

A Study Of Occupational Stress Among Primary And Secondary School Teachers In Sirsa

Neeru Bala and Darpan saluja

Abstract- *“The occupational stress index” was used to measure the extent of stress which employees perceive arising from various constituents and condition of their jobs. During study in Sirsa city of Haryana a sample of 200 primary and secondary school teachers of government and private school was taken by random sampling technique. The analysis indicates that there is significant difference in the primary and secondary school teachers as occupational stress of secondary school teachers is found to be high as compared to primary school teachers.*

Key Words: Occupational stress, school teachers

Introduction

Occupational stress is generally defined in terms of relationship between a person and his environment. There is potential for stress when an environmental situation is perceived as presenting demand which threatens to exceed the person's capabilities and resources for meeting it. Every occupation has some stress, which may differ in its degree. So everyone has some stress with varying degree. Occupational stress has become increasingly common in teaching profession largely because of increased job complexities and increased economic pressure on individuals. A major source of distress among teachers is the result of failure of school to meet the social needs and job demands of the teachers. The organizational factors and contents assume importance due to their influence on the moulding of prescriptions associated with particular position. With specific reference to teachers and within the general concept of occupational stress, Krieger and Sutcliffe (1978) defined stress as: “A response of negative effect (such as anger or depression by a teacher usually accompanied by pathogenic, psychological and biochemical changes such as increased heart rate or release of adrenocortical hormones into the blood stream) resulting from aspect of the teacher's job and mediated by the perception that the demands made upon the teacher constitute a threat to his self esteem or well being and by coping mechanisms activated

to reduce the perceived threat.

The whole advancement of our civilization is based on advancement of our education for qualitative improvement of education. There is need of healthy environment in schools. It is considered that environment of a school, meaning thereby that schools which have good environment, should achieve better. A healthy school environment continuously strives to bring satisfaction among its members. A stress free teacher can teach effectively in the classroom and can provide a better quality of environment to make the school a challenging and interesting learning centre for the students.

Occupational Stress

Stress related with a job or occupation is called occupational stress. The stress related to job has become predominating feature of modern life, exerting effect on employees and their adjustment with the environment as well as with the job. This is the reason that systematic studies of stress in organizational setting have increased dramatically over the passed decades.

Occupation stress has become a pervading failure of modern organization involving serious cost both in human and financial terms. An employer job role, which is composed of set of activity performed by him, constitutes the most significant part of his job life and is responsible for bringing in maximum amount of job satisfaction or job stress and anxiety. Role stress

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usually results from conflicting incompatible or unclear expectation that are derived from work environment.

Caplan, Cobb and French (1975) has defines occupational stress as “any characteristics of job environment that pose a threat to the individual”

Cooper and Marshal (1976) have expressed occupational stress as “negative environmental factors or stressors associated with a part job”.

Allen, Hit and Green have defined occupational stress as “disruption in individual's psychological and physiological homeostasis that force them to deviate from usual functioning in interaction with their job and worked environment which effect the value system. It is assumed that unchecked stress of job reduces values”.

Occupational stress may originate from physical properties of the work environment, change in working hours, time, pressure, work and responsibility over load, monetary, demotion, change in shift pattern, qualitative change in job and under utilization of abilities etc. Marital disturbed life event and stressful life events may be some of job stressors.

Sources of occupation stress reported include poor working conditions, work overload, role conflict and ambiguity, unsatisfactory career development and erratic work hour. There are three major categories of sources of occupational stress.

1. Organizational characteristics and process.
2. Working conditions and interpersonal relationship.
3. Job demands and role characteristics.

Stress and Strain can arise due to:

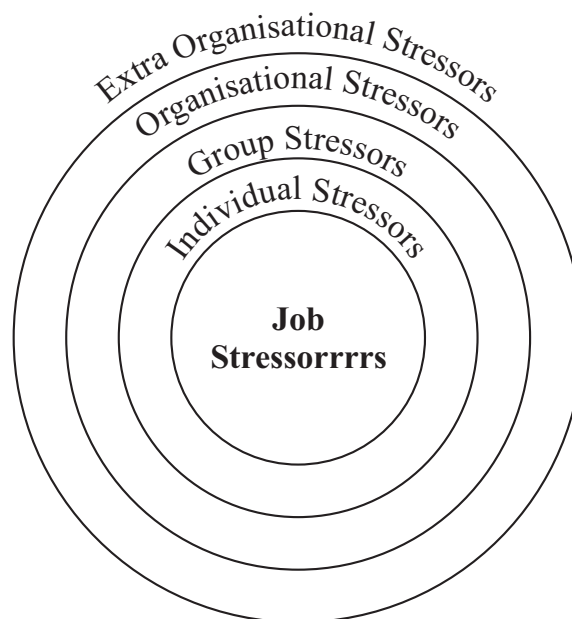
1. **Work Overload :** Too much to do or work task that are too difficult.
2. **Work Under load :** Too little to do or to work tasks that are too easy and fail to cope the individual capabilities.
3. **Insecurity :** Uncertainty about continued employed.
4. **No Participation :** Lack to say indecision that effect one's job.

