

# **A STUDY ON FACTORS INFLUENCING PERSONAL AND ECONOMIC RELATED STRESS AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS WITH REFERENCE TO ZOMBA, MALAWI**

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## **ABSTRACT**

This study investigated on personal and economic related stress among secondary school teachers in Zomba, Malawi. A total 100 secondary school teachers were randomly selected to form participants for the study. Research questions formulated were directed towards issues researched. A validated instrument titled a study on factors influencing personal stress among secondary school teachers. Data collected through survey research was analyzed by percentage analysis. The study revealed that major causes of personal related stress were Financial concerns uncertainty/ disappointment, stay far away from school and Lack of appreciations or recognition and this study reported that major causes of economic related stress were Low salary, High cost of living and Financial Crisis among secondary school teachers in Zomba, Malawi. This study recommended that Management should provide accommodation with lowest rent in around the campus and there is need for school management to develop and implement the new salary scale this would lessen the financial stress among the secondary school teachers in Zomba.

**KEYWORDS:** Stress, Job Dissatisfaction And Teaching Aid.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Currently stress becomes worldwide occurrence. Abrol (1990) argued about, each person needs more and more for the accomplishment of desire, due to this rivalry is increased in every arena of life and this rivalry produces stress among people no doubt the rivalry is must but we don't ignore its outcome in the recent centuries as more and more people are coming out from their villages to get

jobs in town, city and even abroad. Immense pressure at work has led to stress which makes it the number one factor that has lead to illness and dissatisfaction towards the organisation.

Stress is commonly documented as a hostile emotional state. According to Kyriacou (1978), stress is outcome of continued pressures that can't be controlled by the managing policies that an individual has.

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Olson et al (1989) defined stress as “a state of strain that rises from an actual or perceived request that calls for a modification or accepted behavior”. Stress can attribute to poor performance, nonattendance, job dissatisfaction, accidents and various health issues. Distress can lead to hypertension, heart attack and ulcers among other illness.

Currently, so many problems faced by each and every one in life can produce stress. Stress has become a general issue that practically everybody has to manage with particularly those who engage in academic activities such as teaching profession.

Teaching or lecturing as an occupation is a challenging job that involves extremely intellectual activities however, there are various academic symptoms of stress that can affect people in the teaching profession, these includes memory problem, misperception, poor judgment, lack of attentiveness, while the expressive symptoms can be irritation, frustration, temperamental, and unhappiness, all of these can have negative opposing effects on the teachers’ profession (Morgan & Kitching, 2007).

## **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

Eckert and William (1972) reported that repetitive duties, long hours, very poor infrastructure, roughness among teachers, and administrative red tape were the dominant sources of stress.

Fountain, (2002) reported that teaching career has reformed extremely in the last few years, as it has become more attentive on "clients," the students and their parents. This makes the teaching atmosphere less formal and teachers' jobs more challenging, as they must deal with ruder pupils and parents who are more likely to interrogating their resolutions. Teachers also must infrequently deal with difficult co-

workers, hostile work environments and inflexible deadlines. As technology changes, teachers must also learn how to participate new development and technologies into their classrooms. These circumstances can easily lead to stress both on and off the job.

R. Satya Raju & E. Roopa Rani found that Management’s control over the teacher’s work, Role conflict, pay structures, Relocation, Finance related, Transportation, Little control over work environment creating stress among college teachers.

Susan Gill, Marilyn J Davidson., (2001) reported that organizational security, organizational satisfaction, work satisfaction and commitment, physical well-being and psychological health were major sources of stress among teachers.

Leena Jeneffa (2018) In her study revealed that it is concluded that there is a significant difference between job satisfaction and age, qualification and occupation. With increasing work pressure at work place, family issues plays increasing problem between work life and personal life can lead to stress. This work pressure has an impact on their personal life leads to imbalance in their work and life.

## **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

Participants and Settings: Participants of the study are those employees working in secondary school teachers in Zomba, Malawi. The sample size selected for this research purpose constituted of 100 respondents through structured questionnaire in the natural environment. In this research, we used robability sampling by using its category of convenience sampling. The reason behind selecting convenience sampling was that because in this, the most easily accessible customers were chosen as subjects of research and it was the quickest, convenient and less

expensive technique used. It is both descriptive and analytical in nature. The present study is based on the primary data collected from the secondary school teachers in Zomba, Malawi. Secondary data consists of different literature like published articles, journals, books, newspapers, magazines and websites.

Five points likert scaling has been used. The validity of the questionnaires was content-based validity and the reliability of the questionnaires was 0.84 and 0.89, based on the Cronbach Alpha Coefficient. All data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS 17).

**OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

- To identify the Personal related factors of stress among teachers in secondary school at Zomba.
- To identify the Economic related factors of stress among teachers in secondary school at Zomba.

