Teacher's Mastery Experiences on Coping with Stress at Work Place among the Public Secondary School Teachers in Mathare Sub– County, Nairobi, County, Kenya.

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ABSTRACT: *This study assessed Teachers' Mastery Experiences on Coping with stress at Work Place among the Public Secondary School Teachers in Mathare Sub- County.The study adopted a mixed method approach; a convergent parallel design was employed to enable the researcher investigate the relationship between teachers' mastery experiences on working with stress at workplace among the public secondary school teachers in Mathare Sub-County, Nairobi County, Kenya. A census sampling technique was adopted to selectEighty-six respondents. Questionnaires were distributed to the respondents to collect quantitative data while interview guide was used to collect qualitative data. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20 was used to run descriptive and inferential statistics on the data. To present the data, frequency distribution tables were employed. The study's results showsmoderate and positive relationship between mastery experiences and proactive coping methods ($r=.451$; $p<0.05$). Similarly, the correlation between mastery experiences and reflective coping was moderately positive, ($r=.411$; $p<0.05$).There was a positive weak relationship between mastery experiences and preventive coping methods, ($r=.239$; $p<0.05$).The correlation between mastery experiences and instrumental coping was also a weak positive correlation, ($r=.294$; $p<0.05$). Mastery experiences and emotional support also presented a weak positive relationship ($r=.258$; $p<0.05$). This demonstrated that teachers' mastery experience had a favorable impact on stress management. The study recommended the entrenchment of coping skills into teachers' professional development programs to empower them with techniques to manage stress at workplace.The results of this study are expected to equip teachers in Mathare Sub-County with different ways of coping with stress at work place, help teachers address their experience that will be useful to educational community as a whole for it would lead to the reduction of job dissatisfaction and costly turn over.*

I.　　BACKGROUND

Teachers are the most valued assets of any nation. Teachers play a vital role of imparting knowledge and skills to the students with the hope that after they successfully complete their studies would contribute towards building their nations socially and economically. Wilson,Woolfson and Durkin (2020) define mastery experiences as performance accomplishments that involve the accomplishment of goals by direct individual action within the behavioral domain. The greatest and most crucial factor in developing persistent self-efficacy expectations is mastery experiences.

Wilson, Woolfson, and Durkin (2020) conducted a study in Scotland on school atmosphere and mastery experience that mainly influenced teachers' opinions about their abilities to teach inclusively. To review teachers' descriptions of inclusive teaching, self-efficacy and mastery experiences, the study used social cognitive theory. One hundred and forty-eight (148) primary school teachers from conventional Scottish schools made up the study's sample. Study participants provided information using questionnaires that evaluated their experiences with mastery and the learning environment (collective efficacy and school climate perceptions). To illustrate the link between the variables in the study, descriptive statistics were used. The study's findings showed that mastery experiences, the school environment, including climate and collective efficacy were important markers of teachers' self-efficacy. The study asserted that self-efficacy subscales can be supported in the classroom, including classroom management, instructional strategies and student engagement efficacy.

According to Schuck, Aubusson, Buchanan, Varadharajan and Burke (2018) teachers may have low morale in the beginning of their professions, question their abilities, which causes anxiety, reality shock and end up in a survival mode, which involves battling to continue. This study looked at how new expectations for the teaching profession and teacher growth from the viewpoints of school administrators and newly trained teachers. The goal of the study was to determine which professional competencies new teachers needed assistance on in the early stages of their employment. The study entailed analyzing data of one hundred and four (104) Finnish school leaders together with new one hundred and forty-five (145) teachers using quantitative and qualitative methods.

The socio-cultural theory of Wertsch (1985), which acknowledges that social interactions and practices are influenced by people's experiences, served as the theoretical foundation for the study. In this study, teachers had to navigate their way through an established and complex social system (the school). Early Career Teachers were surveyed for the purpose of gathering data for the study. The results showed that in order to provide comprehensive assistance for students' development, new teachers in particular needed support while working with various student groupings. The study also showed that new teachers needed support in order to handle conflict in the classroom and work with partners both inside and outside of the school community.

