

Study on stress management for teachers in malaysia



**ASSIGN
BUSTER**

Teaching is one of the most stressful jobs in Malaysia. The talk on “ Stress Management for Teachers” (Kolej Disted-Stamford news, 23 February 2008) declared that teaching is a challenging profession and hence, teachers could do with learning how to de-stress to maintain good health and high spirits. There are two main sources of stress which affect teachers; heavy workload and students’ problem. Nowadays, a teacher’s duty is multifaceted as they undertake not only teaching but also matters associated with curriculum, students, parents, the school community as well as departmental initiatives.

Another key point to note, the success of the newly launched National Education Blueprint has given a big impact on the development of the schools and teachers themselves. This plan is expected to produce intellectual students who are able to collect information and acquire knowledge and skills, instead of purely memorizing knowledge. Education system should cater to the needs of all students; smart, mediocre, weak or disabled. The success of the National Education Blueprint depends on the teacher’s ability, quality, skills and effectiveness in educating students. Teachers are required to have proficient skills in teaching and educating students to fulfill the government’s aspiration in providing world class education. As a result of this new system, married female teachers may face an increase in workload which will in turn affect their work performance as well as their psychological well-being.

According to Smylie (1999), “ These are tough times being a teacher” (p. 59). Ewing and Smith (2003) reported that between 25% and 40% of beginning teachers in the Western World countries are leaving teaching or <https://assignbuster.com/study-on-stress-management-for-teachers-in-malaysia/>

facing burnout syndrome. Over the past ten years, many researchers focused on the effect of work overload on work-family conflict. Generally, they found that high levels of work overload led to higher levels of work-family conflict (WFC). From a personal perspective, {suggested that the demands that employees have to fulfil considering their resources namely time and emotions to devote to work with less devote to their families.} work demands require employees to devote more resources namely time and emotions to work, leaving them with fewer resources to devote to their families.

Greenhaus and Beutell (1985) define work-family conflict as a type of inter-role conflict in which role pressures from work and family are mutually incompatible. That is, work demands are not compatible with family demands (Allen, Herst, Bruck, and Sutton, 2000). Allen et al. (2000) reviewed the relationship between work-family conflict and (a) work-related outcomes, (b) non-work-related outcomes, (c) stress-related outcomes and generally found significant relationships across these areas. They concluded that work-family conflict has important personal and organizational consequences.

It is important to note that the early research on multiple roles focused almost on women, particularly on women who occupied the roles of wife, mother, and employee. The multiple roles of women may affect the well-being of the family such as the husband, children and including the wife herself. Conflict occurs when a family is unable to cope with this multiples roles effectively and the result has been found to affect work satisfaction and psychological well-being (Greenhaus and Beutell, 1985; Loscocco and Roschelle, 1991; Phelan et al., 1991).

<https://assignbuster.com/study-on-stress-management-for-teachers-in-malaysia/>

In order to maintain the health and success of teachers and schools, greater understanding of WFC is fundamental. Consequently, the influence of WFC in the prediction of psychological well-being is receiving increasing attention (e. g., O'Driscoll, Brough, and Kalliath, 2004). This has led to an increment in the number of occupational stress researchers as well as WFC variables in their estimates of both individual health and work performance (Brough & O'Driscoll, 2005).

Research suggests that an individual's self-efficacy in a specific domain provides information regarding how the individual perceive and cope with challenges. In the case of managing conflict that inevitably arise between personal and professional responsibilities, assessing work-family conflict efficacy may provide a unique perspective on what might ultimately help to reduce the negative outcomes namely decrease in life and job satisfaction that are associated with work-family conflict. Understanding how self-efficacy function in the relationship between work-family conflict and these outcomes could bring about meaningful therapeutic measures for women experiencing work-family conflict.

Self-efficacy is defined as, " people's judgments in their capabilities to organize and execute courses of action required to attain designated types of performance" (p. 391). Bandura (1977) described self-efficacy as a key determinant of psychological change, choice of settings and activities, quality of performance in a specific domain, and level of persistence when one meets adverse or negative experiences.

