

Stress among Preschool Teachers During the Process of Teaching and Learning 学前教育在教学过程中面对的压力

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Abstract: The aim of this study is to identify the factors of stress affecting teachers during the teaching and learning process. This study was conducted by using questionnaire survey method. A total of 75 preschool teachers in Segamat district, Johor were selected as respondents to answer the questionnaire. The data obtained was analyzed by using SPSS. The results showed that the domain of teaching pedagogies and student's behaviour are the dominant factors that lead to the condition of stress among the teachers, to which is found to be in a moderate level. The findings also showed that there was a significant difference between the marital status of the respective teachers' and the level of stress that they faced. Therefore, the manager of preschools should handle the stress of her/his teachers so that it will not affect their teaching performance.

Keywords: preschool, stress, teacher, teaching and learning

摘 要: 本研究的目的是鉴定在教学过程中影响教师压力的因素。本研究采用问卷调查方法进行。在柔佛昔加末地区共75名学前教育教师被选为回答调查问卷的受访者。此研究使用SPSS分析获得的数据。研究结果显示,教学法和学生行为是导致教师压力状况的主导因素,而教师压力程度处于中等水平。调查结果也显示,教师的婚姻状况与他们所面对的压力程度之间存在显著差异。因此,学前教育的管理人应妥善处理老师们的压力,以免影响他们的教学表现。

关键词: 学前教育, 压力, 教师, 教学和学习

1. Introduction

Early childhood education became a hot topic in Malaysia. The improvement in the quality of early childhood education and the quality of teachers is the main focus of the government.

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Nowadays, early childhood education is an important education for a child. This is due to most of the parents do not involve in teaching their children. With regards on this, Age of Learning, an education technology and resource company, conducted an online survey of over 1,000 parents (with children ages two to 12) and 1,000 teachers (in preschool to 6th-grade classrooms) to get a better understanding of children's reading in the U.S. What they found was a dim outlook on young American readers.

With the existence of preschools, children may enhance their potential in physical, emotional, spiritual, intellectual and social aspects of development. Early childhood education becomes a platform that prepares children to face forth coming challenges before going to primary school. With this, children are able to recognize basic learning as the first step in valuable assets of education.

2. Background of Study

Early childhood education is crucial in determining the direction of a child's life for a brighter futures. Nowadays, our country is moving towards the Industrial Revolution 4.0 where educators are to equip themselves with Information and Communication Technology (ICT) knowledge, in line with the rapid development of the global economy and industry. Teachers need to improve their knowledge and skills as well as to ensure the teaching pedagogy is in line with the development of the 21st century.

In today's modern and technological era, our society strives to advance in life in line with the state's aspiration through the transformation of national education under the National Transformation 2050 (TN50). Early childhood education is a priority aspect in today's education. There were calls for more relevant syllabus, access to quality education and educating systems that provide lifelong learning by 2050.

According to the United Nations Development Report (UNDP) (2018), Malaysia's 2017 Human Development Index (HDI) of 0.802 is below the average of 0.894 for countries in the very high human development group and above the average of 0.733 for countries in East Asia and the Pacific. Therefore, government wants Malaysia listed among the top 20 of the HDI in terms of education by the United Nations. To achieve this, the pilot school will encourage critical thinking and instill shared values among the pupils through a simplified, integrated curriculum and new holistic assessment methods.

The teacher education program aims to produce teachers who are noble in character, progressive and scientific in outlook, committed to uphold the aspirations of the nation, ensuring the development of the individual and the preservation of a united, democratic, progressive and disciplined society, parallel with the National Philosophy of Education (Nurkhamimi Zainuddin,

2017). Teachers are social change agents who change the mindset, attitude and behavior of society towards a better life, more dignified and more independent. In addition, the teacher is the most influential component towards the creation of quality education processes and outcomes.

In the meantime, early childhood education becomes a major focus in Malaysia today to educate potential and balanced children in the future. Policy formulation and education system will enhance the role of early childhood educators to achieve new educational policy objectives.

3. Statement of Problem

Meeting the challenges of global education, preschool education continues to be attentive to the Ministry of Education through a sub-National Key Result Area (NKRA). Indirectly, it indicates that early childhood education is important in ensuring the survival of future generations of the nation. In National Preschool Standard Curriculum (NPSC revision 2017), the preschool curriculum focuses on delivering students who have the ability to communicate and socialize with confidence. In addition, this curriculum aspires to students who are able to face challenges, solve problems, desire to learn and prepare for further learning. The implementation of the NPSC (revision 2017) is in line with the efforts for early childhood education and in line with the Malaysia Education Blueprint 2013-2025.

Obviously, the determination of syllabus and high expectations on early childhood education and the quality of teaching and learning will give stress or pressure to preschool and education teachers. Therefore, preschool teachers should provide systematic and creative teaching methods in order to provide an overall-balanced development in children in terms of physical, emotional, spiritual, intellectual and social. In the meantime, the effectiveness of the education curriculum depends on the understanding and competence of the teachers, which is its implementation in school (Rosmah Abd. Ghani & Mariani Md Nor, 2013).

