

# Teachers' Workload and Stress Management in Gaborone Primary Schools, Botswana

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**Abstract:** The study investigated the perceptions of primary school teachers in Gaborone on their workload, workload-related stress and how they managed stress. The theoretical theories of the study were Apple's intensification thesis and also the professionalization theory. While the intensification thesis states that teachers' workload continues to increase due to various educational and governmental factors and reforms and that teachers hardly have time for personal, family or social lives, the professionalization theory emphasizes the need to raise the standards of the teaching profession through self and career development. The study involved five public and five private primary schools in Gaborone, Botswana. A total of 139 classroom teachers participated in filling the closed-ended and open-ended questionnaires. The data were analyzed through descriptive statistics of frequency counts and percentages which were converted into charts for easy interpretations and the research hypotheses were tested using t-tests and one-sample statistics of the SPSS 20.0 version. Participants' quantitative responses were supported with their actual written words to provide more quality. Findings show that the majority of the teachers experienced heavy workload and workload-related stress. The different ways the teachers managed the stress varied and included activities such as exercises, occasional socialization and periodic holidays. Some of the recommendations were that primary school teachers should be made to specialize in a limited number of subjects rather than teaching all subjects and that teachers' assistants and stress management programmes be made available in all primary schools in the country.

**Keywords:** primary school teachers, teachers' workload, teaching profession, workload-related stress.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Primary school teachers in Botswana are expected to teach all major subjects such as: English, Spelling, Reading, Handwriting, Composition Writing, Maths, Science, Cultural Studies, Arts etc. In addition to this, they are to engage in extra-curricular and non-teaching duties which could result to intensified workload and occupational stress. Teachers participate in a host of meetings; formal and informal, brief and lengthy. They plan their lessons and mark loads of pupils' books and test papers and keep records. Some of these activities take a lot of their time before and after school, during breaks and at home. They are expected to attend courses that can develop them professionally, they meet with parents, decorate class display boards, assess learning, materials, photocopy pupils' worksheets, organize class events, run assemblies etc (Acker, 1999).

According to Broadfoot and Osborn (1993) teaching lies at the heart of the educational enterprise. It is the point of delivery of the education system and the key to its success. Because of this, teaching is the focus for numerous research projects and the subject of constant debate. Primary school curriculum has always been broad; because this is where the foundations of learning; acquisition, development and implementation of knowledge, understanding, skills, attitudes and values are laid. Primary school teachers are charged with these responsibilities.

The National Curriculum established by the 1998 Education Reform Act (DES, 1988) prescribed a compulsory curriculum for all maintained schools in England and Wales. The new curriculum was to occupy most, if not all, of pupils' time and was to sit within the 'whole curriculum', an overarching vehicle responsible for the spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of pupils at the school and of society (Section 1 of the Act).

Primary school curriculum in Botswana may be said to have roots in Her Majesty's Inspectorate (HMI)'s definition of the curriculum which says that school curriculum consists of all those activities designed or encouraged within its organizational framework to promote the intellectual, personal, social and physical development of its pupils. It does not only include the formal programme of lessons, but also the 'informal' programme of so-called extracurricular activities as well as all those features which produce the school's 'ethos' (DES, 1988, p.11).

“The term curriculum is often used broadly to refer to the range of subjects taught” (Bartlett, Burton, & Peim, 2001, p.73). But from the definition of curriculum given by HMI, curriculum covers so much more than the series of subjects taught in school. The teacher does much more than imparting knowledge or guiding the construction of knowledge by the learners, as the case may be. But again, in trying to make education learner- centered; focusing on the educational needs of the learners, the primary curriculum is yet to consider the workload of the teacher. If the curriculum covers all areas for the whole education of the learners, what about the delegation of the responsibilities in terms of subjects to be taught and the other extracurricular and administrative duties? Are there effective stress management systems put in place to help teachers who experience stress as a result of their workload?

It is obvious that the education system has changed from what it used to be. Gone are the days when all that the teacher needed was the basic knowledge of the subjects, the new age demands sound and concrete knowledge. According to Kalin and Valencic (2007) “the role of the teacher in the modern school system is increasingly important and complex; a teacher needs a high level of professional knowledge and autonomous decision- making” (p.2). The curriculum has been expanded to accommodate new challenges, discoveries, needs of learners, learning activities and experiences that can contribute to the complete education of the individual. But much has been not been known about some division of labour in the primary schools to ensure the effectiveness of the teacher in terms of the increased workload.