In their study titled "Resolving Feelings of Professional Inadequacy: Student Teachers' Coping with Distressful Situations," Lassila, Uittoa, and Estola (2018) examined the viewpoints of student teachers and newly licensed teachers regarding emotionally challenging circumstances they came across both during teacher school and as newly licensed instructors. The study's objective was to determine how new teachers in Sweden dealt with emotionally demanding circumstances while undergoing teacher training. Twenty student teachers in total, including fifteen (15) women and five (5) men, between the ages of 21 and 30, took part in the study.The findings also demonstrated a strong correlation between relationship conflicts among new teachers and their ability to balance the demands and practical responsibilities of being both an independent teacher and a part of the teaching community at the school. The study found that in order to get the kind of help they required from more experienced colleagues; novice instructors must carefully consider their connections with more seasoned educators.

Otwate, Nyakwara, and Mwangi (2021) conducted a study in Nambale Sub-county of Busia County to ascertain the influence of instructors' topic knowledge and teaching experience on the selection of instructional strategies to enhance students' reading abilities. The research attempted to ascertain the impact of teachers' subject knowledge and teaching experience during the foundation level at which pupils should learn basic reading abilities in order to facilitate a smooth transition to succeeding grades. The Participatory Learning Approach (PLA) theory of Paulo Freire (1972) was employed in the study to determine whether teachers should adopt particular instructional tactics to improve the literacy skills of their first-graders. According to the theory, educating children linguistic skills helps them get ready to deal with social and academic issues in society.The researchers found that a competent teacher needed to have a positive attitude and perceive the various needs of

the students as they were being taught and that teachers with a certain amount of teaching experience had similar potentials and abilities to employ a range of strategies to address the various learning needs of students. According to the study, matching veteran teachers with fresh faces in a classroom and at subject-matter levels resulted in more engaging learning opportunities for kids.

Imonje and Wandera (2019) conducted research on how teaching experience affected students' performance in the English subject of the Kenya Certificate of Primary Examination. The goal of this study was to determine how students' performance on the English section of the KCPE test from public primary schools in Machakos Countywas impacted by teacher experience (teaching). According to the study, teaching experience was a sign of a teacher's expertise with different instructional methodologies through hands-on learning for efficient contentment delivery in a classroom setting.The study found that candidates' performance in the English subject of the Kenya Certificate of Primary Examination improved over time, going between a minimum mean score of 45.8%, which corresponded to a teacher's four years of teaching experience and a maximum mean score of 53.2%, which represented a teacher's fifteen to nineteen years of teaching experience.

II.   METHOD

Research Design

The study set to evaluate the influence of teacher's mastery experiences on coping with stress at work place among the public secondary school teachers in Mathare Sub- County.A research design is the plan for a study that represents the optimal research methodology to address the study's research questions. A research design, according to Creswell (2018) is a framework or strategy for a study that is used as a direction for data collection and analysis.This study used a mixed methods approach ofconvergent parallel research design.This was used to allow the researcher to make sure that both qualitative and quantitative data provide different types of information often detailed views of participants qualitatively and scores on instruments quantitatively and together they yielded results that should be the same.

Location of the Study

Mathare Sub-county is one of the Sub-counties in Nairobi Metropolitan County. After the County Government Act of 2012 was passed, it was separated from Starehe Sub-county in 2013. According to Independent Electoral and Boundaries Commission of Kenya(IEBC), Mathare Sub-County has six wards (Hospital, Mabatini, Huruma, Ngei, MlangoKubwa, and Kiamaiko) and is 3 km2 in size. The three mixed-gender day secondary schools and the one girl's boarding secondary school are the four public schools in Mathare-Sub County, all of which are located in slum areas.The reason for selecting Mathare Sub-County as a study area was that no research had been done on teachers' self-efficacy and coping with stress. The area was chosen because it was conveniently accessible to the researcher.Mathare Sub-county is among one the overpopulated Sub-counties in Nairobi County. It is also known of slums where the majority of the residents come from.

Target Population

A study population according Shukla andSatishprakash (2020) is a set or group of all the units on which the findings of the research are to be applied. According to information from the Mathare Sub-County office of the Director of Education from the year 2021, there were four public secondary schools in the area, with a total of 82 teachers and four principals. 86 teachers made up the study's entire sample. After being split off from Starehe Sub-county, Mathare Sub-County now makes up Mathare Sub-County that comprise three mixed-gender day secondary schools and the one girl's boarding secondary school making a total of four public secondary schools with eighty-six teachers (86). MathareSub-County is one of the seventeen sub-counties in Nairobi County.