However, the Special Examination Report Preschool Education Quality Assurance Report, Ministry of Education in year 2012, 2013, and 2014 found that there are preschool teachers who do not implement the curriculum as intended by the NPSC. After five years of NPSC 2010 implementation, there are still some teachers who fail to deliver the contents of the teaching and pedagogy (Chee, Mariani, Othman & Nor Mashitah, 2017). This finding indirectly affects the aspirations of MOE to ensure that the curriculum implemented in preschools will be able to develop the potential of children holistically.

On the other hand, the rapid development and change that took place did not put the teacher's task in solely teaching, but had begun to carry out clerical tasks for a preschool organization besides carrying out daily tasks as co-curriculum teachers and so on. The National Union of Teaching Profession Malaysia (NUTP) study found that many teachers in Malaysia are now

suffering from breast cancer, hypertension, heart disease, and even psychiatric treatment due to increased stress and burden. Teachers who teach in major cities such as Kuala Lumpur and in the interior are the ones that are heavily attacked by stress to the extent that some need to get psychiatric treatment (NUTP, 2010). The main factor that causes stress is the pressure from parents and students who often threaten them with litigation until some parents want to sue and bring the teacher's offense to court.

Besides that, high expectations by the government and the community towards early childhood educators if not effectively addressed will give stress to public and private preschool teachers. In addition, various issues have arisen among preschool teachers who have pressured preschool teachers. Preschool teachers are under immense pressure to ensure that their pupils are prepared for future success in school. These pressures have been compounded by the reality that preschool professionals are being underappreciated by society such as lack of mobility within the career track and disparities in pay between preschool teachers and teachers in grades K-12 (National Survey of Early Care and Education, 2013, USDH, 2016; Whitebook, Philips, & Howes, 2014). The high professional demands and low income make preschool teachers particularly vulnerable to stress (Gooze, 2014).

According to Nuraimi Thursday & Fariza Khalid (2017), teachers' skills, lack of equipment, computer maintenance constraints and time constraints are the limitations in the use of information technology in teaching and learning at preschool. This shows that the skill of teachers in handling the classroom creatively is very important in achieving learning objectives. Lack of skills, materials and technology equipment will make it easy for kids to lose focus and get bored easily. The factors of this will increase teachers' stress in teaching and learning.

For preschool teachers, serving children's desires from different backgrounds, socioeconomics and culture requires different approaches. Sincere, patient and knowledgeable intentions allow a teacher to hold on to preschool. According to UNESCO (2001), preschool teachers are responsible for the feelings and needs of children. Therefore, teachers' emotion must be always in stable and controlled situation.

However, the number of hours teachers work officially at school is around 28 hours a week even though the real time teacher involve with school work is about 44 hours while 16 periods are used to handle the school works. Thus, preschool teachers are burdened with overloaded work without proper resting time. Study by Droogenbroeck, Spruyt and Vanroelen (2014) showed the higher burden of the teacher, the higher pressure of the teacher receives, and leads to their burn-out at work.

In addition to the heavy burden of work, the workplace climate also has a close relationship with the cause of stress among the preschool teachers (Abdul Said Ambotang, Muhamad Hisyam Mohd Hashim, n.d.). The healthy working climate will create a conducive atmosphere and vice

versa the work climate is unhealthy, it will have a negative impact on the workers, which the working environment is one of the main factors of excessive stress bear by teachers compared to working stress.

Study done by Tajulashikin Jumahat, Fazura Mohd Noor and Mohd Burhan Ibrahim (2013) aimed to identify the perceived level of stress based on demographic factors (gender, age, and teaching experience) and also to determine the contributing factors of stress among teachers who are currently teaching at Missionary Primary Schools in Kuala Lumpur. There are seven teacher's stress sources that were included in this study which comprise workload, pupils' attitude, time constraint, relationships with colleagues, relationships with parents, appreciation and support, and lack of resources.

Moreover, Shernoff, Mehta, Atkins, Torf and Spencer (2011) conducted a qualitative study of the sources and impact of stress among urban teachers. They interviewed sample of K-4 urban teachers (N=14) from three high-poverty schools in a large, Midwestern city. Results from consensual qualitative research suggested that at least one-half of the cases identified lack of resources, excessive workload, school-level disorganization, managing behavior problems, and accountability policies as significant sources of stress.

Liu and Onwuegbuzie (2012) explored the sources of teacher stress in China and the possible reasons for Chinese teachers' turnover intention. The data were collected in Jilin Province of China, and 510 teachers participated in the survey. Qualitative data showed that the possible reasons for the Chinese teachers' turnover intention found from this study included a high level of stress, low salary, inadequate breaks and holidays, heavy workload, and student behavior.