The teaching profession has always been influenced by government and societal ever- changing policies. “Teachers are an easy target for politicians’ wishful if not manipulative thinking, placing them in the firing line for society’s ills, creating the myth that the nation’s prosperity can be regained simply by imposing reforms of the school curriculum, finance and teaching method” (Acker,1999, p.4). This creates pressure and stress for teachers.

Some research on teacher’s workload and stress management (Smith & Bourke, 1992; Moore, 2002; Chaplin, 2008) show that though not every teacher suffers stress as a result of excessive workload, there is concrete evidence that teaching is one of the most stressful jobs possible. Among the causes of stress found were heavy workload, pressure of teaching, number of working hours which usually exceeds the eight hours recommended, demands from managers, anxiety over school inspection, extra-curricular activities etc.

Hargreaves (1994) states that teaching is ever changing and teachers face challenges in this post modern age. For example in England and Wales policy makers tend to treat teachers like naughty children; in need of firm guidelines, strict requirement and a few sharp evaluative shocks to keep them up to the mark. Also in the US the tendency is to treat and train teachers more like recovering alcoholics; subjecting them to step-by- step programs of effective instruction or conflict management or professional growth in ways which make them overly dependent on pseudo-scientific expertise developed and imposed by others (Hargreaves, 1994, p.10).

However, in Africa, the teaching profession could be said to have been bureaucratized and de-politicized since independence. In as much as an education system cannot exist without some interventions and restrictions from the government, certain powers are still being given to teachers to make vital decisions concerning their profession. Teachers’ roles in the society have been changing over time. The professionalization thesis sheds more light on this view. Dove (1995) advocates that school teachers in developing countries should stand up to their role as political actors. They should be involved in everyday politics of the school and the society. Hence, their well being, in terms of workload and stress management deserve attention.

Teachers don’t merely deliver the curriculum; they develop and reinterpret it too. It is what teachers believe and what teachers do at the level of the classroom that ultimately shapes the kind of learning that young people get. In his book, Hargreaves (1994, p. 5) looks at how teachers have changed in recent years and assesses the changes they will face in the future. The book also examines how politicians and administrators want to change teachers along with the reforms they propose and the measures they take. In addition to economic regeneration, teachers in many lands are also expected to help rebuild national cultures and identities. All these may intensify teachers’ workload and workload-related stress.

### **Problem of the study**

According to Christopher (2012) the work and lives of teachers have always been subject to external influence as those who are nearing the end of their careers will attest. Also Goodale (2011) sates that there is a lack of understanding of what is involved in the work of elementary teachers, especially how they experience their work and organize their time. There is an increased workload that teachers may not be able to accomplish within the limited time they have at work. Some teachers resolve to working over time or taking work home and working over the weekend. This seems to result in stress.

Many teachers complain of stress as a result of their workload; this is an educational problem that needs to be addressed. As we know, primary school teachers are not just givers of knowledge, but they have to manage the classroom. They guide, encourage, motivate, discipline, enable and support their students every hour of the day. They have to manage learning and behaviour disorder of their students. The workload may get heavier when they have to combine extra-curricular activities such as sports and non-teaching tasks such as meetings, conferences with parents, planning and preparing lessons and teaching resources, scheming the work to be done, writing records of work, marking, and setting examinations / tests/quizzes/homework and so on.

Most teachers find it hard to wind down, relax and recuperate. There is hardly enough preparation time from one lesson to another. There are many primary school teachers who are not coping well with their workload. Many teachers do not have proper support systems and cooperation from their colleagues, HODs, head teachers, deputy head teachers and the government. Counseling services or stress management programmes for teachers are not available in most primary schools in Botswana. Also many teachers do not enjoy 'time outs' for winding down, enough break time for socializing or refreshing because they are always busy. Break time in the morning is usually 30 minutes and many teachers spend the time marking or preparing for the next lesson. Also many teachers do not enjoy their social and family life because of the extra workload they carry home almost daily.

### **Purpose of the study**

One of the purposes of this research paper is to find out the perceptions of primary school teachers, on their workload. Another purpose is to find out if the teachers experience stress from their workload and to what extent.

