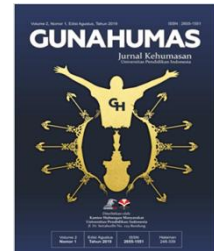




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### Perceived Stressors Among Married Teachers in Private Secondary Schools In Ilorin Metropolis

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#### ABSTRACT

*Stress among married female teachers in private secondary schools is a significant issue impacting their well-being and professional effectiveness. This qualitative study explores the perceived stressors faced by these educators in Ilorin West-East Local Government, Nigeria. Drawing on the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Theory, data was gathered through in-depth interviews with ten participants to uncover factors contributing to their stress, such as heavy workloads, time pressures, and conflicting responsibilities between work and family. Findings reveal that inadequate support, insufficient resources, and demanding educational standards exacerbate stress levels among married teachers. The study underscores the need for supportive school policies, improved resources, and enhanced work-life balance strategies to mitigate stress and promote a sustainable teaching environment. By addressing these stressors, educators' overall well-being and job satisfaction can be significantly enhanced, ultimately benefiting student learning outcomes.*

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#### ABSTRAK

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<p><i>Stres di kalangan guru perempuan yang sudah menikah di sekolah menengah swasta merupakan masalah signifikan yang memengaruhi kesejahteraan dan efektivitas profesional mereka. Studi kualitatif ini mengeksplorasi stresor yang dirasakan yang dihadapi oleh para pendidik ini di Pemerintah Daerah Ilorin Barat-Timur, Nigeria. Mengacu pada Teori Permintaan-Sumber Daya Pekerjaan (JD-R), data dikumpulkan melalui wawancara mendalam dengan sepuluh peserta untuk mengungkap faktor-faktor yang berkontribusi terhadap stres mereka, seperti beban kerja yang berat, tekanan waktu, dan tanggung jawab yang saling bertentangan antara pekerjaan dan keluarga. Temuan penelitian mengungkapkan bahwa dukungan yang tidak memadai, sumber daya yang tidak mencukupi, dan standar pendidikan yang menuntut memperburuk tingkat stres di kalangan guru yang sudah menikah. Studi ini menggarisbawahi perlunya kebijakan sekolah yang mendukung, sumber daya yang lebih baik, dan strategi keseimbangan kehidupan kerja yang ditingkatkan untuk mengurangi stres dan mempromosikan lingkungan pengajaran yang berkelanjutan. Dengan mengatasi stresor ini, kesejahteraan dan kepuasan kerja pendidik secara keseluruhan dapat ditingkatkan secara signifikan, yang pada akhirnya menguntungkan hasil belajar siswa.</i></p> <p><b>Cara mengutip artikel</b> Abdulkareem, H. B., Oluwakemi, A. F., Lasisi, K. A. (2024). Stres yang Dirasakan Kalangan Guru yang Menikah di Sekolah Menengah Swasta di Wilayah Metropolitan Ilorin. <i>Jurnal Gunahumas</i>, 7(2), 121-72.</p>	<p><b>Riwayat Artikel:</b> Diterima 03 September 2024 Direvisi 12 November 2024 Diterima 07 Desember 2024</p> <p><b>Kata Kunci:</b> Stres Guru Menikah, Beban Kerja dan Sumber Daya, Keseimbangan Kerja-Kehidupan.</p> <p><b>Jenis Artikel:</b> Artikel Penelitian</p>
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1. INTRODUCTION

Stress in the teaching profession is a significant problem globally, affecting educators’ mental health, job satisfaction, and overall well-being. This stress arises from multiple factors, each contributing to a demanding and often overwhelming work environment. Understanding these stressors and their impacts is critical to developing strategies to support teachers and improve education systems. Facing a heavy workload, including lesson planning, grading, administrative tasks, and extracurricular activities such as homework and social activities, by teachers directly or indirectly hinders their physical and emotional stability (Anderson, Boaler, & Dieckmann, 2018; Garcia & Lee, 2022). Expectations to meet educational standards and prepare students for standardized tests add to the stress (Johnson, 2020; Lasisi, Abdulkareem, & Adio, 2024). Having limited time to complete these tasks exacerbates stress, leading to long work hours beyond the school day. Managing diverse classrooms with varying student behaviors can be a challenge that increases stress (Ahmed, Abdulkareem, & Lasisi, 2023; Harris 2019). Disruptive behavior, lack of student motivation, and dealing with special needs students without adequate support from school management also contribute to teacher stress. Frequent changes in educational policies, high-stakes accountability measures, and bureaucratic procedures can create a sense of instability and frustration. Teachers may feel pressured to adhere to rigid guidelines that limit their autonomy and creativity (Lasisi et al., 2024). Furthermore, inadequate instructional materials, inadequate funding, and lack of support staff can hinder teachers’ ability to deliver quality education. Limited professional development opportunities and support from the administration further contribute to feelings of isolation and stress. Adeyemi and Ogunnubi (2020) assert that the demanding nature of the profession often affects teachers’ personal lives. Balancing work responsibilities with family and personal time is a challenge for married female teachers, leading to burnout and reduced job satisfaction. Additionally, chronic stress can lead to anxiety, depression, and other mental

