

AN INVESTIGATION OF THE SOURCES AND LEVELS OF
STRESS OF TEACHERS OF CHALLENGING NEEDS
STUDENTS IN NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR

CENTRE FOR NEWFOUNDLAND STUDIES

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**AN INVESTIGATION OF THE SOURCES AND
LEVELS OF STRESS OF TEACHERS OF
CHALLENGING NEEDS STUDENTS IN
NEWFOUNDLAND AND LABRADOR**

by

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to examine the sources and levels of stress experienced by teachers of students with challenging needs in the province of Newfoundland and Labrador and to investigate the relationship between sources and levels of stress experienced by teachers in challenging needs classrooms. The Wilson Stress Profile for Teachers and a General Information Questionnaire were mailed to 302 challenging needs teachers. One hundred and eighty-four (60.93%) completed questionnaires were returned. The following statistics were used to analyze the responses of the population studied: (1) a description of the demographic characteristics of the responding teachers; (2) a representation of the mean score obtained on factors influencing stress and stress score means; and (3) a correlation of personal and professional factors with stress scores. The results indicated that challenging needs teachers find their jobs moderately stressful. When compared with other teachers, challenging needs teachers find their jobs more stressful than do other specialists, and as stressful as regular classroom teachers. Of the nine categories of stress, challenging needs teachers find Employee/Administrator relations least stressful and Physical Symptoms of Stress to be the highest. A total of 11 stressors were found to significantly correlate with overall stress for challenging needs teachers. This study also showed that low prospects of promotion or transfer for challenging needs teachers correlate highly with increased stress. Teachers rated the administrative support they

received to be high. As administrative support increased, stress levels for the challenging needs teachers decreased. An analysis of the results of this study suggested that alternatives are available to teachers and school administrators to reduce stress experienced by challenging needs teachers.

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CHAPTER ONE

STATEMENT OF PURPOSE

The major purpose of this study is to examine the sources and levels of stress experienced by teachers of students with challenging needs in the province of Newfoundland and Labrador.

A secondary purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship between sources of stress and levels of stress experienced by teachers in challenging needs classrooms.

Questions this study will seek to answer are:

1. What is the mean level of stress experienced by teachers of students with challenging needs?
2. What relationship, if any exists between (1) the level of stress experienced by teachers of challenging needs students and (2) personal teacher characteristics and characteristics of the individual's teaching situation?

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

A number of factors combine to make a study of stress of teachers of challenging needs students a worthwhile exercise.

First, as a possible results of their small numbers (slightly over 300) and/or the nature of their work, challenging needs teachers are at risk of being

overlooked and excluded from the majority of studies of the general teaching population. No local studies were found which treated these 300 teachers as an identified, distinct group. Second, a review of the related literature has revealed limited information dealing specifically with stress and challenging needs teachers. Third, while studies have been carried out locally on stress of regular classroom teachers and specialist teachers (Klas, Kendell-Woodward, Kennedy, 1985; and Klas, Kennedy, Kendell-Woodward, 1984), these studies did not specifically address teachers of challenging needs students (or Trainable Mentally Handicapped students, as they were known when these studies were undertaken). As such, this study could prove a useful complement to this earlier work.

Finally, this study could provide useful information to aid in the future development of pre-service and in-service training of challenging needs teachers. While stress cannot be avoided, awareness of stressors can help the individual prepare for the tasks and responsibilities being undertaken.

DEFINITIONS

1. **Stress** - Nonspecific response of the body to any demand made upon it. Positive stress, eustress, leads to increase in performance. Negative stress, distress, leads to a decrease in performance (Selye, 1974).

2. **Program planning team** - the team responsible for developing individualized program plans for exceptional students (Special Education Policy Manual, 1992).
3. **Exceptional student** - a student whose behavioral, communicative, intellectual, physical, or multiple exceptionalities are such that he/she is considered by the program planning team of a school to need a special education program (Special Education Policy Manual, 1992).
4. **Challenging needs student** - a student classified as mentally handicapped and fitting under Criteria C of the Department of Education policy providing for special services for the student in the province's public schools. These students were previously classified as Trainable Mentally Handicapped.
5. **Challenging needs teacher** - teacher of Criteria C students who spend part or all of their day in a segregated classroom within a regular school system. These teachers were previously referred to as TMH teachers.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The present study will be limited by the following:

1. The study will be limited to challenging needs teachers in the province of Newfoundland and Labrador. As such, generalization to other challenging needs teachers outside this area is limited.

2. The general information section of the questionnaire is selective. Not all possible stressors have been included. Items that could possibly be stressful for teachers might have been omitted.
3. The instrument used to collect the data (WSPT) is a self-report. As a result, subjects might use the survey for their own purposes rather than simply reporting items 'as they are.'
4. The study is to be conducted in a limited time frame ("a moment in time"). Stress levels might vary from time to time throughout the year. As such, stress levels measured at this time, might not prove to be true mean levels of the entire school year.

CHAPTER TWO

A REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

In the discussion of related literature, as reviewed in this chapter, the following structure will be used.

This chapter will begin with a review of definitions for the term stress. Next the literature will be reviewed as it relates to the topic of teacher stress. Finally, literature regarding stress as it relates to teachers of challenging needs students will be examined. In this way, the chapter will move from a general overview of a broad topic to a more specific examination of stress for people similar to the target population for this study.

STRESS

The term stress is one which has only recently come into use to describe human behaviour. In its short history stress has been defined by a number of researchers.

In an early discussion of stress, Selye (1956) defined stress by what it is not:

1. Stress is not a nervous condition.
2. Stress is not an emergency discharge of hormones...
3. Stress is not anything that causes a secretion, by the adrenal cortex, of its hormones, the corticoids.
4. Stress is not a nonspecific result of damage.

5. Stress is not a deviation from homeostasis, the steady state of the body.
6. Stress is not anything that causes an alarm reaction... (p. 53-54).

Selye also defined stress, in a medical context, as "The rate of all the wear and tear caused by life" (p. vii). Emphasizing this nature of stress, Selye also stated that "Stress is a part of life. It is a natural by-product of our activities" (p. 299).

Through a historical review of the usage of the term stress, Lazarus and Launier (1978) concluded that there are three variations of the usage: (1) stress is seen as a stimulus or a condition causing turbulence or change; (2) stress can mean the response or reaction to the stimulus; (3) stress has also been used to describe the relationship or "adaptive commerce" (p. 293) between an individual and an environment. This third variation received considerable attention from Lazarus and Launier.

Perhaps one reason for diversity among the definitions of stress is the diversity of stressful conditions such as physical pain, discomfort, emotional upheaval, demands, fatigue, etc. While simple stressors such as noise and pain can be defined in degrees of intensity, more complex stresses might depend on interpretation and meaning to be defined (Fisher, 1984).

In an attempt to overcome the ambiguous nature of the interpretations and meanings derived from a stimulus, thus making the definition of stress unstable,

Fisher (1984) attempted to operationalize the definition of stress by stating that stress was "Any condition in which the majority of people react by giving a stress response" (p. xvii).

However, determining criteria for a stressful response has proven difficult. A psychological criteria (e.g., arousal) might be associated with stress or with other non-stressful responses (e.g., joy).

Following a conservation of resources model for stress, Hobfoll (1988) defined stress as: "A reaction to the environment in which there is either (a) the threat of net loss of resources, (b) the net loss of resources, or (c) the lack of resources gained following investment of resources" (p. 25). Resources can include: "(a) Those objects, personal characteristics, conditions, or energies that are valued by the individual, or (b) the means for attainment of these objects, personal characteristics, conditions, or energies" (p. 26).

This definition has two major implications. First, that stress is limited to losses and gains of resources and that people are mainly concerned with conserving their resources. Second, a process is implied in which the actual or potential loss threatens things we value and begins the stress process (Hobfoll, 1988). Following this model, one's reaction to stress has a simple purpose: to minimize loss and maximize gain.

To gain a better understanding of stress, it might be useful to examine stressors. Levi (1967) defined stressors as the dangers, external forces and strains

of influence to which we are exposed daily and which upset our body's balance. This could include an excess or deficiency of influences to which the body is normally exposed or the introduction of something foreign and new. Levi stated that these stressors could be physical (e.g., lack of oxygen, nutrition, ingestion of poisons, accidents) or mental (e.g., financial difficulties, difficult working conditions, unhappy marriage). While the physical stressors might be more obvious than the mental, mental stressors are just as effective in causing stress. To Levi, stress is the organism's pattern of response to stressors.

With the discussion of definitions of stress to this point, no distinction has been made between positive stress and negative stress. With an emphasis on avoiding stress, minimizing stress and managing stress, one might fall into the trap of viewing all stress as unpleasant, negative phenomena. Such is not the case. Levi (1967) warned about viewing all stress as unpleasant, dangerous, and unhealthy. Rather, he stated that given in moderate doses, that the individual can cope with, stress can be a positive factor.

Klas, Kennedy, and Kendell-Woodward (1985) also reflected on the dual nature of stress. "Stress can be a motivator, a growth producer, a healthy change agent, it can also be a discouragement, destructive personally and professionally, as well as physically and emotionally" (p. 33).

Also, Selye (1974) stated that, "Stress is the rate at which we live in any moment...anything pleasant or unpleasant that speeds up the intensity of life, causes a temporary increase in stress" (p. 2).

Selye differentiated between positive stress (eustress) which enables one to perform successfully and negative stress (distress) which decreases one's ability to perform.

Manera and Wright (1981) also distinguished between positive and negative stress. The negative stress they also described as distress. The positive stress, eustress, they defined as, "The kind of stress that makes you come alive and makes life a positive experience" (p. 53).

A term related to stress which is worth noting is **burnout**. Freudenberger and Richelson (1980) summarized a number of definitions of burnout. These include, "To deplete oneself. To exhaust one's physical and mental resources. To wear oneself out by excessively striving to reach some unrealistic expectation imposed by oneself or by the values of society" (p. 16).