Furthermore, Shoaga, Bukki and Obiyomi (2015) examined Job Burnout, Job stress, and Coping strategies among early childhood education teachers in Ijebu-North Local Government Area of Ogun State. 150 teachers were randomly selected to participate in the study. Instruments used in the study were Job Burnout Scale (JBS), Job Stress Scale (JSS) and Coping Strategies Scale (CSS). The data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics and t-test statistical tools and $p=0.05$ level of significance. The findings revealed that nervousness, high hopes and expectations, among others were factors that lead to job stress among early childhood education teachers. Fatigue, frustration and emotional drained at work were some of the causes of job burnout among early childhood education teachers.

Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2015) interviewed 30 working teachers and 4 retired teachers. They reported that all 34 respondents were occupied by challenges and stress in the teaching profession. The teachers' statements on strains were classified into six categories: workload and time pressure, adapting teaching to students' needs, disruptive student behavior, value conflicts and lack of autonomy, teamwork and lack of status.

Based on the literatures highlighted above, it is clear that there are several factors that cause teachers to feel stressed. Among them are workload; time constraints; student abilities; relationships with colleagues, students, parents and administrators; teaching aids; lack of support from administrators; role-playing, managing student activities and high hopes of student' parents. As teachers is an important asset in the state, the teachers' need to be addressed especially in facing the stress. The stresses among teachers make an impact on teachers in making commitments in carrying out their duties and responsibilities at school.

While the number of stress related issues has increased among preschool teachers, authors feel that the relevant research is still inadequate especially towards preschool teachers. There were many studies about stress among primary school teachers (Tajulashikin Jumahat, Fazura Mohd Noor & Mohd Burhan Ibrahim, 2013, Teuta, Jovanka & Dragan, 2015), secondary school teachers (Klassen & Chiu, 2010, Umami Kalsom, 2014, Mohd Faizul Mohd Noor, Mohd Saifulkhair Omar and Fauzi Bin Hussin, 2016), special education teachers (Mohd Zuri Ghani, Aznan Che Ahmad & Suzana Ibrahim, 2014) and lecturers (Nasir & Rahman, 2002, Damilola Ruth Adebisi, 2013) abroad or in local context. However the study of stress among preschool teachers is still very rare (Shoaga, Bukki & Obiyomi, 2015). Although preschool teachers are the first spin-offs to educate a child, lack of appreciation has made the studies about preschool teachers scare particularly in the concept of stress.

Therefore, the authors aim to study the stress of teaching and learning among preschool teachers in Segamat, Johor. This study aims to identify factors that contribute to stress during the teaching and learning process, the level of stress, and the way to deal with it among preschool teachers.

This study is important because the research result can be used as a guide to preschool teachers to manage their stress and can be a guide to the Ministry of Education to identify issues related to the stress of preschool teachers. This study will also become a guide to the future researchers who intend to study the stress among preschool teachers.

4. Research Objectives

1. Identify the factors that contribute to stress during the teaching and learning process among preschool teachers in Segamat, Johor.
2. Find out the stress level among preschool teachers in Segamat, Johor.
3. Identify the significant differences between the level of stress and gender, age, education level, marital status and teaching experience.

5. Research Questions

1. What factors contribute to stress during the teaching and learning process among preschool teachers in Segamat, Johor?
2. What is the level of stress among preschool teachers in Segamat, Johor?
3. Are there any significant difference between the level of stress and gender, age, education level, marital status and teaching experience?

