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OCCUPATIONAL STRESS: A CASE STUDY AMONG PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS IN NAGAPATTINAM DISTRICT

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ABSTRACT

In the present study an attempt was made to compare teachers' occupational stress of primary government and private school teachers of Nagapattinam District. The teachers are the assets of any country. They are burdened with the greatest responsibility of 'Nation Building'. The teaching profession has an esteemed place among all professions. However teaching as a profession at any level becoming more demanding day by day. Teaching has also become more like a managerial job and is having multidimensional job responsibilities. All these situations greatly enhances the stress among teachers. The study was designed to explore the relationship of occupational stress of the fresh set up primary school teachers with demographic variables like gender. Survey method of research has been used in the present study. Occupational Stress Scale was used for collecting the data. For this research study a sample of 100 teachers was selected, 50 each from government and private schools. primary school teachers of government and private schools were randomly selected at Nagapattinam district of Tamil Nadu by the investigator. To analyze the data and interpret the data, the investigator used the statistical techniques for Mean, Standard Deviation, t-test and ANOVA to compare groups.

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INTRODUCTION

Meaning of stress The word, "stress" has been derived from the Latin Word, "Stringere" which means to draw tight. The term is used to refer to hardship, strain, adversity or affliction. Various terms have been synonymously used with stress such as anxiety, frustration, conflict, pressure, and so on. Every human being has his/her own understanding of stress. Because all demand of adaptability do evoke the stress phenomenon.

Stress is simply the body's non – specific response to any demand made on it. Stress is not by definition synonymous with nervous tension or anxiety. Stress provides the means to express talents and pursue happiness. It can also cause exhaustion and illness, either physical or psychological, heart attack or accidents. The important thing to remember about stress it that certain forms are normal and essential. The result of continuing stress may because disruption is one or more of the following areas of health, physical, emotional, spiritual and social.

An occupational stress is any force that pushes a psychological or physical factor behind its range of stability, producing a strain within the individuals. Knowledge that stress is likely to occur constitutes a threat to the individual. A threat can cause a strain because of what it signifies to the person. As

occupational stress begins to take toll on the body and mind, a variety of symptoms can result.[5]

Working in organisations not only provides individuals with life sustaining income but also exerts its own pressures on them. This can ultimately have negative consequences both for achieving the goals of the organisational and meeting the needs of the individuals working in them. Thus, the work environment is a source of social and psychological stress, which has harmful effects on the well-being of the employees. Stress in general and occupational stress in particular is universal and frequently disabling human phenomenon. Stress arising at work has detrimental effect on the behaviour of people, which ultimately results in personal and organisational inefficiency. Occupational stress can be described as a condition where occupation related factors interact with the worker to change (disrupt/ enhance) his or her psychological or physiological condition, so that the person's mind and/or body is forced to deviate from its normal way of functioning. [6]

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Dr.Keith Davis And Dr.John W.Newstrom (1985) Stress is a condition of strain on one's emotion's thought processes, and Physical condition. When it is excessive, it can threaten one's ability to cope with the environment, "stress" is the

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general term applied to the pressures people feel in life. As a result of these pressures, employees develop various symptoms of stress that can harm their job performance. People who are stressed may become nervous and develop chronic worry. They are easily provoked to anger and are unable to relax. They may be uncooperative or use alcohol or drugs excessively. These conditions occur from other causes also, but they are common symptoms of stress.[1]

Dr.M.J.Mathew (1993) Stress has a variety of meaning to people in the workplace. To the production manager in a chemical plant, it may be the tension of missing the shipping date of a large order for a major customer. To the business executive, it may be frustration associated with the inability to acquire sufficient short-term loans from banks to cover the operating needs, and so on.[2]

In the words of szilagyi and Wallace, stress is an internal experience that creates a psychological or physiological imbalance within an individual and result from factors in the external environment, the organization, or the individual.