Sample Size and Sampling Procedures

The census method, a statistical enumeration in which every member of the population is examined, was utilized in this study. Due to the study's limited study population, this methodology was perfect. A census sampling technique, according to Singh and Masuku (2014), is more desirable for small populations that are between 50 and 200. According to these scholars, a census eliminates sampling error and offers information on every member of the population, which enables them to obtain the desired level of precision by providing comprehensive data relevant to a certain study.The sample size was made up of eighty-six teachers.

Research Instruments

To assess teachers' mastery experience and coping with stress at workplace; Teacher Self-Efficacy Scale was used to assess the self-efficacy of teachers (Schwarzer, Schmitz and Daytner 1999). According to how true they thought each of the ten assertions were, the respondents had to choose one of them from (1) not at all true to (4) entirely true. The identification of particular work abilities unique to the teaching profession, according to Schwarzer et al. (1999) was the first step in creating a new instrument to measure teacher self-efficacy. The following four elements were discovered to be essential: job accomplishment, on-the-job skill development, social ties with children, parentsand coworkers and stress management. Teachers had distinct expectations for their students' self-efficacy for each of these four domains. These were all essential for effective instruction.

The Proactive Coping Inventory (PCI), developed by Greenglass,Schwarzer andTaubert(1999) was utilized by the researcher to identify the coping mechanisms for stress load. Proactive coping, reflective coping, strategic planning, preventive coping, instrumental support seeking, emotional support seeking and avoidance coping were the seven subscales that made up the questionnaire. Each of the four categories: Not at all true, barely true, somewhat true, and completely true—was represented by one of the respondents' responses. Greenglass and others (1999) developed a 55-item questionnaire for each of the aforementioned subscales that examined the teacher's opinion of how truthful each of the statements were based on how he or she felt about the circumstance. Questions from the subscales included avoidance, instrumental support (8 items), emotional support (5 items), strategic support (4 items), proactive support (14 items), preventive support (10 items), reflective support (11 items) and avoidance (3 items).

Table 1

The study sought to explore the relationship between Mastery Experiences on Coping with workplace stress among teachers in Mathare Sub-county Nairobi County Kenya.

Mastery Experiences on Coping with workplace Stress among Teachers

Proactive Coping Subscale	Reflective Coping Subscale	Preventive Coping Subscale	Strategic Planning Subscale	Instrumental Support Seeking Subscale	Emotional Support System Subscale	Avoidance Coping Subscale
.451	.411	.239	.214	.294	.258	-.025
.000	.000	.044	.072	.012	.028	.832
72	72	72	72	72	72	72

According to Obilor and Amadi (2018) Pearson's product moment correlation coefficient is a measure of the strength and direction of relationship that exists between two variables measured on at least an interval scale. A Pearson's correlation tries to draw a line of best fit through the data of two variables, and the Pearson's correlation coefficient, r, indicates how far away all these data points are from this line of best fit. According toTurney (2022) correlation coefficients vary from -1 to +1: whereas -1 and +1 indicate perfect negative and perfect positive correlation coefficients respectively. A correlation coefficient of 0 infers no correlation (zero relationship), correlation coefficient between 0 and 0.3 (whether negative or positive) are said to be weak, between 0.3 and 0.5 are moderate and greater than 0.5 are strong.

Table 1.1 shows that there is a moderate and positive relationship between mastery experiences and proactive coping methods ($r=.451$; $p<0.05$). This implies that a teacher with mastery experience who adopts proactive coping mechanism is able to moderately cope with stress at workplace. Similarly, the correlation between mastery experiences and reflective coping was moderately positive, ($r=.411$; $p<0.05$). This implies that with more mastery experiences there was more reflective coping which enabled teachers to moderately cope with stress at workplace.
It is also revealed that there was a positive weak relationship between mastery experiences and preventive coping methods, ($r=.239$; $p<0.05$). This implies that despite mastery experiences teachers employed preventive coping methods to avert stress at workplace.

The correlation between mastery experiences and instrumental coping was also a weak positive correlation, ($r=.294$; $p<0.05$). Mastery experiences and emotional support also presented a weak positive relationship ($r=.258$; $p<0.05$). This would imply that with more mastery experiences there would be more instrumental and emotional coping methods. Results of analysis also revealed that there was a weak negative correlation between mastery experiences and the avoidance coping subscale. Although weak, ($r= -0.025$, $P> 0.05$). These findings have been supported by Wilson, Woolfson, and Durkin (2020) who asserted that Mastery experiences are an important and the strongest source of creating perseverant self-efficacy expectations that leads to teachers' accomplishment or achievement of goals. Through these accomplishments, a teacher is able to cope with stress at work.