When discussing professional burnout, Morgan and Krehbiel (1985) stated that the term burnout communicates at least four situations:

- (a) not coping, in terms of mental or physical health.
- (b) not functioning competently on the job.
- (c) being job competent but feeling weary, unfulfilled, and bored, and
- (d) actually quitting the job (p. 59).

A person experiencing burnout, according to Freudenberger and Richelson, is, "Someone in a state of fatigue or frustration brought about by a devotion to a cause, way of life, or relationship that failed to produce the expected reward" (p. 13).

Whether burnout is facilitated by the times in which we live, or the impact of change and demands placed upon us, it is usually a result of overcommitment or overdedication on the part of the individual. Burnout is a slow process. The early stages are often missed because most burnout victims are self-sufficient, able people who are able to hide their weaknesses (Freudenberger and Richelson, 1980). The sudden flair-up or breakdown is not the onset of burnout but rather a later step in a long process.

While burnout may be a real threat to a person, Freudenberger and Richelson (1980) offer some comfort by stating that burnout is reversible, no matter how far it has progressed.

TEACHER STRESS

Aschuler (1980) stated that "stress could be a one-word definition for teaching" (p. 7). To justify this statement, he gave the following description of a teacher's school day:

For the major part of the school day teachers are isolated from other adults, a working condition shared by few other professionals.

It is not possible to work in depth daily with as many as 150 students who have unique learning histories, personalities, problems and potentials. Deadlines, bells, excessive paperwork, inadequate supplies are "givens" in most schools. "Free" periods are free in name only. Rest and recuperation take a second place to preparation and grading. In addition to these demands, teachers are harrassed, more or less, in every class. Student sniping takes many forms: talking, whispering, lipreading, note passing, insulting the teacher...When PA announcements are included in this list, typically less than 50% of class time is spent on learning. (p. 7)

These internal pressures when combined with external pressures on schools (e.g., budgetary, mainstreaming, scrutiny of parents, etc.) and personal pressures make stress the number one health problem among teachers (Aschuler, 1980). Sylvester (1977) also showed stress to be the worst health problem teachers had to deal with. This study, conducted for Instructor magazine, revealed other interesting results; which include:

- 33% of illness related teacher absences were related to stress.
- 35% of respondents had called in sick for reasons of fatigue and nervous strain.
- 40% of teachers were taking prescription drugs.
- 7% had received psychiatric treatment.

- 84% believed there were health hazards in teaching.
- 22% had fair to poor health during the school year but only 4% reported the same for summer months.
- 23% claimed to have poor to fair ability to cope with stress.

Coates and Thoresen (1976), in their review of research on teacher stress, uncovered results from studies dating back to the 1930's. In a 1933 study of 6000 teacher, P. F. Hicks found 17% to be "unusually nervous" and 11% reported having had nervous breakdowns. Another study of 5000 teachers conducted by the National Education Association (NEA) (1938) found 37.5% of respondents classifying themselves as "seriously worried and nervous." The National Education Association (1951) found 43% of a tested sample reported working under "considerable strain and tension." A further study by the National Education Association (1967) indicated that 78% of the teacher sample reported to be working under a moderate or considerable level of stress. In a study of teacher stress, Kyriacou and Sutcliffe (1978) used a sample of 257 teachers from 16 medium-sized English schools. The results indicated that 20% of the teachers reported working as a teacher to be "either very stressful or extremely stressful" (p. 166).

Klas, Kendell-Woodward and Kennedy (1985) found that regular classroom teachers, regardless of the grade level taught, experienced a moderate level of stress.

These studies reveal that teacher stress has a long history and continues today internationally. Teacher stress also translated into health problems and affected teachers recognize this relationship.

CAUSES OF TEACHER STRESS

The above section indicated the reported incidence of teacher stress. The following will review some of the sources of teacher stress as identified in the literature.

Needle, Griffin, Swendsen and Berney (1980) stated that, "Stress arises from the discrepancy between the teacher's needs, values, and expectations on the one hand and occupational rewards or job demands and the capacity of the worker to meet these requirements on the other (p. 96).

Some potential stressors teachers share with other occupations include: (a) the challenge of the job, (b) working conditions, (c) relationships with co-workers, (d) promotional opportunities, (e) financial rewards, (f) resource adequacy, and (g) one's role in an organization (Needle et al., 1980).

Some stressors unique to teaching, as outlined by Cichon and Koff (1978) include: (a) student discipline and violence, (b) management tensions, (c) doing a good job, and (d) pedagogical functions such as parent-teacher meetings, planning lessons, etc. As might be expected, teachers experienced greatest stress regarding matters over which they had little or no control.

Cichon and Koff (1978) outlined the ten most stressful events for teachers to be:

- involuntary transfer.
- managing disruptive children.
- notification of unsatisfactory performance.
- threat of personal injury.
- overcrowded classrooms.
- lack of available books and supplies.
- other teachers being assaulted in school.
- reorganization of classes or programs.
- implementing board of education curriculum goals.
- denial of promotion or advancement.

Declining enrolments present two other possible stressors for teachers: (1) job security, and (2) decreased opportunity for mobility or the desire to change jobs (Needles et al., 1980).

Coates and Thoresen (1976) distinguished between sources of stress for beginning teachers and experienced teachers. Beginning teachers expressed concern about: (a) their ability to maintain classroom discipline, (b) students liking them, (c) knowledge of the content or subject area, (d) what to do in case of mistakes, and (e) how to relate to other teachers, administrators and parents. Experienced teachers saw as major sources of stress matters such as: (a) time

demands, (b) difficulties with pupils, (c) large class sizes, (d) financial limitations, and (e) lack of educational resources.

Dunham (1984) provided the following as a list of teacher stressors:

- organizational and curricular changes
- role conflict and role ambiguity
- children's behaviour and attitudes
- difficult working conditions.

A list of seven major sources of job burnout was provided by Cedoline (1982). These were divided into organizational and environmental causes; and non-organizational causes.

The organizational causes include: (a) lack of control over one's destiny (implying that greater participation in decision-making results in higher productivity, higher job satisfaction, higher self-esteem and lower employee turnover); (b) lack of occupational feedback and communication (good working relationships and communication with fellow workers are important in occupational and individual health); (c) work overload or underload (excessive workloads and boring, tedious jobs can both provide stress); (d) contact overload (continued unpleasant encounters with others); and (e) role conflict/ambiguity (uncertainty about what one is expected to do at work).

Non-organizational causes of stress might include: (a) individual factors such as personality (neuroticism, introversion, flexibility, stress orientation), sex

differences, marital discourse, recent loss of loved one, etc. or (b) training deficits (inadequate initial training preventing the worker from going competently through his/her work day and retards a feeling of self-confidence in the worker).

Some of the major stressors identified by Kyriacou and Sutcliffe (1978) included:

- pupil's poor attitude toward work.
- trying to uphold/maintain values and standards.
- poorly motivated pupils.
- covering lessons for absent teachers.
- too much work to do.
- lack of time to spend with individual students.

Kyriacou and Sutcliffe found little association between teacher stress and biographical characteristics such as age, sex, qualifications, and length of teaching experience. Rather, they stated that, "The personality characteristics...of the individual may be the more important determinant of individual differences in teacher stress" (p. 166).

Swick (1989) divided sources of teacher stress into two groups: ecological stress and interactional stress. Ecological stress is involved with stressors that are part of the work environment. Swick felt that ecological stress in relation to teaching occurs within three areas: the classroom, the school, and the professional domain. Classroom stress would include class size, availability of materials and

facilities, work space, etc. School-related stress would include the entire teaching-learning process. Included would be poor school climate, ineffective leadership, scheduling conflicts, consistent interruptions, excessive work demands, and excessive paperwork. Professional stressors reflect the changing nature of teaching with increased training requirements and increased job responsibilities.

Interactional stress can be divided into personal relationships and job-related stress. Personal stresses include financial difficulties, divorce, children with severe disabilities and other major personal changes. Job-related stress would include increasing teacher roles and role ambiguity. Job-related relationship stressors would involve a teacher's interactions with students, colleagues, parents, administration, and other groups in contact with the school. Klas, Kendell-Woodward and Kennedy (1985), using the Wilson Stress Profile for Teachers (WSPT), found the following items to be most stressful for regular classroom teachers (from most stressful to least stressful):

- time management
- parent/teacher relations
- interpersonal conflict
- physical symptoms of stress
- student behaviour
- psychological/emotional symptoms of stress
- teacher/teacher relations

- employee/administrator relations.

Klas (1984) hypothesized about the possible reasons for time management being a teacher stressor. His suggestions include:

- 1) Perhaps educators are less effective time managers.
- 2) ...too many subjects now included in the school curriculum...extracurricular responsibilities also add burden...
- 3) ...the school day or year is too short, in terms of available contact time with students, to accomplish our goals.
- 4) ...too few human resources. (p. 26)

While a number of potential sources of teacher stress have been identified and ranked by many researchers, it must not be assumed that only a combination of these stressors will result in extreme stress for the teacher. "It should be noted that a teacher need find only one aspect of his job extremely stressful, perhaps one not considered stressful by most teachers, for him to nevertheless rate his overall level of stress as extreme" (Kyriacou and Sutcliffe, 1978, p. 167).

In conclusion, it can be said that when general occupational stressors are combined with those stressors specific to the teaching profession, it is clear that teachers are at great risk of stress.

The next section reviews possible consequences of teacher stress.

CONSEQUENCES OF TEACHER STRESS

Hans Selye (1974) stated that humans respond to stress in three stages. He called this three-stage response a General Adaptation Syndrome. In stage one, "alarm," the body prepares for "fighting or fleeing." Stage two, "resistance," sees the individual using a number of coping strategies in an attempt to reduce the stress. Stage three, "exhaustion," is what we commonly call burnout.

After the first alarm of stress, the body reacts physiologically. Adrenaline pours into the blood speeding up the heart rate and increasing blood pressure. As sugar increases in the blood, more "fuel" is available for energy...more energy is transported to the muscles and the brain...

This physiological syndrome can aggravate a wide variety of symptoms: insomnia, upset stomach, ulcers,...headaches,...asthma,...high blood pressure,...stuttering,...depression,...At worst, when stress is chronic and severe, it can lead to illness, accidents, and death (Aschuler, 1980, p. 9).