6. Theoretical Framework of Study

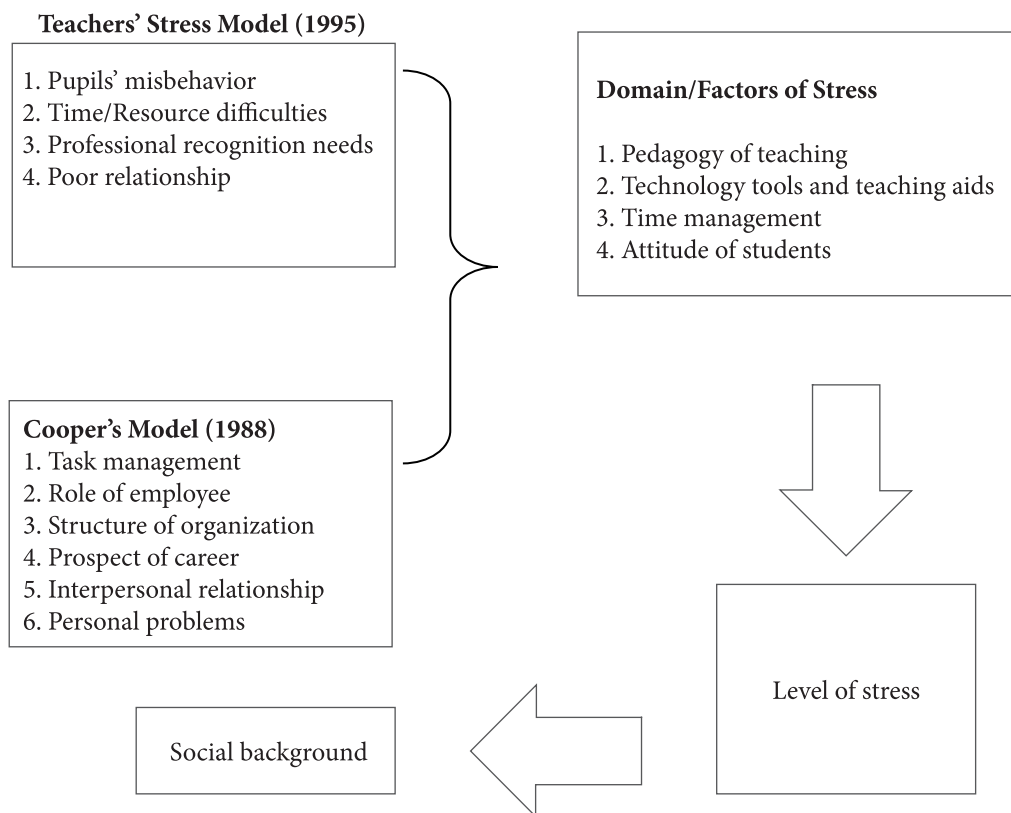


Figure 1 Theoretical Framework

Referring to the teachers' stress model by Boyle, Borg, Falzon and Baglioni (1995) and the Occupational Stress Indicator (OSI) by Cooper, Sloan, and Williams, S. L. (1988), the authors have adapted and modified the above two models in line with the authors' objectives as shown in Figure 1.

In the teachers' stress model, Bolye, Borg, Falzon and Baglioni (1995) have validated the teacher stress inventory through a principle components analysis of a 20-item and had suggested four distinct dimensions which were labelled: Pupil Misbehaviour, Time/Resource Difficulties, Professional Recognition Needs, and Poor Relationships, respectively. Results supported the proposed dimensionality of the sources of teacher stress (measurement model), along with evidence of an additional teacher stress factor (workload).

On the other hand, The Occupational Stress Indicator (OSI) consists of one biographical questionnaire and six questionnaires each measuring different dimensions of stress. For example, source of stress, moderating factor in aspects of dealing with stress and the stressors affecting the individual and situation. Cooper et. al (1988) stated that teachers experienced stress due to task management, employee roles, organizational structures, career prospects, interpersonal relationships and personal problems. Therefore, asking preschool teachers to complete the complex occupational stress indicator questionnaires may indicate the root of the stress and how the person perceives when dealing in the situation.

The authors adapted and modified the above domain and the factors of the models in this study. The domain that the researcher applied in this study consists of pedagogical domain of teaching, technology tools and teaching aids, time management and student attitudes. All the factors in the domain are focused only on factors that will contribute to stress during the teaching and learning process. From these factors, the researchers will analyze the stress level of preschool teachers. Besides that, Cooper et.al (1988) also noted that demographic factors also influence stress among teachers. Therefore, the authors will identify the significant differences between the level of stress and gender, age, education level, marital status and teaching experiences among the preschool teachers.

7. Research Design

This study applied a quantitative survey method by using questionnaire. The questionnaire was conducted to identify the stress factor and stress level among the preschool teachers in Segamat, Johor.

7.1 Sampling of the Study

This study chose the state of Johore as the location of the study as Johor was a less-studied state but was an important state in the south of the Peninsular of Malaysia. The researcher will conduct research in Segamat district among preschool teachers. The Segamat district consists of Chaah, Labis, Tenang, Batu Anam, Buloh Kasap, Jementah and Bekok. There are 55 preschools in Segamat district, Johor according to the Segamat District Education Office. The researchers randomly selected the respondents, namely 75 preschool teachers in Segamat district.

7.2 Research Instrument

The authors used a questionnaire adapted from the ‘Occupational Stress Indicator’ (OSI) questionnaire introduced by Cooper, Sloan & William (1988). Question items about stress factors were taken and modified from the teachers’ stress model by Boyle, Borg, Falzon and Baglioni (1995). In this study, authors have abolished and modified the verses in order to fulfill the objectives of this study and in accordance with preschool teachers. The questionnaire consisted of two parts. Part A was demographic information of respondents including gender, age, education level, marital status and their teaching experience. Part B was the factors that contribute to teachers’ stress during the teaching and learning process (20 items).

In part B, stress assessment items were formed using five point Likert scales starting from 1 for no stress, 2 for low stress, 3 for moderate stress, 4 for high stress and 5 for very high stress. Through the items from section B in the questionnaire, the researchers will study the level of teacher stress based on the given points. The level of stress assessment was categorized into three levels, namely the low level of 1-33 points, the moderate level of the score was 34-67 points and the high score was 60-100 points based on Table 1.

