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Teacher stress: An assessment of teachers' need for and receptiveness towards a stress reduction program within one rural school system

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Teacher Stress: An Assessment of Teachers' Need for and Receptiveness towards a Stress Reduction Program within one Rural School System

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Abstract

There is a concern for the level of stress teachers experience in their jobs. The effects of stress are not only harmful for the individual teacher, but for the teacher's students and the learning environment as well (Travers & Cooper, 1996). Stress among teachers is related to absenteeism, turnover, and early retirement, which negatively affect the climate of the school and lead to poor student outcomes, both academically and behaviorally. The nature and severity of these concerns highlight the need for programs designed to reduce stress among teachers. A critical first step in partaking in program development efforts is to conduct a needs assessment (Nardi, 2003). The current research attempted to determine if teachers in one rural school system are in need of and receptive to participating in a stress reduction program to address work-related stress. Full-time teachers in grades K-12 were asked to fill out questionnaires related to their stress level and interest in participating in a stress reduction program. The results indicated that there were no differences in teachers' overall stress levels based on years of experience; however, as teacher experience increases, stress related to student behavior and relationships with parents decreases. In addition, there were no significant differences between the overall stress levels of high school and elementary school teachers; however, high school teachers experience greater stress related to relationships with parents than elementary teachers. Also, the higher teachers' stress levels, the more interested they are in participating in a stress reduction program. Implications for school psychologists, suggestions and feedback regarding the development of stress reduction programs within the schools, and future research are discussed.

1. Introduction

Statement of problem

Teachers today are under a great deal of stress. With high-stakes testing and schools' demands for high-quality teacher/student performance, teachers experience many sources of stress. The effects of stress are not only harmful for the individual teacher, but for the teacher's students and the learning environment as well (Travers & Cooper, 1996). Stress among teachers is related to absenteeism, turnover, and early retirement, which negatively affect the climate of the school and lead to poor student outcomes, both academically and behaviorally. The nature and severity of these concerns highlight the need for programs designed to reduce stress among teachers. Stress reduction programs that have been found to be effective include interventions such as stress awareness, physiological training, environment adjustment, and cognitive coping strategies (Brown & Uehara, 1999). Before partaking in program development efforts within a school, a critical first step is to conduct a needs assessment. A needs assessment can serve as a foundation for improved communication and cooperation within a school in identification of health and wellness services (Nardi, 2003). This research seeks to determine teacher need for and receptiveness towards a stress reduction program and will provide suggestions and feedback regarding the development of such a program within the school.

II. Literature Review

Definitions of Stress

The understanding of stress is complex and multifaceted. The term 'stress' was first coined by Selye in the 1930s who focused on stress as an effect or response of the body to demands made upon it (Harney, 2008). Stress was seen as a state of stimulation causing changes within the body which interrupt normal physiologic mechanisms (Harney, 2008). These physical reactions were thought to be important in allowing humans to adapt and survive in difficult situations; however, even early theories recognized that a high level of stress can lead to a number of negative effects on the body over time (Hartney, 2008).

More recently, Lazarus and Folkman (1984) recognized that stress does not happen automatically, but involves the interaction between the external environment and the individual. This model conceptualizes stress as a result of how a stimulus or stressor is appraised by the individual and the individual's appraisal of his/her resources to cope with the stimulus or stressor. The model proposes that appraisals and coping are mediators of the stress response; thus, stress can be reduced by helping individuals change their appraisals of stressors, and providing them with strategies to help them cope (Harney, 2008).

Teacher Stress

Although stress has been identified as a problem in all occupations related to human service, over the years, "teacher stress" has received considerable attention among researchers due to the adverse consequences for students (Travers & Cooper, 1996). Teacher stress has been defined as the experience by a teacher of negative, unpleasant

emotions (such as tension, anger, or depression) as a result of some aspect of their work as a teacher (Kyriacou, 2001). Many researchers have attempted to estimate the prevalence of teacher stress; however, these results have varied. Most studies have found that teachers experience some stress from time to time and that between one fifth and one quarter of teachers frequently experience a great deal of stress (Kyriacou, 1996). In addition, stress in teaching appears to be universal across nations and cultures (Harney, 2008).

Sources of Stress

Researchers have identified many of the factors that are related to stress for teachers in the work setting. According to Kyriacou (2001), the main sources of stress facing teachers are lack of motivation among students; maintaining discipline; time pressure and work overload; coping with change; being evaluated by others; self-esteem and status; dealings with colleagues; administration and management; role conflict and ambiguity; and poor working conditions including inadequate facilities and lack of resources.

According to Travers and Copper (1996), the main causes of teacher stress can be divided into six factors: stressors intrinsic to the actual job (e.g. poor working condition, work overload and underload, and working long hours); role in the organization (e.g. role ambiguity and role conflicts); relationships at work (e.g. principals, colleagues, and students); career development (e.g. job security); organizational structure and climate (e.g. participation in decision making and performance appraisal); and home-work interference.

Although research has highlighted a number of common sources of stress among teachers, whether an individual teacher finds these situations stressful depends on the interaction between the situation and the teacher's individual characteristics. Some teachers are more susceptible than others to stress which include features such as age, experience, life events, personality, behavioral disposition, values, and needs (Travers & Cooper, 1996). Research has suggested that younger teachers who have recently entered the profession are likely to experience the highest levels of stress (Travers & Cooper, 1996). This may be due to the fact that younger, less experienced teachers have not gained the expertise required to cope with the job (Travers & Cooper, 1996). In addition, gender has been shown to be related to the type, level, and outcomes of stress experienced (Travers & Cooper, 1996). Women are reported to experience more stress in teaching than men with regard to classroom problems and student misbehavior, while men report more stress related to administration and need for professional recognition (Travers & Cooper, 1996). Overall, women report greater satisfaction with their job than males; however, this does not necessarily mean that women are less stressed (Travers & Cooper, 1996). Information regarding the type of school (i.e. elementary, middle, and high school) and its relationship to the level of stress experienced by teachers is limited; however, it has been suggested that stress is a problem for teachers at all levels of education (Travers & Cooper, 1996).

Effects of Stress

The effects of stress have been found to have a variety of manifestations and can be divided into those that are physical, psychological/emotional, and behavioral. These effects are not only detrimental to the individual teacher, but the school in which he or

she teaches (including the students), and society as a whole. Effects of stress on the individual teacher include physiological manifestations such as increased frequency of headaches, sleep disturbance, hypertension, tightening of muscles, fatigue, and depleted energy reserves (Jenkins & Calhoun, 1991; Travers & Cooper, 1996). Psychological/emotional manifestations include general uneasiness, depression, anxiety, nervousness, fear and frustration, and loss of confidence (Jenkins & Calhoun, 1991; Travers & Cooper, 1996). Behavioral manifestations include problems such as appetite disorders, excessive smoking and alcohol and/or drug abuse, procrastination, impatience with others, low productivity, absenteeism, and withdrawal from teaching (Harney, 2008; Jenkins & Calhoun, 1991; Travers & Cooper, 1996).

