) Employers should establish conducive environments to mitigate stress, (2) Government institutions should consider increasing their workforce to alleviate staff workload and consequent stress, and (3) Ongoing staff training should be prioritized to equip teachers with effective stress coping strategies.

In 2016, Shumba, Maphosa, Rembe, Okeke, and Drake employed a multiple case study design to explore the coping strategies utilized by early childhood development (ECD) teachers to manage work-related stress.The researchers gathered data from eighteen participants through unstructured in-depth interviews. A total of eighteen ECD teachers were deliberately chosen from specific centres in the Eastern Cape Province, South Africa, through purposive selection. The data obtained from interviews underwent qualitative analysis. The results unveiled that teachers utilized diverse coping strategies to seek sustenance and assistance when facing stressful situations. The research findings indicated that early childhood development (ECD) teachers utilized a range of coping tactics to manage work-related stress. These approaches encompassed resourceful improvisation to secure necessary resources, seeking spiritual guidance from a higher power, relying on

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external support networks like family and church, and participating in physical activities such as gardening and beach visits to effectively address stress. Nonetheless, certain teachers appeared to acknowledge their stressful circumstances without actively pursuing alternative strategies for coping or effectively addressing stress.

As a result of these findings, it is suggested that evidence-based training and development programs should be provided for ECD teachers to equip them with effective coping skills to handle the inevitable stress they encounter. Based on the study's conclusions, several recommendations have been proposed to address the stress management needs of ECD teachers.

In 2016, Paquette and Rieg conducted a mixed-methods research project aimed at identifying stressors, detailing coping strategies, and suggesting ways for university supervisors to support Early Childhood/Special Education (ECSP) pre-service teachers during their student teaching responsibilities. This study took place at a state-owned university in rural western Pennsylvania, where all student teaching assignments were situated within a 25-mile radius of the university. The study involved a population of 187 ECSP pre-service teachers, out of which a convenient sample of 51 participants was taken, resulting in a 27% response rate. The identified stressors revolved around three main themes: excessive workload, challenges in communication, and difficulties in classroom management and discipline.

Participants were also requested to share the strategies they employed to manage stress. These strategies included building supportive relationships,

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engaging in physical exercise, effectively managing time, and allocating time for relaxation. Furthermore, participants were prompted to suggest ways in which university supervisors could enhance their support. The responses centred on two key ideas: fostering open and efficient communication, and providing reassurance. Examining the experiences of ECSP pre-service teachers offers valuable perspectives for enhancing program quality, promoting student teacher achievement, and ensuring the long-term effectiveness of classroom educators.

Dua and Sangwan (2016) undertook a research investigation focused on understanding how female school teachers manage stress and examining the relationship between their stress management techniques and stress levels. The study was conducted across two districts within the Haryana State and involved a sample of 300 married female high school teachers who taught in private CBSE-affiliated schools located in the district headquarters of Haryana State. The data collection process involved the utilization of an interview schedule and a questionnaire to gather relevant information. The findings revealed a negative correlation between stress levels and the utilization of stress management strategies. Participants who employed relaxation, organization, entertainment, delegation, sleep, institutional strategies, and exercise as means of managing stress experienced a reduction in their stress levels. The study clearly demonstrated that all identified stress management techniques were inversely associated with stress. The results indicated that a higher frequency of employing stress management strategies was linked to lower levels of stress.

In a cross-sectional survey conducted by Klapproth, Federkeil, Heinschke, and Jungmann (2020), an investigation was carried out to evaluate the stress levels experienced by teachers during the period of school lockdown in Germany. The study also aimed to examine the coping strategies employed by teachers, as well as the obstacles they encountered in implementing distance teaching. An online questionnaire was utilized for data collection. Teachers were selected for participation in the study through nationwide professional networks such as Eduserver-Education in Germany and The German Education Union (GEW). Additionally, recruitment was extended through promotion of the study on the websites of associations catering to various special educational needs and on social platforms like Facebook and Instagram. A group of 380 teachers representing various school forms took part in the study. These teachers reported encountering moderate to elevated levels of stress. When teachers anticipated external challenges related to distance teaching, they tended to employ more effective coping strategies. The outcome indicating that teachers, on average, utilized functional coping strategies (like planning and seeking social support) more frequently than dysfunctional ones (such as abandoning goals or resorting to alcohol consumption) underscores the prevailing sentiment that a majority of them felt competent and intentional in effectively handling the demands of distance teaching.

Nevertheless, despite a notable inclination towards functional coping strategies, nearly all teachers acknowledged employing dysfunctional approaches as well. For instance, some teachers turned to activities such as increased television watching or giving up on personal objectives. Teachers demonstrated a greater

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inclination towards functional coping strategies when they attributed obstacles to external factors like parental motivation or school organization. However, when they internalized these barriers – for instance, when they criticized their own organizational skills or perceived a lack of digital competence, they tended to favour dysfunctional coping strategies over functional ones.

MacIntyre, Gregersen, and Mercer (2020) investigated the stress and coping patterns exhibited by middle school teachers. The study involved six teachers employed across elementary and middle schools in Norway. Ultimately, a total of 102 teachers and 1450 students participated in the study. MacIntyre and colleagues employed a latent profile analysis to assess the self-reported stress and coping levels of the teachers at the commencement of the school year. The resulting profiles were then used to anticipate teacher behaviours and student outcomes over a period of time. Nearly all teachers could be categorized into two predominant groups: those experiencing high levels of both stress and coping (66%), and those facing high stress levels but employing low coping strategies (28%).

Stapleton, Garby, and Sabot (2020) conducted a research investigation focusing on psychological distress, coping strategies, and general well-being within a sample of 166 teachers in Australia. The participants were requested to complete an online survey that encompassed inquiries about their demographic information as well as the utilization of four specific assessment instruments: The Satisfaction with Life Scale, Subjective Happiness Scale, The Brief COPE Inventory, and The Patient Health Questionnaire. The study identified work-related factors such as workload and financial concerns as prominent contributors to stress among the

teachers. Additionally, the research findings indicated that a notable proportion of the participants reported elevated levels of clinical symptoms associated with anxiety, depression, and physical health problems. Additionally, around 17% of the respondents met the criteria indicative of potential alcohol dependence. The outcomes of the study pointed towards the likelihood that teachers' utilization of ineffective coping strategies might play a role in elevating their susceptibility to heightened psychological distress while diminishing their sense of life satisfaction and happiness. These findings underscore the importance of implementing workplace programs aimed at enhancing teachers' coping strategies. Such initiatives could potentially alleviate psychological distress and promote the overall wellbeing of educators.

Through a phenomenological case study, Ab Aziz, Swanto, and Azhar (2019) illuminated and detailed the first-hand encounters of ten English teachers who continue to work in rural schools located in Sabah, Malaysia. The researchers gathered data through interviews and observations, which were then subjected to thematic analysis. The study's results indicated that the primary source of stress for English teachers in rural schools was the challenge of instructing students with low English proficiency (LEP). This was followed by issues related to disruptive student behaviours, overwhelming workloads, and a perceived lack of support. In response to these stressors, teachers adopted a coping strategy of initially assessing and evaluating potential solutions, a process referred to as the stress appraisal process. The current research identified a range of coping strategies employed by teachers to manage the stress they encountered, encompassing personal, social,

professional, and institutional approaches. In their efforts to handle the stress, the English teachers under study shared that they allocated considerable time, both during and outside of their official work hours, to assess the potential threat and adverse effects posed by the stressors. This evaluation process aimed to identify potential negative impacts and explore viable solutions.

Among the various coping strategies, teachers predominantly relied on personal approaches, which included four distinct strategies, to manage their stress. The initial strategy involved cognitive techniques. Teachers emphasized that maintaining a positive outlook had proven effective in navigating the challenges within their teaching careers. Additionally, some teachers highlighted that consciously avoiding dwelling on stressors also contributed to their ability to cope with stress. The second coping strategy pertained to physical methods, which encompassed both active and passive approaches. Teachers mentioned that engaging in physical activities had the potential to alleviate stressful thoughts and provide mental clarity. The third personal coping strategy employed by teachers' involved behavioural techniques. These tactics revolved around adhering to regular daily routines, which, according to the teachers, diverted their focus away from stress-inducing thoughts. Emotional strategies, such as praying and spending quality time with family, were considered a therapeutic means by which teachers managed their stress.

Social coping strategies emerged as the second most commonly employed approach among the teachers in the study. Across all interviews, the teachers consistently highlighted the role of interpersonal communication in sustaining their

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commitment to teaching. They emphasized that not only was collegial support highly valued, but it also played a vital role in effectively managing stress. Moreover, the teachers noted the significance of seeking solace in family interactions during challenging times, considering open conversations or reflective discussions as pivotal components of their social coping strategies.

Professional coping strategies were identified as the third prominent approach employed by teachers. Within this category, four distinct strategies were acknowledged. The initial strategy was adaptability, which multiple teachers highlighted as essential for effectively teaching in rural school settings, necessitating the capacity to acclimate to the specific challenges of such environments.

The subsequent specific professional strategy involved the application of pedagogical expertise. Teachers noted that utilizing teaching skills, such as designing engaging activities, could mitigate the adverse effects of stress. Another professional coping strategy entailed the pursuit of pedagogical knowledge. Teachers mentioned actions like researching teaching strategies online, reading articles and watching videos, as well as pursuing advanced studies in education as ways to enhance their pedagogical proficiency. The fourth strategy within the professional realm involved establishing classroom management early in the school year to ensure effective control over the learning environment.

The last coping strategy employed by teachers to manage stress involved institutional approaches, particularly the adoption of a subject-based classroom structure. Teachers acknowledged the importance of implementing a subject-based

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classroom, emphasizing its role in facilitating effective teaching and learning. They believed that this approach contributed to creating a conducive environment for language learning, thus enhancing the overall educational experience.

The Impact of Stress on the Job Performance of Teachers

In 2019, Alson conducted a research investigation with the objective of evaluating and examining the sources and extent of occupational stress, along with the coping strategies utilized by teachers, in relation to their job effectiveness. The study focused on a group of teachers from Kapayapaan National High School, located in Calamba city within the province of Laguna, Philippines. The research employed a self-developed questionnaire to assess the origins and severity of occupational stress, the varieties of coping methods employed, and the job performance of the teachers.

The results revealed that teachers indeed encountered occupational stress. The connections between job performance and occupational stress, job performance and coping strategies, and occupational stress and coping strategies were determined to be modest or weak in correlation. To tackle and alleviate teachers' stress levels, it is advised to arrange seminars and workshops centred on stress management. The calculated Pearson Product Moment Coefficient of Correlation indicated a slight or weak connection between job performance and the identified occupational stress.

In 2020, Asaloei, Wolomasi, and Werang carried out a study investigating work-related stress and its potential influence on the job performance of primary school teachers in the Boven Digoel district of Indonesia. To achieve their

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objective, the researchers employed a survey methodology and utilized two separate survey questionnaires. The research collected data from a group of 352 primary school teachers who were chosen as the study participants. The collected data underwent statistical examination through Pearson's correlation analysis. The outcomes of the data analysis highlighted a significant and unfavourable relationship between work-related stress and the job performance of primary school teachers in the Boven Digoel district.

In 2020, Yunarti, Asaloei, Wula, and Werang conducted a research investigation aiming to elucidate the potential influence of work-related stress on the job performance of elementary school teachers in the Southern Papua region of Indonesia. To accomplish their objective, the researchers opted for a quantitative approach and utilized a survey research design. A total of 1062 teacher participants were provided with two distinct quantitative survey questionnaires, both employing a four-point Likert scale. These participants were chosen from a larger group of 3078 elementary school teachers in the Southern Papua region. The results of the data analysis revealed a significant negative influence of teachers' stress on their job performance in elementary schools within the Southern Papua area. This suggests that when teachers experience lower levels of stress, their job performance tends to be better, whereas higher stress levels are linked to reduced job performance. The outcomes of this research carry theoretical importance as they contribute to the advancement of existing knowledge. The study offers valuable insights into the dynamic relationship between stress and job performance among

elementary school teachers working within the challenging context of Southern Papua, Indonesia.

