

A STUDY OF JOB STRESS AND JOB SATISFACTION AMONG CHINESE VOLUNTEER TEACHERS IN THAILAND

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Abstract: This study was aim to investigate the level of Job Stress and Job Satisfaction amongst Chinese volunteer teachers and to explore the relationship between the two and whether the teachers Job Stress effected their satisfaction with the job. The questionnaire survey method was used in this study. The target population for this study was the volunteer Chinese teachers who were working in Thailand from 2013-2014. There were 1,200 volunteers during this period; therefore, this number represented the population and use 291 teachers as the sample of this study. The researcher found that stress was common among Chinese volunteer teacher; they showed lower stress levels in Cross Cultural Teaching and Communication and showed the highest level of stress in Workload and Career Development. All Chinese volunteer teachers in Thailand showed high-level satisfaction to the variables ‘Recognition’, ‘Teamwork’, ‘Work itself’ and ‘Achievement’ under Job Satisfaction. However, they showed the lowest level of job satisfaction in ‘Advancement’. The gender and education level of the teacher didn’t have an effect on their Job Stress and Job Satisfaction level. The age and the work experience of the teacher had an effect on the result for their Job Stress and Job Satisfaction level. There were both significant negative correlations and significant positive correlations between job stress and job satisfaction of Chinese Volunteer Teacher in Thailand. There were both significant negative effects and significant positive effects between Job stress and Job satisfaction of Chinese Volunteer Teacher in Thailand.

Keywords: Job Stress, Job Satisfaction, Chinese Volunteer Teacher.

Introduction

Since 2003 to 2015, Hanban had sent a total of 10512 volunteers to Thailand. The number of volunteers sent exceeded 1,000 for the first time in 2009, and now it has exceeded 1,200 for 2 straight years. In the year 2015-2016, there were 1800 volunteer Chinese teacher’s working in the schools of, Higher Education Commission, Basic Education Commission, Vocational Education Commission, The Private Education Commission, Informal and Non-Formal Education Commission, and Confucius Institutes in Thailand. Thailand is the most popular place for Chinese teachers to volunteer, worldwide.

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Moorhead and Griffin (2011), indicated that many things can cause stress, reflecting that stress can be caused by both organizational stressors and life stressors. Organizational stressors are various factors in the workplace that cause stress, for example occupation, security, overload, working environment, conflict, and leadership style, whereas life stressors include life change and life trauma.

When the volunteer Chinese Teachers come to work in Thailand, they will face particular challenges such as a different culture and language, unfamiliar work environment, etc. It can be recognized that stress is a natural component of life and can increase under different or extreme situations, this can be related to how the volunteer Chinese teachers' experience stress, as though they have volunteered for their role, the process and reality of living away from home and the experiences this brings can often lead to an increased stress level. This level of stress and the way it is processed can vary greatly when taking age and experience into account, as often teachers of different background experience and ages will cope with the increased stress to varying degrees. It is necessary to understand the questions and focus points that will be covered in this thesis to have a thorough understanding of the topic, in particular, if certain challenges in the teaching role increase stress levels in Chinese volunteer Teachers, if there are any other factors, other than teaching, that would contribute to high levels of stress, and if the volunteers are satisfied with their jobs in Thailand. These leading questions of discussing will lead to the understanding of the relationship between job stress and job satisfaction and how one affects the other. Based on these issues, this research will study the job stress and job satisfaction among Chinese volunteer teachers in Thailand, focusing on the relationship between teachers' job stress and teachers' job satisfaction.

Objectives

The major objective of the study is to explore the relationship between job stress and job satisfactions of Chinese volunteer teachers in Thailand. The following specific objectives will be considered:

1. To determine the teachers' Job Stress level, based on the determining variables, while working as a volunteer teacher in Thailand.
2. To determine the teachers' Job Satisfaction level, based on the determining variables, while working as a volunteer teacher in Thailand.
3. To determine the relationship between teachers' demographic profiles and teachers' overall job stress.
4. To determine the relationship between teachers' demographic profiles and teachers' overall job satisfaction.
5. To determine the causal relationship between teacher's Job Stress and teacher's Job Satisfaction

Conceptual Framework

In this section, the conceptual framework of this study illustrates the relationship between three main variables. The independent variables are demographic profiles and job stress. The demographic profile consists of gender, age, years of teaching experience and educational level. Job stress consists of the 8 sub-variables of Time management, Student Behavior, Workload, School management, School Environment, Career Development, Social Support, Cross-Cultural Teaching and Communication.