Having mentioned about efficacy, other predictors may also have significance in contributing to WFC and well-being. Religious coping and religiosity that have been found to affect health status positively, including overall morbidity and mortality, acute conditions, fatal ailments, pain and chronic illness (Levin, 1994). Religious belief has been perceived as one way of coping with conflict. The positive influence of religious certainty on well-being was found to be direct and substantial, whereby individuals with a strong religious faith reported higher levels of life satisfaction and greater personal happiness (Ellison, 1991), as well as lower levels of distress (Ross, 1990). Religious activities especially prayers are usually regarded as positive coping devices directed toward both the problem and personal growth (Folkman, Lazarus, Dunkel-Schetter, De Longis & Gruis, 1986).

Due to the insufficient of information on the psychological outcomes of combining work and family roles among Malaysian women, the present study is aimed at investigating the direct and indirect relationships between WFC efficacy, religious coping, WFC and well-being. The study hypothesized that the relationship between WFC efficacy, religious coping and well-being is mediated by WFC. Therefore, the proposed model hypothesized WFC to act as an intervening variable between WFC efficacy and religious coping and well-being among female teachers in Malaysia.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Changes in family structures are transforming the workplace while adjustments in parental work patterns are altering family life. Thus, there has been a dramatic increase in rates of paid employment globally among mothers with children. Research on WFC since the past 30 years has been <https://assignbuster.com/study-on-stress-management-for-teachers-in-malaysia/>

fuelled by the growing proportion of employees who are dual-earner partners or single parents. As the number of working women with young children at home and dual-career households rise, so does the need for research and organizational attention towards potentially reducing stress due to WFC.

Research to date suggests that high levels of work-family conflict are related to dysfunctional outcomes such as life dissatisfaction, anxiety, depression, and poor health in individual, increased interpersonal conflict and divorce in relationships, and as for the organizations, namely absenteeism, tardiness and loss of talented employees.

Besides that, The National Union of The Teaching Profession (NUTP) Secretary, General Lok Yim Pheng, in New Sunday Times, May 18, 2008, informed that teachers are overloaded with paper work and they are pressured to train students on how to answer examination questions.

Teachers must always maintain the quality of their work, try to improve their productivity and acquire knowledge and skills to develop human capital in the globalized world. Moreover, teachers play an essential role in shaping a community as their products of educating efforts contribute to its functionality. These are the demands of teaching profession nowadays.

Researchers have identified various stressors that may affect the psychological well-being of teachers and one of the stressor is workload that may lead to burnout. Although some researchers may argue that social status is one of the most important factors for psychological well-being (Bredemeier, 1979), it seems that excessive workload could impose an undue level of stress that is more serious than any other stressors. A large

number of studies show that teachers are exposed to workload which results
<https://assignbuster.com/study-on-stress-management-for-teachers-in-malaysia/>

particularly in stress and strain. At least one third of teachers can be seen as suffering from extreme stress and/or burnout (e. g., Boyle, Borg, Falzon & Baglioni, 1991; Friesen & Sarros, 1989).

Researchers have considered various unique antecedents to WFC (Greenhaus and Beutell, 1985; Frone, 1992). However, the role of personality factors on women's well-being, on the other hand, is less well documented. Only a few researchers have assessed the relationship between WFC efficacy and religious coping. For instance, Carlson (1999) found negative affectivity to be directly related to greater WIF conflict. There is a need to identify how WFC efficacy and religious coping can be linked with WFC and well-being in a causal relationship in the school setting. The present study uses the Structural Equation Model (SEM) and Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) to examine relationships among two independent (exogenous) and dependent (endogenous) variables simultaneously in a causal framework.

With regard to personal resources, " why do some teachers succeed in being good teachers - continuously enhancing students' achievements, setting high goals for themselves and pursuing them persistently, while others fail to meet expectations imposed on them and tend to collapse under the burden of everyday stress"? Based on this statement, the study examines the problem by investigating the influence of teachers' WFC efficacy and religious coping on work-family conflict and well-being of female teachers in Malaysia. If teachers' WFC efficacy and religious coping can be proven to reduce WFC among female teachers, it seems possible to increase teachers' WFC efficacy and improve teachers' coping style using religious approach which in turn may boost teachers' well-being. Again, if WFC efficacy and <https://assignbuster.com/study-on-stress-management-for-teachers-in-malaysia/>

religious coping are causally related to WFC as hypothesized, this relationship will reduce teachers' WFC and increase teachers' well-being respectively.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

In generally, this study serves the purpose to examine the impact of WFC efficacy and religious coping on WFC and well-being of secondary school teachers' in Malaysia.

