Job Stress, Burnout and the Relationship among the Science and Mathematics Teachers in Basic Education Schools

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ABSTRACT
A questionnaire about job stress and burnout among the Science and Mathematics Teachers in basic education schools was conducted among the Science and Mathematics Teachers in Xi’an city, Xianyang city and Zhanjiang city. The result is stated as follows: 1) The modern society puts great stress on the Science and Mathematics Teachers in basic education schools. 2) Stress of interpersonal relationship positively predicts one’s decreased sense of achievement, emotional exhaustion and depersonalization while employment stress also positively predicts on emotional exhaustion. However, by contrast, stress of job reputation has a backward prediction on depersonalization. 3) The Science and Mathematics Teachers in basic education schools are under stress of career development, workload, examinations, interpersonal relationship, roles, responsibility and unemployment. These stresses have positive correlation with emotional exhaustion obviously. It comes to the conclusion that job stress in different surroundings leads to the 3 reasons for the Science and Mathematics Teachers’ job burnout, which shows a remarkable correlation between job stress and job burnout. Some advice should be implemented, which is for Chinese government, education administration, the society, professional association, school peers, the individual.

Keywords: basic education schools, job stress, job burnout, science and mathematics teachers

INTRODUCTION
The reform of the new curriculum of education has entered a critical period and the social sectors are of great concern, and the performance wage reform of the Science and Mathematics Teachers in the last two years has been controversial at the grassroots level. These concerns and controversies have led to the development of the Science and Mathematics Teachers’ living conditions, including the stress of the Science and Mathematics Teachers, social support, coping styles and job burnout. To improve the Science and Mathematics Teachers’ happiness, first of all, we should fully understand the Science and Mathematics Teachers’ job stress and job burnout. Being a teacher seems to be easy. However, they suffer from a lot of strong stress and no less than other professions. In the early time, some scholars defined the job stress of the Science and Mathematics Teachers as negative and unhappy feelings or emotions like anxiety, depression, anger or rage, which all came from the job. This definition stressed that the Science and Mathematics Teachers thought their work environment threatened their health and even their dignity. The word “stress” is developed as job stress of the Science and Mathematics Teachers in the educational field. The job stress of the Science and Mathematics Teachers in basic education schools is related to physical and mental health of the Science and Mathematics Teachers as well as whether students can complete their missions or not. That is to say, it has much to do with the development of the whole elementary education. This survey in the
form of questionnaires, which focuses on the Science and Mathematics Teachers in middle schools, properly handled the collected data, compared the difference of denotable variables in job stress and looked into the correlation between job stress and work environment. It aims to find a workable solution to the job stress of the Science and Mathematics Teachers and provide a more effective educational administration policy to better teacher’s psychological quality (Cho & Tee, 2018).

Burnout is a term used to describe a state of physical, emotional, and mental exhaustion, which occurs after long-term exposure to situations that are emotionally demanding (Montgomery, Panagopolous, & Benos, 2006; Furner, 2017). Job burnout refers to physical and mental exhaustion caused by job stress (Dorman, 2003). The Science and Mathematics Teachers, especially those who work in schools with a lack of resources, are faced with great stress, which even have an impact on their body and mental health (Ben-Zur, 2002). As a result, it never ends that the Science and Mathematics Teachers punish students physically or even commit suicide. Job stress has been found to be strongly associated with burnout in previous research studies (Wu et al., 2007). The Science and Mathematics Teachers in basic education schools, like other practitioners, are under stress, such as stress from workload and their job reputation along with stress from teaching and students and parents which doesn’t exist in other occupations (Mark et al., 2006). So far, China has carried out some reforms in schools’ personnel system (Borg et al., 1989), which not only changes the situation that employment of all staff members by contract in primary and middle schools leads to the Science and Mathematics Teachers’ austere and stable life but also add more stress on the Science and Mathematics Teachers. Later, one-child policy was carried out to limit the population, which will end up with a decreasing number of students registered and force schools to cut the number of the Science and Mathematics Teachers accordingly (Betoret, 2006). All the stress mentioned above will confront the Science and Mathematics Teachers in primary and middle schools with some problems (Borg et al., 1991), such as unprecedented social crisis and challenges for their career life. However, great job stress also plays a part in the job burnout of the Science and Mathematics Teachers in primary and middle schools, which may end in something bad. From the current situation, researches on the Science and Mathematics Teachers’ job stress are far from enough; especially some concepts like job burnout haven’t been empirically studied in China.