This study also aims to examine how teachers manage work-related stress and to suggest possible/ alternative ways, especially to those who need help to manage stress. And lastly to find out if there are effective, formal stress management programmes in primary schools in Gaborone.

The findings are aimed to benefit all stakeholders who are concerned about the total welfare of the nation builders (teachers) thereby giving rise to solutions such as reducing teachers' workload (for example allocating administrative and extracurricular duties to other staff), providing or strengthening support systems including counseling services and upgrading educational technology to make work less stressful for primary school teachers.

### **Research Questions/ Hypotheses**

This study is guided by an overarching question of how primary school teachers in Botswana deal with stress caused by intensified workload. To help focus on this question, the following sub-questions will be answered through testing related hypotheses:

- In their perceptions to what extent do primary school teachers in Gaborone experience a heavy workload?
- To what extent do the teachers feel stressed from their workload?
- How do the teachers manage stress from workload?
- Are there effective stress management programs in primary schools in Gaborone?

### **Research Hypotheses**

- Primary school teachers in Gaborone experience a significantly heavy workload.
- Primary school teachers in Gaborone feel significant stress from their workload.
- In the perception of primary school teachers in Gaborone, each of the following strategies is significant in the management of workload-related stress:

-Involvement in hobbies

-Involvement in physical exercises

-Involvement in socialization endeavour

- Consultation of professionals

-Taking breaks and holidays

- There are significant effective formal stress management programs in primary schools in Gaborone.

## 2. METHODOLOGY

The survey inferential study is exploratory in nature. A face validated Likert type questionnaire having four options with a Cronbach alpha reliability of 0.853 was administered on 139 classroom teachers who teach in ten randomly selected public and private primary schools Gaborone, Botswana. The questionnaire was designed to find out the perceptions of the teachers on their workload and workload-related stress and to see if there were formal stress management programmes in place in their schools. The questionnaire consisted of five sections; A,B,C,D,E. Section A consisted of questions on personal data (demographic variables) such as gender, standard taught, years of teaching experience, number of hours spent in class, number of pupils in class, number of subjects taught and extracurricular activities. Section B consisted of items on the amount of teachers' workload. Section C measured levels of existing workload-related stress. Section D was about teachers' stress management. Section E was an open space where respondents were instructed to write their general opinions on their workload and other ways of managing work-related stress. Sections B, C and D consisted of 29 items and were four- point Likert scale (1. Strongly Disagree, 2. Disagree, 3 Agree and 4. Strongly Agree). The instrument was validated by two research supervisors and pilot tested among fifteen primary school teachers who were not part of the main study.

## 3. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION OF RESULTS

Being a mixed method research, the research questions were answered through descriptive statistics of frequency counts and percentages which were converted into charts and figures. The hypotheses were tested using t-tests and one-sample statistics of the SPSS 20.0 version. However, respondents' actual words were also analyzed thematically based on the research questions.

### *Common Respondents' Comments on Workload, Workload-related Stress and Stress Management*

Table 1 shows different opinions and comments of respondents on their workload, stress and stress management. These were used to support the quantitative responses.

**Table 1: Respondents' Written Comments and Opinions on Workload and Stress**

Teachers' comments	frequency
Working at home deprives me of family/social time.	67
Teachers' workload should be reduced.	58
Sometimes I stay after school hours to mark.	58
Specialization of subjects should be done.	32
My workload is too stressful.	32
Planning and working ahead reduce the stress.	28
Primary school curriculum is too broad.	27
There is need for teachers' assistants.	27
I unwind by reading books and being with friends.	22
There is a lot to do within a short period of time.	21
I do not feel stressed from teaching.	20
There is too much marking involved.	16
There are usually new demands and policies.	15
Class size should be less than 30.	15
My workload is fine with me.	13
There should be gyms or other exercises facilities in schools.	10