Dunham (1984) also discussed stages of stress to include: (a) attempted change in behaviour; if unsuccessful, (b) frustration (ranging from irritation to aggression), (c) anxiety (feelings of panic or physiological changes), (d) exhaustion (tiredness described as "being drained"), and (e) burnout (with physical, mental and behavioral symptoms).

Some major outcomes of stress, as outlined by Swick (1989) include:

1. Increase in physiological problems such as high blood pressure and dramatic changes in dietary habits.
2. Disruption of psychological functioning that may be exhibited in chronic depression and/or excessive nervousness.
3. Development of a personal sense of helplessness and feelings of inferiority.
4. Significant loss of both physical and psychological energy.
5. Development of psychosomatic illnesses that seem real but stem from the inability to deal with reality. (p. 17)

In addition to the cost of stress on the individual, a number of studies indicate that stressful teaching conditions could also result in lower levels of teaching performance (Humphrey and Humphrey, 1986).

Due to the interactive nature of teaching, the results of teacher stress cannot be contained within the individual or the individual's family; these problems also affect students. Therefore, teacher stress is particularly dangerous because of its potential to affect large numbers of both students and staff members (Klas, Kendell-Woodward, and Kennedy, 1985).

As stated earlier, burnout is a possible consequence of continued stress with which the individual is unable to cope. Wilson and Hall (1981) divided the

symptoms of burnout into two groups: (1) physical, including back pain, headaches, ulcers, exhaustion, and sleeplessness and (2) emotional, physiological, behavioral; including depression, discontent, loss of concern for people, negativism, anger, rigidity to new ideas, high job turnover, low morale and increased absenteeism. Aschuler (1980) identified four psychosocial symptoms of teacher burnout. These include:

1. Distance from students and colleagues.
2. Emotional and physical fatigue.
3. Attitude shift to become cynical.
4. Total disgust characterized by such things as depression, drug abuse, hostility or breakdowns.

Consistent with many others, Swick (1989) identified signals of burnout to include:

1. Consistent feelings of being overwhelmed.
2. Continuing and severe problems with human relationships.
3. Living in a consistent state of high anxiety.
4. Consistent feelings of inadequacy and depression.
5. Lack of involvement in pursuing personal growth.
6. Continuing problems with health, especially psychosomatic illness.
7. Constant negative feelings about self and others.

8. Continuing energy loss, sleeplessness and related symptoms of high anxiety. (p. 18)

Clearly, stress has physiological and psychological consequences for an individual. For a teacher, stress not only affects his/her individual life and professional performance; it also has an impact on those who come into daily contact with the teacher (colleagues and students).

The following section will concern itself with challenging needs teachers' experience of stress.

TEACHERS OF CHALLENGING NEEDS STUDENTS

A review of the literature on challenging needs teachers revealed limited research concerning these specialized teachers. Literature was found in the areas of general special educators; teachers of the emotionally disturbed, behaviourally disturbed, and educable mentally handicapped; and teachers of students in alternate institutions. Since these areas overlap somewhat with challenging needs students, they will be discussed first in this literature review.

Many of the causes of stress for regular classroom teachers have been outlined earlier in this chapter. Coupled with experiencing these stressors, special educators are also exposed to a number of specific stressors, such as; lack of mobility, media assaults, public scrutiny, inadequate training, increasing paperwork, discipline and violence problems, little extrinsic rewards, lack of

perceived student success, lack of administrative support, lack of support from colleagues (Holland, 1982).

Weiskopf (1980) identified six sources of stress for special educators. Her list of sources included: (1) work overload, (2) lack of perceived success, (3) amount of direct contact with children, (4) staff-child ratio, (5) program structure, and (6) responsibility for others.

Work overload involves time pressures associated with planning and implementing individualized program plans, meeting parents, instructing students, and conferring with colleagues.

Perceived lack of success results when the teacher sees only the child's problems and fails to see the smaller successes gained. This leads to decreased teacher self-esteem. What is important here is not the child's success, or lack thereof, but rather the teacher's perception of this.

The number three source of stress, amount of direct contact with children, refers to the fact that, unlike regular classroom students, many children with special needs require constant adult supervision. With increased contact, stress increases. As might be expected, high child-teacher ratio settings are generally more stressful than are low-ratio settings.

Special educators often work in less structured environments than do regular classroom teachers. This is often necessary to meet the child's special

needs. While this is the preferable setting for the child, it can exact a great emotional price and can be emotionally exhausting for the teacher.

The final source of stress deals with the responsibility for others. As in many helping professions, teachers give their emotional strength to students and receive little, if any, in return. Children with special needs require even more support from the teacher. Without support, the teacher's stress increases and burnout is possible (Weiskopf, 1980).

Bensky (1980) indicated that the best predictors of perceived stress for special educators were "...clear role expectations and discrepancy between teacher's perception of the role versus other's expectations of the teacher's role" (p. 27).

Johnson, Gold, and Vickers (1982), in their study of teachers of learning disabled, behaviourally disordered, and educable mentally retarded, found nine items to be stressful across the groups. These included:

1. Being threatened with a lawsuit.
2. Student violence.
3. Lack of acceptance of handicapped students by regular education teachers.
4. Lack of administrative support.
5. Inappropriate supervisory services.
6. Insufficient psychological services.

7. Inappropriate psychological services.
8. Dispute regarding student placement (p. 554).

These researchers also found that teachers of behaviourally disturbed students felt that their teaching situations were more stressful than the situations of teachers of learning disabled or educably mentally retarded students. It was suggested by Johnson et al. that the perceived lack of supervisory and psychological services added to this feeling. Finally, it was found that teachers of behaviour disordered students were more fearful of verbal and physical assault. Most, however, admitted never being abused in either manner.

The issue of administrative support as a source of stress for special educators was also examined in a study of Lawrenson and McKinnon (1982). With a sample of 33 teachers of emotionally disturbed children, the researchers found that, with a 48% attrition rate over a three year period, the major reason teachers gave for leaving the job was hassles with the administration. On the other hand, the teachers' major source of satisfaction came from their relationships with the students. Based on their findings, Lawrenson and McKinnon concluded that; "Administrators and supervisors need to be more aware of the significant impact they have upon the job satisfactions and dissatisfactions, and attrition of teachers of emotionally disturbed students" (p. 41).

Klas, Kennedy, and Kendell-Woodward (1984) found that while special educators shared similar stressors and levels of stress with other teachers, some

stressors were more strongly felt by the special educators. These included: "...poor home environments of their students, parents' disinterest in their children, heavy workloads and overloads, limited time, poor student motivation leading to slow progress in the subjects taught, and feelings of frustration, anger, and anxiety about their jobs" (p. 68-69).

Using a local scale applicable to the province of Newfoundland and Labrador, the researchers hypothesized that where a teacher lived might affect his/her level of stress. The results showed a lack of recreational and leisure time outlets and activities outside the school to be a major source of teacher stress; for the special educator the lack of resources to meet the special needs of students is another stressor. Many of the support services are lacking in small, isolated communities in the province.

Special educators, with specialized training felt they had little input into decisions regarding programming for special needs students. Special educators also expressed concerns about job security when students are integrated into regular classrooms.

Most feelings of teachers of challenging needs students in regular schools are shared by teachers of special needs students in alternate institutions. Two authors who discussed teachers in alternate institutions are Freudenberger (1975) and Meadow (1981).

Workers in alternate institutions often begin with a "missionary zeal" (Meadow, p. 20). The worker, however, begins to "take too much, for too long and too intensely" (Freudenberger, p. 74). Workers have their own internal need to succeed plus they see the immense need of others to be helped. This creates an emotional strain. Seeing the needs of others and one's limitations, the workers begin to feel guilty. This guilt causes them to work harder and longer. With increased work comes increased frustration. This leads to increased stress and potential for burnout.

Another source of stress identified by Freudenberger (1975) is boredom. "No matter how initially exciting our work may be, in time the boredom of the task and the monotony of the problems, complaints, and hassles...can get the better of us" (p. 75). To alleviate boredom, the opportunity for periodic shifting of staff tasks is necessary. The worker must feel they have some power to change or influence their own job situation or setting (Meadow, 1981).

Another major stressor when working with people with special needs is the necessity to be open to others and in touch with their wants and needs (Freudenberger, 1975). Unfortunately, the worker's wants and needs are, at least, secondary and often forgotten. The worker is often emotionally exposed and drained. There is a need to replenish and build up; often through the positive strokes of others. However, a warning must be issued:

If the administrator, the directors, or co-ordinators are not alert to this need and dismiss a worker's open or covert begging for strokes as mere self-indulgence or childishness, or non-productive behaviour, a burnout syndrome can be started. (Freudenberger, p. 76)

In a comparison of stress for teachers of mentally retarded (MR) and non-mentally retarded students, Fimiam (1983) found that while teachers of mentally retarded students reported many sources of stress to be less intense and frequent than their non-retarded counterparts, this was not the case for behavioral and emotional sources of stress. For both sources, teachers of the mentally retarded were affected more frequently and more intensely.

Sutton and Huberty (1984) compared teacher stress and job satisfaction for regular public school teachers and teachers of severely handicapped students in private schools. They found no differences in sources of stress or strategies for coping with stress between the two groups.

Utilizing the Maslach Burnout Inventory, Johnson, Gold, and Knepper (1984) found the frequency and intensity of burnout for teachers of handicapped students to be linked to the demographic characteristics of: years of experience, education, education and sex.

White and Phair (1986) stated that the process of teaching severely handicapped children can produce in teachers feelings of sadness and helplessness;

guilt concerning the lack of progress; and anger directed at the child and his/her parents and the teacher's supervisors. Other common reactions include denial of the existence of mild handicaps, fear of the teacher's own ability to cope with the handicapped child and overprotectiveness. Finally, they stated that defensiveness, fatalism and frustration are possible. The authors emphasized the need to view the handicapped child as an individual and to keep expectations in line with the child's potential.

For teachers expecting new challenging needs students in their classes, Ward (1981) proposed inservice. The purpose of such in-service would be to provide basic information about students to facilitate the students' assimilation into the class with minimum stress and disruption to the classroom.

