

CHAPTER 5

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

5.1 Introduction

This chapter has explained the research findings from Chapter 4 where the findings are based on research objectives. This chapter provide overview based on three sub-topics, (1) to explore the life of being married female teachers, (2) to understand the challenges of being married female teacher and (3) to describe the strategies in managing their stress as married female teacher. The discussion was explained based on research questions of this study. This chapter included the discussion of the data gathered, conclusions for the study, limitations of the study, and suggestions for future research.

5.2 Summary of the findings

The purpose of this research is to explore the life of married female teachers. Then, the researcher wants to understand the challenges of being married female teacher. And lastly, the researcher wants to describe the strategies in managing their stress as married female teacher.

In this study, interviews were conducted to collect the data from three teachers who have 10 years teaching experience and their school located in Lembah Klang area. Other than that, the teachers must be married and having children. The interview was conducted for 45 minutes via face-to-face interview and online platform. The interview was converted from audio into transcript and the data was analysed by using

thematic analysis. All research questions were gained from the interview and the researcher is able to endorse the results of the study.

The results for this study are presented in three main sub-topics which are understanding life of being a teacher, understanding life of marriage and overall understanding the life of married female teacher. The results of the study are discussed in detail in discussion part based on research objectives.

5.3 Discussion of findings

This section only focusses to discuss about the findings in detail. The discussion of the findings is following the research objectives of the research.

5.3.1 Research Objectives 1: To explore the life of married female teachers

The findings gained a view of understanding life experience of being married female teachers. The understanding of life experience of married female was discovered in Theme 3 which is understanding the overall life experience of married female teacher. From this theme, the study found that teacher had overview on their life with optimistic view. Life experiences can be seen in both negative and positive. Everyone will face the hardness in their life. As being a teacher and a married woman at the same time could be challenging because the person needs to balance their responsibilities by managing their time well between job and house chores.

In addition, teacher in Malaysia had a lot of holidays and this is a bonus for them where they can spend time with their family. Other than that, to have a good life experience, teachers need to maintain their health including emotional aspect. In other view, to have a good life experience, teachers need to have effective coping strategy

such as always put their mind in a positive mindset and sort things out with their closest person.

The findings of the present study are supported by many previous studies. One of study conducted by Maeran et al. (2013) found that job satisfaction of a teacher is high when they love their work. Work-life balance among teachers cannot be achieve completely because it involves personal issues such as family conflict and others. They also found that length of working hour has positive correlation with work-family conflicts. This explained that long duration of working will give impact on work-family conflict. It would be reasonable to assume that more experience correlates to increased professional competence and the development of adaptable behaviours that allow workers to balance work and family obligations.

The finding from previous study support the result of this study where the participants gave response similar with the findings from Maeran et al. (2013) where teacher had short time of working. Government school in Malaysia only works from 7.20 am until 3.00 pm which very short as compared to other occupation. This benefit can reduce stress level of the teachers in Malaysia where they can give more time to manage household after 3.00 pm. Another finding from the same study found that job satisfaction increases when teacher loves their job. It support this current study where teacher loves their job because they know that they contribute in future generation life.

Furthermore, a study conducted by Aftab & Khatoon (2012) found that teacher who has less than 16 years of teaching has high stress level. It is related to their insecurity by having thought of less competency in their profession. Aftab and Khatoon (2012) also found that job satisfaction of an individual affected by their environmental factors such as supportive colleague, mentally challenging work, working conditions and equitable rewards. To manage individual stress at work,

teachers must be given the necessary atmosphere and support. In order to improve their functional abilities and minimise stress, teachers should approach their obstacles with positivity, protecting their profession in the process. In which the finding of this previous study had support the result of current study on support from other teachers help to increase teacher motivation to maintain their career as being a teacher.

Apart from that, a previous study had conducted on social support inside and outside family on teacher's work engagement and burn-out by Fiorilli et al. (2019). They found that family was the most significant support followed by supervisor support and interaction with colleagues. Additionally, their research on family support may help clarify the necessity of offering social assistance to teachers who have tense or weakened relationships with their families. This supports the results of this study where all participants had mentioned that they gained support from family either in physical support or emotional support.

Another research found that Akkas et al. (2015) had studied on factor of work and family conflict. It is found that longer working hours, family demand, individual perception, high work demand and personal problem becomes the factor of conflict between work and family commitments. They conclude that everyone need flexibility in managing their time to commit with their responsibility. The study by Akkas et al. (2015) support the results of this research where teacher had high work demand and commitment to family. In the same study by Akkas et al. (2012) list out the factors to help married female worker which are supportive environment, flexible time schedule, social support such as family and others. Thus, these findings support the results of this research where teacher had fleeting time of working which help them to manage their role and responsibilities with family.