The paper mainly probes into the relationship between job stress and burnout among the Science and Mathematics Teachers in basic education schools. The problem whether the current job stress directly leads to job burnout is also covered in the paper. A lot of research has confirmed that the coping styles and social support are important and direct factors in stress function system, which helps develop a more appropriate and effective social support system to advance the curriculum reform, guarantee physical and mental health of the Science and Mathematics Teachers as well as promote the Science and Mathematics Teachers’ career growth and further sustainable development in education (Guglielmi et al., 1998).

**METHODOLOGY**

**Research Objects**

This small-scale study investigates the Science and Mathematics Teachers in basic education. 1400 questionnaires were randomly given out to the Science and Mathematics Teachers in basic education schools in Xi’an city, Xian yang city and Zhanjiang city, whose valid return rate was 69.7%. That is, there were 977 valid questionnaires, of which 201 were from high schools, 312 from middle schools, 278 from primary schools and 186 from nursery schools. They were made up of 396 male of the Science and Mathematics Teachers and 581 female of the Science and Mathematics Teachers.
Research Methods

Job stress questionnaire among the Science and Mathematics Teachers in basic education schools

Two standardized questionnaires, Karasek’s job content questionnaire (JCQ) and Siegrist’s ERI questionnaire, were used to obtain information on job stress. Chinese versions of these two questionnaires have both demonstrated good reliability and validity (Li et al. 2004). This questionnaire focuses on 5 aspects, such as the Job condition, Teaching and learning conditions, workload, relationships, and fun. Based on Likert Scale, it consists of 24 questions with 4-level scoring.

Job burnout questionnaire among the Science and Mathematics Teachers in basic education schools

Maslach Burnout Inventory–General Survey (MBI-GS) was used to measure burnout (Maslach & Jackson, 1981). The Chinese version of the MBI-GS was revised and validated by Li and Shi in 2003 and has been demonstrated good reliability and validity in the Chinese population (Wu et al. 2007). In this study the questionnaire, using Likert Scale, consists of 22 items with a 7-level scoring, from “6-appearance each day” to “0-never appearance”. The 3 dimensions are decreased sense of achievement, depersonalization and emotional exhaustion.

Social support rating scale (SSRS)

Social support rating scale (SSRS) was designed by Xiao Shuiyuan in 1986 (Xiao, 1986), to evaluation subjects, objective support, subjective support and utilization of support. SSRS are widely used in China, is generally believed that the scale design is basically reasonable, and the entry is easy to understand without ambiguity. Also it has good reliability and validity. The coefficient of homogeneity of the scale in this study was 0.75.

Simplified Coping Style Questionnaire (SCSQ)

Simplified Coping Style Questionnaire (SCSQ) was designed by Xie Yaning to assess coping style (Xie, n.d.). The questionnaire, a total of 20 items, lists attitudes and practices that people may adopt as facing with setbacks or some difficulties in life. Never: 0, occasionally: 1, sometimes: 2, often: 3. It includes two dimensions: positive coping and negative coping strategies, respectively, to assess the relative stability of individuals in life. Coping style total scores = positive coping scores - negative coping scores. The higher the score is, the more positive the coping style.

Statistical Analysis

Single factor correlation analysis (Pearson correlation coefficient) and one-way analysis of variance (One Way ANOV) are performed by a software SPSS15.0.