To reduce stress of teachers dealing with handicapped students, Taylor and Seland (1983) suggested the building of a support system that includes: school personnel, community agencies, parental organizations and professional and personal development resources. Taylor and Seland also encouraged the teacher of the handicapped to take an active role in the development of the support system. To do this, the teacher is to make his/her needs known to school personnel, to enlist the support of community organizations, to contact professional organizations and to allot time for activities that are not job-related.

While special educators and challenging needs teachers often deal with fewer students than do regular classroom teachers, they are subject to many of the

same and additional stressors. Like any group, variety of stress levels is prevalent among these educators. There are suggestions in the literature which are aimed at helping teachers reduce the level of stress experienced.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

To explore the research questions presented in Chapter One, the following instruments and methodology were used.

Instruments

Wilson Stress Profile for Teachers

The instrument chosen for this study is the Wilson Stress Profile for Teachers (WSPT) (see Appendix A). This profile was prepared by Dr. Christopher Wilson. "The WSPT measures, by self-report, perceived stress in major stressful categories related to teaching and also provides an overall general teaching stress score" (Wilson, 1980, p. 9).

The major categories of stress contained in the WSPT are: Student Behaviour (SB), Employee/Administrator Relations (EA), Teacher/Teacher Relations (TT), Parent/Teacher Relations (PT), Time Management (TM), Intrapersonal Conflicts (IC), Physical Symptoms of Stress (PS), Psychological/Emotional Symptoms of Stress (PE) and Stress Management Techniques (SM).

There are a total of 36 items; four per category. Responses are given on a 1 ("never") to 5 ("very often") Likert scale. An overall stress score can be obtained by adding the scores of each of the nine categories.

Wilson offered a measure of stress level for each of the nine categories: 1-8 = Low Stress; 9-15 = Moderate Stress; 16-20 = High Stress. For the overall score, the following is available: 36-73 = Low Stress; 74-108 = Moderate Stress; 109-180 = High Stress.

The profile requires about 15 minutes to complete (Wilson, 1980).

A reliability test, using Spearman's Rho yielded a correlation co-efficient of +0.68. Based on this, Wilson concluded that the test was reliable (Wilson, 1980). Wilson (1980) stated that, with a correlation of 0.50 between the pre-test scores of the profile and cumulative scores on the Strait-Trait Anxiety Index, "It appears that the instrument has sufficient construct reliability to warrant its use for the measurement of stress among teachers" (Wilson, 1980, p. 28).

Luh, Olejnik, Greenwood and Parkay (1991) investigated the construct validity, internal consistency and predictive validity of the WSPT. Results suggest that teacher relations with administrators, other teachers and parents are important factors discriminating high from low-stress schools.

Kendell (1982) tested this instrument on 40 Newfoundland and Labrador teachers and found that, "...the instrument performed adequately, included most of the appropriate sources of stress, was usable for the population of teachers in the province of Newfoundland" (p. 93).

The profile was later used in her 1982 study of nearly 600 teachers in the province of Newfoundland. Other studies of teacher stress using the WSPT are:

Sutton and Huberty (1984); Abel (1989); Soh (1988); Herbster (1999); and Greenwood, Olejnik, and Parkay (1990).

General Information Questionnaire

To help determine which factors might be correlated to various stresses and stress levels, a general information questionnaire (GIQ) was given to the same sample. In addition to biographical data (age, sex, etc.), factors that, in the literature, have been found to be related to teacher stress have also been included (see Appendix B).

Procedure for the Study

Initial work concerning research in the area of stress of challenging needs teachers began in March, 1992. Through meetings with Dr. W. Kennedy, Education Professor at Memorial University of Newfoundland, preliminary plans were made for research directions and procedures.

A meeting was held with Mrs. Brenda Kelleher-Flight, Director of M-R Services with the Department of Education. The purpose of the meeting was to define and identify the population of teachers to be studied.

Correspondence was directed to Dr. Christopher Wilson and the Wright Publishing Group requesting permission to use the Wilson Stress Profile for Teachers (see Appendix C). Following a lack of success contacting Dr. Wilson by letter, Dr. William Kennedy was able to reach him by phone at the National

University in San Diego, California. Dr. Wilson gave verbal permission for the WSPT to be used in this study. He also stated that written permission was not necessary.

When permission to use the WSPT was received, school boards superintendents were notified in writing of the purpose of the study and permission was requested to survey their teachers. Surveys were then sent to the challenging needs teachers through school principals.

Sampling

The Department of Education records, provided by Ms. Brenda Kelleher-Flight, indicated the total identifiable population of challenging needs teachers in the province to be slightly over 300. These teachers represent all three school levels: primary, elementary and secondary.

It was determined by the researcher that the total population of challenging needs teachers was manageable for the purposes of the study. As a result, it was decided that survey instruments should be sent to all identified challenging needs teachers in the Province of Newfoundland and Labrador.

CHAPTER FOUR

ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

The purpose of this chapter is to provide a comprehensive analysis of the data gained from a self-devised General Information Questionnaire and the Wilson Stress Profile for Teachers concerning stress experienced by teachers of challenging needs students in the province of Newfoundland and Labrador. To accomplish this, the chapter is divided into three sections: (1) a description of the demographic characteristics of the population studied; (2) a representation of the mean scores obtained on factors influencing stress (as identified in the literature) and stress score means; and (3) a correlation of personal and professional factors with stress scores.

Demographic Characteristics of the Population

Part A of the questionnaire was treated first in this study and the findings concerning the teachers and their professional situations are discussed and presented in tabular form.

Response Rate - Table 1 presents the number of questionnaires mailed to teachers and the number, and percentage, of completed questionnaires returned.

Of the 302 questionnaires mailed to challenging needs teachers on March 13, 1993, 184 questionnaires were completed and returned in the self-addressed,

stamped envelopes provided by the cut-off date of April 17, 1993. This represents 60.93% of all questionnaires.

TABLE 1

Return Rate of Questionnaires

Total questionnaires mailed	302
Completed questionnaires returned	184
Percentage of questionnaires returned	60.93%

Gender - Table 2 presents a distribution of respondents according to sex. Of the 180 teachers who responded to this item, 153, or 85%, were female. This is a large majority when compared with the 27 males who made up only 15% of the total responding population of teachers of challenging needs students.

TABLE 2

Distribution of Respondents by Gender

Gender	Respondents Number	%
Male	27	15.0
Female	153	85.0
TOTAL	180	100.0%

Age - Table 3 presents the distribution of respondents according to age. The ages range from 20 to over 51 years. The largest number (76) fall within the range of

31-40 years of age. This represents 41.3% of the 184 people who completed questionnaires. Over 3 out of 4 teachers surveyed (75.54%) are 40 years of age or under. This total indicates that the province of Newfoundland and Labrador has a relatively young population of challenging needs teachers when compared with the province's full teaching force (only 45% of which are 40 or younger).

TABLE 3
Distribution of Respondents by Age

Age	Respondents Number	%
20-25 years	19	10.33
26-30 years	44	23.91
31-40 years	76	41.30
41-50 years	37	20.11
51 + years	8	4.35
TOTAL	184	100.0%

University Degrees - Table 4 presents the distribution of respondents according to the number of university degrees held. 172 teachers responded to this item. All responding teachers had at least one university degree. 104 teachers (60.47%) had two degrees while less than 2% had 4 or more degrees. Almost all teachers holding two or more degrees had degrees in Special Education. This represents almost 75% of the population studied.

TABLE 4

Distribution by Number of Degrees Held

Number of Degrees	Respondents Number	%
1	43	25.00
2	104	60.47
3	22	12.79
4	2	1.16
5	1	0.58
TOTAL	172	100.0%

Total Teaching Experience - Table 5 presents the total teaching experience of the respondents. 182 teachers responded to this item. The largest number (73) falls within the 11-19 year range. This represents 40.11% of the responding population. When combining the 0-4 year range with the 5-10 year range, 89 teachers were shown to have teaching experience between 0 and 10 years. This is 48.9% of teachers who responded to this item. Only a small minority (10.99%) have more than 19 years of total teaching experience.

TABLE 5

Distribution of Total Teaching Experience of Respondents

Total Teaching Experience	Respondents Number	4%
0-4 years	46	25.27
5-10 years	43	23.63
11-19 years	73	40.11
20 + years	20	10.99
TOTAL	182	100.0%

Experience in Present Position - Table 6 presents the experience of respondents in their present position. 183 teachers responded to this item. The largest number, 78, have 2 years or less in their present position. This group represents 42.62% of the respondent population. 84.7% of the teachers have 8 or less years in their present position.

TABLE 6

Experience in Present Position

Years in Present Position	Respondents Number	%
0-2 years	78	42.62
3-5 years	48	26.23
6-8 years	29	15.85
9 + years	28	15.30
TOTAL	183	100.0%

Time in Challenging Needs Class - Table 7 presents the time teachers spend in Challenging Needs classes represented as relative percentage of their overall teaching time. The majority of teachers studied, 51.38%, teach between 76% and 100% of their total teaching time in Challenging Needs classes. 122 teachers (67.4%) teach at least 50% of their time in a Challenging Needs class. That is, for over two-thirds of the respondents, the majority of their teaching time is spent with Challenging Needs students. Teaching assignments outside challenging needs classrooms usually involve instructing regular special education students.

TABLE 7

Relative Percentage of Teaching Time Devoted to Challenging Needs Class

Percentage of Time	Respondents Number	%
0-25 %	28	15.47
26-50%	31	17.13
51-75 %	29	16.02
76-100%	93	51.38
TOTAL	181	100.0%

Sick Days - Table 8 presents the number of sick days taken by respondents over the past 12 months. 181 teachers responded to this item. 25 teachers, 13.81% of the population, reported no sick time for this period. 129 (71.27%) reported between one and seven sick days. Less than 15% took more than 7 days as sick leave over the 12 month period.