Based on Bronfenbrenner in Ecological system which explain about human development process through five layers of environment; microsystem, mesosystem, exosystem, macrosystem and chronosystem. Human development involves several aspects such as biological, physical, and psychological. In the terms of psychological development, people develop their thinking structure and emotion based on the influence of their surroundings. For example, the culture in an individual family creates ethic and manners of the individual. This implies the framework of social constructivism where people develop their knowledge through social interaction. There are three basic things which are knowledge, reality, and learning. Knowledge is gain from human activity, while reality is when the individual sees how the knowledge implement and learning is a continuous process when someone construct new things in life.

5.3.2 Research Objectives 2: To understand the challenges of being married female teachers

The challenges of being married female teachers was identified during the interview of this study and the data was analyzed in Theme 1 and Theme 2. The challenges were described in sub-themes in Theme 1 and Theme 2. The challenges were identified differently based on the role as teacher and role as married woman. The challenges of being a teacher were students, school admin, workload, and family. Students become the challenge for a teacher due to disciplinary issues, do not have interest to study about the subject and the student who have different level of intelligence where the teacher need to identify the methods suitable for the students. Next, school admins become the challenge due to their relationship with the school admins and too much administrative work given to the teacher. Then, the workload for

a teacher causes the teacher to put less attention on teaching preparation and need to bring extra work at home which disturbs time spent with family.

The challenges faced by the teacher in marriage life were busy schedule, balancing responsibility and managing relationship with spouse. As mentioned above, teachers had many administrative works given by school admin, thus it causes teachers to have busy schedule for their family. The leading challenge for teachers is they facing a problem to balance their responsibility between family and school. In addition, this study found that when teachers have problems with their spouse, it causes teachers to have emotional disturbance when coming to school.

A study conducted by Grammens et al. (2022) found that teacher bring 5 roles in organizing online class which is instructional designer, social, facilitator, managerial and pedagogical. Pedagogical means a teacher learns about effective teaching strategy and maintaining the enthusiasm and participation of students in class. The statement supports the results where teachers need to be creative to teach the students that have different intelligence levels. Instructional designer means designing the learning strategy of the course component. Thus, during Pandemic of COVID-19, teachers need to design and learn how to teach students from far. During this time, teachers need to learn about technology for virtual classes. It causes expansion of teacher's responsibilities with new tasks which teach about technology (Grammens et al., 2022). Other than that, teachers must be creative to design a slide presentation and how to make a video for the topics. This study supports the data gathered regarding to challenge in terms of workload where teachers in Malaysia need to make report via online and key-in student's attendance virtually.

Another study that supports results of this research is Velea and Farca (2013). Velea and Farca (2013) found that teacher and parent need to make sure for a student

learn something that can improve their productivity and form a good attitude of the student. Regardless of academic performance, the moral aim of education is prioritized. Based on the data gathered on Chapter 4, the role of being a teacher includes educator which teacher play role to educate the students with good manners. Thus, the study by Velea and Farca (2013) support the findings of this study where teacher had to educate the students that have disciplinary issues.

The study conducted by Fairman and Mackenzie (2014) found new demands for educators generally focused on work-life balance where school administration need to find other initiatives to reduce teacher's burden on workload. This showed that teachers feel burdened with many jobs given by school admins. And another study shows that teacher's performance can be improved directly by enhancing principal role and providing good conditions to work for teachers (Hartinah et al., 2020). This study supports the results on the relationship between school admin and teacher need to be in good condition, and if it's not it will become the challenge for the teachers to improve their performance at school.

Furthermore, a study conducted by Jayarathna and Weerakkody (2014) found that teacher's extra responsibility which is managerial and administrative tasks at school. The example given is the teacher at the school can be appointed as a head of school or a leader for the student sports club. Based on the data given from the previous chapter, teachers need to work on weekends to train students for sport competitions which cause limited time to spend for their family. The study by Jayarathna and Weerakkody (2014) support that teacher needs to do extra work appointed by the school, cause the teacher to have busy schedule and limiting the time spend with their family at home.

The challenges in marriage life from this research are relationship with spouse, balancing responsibility, and busy schedule. There is a study that supports the findings of this research which conducted by Erdamar and Demirel (2014). They found that being a married female teacher can be a challenge for some people where this study conducted to identify the work-family conflict and family-work conflict. These are the work-family conflicts that arise most frequently are the physical and emotional exhaustion from work makes it difficult to handle the tasks at home, and a problem that was encountered at work results in tension and stress at home.

