

UNIVERSITI TEKNOLOGI MARA

**STRESS AND ITS ASSOCIATED
FACTORS AMONG PRIMARY
SCHOOL TEACHERS AT KINTA
VALLEY- A CROSS SECTIONAL
STUDY**

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Dissertation submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
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AUTHOR'S DECLARATION

I declare that the work in this dissertation was carried out in accordance with the regulations of Universiti Teknologi MARA. It is original and is the results of my own work, unless otherwise indicated or acknowledged as referenced work. This thesis has not been submitted to any other academic institution or non-academic institution for any degree or qualification.

I, hereby, acknowledge that I have been supplied with the Academic Rules and Regulations for Post Graduate, Universiti Teknologi MARA, regulating the conduct of my study and research.

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ABSTRACT

Background: Teacher is a profession known to have exposure to a great amount of stress. Factors that have association with stress vary between research studies. The government of Malaysia had introduced the new Malaysian Education Blueprint (2013-2015) which is aimed to increase the performance of the Malaysian education sector. These new challenges to the teachers may serve as a new factor to occupational stress. Literatures have shown that teachers who experienced great level of stress will have negative impact to their relationship with students. **Objectives:** This study is aimed to determine the prevalence of stress among primary school teachers at Kinta Valley, as well as to study the sociodemographic factors and job characteristics that contributed to stress. We determined the subjects' depression and anxiety status and their association with stress. **Methodology:** This is a cross-sectional study involving 104 primary school teachers. The samples were recruited through cluster random sampling. Study instruments used were sociodemographic form, Depression, Anxiety and Stress 21-item scale (DASS 21) and Teacher Concern Inventory by Fimian (1988). Descriptive analysis was performed, followed by multiple logistic regression analysis. **Results:** The prevalence of stress among the primary school teachers was found to be 14.4%. Among the sociodemographic factors that were studied, none of those were found to have association with stress. Nonetheless, type of teacher (administrators, classroom or subject teachers) was found to have statistically significant association with stress ($p=0.046$). 18.3% of the respondents were depressed, while 47.1% respondents were screened as anxious. However, it is important to note that DASS21 is not a diagnostic tool. Both depression and anxiety had significant association with stress (both p values=0.00). Following the multiple logistic regression analysis, only depression remained to have statistical significant association with stress (OR=56.32, 95% CI = 10.49 - 302.36). **Conclusion:** Stress among primary school teachers is prevalent. Among those who had depressive symptoms, they were highly likely to experience stress with odds 56 times higher. Nevertheless, the confidence interval is wide, owing to the small sample size of our study. This study implicates that teachers do experience stress and they are at risk to develop depression due to this. The policy maker should take appropriate measures to overcome this ongoing issue. However, we suggest that future research should include more teachers, more different type of schools and uses diagnostic instruments so as to make the study more impactful. Additionally, protective factors to stress should be studied as well. Limitation of time and resources has served as a major factor to the limitations of our study.

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Page
CONFIRMATION BY PANEL OF EXAMINERS	ii
AUTHOR'S DECLARATION	iii
ABSTRACT	iv
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	vi
TABLE OF CONTENTS	vii
LIST OF TABLES	xi
LIST OF FIGURES	xii
LIST OF ABBREVIATION	xiii
CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION	1
1.1 Stress	1
1.2 Chronic Stress	2
1.3 Depression, Anxiety and Other Psychiatric Illness	3
1.4 The Emergence of Teachers Stress and Relevance of Study	4
CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW	6
2.1 Teacher and Stress	6
2.2 Factors Associated with Stress Among Teachers	8
2.3 Effect of Stress to Teachers' Mental Health	12