Table 1 Scoring of Stress Level Scores

| Stress level | Score |
|--------------|--------|
| Low | 1-33 |
| Moderate | 34-67 |
| High | 60-100 |

7.3 Data Analysis

The data collected was analyzed by using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) for Windows version 22.0. All data has been analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. Frequency and percent analysis was used to measure the stress level of preschool teachers. Mean values and standard deviations were used to determine stress factors. Bivariate analysis such as T-test and one way ANOVA were used to find out the significant difference between the stress level and the preschool teachers’ background.

Next, Table 2 shows the mean score interpretation below was used for descriptive statistical analysis.

Table 2 Interpretation of Mean Score

| Mean score | Interpretation |
|-------------|----------------|
| 1.00 - 2.33 | Low |
| 2.34 - 3.66 | Moderate |
| 3.67 - 5.00 | High |

7.4 Profile of Respondents

Table 3 Profile of Respondents

| Demography | Details | Frequency (Percentage) |
|---------------------|----------------------|------------------------|
| Gender | Male | 7 (9.3%) |
| | Female | 68 (90.7%) |
| Age | < 30 years | 15 (20.0%) |
| | 31-40 years | 22 (29.3%) |
| | 40-50 years | 27 (36.0%) |
| | > 50 years | 11 (14.7%) |
| | | |
| Level of education | SPM | 33 (44.0%) |
| | STPM/Diploma | 30 (40.0%) |
| | Undergraduate degree | 11 (14.7%) |
| | Master degree | 1 (1.3%) |
| Marital status | Single | 26 (34.7%) |
| | Married | 49 (65.3%) |
| Teaching experience | < 5 years | 6 (8.0%) |
| | 6 – 10 years | 12 (16.0%) |
| | 11 – 15 years | 26 (34.7%) |
| | 16 – 20 years | 20 (26.7%) |
| | > 20 years | 11 (14.7%) |

A total of 75 preschool teachers were chosen where male teachers were fewer (7 teachers, 9.3%) than female teachers (68 teachers, 90.7%). Respondents' age was categorized into four that teachers aged between 40 and 50 were the most (27 teachers; 36%), followed by teachers aged 31 to 40 years old (22 teachers, 29.3%), then the younger respondents who less than 30 years old (15 teachers, 20%), while teachers over the age of 50 were at least (11 teachers, 14.7%).

In terms of educational level, 33 teachers (44%) passed the SPM. Furthermore, 30 teachers (40%) have the STPM /Diploma qualification while 11 teachers (14.7%) have a bachelor's degree and only one (1.3%) holds a master degree.

In terms of marital status, a total of 26 teachers (34.7%) are single, while 49 (65.3%) are married. In terms of teaching experience, teachers with 11 to 15 years of experience (26 teachers, 34.7%) and 16 to 20 years (20 teachers, 26.7%) are the most, but teachers with less than 5 year were at least (6 teachers, 8%).

8. Results

Research Question 1: What factors contribute to stress during the teaching and learning process among preschool teachers in Segamat, Johor?

Table 4 Factors contribute to Stress from the Highest to Lowest

| Item No | Factors of stress | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> |
|---------|--|----------|-----------|
| 12 | The attitude of the children is negative towards the lesson | 3.15 | 1.193 |
| 9 | Teaching a class that has a big number of children | 3.13 | 1.139 |
| 10 | The amount of teaching periods is too much. | 3.09 | 1.387 |
| 8 | Cannot finish the syllabus | 3.08 | 1.292 |
| 13 | Teaching the unmotivated children in the teaching process. | 3.08 | 1.228 |
| 20 | Learning objectives are not achieved. | 3.05 | 1.262 |
| 11 | Uncomfortable class room | 3.04 | 1.350 |
| 16 | Lack of time to focus on children individually | 3.01 | 1.202 |
| 15 | Teaching children who pay less attention. | 2.96 | 1.191 |
| 3 | Lack of facilities and teaching tools | 2.91 | 1.176 |
| 4 | Less exposure to methods, techniques and pedagogy that is suitable for children | 2.89 | 1.214 |
| 17 | Children cannot understand or understanding slowly about a concept | 2.88 | 1.139 |
| 19 | Children are not actively involved in learning activities | 2.85 | 1.135 |
| 7 | Less adaptation of interesting teaching methods that draw attention of children. | 2.84 | 1.220 |
| 1 | Lack of time to do teaching preparation. | 2.84 | 1.151 |
| 14 | Children do not complete their homework. | 2.83 | 1.132 |
| 6 | Lack of technology equipment. | 2.81 | 1.270 |
| 18 | Children do not bring the necessary tools or being told by teachers during the teaching process. | 2.71 | 1.112 |
| 5 | Less skill in using information technology | 2.59 | 1.175 |
| 2 | Lots of time is used to do the teaching preparations | 2.55 | 1.119 |
| Average | | 2.91 | 1.013 |