The dependent variable is Job Satisfaction, which consists of 5 sub-variables, Recognition, Teamwork, Work Itself, Achievement and Advancement. Figure 1 shows that the teachers' Job Stress can be influenced by the demographic profiles, whilst Job Satisfaction can be influenced by both the demographic profiles and Job Stress. This is because different demographic profiles will affect the levels of Job Stress in varying ways, and in turn this will lead to an effect on Job Satisfaction as a result of the level of Job Stress. Job Satisfaction can also be influenced by the demographic profiles as the different profiling of the teachers will relate and adapt to the different satisfaction variables accordingly.

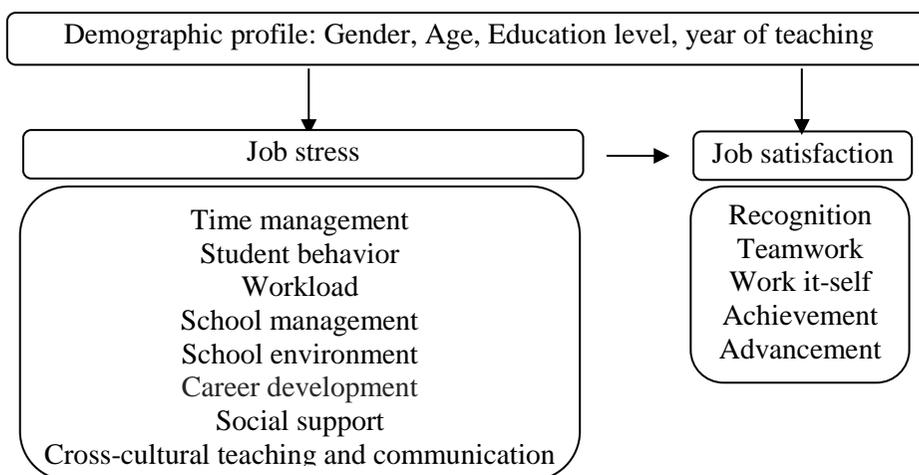


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework of This Study

Definitions of Terms

For the clarify and uniformity of this study, the following terms applied in the study, were defined as follows:

Stress refers to extreme negative effects on the body including an imbalanced psychological state and physical illness.

Job Stress refers to extreme negative effects on the body including an imbalanced psychological state and physical illness caused by an overwhelming working environment. In this study the determinants of Job Stress are Time Management, Student Behavior, Workload, School Management, School Environment, Career Development, Social Support and Cross-cultural Teaching and Communication.

Time Management refers to managing your working hours effectively. This occurs in the form of deadlines for work projects and reports. Extra time outside of teaching hours can be spent meeting deadlines. Working hours can be occupied by other jobs that are not related to teaching.

Student Behavior refers to the student's attitude to learning and their behavior in class.

Workload refers to the total amount of work a teacher has to do.

School Management refers to school policy and the management team.

School Environment refers to the physical environment of the school including teaching resources and the colleague support network.

Career Development refers to the training opportunities available to develop professional teaching techniques and promotion.

Social Support refers to the attitude and support from the school, parents and the community.

Cross-cultural Teaching and Communication refers to the communication between a teacher and student from different cultural backgrounds.

Job Satisfaction refers to a feeling of happiness and fulfillment derived from the job itself and related factors. In this study the determinants of Job Satisfaction are Recognition, Teamwork, Work Itself, Achievement and Advancement.

Recognition refers to a feeling of appreciation from students and colleagues as well as behavioral support.

Teamwork refers to the co-operation between team members in completing a task.

Work Itself refers to the nature of work performed as well as the opportunities of teachers to use their skills and abilities.

Achievement refers to the attainment of a goal or objective that is related to the job or position.

Advancement refers to the opportunity for promotion.

Chinese Volunteer Teachers refers to the Chinese teacher who is employed under the Chinese Volunteer Program of Chinese Language Council (Hanban).

Method

Population

The target population for this study was the volunteer Chinese teachers who were working in Thailand from 2013-2014. There were 1,200 volunteers during this period; therefore, this number represented the population for this study.

Sample

The way to determine sample size would be to use the sample size table. Krejcie & Moran (1970) have produced a table for determining sample size. Therefore, the population of 1,200 teachers gave a calculated sample of 291 teachers.