To validate the instruments utilized in this study, the researcher adopted the two-step Structural Equation Modeling. Then, the researcher estimated the hypothesized relationships.

The primary purpose of this research is to construct-validate the instrument to assess WFC of female teachers in Malaysia which are Work-family conflict (WFC), Work-family conflict efficacy (WFC efficacy) Religious coping (RC), Well-being (WB) consisted of Health (GHQ) and Job-Family Dissatisfaction (JFD). The study also estimates the relationships of WFC, WFC efficacy, RC and well-being of female teachers in Malaysia.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The following research questions are formulated to address the hypothesized relationships:

1. Are the constructs of work-family conflict, work-family conflict efficacy, religious coping and well-being valid and reliable?

2. Does work-family conflict efficacy directly influenced the well-being of female teachers in Malaysia?
3. Does work-family conflict efficacy indirectly influenced well-being via work-family conflict of female teachers in Malaysia?
4. Does religious coping directly influenced well-being of female teachers in Malaysia?
5. Does religious coping indirectly influenced well-being via work-family conflict of female teachers in Malaysia?

Does teachers' work-family conflict directly influenced by their well-being?

Does WFC-efficacy and religious coping significantly correlated?

THE CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK OF WORK-FAMILY CONFLICT

The model of this study, which is derived from Frone et al., (1992), examines the interrelationships among the two predictors WFC efficacy and RC that may affect well-being directly and indirectly via work-family conflict.

This research focuses on the variables that are considered vital to increase well-being and to reduce WFC. The hypothesized interrelationships and interdependency among these variables are presented in Figure 1. The model depicts four measurement models, labeled as efficacy accounted for the variability in WFC efficacy and FWC-efficacy. First, work-family conflict-efficacy (WFC efficacy) which acts as a predictor or an independent variable comprises work-family conflict efficacy (WFC efficacy) and family-work

conflict efficacy (FWC efficacy) of work-family conflict and well-being. This type of personality may improve or increase one's well-being because it strongly affects a person's ability to do a task. Teachers' WFC efficacy should aim at reducing teachers' experiences with WFC aside from functioning as a personality booster. Thus, an individual's personality plays a role in the amount of work-family conflict that he or she experiences.

The second latent variable, religious coping illustrates the underlying factors for positive religious/spiritual coping (POS RC) and negative religious/spiritual coping (NEG RC). In order for teachers to cope with work-family conflict, they need to choose an effective coping style. In this study, religious coping as a second predictor of WFC and well-being may have significant relationships with both dependents. It is certainly reasonable to argue that teachers who manage their religious coping well would most likely have less WFC and a better well-being. In addition, the relationship between the two constructs namely WFC efficacy and religious coping would covary. In other words, the researcher believes that the constructs are correlated, but does not assume that one construct is dependent upon another. This relationship is depicted by a two-headed arrow connection as shown in Figure 1. In the current study, WFC efficacy and religious coping will be tested as predictors of WFC and well-being.

The third latent variable, WFC, represents the underlying factor for Work-interfering-with-family and Family-interfering-with-work. WFC occurs when participation in the work role and the family role is incompatible in some respect. Work-family conflict can arise from; 1) the time demands of one role that interfere with participation in the other role and; 2) the stress that

<https://assignbuster.com/study-on-stress-management-for-teachers-in-malaysia/>

originates in one role that spills over into the other role which, only detracts from the latter's quality of life. As a result, participation in one role is made more difficult by virtue of participation in the other role. Individuals who invest more time or more psychological involvement in their work rather than their family experience the highest levels of work-to-family conflict and life stress, which ultimately reduce their quality of life.