On the other hand, the following are the most typical issues with the family-work conflict is the responsibilities and little tasks at home force people to forsake sleep. The difficulty of professional life is caused by unforeseen circumstances at home such as a kid being sick, uninvited guests coming to town. There are certain issues had mention in the previous chapter of this research such as their child being sick and school admin did not trust the teacher, and emotional disturbance due to conflict with spouse cause trouble at school.

All of these challenges are really causing conflict between work and family, and it might cause circular causality of another issues. In several previous study had supported the findings of this research on challenges faced by teacher in Malaysia.

5.3.3 Research Objectives 3: To describe the strategies in managing their stress as married female teacher.

From the result in previous chapter, the strategies in managing teacher's stress as married female teacher were identified. The strategies in managing stress were found based on the support system of the teacher as being a teacher and married female in Theme 1 and Theme 2. The findings were discovered separately. The

support system for being a teacher is divided into two categories which are social support and spiritual support. Social support was gained from other people around them such as family, other teachers, and students. Meanwhile, spiritual support was gained from ritual activities such as reminding themselves of Allah and revising their intension of teaching.

A study by Ferguson, Mang and Frost (2017) explored how social support gives impact in reducing teacher stress in northern Ontario. The study found that teachers are less likely to share their work issues with their friends or family due to the stigma about teacher competency. The teacher who is likely to share about their issues at workplace showing their lower sense towards career commitment and career intent. However, the response given from the support who come from teachers also. The study supports the result of this research, where teachers like to talk about their workload stress with their family and friends such as their husband and parent because most of them are also teachers.

Based on the Greenglass (2008), there are three categories of social support which is emotional support, instrumental support and informational support. First support comes from interpersonal relationships where an individual feels belonging to certain people including their spouse, friends, and family. Most of them tend to give emotional support to the individual. Instrumental support is when a person given a support in terms of financial, and services. Lastly, informational support means support that given through advice, motivational quotes, and useful information by other people. Thus, the study embraces this research result where teachers gain social support from their closest people such as friends, parents, or spouse to reduce their stress.

The spiritual supports bring meaning of the feelings belonging to something greater than themselves (Scott, 2023). Spiritual supports was studied in previous research by Hamjah, Ismail, Sham, Rasit and Ismail (2015). They found that spiritual support is equal to inner motivation where it helps to reduce work-related stress. This inner motivation helps to increase positive mindset towards teaching responsibilities.

The research by Hamjah et al. (2015) validates the findings from this research where a teacher able to cope with the challenge through spiritual support with renew her intension of teaching students. Another study found by Hamjah, Rasit and Sham (2012) where strengthening spiritual relation with God (Allah) is one of the method to increase motivation. When an individual increase their motivation, it led the person to become productive. This comprises of the research findings where teacher strengthen their bond with God (Allah) from listening to religious talk and put their trust on God in everything where Allah will help them.

The findings on support in marriage life is family. Family was found to be support system for married female in managing their life. The results showed in previous chapter where teachers gain support in many aspects such career aspect, house chores management and childcare. According to a study conducted by Indra (2014) mentioned that woman has issues in managing or balancing their responsibility between job and family. thus, by receiving support from their spouse, children, friends, and peer group will assist them in achieving a balance of duties. Husband needs to take responsibility in house chores and childcare sometimes when their wives are working outside. This can balance the imbalance responsibility of the wives. The children support can also help their mother to balance their responsibility by completing their tasks such as finishing homework and arrange their own books for school. These findings of the previous study had back up the findings of this research

where the teachers had received support from their spouse in childcare and their children in managing their own life according to their age.

5.4 Contributions of the research

A study on life experience of married female teacher contributes to other researcher that study on teacher's life based on social constructivism. The result of the study, contribute to give the knowledge for the school organization and government about the reality life of married female teacher in Malaysia. This study contributes to explain the life experience of being married female teacher. The study will help to explain the challenge faced by the married female teacher in managing their life which can be taken into consideration to give extra attention for them to achieve work life balance. This study is particularly significant for scholars since it gives a first step approach for future research.

5.5 Implications

The findings of this study are to understand life experience of married female teacher by exploring their life in total, identify their challenges of being married female teacher and the strategies in managing their stress as married female teacher. This study finds another view of life experience of married female teacher in Malaysia since many previous studies on teacher was conducted in other country.