Moderating Role of Coping Strategies in the Relationship Between Stress and Work Performance

Teacher standards, individual capabilities, and beliefs differ among educators, and workplace stress doesn't manifest uniformly (Karimi & Alipour, 2011). Dealing with unfavourable circumstances while maintaining a positive outlook can be facilitated by coping strategies. Recognizing factors that mediate stress, identifying stressors, and utilizing coping strategies serve as effective tools to mitigate and alleviate the impact and burnout caused by stress (Srivastav, 2007). In the modern era, individuals, including teachers, encounter various sources of stress like competition, domestic challenges, violence, and environmental issues. However, humans inherently tend to seek pleasure and avoid discomfort (Dunham, 2002). When stress is not effectively managed and persists, it can have detrimental effects on both physical and mental well-being.

Implementing constructive and efficient intervention strategies can mitigate and lower stress levels within organizations (Giga, Cooper & Faragher, 2003). Stress and evasive actions might manifest among teachers grappling with restricted resources and the weight of both their academic responsibilities and job expectations (Pestonjee & Azeem, 2001). Physical education teachers experience numerous stressors linked to student interactions, enhancing academic achievements, and adapting to the prevailing circumstances (Connolly, 2012). Stressors connected to teaching, including high workloads, problematic

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interpersonal relationships with colleagues, and lack of support from students, parents, and co-workers, impact teacher performance (Asimeng-Boahene, 2003). These stressors have consequences for an individual's psychological, emotional, and physical health (Hauge, Skogstad & Einarsen, 2010). Coping strategies involve the management, response, and control of stressors (Jones, Norman & Wier, 2010). These strategies are the actions taken by individuals to mitigate the intensity and adverse effects of stressors on their mental, emotional, and physical well-being (Jones, Norman & Wier, 2010). Coping strategies are influenced by the specific characteristics of the stressors and can be adopted and assessed based on individual personality traits and their functions. Various techniques are employed to alleviate stress levels, including cognitive strategies, self-control, and creating emotional distance (Peklaj & Puklek, 2011).

Ladzekpo and Nukpetsi (2020) examined the correlation between work-related stress, coping strategies, and job performance among tutors in colleges of education situated in the Greater Accra and Eastern Regions of Ghana. The research sample encompassed 150 tutors affiliated with Colleges of Education in these regions. The study was conducted using a quantitative research approach, employing a survey design as the methodological framework. The results revealed that job performance was impacted by work-related stress, and this association was contingent upon the coping strategies adopted by the tutors.

Similarly, Garg (2017) deduced that the performance of employees in private universities is influenced by work-related stress and their efforts to manage it. The coping behaviours of employees suggest that the bureaucratic structure

significantly shapes their responses. Garg (2017) further pointed out that employee performance is positively and considerably linked to avoidance coping strategies.

In 2022, Otsuka, Itani, Matsumoto, and Kaneita investigated the effects of various coping profiles on work performance. The research collected data from a 2-year prospective cohort study comprising 1359 employees located in Japan. The study employed multivariate logistic regression models and conducted causal mediation analysis to ascertain the impact of coping profiles on work performance. A maladaptive coping strategy demonstrated an adverse correlation with work performance. Particularly, in this pattern, self-blame acted as a mediator in the link between stress and work performance. As a result, specific coping profiles can either positively or negatively affect work performance.

In 2017, Li and colleagues conducted a cross-sectional survey within China to investigate how coping strategies influence the connection between work-related stress and job performance among nurses employed in tertiary hospitals. The research was conducted in 2013 and encompassed a group of 852 nurses selected from four tertiary hospitals located in Heilongjiang Province, China. The research team utilized regression analysis to examine how the interplay between work stress and coping strategies influenced job performance. The findings indicated that positive coping strategies had a moderating effect, reducing the negative influence of work stress on job performance. Conversely, negative coping strategies exacerbated the detrimental effects of work stress on job performance.

Gender Differences in Stress Levels among Teachers

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In 2015, Agai–Demjaha, Bislimovska, and Mijakoski conducted a research study that focused on the self-assessed levels of work-related stress among primary school teachers. The study aimed to explore its relationship with factors such as gender, age, job position, educational background, and professional experience. The researchers adopted a descriptive-analytical method for a cross-sectional study carried out across nine primary schools situated in Skopje, Republic of Macedonia. The research encompassed a participant group of 300 teachers. The study revealed that factors such as gender, age, job position, and work experience were all notably associated with increased levels of work-related stress. Additionally, the level of education was observed to have a significant correlation with work-related stress levels. A notably larger proportion of teachers in lower grades reported considering their workplace as highly stressful in contrast to those in higher grades. Likewise, a higher percentage of female participants expressed experiencing extreme workplace stress compared to their male counterparts (15.38% vs. 3.8%). This implies that females are more susceptible to stress than males.

In 2016, Çoklar, Efilti, Sahin, and Akçay conducted an investigation to assess the extent of techno-stress encountered by teachers amid technological shifts. The researchers administered a Techno-Stress Scale for Teachers to a group of 370 educators, spanning different education levels and subject domains, during the academic year 2015-2016. The study included all teachers within the central districts of Konya province, Turkey, throughout the designated school year.

The study's outcomes revealed that, concerning demographic aspects, the teachers' overall techno-stress levels remained steady across gender and years of

service. Nevertheless, these levels did exhibit differences based on the average duration teachers spent using the Internet. In 2017, Desouky and Allam conducted a study to explore the prevalence of occupational stress, depression, and anxiety among Egyptian teachers. The research adopted a cross-sectional methodology and included a participant group of 568 teachers from Egypt. The participants filled out a questionnaire that collected personal details and employed Arabic versions of the Occupational Stress Index (OSI), the Taylor manifest anxiety scale, and the Beck Depression Inventory (BDI) – validated tools-to assess their levels of occupational stress, anxiety, and depression, respectively.

Teachers who were above the age of 40, female, and working at the primary school level demonstrated significantly higher scores in relation to occupational stress. Furthermore, insufficient salary, extensive teaching experience, higher qualifications, and heavier workloads were linked to increased levels of occupational stress among teachers.

In 2017, Jani conducted research with the objective of comparing the stress levels of primary school teachers in government and private schools within Narla and Bhawanipatna Block, District Kalahandi. The study included a participant sample of 100 teachers, evenly divided with 50 teachers from government schools and 50 from private schools. The results of the study showed that there is no significant difference in stress levels between male and female primary school teachers. This implies that stress levels among male and female primary school teachers are similar. Moreover, the study's outcomes indicated that there is no significant difference in stress levels between male and female primary school

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teachers specifically in government schools. This indicates that the stress levels of male and female primary school teachers in government schools do not significantly differ. Likewise, the study uncovered no significant discrepancy in stress levels between male and female primary school teachers within private schools. This implies that stress levels for male and female primary school teachers in private schools are also not significantly distinct. However, a significant difference surfaced in the stress levels of male primary school teachers between government and private schools. In particular, male teachers in private schools demonstrated notably higher stress levels in comparison to male teachers in government schools. Conversely, stress levels among female primary school teachers in government and private schools did not significantly differ. However, a significant distinction in stress levels was observed. Similarly, similar to male teachers in private schools, female teachers in private schools were also found to experience significantly elevated stress levels compared to their female counterparts in government schools.

In 2019, Hussain, Zulfqar, and Aziz conducted a research study to examine the coping strategies and techniques adopted by school teachers in response to their perceived levels of stress. This exploratory research utilized a self-developed questionnaire, adapted from the COPE inventory, to conduct a survey. The study encompassed a participant group of 400 school teachers with diverse backgrounds, employed in both public and private sectors. These teachers were randomly chosen from two districts in Punjab, India. The outcomes of the study unveiled that 60% of the teachers acknowledged encountering a substantial or exceptionally high level

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of stress. Additionally, female teachers expressed experiencing a greater level of stress in comparison to their male colleagues.

In 2020, Klapproth, Federkeil, Heinschke, and Jungmann carried out a cross-sectional survey aimed at assessing the level of stress faced by teachers during the school lockdown in Germany. The research also investigated the coping strategies employed by teachers to handle this stress, along with the challenges they confronted while adapting to distance teaching. The study employed an online questionnaire as its research tool. The participants for the research were chosen from nationwide professional networks such as Eduserver - Education in Germany and The German Education Union (GEW). Additionally, the research was promoted on websites of organizations serving various special educational needs, as well as on social media platforms including Facebook and Instagram. A total of 380 teachers from diverse school settings participated in the study, reporting moderate to high levels of stress. Female teachers displayed elevated stress levels when contrasted with male teachers. Nonetheless, female teachers also displayed a higher occurrence of utilizing effective coping strategies in comparison to their male counterparts.

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Conceptual Framework
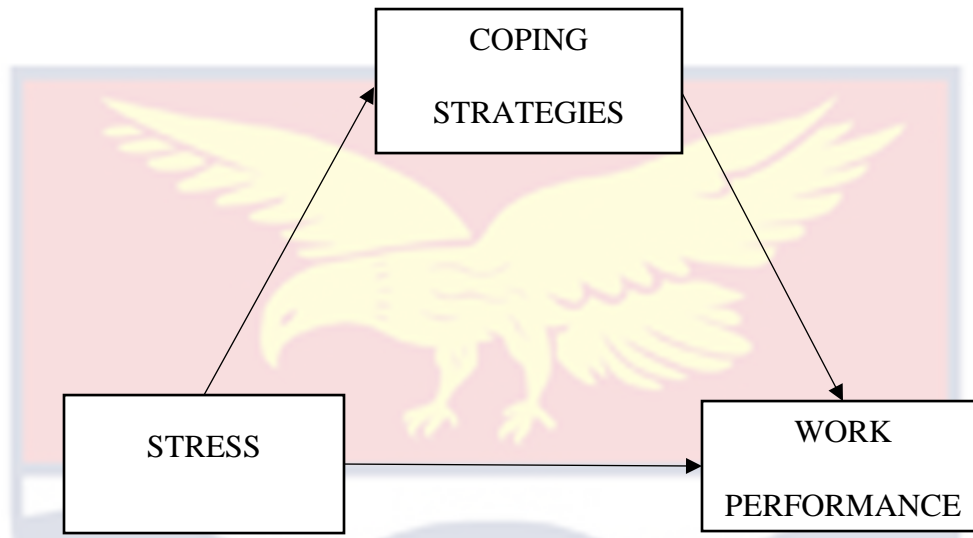
Figure 1: *Conceptual framework*

Source: Researcher's construct

The conceptual framework paints a detailed picture of how stress, coping strategies, and work performance are connected in the teaching context. It provides a clear view of how these factors interact and shape each other. The framework under consideration suggests that stress can directly influence teachers' work performance. However, the impact of stress on work performance might be influenced by the coping mechanisms teachers use. In simpler terms, how teachers manage their stress could potentially lessen its negative effects on how well they perform their job.

Those who adopt effective coping strategies might find themselves better equipped to handle stress, potentially leading to lower stress levels. These strategies could involve seeking support from colleagues, practicing relaxation techniques, or

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tackling problems head-on. By having these strategies in place, teachers coping strategies could act as a buffer against the detrimental impact of stress on their work performance. In essence, the use of productive coping methods might act as a shield, reducing the weight of stress and contributing to sustained job performance among teachers. This conceptual framework thus unveils a mechanism through which stress, coping strategies, and work performance are interconnected in the world of education.