**RESEARCH RESULTS**

**HYPOTHESES**

Two hypotheses were stated and tested:

- There is no significant difference in the expression of secondary school teachers on the personal causes of stress among teachers on the basis of gender;
- There is no significant difference in the expression of secondary school teachers on the economic causes of stress among teachers on the basis of gender;

**RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

Two research questions were raised to guide the study; these are:

- What are the personal causes of stress among teachers as expressed by secondary school teachers?
- What are the economic causes of Stress among teachers expressed by secondary school teachers?

Table 1

| Causes of Stress                               | Not Applicable | Least Stressful | Moderately Stressful | Considerably Stressful | Extremely Stressful |
|--|----------------|-----------------|----------------------|------------------------|---------------------|
| Stay far away from school                      | 22             | 8               | 21                   | 13                     | 36                  |
| Child care responsibilities                    | 30             | 21              | 21                   | 19                     | 9                   |
| Eldercare responsibilities                     | 46             | 23              | 12                   | 12                     | 7                   |
| Family problems                                | 37             | 21              | 16                   | 6                      | 20                  |
| Physical health conditions                     | 35             | 16              | 18                   | 17                     | 14                  |
| Conflict with loved ones,                      | 45             | 21              | 12                   | 8                      | 14                  |
| Psychological health conditions                | 34             | 22              | 17                   | 13                     | 14                  |
| Financial concerns uncertainty/ disappointment | 7              | 23              | 15                   | 18                     | 37                  |
| Conflicting demand                             | 35             | 25              | 19                   | 10                     | 11                  |
| Lack of appreciations or recognition           | 24             | 21              | 23                   | 11                     | 21                  |

Source: Primary Data

Table 1 shows that 93% of the secondary school teachers agreed that Financial concerns

uncertainty/ disappointment is the major cause of stress secondary school among teachers with

mean 3.55 and Standard Deviation 1.37, the table also exposed that 78% agreed that Stay far away from school is another main cause of stress among teachers with mean 3.33 and Standard Deviation 1.56, while 76% of

respondents agreed that Lack of appreciations or recognition is third most major cause of stress among the teachers with mean 2.84 and Standard Deviation 1.45.

**Table 2**

| <b>Causes of Stress</b> | <b>Not Applicable</b> | <b>Least Stressful</b> | <b>Moderately Stressful</b> | <b>Considerably Stressful</b> | <b>Extremely Stressful</b> |
|-------------------------|-----------------------|------------------------|-----------------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|
| Low salary              | 4                     | 10                     | 21                          | 10                            | 55                         |
| High cost of living     | 6                     | 5                      | 15                          | 20                            | 54                         |
| Financial Crisis        | 10                    | 13                     | 18                          | 13                            | 46                         |
| Debt                    | 16                    | 14                     | 19                          | 16                            | 35                         |
| Poverty                 | 20                    | 21                     | 11                          | 17                            | 31                         |

Source: Primary Data

Table 2 shows that 96% of the secondary school teachers agreed that low salary is the major economic cause of stress secondary school among teachers with mean 4.02 and Standard Deviation 1.239, this table also exposed that 94% agreed that high cost of living from school is another main economic cause of stress among teachers with mean 4.11 and Standard Deviation 1.197, while 90% of respondents agreed that financial crisis is third most major economic cause of stress among the teachers with mean 3.72 and Standard Deviation 1.415.

To test the Hypothesis, statistical tools such as arithmetic mean, standard deviation and coefficient of correlation was applied. The significance was that p value was  $p=0.001$ . This result rejects the null hypothesis of Hypothesis 2 which states that “Stay far away from school, Child care responsibilities, Eldercare responsibilities, High cost of living, Poverty, Conflict with loved ones,” Hence, the alternate hypothesis i.e. “Physical health conditions, Family problems, Psychological health conditions, Financial concerns uncertainty/ disappointment, Low salary, Financial Crisis, Debt related factors affect stress level among faculty” is accepted.

### **CONCLUSION**

Based on the findings of the study, the following conclusions are drawn, the major

causes of personal stress among secondary school teachers are Financial concerns uncertainty/ disappointment, stay far away from school and Lack of appreciations or recognition and major causes of economic related stress among secondary school teachers are Low salary, High cost of living and Financial Crisis among secondary school teachers in Zomba, Malawi.

### **RECOMMENDATION**

Management should provide accommodation with lowest rent in around the campus to solve the problems which are faced by teachers who are all staying far away from the school. For the secondary teachers to discharge their responsibilities effectually there is need for school management to develop and implement the new salary scale this will serve as incentive for reducing financial problems what they faced by teachers this would lessen the financial stress among the secondary school teachers in Zomba. Management should motivate all the teachers whenever they need and efforts made by teachers should be appreciated and recognized by higher officials.

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