These causes leads to stress which shows itself in number of ways. For instance, an individual who is experiencing a high level of stress may develop high blood pressure, ulcers, irritability, difficulty

in making reactive decision, loss of appetite, accidental proneness etc. or these can be physiological, psychological and behavioural symptoms.

Types of Stressors :

Various stressors are classified under three categories viz. organizational stressors, group stressors and individual stressors. They are presented as below :



Stress can be viewed both as an intrinsic factors as well as extrinsic depending on the causative factors leading to stress, stress is experienced due to factors inherent within an individual personality or due to factors prevailing within the environment.

The theory of stress and performance is based on the view that behaviour is a function of characteristics of the person and the environment. French Rogers and Cobb introduced the person environment fit models in stress research. The given figure is a diagrammatic representation of the person environment (PE) fit model.

This theory distinguish between two types of fit, each measured in terms of commensurate properties of the person and environment. There is fit between the needs and values of the person and environmental supplies and opportunities to

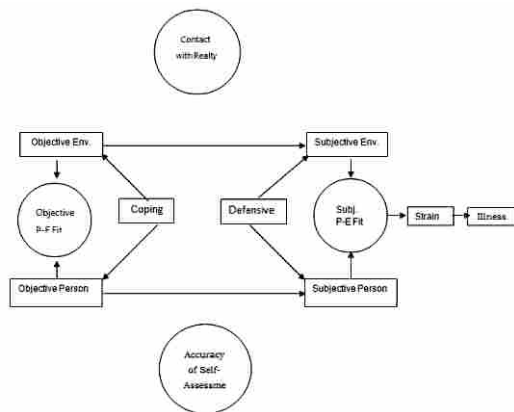


FIG. 1.4 French Rogar and Cobb's (1974) Person- Env. Fit Model Of Stress And Coping

meet these needs and values. Another kind of fit referred to the degree to which the work environment provided supplies to meet the occupant's job demands.

Five levels of stress represented potential area of stress:-

- 1.) **Personal Stressors :-** Susceptibility to stress determined by both genetic and developmental characteristics.
- 2.) **Interpersonal Stressors :-** Good working relationships, according to several behavioural scientists contribute to a healthy work environment. A healthy working relationship depends on support, trust and co-operation.
- 3.) **School Stressors :-** Stress from school setting is characterized by factors that reflects the organization itself (size, number of students, staff, rules and regulations) as well as factors that relate to position and interaction of people which can be:-
 - a) Role conflict
 - b) Job ambiguity
 - c) Workover load and underwork
 - d) Organisational Structure
 - e) Managing People
 - f) Travel
 - g) The nature of educational change and restructuring
- 4.) Environmental stressors
- 5.) Private life stressors.

Brouwers & Tomic (2000) used structural equation modelling to analyse the relationships between self-efficacy and burnout in 243 secondary school teachers. It emerged that self-efficacy had a synchronous effect on personal accomplishment and a longitudinal effect on depersonalisation. However, low self-efficacy had a synchronous effect on emotional exhaustion. The direction of the causal relationship between self-efficacy and stress symptomatology is particularly significant as it suggests that cognitive interventions designed to improve self-efficacy may mediate the effects of stress.

Figen Eres (2011) At the end of the study it was seen that Turkish teachers have mild stress levels and Macedonian teachers have moderate stress levels. There is a meaningful difference in the stress level points of Turkish and Macedonian teachers. Policy makers are sadvised to analyse the teacher training and assessment system with the assumption that personal and social characteristics and working conditions may have an effect on teacher stress.

Friedman, I.A. (2000) : Burnout in teachers: shattered dreams of impeccable professional performance. **Journal of Clinical Psychology** 56, 595-606.

JaninePaulse (2005) The study revealed that teachers in the age group 41-50 (Mean = 102.36, s = 12.32, p < 0.01) differ significantly from the other groups and that stress levels are significantly higher than that of the other respondents. Respondents in the age category 21-30 years (Mean = 64.72, s = 11.46) experienced the lowest levels of stress relative to the other age categories.