Anthony D'Souza (1993) Today's leaders not only live and work at a faster pace but they must also deal with uncertainty and change. They need effective methods for coping with the kind of stress that affects anyone in leadership positions. People popularly identify managing directors or chief executive officers (CEO) as those most susceptible to stress and disease. However, people at all levels of management find themselves exposed to comparable pressures.[3]

Stephen P. Robbins (2005) Most of us are aware that employee stress is an increasing problem in organizations. Friends tells us they're stressed out from greater workloads and having to work longer hours because of downsizing at their company. Parents talk about the lack of job stability in today's world and reminisce about a time when a job with a large company implied lifetime security. We read surveys in which employees complain about the stress created in trying to balance work and family responsibilities. In this section we'll look at the causes and consequences of stress, and then consider what individuals and organizations can do to reduce it.[4]

Xiao Z., et al (2003) in their study on "Teachers Needs in China" reveal that during the past ten years or more, a majority of researchers job satisfaction in China have mainly focused on urban areas rather than on rural areas (Xiao & Li, 2003) with more and more emphasis on education in rural areas, especially in areas of high poverty, recent studies have paid more attention to teacher job satisfaction in rural areas. [7]

Sargent, T. and Hannum, E. (2005) in their study on "keeping Teachers Happy job Satisfaction among Primary School Teachers in Rural North-west China" comparative study highlight an in-depth research on teacher job satisfaction in rural north-west China, in terms of community factors, school environment factors, and teacher characteristics. Their findings were mostly in alignment with previous studies, but contrary to their assumptions, however, teachers with greater workloads, felt more satisfied. Further more economic development was negatively connected with teacher's satisfaction. [8]

Jha,S.S. (1988) in his study on "Jobs Stress and Employee Strain in India Executives" explains the pattern of stress and

strain in three work groups namely production, personnel and data processing divisions in an organization. Results indicated that job future ambiguity had negative effect on job satisfaction in all the three groups. The patter of stress in the three groups was different among different levels of management. Among different levels of managers, the diddle level managers had more role ambiguity than others did. [9]

Reddy, V.S. and Ramamurthi, P.V. (1991) in their study on "The Relation between Stress Experience on the Job-Age, Personality and General ability" analysed the influence of age, personality and general ability of the individual in the perception of stress. It was found that only age influenced the perception of stress. There was only very limited contribution of personality and general ability of the individual to the intensity of stress experience of the individual. [10]

Rajeswari, T.R. (1992) in her study on "Employee Stress: A Study with Reference to Bank Employees" found significant negative relationship between age and stress and also between experience and stress. This study also found negative correlation between number of members in the family and stress. The level of stress did not differ between different levels of workers namely officers, and clerks. [11]

Singh, A.K. and Sehgal, V. (1995) in their study on "Men and Women in Transition: Patterns of Stress, Strain and Social Relations" Highlight the patterns of stress and strain among men and women as well as single and dual career couples. They found that male and female managers did not differ significantly on various stress dimensions. Difference in gender was however found in strains. Women were characterized by anxiety, whereas men exhibited more symptoms of somatic problems comparing the single and dual couples. It was fund that male managers with spouses working experienced higher workload than managers whose spouses were not working. In strains also single career male managers had less irritability that dual career male managers din overall single career male managers had better psychological well-being than others did working women managers had better physical well-being that their working husband did but had poorer psychological well-being. [12]

Lewis,R. (1999) in his study on "Teachers Coping with the Stress of Classroom Discipline" examined that the teachers estimations of stress arising from being unable to discipline pupils in the way. They would prepare overall maintaining discipline emerged as a stressor, with those worst affected being teachers who placed particular emphasis on pupil empowerment. [13]

Farooq A.Shah (2003) in his study on "Role Stress in the Indian Industry: A Study of Banking Organisations" describes adequate explanation of stress, and its nature, dimensions, causes, manifestations and coping up strategies. It was observed that most of the employees experience medium to high level of stress at work. Role stagnation, inadequacy of role authority and role erosion is comparatively high rated dimensions of job stress. The study further reveals that employees belonging to the clerical cadre relatively experience more stress on most of the dimensions. [14]

Berhem et al (2004) in their study on "A New Model for Work Stress Patterns" describe that the role of ambiguity as the main

source of work stress and self-knowledge as the main coping strategy to overcome work stress. Work stress is believed to be one of the most important factors affecting productivity. [15]

Lakhwinder Sing Kang (2005) in his study on “Stressors among Medical Representatives: An Empirical investigations” tries to investigate the various stressors related with the job of a medical representative. A sample of 140 medical representatives was taken for the purpose of the present study. The results showed interference of job in personal life, „unsupportive colleagues.“ „Work load“ and „continuous pressure for improved performance“ have been found to be causing stress among the medical representatives. [16]

Anitha Devi (2006-7) in her study on occupational stress: A comparative Study of Worker in different Occupations” describes identifying the degree of life stress and role stress (LS & RS) experienced by professional women. It also studies the effect of life stress and role stress on various demographic variables like age, experience and income. For the purpose of study, 180 women professionals (six different occupations) were chose. It was found that science and technology professionals and doctors experienced significantly greater life stress and role stress. [17]

Objectives of Study

1. To know the level of occupational stress among primary school teachers.
2. To compare the occupational stress of government and private primary school teachers.

Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses have been formulated while dealing with the present problem:

1. There is no significant level of occupational stress among the primary school teachers.
2. There is no significant difference in the level of occupational stress of government and private primary school teachers.
3. There is no significant difference in the level of occupational stress of male and female primary school teachers.
4. There is no significant difference in the level of occupational stress of government male and government female primary school teachers.
5. There is no significant difference in the level of occupational stress of private male and private female primary school teachers.
6. There is no significant difference in the level of occupational stress of government school male and private school male primary school teachers.
7. There is no significant difference in the level of occupational stress of government school female and private school female primary school teachers.
8. There is no significant level of occupational stress among the Salary of primary school teachers.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present study is based on both primary and secondary data. Primary data have been collected by conducting a survey among 100 sample primary school teachers comprising primary school teachers of government and private schools.

Secondary data have been collected from books, journals, newspapers, periodicals, reports, internet and unpublished records of Nagapattinam District of Tamil Nadu. Initial instrument was developed by generating 30 items after a thorough understanding of occupational stress among Private and Government primary school teachers of Nagapattinam district in the state of Tamil Nadu. The first part of the questionnaire was related to personal details of primary school teachers, second part relates with measuring of occupational stress among the teachers with the help of SPSS. All the closed-ended questions were designed to generate responses on a five point likert scale to measure the occupational stress indicated as 1 strongly disagree, 2 disagree, 3 no opinion, 4 agree and 5 strongly disagree.

Sampling Design

A sample of 100 teachers was taken to meet the sample adequacy, for conducting factor analysis number of sample teachers for the study were selected from the total population. For the purpose of the study (100 Teachers) 10% per cent of the samples were selected. Sample teachers were selected by using simple random sampling from three segments by using lottery method because of easy accessibility and affordability. This study is limited to a particular teacher those who are handling the classes in primary school teachers in Private and Government schools and none of the teachers those who are handling classes in below primary level and unaided primary school teachers.

Interpretation

H1: There is no significant level of occupational stress among the primary school teachers.

Table I Level of occupational stress among primary school teachers

S.No	Level of Occupational Stress	No of Teachers	Percentages
1	High	64	64%
2	Medium	22	22%
3	Low	14	14%
	Total	100	100

It is observed from table I that the number of highly stressed primary school teachers comes out to be 64. This shows that 64%of the Primary school teachers have found to be highly stressed. Thus, the null hypothesis no.1, “T here is no significant level of occupational stress among the primary school teachers,” is rejected.

H2: There is no significant difference in the level of occupational stress of government and private primary school teachers.

Table II Mean, SD and p-value of government and private primary school teachers

Groups	Numbers of teachers	Mean	Standard deviation	‘p’-value
Private school teachers	50	132.82	15.76	
Government School teachers	50	119.98	17.303	0.000

It is clear from table II that result of two-tailed p-value is 0.000. if we take the significance level of 1%, we can see that the p value obtained is less than 0.01. therefore, we can reject the null hypothesis at $\alpha=0.01$, “There is significantly different in

the level of occupational stress of government and private primary school teachers.” . This shows that there is a significant difference in the level of occupational stress of government and private primary school teachers. The private primary school teachers are found to have significantly more stresses than their government primary school teacher counterparts.

H3: There is no significant difference in the level of occupational stress of male and female primary school teachers.

Table III Mean, SD and p-value of male and female primary school teachers

Groups	Numbers of teachers	Mean	Standard deviation	'p'-value
Male teachers	50	127.92	16.61	0.405
Female teachers	50	127.88	18.74	

It is clear from table III that result of two-tailed p-value is 0.405. If we take the significance level of 5%, we can see that the p value obtained is greater than 0.05.therefore, we can accepted the null hypothesis at $\alpha=0.05$, “There is no significantly different in the level of occupational stress of male and female primary school teachers,” is accepted . This shows that there is a no significant difference in the level of occupational stress of male and female primary school teachers.

H4: There is no significant difference in the level of occupational stress of government male and government female primary school teachers.