The effect of stress on teachers has also been found to have a significant negative effect on the students, the school, and the profession as well. In recent years, there has been an increase in absenteeism, turnover, and early retirement in teaching, and many experts believe the problem is directly related to teacher stress. According to the National Center for Education Statistics (2007), 8% of teachers changed professions during the 2003-2004 school year and another 8% transferred to another school (Flynt & Morton, 2009). Younger, less experienced teachers are more likely to leave the profession within the first five years than older, more experienced teachers, at a rate of over 40%. This not only leads to serious financial costs, but significantly impacts students' academic achievement (Flynt & Morton, 2009). Woods and Montango (1997) examined the relationship between third and fourth grade students' changes in reading scores and teacher absence behavior, and found that students with teachers who had fewer absences

had significantly larger improvements in reading scores compared to students with teachers with a higher rate of absenteeism.

In addition, the overall climate of a school is negatively impacted by teacher stress. A positive school climate is essential for students' development, learning, and achievement. A positive school climate is linked to higher academic achievement and improved behavioral and socio-emotional adjustment among students (Brand, Felner, Seitsinger, Burns, & Bolton, 2008; Hoy & Hannun, 1997). In order to have a healthy school climate, components such as high levels of caring, respect, and trust between students and teachers, dedication to student learning, and high staff expectations are essential (Lehr & Christenson, 2002). When teachers are stressed they lack motivation and enthusiasm for teaching and are often irritable, impatient, and easily frustrated with their students (Brock & Grady, 2000). Goodenow (1993) found that early adolescents derive much of their academic motivation from perceived support of others, especially teachers. When teachers are stressed, they are unable to provide adequate support to their students; thus, academic achievement is impacted.

Teacher Burnout

A more extreme result of the long-term effects of teacher stress is total emotional exhaustion known as burnout. Although Freudenberger is credited for first conceptualizing the term in the 1970s while working in human services and healthcare, Maslach and her colleagues refined the meaning of the burnout construct and identified three aspects: depersonalization, reduced personal accomplishment, and emotional exhaustion (Brock & Grady, 2000). Emotional exhaustion involves the depletion of energy or draining of emotional resources. Depersonalization involves psychological

withdrawal from relationships with students and/or colleagues and is exhibited in negative, cynical attitudes towards students and colleagues. Reduced personal accomplishment involves the tendency for teachers to perceive that they are ineffective in helping students learn and in fulfilling their school responsibilities (Brock & Grady, 2000).

According to Brock and Grady (2000), 40-50% of teachers suffer some form of burnout during their careers, and the phenomenon of burnout is most prevalent in teachers between the ages of 33 and 45 with 7 to 12 years of experience. Brock and Grady (2000) suggest that this may be because teachers in their 30s and 40s are most vulnerable to self-doubts regarding their career choices. The high number of teachers experiencing burnout is alarming given the significant impact of burnout on teachers' health, relationships, and work performance. Burned out teachers are less able to cope with the responsibilities and pressures of teaching and the quantity and quality of their work deteriorates. This significantly impacts students' performance in the classroom (Brock & Grady, 2000).

Teacher Stress Interventions

A number of studies have examined sources and consequences of stress in the workplace and have evaluated worksite stress reduction programs; however, few studies have examined stress management specifically for educational personnel (Brown & Uehara, 1999). Brown and Uehara (1999) conducted a review of the literature on stress prevention in the health and human service area and found several major strategies that were successful in coping with stress and burnout that are applicable to teachers and other educational personnel. These include stress awareness, physiological training,

environment adjustment, and changing how one thinks about stressful or stress producing situations (Brown & Uehara, 1999). Many successful intervention programs begin by building participants' knowledge and awareness of stress and burnout (Brown & Uehara, 1999). Following initial awareness of stress and burnout, participants are often taught how to determine, identify, and understand the origins of stress. In addition, the most successful stress prevention programs also provide training in physiological coping such as muscle relaxation, focused meditation, breathing techniques, and aerobic activity. The third major strategy of successful stress prevention programs is the development of situational coping strategies. Participants are taught how to change their reaction to specific stressful situations or alter their work environment through assertiveness techniques, tools for enlisting the cooperation of others, and skills for changing a stressful situation. In addition to training participants in physiological and/or situational coping strategies, studies have also emphasized the importance of cognitive coping strategies, which involve changing how one thinks about stressful or stress- producing situations. In a study by Forman (1982) researchers found that urban secondary school teachers who participated in a cognitive-behavioral stress management program showed a significant reduction in self-reported stress and anxiety at the completion of the 18-hour training program compared to a no-treatment control group. In addition, reductions in anxiety and stress level were found six weeks after termination of the training program (Forman 1982). Overall, teacher stress management interventions that contain components which address cognitive control have been shown to be the most effective (Forman, 1990).

Jenkins and Calhoun (1991) compared two methods of stress management training, the global approach and the individual approach, to determine whether one

approach would result in more action and change by female teachers of grades K-12 than would the other. With the individual approach, participants were asked to define a major source of stress and its effects and agreed to commit themselves to doing something about the stressor they had identified. By the end of the training session, participants had individual plans for working with this self-identified major stressor. In the global approach, general information about stress and stress management was presented in a lecture format and no attempt was made to develop individualized plans for managing participants' own specific stressors. Jenkins and Calhoun (1991) found that teachers trained in the individual approach significantly increased their time spent on managing stress compared to those in the global training approach.

Brown and Uehara (1999) found that stress management intervention programs have a variety of outcomes. These include: improved peer support; reduced levels of somatic complaints; decreased work pressure and role ambiguity; enhanced feelings of personal accomplishment; and improved job satisfaction. While most studies showed positive effects, several highlighted the need for using methods that maintain the impact of the intervention over an extended period of time (Brown & Uehara, 1999).