Overall, five main factors that stressed the preschool teachers in Segamat, Johor were the negative attitudes towards children ($M = 3.15$, $SD = 1.193$), teaching a class that has a big number of children ($M = 3.13$, $SD = 1.139$), overloaded teaching periods ($M = 3.09$, $SD = 1.387$), unable complete the syllabus ($M = 3.08$, $SD = 1.292$) and teaching children who are not motivated during the teaching process ($M = 3.08$, $SD = 1.228$). Overall, the stress level is at a moderate level ($M = 2.91$, $SD = 1.013$).

Analysis of Factors that Contribute to Stress by Domain

Table 5 Mean Score of Stress Factor According to Domain

| Domain | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> |
|-------------------------------------|----------|-----------|
| Teaching pedagogy | 2.99 | 1.140 |
| Children's attitude | 2.96 | 1.027 |
| Time management | 2.91 | 1.017 |
| Technology tools and teaching tools | 2.75 | 1.054 |

Table 5 shows the mean value of each domain that was the factor contributing to the stress of the teachers. The domain that has the highest mean value was the teaching pedagogical domain ($M = 2.99$, $SD = 1.140$). Factors available in the domain consisted of the lack of exposure to teaching methods, techniques and pedagogy appropriate to children, lack of adaptation of teaching methods that attract the attention of children, teaching classes with over-crowded students, uncomfortable classrooms and learning objectives are not achieved.

The domain with the second highest mean value was student attitudes ($M = 2.96$, $SD = 1.027$). Among the factors that are covered by this domain were negative attitudes of children towards education, teaching the children who are not motivated during the teaching process, children who do not complete their homework, teaching the children who pay less attentions in learning process, children cannot understand or slowly understand a concept and children are not actively involved in learning activities.

Furthermore, the mean value of the time management domain was ranked at third place ($M = 2.91$, $SD = 1.017$). Factors in this aspect were lack of time to do teaching preparation, a lot of time used to make teaching preparation, unable to complete the syllabus, too much teaching periods and lack of time to focus on children individually.

Finally, the domain of technology equipment and teaching aids had a moderate level mean value at $M = 2.75$, $SD = 1.054$. Among the sources of stress in the domain were lack of facilities and teaching aids, lack of skills in the use of information technology, lack of technology equipment, children do not bring the necessary tools and ordered by teachers during the teaching process.

The stress level among the respondents' score:

Table 6 Stress Level among the Preschool Teachers

| Stress level | Score | Frequency | Percentage (%) |
|--------------|--------|-----------|----------------|
| Low | 1-33 | 14 | 18.7 |
| Moderate | 34-67 | 36 | 48.0 |
| High | 68-100 | 25 | 33.3 |
| Total | | 75 | 100.0 |

Table 6 shows the stress level of the respondents. In this study, 14 (18.7%) had low stress levels, 36 (48%) had moderate stress levels and 25 (33.3%) had high stress levels.

Research Question 2: Are there any significant differences between the level of stress and gender, age, education level, marital status and teaching experience?

The analysis was conducted to see the differences between stress levels and respondents' demographics such as gender, age, education level, marital status and teaching experience.

Table 7 T-test Analysis of Stress Level Based on Gender

| Gender | N | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> | t-value | <i>p</i> -value |
|--------|----|----------|-----------|---------|-----------------|
| Male | 7 | 2.43 | .535 | 1.104 | .629 |
| Female | 68 | 2.12 | .723 | | |

$p < .05$

T-test was used to see the difference between stress level of teachers and gender in Table 7. The mean value for male was at moderate level ($M = 2.43$, $SD = 0.535$) whereas mean value for female was low ($M = 2.12$, $SD = 0.723$). The t-test results indicated that $t = 1.104$ and $p = .629$. The difference in the mean value of male and female respondents stress was .311 only. This means there was no significant difference in the level of stress between male and female respondents.

Table 8 Analysis of one-way ANOVA on the Stress Level Based on Age

| Descriptive | Sum of squares | <i>df</i> | Mean square | <i>F</i> | <i>p</i> -value |
|----------------|----------------|-----------|-------------|----------|-----------------|
| Between groups | .807 | 3 | .269 | .522 | .669 |
| Among groups | 36.580 | 71 | .515 | | |
| Total | 37.387 | 74 | | | |

$p < 0.05$

Table 8 shows the one-way ANOVA results based on the age of preschool teachers at $F(3, 71) = 0.522$, $p = 0.669$. This showed that there was no significant difference between the level of stress and the age of the respondent.