Research Instrument

The research instrument used in this study was a questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of three parts.

- Part one: Demographic profiles.
- Part two: Job Stress
- Part three: Job Satisfaction

Collection of Data

The researcher used a questionnaire for the collection of primary data. Most of the questionnaires were sent to the volunteer Chinese teachers via E-mail, others were sent via an online survey website and lastly hard copies were given to the remaining volunteers to complete during their teachers meeting in Bangkok.

Reliability Analysis

Table 1: Reliability Analysis

Scale	Cronbach Alpha	Variables	Items	Cronbach Alpha
Job Satisfaction	0.949	Recognition	5	0.889
		Team Work	5	0.893
		Work Itself	4	0.869
		Achievement	5	0.884
		Advancement	5	0.886
Job Stress	0.947	Time Management	3	0.78
		Student Behavior	5	0.846
		Workload	2	0.732
		School Management	3	0.872
		School Environment	5	0.851
		Career Development	5	0.844
		Social Support	2	0.791
		Cross-cultural Teaching and Communication	5	0.894

As shown in Table 1, it consists of two topics of focus, 'Job Satisfaction' and 'Job Stress', each containing relating variables. The Cronbach Alpha for Job Satisfaction is 0.949; the Cronbach Alpha for Job Stress is 0.947. For 'Job Satisfaction' the variables are Recognition, Teamwork, Work Itself, Achievement and Advancement, the Cronbach Alpha of each variable being as follows: 0.889, 0.893, 0.869, 0.884 and 0.886. For 'Job Stress' the variables are Time management, Student behavior, Workload, School management, School environment, Career Development, Social support and Cross-cultural teaching and communication, the Cronbach Alpha of each variable being as follows: 0.78, 0.846, 0.732, 0.872, 0.851, 0.844, 0.791 and 0.894. With this it can be seen that all of the results are greater than 0.7, and can therefore be considered reliable, furthermore the survey and data can be used for analysis.

Content Validity Analysis

The questionnaire was divided into three parts. Part one consisted of the demographic of the respondents. Part two consisted of questions related to the factors of Job Stress, which were developed from previous research. Ye Qing (2011) conducted this research through his questionnaire "Occupational Stressor Questionnaire for Global Chinese Language Teachers". Ye Qing concluded from the study, that the main stressors of the Global Chinese Language Teachers were Time management, Student Behavior, Workload, School management, School Environment, Career Development, Social Support, Cross-Cultural Teaching and Communication. This was used as template and later adapted to meet the requirements of this research. Part three consisted of questions related to the determinants of Job Satisfaction, which

were adapted from previous research by Chiraprapha La-ongkum (2002), “Job Satisfaction questionnaire of Teachers”. He concluded that determinants of Job Satisfaction were Achievement, Recognition, Work Itself, Responsibility, Advancement and Growth.

After developing the questions from these two researches, I consulted with an expert of psychology and education. This led to my questionnaire receiving a strong agreement from the expert, stating that the content of my questionnaire was suitable for my research and therefore I was able to produce an appropriate questionnaire based on the work of both writers.

Finding

Based on the research objectives, the findings of this study were:

Research Objective 1:

All volunteer Chinese teachers in Thailand showed lower stress levels in the variable Cross-cultural Teaching and Communication, and they showed a mid-level of stress in the following variables: Time Management, Student Behavior, Workload, School Management, School Environment, Career Development and Social Support. Within these 7 variables, the highest level of stress is achieved in Workload and Career Development.

Research Objective 2:

All volunteer Chinese teachers in Thailand showed they were very satisfied with the variables Recognition, Teamwork, Work Itself, and Achievement. Within these 5 variables, the lowest level of job satisfaction is achieved in Advancement.

Research Objective 3:

The gender and education level of the teacher did not affect the result of their Job Stress. The age and work experience of the teacher affect the result of their Job Stress. For the different age groups, the age group above 30 showed higher stress levels within the variable workload, but it shows the lowest stress levels in the variable Cross-cultural Teaching and Communication. The age group 20-25 showed the lowest stress levels in the variable workload. The age group 20-25 showed the highest stress levels in the Variables School Environment, Cross-cultural Teaching and Communication. In the category Work Experience, the group working for over 4 years showed the highest stress levels in the variable workload, but showed the lowest stress levels in Cross-cultural Teaching and Communication. The group working for less than 1 year, showed the lowest stress levels in the variable workload, but showed the highest stress levels in the variables Cross-cultural Teaching and Communication.