### *Descriptive Analysis based on the Research Questions*

#### **Research Question 1**

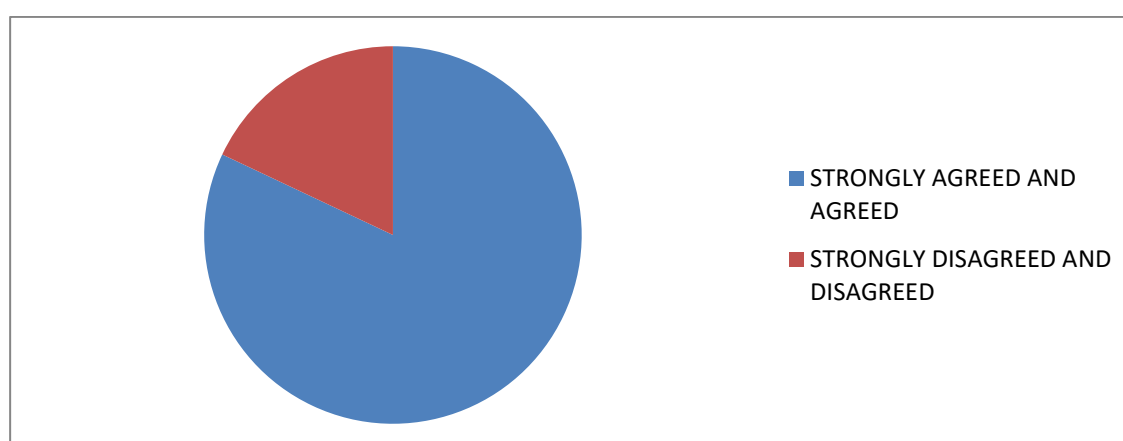
*To what extent do primary school teachers in Gaborone experience heavy workload?*

Frequency counts and percentages of the participants' responses to the Likert scale of strongly agree, agree, strongly disagree and disagree were manually analyzed as shown on Table 9 and the Figure 8. Item one tested teachers' perceptions on their workload, 63 teachers (45%) strongly agreed that their workload was heavy. Fifty-one teachers (37%) agreed. Only one teacher (0.7%) strongly disagreed to the statement while 24 teachers (17%) disagreed. Which made a total of 25 teachers (18%) whereas, the combination of those who strongly agreed and those agreed amounts to 114 (82%). This indicates that majority of the teachers experience heavy workload. Also from the majority of the comments written by the teachers, the findings confirm previous studies that even though not all teachers experience heavy workload, majority do.

Also item 2 on the table tests teachers' perceptions on the number of tasks they do at work. Forty-eight teachers (35%) indicated that they strongly agreed that the number of tasks they did at work was too much. Fifty-eight teachers (42%) agreed, 3 teachers (2%) strongly disagreed and thirty teachers (22%) disagreed. This is another indication that most teachers perceive their workload as being heavy due to the different tasks they are required to do. Furthermore other indicators of heavy workload were also used to find answers to the research question; such as numbers of working hours exceeding eight hours. Thirty-four teachers (24%) strongly agreed that they work more than eight hours in a day. Thirty teachers (24%) agreed, eight (6%) strongly disagreed and twenty-five teachers (18%) disagreed.

**Table 2: Teachers' Perceptions on their Workload**

Questionnaire Items	SA	%	A	%	SD	%	D	%
My workload is heavy.	63	(45.3)	51	(36.6)	1	(0.7)	24	(17.2)
The number of tasks I do at work is too much.	48	(34.5)	58	(41.7)	3	(2.2)	30	(21.5)
I am not involved in non-teaching duties.	3	(2.2)	15	(32.3)	40	(28.8)	55	(39.6)
I work in school more than eight hours in a day.	34	(24.4)	30	(21.5)	8	(5.8)	25	(18.1)
I usually take work home or work during the weekends.	57	(41.0)	60	(43.1)	10	(7.2)	12	(8.6)
I am assigned a lot of extra-curricular activities.	12	(8.6)	29	(20.9)	21	(15.1)	77	(55.4)
I teach many major subjects.	54	(38.8)	45	(32.3)	10	(7.2)	30	(21.6)
I have more than 30 pupils in my class.	45	(32.3)	15	(10.8)	21	(15.1)	58	(41.7)
My workload is too demanding.	64	(46.0)	46	(33.0)	6	(4.3)	23	(16.6)



**Figure 1: Teachers' Responses to Heavy Workload**

Fifty-seven teachers (41%) strongly agreed that they usually took work home. Sixty teachers (43%) agreed, ten teachers (7%) strongly disagreed and 12 teachers (9%) disagreed. On the statement which says “I teach many major subjects”, fifty-four teachers (39%) strongly agreed while 45 teachers (32%) agreed. 10 teachers (7%) strongly disagreed while 30 teachers (22%) disagreed.