Chapter Summary

This study aimed to investigate stress among Junior High School (J.H.S.) educators in the Upper Denkyira East Municipality, focusing on stress levels, sources, coping strategies, impact on job performance, and gender differences. The literature review comprehensively explored relevant theories and concepts. Theoretical frameworks such as Lazarus and Folkman's Transactional Model of stress and Selye's General Adaptation Syndrome were discussed. Conceptually, the review examined key concepts like stress and its implications for job performance. Empirically, the study aligned with its objectives by analyzing existing research findings related to stress in educational settings, setting the stage for a detailed exploration of stress among public school teachers in the specified region. The studies reviewed here provide insights into the stress levels experienced by teachers across various educational contexts and geographic locations. These studies underscore the global prevalence of stress among teachers and highlight diverse factors contributing to their stress levels across different educational settings.

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CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODS

Introduction

The purpose of the study was to explore the stress levels, coping strategies and their influence on work performance of Junior High School students. This chapter presents the research design, the study area, data collection methods and procedures, the population and its characteristics, the sample size and sampling technique, instruments used for data collection, ethical considerations, and data analyses techniques.

Research Philosophy

Positivism (Prediction), interpretive approaches (understanding), emancipatory (critical theoretical approaches), and pragmatic are the four main research paradigms discussed by Lather (2004) and Kivunja and Kuyini (2017). Positivism is a philosophical viewpoint asserting that knowledge is solidly grounded in empirical evidence obtained through the senses. Moreover, it asserts that knowledge can be considered valid only when all observers arrive at fundamentally the same depiction of an object or phenomenon. Finally, it necessitates that these descriptions remain consistent among all researchers or observers, resulting in the stipulation that measurement becomes the definitive path to acquiring knowledge.

The second approach, the Interpretivist paradigm, strives to comprehend the subjective realm of human experience (Guba & Lincoln, 1989). This method endeavours to delve into the perspectives of the subjects under investigation,

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metaphorically speaking, with the intention of comprehending and interpreting the thoughts or the manner in which they are comprehending the situation (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017). The third paradigm, known as the Critical paradigm (transformative), is rooted in addressing issues of social justice and endeavours to tackle the societal, political, and economic factors that contribute to disparities, conflicts, and power dynamics across various levels. Subsequently, the Pragmatic paradigm emerged as a response from scholars who contended that establishing a complete understanding of social reality through a single scientific approach, as endorsed by the Positivist paradigm, or accessing the "truth" about the actual world exclusively via a single scientific method, as advocated by the Interpretivist paradigm, was not feasible. In reaction to this, these intellectuals sought more practical and varied research approaches, permitting the combination of methods that, when integrated, could shed light on the genuine actions of individuals, the underlying concepts guiding those actions, and the possible outcomes stemming from such actions (Kivunja & Kuyini, 2017).

The researcher adheres to the positivist paradigm. According to this paradigm, a singular and well-defined reality exists, which is stable, quantifiable, and perceivable. Positivists hold the belief that this reality is objectively inherent and can be measured using attributes that are unrelated to the researcher and the tools they employ. In essence, knowledge is regarded as objective and capable of being quantified. Hence, the notion of Stress, Coping Strategies, and their Influence on Work Performance among Junior High School Teachers in the Upper Denkyira East Municipality, if assessed, will be apparent to anyone who observes it.

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Moreover, the positivist viewpoint asserts that authentic knowledge is objective and measurable. The objective of science is to verify and extend theories. The epistemological stance stems from a conviction that individuals' perceptions and assertions are either accurate or erroneous, correct or incorrect. This belief is grounded in a perspective of knowledge as tangible, tangible, and attainable. Gaining knowledge regarding teachers' stress is a systematic procedure, objective in nature, capable of measurement, and the reported measurements are dependable and valuable information. Additionally, Positivists hold the viewpoint that objectivity is commendable, whereas subjectivity is inherently deceptive. The numerical assessment of teachers' stress will provide an objective indication of their stress levels, which is a significant aspect to comprehend.

Employing quantitative research methodologies like experiments, quasi-experiments, surveys, and correlation studies, which demand unbiased measurement and analysis, is the sole recognized approach for producing legitimate knowledge as per the positivist perspective. These assumptions result in the conduct of quantitative studies, which hinge upon the objective measurement of observable occurrences.

Research Approach

Quantitative research is perceived as a structured investigation of phenomena involving the gathering of numerical data and the utilization of statistical, mathematical, or computational methods. The quantitative approach originates from positivism, which embodies a realist perspective and is founded on the concept of a God's-eye view or an independently existing reality that can be

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accurately described. The ontological stance of the quantitative paradigm asserts that an objective reality exists separate from human perception (Sale, Lohfeld & Brazil, 2002).

The goals of quantitative research are quantifiable and inherently linked to variables and hypotheses. Variables encompass concepts with varying values that can assume multiple forms, whereas hypotheses are unverified suppositions or propositions concerning the connection between variables. As per Håkansson (2013), the most commonly employed research strategies within the realm of quantitative research include survey, ex-post-facto, case study, and experimental research.

Research Design

A research design is a formulated plan or approach devised to structure and facilitate research, enabling the resolution of research inquiries through substantiated evidence and justifications (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2011). As stated by Håkansson (2013), descriptive survey, ex-post-facto, case study, and experimental research are the prevailing research strategies commonly employed within the realm of quantitative research. The chosen research design for data collection in this study will be the descriptive cross-sectional survey research design. The aim of descriptive research is to delineate a phenomenon and its attributes.

Thus, data collection frequently entails the use of observation and survey instruments (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2007). Nonetheless, this study will adopt a descriptive cross-sectional design, entailing the implementation of a survey

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exclusively. The selected research design for data collection in this study will be the descriptive survey research design. The primary objective of descriptive research is to depict a phenomenon along with its inherent traits. The rationale behind choosing this design stemmed from the researchers' aim to comprehensively and methodically portray a population. Additionally, the descriptive research design serves as a scientific approach encompassing the observation and portrayal of a subject's behaviour without exerting any form of influence.

This design was considered suitable for the study because the intention is to depict the stress levels of teachers and how it affects their work performance without introducing any form of intervention. As a result, the focus is on portraying the phenomenon of stress as it is experienced by teachers. Moreover, data collection will occur at a specific moment, encompassing individuals with varying attributes such as age, gender, and educational background. The rationale for selecting this design originated from the researchers' goal to meticulously and systematically depict a population. Furthermore, the descriptive research design constitutes a scientific approach wherein the behaviour of a subject is observed and portrayed without exerting any form of influence on it.

Study Area

The Upper Denkyira East Municipality is one of the seventeen Administrative Districts located in the Central Region. Geographically, it spans between latitudes 5° and 6° north of the equator and longitudes 1° W and 2° W of the Greenwich Meridian. It shares its boundaries with Adansi South to the North, Assin District to the East, Twifo Hemang Lower Denkyira to the West, and Upper

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Denkyira West District to the North-West. Encompassing a land area of 1020 square kilometres, the Upper Denkyira East Municipality constitutes approximately 10% of the entire land area of the Central Region.

This area was chosen because of the scarce research in the municipality. Informal observation, personal experience and conversation with colleagues have revealed that several students engage in mining within the community and at times are likely to be lagging behind or not be punctual in their classes. This is particularly true in the district capital Dunkwa-on-Offin where mining activities are more rampant than other towns in the district. Therefore, the study will focus on the Dunkwa-on-Offin Township. As such teachers have constantly had to resort to visiting and encouraging students to report to school and as well organize extra tuition to help students catch up amidst their regular work loads. It is therefore necessary to investigate the stress, coping and work performance of teachers in this area.

Population

According to Nitko (2004), a population is the complete collection of cases that satisfy a specified set of criteria. The term "target population" pertains to the particular elements that are the primary focus of the study and to which the research findings are extended (Draugalis & Plaza, 2009). The Ghana Education Service of the Upper Denkyira East Municipal indicates that there are 63 public and 20 private JHS schools in Upper Denkyira East Municipal. The target population is all public JHS teachers in the Upper Denkyira East Municipal. However, due to the inability to engage all JHS teachers within the municipal, the accessible population for the

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study will be JHS teachers in Dunkwa-on-Offin, the capital of the Upper Denkyira East Municipal. There are 174 teachers within 18 public JHS's in the Dunkwa Township. This includes 109 male and 65 female teachers. All 174 teachers were used for the study. The table below gives an idea of the accessible population.

Table 2: Accessible population

Schools	Number of teachers		
	Male	**Female**	**Total**
Dunkwa church of Christ JHS	10	10	20
Dunkwa Presby JHS	10	12	22
Dunkwa Methodist JHS	5	3	8
St Theresa's catholic girls JHS	3	4	7
St Stephen's catholic boys JHS	6	4	10
Ahmadiyaa M/A Basic	8	2	10
Ansaru-l-Deen M/A Basic	5	1	6
Mbradan M/A JHS	6	0	6
Buabinso M/A JHS	6	1	7
Akyempim M/A JHS	4	4	8
Abuakwa Nkwanta M/A JHS	4	2	6
Boa-Amponsem M/A JHS	5	5	10
Dunkwa Anglican JHS	14	6	20
SDA M/A JHS	5	2	7
Kofi Ashia M/A JHS	5	5	10
Mfuom Methodist JHS	5	2	7

Dunkwa Goldfields	4	2	6
Abekwa M/A JHS	4	0	4
Total	109	65	174

Source: GES, Dunkwa On-Offin (2023)

Sample and Sampling Procedure

Sampling is a method utilized by researchers to systematically choose a smaller subset of representative items or individuals from a predetermined population. This subset is then used as the subjects for the researcher's study (Sharma, 2017).

The sampling methods utilized in this study included the purposive and census approaches. These methods were chosen because the researcher's focus was solely on public Junior High School (JHS) teachers, and all available teachers were included due to their demanding schedules. The study specifically concentrated on JHS teachers, distinct from primary teachers, despite both groups being present within a basic school setting.

The study aimed to include all 174 JHS teachers for analysis, so no selection was intended from this group. However, 154 teachers voluntarily participated in the study, resulting in a high return rate of 88.5%. Teachers who chose not to take part after being informed about the study's objectives were not included.

Data Collection Instruments

Questionnaires provide advantages in terms of obtaining standardized and diverse responses on various subjects from a significant sample or population. They offer cost-effectiveness, reliability, validity, speed, and simplicity in completion

(Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2018). The questionnaires were formulated after reviewing the existing literature in alignment with the study's objectives. The initial segment of the questionnaire collected demographic information from the participants, including details like age, gender, and teaching experience. The subsequent segment concentrated on assessing the stress experienced by teachers, while the third segment delved into understanding the coping strategies adopted by teachers. The ultimate section of the questionnaire centred on self-reported work performance. Consequently, the questionnaire was structured into five distinct sections, encompassing demographic information, stress assessment, coping strategies, and levels of work performance.

Teachers' stress levels

The Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) serves as a traditional tool for evaluating stress levels. Created by Cohen, Kamarck, and Mermelstein in 1983, the PSS stands as one of the widely used instruments for gauging psychological stress. The Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) is a self-administered survey created to assess how individuals perceive stress in their lives. It measures the extent to which individuals interpret situations as stressful (Cohen et al., 1983, p. 385). In various studies where the PSS-10 was utilized, Cronbach's alpha values exceeded .70, indicating strong internal consistency (Lee, 2012). The questions ask about feelings and thoughts during the last month. In each case, respondents are asked how often they felt a certain way on a five-point scale from 'never' to 'very often'. Answers are then scored as follow: Never = 0, Almost never = 1, Sometimes = 2, Fairly often = 3, Very often = 4. To calculate a total PSS score, responses to the four positively stated

items (items 4, 5, 7 and 8) first need to be reversed (i.e. 0 => 4; 1 => 3; 2 => 2; 3 => 1; 4 => 0). The PSS score is then obtained by summing across all items. Individual scores on the Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) can range from 0 to 40, with higher scores indicating higher perceived stress levels. Specifically, scores ranging from 0 to 13 are considered indicative of low stress, scores from 14 to 26 reflect moderate stress, and scores from 27 to 40 signify high perceived stress. This range allows for a clear categorization of stress levels, aiding in the assessment and understanding of an individual's stress experience.