health issues among dedicated teachers. Teachers who experience high levels of stress may also face physical health problems, such as headaches, insomnia, and hypertension. Stress negatively impacts performance and job satisfaction (Abdulkareem & Lasisi, 2024; Miller & Garcia, 2019). While stressed teachers may struggle to maintain enthusiasm and effectiveness in the classroom, which impacts student learning outcomes, high teacher turnover can disrupt the continuity of educational attainment and may also lead to increased absenteeism. Anderson, Boaler, and Dieckmann (2018) observed that persistent stress has contributed to teacher turnover with many educators leaving the profession early, placing additional strain on remaining staff.

Additionally, Taylor and Robinson (2022) argue that teacher stress can indirectly affect students. Stressed teachers may have less patience and energy, leading to less effective teaching and lower student engagement and achievement. Providing ongoing professional development and training can equip teachers with effective classroom management techniques, coping strategies, and resilience-building skills. Fostering a supportive school culture where teachers feel valued and heard is essential. Regular communication, opportunities for collaboration, and recognition for teacher efforts (Ehindero, Bolaji, & Abdulkareem, 2023; Hassan, Bolaji, & Abdulkareem, 2024) can boost morale and reduce stress. Ensuring that teachers have access to necessary resources, such as instructional materials, technology, and support staff, can alleviate some of the practical challenges they face (Brown & Miller 2020; Robinson, 2018). Implementing policies that reduce administrative burdens and allow for greater teacher autonomy can help reduce stress. Providing clear and consistent guidelines and involving teachers in the decision-making process can also increase their sense of control and job satisfaction.

A major problem faced by married female teachers as cited by Sweet (2014) is stress caused by role conflict or dual roles. Women generally perform dual roles such as managing work in their organization, managing family at home, and fulfilling other obligations to the community. Working women face a major dilemma in managing work-home conflict. Married teachers in private secondary schools in Ilorin Metropolis face a variety of stressors that can impact their personal and professional lives (Robinson, 2018).

The major stressors experienced among this group include: Work-family conflict: Married teachers often struggle to balance the demands of teaching responsibilities with family obligations, which causes stress and strain. The need to manage work and household duties can be challenging in itself (Garcia & Taylor 2019). Personality and behavioral factors that include certain personality traits and behavioral patterns, such as perfectionism or poor coping mechanisms, can exacerbate marital challenges and increase stress levels. Affective factors such as emotional and relational problems in marriage, such as lack of affection or poor communication, can be a significant source of stress for married teachers (Smith & Jones, 2018).

Home is another factor that can be a shelter and workplace for every married woman (Clark 2020). A woman as a mother and homemaker, caretaker of the home, and family leisure time is culturally privileged as a legitimate and appropriate female purpose (Harris & Anderson, 2021). Nigeria as a traditional society expects only women to take care of children, be the head of the household, and pay respect to elders (Miller & White, 2023). Almost all Nigerian women adhere to this doctrine and are content to be marginalized objects in the life

of society in various aspects such as social, cultural, economic, and political perspectives. Among the forces that bring women into the labor market are economic factors, inflation affecting the family budget, independence, unemployed husbands, supportive motives, increasing demand for female labor such as midwifery, and advancement in household appliances and technology (Brown, 2019). While many married women work not only for economic motivation and income but most of them are involved in the labor market only for the satisfaction of skills, self-esteem, self-recognition, and the desire for self-actualization and achievement (Rai, Suzen, & Pavi, 2021).