Table 9 Analysis of One way ANOVA on the Stress Level based on Educational Level

| Descriptive | Sum of squares | <i>df</i> | Mean square | <i>F</i> | <i>p</i> |
|----------------|----------------|-----------|-------------|----------|----------|
| Between groups | 2.444 | 3 | .815 | 1.655 | .184 |
| Among groups | 34.942 | 71 | .492 | | |
| Total | 37.387 | 74 | | | |

$p < 0.05$

Table 9 shows the one-way ANOVA results based on the level education of teachers in the study at $F(3, 71) = 1.655, p = 0.184$. Obviously, the result shows that there was no significant difference between the level of stress and the level of education of the respondents respectively.

Table 10 Analysis of one-way ANOVA on the Stress Level Based on Marital Status

| Descriptive | Sum of squares | <i>df</i> | Mean square | <i>F</i> | <i>p</i> -value |
|----------------|----------------|-----------|-------------|----------|-----------------|
| Between groups | 3.946 | 1 | 3.946 | 8.613 | .004 |
| Among groups | 33.441 | 73 | .458 | | |
| Total | 37.387 | 74 | | | |

$p < 0.05$

Table 11 Mean Score for the Stress Level of Preschool Teachers

| Marital status | <i>N</i> | <i>M</i> | <i>SD</i> |
|----------------|----------|----------|-----------|
| Single | 26 | 2.46 | .508 |
| Married | 49 | 1.98 | .750 |

Table 10 shows the results of one-way ANOVA according to the marital status of the preschool teachers at $F(1, 73) = 8.613, p = 0.004$. The results show that there was a significant difference between the stress level and the respondents' marital status. In other words, single teachers experienced higher stress levels ($M = 2.46, SD = 0.508$) than those who are married ($M = 1.98, SD = 0.750$) in their work at preschool (Table 11).

Table 12 Analysis of one-way ANOVA on the Stress Level Based on Teaching Experience

| Descriptive | Sum of squares | <i>df</i> | Mean square | <i>F</i> | <i>p</i> -value |
|----------------|----------------|-----------|-------------|----------|-----------------|
| Between groups | 4.549 | 4 | 1.137 | 2.424 | .056 |
| Among groups | 32.837 | 70 | .469 | | |
| Total | 37.387 | 74 | | | |

$p < .05$

Table 12 shows the results of one-way ANOVA according to the teaching experiences of the preschool teachers at $F(4, 70) = 2.424, p = 0.056$. The result shows that there were not significant difference between the stress level and the respondents' teaching experiences.

9. Discussion

Through this study, five main factors contributing to the stress of preschool teachers in Segamat during the teaching and learning process were identified. They are children negative attitude towards education, a large number of children in a classroom, a lengthy teaching

periods, unable to complete the syllabus at a predetermined time, teaching unmotivated and enthusiastic children during the teaching process.

This study found that teaching pedagogy is the main domain that impacts the stress among the preschool teachers, followed by the children's attitudes, time management and technology equipment and teaching aids. This finding is different from Ooi and Aziah Ismail (2015) who stated that the burden of duties is the main cause and followed by student misconduct, professional rewards, interpersonal relationships and others. The differences exist due to their study were conducted in six National School and six National-type Chinese Schools from the Southwest District, Penang.

The finding of this study, however, is consistent with the findings of foreign studies in USA that a negative view of learning through play by believing that it does not have time to play and prioritize traditional teaching which will force children to focus on academics (Lynch, 2014). This causes the preschool teacher there to experience high stress. Now, 21st-Century Learning (21CL) has become a hot issue in the education world as it is seen to meet current educational needs, as well as bringing about new changes in the education world. 21CL is said to be a student-centered learning process that request new method of teaching and learning, and consequently cause high stress among the teachers.

In terms of heavy burdens and student problems, the findings are consistent with the findings of Shernoff, Mehta, Atkins, Torf, and Spencer (2011) who found that excessive workload and managing behavior problems as significant sources of stress among the K-4 urban teachers. Similar findings found by Liu and Onwuegbuzie (2012) who indicated that the reasons for the Chinese teachers' turnover intention included a high level of stress, heavy workload, and student behavior. In addition, this finding is consistent with the study of Collie, Shapka and Perry (2012) that teachers 'perceptions of students' motivation and behavior have the most powerful impact towards teachers stress and Gökçe DİŞLEN (2013) study that lack of motivation and interest toward language learning becomes a source of stress among teachers.

The amount of time spent teaching is stressful to the preschool teachers. This is acknowledged by Shernoff, Mehta, Atkins, Torf, and Spencer's (2011) findings that teachers hardly have the time to prepare and teach. According to the National Preschool Curriculum Standards should be conducted at least four hours a day of 20 hours a week for children aged 4 to 6 years old. Meanwhile, three and a half hours of 17½ hours should be taught to children aged below four years old. This causes a teacher to teach a long time to the children and cause a preschool teacher to experience stress.