Causes of Teacher Stress

The Teacher Stress Inventory (TSI) is a self-report scale consisting of 20 items. It employs a five-point Likert-type response system to evaluate the level of occupational stress experienced by teachers (Boyle et al., 1995). The TSI was developed based on the 51 stress sources identified by Kyriacou and Sutcliffe (1978). Boshoff et al. (2018) later conducted a principal component analysis with oblimin rotation and Kaiser Normalization on the complete scale. This analysis revealed two factors, as extracted according to Kaiser's criteria, which explained 54.6% of the total variance. The two extracted factors lent themselves to theoretical interpretation, and can be described as follows: (1) General circumstance-related stress consisting of 10 items ($\alpha = 0.89$), and (2) Learner-related stress consisting of seven items ($\alpha = 0.87$).

Coping Inventory for Stressful Situations (CISS)

The Coping Inventory for Stressful Situations (CISS) is a self-report questionnaire consisting of 48 items. It assesses stress coping strategies across three

dimensions: task-oriented, emotion-oriented, and avoidance-oriented coping. Each dimension is composed of 16 items. Task-oriented coping involves approaching a stressful situation as a challenge to be addressed directly. Emotion-oriented coping aims to alleviate emotional distress, while avoidance-oriented coping involves deferring the resolution of current issues. Choi, Moon, Park, Lee, Lee, Jeong, and Chung (2017) employed principal component analysis during the exploratory factor analysis to extract factors. The outcome revealed a distinct pattern matrix, and the internal consistency was found to be high based on the value of Cronbach's alpha. The items belonging to task-oriented and emotion-oriented coping demonstrated satisfactory factorial validity. However, only three items from the avoidance-oriented coping category exhibited weak loadings or were associated with factors different from the intended ones. The task-oriented strategies exhibited a high level of internal consistency with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.92, emotion-oriented strategies showed a Cronbach's alpha of 0.88, and avoidance-oriented strategies displayed a Cronbach's alpha of 0.86.

The Individual Work Performance Questionnaire

The Individual Work Performance Questionnaire (Koopmans et al., 2015) is an assessment tool containing 18 items that originated in The Netherlands. Its purpose is to evaluate three primary aspects of work performance: task performance, contextual performance, and counterproductive work behaviour. All items have a recall period of three months and a 5-point rating scale (0 = seldom to 4 = always for task and contextual performance; and 0 = never to 4 = often for counterproductive work behaviour). A mean score for each IWPQ scale can be

calculated by adding the item scores, and dividing their sum by the number of items in the scale.

Pilot Test

In quantitative research, survey methods are commonly employed, which entails selecting the components to be included in the questionnaire, formulating and testing the questionnaire, and refining it before final implementation (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2018). Conducting a pilot study helps to uncover any uncertainties or variations in the interpretation of a questionnaire. An effective questionnaire should exhibit qualities similar to well-drafted legislation, being easily understood, free from ambiguity, and feasible, thus minimizing the likelihood of errors by participants and analysts. Additionally, it should encourage participant engagement and promote truthful responses to the best extent possible (Cohen et al., 2018).A pilot test was conducted using 17 J.HS. Teachers at upper Denkyira West municipality. They were selected because of the similarities between the two municipalities.

Reliability

One of the preliminary checks or test every researcher conducts before running the actual analysis of the study is reliability. The reliability testing is used to establish whether the items that were employed in the development of the scale can produce reliable results or otherwise for the researcher. Consequently, the study found it very important to check for the reliability scores of the items used to measure all four variables using the Cronbach Alpha statistical technique. Generally speaking, an alpha between 0.6 and 0.7 suggests a reasonable level of

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reliability, and an alpha of 0.8 or higher is excellent (Ursachi, Horodnic, & Zait, 2015). However, results above 0.95 should be interpreted with caution, as they may point to unnecessary redundancy (Hulin, Netemeyer, & Cudeck, 2001). Hence, the values presented in the Table 3 below were evaluated against this threshold.

Table 3: Reliability (α) of instruments

Original Instrument	Items	Original	Pilot	Main data
Teachers' stress levels	10	> 0.70	0.826	0.706
Causes of Teacher	17	0.89	0.819	0.847
Stress Coping Inventory for Stressful Situations (CISS)	48	> 0.88	0.915	0.917
The Individual Work Performance Questionnaire	18	N/A	0.730	0.751

Source: Field Data (2022)

The reliability of the instruments through a pilot test of 17 teachers is presented in Table 3. The findings confirmed the reliability of the items in the questionnaire before data collection.

Data Collection Procedure

All participants in the research were asked to express informed consent. The complete objective of the study were communicated to them, and the confidentiality of their information were ensured. The study's advantages were presented to them as well. Those who decided not to give information were also questioned about their reasons, and any misunderstandings regarding the research were addressed.

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Those who declined to participate despite a comprehensive explanation were eliminated from the research. Filling of questionnaires took approximately 15 to 25 minutes. After collecting the data, respondents were appreciated with a writing pen and a note pad. This is because teachers were used in the study and this will help them in their daily activities. A minimum period of three (3) weeks was used for data collection.

The first week entailed the presentation of an introductory letter to the heads of various public JHS in the municipality. This was done with the help of two field assistants. Once authorization was secured from the principals of the JHS schools, the researcher, along with the field assistants, revisited the schools to inform the teachers about the research's purpose and to distribute and collect consent forms. This was done for all schools. After this, the second week was used to administer the questionnaires. The questionnaires were administered to teachers school by school. Teachers who were unable to fill their questionnaires that same day were given the opportunity to fill it and the field assistants returned on another occasion to collect these questionnaires back.

Data Processing and Analysis

To guarantee consistency and completeness, the data obtained were first thoroughly checked to discover any omissions and mistakes. The revised data were first coded and then analysed employing the Statistical Product and Service Solution (SPSS). Research questions one, two and three were analysed using means and standard deviations. Regression analysis was used to test hypothesis one. Hayes

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mediation process was used to analyse hypothesis two. An independent Samples T-Test was used to analyse hypothesis three.

Ethical Considerations

Since this study was a little sensitive as it probed into work performance of teachers, protection and consent of participants and their responses were assured by obtaining due permission, protecting privacy and ensuring confidentiality. Approval was obtained from the school administrators before commencing data collection. This involved submitting an introductory letter as per the requirements of the Department of Education and Psychology. Respondents data such as names were be requested, this is to ensure they are not identified by the responses they provided. All responses were not shared with a third party except for research purposes. Field assistants were informed not to share participants' responses with any other person.

During this process, participants were provided with information about the study, its objectives, potential advantages, and potential risks. The researcher ensured that participants were informed of their right to withdraw or discontinue their participation at any point if they felt it was appropriate. A statement of consent was given to participants to sign as evidence of their willingness to participate in the study. Also, in accordance with the rules of the university, the researcher ensured the study does not plagiarise any ones work. A plagiarism test was run at the university library to ensure this criteria is met. All sources were rightly acknowledged in both in-text and reference list.

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CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Introduction

The aim of this research was to explore the stress levels, coping strategies, and their influence on the work performance of Junior High School (J.H.S.) teachers in the Upper Denkyira East Municipality. The theoretical framework and research methodology that underpinned this study were detailed in the previous chapter, Chapter Three. This section presents the outcomes derived from the data analysis conducted on the collected field data. Subsequently, these findings are examined and interpreted in relation to the previously reviewed studies in Chapter Two.

Out of the distributed 174 questionnaires, 154 were completed accurately and returned, resulting in a return rate of 88.5%. This rate was considered sufficient for analysis in the context of this particular research, as indicated by Saunders and Thornhill (2007). The findings of the data analysis are presented in the subsequent segments. Section A covers the demographic details provided by the participants, Section B focuses on addressing the research questions posed by the study, and Section C showcases the results obtained from analysing the data based on the three research hypotheses that guided the investigation. Wherever it was deemed appropriate, tables were generated to provide additional support to the analysis and findings.

Section A: Demographic Information (Description of sample)

This section provides an overview of the demographic details of the participants who took part in the study. The demographic information encompassed factors such as gender, age, and educational background.

Sex of Respondents

The Sex distribution of respondents in the study is shown in Table 4 below.

Table 4: Sex Distribution of Respondent

Sex	Frequency	Percentage
Male	93	60.4
Female	61	39.6
Total	**154**	**100.0**

Source: Field Survey (2022)

Table 4 presents the sex distribution of the J.H.S teachers involved in the study. The table shows that majority of the respondents were males, representing 60.4% of the total sample size, with females (39.6%), representing the least sex of the entire sample.

Section B: Analysis of Data on Research Questions

In this section, the data analysis for the three research questions that guided the study's objectives is presented. The analysis and responses to these research questions played a crucial role in accomplishing the overarching goal of the study.

Research Question 1: What are the stress levels of JHS teachers in the Upper Denkyira East Municipality?

The first research question sought to identify the levels of stress experienced by Junior High School (JHS) teachers in the Upper Denkyira East Municipality. There were a total of (10 items) used to measure stress among J.H.S teachers. The participants responded to the questionnaire using a scale ranging from 0 to 4, where 0 represented "Never," 1 represented "Almost Never," 2 represented "Sometimes," 3 represented "Fairly Often," and 4 represented "Very Often." The analysis of data related to this research question involved calculating the means and standard deviations. Table 7 below shows the mean and standard Deviation for each item on the perceived stress scale. Because the scoring of the items were on a scale of 0 to 4, mean score above 2.0 indicates respondent agreed to the statement while mean score below 2.0 indicates respondent disagreed to the statement.

Table 5: Perceived Stress of teachers

Statement	M	SD
Been upset because of something that happened unexpectedly	3.11	1.10
Felt that I was unable to control the important things in my life	3.32	1.01
Felt nervous and stressed	2.94	1.23
Did not feel confident about my ability to handle my personal problems	3.16	1.01
Did not feel that things were going my way	2.68	1.13
Found that I could not cope with all the things that I had to do	3.27	0.98
Not been able to control irritations in my life	3.07	1.03
Did not feel that I was on top of things	2.05	1.16
Been angered because of things that happened that were outside of my control	2.84	1.13
Felt difficulties were piling up so high that I could not overcome them	2.84	1.19
Mean of Means	**2.93**	**1.10**

Source: Field Survey (2022)

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Table 7 presents the mean and standard deviation of perceived stress among J.H.S teachers. The results revealed that, the teachers have high perceived stress level (M=2.93, SD=1.10) looking at their mean of means. All 10 items has mean scores above 2.0 an indication that J.H.S teachers have high perceived stress level. Teachers mean scores above 2.0 indicated that, they felt unable to control the important things in their life (M=3.32, SD=1.01), they could not cope with all the things that they had to do (M=3.27, SD=0.98), they did not feel confident about their ability to handle their personal problems (M=3.16, SD=1.01), they felt upset because of something that happened unexpectedly (M= 3.11, SD=1.10), they could not control irritations in their life (M=3.07, SD=1.03) and they felt nervous and stressed (M= 2.94, SD=1.23). Teachers also agreed that they did not feel that they were on top of things (M=2.05, SD=1.16)

Furthermore, teachers' scores were computed to find out the percentage of teachers experiencing mild, moderate and severe stress levels. From the 10 items on a 5-point Likert scale (0-4), scores ranged from 0 to 40. scores ranging from 0 to 13 are considered indicative of low stress, scores from 14 to 26 reflect moderate stress, and scores from 27 to 40 signify high perceived stress.