Research Objective 4:

The gender of the teacher didn't have an effect on the result of their Job Satisfaction level; however, the age, educational level and the work experience of the teacher did have an effect on the result of their Job Satisfaction level. The age group above 30 showed their highest satisfaction level is achieved in Recognition, Work Itself, Achievement and Advancement. However, the age group 20-25 showed their lowest satisfaction level is found in Recognition, Work Itself, Achievement and

Advancement. For the educational level factor, the teachers holding a Master's Degree have a greater job satisfaction when focused on Advancement. For the work experience factor, the group that has been working for 4 or more years showed the highest satisfaction level. For the group that has been working for less than 1 year, it showed the lowest satisfaction level.

Research Objective 5:

There were several negative correlations from the results between the two variables of Job Stress and Job Satisfaction. When focused on Recognition, under Job Stress, the negative correlation was apparent with Career Development and Cross-cultural Teaching and Communication. For Teamwork the negative correlations were School Environment and Career Development. These Job Stress variables of School Environment and Career Development also showed a negative correlation with Work Itself. Whereas Achievement showed a higher amount of negative correlations with variables Student Behavior, Career Development, Social Support and Cross-cultural Teaching and Communication. Advancement has a negative correlation only with Career Development; this also shows that all variables under Job Stress show a negative correlation with Career Development.

There were positive correlations between Advancement and the two variables of Time Management and School Management.

Based on the Multiple Linear Regression Analysis, there was no effect from Job Stress on the variable of Recognition under Job Satisfaction. The variables School Environment and Career Development under Job Stress has shown to have a significant negative effect to the variable of Teamwork. This implies that if the teacher shows a high stress level in School Environment or Career Development, they will have a low satisfaction level with Teamwork. There was a significant negative effect from the variable of Career Development, on Work Itself, implying that if the teacher shows a high stress level in Career Development, they will have a low satisfaction of Work Itself. A significant negative effect was shown from the variables Student Behavior and Cross-cultural Teaching and Communication on the variable of Achievement, under Job Satisfaction. Therefore, if the teacher shows a high stress level in Student Behavior or Cross-cultural Teaching and Communication, they will likely have low satisfaction level for Achievement. There was a significant negative effect from the variable Career Development on Advancement, suggesting that if the teacher shows a high stress level in Career Development they will have low satisfaction with Advancement. A significant positive effect can be shown from the variable of School Management on the variable of Advancement, showing that if the teacher shows a high stress level to School Management then they will have a lower satisfaction level with Advancement.

Discussion

What Are the Teachers Job Stress Levels Based on The Determining Variables, While Working as A Volunteer in Thailand?

Ye (2011) indicated that the oversea Chinese teacher shows a high-level of stress in their work. Theirs stress level for the issues regarding students, social pressure, school

management, workload, and time management are impacted by their working experience and age.

Zhou (2009) indicated that the occupational stress is common among TCSL teachers and two thirds of them believe they suffer high or extremely high pressure. The biggest stress comes from scientific research, career development and various evaluations.

From this research, it was found that all volunteer Chinese teachers in Thailand show their lowest stress in the variable Cross-Cultural Teaching and Communication. This is due to the extensive training program and preparation workshops the Chinese language council provides the volunteers before they depart from China to Thailand. This help teachers to easily adapt to the working environment and reduce their stress levels in Cross Cultural Teaching and Communication. These findings differ from the previous research, by Ye (2011) as the more recent research was conducted in Thailand, whereas, Ye's (2011) research was completed only within China, teaching students of varying nationality. Zhou's (2009) research showed that teachers experienced the highest level of stress from Career Development, Scientific Research and Various Evaluations. The findings from Zhou's (2009) research reflect the findings of this paper with regards to a high stress impact from Career Development on the teachers. The teachers show a mid-level of stress in the variables Time Management, Student Behavior, Workload, School Management, School Environment, Career Development and Social Support. However, they show more stress in Workload and Career Development than any other variables. This is due to the fact the volunteer Chinese teachers face a new and challenging environment when they start to work in Thailand. In some schools there is only one Chinese Teacher. This means that the teacher has to teach all classes in the school. In addition, all volunteer Chinese teachers need to support the relative Chinese activities in school and in the local community. This puts the teacher under a great pressure due to the large workload. After the volunteer Chinese teacher has worked for one to three years, they have to leave this position. After they leave, there is no relationship between the Chinese language council and the volunteer. Where will the teacher go? What are their future career prospects? Most of the volunteer Chinese teachers don't know what they want to do after their voluntary experience. The Chinese language council doesn't provide any programs or training during and after their work as a volunteer. This means that they receive no constructive feedback about their personal development as a teacher or any information regarding their career options after the scheme has ended.