In terms of stress levels, the researchers found that preschool teachers in Segamat, Johor were at moderate level. This study is in line with the study of Tajulashikin Jumahat, Fazura Mohd Noor and Mohd Burhan Ibrahim (2013), Teuta, Jovanka & Dragan (2015) who also find

the moderate level of teacher stress. Instead, it is against the findings by Liu and Onwuegbuzie (2012), Shkëmbi, Melonashi and Fanaj (2015) who find teachers experiencing high levels of stress in the workplace.

However, keep in mind that moderate pressure tends to rise to a high level if the cause of stress is not identified and taken immediate steps to resolve it. Therefore, teachers should take steps to address the stress of themselves even if they use different methods. Otherwise, the preschool teachers may experience higher stress that will affect their health.

Furthermore, this study found that there was no significant difference between the level of stress and gender. This suggested that the level of stress of male teachers and the level of stress of female teachers is the same and not influenced by gender. The findings are consistent with the studies conducted by Junaidah and Rosila (2013) Tajulashikin Jumahat, Fazura Mohd Noor and Mohd Burhan Ibrahim (2013), Shkëmbi, Melonashi and Fanaj (2015), Shoaga, Bukki and Obiyomi (2015) Teacher stress is not affected by gender. These findings differ from the study of Klassen and Chiu (2010), Teuta, Jovanka & Dragan (2015) which reported that the level of stress of female teachers was higher than that of men, suggesting that women had higher stress levels than men due to management, schooling, solid classrooms, safety, students do not listen to advice, students always make noise in the classroom and so on.

This study also found that there was no significant difference between the level of stress and age. All teachers face the same level of stress regardless of age. Tajulashikin Jumahat, Fazura Mohd Noor and Mohd Burhan Ibrahim (2013) noted that there was no significant difference between teacher's age in his study of teacher stress. However, the result of this research is contrary to the study of Teuta, Jovanka & Dragan (2015) who found that the level of work-related stress was significantly related to the age of the teachers.

Furthermore, the level of education also has no significant difference with the level of stress. Junaidah and Rosila (2013) noted that the level of teacher stress is not influenced by the level of education. This shows that all teachers feel the same pressure without taking into account their level of education. However the study of Shearin (1996), Shkëmbi, Melonashi and Fanaj (2015), Teuta, Jovanka & Dragan (2015) results showed that teachers with university education significantly more often associate their workplace with stronger stress than their colleagues with high education. This is because high-educated teachers are more likely to show their academic achievement that causes lower educated teachers to experience stress (Mohamad, 2013).

In this study, finding indicated that marital status has a significant difference with the level of stress. Single teachers gain higher stress than married teachers. This is because married teachers have the experiences of controlling children while single and new teachers are learning to control children. This finding is contrary to the study of Emirel, Güler, Toktamis, Özdemir,

and Sezer (2005), Shkëmbi, Melonashi and Fanaj (2015) who stated that the marital status does not affect the level of teacher stress.

Teaching experience has also been analyzed in this study and showed that there was no significant difference between the level of stress and the teaching experience among preschool teachers. This showed that all teachers experience the same level of stress regardless of their teaching experience period. This study is in line with Junaidah & Rosilah (2013), Tajulashikin Jumahat, Fazura Mohd Noor and Mohd Burhan Ibrahim (2013), Shkëmbi, Melonashi and Fanaj (2015), Teuta, Jovanka & Dragan (2015) indicated equal stress regardless of the duration of teaching experience. All teachers take the same responsibility in educating children.

In addition, Cooper et.al (1988) model emphasized on job management, employee roles, organizational structure, career prospects, interpersonal relationships and personal problems which are the main domains that contribute to teacher stress. This study is found contrary to the model. Time management and technology equipment and teaching aids are the sources of teacher stress in this study. Meanwhile, Cooper (1988) focused only on the negative environment as well as communication and social in the workplace. Stress undergoes during the teaching and learning process cannot be attributed to the Cooper's model (1988) in this study.

Obviously, the findings of this study are contrary to the model by Boyle et.al (1995) model and Cooper et.al. (1988). This is because the respondents of this study are preschool teachers, while their respondents were primary, secondary and upper secondary school teachers. The differences in work culture between our country and the west also caused this study to be contrary to their model. Due to this study focused only on teaching and learning processes, their domain are conflicts with pedagogical teaching and in terms of student attitude in this study context.

10. Conclusion

In conclusion, this study showed that the stress of preschool teachers in Segamat, Johor is at moderate level. The main factor that contributes to stresses among the preschool teachers was negative attitude of the children that need more attention from the related parties. Therefore, preschool teachers, preschool managers, the Ministry of Education Malaysia and the Ministry of Health should play their important role in maintaining the mental health of preschool teachers. Teachers, especially bachelor or single teacher, should seek effective resolution to manage self-stress and avoid having a high level of stress. Solving this problem will help to produce excellent, glorious and distinguished preschool teachers so that the well-being of the students can be preserved.

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