Also 64 primary school classroom teachers (46%) strongly agreed that their workload was too demanding while 46 teachers (33%) agreed. Six teachers (4%) strongly disagreed while 23 teachers (17%) disagreed.

From all the data analyzed and written words of some teachers, Research Question 1 has been answered; many primary school teachers in Gaborone experience heavy workload but not to a large extent as many said even though the workload is heavy and they are stressed they try to cope and manage fairly well.

### Research Question 2

*Do primary school teachers in Gaborone feel stressed from their workload?*

Research Question 2 was also found through manual descriptive statistics of frequency counts and percentages as shown on Table 10 and Figure 9. There were ten items that measured workload-stress level of the participants. Some of the teachers indicated that they experienced stress from their workload. Out of the 139 teachers, 39 teachers (28%) strongly agreed to the first statement that “I usually feel stressed at work.” Forty-nine teachers (35%) agreed, seven teachers (5%) strongly disagreed and 44 (32%) disagreed. The total number of those who strongly agreed and those who agreed to the statement equals 88 (63%) which is more than the addition of those who strongly disagreed and disagreed; fifty-one teachers (37%). From this analysis we can say that the number of teachers who feel stressed from their workload is more than those who do not.

Also from a similar statement which says “I feel a lot of pressure from my workload” 26 teachers (19%) strongly agreed, 61(44%) agreed, 15teachers (11%) strongly disagreed while 37 (27%) disagreed. The total number of teachers who strongly agreed and agreed to the statement equals to 87 (63%) as compared to those who strongly disagreed and disagreed; 52 (37%). This also indicates that more teachers feel stressed from their workload.

The statement which tests teachers’ general perception on their workload and stress reads “My workload does not stress me up.” Ten teachers (7%) strongly agreed, 31 teachers (22%) agreed, 41 teachers (30%) strongly disagreed while 57 (41%) disagreed. The total number of teachers who strongly disagreed and disagreed to this statement equals to 98 (71%) as compared to those who strongly agreed and agreed; 41 teachers (29%). From the analysis and written words of some teachers, research question 2 has been answered; many teachers feel stressed from their workload.

**Table 3: Teachers’ Responses to Workload-related Stress**

Questionnaire Items	SA	%	A	%	SD	%	D	%
I usually feel stressed at work.	39	(28.0)	49	(35.2)	7	(5.0)	44	(31.7)
I feel physically exhausted at the end of every work day.	49	(35.2)	60	(43.2)	5	(3.6)	25	(18.1)
I usually feel tensed with the amount of duties I'm required to do daily.	27	(19.4)	45	(32.4)	11	(7.9)	56	(40.3)
I do not usually feel imitable towards my workload.	10	(7.2)	57	(41.0)	22	(15.8)	50	(35.9)
I usually feel nervous when I get the schedules for my duties per term.	17	(12.2)	35	(25.2)	29	(20.8)	58	(41.7)
I feel a lot of pressure from workload.	26	(18.8)	61	(43.9)	15	(10.8)	37	(26.6)
Teaching all the major subjects is not stressful for me.	42	(30.2)	18	(12.9)	40	(28.8)	39	(28.1)
I feel stressed combining teaching duties with non-teaching duties.	37	(26.6)	58	(41.7)	15	(10.8)	29	(20.9)
My workload does not stress me up.	10	(7.2)	31	(22.3)	41	(29.5)	57	(41.0)
I do not have any symptoms of stress from my workload.	14	(10.1)	35	(25.2)	38	(27.3)	52	(37.4)

**Research Question 3**

*How do primary school teachers in Gaborone manage workload-related stress?*

In addition to one-sample tests to test the hypotheses, frequency counts and percentages of the stress management strategies used by participants were also done. Table 11 and Figure 10 show the different ways that stress can be managed which were operationalized into statements and teachers were asked to strongly agree, agree, strongly disagree or agree to, as well as make comments or reasons from their responses.