The fourth latent variable, well-being, accounts for the variability in General Health Questionnaire (GHQ) and Job-Family Dissatisfaction (JFD) which is hypothesized to represent participants' reported well-being. Thus, it is not what the situation offers but rather how we react to a situation that determines our well being. If work and family roles were imbalanced, conflict might occur which would eventually affect the well-being of a person. Effects will range from job-family dissatisfaction to health problems, which are viewed as psychological distress.

Work-Family Conflict Efficacy

H3

Well-being

(distress & job dissatisfaction

Work-family

Conflict

(wif, fiw) H2

H7 H6

H3

Religious

Coping

H5

Figure 1 The Hypothesized Model of Work-family Conflict and Well-Being

Note: Exogenous Construct: WFC efficacy; religious coping; WFC

Endogenous Construct: WFC; well-being

RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

In the hypothesized model, six hypotheses are tested to depict the relationships between work-family conflict and the three variables identified above. In the following discussion, each of these six hypotheses are identified and explained.

The Reciprocal Relationship between Work-Family Conflict Efficacy, Work-Family Conflict and Well-Being

Studies have shown that the personal resources that women bring with them into their roles explained more of the variance in reported strain symptoms than the role stressors alone (e. g. Amatea & Fong, 1991). Self-efficacy in a particular domain has been indirectly and directly linked to outcomes in that domain. For instance, Lent, Brown and Hackett (1994) suggested that self-efficacy promotes academic and vocational outcomes, such as interest,

choice and performance. The conservation of resources model proposes that individuals act to acquire and maintain a variety of resources, such as objects, energies, condition and personal characteristic. On the basis of these findings, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H2 Those with high work-family conflict efficacy will portray increased well-being (low distress and low dissatisfaction)

H3 The effects of work-family conflict efficacy on well-being are mediated by work-family conflict, such that those with high work-family conflict efficacy demonstrate less conflict which will leads to increased well-being (low distress and low dissatisfaction).

The Reciprocal Relationship between Religious Coping, Work-family Conflict and Well-Being

In recent years, a growing body of literature has explored the implications of religion and spirituality for various mental and physical health outcomes (Koenig 1994). Other findings have also indicated that various dimensions of religiousness and spirituality may enhance the subjective states of well-being (Ellison, 1991). A report by the Fetzer Institute (2003), stated that a few studies in the US show that the subjective beneficial effects of participating in religious services, prayer and Bible reading are primarily due to their role in strengthening religious belief and individuals who describe themselves as having a strong religious faith report being happier and more satisfied with their lives. Most recently, Lapierre and Allen (2006) had used conservation of resources model to study the different coping methods employed by individuals to avoid WFC. They found that some coping

methods are more useful than others to help individuals gain or conserve resources. Thus, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H4 Those with high religious coping show increased well-being (low distress and low dissatisfaction).

H5 The effects of religious coping on well-being are mediated by work-family conflict such that those with high religious coping portray less conflict which leads to increased well-being (low distress and low dissatisfaction)

The Reciprocal Relationship between Work-Family Conflict and Well-Being

Work-family conflict has been found to have a significant negative relationship with measured of psychological health rather than physical health (Mikkelsen & Burke, 2004). Noor (2006) presented some selected research findings on work, family and women's well-being. The result showed that women were more strongly affected by the changes in their lives compared to men because even when employed they are still primarily responsible for the home and family. Role theory and spillover theory are the underpinning theories to explain the connection between WFC and well-being. Thus, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H6 WFC negatively influences well-being.

The Reciprocal Relationship between Work-Family Conflict Efficacy and Religious Coping Covary

Judge, Erez and Bono (1998) suggested that self-efficacy has a strong influence on individuals, whether they adopt an optimistic or pessimistic

coping style (Seligman & Schulman, 1996). They suggested that those with high generalized self-efficacy believe in their ability to change bad situations. The type of coping strategy selected has been shown to be related to the experience of work-family strain and overall well-being. Researchers have also found that self-efficacy is linked to the effectiveness of coping (Anderson, 1977; Bandura, 1977). On the basis of these findings, the following hypothesis is proposed:

H7 WFC efficacy and religious coping significantly correlated.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This is a fundamental area of study for both researchers and practitioners, as more and more female teachers struggle having to take up with multiple roles in life being a wife, a parent and even a caretaker of elderly parents aside from her teaching profession. Teachers are the main doers in the process of forming a community and students are the products of teachers' educating efforts.

