

A COMPARATIVE STUDY ON OCCUPATIONAL STRESS AMONG MALE AND FEMALE PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS IN THIRUVANNAMALAI (DT)

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Abstract

Rapid industrialization, increasing urbanization and receding support over the last few decades have contributed to rise in stress level among the population. Stress has now become as an unavoidable phenomenon in human life. Though the type of stress may vary, but almost any aspect of life can lead to stress, be it lack of friends, lack of money, unemployment or even employment. According to Kyriacou (1978), stress is a result of prolonged pressures that can't be controlled by the coping strategies that an individual has. Occupational stress has now become one of the major health risks of the modern workplace. It accounts for much of the physical illness, substance abuse, and family problems experienced by millions of blue and white-collared workers. Kyriacou (2001) also reported that the main sources of stress among the teachers are due to various reasons such as teaching students who lack

motivation, maintaining discipline in the classroom, confronting general time pressures and workload demands, being exposed to a large amount of change, being evaluated by others, having challenging relationships with colleagues, administration, and management, and being exposed to generally poor working conditions. The main aim of the study is to compare the occupational stress among male and female primary school teachers in Thiruvannamalai District. Data was collected from 60 respondents. The data was systematically analyzed using appropriate statistical measures and inferences were drawn. Based on the findings, the study will suggest suitable measures to reduce the stress level among the school teachers.

Keywords: *Primary School, Occupational stress, Teachers, School*

Introduction

The world has now become a global market and a lot of sumptuousness has come to the market. Though, Rapid industrialization, increasing urbanization and receding support over the last few decades have contributed towards development, Stress has become an unavoidable phenomenon in every human life. Though the type of stress may differ but almost any aspect of human life can be affected with stress, may be due to lack of friends, money, unemployment or even some times employment. Till recent past, it was not considered as an important health problem in many of the countries, but of late stress has gained worldwide attention due to its possible hazards.

Olson et al (1989) defined stress as "a state of tension that arises from an actual or perceived demand that calls for an adjustment or adaptive behaviour". Stress is the body's way of response to any kind of demand or threat. When a person feels frightened, the nervous system responds by releasing stress hormones, including adrenaline and cortisol, which provoke the body for an emergency action. Physiological or biological stress is mainly due to an organism's response to a

stressor such as an environmental stimulus or a condition. Stress is a body's method of reaction to a challenge. Any aspect that poses a challenge or a threat to our well-being is a stress.

Hence, stress is an unpleasant emotion that arises when people worry about their inability to cope with excessive pressures and demands on them. Stress can have its effect positively or negatively on a person. Positive stress encourages a person to perform more whereas negative stress affects the productivity of the person affected. This study is focused on stress that occurs in workplace among the primary School teachers in Thiruvannamalai dt.

Occupational stress is stress related to one's job. Occupational stress occurs due to the unpredicted errands and pressures that do not sink with a person's skills, knowledge, or expectations, preventing one's ability to cope. Occupational stress can increase when workers do not feel supported by their supervisors or colleagues, or when they feel that they have little control over their work processes. Teaching was one of the profession which has traditionally been regarded as low stressful occupation (French et al.,1982) but in the past two decades the situation is not the same as before.(Olivier & Venter,2003)Teaching has now becoming more challenging profession: more of paper work, increased bureaucracy and more challenging classes.

Kyriacou (2001) has reported that the main sources of a teacher's stress is due to teaching students who lack motivation, maintaining regulation in the classroom, tackling between time pressures and workload demands, being exposed to a huge amount of change, being assessed by others, having tough relationships with colleagues, administration, and management, and being exposed to generally inadequate working conditions prospects, uncertainty of the teacher's role, and job insecurity.

Review of Literature

ANBU. A (2015) in his study titled **A Study on Professional Stress of Higher Secondary School Teachers** studied the professional stress level of higher secondary school teachers in Nagercoil region. The findings of the study reveals that the demographic factors like gender; type of the school and marital status of the teachers have significant impact upon their stress level.

Naina Sabherwal, Deeya Ahuja et al, (2015) in their study found that lots of work have been done on the occupational stress of a teacher in a different dimension and has tried to find out the occupational stress among faculty members in higher education institution and the results showed that the determinants of stress among the administrators are many and different, with compilation of results, lack of infrastructure, time pressures, student's indiscipline and poor pay prospects was a very high ranked stressors. Along with that, findings also revealed that the administrators though experienced on an average, a low to moderate level of stress and this stress did not negatively affect their performance.

Ansarul Hasan, (2014) in his study has found that the primary school teachers are highly stressed. Moreover, the private primary school teachers were found to be more stressed in comparison to their government primary school teachers counterparts.

General Objective

- To study about the Occupational Stress among male and female Primary School Teachers In Thiruvannamalai Dt.

Specific Objective

- To know the Demographic profile of the respondents
- To find out the causes of occupational stress among male and female teachers
- To assess the level of stress with occupational stress index
- To identify and suggest coping methods to manage occupational stress

Field of Study

The field of study selected by the researcher was Vandavasi (Tk) in Thiruvannamalai (Dt).

Research Design

The researcher adopted descriptive research design for the study.

Sampling Method

The universe of the study was the primary school teachers in vandavasi (TK),Thiruvannamalai(Dt). The researcher used simple random method for the selection of schools in Thiruvannamalai (Dt). The sampling technique used was convenience sampling. The total sample size was 60. The samples was collected from Vandavasi (TK), Thiruvannamalai(DT).