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

The Source of job stress among the Science and Mathematics Teachers in basic education schools

The Science and Mathematics Teachers shared their answers to the open-ended question what is the most stressful thing the Science and Mathematics Teachers have come across in their work lately. The result (Table 1) shows that examination puts the most stress on the Science and Mathematics Teachers, while stress from parents of students lists the first in western countries.
The Seriousness of Job Stress among the Science and Mathematics Teachers in Basic Education Schools

In this group, the total seriousness of job stress stands at 3.81±0.91, stress from examination 3.94±0.98, stress from job reputation 3.81±1.24, stress from workload 3.5±1.04, stress from unemployment 3.47±1.20, stress from career growth 3.24±1.16, stress from parents of students 3.10±1.05, stress from responsibility 3.03±1.04, and stress from interpersonal relationship 2.4±1.11. In the 8 aspects, only the stress from interpersonal relationship averages is less than 3, and the rest is all over 3.

The Correlation between Job Stress and Job Burnout

From Table 2, we know that the stress from interpersonal relationship is in direct ratio with the 3 reasons for job burnout. 6 out of the 8 aspects show a direct ratio with emotional exhaustion.

The Correlation between Job Stress and Job Burnout

Table 1. The Source of job stress among the Science and Mathematics Teachers in basic education schools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of Job Stress</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Examination</td>
<td>102</td>
<td></td>
<td>31.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workload</td>
<td>58</td>
<td></td>
<td>17.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Reputation</td>
<td>48</td>
<td></td>
<td>14.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unemployment</td>
<td>41</td>
<td></td>
<td>12.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents Of Students</td>
<td>33</td>
<td></td>
<td>10.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role And Responsibility</td>
<td>21</td>
<td></td>
<td>6.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal Relationship</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career Growth</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>0.9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2. The correlation between job stress and job burnout among the Science and Mathematics Teachers in basic education schools

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source of Job Stress</th>
<th>Emotional Exhaustion</th>
<th>Decreased Sense of Achievement</th>
<th>Depersonalization</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Examination Stress</td>
<td>0.126*</td>
<td>0.031</td>
<td>-0.036</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Workload Stress</td>
<td>0.172***</td>
<td>0.077</td>
<td>0.027</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Role Duty Stress</td>
<td>0.147**</td>
<td>-0.017</td>
<td>0.035</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment Stress</td>
<td>0.199***</td>
<td>0.039</td>
<td>0.030</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Career Development Stress</td>
<td>0.154**</td>
<td>0.055</td>
<td>0.056</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Job Prestige Stress</td>
<td>0.051</td>
<td>0.035</td>
<td>-0.076</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parents and Students Stress</td>
<td>0.050</td>
<td>-0.041</td>
<td>-00.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interpersonal Stress</td>
<td>0.299***</td>
<td>0.144**</td>
<td>0.168**</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note:*P<0.05, **P<0.01, ***P<0.001

Multiple Regression Analysis of the Science and Mathematics Teachers’ Job Burnout and Its 3 Factors

Based on the existing research results at home and abroad and the above relations, the job stress, social support (including subjective support, objective support and utilization of support), and demographic variables as
The curriculum reform has been designed and implemented by education experts for many years. Although the blueprint is very beautiful and urgent, it has not fully aroused the enthusiasm of the first-line Science and Mathematics Teachers in basic education schools (Shang et al., 2016). Based on job burnout as the dependent variable, we investigate the job stress’s predictive effect on social support, and it was found that job stress and social support had a predictive effect on it. In order to further explore the adjustment function of social support, regardless of the level of job stress, the level of job exhaustion is always low. After further study, we found out job stress could be basically thought of no interaction on what social support influences on job burnout.