TABLE 8
Sick Days Over Past 12 Months

Sick Days	Respondents Number	%
0	25	13.81
1-3	81	44.75
4-7	48	26.52
8 + days	27	14.92
TOTAL	181	100.0%

Student Assistant - Table 9 presents the distribution of respondents according to whether or not a Student Assistant is present in the classroom. 183 teachers responded to this item. The vast majority of teachers (143) indicated they have the assistance of Student Assistants. Less than 22% of responding teachers reported working without the aid of a Student Assistant.

TABLE 9
Presence of a Student Assistant

Response	Respondents Number	%
Yes	143	78.14
No	40	21.86
TOTAL	183	100.0%

Students with Multiple Disabilities - Table 10 presents the distribution of respondents according to whether students with multiple disabilities make up, at least part of, the teacher's Challenging Needs class. 183 teacher responded to this item. The majority of teachers (115) reported not having multiply disable students in their class. 68 teachers, 37.16% of the population, responded yes to this item

TABLE 10
Presence of Students with Multiple Disabilities

Response	Respondents Number	%
Yes	68	37.16
No	115	62.84
TOTAL	183	100.0%

Health - Table 11 presents the distribution of respondents according to self-report of health. 181 teachers responded to this item. 158 teachers reported their health

to be "excellent" or "good." This represents 87.3% of the responding population. Less than 1% (only one respondent) reported having poor overall health.

TABLE 11

Self-report of Health

Response	Respondents	%
Excellent	61	33.70
Good	97	53.60
Fair	22	12.15
Poor	1	0.55
TOTAL	181	100.0%

Position - Table 12 presents the distribution of teachers according to the classification of their position as: half-time; three-quarter time; or full-time. 182 teachers responded to this item. Results indicated that the vast majority of teachers surveyed (74.73%) teach in full-time positions.

TABLE 12

Classification of Positions

Classification	Respondents Number	%
Half-time	32	17.58
Three-quarter time	14	7.69
Full-time	136	74.73
TOTAL	182	100.0%

School - Table 13 presents the distribution of teachers according to the level of school in which they teach. 183 teachers responded to this item. The largest group (90) teach in Elementary schools while the smallest group (13) teach in schools that are exclusively Primary schools. Teachers are evenly distributed between high school (22.95%) and All-grade schools (20.77%).

TABLE 13

Respondents Working at Various Grade Levels in Newfoundland Schools

School Level	Respondents Number	%
Primary	13	7.10
Elementary	90	49.18
High	42	22.95
All-Grade	38	20.77
TOTAL	183	100.0%

Summary

The purpose of this section was to present an overview of the data gathered from questions #2 to #14 of the General Information Questionnaire. A total of 184 teachers were studied. Some teachers selected to opt out of answering some questions. Therefore, not every teacher is represented in every item. The findings in the descriptive analysis of the personal and professional characteristics of the respondents pointed to the following conclusions:

1. The majority of challenging needs teachers (85.9%) in the province are female.
2. The province of Newfoundland and Labrador has a relatively young population of Challenging Needs teachers. 75.54% of teachers surveyed are 40 years of age or younger. Only 45% of the province's full teaching force is 40 or younger.
3. The population of challenging needs teachers in the province have a high academic background. Almost 75% of teachers hold 2 or more university degrees.
4. While over 40% of teachers have total teaching experience between 11 and 19 years, the majority of teacher (66.95%) have less than 6 years experience in their present position. Almost 43% of teachers have less than 3 years in their present position. This indicates a possible high turnover rate for challenging needs teachers in Newfoundland and Labrador.
5. For over two-thirds of respondents, the majority of their teaching time is spent with challenging needs students. 67.4% of teachers spend at least half their time in challenging needs classrooms.
6. Student Assistants are present to assist the vast majority of challenging needs teachers. Less than 22% of teachers are teaching without Student Assistants.

7. The largest group of challenging needs teachers are found in Elementary school settings. Almost one-half of all teachers surveyed work in Elementary schools.

Analysis of Factors Influencing Stress and Categories of Stress

The literature review in Chapter 2 presented factors causing stress among teachers (regular and specialist). These influences were included in the General Information Questionnaire for challenging needs teachers to rate as he/she experienced them (see Appendix B). Factors included: (1) amount of paperwork required of the teacher; (2) severity of physical disabilities of students in the Challenging Needs class; (3) administrative support the teacher receives; (4) the teacher's perception of his/her prospects for promotion or transfer; (5) severity of mental disabilities of students in the Challenging Needs class; (6) the teacher's degree of physical exercise; (7) the teacher's involvement in hobbies; (8) the severity of behavioral disabilities of students in the Challenging Needs class; and (9) the teacher's feeling of cohesion with other staff members.

Teachers rated their experience of each using a 1 to 5 Likert scale; 1 representing the LOW end of the scale and 5 for the HIGH limit. Table 14 and Figure 1 present the mean score obtained for each of these nine factors.

The mean of Paperwork (PW) was 3.57. This indicates that challenging needs teachers feel the paperwork required of them is neither excessively low or high; only slightly above the midpoint of 3.

The item on severity of Physical Disabilities of students (PD) yielded a mean of 2.75. This score shows that most challenging needs students in the province have only mild to moderate physical disabilities. The item on severity of Behavioral Disabilities of students (BD) gave results similar to (but slightly higher than) the item on Physical Disabilities. The mean for Behavioral Disabilities was 3.21, indicating most challenging needs students in the province have moderate behavioral disabilities. As might be expected from the population studied (teachers assigned to students with mental disabilities), the mean score for severity of Mental Disabilities of students (MD) was high at 3.92.

The item receiving the lowest overall mean (2.02) concerned the teachers' prospects for promotion or transfer from their current teaching position (PT). On average, challenging needs teachers see little chance of moving from their position to other positions within the school system.

When studying questions concerning teacher's degree of Physical Exercise (PE) and involvement in Hobbies (H), identical mean of 2.99 were obtained. This would indicate challenging needs teachers consider their involvement in physical exercise and hobbies to be neither high nor low.

The final factor, Staff Cohesion (SC), gave a mean of 3.20 pointing to challenging needs teachers' belief that they have a moderately close relationship with other teachers on staff.

TABLE 14

Means of Factors Influencing Stress Levels

Factor	Mean (Scale of 1-5)
Paperwork (PW)	3.57
Physical Disabilities (PD)	2.75
Administrative Support (AS)	3.89
Promotion/Transfer (PT)	2.02
Mental Disabilities (MD)	3.92
Physical Exercise (PE)	2.99
Hobbies (H)	2.99
Behavioral Disabilities (BD)	3.21
Staff Cohesion (SC)	3.20

Means for Factors Influencing Stress

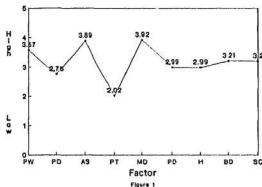


Figure 1

Using the Wilson Stress Profile for Teachers (1979), it was possible to determine teacher stress in nine categories as well as overall teacher stress. The means for each of these stress scores was calculated. Table 15 and Figure 2 present the distribution of mean scores for all 10 stress scores.

The category of Student Behaviour (SB) yielded a mean score of 9.87 which is in the lower end of the Moderate range established by Wilson.

A mean score of 6.63 in the Employee/Administrator Relations (EA) category indicated a low level of stress experienced by challenging needs teachers when dealing with their employers.

Teacher/Teacher Relations (TT) proved borderline low to moderately stressful for Challenging Needs teachers. A mean of 8.69 was obtained in this study.

The mean for the Parent/Teacher Relations (PT) category was 10.81. According to WSPT (1979), this would indicate a moderate level of stress for these relations. Time Management (TM) was also moderately stressful with a mean score of 10.97. The category of Intrapersonal Conflicts (IC) yielded a mean score of 10.82; again within the Moderate range.

The stress category with the highest mean score (11.64), while still in the moderate range, was Physical Symptoms of Stress (PS).

An obtained mean of 10.50 for the category of Psychological/Emotional Symptoms of Stress (PE) placed it in Wilson's Moderate range of stress.

Finally, challenging needs teachers find their inability to use stress management techniques moderately stressful. The obtained mean for the category of Stress Management Techniques (SM) was 9.47.

The mean for the Total Overall Stress Score was 89.50. Like the mean scores on 8 of 9 stress categories, this overall mean is within the Moderate range. Overall, Challenging Needs Teachers in Newfoundland and Labrador find their jobs moderately stressful.

TABLE 15

Mean Scores Obtained for Categories of Stress and Overall Stress Scores

Category	Mean Score
1- Student Behaviour (SB)	9.87
2- Employee/Administrator Relations (EA)	6.63
3- Teacher/Teacher Relations (TT)	8.69
4- Parent/Teacher Relations (PT)	10.81
5- Time Management (TM)	10.97
6- Intrapersonal Conflicts (IC)	10.82
7- Physical Symptoms of Stress (PS)	11.64
8- Psychological/Emotional Symptoms of Stress (PE)	10.50
9- Stress Management Techniques (SM)	9.47
TOTAL OVERALL MEAN SCORE	89.50

Means for Wilson's Categories of Stress

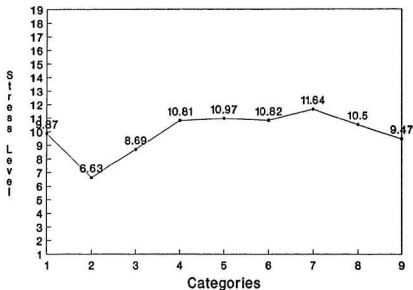


Figure 2

Analysis and Comparison of Stress Means

Table 16 presents a comparison of mean stress levels for challenging needs teachers uncovered in this study with mean stress levels of other specialist teachers obtained from a Newfoundland and Labrador study of 588 regular classroom teachers and 211 specialist teachers. This large-scale study was conducted by Dr. Leroy Klas, Leonie Kennedy, and Sharon Kendell-Woodward.

In the category of Student Behaviour (SB), challenging needs teachers appear to experience less stress than any other specialist group studied. The mean of 9.87 was lower than the other 8 means in this category.

The challenging needs teachers' mean score of 8.69 for Teacher/Teacher Relations (TT) is the highest of all specialist scores; indicating that challenging needs teachers find these relations more stressful than do other specialist teachers.