Tools of Data Collection

The tool used for data collection was a pre structured interview schedule. The interview schedule contained questions in the order of the objectives of the study. The interview schedule enabled the respondents to share their life conditions and experiences and not strictly restricted to the interview schedule.

Sources of Data

• Primary Data

The primary data source of data collection for the study was from the respondents through the interview schedule.

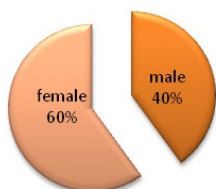
• Secondary data

The secondary data source of data was from books, journals, and websites.

Major Findings

Figure1: Distribution of Stress among the Respondents

Stress among the Respondents



From the above figure it is inferred that female teachers experience more stress than the male teachers.

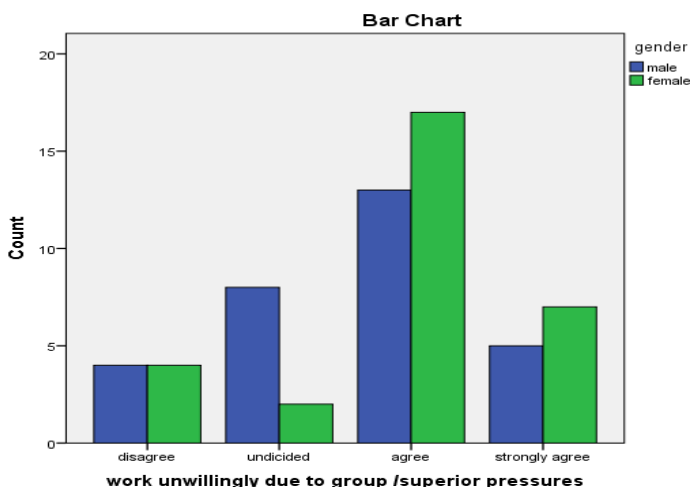
Table 1 Excessive Work Load and Insufficient Resource

Excessive work load and insufficient resources	Male	Female	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Agree	17	21	38	63.4
Disagree	13	9	22	46.6

Inference

From the above table it is inferred that 63.4% of the respondents (17 Male and 21 Female) have responded that due to excessive work load and limited time, they have to manage with the limited and insufficient resources available. Whereas, 22% of the respondents (13 male and 9 female) have differed in the statement.

Figure 2: To work unwillingly due to group /superior pressures



Inference

From the above figure 2, it is showed that 50 % of the respondents (13 male and 17 female) have agreed that teachers have to do some tasks unwillingly, owing to certain group and superior pressures and 20 % of the respondents (5 male and 7 female) have strongly agreed to it, whereas 13.3 % of the respondents (4 male and 4 female) disagreed and 16.7% of the respondents (8 male and 2 female) are undecided with the statement.

Table 2: Correlation between the Occupational Stress and Coping Strategy

S. No	Variables	Correlation values	Statistical inference
1	Occupational stress and coping strategy	-0.267	P<0.05 Significant

The relationship between the occupational stress of the respondents with regard to their level of coping mechanism. The correlation values is -0.267 which shows there is negative correlation between the two variables, which means as the occupational stress high there is less coping strategies adopted by the respondents. Hence it is inferred that when coping strategies are adopted, the level of stress are found to be lesser.

Major Findings

Findings Related to the Causes of Stress

- More than half of the respondents 55.5% respondents are handling students strength ranging from 26-50, 20% of the respondents are handling the strength of the students of about 1-25, and

20 % of the respondents have to handle students strength of 51-75. 5.0% of the respondents are handling the strength of the students from 76-100.

- 45 % of the respondents said that sometimes it becomes compulsory for the teachers to make academic adjustments between political and group pressure and formal instructions.
- More than half of the respondents 56.7 % expressed that there is poor infrastructure in their schools.

Findings Related to Occupational Stress

- Female teachers experienced more stress comparatively with male teachers i.e., 60% of female teachers and 40% of male teachers.
- Majority of the respondents i.e., 68.3 % of the respondent said that they are responsible for the future of the students.
- 60 % of the respondents said that they have to do more work as there is inadequate number of teachers.
- More than half of the respondents, i.e. 58.3 % have said that teachers are unable to carry out assignments to their satisfaction level on account of excessive load of work and lack of time.

Findings Related to Coping Strategies Adopted by the Respondents

- 56.7 % of the respondents used to read novels as one of the measure to reduce their stress level.
- 43.3 % of the respondents used regular walking as one of their coping strategy.
- 33.3% of the respondents never used walking as their coping strategy, 23.3% of the respondents occasionally did walking as part of coping strategy and the researcher found that, 60% of the respondents never involved in sports and games.

Suggestions and Recommendations

- School social workers to be appointed not only to address the issue of the students but also to address the teachers.
- Well structured training program to address the needs of the teachers to be organized.
- Teachers should be taught on the stress management techniques like practicing yoga, meditation, balanced working environment, etc... to handle stress efficiently.
- The teachers should be given counseling and should be trained to handle situations when they are stressed.
- Social workers should work with Policy makers to make clear cut policies in facilitating and to define protocol of the teachers.
- The teachers should be educated on the methods to relieve stress making use of the facilities available.

Conclusion

This research study gives more insight into the occupational stress among male and female primary school teachers in Thiruvannamali (dt)". Findings highlight that the Occupational stress is high, when the coping strategies of teachers are low. Because of their occupational stress and pressure, not only the health of the teachers gets affected, but the whole family is affected negatively. Therefore it is highly recommended that measures should be taken at all levels to

address the immediate needs of the teachers thus reducing the level of stress among them and paving the way for wellbeing of the teachers as well as the students.

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