### DISCUSSION

#### Stress Source and Job Stress

According to the research, today the Science and Mathematics Teachers in China have to deal with the stress from parents of students, which illustrate the specialty of teaching. They also have to deal with the stress from job reputation, salary, especially the most stressful examination that is seldom reported in foreign countries, which shows its variety. The stress from examinations performs their unique effect in China and has a great impact on the body and mental development of the Science and Mathematics Teachers, parents and students. In China, the Science and Mathematics Teachers in primary and middle schools have to face the suppression of social system, the expectation of schools and parents together with the development of students. With the increasing stress, the Science and Mathematics Teachers are easy to fall into anxiety, which will in return influence their physical and mental health and work efficiency. And this is a never-ending cycle.

This study examined the intensity of job stress perceived by primary and secondary school of the Science and Mathematics Teachers. It found that nearly 81% the Science and Mathematics Teachers of primary and secondary school thought they were facing greater job stress. According to the stress source, the top 10 items were: (1) High job requirement. (2) Sense of knowledge crisis; (3) having to do present school work that is disliked; (4) Few opportunities for improving and learning; (5) Higher and higher certificate in education; (6) Less fun; (7) Not being recognized of work; (8) Too many boring things to do every day; (10) Superior mistrust.

The curriculum reform has been designed and implemented by education experts for many years. Although the blueprint is very beautiful and urgent, it has not fully aroused the enthusiasm of the first-line the Science and Mathematics Teachers and greatly reduced the effectiveness. At present, there is still a large gap between the Science and Mathematics Teachers’ ability to handle new curriculum reform and the high requirement of new curriculum reform, so forced implementation can only invite complaints. They generally reflect that the requirements are too high to achieve! On the other hand, they also promote the continuous development of the Science and Mathematics Teachers. They are very eager to meet the requirements of the new curriculum, so the biggest stress impact event is the sense of knowledge crisis. Fewer opportunities for charging and learning; Schools are becoming more demanding. With the increasing speed of knowledge update, primary and secondary schools are demanding higher education requirements, and the Science and Mathematics Teachers are struggling to cope with the assessment and workload, so the stress is obvious. Of course, the teacher feel have no time to study, work long hours and work requirement is high, the reason is that the implementation of the new curriculum reform for
Coping Style and Job Stress

Studies have shown that in addition to personality, Noon-genetic factors, like environment, have an influence on coping style. In coping style, the Science and Mathematics Teachers in nursery schools show the most positive coping styles while the Science and Mathematics Teachers in high schools tend to choose negative coping styles, the reasons for which are various. It may have relevance to such factors as their living background, the level of salary, social position and even how long they have been a teacher in elementary schools. In subjective support, the Science and Mathematics Teachers in middle schools top the list, while the Science and Mathematics Teachers in high schools tend to choose negative coping styles, and negative coping styles have larger effect than positive coping styles, at the same time, this study showed that stress source events can also affect the work of social support and coping styles, and the size of the social support that the individual has to feel, affects the adoption of coping styles, thus affecting the individual symptoms of job burnout.

At present, a huge contradict exists ahead of schools and the Science and Mathematics Teachers that schools have abundant the Science and Mathematics Teachers while their teaching quality isn’t improved accordingly (Friedman, 1991). Schools are carrying out personnel reform, which is a serious problem for the Science and Mathematics Teachers in primary and middle schools. These problems add to their living stress and challenge them all the time (Ho, 2017). Besides, a new stress for the Science and Mathematics Teachers emerges in this research, which is also a new challenge. The system of appointment of the Science and Mathematics Teachers is featured in job bidding and bottom-out series, which not only puts more stress on their life and mind but also increases the stress of unemployment. In China, the stress from students has been neglected because of the stress from unemployment, examinations and job reputation, which tops the list in the western world (Abel et al., 1999). Things that are beneficial to the Science and Mathematics Teachers’ career growth and professional development, like advanced study, promotion, education background and titles, have been drown in extensive living stress, which should be thought highly of by school leaders and administrative authorities.