Discussions

Similarly, a study from Indonesia by Carney, Brendefur, Thiede, Hughes and Sutton (2016) avers that the best way to develop greater self-efficacy in teachers is to focus on mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, getting positive and encouraging feedback.A study in Australia by Toe and Longaretti (2022) on teacher' mastery experience in high performing teachers as well as barriers and enablers for new graduates reported that teachers with a high sense of mastery experience were more resilient to difficulties, experienced greater job satisfaction and had higher expectations of their students. This study also reported that new graduate teachers had low mastery experience in their roles but they got increasing it due to mentoring and positive feedback from their senior teachers.

Wilson, Woolfson, and Durkin (2020) conducted a study in Scotland on school atmosphere and mastery experience that mainly influenced teachers' opinions about their abilities to teach inclusively.The study's findings showed that mastery experiences, the school environment, including climate and collective efficacy were important markers of teachers' self-efficacy. The study asserted that mastery experience and self-efficacy subscales can be supported in the classroom, including classroom management, instructional strategies and student engagement efficacy. All these sub-scales were positively correlated with opinions of the principal teacher's leadership, resource influence, academic emphasis and interacting with teachers' beliefs.

When workplace demands clash with a worker's capacity, resources, or needs, stress at work is the physical and emotional reaction that results. Significant research into work-related stress has been an on-going activity in many

countries of the world (Badu, 2020). Dempsey and Burke (2021) undertook a research study in Ireland to explore the Irish Teachers' experiences of stress and how different teachers dealt with stress. The study found that although all of the teachers had some degree of stress, there were differences in the levels of stress among them based on experience due to things like relationships, a lack of control, authority and identity.

A study in Ethiopia by Kabito and Wami (2020) on how public secondary school teachers in Gondar city rated their level of job-related stress reported that teachers experienced a high level of occupational stress that arose from interpersonal stressors, administrative stressors and student-parent stressors. The study asserted that to cope with occupational stress more than half of the teachers used religion as a coping mechanism. This study recommended educational bureaus, health professionals and other educational practitiners should collaborate with the schools to put the necessary measures into place in order to lower the level of occupational stress among teachers and help them to use the best coping mechanisms.

Steenekamp, van der Merwe and Mehmedova (2018) conducted a study in South Africa in order to better understand the mastery experience of student teachers who had the chance to experience vicarious learning while on a field trip. The study's objective was to gain a better understanding of how student teachers developed their professional identity. Using Vygotsky's (1986) social-constructivist theory framework, this qualitative research study focused on how mastery experience of teachers in learning changed student instructors' professional identities. According to the theoretical framework, learning involved making connections to and adoptions from the sociocultural background.

Imonje and Wandera (2019) conducted research on how teaching experience affected students' performance in the English subject of the Kenya Certificate of Primary Examination. The goal of this study was to determine how students' performance on the English section of the KCPE test from public primary schools in Machakos Countywas impacted by teacher experience (teaching).According to the study, teaching experience was a sign of a teacher's expertise with different instructional methodologies through hands-on learning for efficient contentment delivery in a classroom setting.

Otwate, Nyakwara, and Mwangi (2021) conducted a study in Nambale Sub-county of Busia County to ascertain the influence of instructors' topic knowledge and teaching experience on the selection of instructional strategies to enhance students' reading abilities. The study found that a competent teacher needed to have a positive attitude and perceive the various needs of the students as they were being taught and that teachers with a certain amount of teaching experience had similar potentials and abilities to employ a range of strategies to address the various learning needs of students. At the same time matching veteran teachers with fresh faces in a classroom and at subject-matter levels resulted in more engaging learning opportunities for kids.

IV CONCLUSION

On mastery experiences, respondents generally believed that they had mastered enough experience to be able to steer well in all responsibilities in which they had been entrusted.The study realized that their social networks will important for practical help, such as advice and general knowledge. On the other hand, people's counsel to assist them solve their own difficulties, research participants agreed that this was absolutely true. Additionally, they said that the knowledge they gained from others had frequently assisted them in managing their stress and that they could typically recognize people who could assist them in coming up with their own answers to difficulties to achieve on their mastery experiences.

The study recommends for professional development of teachers which should include stress coping mechanisms. By this teachers' wellness will be well catered for; and this will provide stress management techniques as part of their ongoing professional development.

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