School Psychologists' Role

School psychologists are ideal persons to take a proactive role in reducing teacher stress. According to the National Association of School Psychologists (NASP) guidelines for the provision of school psychological services, school psychologists are responsible for: creating prevention programs within the school; and facilitating the development and implementation of strategies that result in good health and learning (National Association of School psychologists, 2000). The psychological nature of stress

management intervention programs for teachers and the effects of the problem of stress on school personnel and students have provided a rationale for the provision of school psychological services in this area (Forman, 1981). In addition, offering stress management programs for teachers will expand their role and enhance the effectiveness of school psychologists in the schools (Forman, 1981). For example, Sheridan and Gutkin (2000) argued that we must change the structure of traditional school psychological services, which involve focusing on individual children and delivering remedial services, and become more concerned with prevention and promoting wellness. Individuals are significantly influenced by the multiple systems that surround them, including the school system. School psychologists must adopt an ecological perspective and build systems that support children, youth, and families (Sheridan & Gutkin, 2000). This involves providing services to those who are integral to children's environments. By promoting wellness among teachers, school psychologists will significantly influence the day-to-day lives of the students. School psychologists who are willing to expand their role within the school to include prevention efforts, wellness promotion, and program development will play an influential role in improving the lives of school children.

In addition to job expansion, offering stress reduction programs to teachers allows for school psychologists to learn coping skills, which will assist themselves in dealing with the numerous stressors associated with their job (Forman, 1981). Forman (1981) found that school psychologists who participated in training designed to teach them how to conduct stress management programs for teachers showed decreases in self-reported anxiety and increases in job satisfaction as a result of the training. Thus, implementing

stress reduction programs within the schools will provide school psychologist with personal coping skills as well as reduce stress among teachers.

Needs Assessment

A critical first step in partaking in program development efforts is to conduct a needs assessment. A needs assessment can serve as a foundation for improved communication and cooperation within a school in identification of health and wellness services and evaluation needs (Nardi, 2003). Need assessments are used to set goals, locate and distribute service resources, and communicate needs (Petersen & Alexander, 2001). A needs assessment report marks the end of the first phase of a project, and the beginning of the next and final phase- the development of research and service based programs and the securing of external funding for both (Petersen & Alexander, 2001).

Hypotheses

The current research will attempt to determine if teachers in one rural school system are in need of and receptive to participating in a program designed to address work-related stress. Based on a review of the literature, this research seeks to explore the following three questions:

1. Is there a relationship between teacher stress and teaching experience?
2. Are there differences between teacher stress and school level (elementary school, middle school, high school)?
3. Is there a relationship between teachers' overall stress levels and their receptiveness to participating in a stress reduction program?

III. Method

Participants

The sample for this study comprised male and female teachers in one elementary, one middle, and one high school in a rural mid-eastern state. A total of 67 teachers participated in the study. Three participants were not used in the total sample due to incomplete questionnaires. A total of 167 packets were distributed and there was a response rate of 58% for the elementary school, 17.3% for the middle school, and 43% for the high school. There were 29 elementary school teachers (2 male; 26 female; 1 no response), 9 middle school teachers (2 male; 7 female), 28 high school teachers (5 male; 22 female; 1 no response), and 1 post-graduate teacher (1 female). Sixty-four participants were Caucasian/White and three participants did not identify their ethnicity. There were 53 (79.1%) general education teachers and 12 (17.9%) special education teachers. Two teachers (3%) did not respond to the type of curriculum they taught. Teachers in this study had experience ranging from four to forty plus years with 16.7% having less than 10 years of experience, 55.9% having 10-25 years of experience, and 27% having more than 25 years of experience. One teacher did not report her total years of experience.

Materials

Needs Assessment. The needs assessment questionnaire was developed by the primary researcher to assess teachers' receptiveness to participating in a program designed to address teacher stress. The first six questions are demographic questions and include participants' gender, ethnicity, years of teaching experience, type (i.e. general education teacher or special education teacher), school (i.e. elementary school, middle school, or high school), and grade currently teaching. Questions measuring teachers'

receptiveness to participating in a professional stress reduction program (e.g. "I would be interested in participating in a professional stress reduction program") included Yes/No and Likert-type items on a 5-point scale (1 = *not at all* and 5 = *a significant amount*). See Appendix.

Stress Level. The Wilson Stress Profile for Teachers (WSPT; Luh, Olejnik, Greenwood, & Parkay, 1991) was also used in the study to assess teachers' stress levels. The WSPT is a 36-item self-report stress inventory developed by Dr. C.F. Wilson in 1979 for teachers at the elementary and secondary levels. The questionnaire is composed of nine scales: 1) Student Behavior (SB), 2) Employee/Administrator Relationships (EAR), 3) Teacher/Teacher Relations (TTR), 4) Parent/Teacher Relationships (PTR), 5) Time Management (TM), 6) Intrapersonal Conflicts (IC), 7) Physical Symptoms of Stress (PS), 8) Psychological/Emotional Symptoms of Stress (PES), and 9) Stress Management Techniques (SM). Each scale consists of four questions. Each of the 36 items is scored on a 5-point Likert scale (1= *never* and 5= *very often*). Item scores are summed to yield the total scale score and range from 36 to 180 (36 to 72 = Low Stress; 73 to 108 = Moderate Stress; 109 to 180 = High Stress). The following items are samples from each of the components: "I have difficulty controlling my class" (Student Behavior); "I have difficulty in my working relationship with my administrator(s)" (Employee/Administrator Relations); "I feel my fellow teachers think I am not doing a good job" (Teacher/Teacher Relations); "Parents of my students are a source of concern for me" (Parent/Teacher Relations); "I have too much to do and not enough time to do it" (Time Management); "Teaching is stressful for me" (Intrapersonal Conflicts); "I experience headaches" (Physical Symptoms of Stress); "I feel depressed about my job"

(Psychological/Emotional Symptoms of Stress); "I feel powerless to solve my difficulties" (Stress Management Techniques).

According to Luh, Olejinik, Greenwood, and Parkay (1991), the WSPT was found to be a psychometrically valid and reliable measurement of teacher stress. The internal consistency measures ranged between .58 (Teacher/Teacher Relations; Parent/Teacher Relations) and .89 (Psychological/Emotional Symptoms of Stress). Although the Teacher/Teacher Relations and Parent/Teacher Relations scales may appear to be unacceptably low if used individually for decisions regarding a teacher, these scales are sufficiently reliable for use in research and program evaluation purposes (Luh et al., 1991). The internal consistency estimates for the total scale score is high (.91 = low stress group; .93 = high stress group) (Luh et al., 1991). The results of the descriptive discriminant analysis indicate that the WSPT has good concurrent validity (Luh et al., 1991).