Statement 1 was to find out if the teachers had or did hobbies that helped them manage work related stress. Twenty-four teachers (17%) strongly agreed, 61 (44%) agreed, 28 teachers (20%) strongly disagreed while 26 (19%) disagreed. The total number of teachers who strongly agreed and agreed to statement one was 85 (61%). This is more than the total number of teachers who either strongly disagreed or disagreed to the statement which was equal to 54 (39%). Also from the comments of the teachers it shows that many teachers squeezed time to do hobbies that helped them manage stress from workload. Some teachers who indicated they did not do hobbies said they hardly had time for hobbies and often felt either too tired or too lazy to do so.

**Table 4: Teachers’ Responses on Stress Management Strategies**

Questionnaire Items	SA	%	A	%	SD	%	D	%
I do hobbies that help me manage my work-related stress.	24	(17.2)	61	(43.9)	28	(20.1)	26	(18.7)
I do my hobbies at least 3x a week.	18	(12.9)	46	(33.1)	36	(25.9)	39	(28.1)
I exercise daily to reduce stress.	22	(15.6)	40	(28.8)	34	(24.5)	43	(30.9)
I go to a gym at least once a week to relieve myself from stress.	11	(7.9)	17	(12.2)	70	(50.3)	41	(29.5)
I socialize every weekend.	36	(25.9)	48	(34.5)	29	(20.9)	26	(18.7)
I’m aware of managing stress tips.	40	(28.8)	76	(54.7)	13	(9.4)	10	(7.2)
I consult professionals who help me to manage stress.	9	(6.5)	23	(16.5)	67	(48.2)	40	(28.8)
My colleagues share with me how they manage stress.	22	(15.8)	61	(43.9)	32	(23.0)	24	(17.3)
Periodic breaks/holidays help me relax when I’m stressed.	16	(11.5)	56	(40.3)	49	(35.2)	18	(12.9)

Teachers were asked about exercising daily to reduce stress. Twenty-two teachers (16%) strongly agreed, 40 teachers (29%) agreed, 34 (25%) strongly disagreed while 43 (31%) disagreed. The total number of teachers who did not exercise daily surpasses that of those who indicated they did. While 77 teachers (55%) indicated exercised daily, 62 teachers (45%) indicated otherwise. Even though the difference is not much, this shows that most teachers do not exercise daily.

On another statement about managing stress which was “I go to a gym at least once a week to relieve myself from work-related stress” 11 teachers (8%) strongly agreed, 17 teachers (12%) agreed, 70 teachers (50%) strongly disagreed while 41 (30%) disagreed. Obviously not many teachers used the gym to exercise. Their reasons varied from not having money to go to the gym, not having time or not thinking it is necessary.

Still on managing stress, another way that was researched on was socialization. On the statement “I socialize every weekend to wind down from stress during the week.” Thirty-six teachers (26%) strongly agreed, 48 teachers (35%) agreed, 29 teachers (21%) strongly disagreed while 26 teachers (19%) disagreed. The total number of teachers who indicated that they socialized every weekend to manage stress was 84 (60%) as compared to those who did not; 55 teachers (40%). This shows that most teachers managed work related stress by meeting with friends, going out to eat with family and friends, attending functions etc over the weekend which helped them to ‘wind’ down from the stress throughout the week.

One of the purposes of the research was to help teachers who experience stress from their workload with information or tips that could make them cope. A statement was generated to find out if teachers were aware of information or tips that could make them manage stress. Forty teachers (29%) strongly agreed, 76 teachers (55%) agreed, 13 teachers (9%) strongly disagreed while 10 (7%) disagreed. This indicates that majority of the teachers surveyed were aware of information that helped them manage stress. Those who were not aware need to be sensitized accordingly.

To find out if teachers experienced stress to a large extent that needed professionals to help, a statement was generated; “I consult professionals who help me to manage stress.” Nine teachers (7%) strongly agreed, 23 teachers (17%) agreed, 67 teachers (48%) strongly disagreed while 40 teachers (29%) disagreed. The total number of teachers who indicated they did not consult professionals to manage stress was 107 (77%) as compared to the total of those who said they consulted professionals; 32 (23%). This means majority of the teachers who experienced stress managed on their own without professional help.