In the category of Physical Symptoms of Stress (PS), challenging needs teachers obtained a mean score of 11.64. This is a close second to the highest score of 11.69 obtained by Home Economics teachers.

Challenging needs teachers are at the lower end of the range of mean scores for Time Management (TM) with a score (10.97) only slightly higher than the scores of Special Educators (10.80) and Music Teachers (10.80).

For the remaining 5 categories; Employee/Administrator Relations (EA), Parent/Teacher Relations (PT), Intrapersonal Conflicts (IC), Psychological/Emotional Symptoms of Stress (PE), and Stress Management (SM), the mean scores for challenging needs teachers are well "couched" in the ranges of mean scores of the other specialists. For each of these categories, challenging needs teachers are more stressed than some specialist teachers but less stressed than others.

TABLE 16

Mean Scores for Each of the Nine Categories of Stress for Specialist Teachers

GROUP MEAN									
Category	Challenging Needs	Special Education	Counselor	Music	Physical Education	Industrial Arts	Remedial Reading	Librarian	Home Economics
Student Behavior (SB)	9.87	10.49	10.31	10.27	10.61	10.00	11.89	11.21	11.77
Employer/Adminal Relations (FA)	6.65	6.35	5.92	4.80	5.73	7.00	6.55	6.07	7.08
Teacher/Teacher Relations (TR)	8.69	7.21	8.15	6.40	7.34	6.83	6.89	7.57	6.23
Parent/Teacher Relations (PR)	10.81	11.85	11.69	10.27	10.49	11.50	14.78	9.36	10.69
Time Management (TM)	10.97	10.80	13.70	10.80	11.30	13.13	13.78	13.64	12.15
Intrapersonal Conflict (IC)	10.82	10.34	12.23	10.53	10.51	11.33	12.55	12.43	11.15
Physical Symptoms (PS)	11.64	10.42	10.78	10.00	9.44	11.17	11.33	10.57	11.69
Psychological Emotional (PE)	10.55	10.23	9.84	10.53	9.41	10.50	12.33	9.00	10.83
Stress Management (SM)	9.47	9.40	9.92	8.07	8.22	10.33	10.56	10.00	9.46

Table 17 presents a comparison of Overall Stress Score means for all specialist teachers, Special Education teachers and regular classroom teachers (from the Klas, Kennedy, Kendall-Woodward Study, 1984) and challenging needs teachers (of this study). The mean level of stress for challenging needs teachers (89.50) is almost identical to the highest mean of the group; that is the 89.51 score for regular classroom teachers. The score is higher than the mean score for

Special Educators (87.40) and all specialist teachers (87.46). Challenging needs teachers experience slightly more stress than other specialist teachers.

TABLE 17

Overall Stress Mean Scores

Teacher Group	Overall Mean Score
Regular classroom	89.51
Challenging Needs	89.50
Special Education	87.40
All Specialists	87.46

One limitation of these comparisons is the age of the Klas, Kennedy, Kendell-Woodward study (1984). The results of this study are approximately nine years old. Because of this, some fluctuation in mean scores is possible. It is, therefore, also possible that the comparisons given above might not be exactly as presented.

Summary

The purpose of the two preceding sections was to: (a) analyze factors influencing stress (as found in the literature) and categories of stress (from the Wilson Stress Profile for Teachers) and (2) compare mean stress scores obtained in this study for challenging needs teachers with mean scores for other specialists as studied by Klas, Kennedy, and Kendell-Woodward (1984).

1. Of all the factors influencing teacher stress (as identified in the literature), Challenging needs teachers rated the severity of Mental Disabilities of students highest, with a mean score of 3.92.
2. On average, challenging needs teachers consider their prospects of promotion or transfer from their present position to be low. The obtained mean (2.02) was the lowest of all factors studied.
3. Employee/Administrator relations cause little stress for challenging needs teachers in the province. Challenging needs teachers also rated the amount of support they received from their administrators as high.
4. Challenging needs teachers are moderately stressed by 8 of 9 of Wilson's categories of stressors (with the exception of Employee/Administrator relations).
5. Overall, challenging needs teachers find their jobs moderately stressful. An overall mean of 89.5 was obtained.
6. Challenging needs teachers are less stressed by Student Behaviour than are any other specialist teachers.
7. Teacher/Teacher relations are more stressful for Challenging needs teachers than for other specialists.

8. Overall, Challenging needs teachers find their jobs almost as stressful as do regular classroom teachers and more stressful than do any other specialist group, including Special Education teachers.

Correlation of Stressors to Stress Scores

The final section of this chapter deals with relationships that exist between personal and professional stressors and stress levels experienced by challenging needs teachers in Newfoundland and Labrador. The stressors are those found in the literature and rated by the target population in questions #2 to #15 of the General Information Questionnaire. The stress levels are the nine categories and one overall stress score uncovered using the Wilson Stress Profile for Teachers.

Using a 2-tailed significance, it was found that these relations (correlations) are significant at the $P < .05$ level. This means that a significant relationship exists between the two variables being discussed.

Each stressor is discussed as it relates to stress levels. Only those relationships which are significant are discussed. Table 18 presents correlations for significant stressor/stress relationships.

Gender is related only to Physical Symptoms of Stress (PS). With males coded as 1 and females coded as 2, this study indicated that female challenging needs teachers experience greater physical symptoms of stress than do their male counterparts.

A significant inverse relationship is seen between the number of degrees a challenging needs teacher has earned and the stress he/she experiences from intrapersonal conflicts. As the number of degrees increases, intrapersonal conflict stress decreases.

The number of students in a challenging needs class is inversely related to the level of stress teachers experience in the areas of: (1) Student Behaviour (SB); (2) Teacher/Teacher Relations (TT); (3) Intrapersonal Conflicts (IC); (4) Psychological/Emotional Symptoms of Stress (PE); (5) Stress Management Techniques (SM); and (6) Overall Stress Score. One might think that as the number of disabled students in one's class increases, stress experienced by that teacher would also increase. The results of this study contradict this belief. Here, an increase in student numbers corresponds to a decrease in stress.

A positive correlation was found to exist between the number of sick days a challenging needs teacher has taken over the past 12 months and: (1) Employee/Administrator (EA) stress; (2) Teacher/Teacher (TT) stress; (3) Intrapersonal Conflict (IC) stress; (4) Psychological/Emotional Symptoms of Stress (PE); (5) stress concerning Stress Management Techniques (SM); and (6) Overall Stress. As the teacher's experience of each of these six types of stress increased, the number of sick days taken also increased.

Challenging needs teachers' prospects of promotion or transfer was found to be inversely related to all categories of stress; including overall stress. The

relationship between prospects of promotion/transfer and stress of Employee/Administrator Relations (EA) was, however, not significant. As prospects for promotion decreased, 9 of the 10 areas of stress increased (as seen in significant correlations). This is significant because, in this study, Prospects of Promotion/Transfer received the lowest mean score (2.02) of all stressors; indicating that most challenging needs teachers see their opportunities for job change to be very low.

Significant positive correlations were found to exist between the severity of mental disabilities of students in challenging needs classes and teacher stress in the areas of: (1) Teacher/Teacher Relations (TT); (2) Physical Symptoms of Stress (PS); (3) Psychological/Emotional Symptoms of Stress (PE); (4) Stress Management Techniques (SM); and (5) Overall stress. As the severity of students' mental disabilities increases, the stress levels for teachers in these five areas also increase. This is significant for the population studied because, overall, the teachers rated the severity of their students' mental disabilities to be high.

This study found an increase in physical exercise to correlate with a decrease in the level of overall stress a challenging needs teacher experienced. As the level of physical exercise increased, decreases were also seen in: (1) parent/teacher relations stress (PT); (2) time management stress (TM); (3) intrapersonal conflicts stress (IC); (4) physical symptoms of stress (PS); (5) psychological/emotional symptoms of stress (PE); and (6) stress management

techniques stress (SM). For the teachers studied, the benefits of increased physical exercise are clear.

Increased involvement in hobbies was also shown to relate to decreased teacher stress. All stress scores (except Employee/Administrator) were significantly inversely correlated to teacher involvement in hobbies. This shows that involvement in hobbies outside school could translate into less employment-related stress.

As found with the stressor of severity of student mental disabilities, the severity of behavioural disabilities is also significantly related to stress levels in many categories (and overall stress). In addition to the relationships found between the severity of student mental disabilities and stress scores, the severity of behavioural disabilities was also significantly correlated to student behaviour stress (SB) and employee/administrator stress (EA): bringing the number of relationships with severity of student behavioral disabilities to seven.

This study found that challenging needs teachers who feel a high level of cohesion with other staff members, are also more likely to feel lower levels of overall stress. On the other hand, challenging needs teachers who feel isolated from others on staff are more likely to experience higher stress levels in: (1) employee/administrator relations (EA); (2) teacher/teacher relations (TT); (3) intrapersonal conflicts (IC); and (4) stress management techniques (SM). These

teachers also exhibit greater physical and psychological/emotional symptoms of stress.

In this study, challenging needs teachers' self-report of health was inversely related to stress levels they experienced. As stress levels increased in: (1) student behaviour (SB); (2) employee/administrator relations (EA); (3) teacher/teacher relations (TT); (4) parent/teacher relations (PT); (5) psychological/emotional symptoms of stress (PE); (6) intrapersonal conflicts (IC); (7) physical symptoms of stress (PS); (8) stress management techniques; and (9) overall stress, teachers' self-report of general health decreased. It must, however, be noted that no cause-effect relationship is implied here; merely an inverse correlation is indicated.

Significant inverse relationships were found between the school level in which the teacher works and the stress categories of: (1) intrapersonal conflicts (ic); (2) physical symptoms of stress (PS); (3) psychological/emotional symptoms of stress (PE); (4) stress management techniques (SM); and (5) overall stress levels. Challenging needs teachers in lower grades (Primary and Elementary) schools experiencing more stress in these five areas than do high school teachers.

As might be expected, the amount of paperwork required of a teacher is positively correlated to the stress of time management. As the paperwork requirements increase, the teacher's stress level concerning time management also increases.