Lewis (1999) examined teachers' estimations of stress arising from being unable to discipline pupils in the way they would prefer. Overall, maintaining discipline emerged as a stressor, with those worst affected being teachers who placed particular emphasis on pupil empowerment.

TNN(2010) stated that a stressor is an external stimulus which brings about changes physically and psychologically to adapt to the

stressor. Stressor may vary in intensity from mild to severe stressor. However the reaction to a stressor depends not only on the severity of the stressor but also on the ability of the person to tolerate stress. The effects of stress can be physical and psychological.

After feeling the gravity of the situation, investigator has chosen this less explored field. Further, the investigator found it more significant to compare the occupational stress of teachers of primary and secondary schools.

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Operational definitions

Occupational: - Connected with a person's job or profession.

Stress: - Refers to state of anxiety, conflict, heightened emotion and frustration.

Primary School Teacher: - Primary school teacher is one who teaches class Ist to VIIIth.\

Secondary School Teachers: - Secondary school teacher is one who teaches class IXth and Xth

Objective : Main objective of the present study was on the extent of occupational stress of primary and secondary school teachers in sirsa .

Statistical Analysis

Sample: - A sample of 200 school teachers, both Male and Female teaching in primary and secondary was drawn from Government and Private schools of Hoshiarpur City.

Tool: - "The occupational stress index" by A.K. Srivastava and A.P. Singh (1979) was used.

Techniques: - Mean Standard Deviation and t-Test was used.

Administration of the test : It was self administrating inventory. The subject was asked to read out instructions given on the front page of the test and was also requested to return the questionnaire by a day or so.

Scoring : Since the questionnaire consisted of both true keyed and false keyed items, two different patterns of scoring were adopted for two type of items. The following table provides guidelines to score the responses given to two categories of items

Scoring of The Scale

Categories of Response	Scores for true Keyed	Scores for false keyed
Never/Strongly disagree	1	5
Seldom/disagree	2	4
Sometime/Undecided	3	3
Mostly/Agree	4	2
Always/ Strongly agree	5	1

Analysis and interpretation

Interpretation involves explaining the findings answering 'why' questions, attaching significance to particular results and putting patterns into an analytical framework. Simple verbal responses of the respondents don't reveal the realities unless these have been complemented by occupational stress index. The main finding have been presented as under.

Hypothesis

There is no significant difference in the occupational stress in primary and secondary school teachers in Sirsa.

Table No.1. Comparison of Primary and Secondary Teachers.

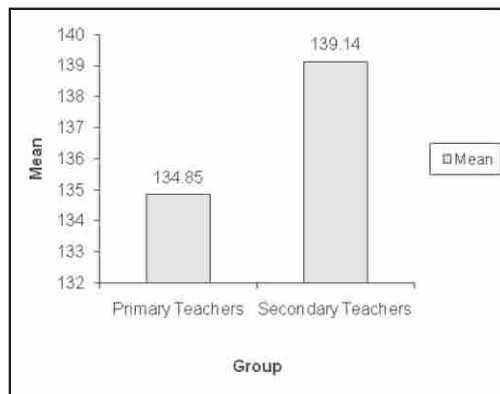
Primary Teachers	Secondary Teachers
100	100
134.85	139.14
12.35	10.87
1.23	1.09
	1.64
	2.62
	Significant

Table 1.shows that mean of primary school teachers (PST) is 134.85 and mean of secondary school teachers (SST) is 139.14. Standard Deviation (SD) of PST is 12.35 and of SST is 10.87. Our calculated critical ratio is 2.62 which is significant at 0.05 and 0.01 levels of significance.

Thus there is significant difference in the occupational stress of the primary and secondary teachers.

Graphical representation of mean PTS and SST is shown in graph.

Mean of Primary Teachers and Secondary Teachers



The graph shows that mean of the Secondary School Teachers is more than that of Primary School Teachers.

Conclusion & recommendations :

The findings of the present study have led to conclusion that secondary school teachers perceived more occupational stress at work than primary school teachers. Significant difference was found in perception of occupational stress at work among primary and secondary teachers.

1. The present study was conducted in Sirsa city. It is, therefore, suggested that this research may be carried out on district/state.
2. The present investigation was undertaken on the teachers. The study may be further extended to the college lecturers.
3. The study of same nature may be undertaken on different occupations like doctors, lawyers, managers, businessman laborers etc.
4. The study of same nature may be undertaken on different variables such as age, socio economic status, qualification, pay scale etc.
5. The study can be undertaken in relation to organizational climate.
6. The study can be undertaken in relation to administration.
7. The study can be conducted on the head of the institutions, colleges or schools.

8. The study can be conducted on large samples.

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