The research also indicates that job stress is in direct ratio with job burnout. In some way, it is normal and unavoidable that the Science and Mathematics Teachers suffer from a lot of stress, because practitioners in any industry have to face diverse stress. Therefore, a high level of stress can excessively consume the emotional and physical resources of the Science and Mathematics Teachers and ultimately lead them to a severe state of job burnout (Veldman, van Tartwijk, Brekelmans, & Wubbels, 2013). Shi Shufen made a regression analysis on the job exhaustion of primary and secondary school of the Science and Mathematics Teachers based on background factors, job stress and coping style, and found that the predictive power of job stress was the highest (Shufen, 1990). Lv Xinhua’s research shows that there is a significant positive correlation between stress and job exhaustion of middle school of the Science and Mathematics Teachers (Xiuhua, 1997). According to the study of Shan Xiaolin, stress is the source of high professional exhaustion of the Science and Mathematics Teachers (Xiaolin, 1990). Xu Fuming’s research also shows that there is a significant positive correlation between the stress of primary and secondary school of the Science and Mathematics Teachers and the exhaustion of the Science and Mathematics Teachers (Fuming et al., 2003).
On the other hand, if the Science and Mathematics Teachers’ social support level is bad, bad relationships with family, friends very few, in case of urgent problems difficult to get the material and spiritual help, and feel very poor interpersonal relationships, interpersonal communication is also very failure, I don’t know how to seek the help of others in need. For him, the onset of stress is the beginning of a nightmare. Short-term stress is gradually becoming a chronic stress, and job burnout is only a matter of time. If the individual is under stress for a long time, his difficulties cannot be resolved, during this period and no buffer resources and support system, the stress will gradually develop into job exhaustion.

Effect of Social Support

In the research of social support, many studies formed 2 main models: the main effect model and the buffer model. Buffer model argues that social support has good cushioning effect on the individual in the stress; and social support can protect the individual from stress events’ damaging. The main effect model think that social support has common gain effect, no matter whether the individual is in the face of stress and no matter how individual personality factors are, high social support is always accompanied by good physical and mental condition. The conclusions come from a study of statistics, in the statistics there only appear the main effect of social support for individual physical and mental symptoms, and no interaction between social support and life bad events. Corresponding to above 2 models, the foreign researchers think there’re 2 kinds of mechanism how social support works on job burnout: social support acts as independent variable for job burnout; social support acts as the buffer variable.

According to the result of regression analysis in this study, for the primary and secondary school of the Science and Mathematics Teachers, it shows the relations: the more serious the job stress (from payment, self-development, interpersonal relationship, evaluation of one’s performance, and so on,) is, the more serious the job burnout is; The higher the level of social support (such as objective support, subjective support and support utilization), the serious the job burnout is; Social support has a moderating effect between job stress and job burnout. Social support can provide a buffer against stress in teaching, interpersonal relationships, competition, and workload, so as to alleviate job burnout. In this process, social support mainly alleviates job burnout by cushioning job security, teaching support and self-development.

How does social support play a role of buffer? Buffer Model answers: after perceiving stress, if he get enough social support, the subject can make re-cognition and re-evaluation on the stress, and suppress adverse reactions from the stress, then actively seek for better adjusting response, so as to reduce or even eliminate symptoms for the stress, eventually to achieve the effect of the buffer. In other words, good social support can cushion the negative consequences of stress; in fact it is the negative consequences whose cumulative effect leads to burnout. Concretely speaking, the Science and Mathematics Teachers in higher levels of social support, have good relationships with family, friends, and can get various economic support and spiritual encouragement when they need. They are satisfied with the interpersonal relationship and social ability also can make good use of social resources. In this way, when they are under stress, the various analyses and Suggestions are made by their family and friends as bystanders to help them view the stress from the positive side and turn the stress into motivation. Relatives and friends’ much-needed comfort and motivation, and various support can form the Science and Mathematics Teachers’ psychological support system to reduce negative feelings, such as anxiety, depression, frustration, helplessness, better to avoid overeating, smoking, alcohol and other bad behaviors, so as to prevent physical and mental diseases caused by the stress.