The severity of student physical disabilities is related to only one category of stress; stress management techniques. Challenging needs teachers who teach students with severe physical disabilities experience greater difficulties managing their own stress than do teachers of less physically disabled students.

Finally, the stressor of administrative support is inversely related to many categories of stress. With the support of school administration, challenging needs teachers experience less stress in: (1) student behaviour (SB); (2) employee/administrator relations (EA); (3) teacher/teacher relations (TT); intrapersonal conflicts (IC); and total overall stress. Teachers supported by their administrator(s) also showed fewer physical symptoms of stress and fewer psychological/emotional symptoms of stress.

This is significant for the population studied because, on average, these teachers rated the administrative support they received to be high.

Of all the possible stressors explored using the General Information Questionnaire, the following were shown not to significantly relate to any category of stress (as outlined in Wilson's WSPT, 1979):

- teacher age;
- total teaching experience;
- experience in present position;
- percentage of teaching time in challenging needs class;

- classification of teaching position as half-time; three-quarter time or full-time;
- presence of a student assistant; and
- presence of students with multiple disabilities in the challenging needs class.

Summary

The purpose of this section was to examine the correlations between stressors and stress scores obtained using the Wilson Stress Profile for Teachers.

Based on the obtained correlations, several conclusions are indicated:

1. Overall work stress of challenging needs teachers is correlated positively with: (1) the severity of mental disabilities of the students in the challenging needs class, and (2) the severity of behavioral disabilities of the challenging needs students.
2. An increase in overall stress also sees a decrease in challenging needs teachers' self-report of health and an increase in the number of sick days the teacher takes.
3. The following stressors are inversely correlated with overall stress for challenging needs teachers: (1) number of students in the challenging needs class, (2) the school level at which the teacher works; (3) the administrative support provided to the teacher; (4)

teacher's prospects for promotion/transfer; (5) teacher's degree of physical exercise; (6) teacher's level of involvement in hobbies, and (7) the teacher's feeling of cohesion with other staff members. As each of these increase, overall teacher stress decreases for the challenging needs teacher.

4. The Prospects for Promotion/Transfer stressor is significantly negatively correlated to all, but one, category of stress. This is a danger area for the population studied because, on average, challenging needs teachers in this study rated their prospects of promotion or transfer to be low.
5. The level of administrative support challenging needs teachers receive is negatively correlated with level of stress in many categories. Teachers in this study, on average, reported the level of administrative support they receive to be high.

TABLE 18

Correlations of Significant Stressors/Stress Relationships

Condition:	SB	EA	TT	PT	TM	IC	PS	FE	SM	Overall
Sex							-.262 P = .001			
# Degrees						-.180 P = .013				
# Students	-.5210 P = .000		-.2527 P = .002			-.1901 P = .024		-.2315 P = .005	-.2803 P = .013	-.2111 P = .006
# Sex. Divs.		-.2138 P = .011				.1602 P = .008		-.2884 P = .003	-.3171 P = .006	-.2723 P = .001
Health	-.2971 P = .014	-.2707 P = .001	-.3358 P = .000	.1847 P = .021		-.2145 P = .001	-.4204 P = .000	-.3166 P = .000	-.3397 P = .000	-.4028 P = .000
School Level						-.1680 P = .026	-.2754 P = .019	-.1823 P = .031	-.2561 P = .002	-.1831 P = .028
Paperwork					.3774 P = .000					
Senior Pts.									-.1791 P = .034	
Adm. Supp.	-.1161 P = .271	-.4158 P = .000	.3602 P = .000			-.1162 P = .041	-.2473 P = .003	-.2164 P = .011	-.2810 P = .001	-.3366 P = .000
Pres.	-.4829 P = .000		-.2527 P = .003	.1790 P = .034	-.2125 P = .011	-.3005 P = .000	-.2829 P = .001	-.4059 P = .000	-.3603 P = .000	-.4021 P = .000
Sex. Minor			-.1045 P = .027				-.2648 P = .001	-.1140 P = .028	-.2513 P = .002	-.1763 P = .008
Psy. Dist.			-.2543 P = .002		-.1715 P = .042	-.1836 P = .028	-.2451 P = .003	-.2143 P = .011	-.2841 P = .000	-.2790 P = .001
Retention	-.3126 P = .000		-.1434 P = .027	-.2280 P = .007	-.2873 P = .002	-.2926 P = .002	-.2808 P = .003	-.3248 P = .000	-.2558 P = .001	-.3000 P = .000
Sex. Rel.	-.3488 P = .000	.1708 P = .023	.3003 P = .011				.1815 P = .027	-.1398 P = .018	.2811 P = .001	.2541 P = .004
Classroom		-.3400 P = .000	-.3383 P = .000			-.2923 P = .001	-.4013 P = .000	-.3351 P = .000	-.3243 P = .000	-.4208 P = .000

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Summary

The major purpose of this study was to examine the sources and levels of stress experienced by Newfoundland and Labrador teachers of students with challenging needs. A secondary purpose was to investigate the relationships between sources of stress and levels of experienced stress for these challenging needs teachers.

The following research questions guided this study:

1. What is the mean level of stress experienced by teachers of students with challenging needs?
2. What relationship, if any, exists between; (1) the level of stress experienced by teachers of challenging needs students and (2) personal teacher characteristics (e.g., age, experience, health, etc.) and characteristics of the individual's teaching situation.

In Chapter Two, research literature was presented on the topic under study and divided into the following sections: (1) stress; (2) teacher stress; (3) causes of teacher stress; (4) consequences of teacher stress; and (5) teachers of challenging needs students.

A two-part data collection instrument was used in this study. Part one was a self-devised General Information Questionnaire including items addressing

demographic characteristics of the studied population and sources of stress as identified in the literature. Part two was the Wilson Stress Profile for Teachers identifying stress levels for nine categories of stress and an overall stress level score. The instrument was mailed in March, 1993. Four weeks after the mailing, closure was put on the receipt of completed questionnaires. A total of 184 completed questionnaires (60.93% of the total number of mailed questionnaires) were returned.

The data was statistically analyzed using three different methods. First, demographic statistics were used to describe the demographic characteristics of the population. Second, mean scores were used to analyze factors influencing stress and to analyze and compare stress mean scores. Third, correlations were used to determine if relationships exist between personal and professional characteristics of the target population (stressors) and stress levels. A two-tailed significance of $P \leq .05$ was used to identify significant stressor/stress relationships.

Conclusions

The results of this study indicate that challenging needs teachers in the province find their jobs moderately stressful. On average, they scored within the moderate range for eight of Wilson's nine categories of stress. Stress levels for challenging needs teachers are almost identical to those of regular classroom teachers. Both these groups find their profession equally stressful. Challenging

needs teachers find their teaching positions more stressful than do other Newfoundland and Labrador specialist teachers. While higher levels of stress do not necessarily equate to distress, it can be stated that increased stress increases the possibility of distress (if stress level is beyond the individual's ability to cope).

Of the nine categories of stress, challenging needs teachers find Employee/Administrator relations least stressful and Physical Symptoms of stress highest of all categories.

Overall stress for challenging needs teachers is positively correlated to the severity of mental disabilities and severity of behavioral disabilities of students in the challenging needs class. Based on these findings, the author recommends that teacher education institutions give teachers in-training a realistic picture of what to expect in the challenging needs classroom. This could include an in-class training segment for challenging needs teachers. It is also suggested that, where possible, school board personnel and school administrators evenly distribute students (in terms of severity of disabilities) among available classes.

Increased stress corresponds to a decrease in challenging needs teachers' self-report of health and an increase in the number of sick days taken by teachers. While teachers might be unaware of the level of stress they are experiencing, they should look to their own report of health and the number of sick days taken as possible indicators of stress.

Challenging needs teachers' stress decreases as an increase is seen in each of the following:

- number of students in the challenging needs class;
- grade level at which the teacher works;
- the administrative support given to the teacher;
- teacher's prospects of promotion or transfer;
- teacher's degree of physical exercise;
- teacher's level of involvement in hobbies;
- teacher's feeling of cohesion with other staff members.

The stressor which is possibly of most concern is Prospects of Promotion or Transfer. This study shows that low prospects for promotion/transfer correlate highly to increased levels of stress. Teachers in this study see their opportunity for promotion/transfer to be low. School boards which allow (and encourage) teacher mobility facilitate decreasing stress levels for teachers of challenging needs students.

One particularly significant area for the challenging needs teachers studied is the high level of support they receive from their administrators. High support translates into lower stress levels.

It is clear that any one particular level of stress does not affect all people equally. One's ability to cope is, at least, as important as the intensity of stressors

to which one is exposed (in determining the effects of stress on an individual). The goal for these teachers should be to keep stress at manageable levels. Through doing so, the negative effects of stress are minimized and stress can become positive, motivating, and performance boosting (eustress).

In addition to the teacher's mental health issues associated with stress, another central issue is that of the quality of education received by students with challenging needs. Keeping stress at a reasonable level for the teacher enhances performance and helps ensure that students under the teacher's direction receive maximum benefit from their school experience.

Recommendations for Further Research

Further research is recommended on the basis of the investigation conducted in this study.

1. Further research could be conducted in the area of Employee/Administrator (EA) relations. EA relations have been found to be the least stressful of Wilson's categories for challenging needs teachers. It was also shown to be among the least stressful categories for other educational specialists. The results of such research could provide information about what factors influence teachers' response to this item.

2. An issue which warrants further study is why challenging needs teachers rate their prospects for promotion or transfer to be so low. A follow-up study of these teachers could be useful to determine if teachers were accurate in their estimation of promotion prospects.
3. Further research could also be conducted on demographic characteristics, other than those examined in this study, to determine what other factors affect stress for challenging needs teachers.
4. Due to the possible damaging consequences of stress, research would be useful to determine methods which could be used to reduce the levels of stress experienced by teachers of students with challenging needs. The utilization of a list of such methods would be beneficial for the teacher in monitoring and regulating his/her stress levels.