This study reveals the challenge faced by teachers in Malaysia are students, school admins, workload, and family issues. While the challenges faced by married female are busy schedule, problem to balance their responsibility as being married female and problem with spouse. This shows how work and family bring conflict to married

female teacher. This shows that married female teacher needs help or guidance to reach work life balance in order to reduce their stress of being married female teacher.

Lastly, this study reveals the supports received by the teachers to manage their issues for example from their family members, spouse, children, other teachers, and ritual activities. These findings might be the guideline for government organization to conduct activities to strengthen the support for married female teacher in Malaysia.

5.6 Limitations of the research

The findings of this research are about understanding life experience of married female teacher in Lembah Klang, Malaysia. The sample size of this study is small which the researcher only chooses three teachers. The number should be larger to give clear explanations about married female teacher's life experience in Malaysia. In addition, this study specifies on certain criteria such as 10 years of experience or more, teach at school in Lembah Klang area and must be married and have children. The number of children are not specified because there is a study who mentioned the challenge is greater for people with many children (McIntosh et al., 2012). The findings from the previous findings need to be put into consideration where the possibility of people with many children will have different levels of challenge.

Furthermore, the type of subject teaching is also important due to the response given by the teacher. From this study, it was found that the teacher who teach religious subject will talk about her ritual activities which might be biased toward the other two participants who teach English subject. The place of school also needs to be put into consideration where most of the teachers mention about the students' interest to learn. However, two of them were teaching in rural area.

Other than that, there is potential bias in answers given by the participants. There are several events are organized by school at the moment which increase teacher's tension in managing the events. For example, the sports event is coming for next two weeks. Thus, it possible to have bias answer for the teachers if the interview conducted during that period of time. So, the researcher needs to put into consideration before conducting interview with teachers. Next, potential bias in answer will happen if the teacher has baby which it involves many things for giving attention to a baby.

Lastly, the questions design by the researcher might be poor which it might not cover all the elements that need to study. This study is not covering the elements of their past experience, current experience and future plan which shows how the teachers are develop from their past experience. The questions might help the study to really explain the human development process by using Bronfenbrenner theory and social constructivism.

5.7 Suggestion for future research

Future research must put the subject teaching into the characteristic of participants because there might give similar answers. This research found there are distinct types of spiritual support receive by participants. It might be different answer given based on their subject teaching area. Future study should also focus on the events happen at school because it might influence on teacher's stress. From the findings, it found that many all participants mentioned about their extra job at school during weekend. Where the teachers need to go to school on the weekend to train their students for sports competition. Next, it is important to find teacher of the same rank because the teacher has different job scope at all rank.

In addition, future research needs to larger the sample size in order to gain accurate answer about their perspectives. It also possible to for future research to widen the study area to different school location such as urban area and rural area. Because for this research, the findings show the challenge of the teacher to deal with student who not interested to learn about their subject.

Lastly, future research can broaden the area of study by using well-being framework to gain a clear explanation on teacher's wellbeing in managing life as married female teacher. Bronfenbrenner and social constructivism framework help in explaining human development and learning process, however the study is not focusing on the well-being of married female teacher in managing their life.

5.8 Conclusion

This study explores life experience of married female teacher including their challenges and the strategies in managing their life as being married female teacher. The findings of this study shows that teacher faced challenge in both role as a teacher and a married female. Plus, the challenge faced by the teacher are students, family, school admin, relationship with spouse, problem in balancing responsibilities, busy schedule, and extra workload. However, teachers gain supports from people around them including their spouse, children, parents, and ritual activities. The result of this study shows that teacher's surrounding gives impact on the teacher's life experience in managing their responsibilities as being teacher and married woman at the same time.

In addition, this study found that the teachers who teach at school located in rural area will has issues with student who do not have interest to learn. Thus, it become a challenge for the teacher to deal at school. However, the challenge for the teacher who teach at school located in urban area will bring different issues such as

student with disciplinary issues. This study also indicate that teacher with high rank will have close relationship with school admin and the teacher with lower rank with have issues with school admin due to low interaction with them (Ferguson et al., 2017).

Most of our findings had supported by previous study such as the challenges faced by teachers in Malaysia. Its shows that other teacher in different country also faced similar challenge. for example, teacher has issue in achieving work life balance to manage their responsibilities of being married female teacher. Overall, the findings of this study shows that teacher has optimistic view of their life experience as being married female teacher.

Concisely, the researcher of this study encourages other researcher to further the study on exploring life experience of married female teacher by using qualitative methods that specify the characteristics mention in suggestion for future research.