The current study also found adequate internal reliability (α = .83) for The Wilson Stress Profile for Teachers (WSPT) total scale. The internal reliability for the subscales of the WSPT ranged between .55 (Student Behavior) and .84 (Employee/Administrator Relations). The Student Behavior (α = .55) and Teacher/Teacher Relations (α = .67) had low reliability and should be interpreted with caution (See Table 1).

Table I
Reliability of Subscales from the WSPT

Subscale	Crombach's Alpha
Student Behavior	.55
Employee/Administrator Relations	.84
Teacher/Teacher Relations	.67
Parent/Teacher Relations	.71
Time Management	.76
Intrapersonal Conflicts	.71
Physical Symptoms of Stress	.82
Psychological/Emotional Symptoms	.73
Stress Management Techniques	.71

Procedure

Participants were recruited through a method of convenience sampling. Participants were recruited through a contact person (Director of Pupil Personnel Services) for the school system. The school system is located in a rural community in the mid-east and includes 14 elementary schools, 4 middle schools, and 3 high schools with over 1,800 full-time employees. The school system was chosen because of its close proximity to a large mid-eastern university. Data was collected at one elementary school, one middle school, and one high school in the county. At each school, the research study was introduced and questionnaire packets were distributed in a group forum at the beginning of a staff meeting. Data was collected during the first staff meeting of the second nine-weeks of school. The research packets were distributed at the elementary

school and middle school by the primary investigator's research co-chair and at the high school by the primary researcher as well as the research co-chair. The research packets distributed at each staff meeting included a cover letter that explained the purpose of the study and stated that participation in the study was voluntary. Participants were told that by completing the questionnaires, they were consenting to participate in the study. The two questionnaires included in the packet were The Needs Assessment Questionnaire and the Wilson Stress Profile for Teachers. Stress reducing tea was also included with each of the questionnaire packets to thank them for their time. There was no identifying information on the questionnaires, so complete confidentiality was assured to the participants. Participants were told to place their completed questionnaires in a sealed envelope that was provided and deposit their envelopes containing their questionnaires in a confidential box in a room designated by the school principal. Participants were told that the completed questionnaires would be collected two weeks later.

The envelopes were coded in order to only identify the school from which the questionnaires were taken. All questionnaires were stored and locked in the primary researcher's home office.

IV. Results

Descriptive Statistics

Data was analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). Overall stress scores on the Wilson Stress Profile for Teachers (WSPT) ranged from 52 to 128 with a mean stress score of 93.10 (*SD* = 14.33). Six percent of teachers had overall stress scores that fell within the low stress range (32 to 72), while 78% of scores fell within the moderate stress range (73 to 108) and 16% of scores fell within the high stress range (109 to 180).

Table 2 presents the means and standard deviations for responses on the Needs Assessment Questionnaire based on school level. Forty-one percent of teachers are "somewhat" interested in participating in a stress reduction program, while 34.3% are interested "quite a lot" or "a significant amount," and 23% are interested "very little" or "not at all." In addition, 46.3% of teachers agree "quite a lot" that there is a relationship between teacher stress levels and student outcomes. Slightly under half of teachers agree "somewhat" that stress interferes with their performances as teachers (47.8%), and half of teachers agree "somewhat" that a stress reduction program would improve their job performances (50%). On average, teachers are most interested in participating in a stress reduction program after school rather than before school or at night. Middle school and high school teachers are most interested in a program lasting 2-3 sessions, while elementary school teachers are slightly more interested in a stress reduction program lasting 4+ sessions. In regards to stress reduction program topics, teachers, on average, are most interested in relaxation training (See Tables 3 and 4). Of the teachers who have

participated in a stress reduction program in the past, (7.7%), they all found the program to be beneficial.

Table II
Mean Responses to Questions by School Level

Questionnaire Items	Elementary School (N = 29)		Middle School (N = 9)		High School (N = 29)	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
I believe there is a relationship between teacher stress levels and student outcomes.	3.79	.77	4.22	.66	3.55	.94
I feel that my level of stress interferes with my performance as a teacher.	3.07	.84	2.89	.92	2.79	.94
I think that participating in a stress-reduction program would improve my job performance.	3.24	.78	2.89	1.16	3.24	.83
I would be interested in participating in a stress reduction program.	3.03	1.08	3.11	1.05	3.31	1.03
I would be interested in participating in a stress reduction program before school.	1.72	.99	2.11	1.16	1.44	.89
I would be interested in participating in a stress reduction program after school.	2.97	1.26	2.78	1.20	3.59	1.01
I would be interested in participating in a stress reduction program at night.	1.44	.68	2.11	1.53	1.50	.74
I would be interested in participating in a stress reduction program as an all day program.	1.89	.87	2.44	1.13	2.29	1.11
I would be interested in participating in a stress reduction program lasting 2-3 sessions.	2.97	1.05	3.22	.97	3.21	.83
I would be interested in participating in a stress reduction program lasting 4+ sessions.	2.86	1.18	2.44	.88	2.79	1.06

Table III
Interest in Percentages for Stress Reduction Program Topics

Topic	Interest				
	Not at all	*Very little*	*Somewhat*	*Quite a lot*	*Significant Amount*
Team Building	17.5	22.2	25.4	27	7.9
Stress Awareness/Education	12.5	7.8	28.7	39.1	10.9
Communication Skills	18.8	15.6	32.8	29.7	3.1
Problem Solving	17.2	9.4	32.8	31.3	9.4
Time Management	14.1	15.6	20.3	34.4	15.6
Conflict Resolution	10.9	15.6	31.3	25.0	17.2
Coping Skills	12.5	12.5	20.3	48.8	10.9
Interpersonal Skills	14.1	15.8	43.8	21.9	4.7
Positive Thinking	14.5	4.8	19.4	43.5	17.7
Relaxation Training	7.8	10.9	14.1	28.1	39.1
Yoga	18.8	10.9	18.8	26.6	25.0
Aerobic Activity	14.1	4.7	31.3	31.3	18.8

Table IV
Mean Interest in Program Topics by School level

Topic	Elementary School (N = 28)		Middle School (N = 8)		High School (N = 25)	
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*
Team Building	2.86	1.17	3.13	1.64	2.72	1.13
Stress Awareness/Education	3.21	1.16	2.63	1.40	3.52	1.08
Communication Skills	2.82	1.18	2.38	1.50	3.00	1.04
Problem Solving	3.07	1.18	2.38	1.50	3.28	1.20
Time Management	3.39	1.34	2.63	1.30	3.28	1.27
Conflict Resolution	2.93	1.08	3.00	1.51	3.52	1.26
Coping Skills	3.14	1.29	2.50	1.41	3.64	.95
Interpersonal Relationships	2.89	1.16	2.50	1.30	2.96	.93
Positive Thinking	3.32	1.24	3.50	1.60	3.56	1.22
Relaxation Training	3.82	1.36	3.38	1.59	4.00	1.04
Yoga	3.32	1.46	3.12	2.03	3.28	1.26
Aerobic Activity	3.21	1.22	3.38	1.40	3.40	1.29