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APPENDIX A

STRESS PROFILE FOR TEACHERS

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The Wilson Stress Profile for Teachers is designed to help you more clearly define, on a self-scoring basis, the areas and frequency of your stress. As you read each item, evaluate the statement in terms of a period of time rather than a specific day you remember. Indicate how often the source of stress occurs by circling the number that corresponds to the frequency of occurrence. Do not read the stress profile scoring sheet until after you have completed items 1-36.

Student Behavior	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Very Often
1. I have difficulty controlling my class.....	1	2	3	4	5
2. I become impatient/angry when my students do not do what I ask them to do.....	1	2	3	4	5
3. Lack of student motivation to learn affects the progress of my students negatively.....	1	2	3	4	5
4. My students make my job stressful.....	1	2	3	4	5
	Total Items 1-4 _____				
Employee/Administrator Relations					
5. I have difficulty in my working relationship with my administrator(s).....	1	2	3	4	5
6. My administrator makes demands of me that I cannot meet.....	1	2	3	4	5
7. I feel I cannot be myself when I am interacting with my administrator.....	1	2	3	4	5
8. I feel my administrator does not approve of the job I do.....	1	2	3	4	5
	Total Items 5-8 _____				
Teacher/Teacher Relations					
9. I feel isolated in my job (and its problems).....	1	2	3	4	5
10. I feel my fellow teachers think I am not doing a good job.....	1	2	3	4	5
11. Disagreements with my fellow teachers are a problem for me.....	1	2	3	4	5
12. I get too little support from the teachers with whom I work.....	1	2	3	4	5
	Total Items 9-12 _____				

Parent/Teacher Relations					
	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Very Often
13. Parents of my students are a source of concern for me.	1	2	3	4	5
14. Parent's disinterest in their child's performance at school concerns me.....	1	2	3	4	5
15. I feel my student's parents think I am not doing a satisfactory job of teaching their children.....	1	2	3	4	5
16. The home environment of my students concerns me....	1	2	3	4	5
	Total Items 13-16 _____				
Time Management					
17. I have too much to do and not enough time to do it....	1	2	3	4	5
18. I have to take work home to complete it.....	1	2	3	4	5
19. I am unable to keep up with correcting papers and other school work.....	1	2	3	4	5
20. I have difficulty organizing my time in order to complete tasks.....	1	2	3	4	5
	Total Items 17-20 _____				
Intrapersonal Conflicts					
21. I put self-imposed demands on myself to meet scheduled deadlines.....	1	2	3	4	5
22. I think badly of myself for not meeting the demand of my job.....	1	2	3	4	5
23. I am unable to express my stress to those who place demands on me.....	1	2	3	4	5
24. Teaching is stressful to me.....	1	2	3	4	5
	Total 21-24 _____				
Physical Symptoms of Stress					
25. The frequency I experience one or more of these symptoms is: stomachaches, backaches, elevated blood pressure, stiff neck and shoulders.....	1	2	3	4	5
26. I find my job tire me out.....	1	2	3	4	5
27. I am tense by the end of the day.....	1	2	3	4	5
28. I experience headaches.....	1	2	3	4	5
	Total Items 25-28 _____				

Psychological/Emotional Symptoms of Stress

	Never	Seldom	Sometimes	Often	Very Often
29. I find myself complaining to others.....	1	2	3	4	5
30. I am frustrated and/or feel angry.....	1	2	3	4	5
31. I worry about my job.....	1	2	3	4	5
32. I feel depressed about my job.....	1	2	3	4	5
	Total Items 29-32 _____				

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
34. Stress management techniques would be useful in helping me cope with the demands of my job.....	1	2	3	4	5
35. I am now using one or more of the following to relieve my stress: alcohol, drugs, yelling, blaming, withdrawing, eating.....	1	2	3	4	5
36. I feel powerless to solve my difficulties.....	1	2	3	4	5
	90	Total Items 33-36 _____			

APPENDIX B

GENERAL INFORMATION

1. Code number: _____
2. Sex: M _____ F _____
3. Age Category:

20-25	_____
26-30	_____
31-40	_____
41-50	_____
51 +	_____
4. List all university degrees earned _____

5. Total teaching experience:

0-4 yrs.	_____
5-10 yrs.	_____
11-19 yrs.	_____
20 + yrs.	_____
6. Total years in present position:

0-2 yrs.	_____
3-5 yrs.	_____
9-8 yrs.	_____
9+ yrs.	_____
7. Approximately what percentage of your teaching time is used for instruction of challenging needs students in a segregated class?

0-25%	_____
26-50%	_____
51-75%	_____
76-100%	_____
8. Total number of students in that segregated class: _____
9. Number of sick days you have taken over the past 12 months:

0	_____
1-3	_____
4-7	_____
7 +	_____

10. Is there a student assistant assigned to your class?
 YES _____ NO _____
11. Are there students with multiple disabilities in your class?
 YES _____ NO _____
12. How would you rate your general health?
 Poor _____
 Fair _____
 Good _____
 Excellent _____
13. Is your position:
 Half-time _____
 Three-quarter time _____
 Full-time _____
14. Is your school:
 Primary _____
 Elementary _____
 High _____
 All-grade _____
15. Please rate each of the following:
- | | | Low | | | | High |
|----|--|-----|---|---|---|------|
| a) | Amount of paperwork required of you. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| b) | Severity of physical disabilities of students in your class. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| c) | Administrative support you receive. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| d) | Your prospects of promotion/transfer. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| e) | Severity of mental disabilities of students in your class. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| f) | Your degree of physical exercise. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| g) | Your involvement in hobbies. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| h) | Severity of behavioral disorders of students in your class. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| i) | Your feeling of cohesion with other staff members. | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

APPENDIX C

Box 154, Riverhead
Harbour Grace, NF
Canada, A0A 3P0
October 15, 1992

The Wright Corp.
La Mesa
California

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN:

I am a graduate student in Educational Psychology at Memorial University of Newfoundland, Canada. I am preparing to carry out a study on stress of teachers of challenging needs students. As part of this study, I would like to administer the Wilson Stress Profile for Teachers (1979).

The purpose of this letter is to request permission to use this profile. Such permission would be greatly appreciated and I would be pleased to forward a copy of my final report to you upon completion.

Thank you in advance for your time and consideration.

I await your reply.

Sincerely,

Tony McCarthy

Box 154, Riverhead
Harbour Grace, NF
Canada, A0A 3P0
December 18, 1992

The Wright Group
8265 Commercial Street
Suite 14
La Mesa
California
92041

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

I am a graduate student in Educational Psychology at Memorial University of Newfoundland, Canada. I am preparing to carry out a study on stress of teachers of challenging needs students. As part of this study, I would like to administer the Wilson Stress Profile for Teachers (1979).

The purpose of this letter is to request permission to use this profile. Such permission would be greatly appreciated and I would be pleased to forward a copy of my final report to you upon completion.

Thank you in advance for your time and consideration.

I await your reply.

Sincerely,

Tony McCarthy

Box 154, Riverhead
Harbour Grace, NF
A0A 3P0

Dear Superintendent:

I am a graduate student completing my masters program in Educational Psychology at Memorial University of Newfoundland. I am investigating the levels and sources of stress experienced by Challenging Needs teachers in the province. I am requesting your permission to survey, through questionnaires, the Challenging Needs teachers employed with your school board.

Please be assured that all responses are anonymous. I hope that by examining the responses of over 300 teachers, I will get an overall picture of the effects of stress on Challenging Needs teachers.

This study is supported by Memorial University. It has also received the approval of the Faculty of Education's Ethics Committee.

If you would like additional information or have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to phone me at 596-3452(s) or 595-7137 (h).

Tony McCarthy
Graduate Student
Faculty of Education
Memorial University

Box 269
Harbour Grace, NF
A0A 2M0
March 05, 1993

Dear Principal:

I am a graduate student completing a Masters program in Educational Psychology at Memorial University of Newfoundland. I am presently conducting a study of stress and Challenging Needs Teachers in the province. As part of this study, I am requesting these teachers to complete and return a brief questionnaire.

As school principal, I ask that you merely distribute the enclosed questionnaire package(s) to the Challenging Needs Teacher(s) at your school. Each self-addressed envelope contains a complete questionnaire package for the teacher (including a cover letter, a General Information Questionnaire, and a copy of the Wilson Stress Profile for Teachers).

To ensure that the survey examines the desired population, I must emphasize that this questionnaire is only for teachers who work with mentally handicapped students (i.e., those teachers previously referred to as TMH teachers and whose teaching units are allocated under Criteria C of this Department of Education's teacher allocation policy).

This study is supported by Memorial University of Newfoundland and has received approval from the University's Faculty of Education Ethics Committee. Permission has also been given by your Superintendent to carry out this study in all schools within the district.

If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact me at 596-3452(s) or 596-7137 (h).

Thank you in advance for your time and consideration.

Sincerely,

Tony McCarthy
Graduate Student, Memorial University

P. O. Box 269
Harbour Grace
Newfoundland
A0A 2M0
March 5, 1993

Dear Challenging Needs Teachers:

I am a graduate student completing my Masters program in Educational Psychology at Memorial University of Newfoundland. I am investigating the sources and levels of stress experienced by Challenging Needs Teachers in the province. I am requesting your assistance in this investigation by completing the enclosed questionnaire and returning it in the stamped, self-addressed envelope provided.

Please be assured that all responses are anonymous. You are also free to omit answering any questions you do not wish to answer. I hope that by examining the responses to over 300 teachers, I will get an overall picture of the effects of stress on Challenging Needs Teachers.

Being a full-time Challenging Needs Teacher myself, I am aware of your busy schedule. However, your assistance is crucial to this investigation. Your completion and prompt return of this questionnaire will be gratefully appreciated and in the long term, it is hoped it will benefit the profession. The findings will be published and a summary report will be made available upon request.

This study has been approved by my supervisor, Dr. W. Kennedy and is supported by Memorial University. It has also received the approval of the Faculty of Education's Ethics Committee.

If you would like additional information or have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to phone me at 596-3452 (s) or 5996-7137 (h).

Tony McCarthy
Graduate Student
Faculty of Education
Memorial University of Newfoundland