What Is the Teachers' Job Satisfaction Level Based on The Determining Variables, While Working as A Volunteer in Thailand?

All volunteer Chinese teachers in Thailand showed the highest levels of satisfaction in the variables Recognition, Teamwork, Work Itself, and Achievement. However, the teachers showed the lowest level of satisfaction in the variable Advancement. All volunteer Chinese teachers in Thailand work hard in their position, because they consider it a great opportunity to work in a different country and gain an insight into different cultures and traditions. They are also proud to share their own culture and language with others. During their time as a volunteer, they gain professional work

experience, which they can then use in their future career. However, they still show low satisfaction levels in the variable advancement. This is because they have fewer opportunities in personal development and they worry about their future career. As there has been no previous research into the Job Satisfaction of Chinese Volunteer Teachers working overseas, in Thailand, it is not possible to show a relation or difference to others research work as this paper is the first to show any findings on the topic.

Is There a Relationship Between Teachers' Demographic Profiles and Teachers' Overall Job Stress?

There was no correlation between the teachers' overall Job Stress and their gender or education level. This can also be shown with the research from Zhou (2009), which stated that the stress difference of TCSL teachers based on different gender and educational level was not remarkable. Zhou's research also showed that teachers felt increasing stress first and then the stress would gradually decrease with the rise of the length of teaching experience or physical age. However, this paper found that the age and working experience of the teacher does affect the result of their Job Stress but this varies depending on the variable it is under. The age group above 30 showed that their highest stress levels are achieved in workload; whilst the age group of 20-25 showed that their lowest stress levels are achieved in workload. The age group above 30 showed its lowest stress levels is in the variable Cross-Cultural Teaching and Communication. The age group 20-25 showed their highest stress level is achieved in School Environment, Cross-cultural Teaching and Communication. The correlation between the variables and stress level for each age group shows that they are the complete opposite to each other. For the factor work experience, the group working for 4 years and above shows that their highest stress levels are attributed to workload. Their lowest stress levels were in the variable of Cross-cultural Teaching and Communication. The group working for less than 1 year showed that their lowest cause of stress is workload, but their highest cause of stress is Cross-cultural Teaching and Communication. This implies that the younger teachers show more capability of adapting themselves to workload even though they don't have as much work experience. The teachers who are older and with more work experience have reduced stress levels in Cross-cultural Teaching and Communication, due to their knowledge and expertise.

Is There a Relationship Between Teachers' Demographic Profiles and Teachers' Overall Job Satisfaction?

There was no correlation between the teacher's overall Job Satisfaction and their gender and education level. However, the age and work experience of the teacher has an effect on the result of teacher's Job Satisfaction. The age group above 30 showed the highest level of job satisfaction in Recognition, Work Itself, Achievement and Advancement. However, the age group 20-25 showed lower satisfaction levels in Recognition, Work Itself, Achievement and Advancement. This means that each age group showed a different perception of job satisfaction. For the work experience factor, the group that has worked for 4 or more years showed the highest satisfaction level, but the group that has worked for less than 1 year showed lowest satisfaction

level. This is due to a higher level of confidence in the group that has worked for 4 or more years. Their teaching ability and the experience they have gained will have improved their competence level and ability to handle difficult situations. In contrast, the group that has worked for less than 1 year will not enough skills or experience, so their competence levels will be lower and they won't have any experience in handling difficult situations. This is going to induce more stress and lower satisfaction levels.

What Is the Relationship Between Teachers' Job Stress and Teachers' Job Satisfaction?

A lot of previous research shows that there is both a positive and negative relationship between Job Stress and Job Satisfaction.

Kyriacou and Sutcliffe (1979) found that teachers became unsatisfied with the work in the situation with overload teaching assignment or too much stress, while doing the research about the relationship between teachers' job stress and job satisfaction.