Hypotheses

To test *Question 1,* is there a relationship between teacher stress and teaching experience, a correlational analysis was conducted using teachers' overall stress scores on the Wilson Stress Profile for Teachers (WSPT) and the variable of Teacher Experience. There was not a significant relationship between teachers' overall stress scores on the WSPT (M = 93.10, SD = *14.33)* and Teacher Experience (M = 19.76, SD = 9.03)*,* r = -.175, p >.05. Correlational analyses were also conducted using Teacher Experience and teachers' scores on each of the nine stress scales of the WSPT (Student Behavior; Employee/Administrator Relations; Teacher/Teacher Relations; Parent/Teacher Relations; Time Management; Intrapersonal Conflicts; Physical Symptoms of Stress;

Psychological/Emotional Symptoms of Stress; Stress Management Techniques). There was a significant but weak negative relationship between the Parent/Teacher Relations scale (M = 11.78, SD = 2.51) of the WSPT and Teacher Experience, r = -.30, p < .05. This means that as teacher experience increases, stress related to parent/teacher relations decreases. There was also a significant but weak negative relationship between the Student Behavior scale (M =10.87, SD = 2.03) of the WSPT and Teacher Experience, r = - .28, p <.05. This means that as teacher experience increases, stress related to student behavior decreases; however, due to the low reliability for the Student Behavior subscale, these results may not be replicated. No other significant relationships were found between the WSPT scales and Teacher Experience.

To test *Question 2*, are there differences between teacher stress and school level (elementary school, middle school, and high school), an Independent-samples t-test was conducted comparing elementary and high school teachers' overall stress scores on the WSPT. Middle school teachers' overall stress scores were not included in the analysis because of the small sample size. There was no significant difference between elementary and high school teachers' overall stress level, $t(55)$ = -.53, p >.05. Independent-samples t-tests were also conducted comparing elementary and high school teachers' scores on each of the nine stress scales of the WSPT. A significant difference was found between elementary and high school teachers on their stress related to relationships with parents. High school teachers, on average, experience more stress related to relationships with parents than elementary school teachers. Table 5 presents the means, standard deviations, t-test statistics and p-values for the differences between elementary and high school teachers on the nine scales. Overall, teachers experience the least amount of stress related

to Employee/Administrator Relations, while teachers experience the most amount related to Time Management.

Table V
Means, Standard Deviations, and t-Tests for Differences Between Elementary and High School Teachers on Nine WSPT Scales

Scale	Elementary School (N = 29)		High School (N = 28)			
	M	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*t- Statistic*	*p-value*
SB[a]	10.53	2.15	11.57	1.87	-1.92	.06
EAR	5.93	2.15	5.42	1.87	.93	.35
TTR	6.89	2.19	7.07	2.47	-2.8	.77
PTR	11.34	2.15	12.66	2.73	-2.01	.04
TM	13.75	2.73	13.50	2.84	.35	.72
IC	12.10	2.04	12.28	2.33	-.30	.76
PS	12.34	1.8	12.00	3.24	.493	.62
PES	9.93	2.12	9.96	2.47	-.05	.95
SM	10.44	2.47	10.39	2.40	.07	.93

[a] The abbreviations of nine scales: (SB) Student Behavior, (EAR) Employee/Administrator Relations, (TTR) Teacher/Teacher Relations, (PTR) Parent/Teacher Relations, (TM) Time Management, (IC) Intrapersonal Conflict, (PS) Physical Symptoms of Stress, (PES) Psychological/Emotional Symptoms of Stress, (SM) Stress Management Techniques.

To test *Question 3*, is there a relationship between teachers' overall stress levels and teacher receptiveness to participating in a stress reduction program, a correlational analysis was conducted using teachers' overall stress scores on the WSPT and teachers' responses to Question 4 on the Needs Assessment, "I would be interested in participating in a professional stress reduction program." There was a significant positive relationship between teachers' overall stress scores and their interest in participating in a stress reduction program, $r = .50$, $p < .01$ The greater teachers' stress levels ($M = 93.10$, $SD =$

14.33), the more interested they are in participating in a stress reduction program (*M* = 3.16, *SD* = 1.0*5)*.

Qualitative Data

Of the 67 teachers who completed the Needs Assessment Questionnaire, 11 teachers left comments regarding their thoughts/ideas on the development of a stress reduction program. Comments were analyzed using the cutting and sorting method (Ryan & Bernard, 2003). The cutting and sorting method involved identifying important quotes/expressions, posting them on index cards, and arranging them into similar piles. Quotes were grouped by identifying themes and subthemes based on the stress literature, repetition of common words, or the meaning of the whole quote. Table VI presents the theme names, which are general descriptors of the themes, and subtheme names, which are specific aspects of the themes. The theme and subtheme names are arranged in order based on the number of quotes in each pile. Themes and subthemes listed first include the most common quotes. Unnumbered themes and subthemes are arranged in alphabetical order and indicate that there are an equal number of quotes in those piles.

Table VI: Themes and subthemes from Needs Assessment Comments

Themes	Subthemes
1. Sources of Stress	1: Job responsibilities
	2: Not enough time during work day for responsibilities other than teaching
	Difficult/Unmotivated Students
	Meetings
	Standards of Learning (SOLs)
2: Coping Mechanisms	1: Exercise
	Eating healthy
	Prayer
	Sleeping
	Spending time with family
3. Stress Reduction Program Scheduling	All-day program during the summer
	Programs on Saturdays
	Voluntary
	Year-long
Negative Effects of Teacher Stress	School climate
	School performance
	Student well-being
Stress Reduction Topics of Interest	Mindfulness Training
	Relaxation Training
	Yoga
6: Appreciation for the Acknowledgement of teacher stress	

V. Discussion

The purpose of this study was to determine if teachers in one rural school system are in need of and receptive to participating in a program designed to address work-related stress. The results of the current study support the research that a majority of teachers experience stress related to their job (Travers & Cooper, 1996). In the current study, 94% of teachers surveyed had overall stress scores that fell within the moderate to high stress range, while only 6% of teachers' scores fell within the low stress range. These findings are alarming considering the costs and consequences of stress in terms of the individual teacher, the school including students, and the profession as well.

