

EFFECTIVE MANAGEMENT OF OCCUPATIONAL STRESS: CHALLENGES TO REALITY

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Abstract

In the present study, the occupational stress level of secondary school teachers is determined by making a comparison between occupational stress level of male and female, secondary school teachers. 50 number of secondary school teachers, having equal number of male and female teachers are selected as sample of the study. A self made occupational stress inventory is being used for data collection. The study reveals teaching is a considerably stressful occupation for secondary schoolteachers. Male and female secondary school teachers do not differ significantly with reference to their level of occupational stress.



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1. Introduction

In the 21st century, schools have become very crucial to support the rapid development of individuals and are expected to perform a wide range of functions. Teachers have to play a wide variety of roles and bear responsibilities that may relate to teaching, school management, curriculum changes, educational innovations, working with parents and community services. So teachers are inevitably in need of continuous life-long professional education to update themselves with new knowledge, competence, and attitude to meet all these challenge. In the last two decades, policy-makers, teacher education institutions and schools have implemented many initiatives to improve teacher performance. A good teacher has to teach effectively in the class and to satisfy with his teaching style and teaching quality; moreover has to manage time for teaching and other duties assigned by head teachers and department, also has to manage class discipline and disruptive students, has to be regular and punctual, should have good interaction with the colleagues, the students and their parents because his interpersonal skills also determine his job performance, rather directly or indirectly. His attitude should be same for high grade student and low grade student. The number of secondary schools of India has increased tremendously for the past few years. Almost every school is now setting new goal to compete with other Schools and the teachers

are involving with the ultimate goal. This may cause the Secondary School teachers to face plenty of stresses which affect their physical or mental health .In research globally, a consistent correlation has been found between changing education policies of the government and heavy workload of teacher. Recently Singh et.al. (2011) carried out a study regarding the management of schools in Uttar Pradesh, India and reported significant difference in occupational stress of physical education teachers in different management schools. The mechanism involved in the pathway in which teacher's education may promote their new behavior and make it effective by the use of new techniques/ methods of teaching and learning procedure and services . The term Teacher stress involved in physical body and is rarely determined through examination. There has been no systematic, large-scale research or small-scale research which uses an actual test to examine between age, gender, education level, years of experiences, and psychological indicators in the Region of Asia.

Rationale of the study

Review of literature in teacher stress indicate the absence of research on teachers stress in Odisha has prompted the researchers to take up this project and to find out Occupational stress of teacher is not only a problem in developed countries but also in developing countries like India, there may be difference in their degree of importance. studies reveal that stress is not always negative, stress at optimal level may be motivating and may lead to higher performance. Now a days along with the teaching duty teacher have to perform many other functions. So there is a need to find out occupational stress of teacher of our region. Assessment of level of stress may help the teacher to manage stress and improve their performance.

Research Questions

1. What is the perceived level of occupational stress of the selected secondary school teachers?
2. Does the perceived level of occupational stress of the selected male and female secondary school teachers differ?

Methodology

The design: In the present study, an inventory and survey method for collecting data has been used.

The sample:

Here the investigator followed the purposive sampling technique for the collection of data. Ten school were selected as sample schools .From among the selected schools all teachers were drawn as sample of the study.

Instrument

The objective of the study was to find out the stress level of secondary school teachers and have a comparison of stress level of male and female teachers . For this purpose primary data was collected from the sample secondary school teachers through a self made teachers Occupational stress inventory **Teachers occupational stress inventory (TOSI)**

Scoring order

The teacher occupational stress inventory (TOSI) contains 40 items in total and each item represents a stressors and against each stressors there are 5 alternatives 1.(Not Stressful), 2 (Somewhat Stressful), 3 (Considerably Stressful),4 (Decidedly Stressful) and 5 (Extremely Stressful). The scoring order was 1,2,3,4 and 5 respectively for each item. Thus the maximum score of each stressor would be 5 and minimum score would be 1. Similarly the maximum score of the total stressors would be 200 and minimum score would be of 40 respectively.

Content Validity of the Inventory

When the inventory was constructed five judges were requested to examine each item of the inventory and to affirm categorically whether the each stressor was representing an occupational stressor of the teaching or not

Estimation of the stress level

For the estimation of the level of stress the following procedure was followed. The TOSI of 40 stressors with maximum score of 200 determine the 100% stress level of secondary school teachers In terms of percentage, the stress level of the teachers of the secondary schools was calculated as follows.

Stress level of the secondary school teachers

$$= \frac{\text{Mean Score (TOS inventory)}}{200 \text{ (Maximum score)}} \times 100$$

Following the formula given above the classification of the level of stress of the secondary school teachers could be determined as Not stressful, somewhat stressful ,Considerably

stressful, Decidedly stressful and extremely stressful have been visualised on the principle of a continuum on linear scale. The percentage of the score and the corresponding raw score of each of the level of the stress has been shown below.