These contemporary working women are married women who live with their spouses, pre- and post-kindergarten-age children, and possibly their in-laws (Jones & Smith, 2019). Having little time to raise children, diminishing attention to husbands, and overload of housework, thus, maximizing work opportunities while managing family duties pose physical, mental, and domestic work stress to married working women (Clark & Harris, 2021). Stress is an overwhelming pressure or anxiety that stems from challenges faced in one's life that are perceived to hinder one's well-being and one's ability to cope and survive (Rai, Suzen, & Pavi, 2021). Some of the threats that stress poses to its victims are anxiety, low self-esteem, threats related to physical safety, and a sense of belonging or reputation. For a woman to work in a psychologically demanding environment in the office and come home to face a lot of household chores such as cleaning, cooking, washing, and ironing (laundry), may be tiring and harmful to her in terms of psychological and emotional well-being which can periodically lead to prolonged stress. Married female teachers who shoulder the responsibilities of being a housewife and the burden of taking care of children well may experience the inevitable stress associated with being a foreman or a superwoman, such women may suffer from stressors such as work-family conflict, sexual harassment, role conflict and dissatisfaction, prolonged stress to name a few (Brown & Miller, 2020). Although, short-term stress is necessary as a part of daily routine in human life it helps an individual to meet deadlines in preparing presentations, punctuality, and punctuality in important events. However, prolonged long-term stress and overwhelm can result in emotional imbalance, agoraphobia, mental health issues and depressive disorders, less sexual satisfaction, and high rates of infertility among others (Harris & White, 2023). Thus, juggling between dual roles as an employee and family duties reflects and affects the mental health of such working women drastically. Findings reported that married working women complained of more symptoms of stress than unemployed women and psychological distress (Robinson, 2019; Tiamiyu, Adegbenro, & Abdulkareem, 2024).

Recently, Smith and Brown (2020) observed that out of 46 intact marriages in America, the working wife numbered over 26 million. Research also shows that married women from the lower working class in America experience the greatest increase in mental depression due to stress (Miller & White, 2023). Furthermore, the dual responsibilities of home and workplace are enormous physical and emotional burdens on married women. Another survey showed that the average working woman spends at least 26 hours per week on household tasks in addition to her job, resulting in a 66-hour workweek, leaving little time for relaxation and structured recreation. Role conflict can also leave working women feeling guilty about what might happen to their children by leaving them with a babysitter, friend, relative, or after-school caregiver (Smith & Brown, 2020). Working women's inability to

juggle their responsibilities in both places leads to intrapersonal, interpersonal, cultural, and organizational conflicts. The consequences of stressors are the pressure of the mother's role at home, emotional imbalance, ineffective individual skills, inadequate support, a great negative impact on individuals in the family, and a spirit of endangering the traditional role of women in a particular society. According to Rai, Suzen, and Pavi (2021), among the stressors experienced by working and married women are mental health problems due to role conflict, poor relationships, anxiety, emotional mismanagement, and unspecified psychological dysfunction. Moreover, mothers are one of the important socialization agents that determine the success of children's education both formally and informally. Thus, lack or absence of attention to children damages or weakens the parent-child relationship that fosters the victory and success of children. This jet era shows that working women are entering the labor market at the wrong time. Research shows the level of stressors between men and women with a ratio of 3:7. Perhaps, working women are vulnerable to stress due to heavy burdens at home and work. The consequences of stressors in balancing work and family life include decreased quality of life and work, including physical and mental illness, amnesia, insomnia reactions, decreased productivity, forgetting one's duties and roles to others, and low levels of social communication (Hosseini et al, 2024; Olanrewaju, Baba, & Abdulkareem, 2023). In conclusion, playing dual roles simultaneously induces daily stressors at home, from husband, at work, from superiors or employers which eventually causes great strain to be active and competent at home and work. Meanwhile, addressing stress in the teaching profession requires a multifaceted approach involving educators, administrators, policymakers, and the wider community. Given the gap to be filled, this study objectively aims to examine the sources of stressors faced by working and married women in federal, state, and private secondary schools in Ilorin West-East Local Government, suggest counseling tips for stress coping strategies, and implement supportive measures to achieve Work-Family balance and a more positive sustainable teaching environment. Objectives of the Study

This study primarily aims to investigate the stressors experienced by married female teachers in private secondary schools in Ilorin West-East Local Government. Specifically, the study:

1. Examines the factors causing stress experienced by married female teachers in private secondary schools in Ilorin West-East Local Government

#### Research Questions

1. What are the factors causing stress experienced by married female teachers in private secondary schools in Ilorin West-East Local Government?

## 2. LITERATURE REVIEW

This study was guided by the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) Theory. This theory was developed by Bakker and Demerouti (2008), which explains how job demands and job resources affect employee well-being and stress. The JD-R theory states that job demands such as workload, time pressure, and conflicting responsibilities, can lead to stress and burnout. On the other hand, job resources, such as social support, autonomy, and growth opportunities, can mitigate the negative impact of job demands and enhance employee well-being. In the context of married teachers in private secondary schools in Ilorin Metropolis,

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married teachers in this environment may experience high levels of job demands due to the dual responsibilities of teaching and managing family life. These demands may include; heavy workload and time pressure (Bakker & Demerouti, 2008), conflicting responsibilities between work and family (Kossek & Lautsch, 2018), limited resources and support from the school or colleagues (Hobfoll, 1989). The JD-R Theory states that job resources can help mitigate the negative impact of job demands. For married teachers, job resources may include; social support from colleagues, family, or friends (Cohen, Gottlieb, & Underwood, 2015), autonomy in managing their teaching and family responsibilities (Oldham, Hackman, & Pierce, 1976), opportunities for professional growth and development (Luthans & Youssef, 2007). By applying the JD-R Theory, this study was able to investigate how perceived job demands and job resources among married teachers in private secondary schools in Ilorin Metropolis contribute to their stress levels and overall well-being. This can inform strategies to reduce stress and improve work-life balance among these teachers.