In an effort to determine if some teachers are more susceptible to stress than others depending on their individual characteristics, this study explored the relationship between teachers' years of experience and stress levels. Overall stress levels were not related to teacher experience; however, less experienced teachers felt greater stress than more experienced teachers regarding student behavior. One reason for this finding may be that newer teachers are still learning effective strategies for dealing with student behavior. In addition, the study found that less experienced teachers felt greater stress than more experienced teachers regarding relationships with parents. Relationships with parents involve feeling that parents are disinterested in their child's performance, being concerned that students' parents think the teacher is not doing a good job, and being concerned with students' parents as well as students' home environments. According to Travers and Cooper (1996), younger, less experienced teachers may not yet have gained the expertise needed to cope with the job. Although the current study did not specifically explore age in relation to stress level, these two characteristics are often linked. These

findings support prior research that individual characteristics of the teacher, specifically years of experience, affect what a teacher perceives as stressful (Capel &Al-mohannadi, 2007; Travers & Cooper, 1996).

Although prior research on the type of school and its relationship to levels of stress experienced by teachers has been limited, the current study supports the conclusion that stress is a problem at all levels of education (Travers & Cooper, 1996). This study found that there were no differences between elementary and high school teachers based on overall levels of stress; however, high school teachers reported significantly more stress related to relationships with parents than elementary school teachers. This may be because parents at the elementary school level tend to be more involved in their child's education than parents at the high school level. Although stress is a concern at all levels of education, the specific types of stressors that are problematic appear to be different (Travers &Cooper, 1996). In addition, the results of the study found that time management caused the greatest amount of stress for both elementary and high school teachers. Time management involves feeling like teachers have too much to do and not enough time to do it, having to take work home, feeling unable to keep up with school work, and having difficulty organizing time to complete tasks. This finding supports other research that the main sources of stress facing teachers are time pressure and work overload (Kyriacou, 2001).

Lastly, the study found that teachers are receptive to participating in a stress reduction program. Three-fourths of teachers are at least "somewhat" interested in participating. In addition, it was found that the greater the teachers' stress levels, the more interested they are in participating. This suggests that needs assessments are

accurate tools in identifying which teachers are in greatest need of participating in stress reduction programs.

Analysis of Qualitative Data

A number of themes emerged from the comments on the Needs Assessment Questionnaire regarding teachers' thoughts/ideas on the development of a stress reduction program. These included: sources of stress; coping mechanisms teachers currently use to assist in managing their stress; stress reduction program topics of interest; ideal length and time of stress reduction programs; teachers' perceptions of the negative effects of teacher stress within the schools; and appreciation for the acknowledgement of teacher stress. Of the 11 teachers who left comments on the Needs Assessment questionnaire, 36% of teachers responded that they have too many responsibilities and not enough time during the workweek. This highlights the importance of tailoring stress reduction programs to fit teachers' needs. Teachers need to feel that their needs are being addressed and that attending a program isn't one more thing added to their "plate" of responsibilities.

Recommendations

Numerous recommendations have been made regarding effective ways for schools to assist in reducing the level of stress among teachers. Research indicates that teacher stress management interventions that contain cognitive-behavioral techniques and have teachers develop individualized plans for managing their own specific stressors are most effective (Brown & Uehara, 1999; Forman, 1982; Jenkins & Calhoun, 1999). The current study found that teachers across school levels are most interested in participating in programs that involve training in physiological and cognitive coping strategies.

Specifically, teachers are most interested in relaxation training and positive thinking. Along with relaxation training and positive thinking, elementary school teachers are most interested in learning time management strategies and participating in yoga; middle school teachers are most interested participating in aerobic activities and yoga; and high school teachers are most interested in learning coping strategies. In regards to when programs should take place, the results suggest that on average, elementary, middle, and high school teachers prefer stress reduction programs after school as opposed to before school or at night. Middle school and high school teachers prefer programs lasting two to three sessions, while elementary school teachers prefer programs lasting four or more sessions. Although middle and high school teachers prefer programs lasting a shorter period of time, Forman (1990) suggests that programs that have sufficient time to allow for rehearsal of skills are most effective.

School Psychologists

School psychologists are ideal persons to implement stress reduction programs. In addition to expanding service to schools on a systems level, offering stress reduction programs to teachers allows for school psychologists to learn coping skills, which will assist themselves in dealing with the numerous stressors associated with their job (Forman, 1981). Research is limited regarding the prevalence of stress among school psychologists. According to Huebner (1993), a large number of school psychologists experience high levels of burnout. In addition, Huebner (1993) suggested that the job of school psychology leads to substantial professional distress and reduced morale for many school psychologists. The lack of research regarding stress among school psychologists is

surprising considering emotional well-being has direct implications on effective service delivery. (Huebner, Gilligan, & Cobb, 2002).

Practical Suggestions

The following are suggestions for school psychologists to consider when implementing stress reduction programs within the schools:

- Obtain support from school administrators including the principal and assistant principal by providing data and research on the potential benefits of implementing stress reduction programs.
- Consider the climate of the school and the varied ways teacher stress and wellness are currently being addressed at the school.
- Conduct a brief needs assessment in order to tailor the program to the needs of the participants. Needs assessments assist in the development of stress reduction programs by determining teachers' stress levels, needs, topics of interest, and scheduling of the program.
- Develop a plan for the program. The plan should clearly state why, how, when, and by whom activities will be accomplished. In addition, the plan should include goals, measurable objectives, a budget, and an evaluation plan (Directors of Health Promotion and Education, 2006).
- Consider cultural factors when planning the program. A culturally competent plan includes an understanding of the beliefs, values, and practices of various cultures including culturally based belief systems about stress and stress management (Directors of Health Promotion and Education, 2006).

- Connect the program to the school district's mission and goals and to the particular school's mission statement.
- Identify necessary resources including space to conduct programs, supplies to carry out activities, and information about specific issues.
- Raise awareness about the program using newsletters, email, websites, posters, and other communication channels (Directors of Health Promotion and Education, 2006).
- Implement the program. Begin by building participants' knowledge and awareness of stress and burnout (Brown & Uehara, 1999). Following initial awareness, teach participants how to determine, identify, and understand the origins of stress. Have participants develop individualized plans for managing their own specific stressors (Jenkins & Calhoun 1991). In addition, provide relaxation training and cognitive coping strategies.
- Evaluate and adapt the program. Evaluation helps to identify needed changes, determine if objectives are being met, determine the effects of the program, and identify ways to improve the program (Directors of Health Promotion and Education, 2006).
- Sustain the program and maintain support from administrators by communicating regularly about the status of the program, and evaluating the program frequently.