Due to the above basis, there are three important research areas that need focus namely; theory, methodology and practicality.

Firstly, from the theoretical viewpoint, less attention is devoted to examine how WFC and well-being are indirectly related to efficacy and RC. The studies by Frone (2003) called for the examination of personality dispositions as antecedents of WFC. The role of personality factors on women's well-being, on the other hand, is less well documented. Carlson (1999) found negative affectivity to be directly related to greater WIF conflict. Although many

studies on WFC involved nurses, managers, clericals, doctors, lawyers and <https://assignbuster.com/study-on-stress-management-for-teachers-in-malaysia/>

engineers there were not many studies related to work and family conflict in the teaching profession.

According to Kinicki et al.'s (1996) review, the basic proposition which states that environmental and personality variables influence the choice of coping strategies, has been generally supported by empirical research, but the relationships between coping strategies and outcomes are inconsistent. Research on coping should address both the effects of coping on appraisal and strain as well as vice versa (Harris, 1991). It is vital to note that this study focus on the relationships between religious coping and work-family conflict and well-being. Furthermore, knowing how women deal with the realities of their conflicts rather than how they feel about them seems particularly important. Therefore it is of great interest to get a deeper knowledge of the antecedents/predictors of the teachers' work-family conflict.

Secondly, is/from the methodological component/perspective. There are inconsistent findings regarding the relationship between WFC and well-being. Due to this reason, this study also investigates the direct and indirect relationships concurrently. Apart from that, this study also examines WFC efficacy as a predictor of WFC due to the inconclusive findings related to efficacy and stress. In the current study, the researcher examines work-family conflict efficacy that may play an important role as a predictor of WFC in increasing teachers' well-being. Unfortunately, not much is known about the relationships between WFC efficacy, religious coping, WFC and well-being in Malaysian studies. Thus, this study examines direct and indirect

relationships between WFC, WFC efficacy, religious coping and well-being. By <https://assignbuster.com/study-on-stress-management-for-teachers-in-malaysia/>

using Structural Equation Modeling, the direct and indirect relationships can be simultaneously tested. To achieve this purpose, the data are analyzed using Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA) and Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). Additionally, there is only few research on WFC among teachers in the Malaysian population utilizing SEM. The result of the study would substantiate understanding about the phenomenon of work-family conflict in teacher population with the use of SEM.

Thirdly, in practicality, it is important to study WFC and the psychological well-being of female school teachers. Studies has indicated that many teachers are incapable of juggling their professional and family roles effectively (Elbaz-Lubisch, 2002; Spencer, 1986). Teachers in Acker's study (1992) clearly thought that the combination roles of being a teacher and a mother were not at all convenient. Job satisfaction and teaching competence are important variables in regard to teachers' continuity in the profession. For instance, studies by Certo and Fox (2002) indicated that job satisfaction in teaching was associated with aspects such as workplace conditions, administrative control, and organizational culture. It also touched on how teachers felt about their own competencies like teaching accomplishments and their general feelings coming to work. When teacher satisfaction was examined by Scott and Dinham (2003), they found that it was influenced by student's achievement and personal efficacy. Hence, it may be plausible to argue that a teacher's well-being is influenced by job satisfaction and competence plus, reduced well-being associated with work may lead to stress that will in turn affect job performance.

This study hopes to contribute to the importance of the relationships between WFC, WFC efficacy, religious coping and well-being of female teachers. Work-family problems, if they are not effectively managed, will not only affect individuals and their families, but also adversely affect their employers and ultimately the society at large. Hence, the responsibility for developing and implementing effective ways to reduce work-family interference and increase development should be shared by organizations, individuals and their families, as well as policy-makers. This study may also assist the policy-makers and administrators to implement intervention strategies aimed at managing teachers' WFC, if possible reducing their workload.

Additionally, practitioners are interested in the extent to which various interventions like family-friendly policies and programs, and the supportiveness of the work-family culture would actually reduce employees' work-family role conflict. They are also interested in how this can have significant impact on a number of work, family and personal outcomes, as mentioned above. Therefore, future research should be aimed at examining the effectiveness of such interventions.

LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

First, limiting the generalizability of current findings, even though the sample represents the organization's population, they were female. Secondly, the disadvantage of using a survey method is that it influence the willingness of individuals to respond accurately. Finally, the present study is clearly limited by the cross-sectional nature of the research.

DELIMITATION OF THE STUDY

This study focused only on married female secondary school teachers in the District of Hulu Langat in Selangor. This sample size was limited to only those who were in one district in one state. The researcher controlled the influence of participants' marital status, number of children, working experience on WFC and level of institutions (secondary schools) that were expected to have high significant levels of conflict between work and family roles. The presence of children within the home has been identified as a factor that affects conflict. Regarding the influence children have on work and family conflict, research has suggested that FWC and WFC are exacerbated by the number of children living within the home (Kinnunen & Mauno, 1998; Voydanoff, 1988). This research also included in-depth open-ended interviews to further explore the mechanisms that explain teachers' WFC.

DEFINITION OF THE OPERATIONAL KEY TERMS

For the purpose of this study, the key terms or constructs under the study are operationally defined as follow, with some elaborations on the definitions.

Work-Family Conflict

Work-family conflict has been defined as a form of inter-role conflict in which pressures from work and family roles are incompatible (Greenhaus & Beutell, 1985). For instance, when one devotes extra time and energy into one role, the other role is compromised. This study defines work-family conflict according to Netemeyer et al., (1996, p. 401) as " a form of inter-role conflict

in which the general demands of, time devoted to and strain created by the job interfere with performing family-related responsibilities”.

Work-Family Conflict Efficacy

Work-family conflict efficacy is defined as “ an individual’s beliefs in her or his ability to manage work-family and family-work conflict” (Cinamon, 2003). In this study, work-family conflict efficacy refers to the perceptions of self-efficacy to manage work-family conflict and family-work conflict.

Self-efficacy was theoretically defined in this study as self-regulatory efficacy, which is a specific type of perceived self-efficacy. The given attainment in this study was ... Bandura (1997) defined a specific type of self-efficacy, self-regulatory efficacy, as the ability to “ guide and motivate oneself to get things done that one knows how to do. The issue is not whether one can do them occasionally but whether one has the efficacy to get oneself to do them regularly in the face of varied dissuading” (p. 43).

Religious Coping

Various definitions of coping have been proposed, including coping as a psychoanalytic process; as a personal trait, style or disposition; as a description of situationally specific strategies; and as a process. In this study, coping in the context of religious approach is used. Thus, religious coping is defined as dealing with life effectively within the search for significance towards the sacred (Pargament, 1997). Religious coping includes a positive and negative religious/spiritual coping factor that reflects benevolent religious involvement in the search for significance and a negative factor that reflects religious struggle in coping.

Well-being

Kathryn & Dianne (2009) argued that employee well-being consists of subjective well-being (life satisfaction and dispositional affect), workplace well-being (job satisfaction and work-related affect) and psychological well-being (self acceptance, positive relations with others, environmental mastery, autonomy, purpose in life and personal growth). In this study well-being refers to symptoms of psychological distress and job-family dissatisfaction.

Symptoms of psychological distress

Goldberg (1978) has identified symptoms of psychological distress through somatic and affective of distress.

Job-Family Dissatisfaction

Job-family dissatisfaction refers to a respondent's perception of negative spillover from his or her work to family (Small & Riley, 1990), for example the negative impact of a respondent's work demands or stressors on her marital and parental roles.

Mediator

Mediators are intervening variables, which could explain why relationships exist. Mediation exists when an exogenous construct indirectly influences an endogenous construct via a third variable or construct. That is, the effect of a third variable or construct (mediator) intervenes between two other related constructs. In this study, work-family conflict functions as a mediator.

SUMMARY

Chapter one is organized into nine sections. The first section presents the background of the study, followed by the statement of problem and purpose of the study. To achieve the purpose of the study, several research questions have been formulated and explained more on the conceptual framework part, a set of relationships (work-family conflict efficacy, religious coping, work-family conflict and well-being) in a path diagram is depicted. Sixth, on the basis of