Table 6: Level of teachers' stress

Category	Score	Frequency	Percentage
Low	0-13	14	9.1
Moderate	14-26	27	17.5
High	27-40	113	73.4
Total		**154**	**100**

Source: Field Study (2022)

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From the results in Table 8, majority of the respondents have high stress levels. A total of 73.4% experience high stress levels whiles 9.1% experienced low stress levels. On the other hand 17.5% of the teachers experienced moderate stress levels.

Research Question 2: What are the perceived causes of stress among JHS teachers in the Upper Denkyira East Municipality?

The focus of research question 2 was to investigate the factors that JHS teachers in the Upper Denkyira East Municipality perceived as contributing to their stress levels. There were a total of (17 items) used to determine the cause of stress among J.H.S teachers. Responses to research question 2 were rated on a scale ranging from 0 to 4, with values corresponding to different levels of frequency: 0 indicating "Never," 1 denoting "Rarely (R)," 2 representing "Sometimes (S)," 3 signifying "Often (O)," and 4 indicating "Always (A)." The analysis of this research question was conducted through the calculation of means and standard deviations. Table 9 shows the mean and standard deviation for each item on the causes of stress scale. Because the scoring of the items where on a scale of 0 to 4, Mean score above 2.0 indicates respondent agreed to the statement while mean score below 2.5 indicates respondent disagreed to the statement.

Table 9 presents the mean and standard deviation of perceive causes of stress among J.H.S. teachers. The results showed some items to be the causes of stress among J.H.S teachers and others were not perceived as causes of stress at all. Items with mean above 2.0 were considered as causes of stress. For instance, teachers perceived that inadequate salary (M=2.76, SD=1.24), shortage of

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equipment and poor facilities (M=2.56, SD= 1.06), excessive work to do (M=2.53, SD=1.04), and learners' impolite behaviour (M=2.26, SD= 1.03) were causes of stress among J.H.S teachers. Teachers also agreed that responsibility for learners (e.g. exam success) (M=2.45, SD = 1.09) and learners' poor attitudes to work (M=2.37, SD=1.10) also caused stress.

Table 7: Perceived cause of stress

Statement	M	SD
Attitudes and behaviour of other teachers.	1.81	1.11
Pressure from principal and education officials	1.87	1.11
Shortage of equipment and poor facilities	2.56	1.06
Ill-defined syllabuses (e.g., not detailed enough)	2.36	1.01
Lack of time to spend with individual learners	2.16	1.17
Having extra learners because of absent teachers	1.56	1.16
Pressure from parents of students	1.70	1.26
Inadequate salary	2.78	1.24
Excessive work to do	2.53	1.04
Learners' impolite behaviour	2.26	1.03
Noisy learners.	2.32	1.17
Difficult class.	2.07	1.20
Maintaining class discipline	2.37	1.27
Responsibility for learners (e.g. exam success)	2.45	1.09
Learners' poor attitudes to work	2.37	1.10
Having a large class (i.e., too many learners)	2.16	1.22

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Administrative work (e.g., filling in forms)	1.97	1.23

Source: Field Survey (2022)

Among the factors on the perceived causes, attitudes and behaviour of other teachers (M=1.81, SD= 1.11), having extra learners because of absent teachers (M=1.56, SD= 1.16), noisy learners (M=2.32, SD=1.17) among others were found not to cause stress at all to J.H.S teachers.

Research Question 3: What stress coping strategies are adopted by JHS teachers in the Upper Denkyira East Municipality?

Research question 3 aimed at assessing the stress coping strategies that are adopted by JHS teachers in the Upper Denkyira East Municipality. There were a total of (48 items) used to determine stress coping strategies among J.H.S teachers. They were scored on a scale of 0 to 4, thus 0= Never, 1=Rarely (R), 2 = Sometimes (S), 3 = Often (O), and 4 = Always (A). The information related to this research question underwent analysis through the computation of means and standard deviations. Table 10 shows the mean and standard deviation for items on the stress coping strategies that were frequently used by teachers. Due to the fact that there were 48 items measuring coping strategies, only items that were strategies used by teachers as coping strategies were presented. Because the scoring of the items where on a scale of 0 to 4, mean score above 2.0 indicates respondent agreed to the statement while mean score below 2.0 indicates respondent disagreed to the statement.

Table 10 presents the mean and standard deviation of perceive stress coping strategies among J.H.S. teachers. The results showed some items were seen as stress

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coping strategies among J.H.S teachers and others were not perceived as stress coping strategies at all. Table 10 presents the highest mean scores.

Table 8: Stress coping strategies.

Statement	M	SD
Task		
Schedule my time better	2.75	1.03
Focus on the problem and see how I can solve it	2.89	.957
Do what I think is best	2.70	1.06
Think about how I have solved similar problems	2.65	1.00
Work to understand the situation	2.53	1.04
Take corrective action immediately	2.58	1.13
Think about the event and learn from my mistakes	2.72	1.07
Talk to someone whose advice I value	2.50	1.16
Analyse the problem before reacting	2.58	1.14
Get control of the situation	2.64	.960
Come up with several different solution to the problem	2.72	1.02
Use the situation to prove that I can do it	2.64	1.05
Try to be organised so I can be on top of the situation	2.70	.983
Emotion		
Tell myself that it will never happen again	2.53	1.08
Avoidance		
Think about the good times I have had	2.59	.98
Make an extra effort to get away from the situation	2.70	1.07

Source: Field Survey (2022)

In examining stress coping strategies, individuals employ various approaches, which can be categorized into three main groups: task-oriented, emotion-focused, and avoidance strategies. Task-oriented strategies, such as scheduling their time better (M=2.75, SD=1.03) and focusing on the problem to find a solution (M=2.89, SD=0.957), aim to address and manage the sources of stress directly. Emotion-focused strategies involve cognitive and emotional adjustments, like telling oneself that it will never happen again (M=2.53, SD=1.08), to mitigate the emotional impact of stress. Finally, avoidance strategies, including thinking about the good times (M=2.59, SD=0.98) and making an extra

effort to escape the situation (M=2.70, SD=1.07), involve evading the stressor or distracting oneself to alleviate stress.

Section C: Analysis of Data on Research Hypotheses

The study was directed by three research hypotheses. This section provides the outcomes obtained from evaluating these research hypotheses.

Hypothesis 1

H_0: *There is no statistically significant impact of stress on the work performance of JHS teachers in the Upper Denkyira East Municipality.*

H_1: *There is a statistically significant impact of stress on work performance of JHS teachers in the Upper Denkyira East Municipality.*

Hypothesis one aimed to ascertain whether stress affects the work performance of JHS teachers in the Upper Denkyira East Municipality. A simple linear regression analysis was employed to test this hypothesis and evaluate the influence of teacher stress on their work performance. Before conducting these hypothesis tests, the normality assumption, which serves as a fundamental aspect of all parametric assumptions, was also examined. To verify this, a histogram and a P-P plot were utilized for testing. The outcomes of these tests are outlined in the following sections. The findings of the linear regression analysis are displayed in Table 11.
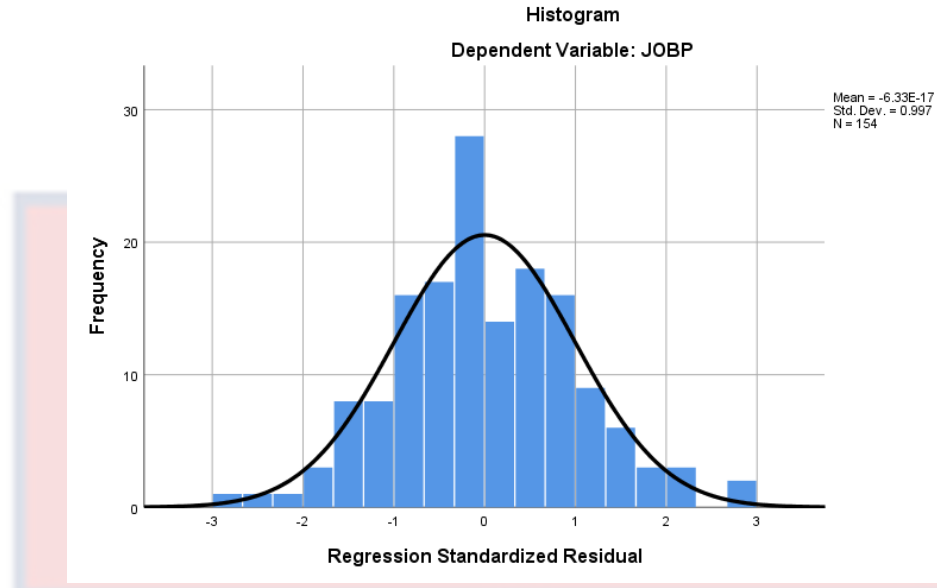
Figure 2: Normality histogram
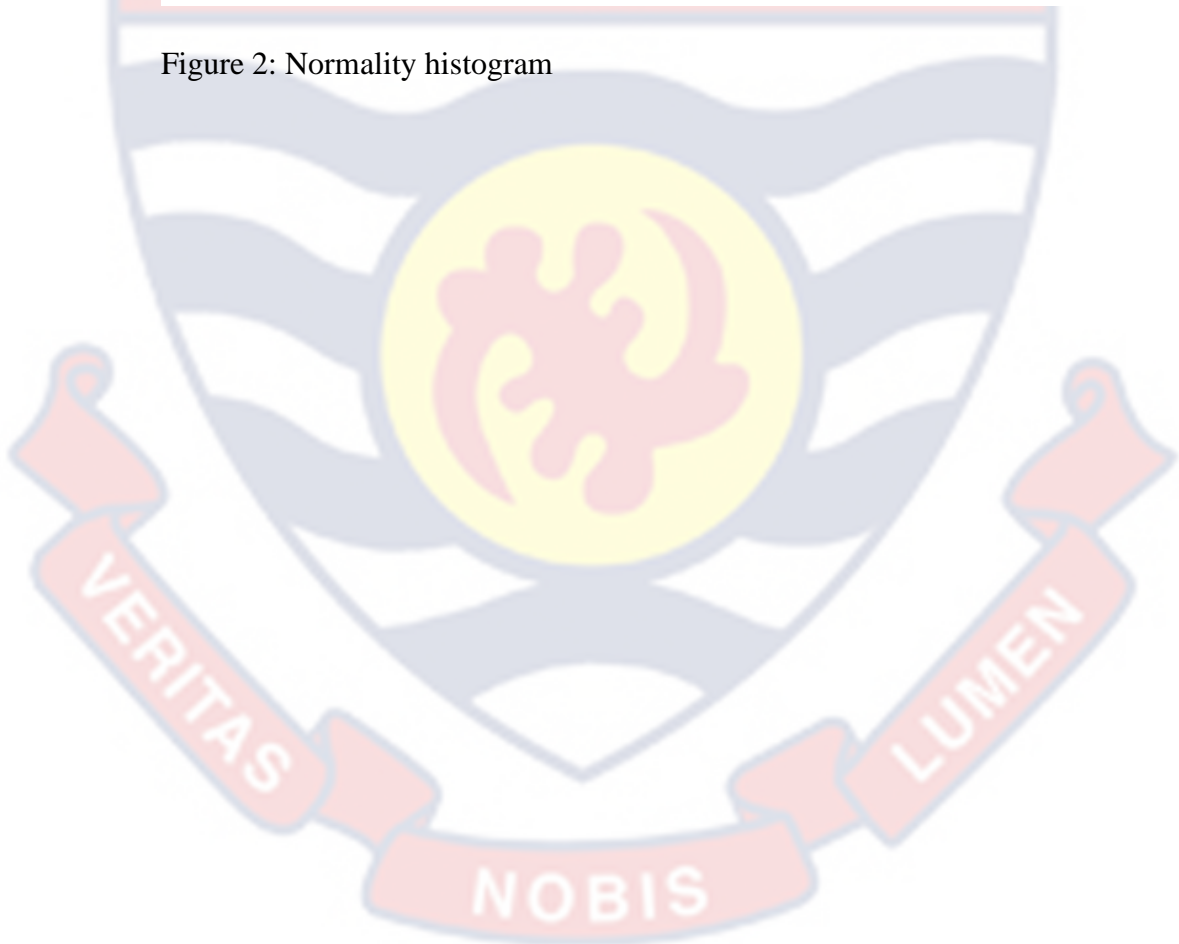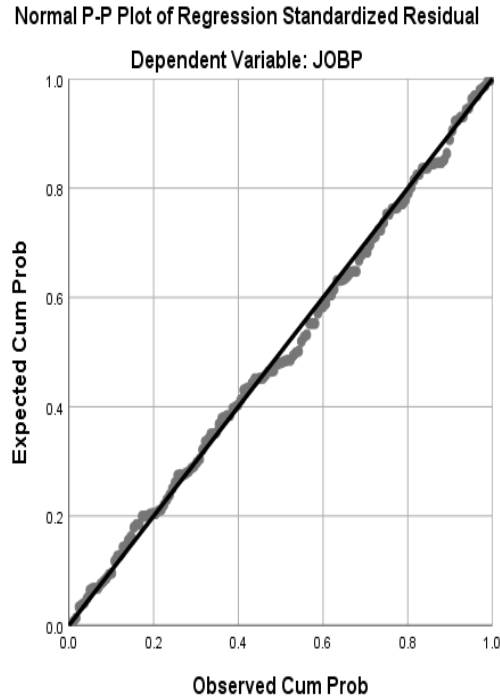
Figure 3: Normal P-Plot