Table 1.1: Estimation of level of stress

Stress level of TOSI	Range of scores on TOSI	
	Percentage	Raw score
Extremely stressful	80 % and above	161 and above
Somewhat stressful	61 to 80 %	121 to 160
Considerably stressful	41 to 60 %	81 to 120
Decidedly stressful	21 to 40 %	41 to 80
Not stressful	up to 20 %	up to 40

Data collection

The research tool was administered to all the sample teachers of the selected schools one by one .The selected teachers of the sample schools were supplied the copies of the inventory to be administered chronologically during their available leisure period in their respective schools and inventories were collected after duly responded by the sample group. The teachers were requested to read the inventory carefully and record their first and spontaneous reaction to each of the statement accordingly. They were also assured that their responses would be kept confidential and be used for the academic & research purpose only.

Scheme of data analysis

For interpretation of result both the description analysis and inferential techniques have been followed. A research question wise analysis was attempted in the study in the following manner.

1. Estimation of the perceived level of occupational stress of the selected secondary school teachers.
2. Compare the perceived level of occupational stress of the selected male and female secondary school teachers

Results

I. Level of stress of secondary school teachers.

Following the procedure of estimation of stress level of the teachers the level of the stress of the entire group of the selected teachers have been estimated and shown in the table-2.1

Table2.1 Estimation of Level of stress of the secondary school teachers

Group	Mean	S.D.	% of TOSI scores	Classification of level of stress
Total group	94.67	14.97	47.16	stressful Considerably

It is revealed from the Table -2 .1 that the secondary school teacher’s mean score of stress being 94.67 is considerably high in comparison to the maximum stress level scores that is 200. This clearly indicates that the percentage of stress level scores of the secondary school teachers is 47.16 which can be classified as considerably stressful. This again clearly means that for the most of the secondary school teachers their occupation is considerably stressful.

II. Comparison of levels of occupational stress of the male and female secondary school teachers

For the comparison of the stress level of the male and female teacher a null hypothesis has been framed as there is no significance difference of the male and female secondary school teachers with reference to the level of occupational stress and the hypothesis has been statistically tested by the comparison of mean scores stress inventory with the help of the ‘t’ test and the result are reflected in the table-2.2.

Table-2.2: Comparison of occupational stress level of male and female teachers

Group	Mean	S.D.	% of TOSI scores	Classification of level of stress	‘t’	CR	Level of significance
Male	95.85	15.15	47.75	Considerably stressful	71	2.8	NS
Female	93.85	14.8	47.9	Considerably stressful			

The Table 2.2 demonstrates that though the female teachers have more total stress scores than their male counter parts the difference between two groups is not statistically significant. Further both the groups have been classified as moderately stressful this indicates the similarity between two groups with reference to the perception of occupational stress. **Discussion of the result**

The various research questions of the present study have been analysed by employing different statistical techniques such as mean and ‘t’ test the mean finding of the study has been presented in the preceding pages of this chapter and research question wise discussion of the findings the study are discussed here.

1. Estimation of Level of Stress of Secondary School teachers

It is revealed from analysis that the secondary school teachers ' TOSI mean score of stress being 94.67 out of the total score of 200 the secondary school teachers ' stress level is considerably high. This again clearly depicts that for most of the secondary school teachers their occupation is considerably stressful. This finding goes along with some of the previously done researches. (Kariacou's & utcliffe, 1979, Fimian, M.J. and Santoro, T.M, 1981; Proctor and Alexander, 1992, Pithers & Soden, 1998, Antoniou, 2000; Phillips, S. Sen, Dil and McNamee, R 2005, Uzole, 2006). All these researches have reported teaching as stressful occupation

2. Comparison of levels of occupational stress of the male and female secondary school teachers

The comparison of the TOSI mean score of the male and female reveals the fact that though the female school teachers have more total stress scores than their male counterparts the difference between two groups is not statistically significant. This indicates the similarity of the two groups with reference to their perception of their occupational stress level. The result obtained by Vance, Miller, Humphreys, Reynolds, 2000 also corroborate with the present findings.

Educational implications

This piece of research work carries implications for the teachers, Headmaster/Principals, Educational Administrators, Teacher Educators, Curriculum framers of teacher education programme and students.

Conclusions

According to Nagle and Brown (2003), teachers will always have some stress. Stress does have some positive sides, such as motivating teacher to (1) examine new instructional strategies, (2) adopt innovative approaches to help students become more motivated, and (3) take time to reflect on their teaching practices. Negative stress occurs when teachers are overwhelmed and then it reduces their efficiency and ultimately affect student performance. Gradually the teaching profession is becoming more and more stressful which may adversely affect the system. It is high time to know about teacher's level of stress and different stressors causing teachers stress. Knowledge of the stress level of the secondary school teachers and different occupational stressors of teachers would help the teachers to be more prepared to

face their responsibilities each day turning stressors into positive ones could help teachers become more effective, empowered and successful at their work places in schools.

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