Limitations of the Current Study

There were several limitations to this study that may have affected the results of the data. First, the study consisted of primarily female, Caucasian teachers working in a rural area of the Mid-East; thus, the results are only applicable to the teachers who took part in the study. Second, the sample size, particularly in regards to middle school teachers, was small, which also limits the generalizability of the results. Third, there was low internal reliability among the Student Behavior and Teacher/Teacher Relations subscales of the WSPT; consequently, results may not be replicated.

Future Research

Future studies should recruit larger and more representative samples, which would increase statistical power and generalizability of results. In addition, future studies should examine the effectiveness of stress reduction programs in reducing teacher stress. Other suggestions for future research include:

- Exploring current levels of stress among school psychologists.
- Examining the affects of school psychologists providing stress reduction programs for teachers in reducing school psychologists' stress levels and expanding their role within schools.
- Further analyzing differences between elementary, middle, and high school teachers' levels of stress based on individual characteristics of the teacher including age, gender, type of teacher (i.e. special educator versus general educator), and culture.
- Further exploring the relationship between school climate and teacher stress levels.

Conclusion

Despite the limitations in our study, our results are consistent with the existing literature in finding that stress continues to be a problem among elementary, middle, and high school teachers. Although stress is prevalent among other professions, stress among teachers is especially problematic due to the adverse consequences on students. The responsibility for the education of society's youth is a demanding job that will most likely continue to come with a certain amount of stressors; however, research suggests that stress management programs can decrease work pressure, enhance feelings of personal accomplishment, and improve job satisfaction among teachers (Brown & Uehara, 1999). In addition, reducing stress levels among teachers is an essential component of a positive school climate, which has a significant influence on student achievement and outcomes. The current data suggest that not only is there a need for teacher stress reduction programs, but also teachers are receptive to participating in such programs. Therefore, it is critical for school psychologists to take action to implementing stress reduction programs within their schools and improve the overall well-being of teachers, students, and themselves.

APPENDIX A

Participant Cover Letter

Identification of Investigators & Purpose of Study

You are being asked to participate in a research study conducted by Tyler Rosenberg from James Madison University. The purpose of this study is to assist the investigators in determining teacher need for and receptiveness towards participating in a stress reduction program in order to provide suggestions and feedback regarding the development of such a program within the school. This study will contribute to the student's completion of her Education Specialist Degree.

Research Procedures

This study consists of a survey that will be administered to individual participants in Rockingham County Schools. You will be asked to provide answers to a series of questions related to your experience of stress and your interest in participating in a professional stress reduction program.

Time Required

Participation in this study will require approximately 15 minutes of your time.

Risks

The investigator does not perceive more than minimal risks from your involvement in this study.

Benefits

Potential benefits from participation in this study include providing suggestions and feedback regarding the development of a stress reduction program for teachers within your school system.

Confidentiality

The results of this research will be published in a master's thesis and may be submitted for publication in a professional journal and/or presented in poster format at a psychology conference**.** While individual responses are obtained and recorded anonymously and kept in the strictest confidence, aggregate data will be presented representing averages or generalizations about the responses as a whole. No identifiable information will be collected from the participant and no identifiable responses will be presented in the final form of this study. All data will be stored in a secure location accessible only to the

researcher. The researcher retains the right to use and publish non-identifiable data. At the end of the study, all records will be shredded.

Participation & Withdrawal

Your participation is entirely voluntary. You are free to choose not to participate. Should you choose to participate, you can withdraw at any time without consequences of any kind. However, once your responses have been submitted and anonymously recorded you will not be able to withdraw from the study.

Questions about the Study

If you have questions or concerns during the time of your participation in this study, or after its completion or you would like to receive a copy of the final aggregate results of this study, please contact:

Tyler Rosenberg Graduate Psychology James Madison University rosenbtc@jmu.edu	Tammy Gilligan Graduate Psychology James Madison University Telephone: (540) 568-6564 gilligtd@jmu.edu	Debi Kipps-Vaughn Graduate Psychology James Madison University Telephone: (540) 568-4557 kippsvdx@jmu.edu

Questions about Your Rights as a Research Subject

Dr. David Cockley
Chair, Institutional Review Board
James Madison University
(540) 568-2834
cocklede@jmu.edu

Giving of Consent

I have read this cover letter and I understand what is being requested of me as a participant in this study. I freely consent to participate. I have been given satisfactory answers to my questions. I certify that I am at least 18 years of age. By completing and submitting the anonymous survey, I am consenting to participate in this research.

_____

Name of Researcher (Printed)

_____ _____

Name of Researcher (Signed) Date

APPENDIX B

Participant Needs Assessment

For each item, please complete/circle the information that best describes you:

Gender: Male Female

Ethnicity: African American/Black Caucasian/White
Latino/Latina/Hispanic Asian/Pacific American/Islander
American Indian/Native Other (please specify) _____

Number of years teaching (including this year) _____

I am a: General Education Teacher Special Education Teacher

I teach at a/an: Elementary School Middle School High School

Grade(s) teaching in this year: _____

Please circle the number that best represents your response:

1. I believe that there is a relationship between teacher stress levels and student outcomes.

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	Very Little	Somewhat	Quite a lot	A significant amount

2. I feel that my level of stress interferes with my performance as a teacher.

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	Very Little	Somewhat	Quite a lot	A significant amount

3. I think that participating in a stress-reduction program would improve my job performance.

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	Very Little	Somewhat	Quite a lot	A significant amount

4. I would be interested in participating in a stress reduction program.

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	Very Little	Somewhat	Quite a lot	A significant amount

5. I would be interested in participating in a stress reduction program before school:

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	Very Little	Somewhat	Quite a lot	A significant amount

6. I would be interested in participating in a stress reduction program after school.

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	Very Little	Somewhat	Quite a lot	A significant amount

7. I would be interested in participating in a stress reduction program at night.

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	Very Little	Somewhat	Quite a lot	A significant amount

8. I would be interested in participating in a stress reduction program as an all day program.

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	Very Little	Somewhat	Quite a lot	A significant amount

9. I would be interested in participating in a stress reduction program lasting 2-3 sessions.

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	Very Little	Somewhat	Quite a lot	A significant amount

10. I would be interested in participating in a stress reduction program lasting 4+ sessions.

1	2	3	4	5
Not at all	Very Little	Somewhat	Quite a lot	A significant amount

Keep going! You're almost done!