In the book named *Research on Relationship between Teachers test Stress and Job Satisfaction*, Feng (1996) pointed out that test stress factor was relatively strong in affecting the satisfaction of intensity of work, income wages and leadership relations. In other words, in a way, the stronger the sense of stress the teachers feel, the stronger the satisfaction declines.

The findings of Yang and Lu (2007) showed that there was a significant negative correlation between the college teachers' job stress and work satisfaction.

These findings can relate to the findings of this paper, as the results from this research reflect the work of the mentioned researchers. In this study, the researcher tried to identify the relationship between the teachers Job Stress and the teachers Job Satisfaction. From the Correlation analysis between the variables of Job Stress and Job Satisfaction, the researcher found that there is a significant negative correlation between 'Recognition and Career Development' and 'Cross-cultural teaching and communication'. There was significant negative correlation between Team work and School Environment and Career Development. There was a significant negative correlation between Achievement and variables Student Behavior, Career Development, Social Support, Cross-cultural Teaching and Communication. There was significant positive correlation between Advancement and the variables Time Management, School Management. There was significant negative correlation between Advancement and Career Development.

The American scholar Selye (1956) has pointed out that the job stress can be divided into two types as positive and negative, which means that the stress can bring positive and negative effects to people. For positive impact, moderate stress may encourage people to be more active to face life and work; however, when job stress becomes excessive or people cannot correctly handle the stress, the stress will bring a lot of negative impacts. The negative effect of Job Stress on Job Satisfaction can be shown with the findings from the paper. From the Multiple Linear Regression Analysis, the researcher found that there is no effect from Recognition on Job Stress. School environment and Career Development has shown a significant negative effect on Teamwork. Student Behavior and Cross-cultural Teaching and Communication have shown to have a significant negative effect on Achievement. Whilst, Career

Development has shown to have a significant negative effect on Work Itself. With Student Behavior and Cross-cultural Teaching and Communication having shown a significant negative effect on Achievement. School Management has shown a significant positive effect on Advancement, but Career Development has shown significant negative effect.

Recommendation

Recommendation for Chinese Volunteer Teacher in Thailand

From the research finding, Job Stress exists in the life of every teacher. All the teachers questioned had high stress levels with regards to workload and Career Development. Also, they had lower satisfaction levels in the variable Advancement. Therefore, the new volunteer Chinese teachers in Thailand should communicate with experienced teachers about Career Development and think about their future career goals. The teacher should try to become more self-competent by consulting with the experienced teachers and participate in career development workshops. In addition, it is important to continue study in order to broaden their knowledge and ability.

Recommendation for The School, Which Hired the Volunteer Chinese Teacher

Due to all the volunteer Chinese teachers showed high stress levels because of the large workload, the school should consider reducing the teacher's workload, or hiring more teachers. The lack of career development and promotional opportunities has also caused the teachers to have a lower satisfaction level. This should be addressed by providing the teachers with more opportunities for promotion and relative training for career development.

Recommendation for Chinese Language Council

More and more volunteer Chinese teachers work for the Chinese Language Council. They are the main force to spread the Chinese language and culture overseas, strengthen the mutual understanding between China and other countries and increase the friendship and exchange among all countries. Even though the longest tenure of a volunteer teacher is only three years, the teachers' still work hard to maintain a high level of professionalism. Most of the volunteer teachers have just graduated from university when they become a volunteer. The work experiences they will gain by becoming a volunteer is an important factor in their development and the foundation of their working life. Therefore, I think the Chinese Language Council should provide more humanistic care and promote opportunity to the teacher. Holding more workshops relative to career development and establishing a volunteer association to share the information about career development can achieve this. Creating a consultation center, including psychological counseling and career development counseling would also be extremely beneficial. This would ensure the volunteer could consult with a professional when they are under stress or need advice on career development. If the Chinese volunteer program had a stronger and more developed structure, with constant support and development, there would be lower stress levels and higher job satisfaction in teachers. This would consequently attract more teachers

to work as volunteers and enabling the Chinese Language council to achieve the mission of the Chinese volunteers' program.

Recommendation for Further Study

Further research can focus on the following area:

1. in depth study about more sources of the stress of the teachers working in similar environment and conditions with this study.
2. Study the factors and the administration approaches that are effectively alleviating the stress of teachers.
3. Study the administration of the schools that can bring about more job satisfactions of teachers.
4. Study the means and ways that stress reduction and the satisfaction of teachers can contribute to the better achievement of students.

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