They say ‘Problems shared is problems half solved’. To find out if teachers help one another to manage stress, another statement was generated; “My colleagues share with me how they manage stress.” 22 teachers (16%) strongly agreed, 61 teachers (44%) agreed, 32 teachers (23%) strongly disagreed and 24 teachers (17%) disagreed. The total number of teachers who indicated that their colleagues shared managing stress tips with them was 83 (60%) while the total number who disagreed to the statement was 56 (40%).

This indicates that even though there are more teachers who agreed that their colleagues shared information or tips on how to manage stress, there is quite a large number of teachers who disagree.

Lastly on finding out how primary school classroom teachers manage work related stress, on the statement “Periodic breaks and holidays help me to relax when I’m stressed.” Sixteen teachers (12%) strongly agreed, 56 teachers (40%) agreed, 49 teachers (35%) strongly disagree while 18 teachers (13%) disagreed. The total number of teachers who indicated that periodic breaks and holidays helped them to relax was 72 (52%) while the total number of teachers who indicated otherwise was 67 (48%).

This indicates that despite the fact that teachers have periodic breaks and holidays, most of them do not enjoy the benefits of such. From their written comments, the teachers said that they always had work to do during such times. This agree with the intensification thesis that teachers’ times are being deprived of them to cater for excessive workloads due to educational reforms and other external factors.

In summary, Research Question 3 has been answered; primary school teachers manage stress through hobbies, socialization, going to gyms, consulting professionals, sharing ideas with one another and through periodic breaks and holidays. However, the degree or extent at which they do these vary and are particular to individual teachers.

**Research Question 4:**

*Are there effective formal stress management programs in primary schools in Gaborone?*

From the responses of the teachers as shown on Table 12 and Figure 11, there are clearly no formal stress management programs in most primary schools in Gaborone. Only 11 teachers (8%) strongly agreed that there were formal stress management programs in their schools, ten teachers (7%) agreed, 76 teachers (55%) strongly disagreed while 42 teachers (30%) disagreed. This indicates that teachers are being left on their own to manage their workload and stress.

By effective and formal stress management programs the researcher meant programs such as counseling services for teachers, in services and workshops on how to manage stress, bringing in professionals to assist teachers who are stressed or providing gyms for teachers. All these seem to be lacking in our primary schools.

**Table 5: Responses on Availability of Formal Stress Management Programs in Primary Schools**

Questionnaire Item	SA	%	A	%	SD	%	D	%
There are formal effective stress management programs in my place of work.	11	(7.9)	10	(7.2)	76	(54.7)	42	(30.2)



**Data Analysis based on the Research Hypotheses**

Null Hypothesis 1

*Primary school teachers in Gaborone do not experience a significant heavy workload.*

To test the hypothesis that primary school teachers in Gaborone do not experience a significant high level of stress, a t-test statistics and one-test statistics were done. The total number of number of 119 teachers responded to the ten items measuring their level of workload. Table 15 shows the result of the analysis of their responses. The observed mean of 26.67(SD = 4.91) is significantly ( $p < .05$ ) greater than 2.5 which is the population mean. This indicates that the respondents experience a significant high level of workload.

**Table 6: Population t-Test of Teachers’ Perception of their Level of Workload**

Variable	$\mu$	Mean	Std Dev.	Mean Diff.	SE	t	df	Sig. (2 tailed)
Level of Workload	25.0	26.66	4.91	4.16	0.45	9.24	118	.000

Null Hypothesis II

*Primary school teachers in Gaborone do not feel significant stress from their workload.*

To test the hypothesis that primary school teachers do not experience a significant high level of stress, a t-test analysis was done. The results are shown on Table 14. The mean = 27.2,  $p < .05$  while standard deviation = 6.03,  $p < .05$ , both were greater than .05 which indicates that 101 teachers who responded to the 10 items on their perceptions on workload related stress experience a significant high level of stress. Therefore the null hypothesis was rejected.