Table 9: Linear Regression of the Impact of teacher stress on their work

performance

Variables	B	R^2	SE B	β	T	p
Constant	54.370	.105	2.339		23.245	.000
Stress	-.324		.077	-.323	-4.213	.000

Source: Field Survey (2022)   P= 0.000 r^2= .105   F= 17.749   df= (1, 152)

A linear regression model was calculated to determine the impact of teachers' stress on teacher work performance. Table 10 shows that there was a significant regression equation found, $F (1, 152) = 17.749$, $p< .05$, with an r^2 of .105. This shows that 10.5% of the variation in teacher's work performance is as a result of their stress levels. Furthermore, a unit increase in stress levels leads to a -.324 decrease in work performance. Therefore the researcher rejected the null

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hypothesis "There is no statistically significant impact of stress on the work performance of JHS teachers in the Upper Denkyira East Municipality".

Research Hypothesis Two

H_0: *coping strategies will not moderate the relationship between stress and work performance of public JHS teachers in the Upper Denkyira East Municipality*

H_1: *coping strategies will moderate the relationship between stress and work performance of public JHS teachers in the Upper Denkyira East Municipality*

Hypothesis 2 aimed to investigate whether coping strategies would act as a moderator in the connection between stress and work performance among public JHS teachers in the Upper Denkyira East Municipality. A moderation analysis was conducted to determine whether coping strategies moderated the effect of teacher stress on teacher performance. The hypothesis was assessed through a straightforward moderation analysis utilizing Smart PLS method and employing 1500 bootstrap samples. In this analysis, the predictor variable was teacher stress, the moderator variable was teachers' coping strategies, and the outcome variable was teachers' work performance. In Tables 12 the results are described in detail.

Table 10: *Regression coefficient of moderating role of coping strategies*

Model	β	T	*p*	95% confidence interval	
				Lower	Upper
Coping Strategies → Job Performance	0.322*	4.984	0.00	0.192	0.442

Moderating Effect of Coping strategies	0.133	2.034	0.042	0.005	0.266
Stress → Job Performance	-0.293	3.882	0.00	-0.426	-0134

Source: Field data (2022)   *Significant, $p < .05$, $R^2 = .229$

The regression analysis reveals that 22.9% of the variance in job performance can be explained by stress and coping strategies, as indicated by an R-squared value of 0.229. Stress has a significant negative impact on job performance ($\beta = -0.293$, $p < 0.05$), indicating that higher stress levels lead to decreased job performance. Conversely, coping strategies have a significant positive impact on job performance ($\beta = 0.322$, $p < 0.05$), suggesting that better coping strategies lead to improved job performance. Additionally, coping strategies moderate the relationship between stress and job performance ($\beta = 0.133$, $p < 0.05$), meaning that the negative effect of stress on job performance is reduced when effective coping strategies are employed. These findings emphasize the importance of developing and utilizing coping strategies to enhance job performance and ease the negative effects of stress.

Research Hypothesis 3

H_0: *There is no statistically significant gender difference in the stress of JHS teachers in the Upper Denkyira East Municipality.*

H_1: *There is a statistically significant gender difference in the stress of JHS teachers in the Upper Denkyira East Municipality.*

Hypothesis 3 sought to determine if there is a gender difference in stress of JHS teachers in the Upper Denkyira East Municipality. An independent samples t-

test was conducted to find out if there was a statistically significant gender differences in J.H.S teacher stress. The independent variable was gender with two categories; males and females, whiles the dependent variable was teacher stress. Table 14 presents results of the independent samples t-test.

Table 11: Gender differences in teacher stress

Gender	N	M	SD	T	Df	P
Male	93	29.25	8.37			
				-.035	152	.972
Female	61	29.30	8.14			

Source: Field survey, 2022   N= 154   p= .972

An independent samples t-test was conducted to compare the teacher stress for Males and Females. Levene's test of homogeneity of variance revealed that the variances for the two groups (Males and Females) are equal (p= .933). Results of the t-test revealed that there was no statistically significant difference in teacher stress for Males (M=29.25, SD=8.37) and Females (M=29.30, SD=8.14), t (152) = -.035, p= .972 (two tailed). This means that Males and Females not differ when it comes to teacher stress.

Discussion of findings

Perceived stress levels

The study assessed the levels of stress experience by teachers. The study's findings indicated that 44% of teachers reported experiencing significant levels of stress, while 42% reported encountering moderate levels of stress. The study's results align with the research conducted by Ozamiz-Etxebarria et al. (2021) and

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Agai–Demjaha et al. (2015), which also suggested that stress levels tend to be elevated among university teachers while remaining at a moderate level among educators in pre-tertiary institutions. Although the current study was conducted among junior high schools, the current study found that majority of JHS teachers had high stress levels. Likewise, results from the research conducted by Owusu (2021) and Ismail and Noor (2016) revealed that academic staff exhibited varying degrees of occupational stress, ranging from low to moderate levels, among Senior High School teachers in the Cape Coast Metropolis and within a research university in Malaysia. Stress levels may differ significantly due to an individual's working conditions, the individuals themselves, how they perceived stress and the coping strategies employed.

Causes of stress

The study examined the perceived causes of stress among public JHS teachers. Insufficient salary, excessive workload, disrespectful behavior from students, lack of necessary equipment, and inadequate facilities were recognized as factors contributing to stress. The results of this research align with several other studies (Abubakari & Wuptiga, 2016; Desouky & Allam, 2017; Alson, 2019; Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2015; Adu & Okeke, 2016).The finding of this study is congruent with assertions made by Alson, (2019) besides Desouky, and Allam, (2017) who mentioned inadequate salaries to cause occupational stress. Economic factors such as inadequate salaries lead to frustrations which may be a spark for stress since teachers will have no option than to depend on the limited income or funding amidst the high cost of living they have no control over. As revealed by the

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current study, workload and time pressure affirms Skaalvik, and Skaalvik, (2015) position that excessive work to do within a limited time frame also contributes to the stress experienced by teachers. Stressful situations compound when the workload keeps increasing irrespective of the efforts an individual may exert in reducing or dealing with stressors. In the face of multiple stressors productivity is hindered. Findings from the study lies in avowal with findings of Skaalvik, and Skaalvik, (2015), Adu and Okeke (2016) and Harmsen et al (2018) that perceived negative social aspects and negative pupil aspects breeds tension or stress. The negative pupil aspects are made manifest in pupils' indiscipline which includes disruptive student behaviour and learners' impolite behaviour which are likely to interfere with classroom activities and teachers' performance.

Coping Strategies

The study examined the coping strategies adopted by public JHS teachers. The findings of the study highlighted recovering strategies, problem and emotion-oriented approaches as well as functional coping strategies as strategies for managing or handling. These strategies are in tandem with findings of Hussain et al., (2019), Klapproth et al., (2020), Paquette and Rieg, (2016), Raymond and Hassan, (2016) besides Skaalvik and Skaalvik, (2021). With regards to problem and emotion-oriented approaches, the finding of this study harmonizes with that of Hussain et al., (2019) who indicated that teachers tend towards use of problem - oriented approaches than avoidance. The study's results indicated that teachers primarily engaged in problem-solving and actively sought solutions, along with

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implementing what they believed to be the most effective approaches to alleviate stressful situations.

Emotional intelligence is considered an emotion-oriented approach to minimize stress and its effect. Thinking about the good times a person may have encountered or may have had goes a long way to affect his mood which may be altered when worn out due to stress. Emotions go long way to affect productivity hence it is imperative for individuals to avoid thinking about a negative or unfortunate event and learn from my mistakes. This aligns with the assertions made by Raymond and Hassan (2016) that practicing positive hobbies, enhancing communication abilities, and cultivating emotional intelligence were recognized as effective stress management techniques among technology education teachers.

Furthermore, recovering strategies included scheduling, time management and accurate organisation. These strategies have also been mentioned by Paquette, and Rieg, (2016) effective time management and the skill to create schedules "down time enables employees to have a smooth work day with little to no tension or anxiety which may arouse from stress. The findings further stressed whereas Skaalvik, and Skaalvik, (2021) confirmed that accurate organisation of work activities reduces an individual's tendency of working haphazardly. Such practices make an employee prone to numerous incomplete works and the demand to complete them within a short period affects work performance. Trying to be organised allows workers to be on top of situations. Recovering strategies are used to cope with the demands that seem to overwhelm employees. Moreover, getting control of the situation and making an extra effort to get away from the situation

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are considered as functional coping strategies. Maladaptive coping strategies employed by teachers may contribute to their risk of increased psychological distress, and decreased life satisfaction and happiness.

However, the use of coping strategies in an effort to reduce psychological distress and improve overall wellbeing in teaching professionals which is coherent with findings by Klapproth et al., (2020) that teachers used more functional coping strategies when they expected external factors as barriers for teaching. This is to say that teachers draw from different coping strategies for sustenance and support in the events of stress.

Impact of stress on the work performance

The primary focus of the study was to delve into the impact of stress on work performance. The findings of the study provided substantial evidence that stress exerts a negative impact on work performance. This finding resonates with the perspective put forth by Alson (2019), who posited that the relationship between job performance and occupational stress might not be particularly strong or straightforward. In other words, while job performance and stress may not be directly proportional, there is a notable relationship between the two factors.

Furthermore, the research aligns with the observations made by Asaloei, Wolomasi, and Werang (2020), who specifically explored the association between stress and job performance among primary school teachers. The study highlighted a significant negative correlation, indicating that higher levels of work-related stress were associated with lower job performance among these educators. This

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shows that stress can impede the effective execution of job responsibilities, particularly within specialized contexts such teachers.

They suggest that the extent to which employees experience stress in their professional lives can intricately shape their ability to perform their tasks well. The current study's result, revealing that stress accounts for approximately 10% of the variability in job performance, serves as a quantitative evidence to this relationship. In practical terms, this suggests that efforts to enhance work performance cannot overlook the role of stress management and the promotion of a supportive work environment. Organizations that prioritize employee well-being and proactively address stressors are likely to witness improvements in overall job performance.

