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**The Wellbeing of New Zealand Teachers: The Relationship between Health, Stress, Job
Demands, and Teacher Efficacy**

**A thesis presented for the partial fulfilment for the requirements of
Master of Educational Psychology**

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Abstract

Teacher stress is a phenomenon that has attracted a vast amount of attention over the last forty years. Historically, national and international research has demonstrated role overload and teacher efficacy have long been associated with teacher stress. More recent international research indicates increased role responsibility might also be a contributing factor. The last published New Zealand study on teacher stress was in 1996, which prompted further investigation of the factors associated with stress and extended previous research by examining the physical and mental health status of New Zealand teachers. The present study examined the relationship between physical health, mental health, stress, role overload, role responsibility, and teacher efficacy. It also examined the factors that influence stress and mental health levels. Finally, the present study investigated the prevalence of stress to determine if it has changed since the last published study. Participants were 131 teachers randomly recruited across New Zealand high schools who completed a battery of online self-report questionnaires that measured health, stress, role overload, role responsibility and teacher efficacy. Analysis revealed the physical and mental health of teachers was no worse than that of the general population. The results of a path analysis demonstrated role responsibility and role overload directly influenced stress and mental health levels negatively. Physical health had a direct and positive influence over stress and mental health levels and teacher efficacy was found to have no influence over stress and mental health levels. Over 39% of teachers considered teaching to be either very stressful or extremely stressful. This is an increase of 13.6% from the last published study. The findings and limitations are discussed along with the implications for teachers and policy makers.

Dedication

This Master's thesis is dedicated to Hayden Beckley. Sometimes what we strive for will seem impossible. Sometimes what we strive for will need to be adjusted or delayed or may not even be achieved. However, striving for goals that may seem out of reach will still lead to great achievements. This Master's thesis represents achieving something great despite not having achieved the original goal and the adjusted goal is yet to be achieved. I hope this encourages you to strive for great things and not to get discouraged when adjustments need to be made.

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