**Table 7: Population t-Test of Teachers’ Perceptions on their Level of Workload-related Stress**

Variable	$\mu$	Mean	Std Dev.	Mean Diff.	SE	t	df	Sig. (2 tailed)
Level of stress	25.0	27.22	6.03	0.60	0.45	3.70	100	.000

Null Hypothesis III

*In the perception of primary school teachers in Gaborone, each of the following strategies is not significant in the management of workload-related stress:*

- Involvement in hobbies
- Involvement in physical exercises
- Involvement in socialization endeavour
- Awareness of information on stress management
- Consultation of professionals
- Taking breaks and holidays

To test the hypothesis, one-sample statistics was done. Table 15 shows the result. Some activities are significant while some are not. For example, the observed mean 5.02 on the two items on ‘Involvement in hobbies’ (SD 1.80) is not significantly ( $p < .05$ ) greater than 5.0 which is the population mean. The observed mean 4.15 on the two items on ‘Physical exercises’ (SD 1.74) is also not significantly ( $p < .05$ ) greater than 5.0 which is the population mean.

Meanwhile, the observed mean 2.71 (SD 1.07) on one item on ‘Socialization’ is significantly ( $p < .05$ ) greater than 2.50 which is the population mean. The observed mean 1.80 on one item ‘Consulting professionals’ (SD 0.93) is not significantly ( $p < .05$ ) greater than 2.50 which is the population mean. ‘Taking breaks and holidays’ has an observed mean of 3.03 (SD 1.04) and is significantly ( $p < .05$ ) greater than 2.50 which is the population mean. And finally, ‘Awareness of stress management information’ has an observed mean of 3.05 (SD 0.85) and is significantly ( $p < .05$ ) greater than 2.50 which is the population mean. This indicates that each of the stress management activities researched for is a significantly non-stress management strategy. They were being carried out at significant different levels by the participants.

**Table 8: Population One-Sample Test of Teachers’ Stress Management Activities**

Variable	$\mu$	Mean	Std Dev.	Mean Diff.	SE	t	df	Sig. (2 tailed)
<b>Involvement</b>								
in hobbies	5.0	5.02	1.80	0.41	0.16	0.15	126	.882
<b>Physical</b>								
Exercises	5.0	4.15	1.74	0.34	0.16	-5.40	121	.000
Socialization	2.5	2.71	1.07	0.21	0.09	2.31	132	.022
<b>Consulting</b>								
Professionals	2.5	1.80	0.93	-6.95	0.08	-8.60	132	.000
<b>Taking breaks and holidays</b>								
	2.5	3.03	1.04	0.53	0.09	5.85	131	.000
<b>Awareness of Stress mgt. information</b>								
	2.5	3.05	0.85	0.55	0.07	7.31	129	.000

Null Hypothesis IV

*There are no significant stress management programs in primary schools in Gaborone.*

To test the null hypothesis that there are no significant effective formal stress management programmes in primary schools in Gaborone, a simple one-sample test was conducted as shown on Table 16. The observed mean of 1.65 (SD = 0.92) is significantly ( $p < .05$ ) less than 2.50 which is the population mean, also  $t = -10.5$  ( $p < .05$ ). This indicates a significant absence of effective formal stress management programs in primary schools in Gaborone.

**Table 9: Population t-Test of Teacher’s Perception on the Availability of Formal Effective Stress Management Programs in their Schools**

Variable	$\mu$	Mean	Std Dev.	Mean Diff.	SE	t	df	Sig. (2 tailed)
<b>Availability of formal Stress Mgt. programs</b>	2.50	1.65	0.92	-.85	0.08	-10.49	127	.00

#### 4. CONCLUSION

The findings support some prior studies and literature on teachers’ workload and stress management that even though not all teachers experience stress from their workload, a large number of them do. Also teachers have common ways of managing stress which vary from doing hobbies, exercising, socializing at weekends, visiting the gyms, consulting professionals, reading information on how to manage stress, getting ideas from their colleagues as well as taking breaks

and holidays. However, the findings show that most primary schools do not have formally put in place and effective stress management programs. Therefore, the following, among others are recommended:

1. Primary school teachers' workload should be reduced. To do this, teachers should be allowed to specialize on a limited number of subjects rather than teaching all subjects. It should start from the teachers' training college then school managers should implement this in schools.
2. School administrators should provide teachers' assistants or aides should for all classroom teachers.
3. Professionalism of teaching should be encouraged but care must be taken to avoid intensification. In other words, teachers should be encouraged to further their studies, upgrade their professional standards but in the process of doing so should not be exposed to pressures and their personal time should not be deprived of them.
4. Continuous and effective stress management programs should be put in place in all primary schools in Botswana. In-services, workshops and conferences on how to manage stress should be facilitated by school administrators and the government.

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