Moderating role of coping strategies

The study examined the moderating role of coping strategies in the relationship between stress and work performance of public JHS teachers. The study revealed that coping strategies moderated the relationship between stress and work performance, reducing the effect of stress on work performance. Stress had a negative effect on work performance, but coping strategies mitigated this relationship, suggesting that the adoption of coping strategies can lead to increased performance despite high stress levels.

This aligns with findings by Ladzekpo and Nukpetsi (2020), who investigated work-related stress, coping strategies, and job performance among tutors in Ghana's Colleges of Education. They found that job performance was influenced by work-related stress, and this relationship was contingent on the coping strategies adopted by the tutors. Similarly, Garg (2017) found that employee

performance in private universities is influenced by work-related stress and the coping mechanisms they employ, noting that bureaucratic structures significantly shape these responses. Garg also observed that avoidance coping strategies positively influenced employee performance.

Further supporting these findings, Otsuka, Itani, Matsumoto, and Kaneita (2022) investigated the effects of various coping profiles on work performance in Japan and found that maladaptive coping strategies, particularly self-blame, negatively impacted work performance. This suggests that specific coping profiles can either positively or negatively affect job performance. Li et al. (2017) also demonstrated that positive coping strategies among nurses in China's tertiary hospitals moderated the negative influence of work stress on job performance, while negative coping strategies exacerbated these detrimental effects. The current study's findings are consistent with these previous studies, showing that effective coping strategies act as a buffer against the negative effects of stress on job performance

The study delved into the complex interplay between stress, coping strategies, and work performance among public Junior High School (JHS) teachers, drawing insights from the Transactional Theory of Stress and Coping as well as the General Adaptation Syndrome (GAS). According to the Transactional Theory of Stress and Coping, stress is not solely determined by external factors but is also shaped by an individual's appraisal of those factors and their perceived ability to manage them. Coping strategies, on the other hand, are mechanisms employed by individuals to manage stress and its associated emotional and behavioral responses.

The findings of the study revealed that coping strategies played a significant moderating role in the relationship between stress and work performance (β = 0.133, p < 0.05). In line with the General Adaptation Syndrome (GAS), which outlines the body's physiological response to stressors, it was evident that stress had a negative impact on the work performance of JHS teachers. However, the introduction of effective coping strategies acted as a buffer, moderating the impact of stress on work performance.

This suggests that when teachers utilized adaptive coping strategies, the adverse effect of stress on their job performance was reduced. These coping strategies could include problem-solving, seeking social support, or employing relaxation techniques—all of which align with the principles of the Transactional Theory of Stress and Coping. Importantly, the findings imply that regardless of the individual's initial stress levels, the adoption of appropriate coping strategies could lead to an enhancement in work performance. This supports the notion that through effective coping, individuals can better manage the physiological and psychological responses to stressors, ultimately leading to improved job performance. In essence, the study underscores the dynamic relationship between stress, coping, and performance within the framework of these psychological theories.

Gender differences in stress among public JHS teachers

The study examined gender differences in stress among public JHS teachers. The study made bare that female teachers and male teachers do not differ in relation to stress. Findings from the study is not in line with Hussain et al., (2019), Agai–Demjaha et al, (2015), Desouky and Allam (2017) who reported a high

prevalence of occupational stress for female primary school teachers. In spite of the gender difference in stress levels, Klapproth, Federkeil, Heinschke and Jungmann, (2020) claimed that female teachers also used more often functional coping strategies than their male colleagues. This is to explain that although females may be frequently stressed, chances of dealing with it increases which may be the reason why both male and female teachers do not differ in relation to stress significantly.

In essence, the study's results challenge the assumption that female teachers inherently experience higher stress levels than their male counterparts. It suggests that the effectiveness of coping strategies plays a crucial role in mediating the potential impact of stress on individuals, potentially explaining why the overall stress levels do not significantly differ between male and female teachers. This underscores the significance of not only investigating stress prevalence but also considering how individuals manage and cope with stress.
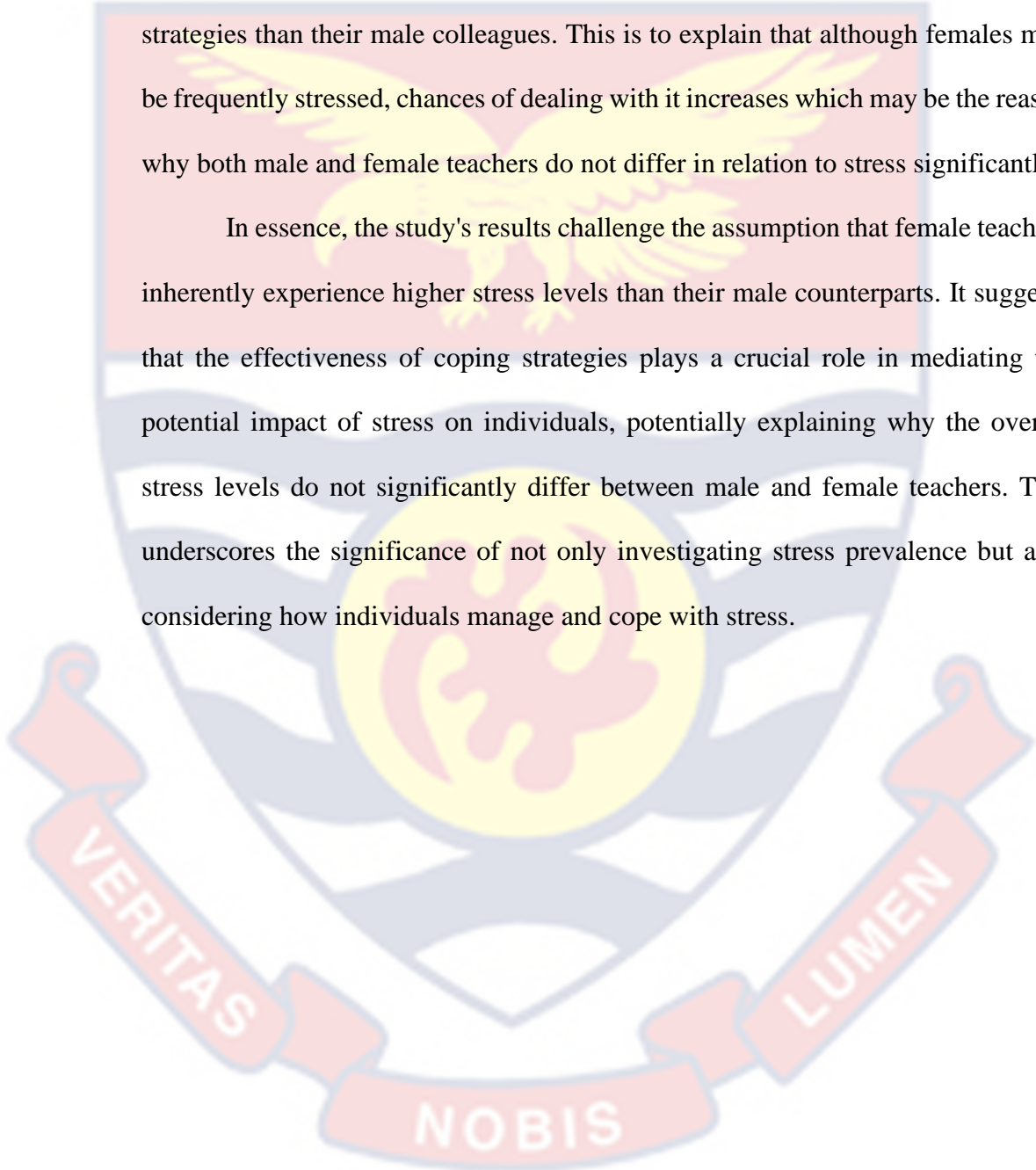
CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

The main objective of the study was to investigate stress, coping strategies and their impact on the work performance of J. H. S. teachers. Specific objectives were to identify the stress levels, examine the perceived causes of stress, ascertain the coping strategies adopted when stressed, examine the impact of stress on the work performance, identify gender differences in stress as well as the mediating role of coping strategies in the relationship between stress and work performance.

Summary of the Study

The purpose of the study was to investigate stress, coping strategies and their impact on work performance. The study was carried out among J. H. S. teachers in the Upper Denkyira East Municipality. The study employed the descriptive survey research design and was carried out in the Upper Denkyira East Municipality. The study targeted all public JHS teachers in the Upper Denkyira East Municipality with an accessible population of 174 teachers within 25 public JHS's in the Dunkwa district. The entire population was used for the study based on census sampling however, 154 teachers took part in the study, giving a return rate of 88.5%. The instruments used in this study were the Perceived Stress Scale developed by Cohen, Kamarck and Mermelstein, (1983), the Teacher Stress Inventory (TSI) (Boyle et al., 1995), the Coping Inventory for Stressful Situations (CISS) by Moon, Park, Lee, Lee, Jeong, and Chung, (2017) and the Individual Work Performance Questionnaire (Koopmans, 2015).

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Quantitative data from the closed ended questionnaires were coded and analyzed by descriptive statistics such as frequency counts and percentages. Research questions one, two and three were answered using means and standard deviation which helped determine teachers' stress levels, causes of stress as well as the coping strategies used when stressed. Research hypothesis one was answered using simple linear regression model which helped determine the impact of teachers' stress on teacher work performance. Research hypothesis two was answered using a simple mediation analysis with Hayes' PROCESS and 5000 bootstrap samples which helped determine whether coping strategies mediated the effect of teacher stress on teacher performance. Research hypothesis three was answered using Independent t-test which helped determine the gender differences in stress levels.

Key Findings of the Study

1. Findings of the study revealed that teachers experience high stress levels. Up to 73.4% of teachers experience high stress levels.

2. Inadequate salary, shortage of equipment and poor facilities, excessive workload and learners' impolite behaviours were identified to be causes of stress.

3. Task-oriented coping strategies, such as scheduling their time better and focusing on the problem to find a solution, aim to address and manage the sources of stress directly. Emotion-focused strategies involve cognitive and emotional adjustments, like telling oneself that it will never happen again, to mitigate the emotional impact of stress. Finally, avoidance strategies,

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including thinking about the good times and making an extra effort to escape the situation, involve evading the stressor or distracting oneself to alleviate stress..

4. Stress had a significant impact on job performance, accounting for 10% of the differences in work performance.

5. The study revealed that coping strategies moderated the relationship between stress and work performance. Stress had a negative effect on work performance, however coping strategies moderated this relationship. Thus irrespective of an individual' stress levels, adaptation of coping strategies may cause performance to increase.

6. The study revealed that female teachers do not differ from male teachers when it comes to stress.

Conclusions

The performance of employees completely affects the performance of an organisation as a whole. It, therefore, becomes necessary to understand factors that affect employee performance. JHS teachers experience high stress levels. This is mostly caused by inadequate salary, shortage of equipment and poor facilities, excessive workload and learners' impolite behaviours. To manage stress, JHS teachers manage their time, focus on the problem and see how it can be solve it. Although stress had a negative effect on work performance, the coping strategies used by teachers can reduce this effect. Also, males and females do not differ in relation to stress levels.

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Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusion, the following recommendations are;

1. The Ministry of Education and school administrators should implement comprehensive stress management programs and workshops to support teachers. These programs should include regular stress assessments, mindfulness training, and access to mental health resources to help teachers manage and reduce stress.

2. The GES, in collaboration with the Ministry of Education, should advocate for better funding to increase teacher salaries and improve school facilities. Additionally, workload should be balanced by hiring more staff or redistributing tasks, and implementing programs to promote respectful behaviour among students through counselling and disciplinary measures. Educational psychologists should be involved in designing these programs to ensure they effectively address the underlying issues.

3. In the face of challenges, more and diverse coping strategies should be employed. School management committee and other related bodies should organize seminars and stress related issues and its management.