Perceived stress is related to thoughts and feelings about stressors that cause stress. The findings of Rai, Suzen, and Pavi (2021) on the Exploration of Perceived Stress in Married and Unmarried Female Employees in the Public and Private Sectors show that the average score of married female workers (76.63) is higher than the score of unmarried female workers (57.86) which indicates that married female workers face more stress than unmarried female workers. This finding explains that additional family responsibilities such as children, and in-laws are the reasons why married female workers have higher levels of perceived stress than unmarried female workers.

### **3. METHOD**

This study used a qualitative research approach. In-depth interviews with a sample of married teachers from private secondary schools in the Ilorin Metropolis were conducted. The interviews explored the teachers' personal experiences, perspectives, and coping strategies related to the identified stressors. The phenomenological approach enabled the researcher to gain an in-depth understanding of the lived experiences of the participants. In-depth questions were the primary means of data collection used in this study. The interviews were conducted face-to-face and essential information was obtained from the respondents. Open-ended questions that were in line with the research objectives and research questions were used in the interviews. The purpose of the interview questions was to elicit the respondents' opinions, experiences, and perceptions on how they perceive stress in their schools and the education system as a whole. Ten private secondary school teachers in Ilorin West LGA were selected for this study using a purposeful sampling technique. The selection of respondents was based on their suitability and representativeness for the research topic, as well as their availability and willingness to participate in the study. The respondents varied in terms of age, gender, and years of teaching experience. To examine the information gathered from the interviews, the study conducted a thematic analysis. After the audio recordings were converted into text, they were meaningfully categorized and thematically coded. Once the voice notes were converted into text, they were meaningfully categorized and thematically coded. Themes were then examined and debated based on the research objectives and research questions as well as the current body of literature. This study adhered to ethical standards and best practices for qualitative research. Before agreeing to participate, respondents were informed about the purpose, methods, and objectives of the study. They received assurances that information about them and their responses would remain anonymous and confidential. In addition, they were asked if it was okay to record and use their voice notes for reporting and data analysis.

## 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Factors Causing Stress Experienced by Married Female Teachers

The majority of teachers face physical and psychological stress in their various primary roles. Heavy workloads from lesson planning, grading papers, and administrative tasks were reported as contributing factors to stress. It was noted that when combined with long hours at school, their workload becomes tedious for the day. Other respondents reported that dealing with disruptive behavior, maintaining discipline, and managing the various needs of students were also seen as contributing factors to stress. Newly hired teachers in particular found it difficult to cope with stress. Respondents also noted that inadequate teaching materials, outdated technology, and inadequate support from school administration added to the stress experienced during effective teaching and learning. Expectations to meet educational standards, achieve academic results, and prepare students for standardized tests were also reported as contributing factors to significant stress for teachers. A male from an inclusive high school also revealed that supporting students who were facing personal issues, such as behavioral problems, mental health issues, or difficult home situations, could be emotionally draining and stressful.

### Factors Causing Stress in Teachers

The findings of this study revealed that teachers have diverse and complex perceptions of stress ranging from viewing it as a dynamic psychological and physical process that aims to undermine teacher development and thereby affect students and the wider community. The article also found that teachers face various challenges and obstacles in completing their tasks as the workload is on the high side. Lack of remuneration and motivation, inadequate training and resources, poor communication and engagement, and stressful tasks have contributed to the level of stress faced. The article identified several factors that can reduce teachers' stress such as task distribution, remuneration and motivation, training and support, communication and engagement, and provision of adequate resources to facilitate stress coping among teachers.

## 5. CONCLUSION

Married teachers face a series of challenges that negatively affect their personal and professional lives. As they have to juggle household duties and academic tasks simultaneously. The struggle to maintain a healthy balance between home and school responsibilities can escalate into feelings of guilt, frustration, and burnout that ultimately affect the positive outcomes in all their endeavors.

However, these factors can vary in intensity depending on the school environment, the support provided by administrators and colleagues, and the experiences and coping mechanisms of each teacher. Addressing these stressors through supportive school policies, professional development, and promoting work-life balance can help mitigate their impact on teachers.

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