CONCLUSION

Job stress refers to too much job responsibility or overworked stress on people, which is the hot topic of the current global job stress. Job stress is not only a powerful driving force, but also a negative factor influencing the working performance and job health (Tomic et al., 2008). The Science and Mathematics Teachers are inevitably working under stress when they are engaged in teaching. Stress is normal, when the stress is too large, to personal physical and mental damage and poor performance, the teacher should pay attention to learn self-regulation, to face the frustration and difficulties in life and work, adjust good state of mind and emotions, learn to self-relief. While paying attention to business study, master some knowledge of mental health care, and reduce job stress by relaxing training, transferring attention and talking with people (Dombrovskis et al., 2011). The Science and Mathematics Teachers should constantly improve their personal cultivation, honing their will quality and relaxing training, transferring attention and talking with people (Dombrovskis et al., 2011). The...
problem lies in the intensity of workload. Only overload of work goes against people’s health and has a bad influence on the Science and Mathematics Teachers. Western scholars have come to the conclusion that the Science and Mathematics Teachers are under high stress. However, it has been testified that the workload of the Science and Mathematics Teachers in China is heavier than that of the Science and Mathematics Teachers abroad. Nearly three quarters of the Science and Mathematics Teachers in China are reported to be under great stress, while the rate varies from one third to one fourth in western local report. It is easily concluded that the relation between job stress and emotional exhaustion reflects that of job burnout and job stress (Austin et al., 2005). A further study shows that the other two dimensions are only related to the stress from interpersonal relationship and job burnout and emotional exhaustion have a positive correlation with the other factors of job stress, making the relation between job stress and job burnout more complex which we didn’t have a clear recognition. This has to deepen into diverse sources of job stress and factors of job burnout.

It is commonly thought that job stress leads to job burnout, which is a causal relationship. Facts show that the relation is much more complicated than it was thought. According to the multiple regression analysis, only one or two factors of job stress has an impact on emotional exhaustion, decreased sense of achievement and depersonalization and all the other factors of job stress are secondary to the stress from interpersonal relationship, which makes it clear that some mediating factors influence the relation between job stress and job burnout and further illustrates that job stress indirectly affects job burnout. This isn’t involved in the research. In conclusion, it is necessary to set up a social support system aimed at the Science and Mathematics Teachers in the next curriculum reform to raise the Science and Mathematics Teachers’ awareness of subjective social support and encourage them to use social support positively.

The level of subjective support involves 2 factors: first, the objective social resources that actually exist to support the main body; the second is the degree of the subject’s perception of objective social resources. In general, factor two is based on factor one, but there is a great difference between them. The “existence” in individual subjectivity can be either “true” or “false”. Objectively existing social support, if not fully perceived byte Science and Mathematics Teachers, would be ignored. If the social support that objectively does not exist is perceived subjectively by the teacher, or the social support that is perceived is exaggerated, then there will be the effect: “feeding on fancies, drawing a cake to satisfy hunger”. Positive and optimistic state of mind can actually eliminate adverse effects the Science and Mathematics Teachers’ job burnout; studies have confirmed that a person no matter belongs to self-reflection and inner awareness, as long as optimistic, their psychological health level is high.

From a personal perspective, the Science and Mathematics Teachers should not compare their own efforts, gains and benefits with other people’s differences. They should compare themselves with their own ideals. After all, the teaching profession is different from other industries, and it is doomed to have no big, big, red and purple life. We are engaged in a career that requires us to be the embodiment of our value in the growth of our students, which is the personality of the teacher. To this end, we need to have a common heart to see ourselves and see gains and losses in a calm state of mind. Only when you have peace of mind can you face yourself and be practical. You have your life, I have my world, and I am not jealous. Only in this way can I put my heart into my mind and calm down.

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