4. The GES should monitor and regularly evaluate teachers' stress levels and their impact on job performance. Developing targeted interventions to reduce stress and its impact on performance, such as counselling services, flexible work schedules, and stress-relief programs, can help improve overall job performance. Involving educational psychologists in these

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evaluations and interventions can help tailor support to the specific needs of teachers

5. The GES should emphasize the importance of adaptive coping strategies in professional development programs. Providing teachers with training on specific coping strategies, such as problem-solving and organizational techniques, can help mitigate the negative effects of stress on job performance. Encouraging a supportive work environment where teachers feel comfortable seeking help and discussing stress-related issues is also crucial. Educational psychologists can contribute by training teachers in these coping strategies and providing ongoing support.

6. The GES should ensure that stress management programs and resources are inclusive and accessible to all teachers, regardless of gender. By promoting an equitable approach to stress reduction and support, the GES can create a more inclusive and supportive work environment for all teachers. Regular gender-sensitive training sessions can help address specific stressors and coping strategies relevant to both male and female teachers. Educational psychologists can play a key role in designing and delivering these training sessions to ensure they are effective and sensitive to gender-specific needs.

Recommendations for further studies

Further studies should focus on teachers' experiences of stress levels employing the qualitative approach. The study should be replicated in other districts to find out if the phenomenon of stress is prevalent in these districts.

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APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

COLLEGE OF EDUCATION STUDIES

FACULTY OF EDUCATIONAL FOUNDATIONS

DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION AND PSYCHOLOGY

RESEARCH QUESTIONNAIRE

Dear Respondents,

You are invited to participate in research on Stress levels, Coping Strategies and their Impact on Work Performance on J.H. S Teachers in Upper Denkyira East Municipality. I wish to assure you that this questionnaire is strictly for academic purposes and as such, all information obtained through this medium shall be treated as confidential. **DO NOT write your name on any part of the questionnaire.** Please be honest in your responses. Please read carefully and tick the appropriate choice for each statement.

Please fill in the required information below or Please tick [√] the appropriate box

SECTION A: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION

1. Gender

   I.   Male   [ ]

   II. Female   [ ]

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2. Age (e.g 36)   _____

3. Highest Educational Background

I.	Secondary Education	[ ]
II.	Diploma	[ ]
III.	HND	[ ]
IV.	First degree	[ ]
V.	Masters	[ ]
VI.	PHD	[ ]

SECTION B: PERCEIVED STRESS SCALE

The questions in this scale ask you about your feelings and thoughts during the last three months. In each case, you will be asked to indicate how often you felt or thought a certain way. Although some of the questions are similar, there are differences between them and you should treat each one as a separate question. The best approach is to answer fairly quickly. That is, don't try to count up the number of times you felt a particular way; rather indicate the alternative that seems like a reasonable estimate.

For each question choose from the following alternatives:

0=Never 1= Almost Never 2 = Sometimes 3 = Fairly Often 4 = Very Often

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S/N	In the last three months, indicate how often these statements apply to you	0	1	2	3	4
1	Been upset because of something that happened unexpectedly					
2	Felt that I was unable to control the important things in my life					
3	Felt nervous and stressed					
4	Felt confident about my ability to handle my personal problems?					
5	Felt that things were going my way					
6	Found that I could not cope with all the things that I had to do?					
7	Been able to control irritations in my life?					
8	Felt that I was on top of things?					
9	Been angered because of things that happened that were outside of my control?					
10	Felt difficulties were piling up so high that I could not overcome them?					

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SECTION C: CAUSES OF TEACHER STRESS

The questions in this scale ask you about causes of teacher stress. Indicate how often you were stressed as a result of these situations.

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0=Never 1=Rarely (R) 2 = Sometimes (S) 3 = Often (O) 4 = Always (A)

S/N	Statement	0	1	2	3	4
1.	Attitudes and behaviour of other teachers.					
2.	Pressure from principal and education officials					
3.	Shortage of equipment and poor facilities.					
4.	Ill-defined syllabuses (e.g., not detailed enough).					
5.	Lack of time to spend with individual learners.					
6.	Having extra learners because of absent teachers					
7.	Pressure from parents of students					
8.	Inadequate salary.					
9.	Excessive work to do					
10.	Learners' impolite behaviour or cheek.					
11.	Noisy learners.					
12.	Difficult class.					
13.	Maintaining class discipline					
14.	Responsibility for learners (e.g. exam success).					
15.	Learners' poor attitudes to work.					
16.	Having a large class (i.e., too many learners).					
17.	Administrative work (e.g., filling in forms).					

SECTION D: COPING INVENTORY FOR STRESSFUL SITUATIONS

The following are ways people react to various difficult, stressful or upsetting situations. Please tick a number for each item. Indicate how much you engage in these types of activities when you encounter a difficult, Stressful, or upsetting situation.

0=Never 1=Rarely (R) 2 = Sometimes (S) 3 = Often (O) 4 = Always (A)

S/N	Statement	0	1	2	3	4
1	Schedule my time better.					
2	Focus on the problem and see how I can solve it.					
3	Think about the good times I've had.					
4	Try to be with other people					
5	Blame myself for procrastinating.					
6	Do what I think is best.					
7	Preoccupied with aches and pains.					
8	Blame myself for having gotten into this situation.					
9	Window shop.					
10	Outline my priorities.					
11	Try to go to sleep.					
12	Treat myself to a favourite food or snack.					
13	Feel anxious about not being able to cope.					
14	Become very tense.					

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15	Think about how I have solved similar problems.					
16	Tell myself that it is really not happening to me.					
17	Blame myself for being too emotional about the situation.					
18	Go out for a snack or meal.					
19	Become very upset.					
20	Buy myself something.					
21	Determine a course of action and follow it.					
22	Blame myself for not knowing what to do.					
23	Go to a party.					
24	Work to understand the situation.					
25	Freeze" and don't know what to do.					
26	Take corrective action immediately.					
27	Think about the event and learn from my mistakes.					
28	Wish that I could change what had happened or how I think.					
29	Visit a friend.					
30	Worry about what I am going to do.					
31	Spend time with a special person.					
32	Go for a walk.					
33	Tell myself that it will never happen again.					
34	Focus on my general inadequacies.					

35	Talk to someone whose advice 1 value.					
36	Analyze the problem before reacting.					
37	Phone a friend.					
38	Get angry.					
39	Adjust my priorities.					
40	See a movie.					
41	Get control of the situation.					
42	Make an extra effort to get things done.					
43	Come up with several different solutions to the problem.					
44	Take time off and get away from the situation.					
45	Take it out on other people.					
46	Use the situation to prove that I can do it.					
47	Try to be organized so I can be on top of the situation.					
48	Watch TV.					

SECTION E: THE INDIVIDUAL WORK PERFORMANCE QUESTIONNAIRE

The statements below describe various aspects of employee performance. For each statement, decide how best how you engage in the following by ticking in the corresponding blank that best indicates your feeling.

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0=Never 1=Rarely (R) 2 = Sometimes (S) 3 = Often (O) 4 = Always (A)

S/N	Statement	0	1	2	3	4
1.	I managed to plan my work so that I finished it on time					
2.	I kept in mind the work result I needed to achieve					
3.	I was able to set priorities					
4.	I was able to carry out my work efficiently					
5.	I managed my time well					
6.	On my own initiative I started new task when my old tasks were completed					
7.	I took on challenging tasks when they were available					
8.	I worked on keeping my job-related knowledge up-to-date					
9.	I worked on keeping my work skills up-to-date					
10.	I came up with creative solutions for new problems					
11.	I took on extra responsibilities					
12.	I continually sought new challenges in my work					
13.	I actively participated in meetings and/or consultations					

14.	I complained about minor work-related issues at work					
15.	I made problems at work bigger than they were					
16.	I focused on the negative aspects of situation at work instead of the positive aspects					
17.	I talked to colleagues about the negative aspects of my work					
18.	I talked to people outside the organization about the negative aspects of my work					

THANK YOU FOR YOUR PARTICIPATION

APENDIX B

ETHICAL CLEARANCE

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD SECRETARIAT

TEL: 0558093143 / 0508878309
E-MAIL: irb@ucc.edu.gh
OUR REF: IRB/C3/Vol.1/0079
YOUR REF:
OMB NO: 0990-0279
IORG #: IORG0011497　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　　21ST MARCH 2023

Ms Freda Dodoo
Department of Education and Psychology
University of Cape Coast

Dear Ms Dodoo,

ETHICAL CLEARANCE – ID (UCCIRB/CES/2022/144)

The University of Cape Coast Institutional Review Board (UCCIRB) has granted Provisional Approval for the implementation of your research on **Stress, Coping Strategies and Their Impact on Work Performance of J.H.S Teachers in Upper Denkyira East Municipality.** This approval is valid from 21st March 2023 to 20th March 2024. You may apply for a renewal subject to the submission of all the required documents that will be prescribed by the UCCIRB.

Please note that any modification to the project must be submitted to the UCCIRB for review and approval before its implementation. You are required to submit a periodic review of the protocol to the Board and a final full review to the UCCIRB on completion of the research. The UCCIRB may observe or cause to be observed procedures and records of the research during and after implementation.

You are also required to report all serious adverse events related to this study to the UCCIRB within seven days verbally and fourteen days in writing.

Always quote the protocol identification number in all future correspondence with us in relation to this protocol.

Yours faithfully,

Kofi F. Amuquandoh
Ag. Administrator

ADMINISTRATOR
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD
UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST.

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APPENDIX C

INTRODUCTORY LETTER

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APPENDIX E

COPING STRATAGIES OUTPUT

Statement	Mean	Std. Deviation
Schedule my time better	2.75	1.03
Focus on the problem and see how i can solve it	2.89	.957
Think about the good times i've had	2.59	.98
Try to be with other people	2.41	1.10
Blame myself for procastinating	2.04	1.18
Do what i think is best	2.70	1.06
Preoccupied with aches and pains	1.92	1.10
Blame myself for having gotten into this situation	2.03	1.19
Window shop	1.83	1.21
Outline my priorities	2.47	1.17
Try to go to sleep	2.23	1.08
Treat myself to a favourite food or snack	2.29	1.18
Feel anxious about not being able to cope	1.98	1.07
Become very tense	1.91	1.10
Think about how i have solved similar problems	2.65	1.00
Tell myself that it is really not happening to me	2.22	1.09
Blame myself for being too emotional about the situation	1.94	1.14
Go out for a snack or meal	1.77	1.16
Become very upset	1.90	1.12

Buy myself something	2.18	1.12
Determine a course of action and follow it	2.48	1.07
Blame myself for not knowing what to do	1.73	1.16
Go to a party	1.51	1.22
Work to understand the situation	2.53	1.04
Freeze and dont know what to do	1.80	1.19
Take corrective action immediately	2.58	1.13
Think about the event and learn from my mistakes	2.72	1.07
Wish that I could change what had happened or how I think	2.44	1.09
Visit a friend	1.87	1.09
Worry about what I am going to do	2.07	1.21
Spend time with a special person	2.14	1.16
Go for a walk	2.12	1.14
Tell myself that it will never happen again	2.53	1.08
Focus on my general inadequacies	2.43	1.02
Talk to someone whose advice I value	2.50	1.16
Analyze the problem before reacting	2.58	1.14
Phone a friend	2.17	1.14
Get angry	1.81	1.24
Adjust my priorities	2.18	.981
See a movie	1.98	1.09
Get control of the situation	2.64	.960

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Make an extra effort to get away from the situation	2.70	1.07
Come up with several different solution to the problem	2.72	1.02
Take time off and get away from the situation	2.30	1.09
Take it out on other people	1.90	1.20
Use the situation to prove that I can do it	2.64	1.05
Try to be organised so I can be on top of the situation	2.70	.983
Watch TV	2.20	1.22

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