Table IV Mean, SD and p-value of government male and government female primary school teachers

Groups	Numbers of teachers	Mean	Standard deviation	'p'-value
Govt. School Male teachers	25	122.48	18.41	0.312
Govt. School Female teachers	25	117.48	16.11	

It is clear from table IV that result of two-tailed p-value is 0.312. If we take the significance level of 5%, we can see that the p value obtained is greater than 0.05.therefore, we can accepted the null hypothesis at $\alpha=0.05$, “There is no significantly different in the level of occupational stress of government male and government female primary school teachers,” is accepted . This shows that there is a no significant difference in the level of occupational stress of government male and government female primary school teachers.

H5: There is no significant difference in the level of occupational stress of private male and private female primary school teachers.

Table V Mean, SD and p-value of private male and private female primary school teachers

Groups	Numbers of teachers	Mean	Standard deviation	'p'-value
Private School Male teachers	25	133.28	17.82	0.839
Private School Female teachers	25	132.36	13.74	

It is clear from table V that result of two-tailed p-value is 0.839. If we take the significance level of 5%, we can see that the p value obtained is greater than 0.05.therefore, we can

accepted the null hypothesis at $\alpha=0.05$, “There is no significantly different in the level of occupational stress of private male and private female primary school teachers,” is accepted . This shows that there is a no significant difference in the level of occupational stress of private male and private female primary school teachers.

H6: There is no significant difference in the level of occupational stress of government school male and private school male primary school teachers.

Table VI Mean, SD and p-value of government and private primary school male teachers

Groups	Numbers of teachers	Mean	Standard deviation	'p'-value
Govt. School Male teachers	25	122.48	18.41	0.04
Private School Male teachers	25	133.28	17.83	

It is clear from table VI that result of two-tailed p-value is 0.04. If we take the significance level of 5%, we can see that the p value obtained is less than 0.05.therefore, we can rejected the null hypothesis at $\alpha=0.05$, “There is no significantly different in the level of occupational stress of government school male and private school male primary school teachers,” is rejected . the private school male teachers have found to be significantly more stressed than their government school male teachers.

H7: There is no significant difference in the level of occupational stress of government school female and private school female primary school teachers.

Table VII Mean, SD and p-value of government and private primary school female teachers

Groups	Numbers of teachers	Mean	Standard deviation	'p'-value
Govt. School Female teachers	25	117.48	16.11	0.001
Private School Female teachers	25	133.28	13.74	

It is clear from table VII that result of two-tailed p-value is 0.001. If we take the significance level of 1%, we can see that the p value obtained is less than 0.01.therefore, we can rejected the null hypothesis at $\alpha=0.01$, “There is no significantly different in the level of occupational stress of government school female and private school female primary school teachers,” is rejected. The private school female teachers have found to be significantly highly stressed than their government school female teachers.

H8: There is no significant level of occupational stress among the Salary of primary school teachers.

Table VIII Monthly in for government and private primary school teachers

ANOVA					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	85.740	37	2.317	3.220	.000
Within Groups	44.620	62	.720		
Total	130.360	99			

It is clear from table VIII that result of two-tailed p-value is 0.000. If we take the significance level of 1%, we can see that the p value obtained is less than 0.01.therefore, we can rejected the null hypothesis at $\alpha=0.01$, which means that the sample mean is significantly different from hypothesized value and salary of the primary school in question is not the same as the

monthly salary of the government and private primary school teachers at the 1% level of significance. "There is no significantly different in the level of occupational stress of government and private primary school teachers income," is rejected. Therefore private primary school teachers monthly salary very low. The private school teachers have found to be significantly highly stressed than their government school teachers.

CONCLUSION

The results of the study it is clear that the primary school teachers as a whole are found to be highly stressed. The next finding of this study revealed that on the basis of type of school private school teachers face more stress than the government teachers this may be due to low salary and more burden of work in the private schools. The next finding of this study revealed that there is no significant difference in the level of occupational stress of male and female primary school teachers. Further, from the result it is clear that no significant difference has been found in the level of occupational stress of government male and government female primary school teachers. Similarly, private school, male and female primary school teachers have been found to differ non-significantly in the level of occupational stress. The private school male teachers have found to be significantly more stressed than their government school male teacher counterparts. Similarly, here also, as in the case of private school male teachers, the private school female teachers have also found to be significantly highly stressed than their government school female counterparts.

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