Please circle Yes or No:

11. I have participated in a program that addressed stress reduction as related to my teaching role:

    Yes No

12. If you answered "Yes" to Question 12, I found the program beneficial:

    Yes No

13. What did you like/dislike about the program:_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

Please indicate your level of <u>interest</u> in participating in the following professional stress reduction program topics:

	Not at all	**Very little**	**Somewhat**	**Quite a lot**	**A significant amount**
Team Building	1	2	3	4	5
Stress Awareness/Education	1	2	3	4	5
Communication Skills	1	2	3	4	5
Problem Solving	1	2	3	4	5
Time Management	1	2	3	4	5
Conflict Resolution	1	2	3	4	5
Coping Skills	1	2	3	4	5
Interpersonal Skills	1	2	3	4	5
Positive Thinking	1	2	3	4	5
Relaxation Training	1	2	3	4	5
Yoga	1	2	3	4	5

Aerobic Activity 1 2 3 4 5

Please provide any additional comments regarding your thoughts/ideas on the development of a stress reduction program:

_____
_____
_____
_____
_____
_____

"The time to *relax* is when you don't have time for it."

~Sydney J. Harris

APPENDIX C

Stress Profile for Teachers

Student Behavior

1. I have difficulty controlling my class.

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often

2. I become impatient/angry when my students do not do what I ask them to do.

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often

3. Lack of student motivation to learn affects the progress of my students negatively.

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often

4. My students make my job stressful.

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often

Employee/Administrator Relations

5. I have difficulty in my working relationship with my administrator(s).

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often

6. My administrator makes demands of me that I cannot meet.

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often

7. I feel I cannot be myself when I am interacting with my administrator.

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often

8. I feel my administrator does not approve of the job I do.

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often

Teacher/Teacher Relations

9. I feel isolated in my job (and its problems).

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often

10. I feel my fellow teachers think I am not doing a good job.

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often

11. Disagreements with my fellow teachers are a problem for me.

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often

12. I get too little support from the teachers with whom I work.

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often

Parent/Teacher Relations

13. Parents of my students are a source of concern for me.

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often

14. Parent's disinterest in their child's performance at school concerns me.

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often

15. I feel my students' parents think I am not doing a satisfactory job of teaching their children.

1	2	3	4	5

Never Rarely Sometimes Often Very Often

16. The home environment of my students concerns me.

1 2 3 4 5
Never Rarely Sometimes Often Very Often

Time Management

17. I have too much to do and not enough time to do it.

1 2 3 4 5
Never Rarely Sometimes Often Very Often

18. I have to take work home to complete it.

1 2 3 4 5
Never Rarely Sometimes Often Very Often

19. I am unable to keep up with correcting papers and other school work.

1 2 3 4 5
Never Rarely Sometimes Often Very Often

20. I have difficulty organizing my time in order to complete tasks.

1 2 3 4 5
Never Rarely Sometimes Often Very Often

Intrapersonal Conflicts

21. I put self-imposed demands on myself to meet scheduled deadlines.

1 2 3 4 5
Never Rarely Sometimes Often Very Often

22. I think badly of myself for not meeting the demands of my job.

1 2 3 4 5
Never Rarely Sometimes Often Very Often

23. I am unable to express my stress to those who place demands on me.

1 2 3 4 5

Never Rarely Sometimes Often Very Often

24. Teaching is stressful for me.

1 2 3 4 5
Never Rarely Sometimes Often Very Often

Physical Symptoms of Stress

25. The frequency I experience one or more of these symptoms is: stomachaches, backaches, elevated blood pressure, stiff necks and shoulders.

1 2 3 4 5
Never Rarely Sometimes Often Very Often

26. I find my job tires me out.

1 2 3 4 5
Never Rarely Sometimes Often Very Often

27. I am tense by the end of the day.

1 2 3 4 5
Never Rarely Sometimes Often Very Often

28. I experience headaches.

1 2 3 4 5
Never Rarely Sometimes Often Very Often

Psychological/Emotional Symptoms of Stress

29. I find myself complaining to others.

1 2 3 4 5
Never Rarely Sometimes Often Very Often

30. I am frustrated and/or feel angry.

1 2 3 4 5
Never Rarely Sometimes Often Very Often

31. I worry about my job.

1 2 3 4 5
Never Rarely Sometimes Often Very Often

32. I feel depressed about my job.

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often

Stress Management Techniques

33. I am unable to use an effective method to manage my stress (such as exercise relaxation techniques, etc.)

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often

34. Stress management techniques would be useful in helping me cope with the demands of my job.

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often

35. I am now using one or more of the following to relieve my stress: alcohol, drugs, yelling, blaming, withdrawing, eating, smoking.

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often

36. I feel powerless to solve my difficulties.

1	2	3	4	5
Never	Rarely	Sometimes	Often	Very Often

APPENDIX D

Researcher's Script

"Good afternoon. My name is Tyler Rosenberg. I am a school psychology graduate student at James Madison University. For my thesis, I am conducting a research study to determine the stressors encountered by teachers and interest in participating in a stress management program. I am interested in studying teacher stress in order to provide suggestions and feedback for the development of a teacher stress management program within the Rockingham County School System. In order to develop the best stress management program possible, I want to receive feedback from as many teachers as I can within the school.

I am going to pass out a packet of materials, and I would like you to take a moment to read the cover letter on the first page. As the cover letter states, by completing and submitting the two surveys included in the packet, you are agreeing to participate in this research. Your participation is entirely voluntary and you are free to leave at any time without consequences of any kind. Your responses on the questionnaires will be kept anonymous and the results of this study presented in journal articles or at conferences will be an aggregate of data with no identifying information attached. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to ask.

Once you have completed the two questionnaires, put the questionnaires in the envelope that is provided in your packet, and drop off your sealed envelope in the box in room ___.

Thank you so much for your time and for your help.

APPENDIX E

Site Coordinator Letter of Permission

DATE

Institutional Review Board
James Madison University
MSC 5728
JMAC-6, Suite 26
Harrisonburg, VA 22807

Dear Institutional Review Board,

I hereby agree to allow Tyler Rosenberg and Debi Kipps-Vaughn, from James Madison University to conduct their research at NAME/LOCATION. I understand that the purpose of the study is to determine teacher need for and receptiveness towards participating in a stress reduction program in order to provide suggestions and feedback regarding the development of such a program within the school system.

By signing this letter of permission, I am agreeing to the following:

☐ JMU researcher(s) have permission to be on NAME/LOCATION premise and address the school staff at a pre-arranged staff meeting.

☐ JMU researcher(s) have access to the data collected to perform the data analysis both for presentation to NAME/LOCATION and/or for publication purposes.

Sincerely,

Tyler C. Rosenberg, M.A.	_____	_____
James Madison University	Principal	Date

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