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Occupational stress of school teachers working in government and private schools

[1] Dr. Shivananda B Hatti, [2] Dr. Aneelraj, [3] Dr. Kamal N Kalita, [4] Dr. Aparajeeta Baruah

[1] Senior resident, Dept. of Psychaitry, GIMS, Gadag, Karnataka, India
[2] Senior resident, Dept. of Psychaitry, National Institute of Medical Sciences, Bangalore, Karnataka, India
[3] Associate Professor, Dept. of Psychaitry, LGBRIMH, Tezpur, Assam, India
[4] Professor and Head, Dept. of Psychaitry, LGBRIMH, Tezpur, Assam, India

Abstract
Introduction: The term "stress" has been around since the 1600's and has a very different meaning than that of today. During the 17th century, stress referred to adversity or hardship, whereas in the 18th and 19th centuries stress referred to the force or pressure applied to an object or an individual's brain. Science adopted the latter definition and brought the term into common usage.
Methodology: It was aimed at assessing the occupational stress of government and private school. In the present study the population includes all school teachers working in a private and government schools. Sample size of the study was 160.
Results: Total score of occupational stress in school teachers was 3.181 ± 0.306. Among 138 teachers some 27(19.6%) were highly stressed, majority 111(80.4%) were moderately stressed.
Conclusion: Occupational stress level between government and private school teachers were not significantly different. Hence null hypothesis accepted at 0.05 level of significance

Keywords: Occupational stress, school teachers, TSI

1. Introduction

Centuries ago scientists recognized that work situation may have adverse health effects. Goodell, wolf and Rogers (1986) suggest that the involvement of medical science with work and health problems started with Hippocrates, as early as fifth century BC.A state of mental or emotional strain or tension resulting from adverse or demanding circumstances [1].

Stress is a state of mental or emotional strain or tension resulting from adverse or demanding circumstances. The origin of the word stress can be traced to the old French word *estresse* meaning 'narrowness' or 'oppression' or the Latin word *strictus* meaning 'drawn tight'. Professional stress is defined as the harmful physical and emotional responses that occur when the requirements of the job do not match the capabilities, resources, or needs of the worker. Professional stress manifests in a varied fashion including burnout, depression, anxiety, anger, irritability and/or substance abuse. This in turn affects the personal, interpersonal and social wellbeing of an individual which are conceptually referred as quality of life. Coping with job stress is difficult as it usually depends on a whole range of factors which may or may not be under an individual's control[2].

The term "stress" has been around since the 1600's and has a very different meaning than that of today. During the 17th century, stress referred to adversity or hardship, whereas in the 18th and 19th centuries stress referred to the force or pressure applied to an object or an individual's brain. Science adopted the latter definition and brought the term into common usage. The term "stress" as it was being used in physics and engineering was coming into alignment with that of the definition of stress as it was being used in medicine and biology, suggesting that individuals have a physiological response to external stimuli. Anything that elicited a physiological response caused stress. In Psychophysiology, stress refers to some stimulus resulting in a defectable strain that cannot be accommodated by the organism and which ultimately results in impaired health or behavior. The present day researchers and practitioners visualise the phenomenon of stress in a new perspective. Each individual needs a moderate amount of stress to be alert and capable of functioning effectively in an organization [3].

Some Stress is good. Without thrills or excitement life would be dull. Indeed, after a short period of stress one's body is returned to equilibrium. Prolonged and continuous stress causes threat to health, which will lead to many physical and mental diseases.

2. Methodology

This study is descriptive observational study which is cross-sectional in nature. It was aimed at assessing the occupational stress of government and private school. In the present study the population includes all school teachers working in a private and government schools. Sample size of the study was 160.

160 teachers were selected by lot (randomisation) method from them using Random Number Generator. All teachers in each school (clusters) on the day of visit were allowed to pick a chit from the lot (which contained a set of numbers depending on the number of available teachers). Total number of teachers available on the day of visit was feeded as the maximum number and 10 or 12 as sample strength in the Random Number Generator. About 10 to 12 teachers were targeted from each school. The teachers with the lot numbers matching with numbers of random table (generated by Random Number Generator) were interviewed

3. Results

Table 1: Age distribution of the study sample

Age Range (Years)	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)	Statistics	
25-35	27	19.6%	Mean	43.23yrs
36-45	51	36.9%	Median	42 yrs
46-60	60	43.5%	Mode	42 yrs
			Std. Deviation	8.92yrs

Table 1 shows distribution of age across the groups and total population (range 25-59 years).
The mean age group of the study population in school was 43.23 (SD=8.92) years, Majority of the study population were above 45 years, second highest was from age range 36-45 years, and least was from age group 25-35 years of age.

Table 2: Occupational stress level in two groups.

S. No.	Occupational Stress level(TSI)	Government schools, n=62		Private schools, n=76		χ^2	df	P
		Frequency	%	Frequency	%			
1	Mod.stress (1.82-3.48)	52	83.8	59	77.6			
2	High stress (>3.49)	10	16.2	17	22.4	0.84	1	0.35

Occupational stress level between government and private school teachers were not significantly different. Hence null hypothesis accepted at 0.05 level of significance.

Table 3: Occupational stress subscale scores of government, private and total school teachers.

Occupational stress	Govt teachers (n=62)	Private teachers (n=76)	Total Teachers (n=138)
	Mean±SD	Mean±SD	Mean±SD
Time management	3.06±0.25	3.41±0.36	3.25±0.36
Work related stressors	3.32±0.68	3.31±0.69	3.32±0.68
Professional distress	3.67±0.52	3.55±0.61	3.60±0.57
Discipline and motivation	3.47±0.55	3.39±0.54	3.43±.55
Professional investment	3.41±0.61	3.42±0.73	3.42±0.68
Emotional manifestations	3.17±0.65	3.30±0.65	3.24±0.65
Fatigue manifestations	3.10±0.66	3.01±0.78	3.05±0.73
Cardiovascular manifestations	2.97±0.68	2.74±0.70	2.84±0.70
Gastronomical manifestations	2.68±0.95	2.74±0.86	2.71±0.90
Behavioural manifestations	2.91±0.92	2.89±0.87	2.90±0.89

The Mean subscale score was highest in the area of professional distress in both government (3.67) private (3.55) and total (3.60) teacher group. Least mean score was in area of Gastronomical manifestations i.e 2.68 in government school, 2.74 in private school group.
Stress was more reported in professional distress domain among teachers. This domain had items to assess mainly about progression, promotion, status, respect and salary satisfaction. This reflects more work demand and less reward to the teachers which has significant consequence on the performance of teachers.

4. Discussion

In the study mean age of school teachers was 43.23 ± 8.92 years. Among the school teachers working in government school mean age was 44.24 ± 7.85 years, whereas among teachers from private school the mean age was 42.40 ± 9.69 years. 23.9 % were male and 76.1% were female. These findings are in line with many previous studies.
A correlational meta-analysis of 78 studies by Cameron Montgomery showed the median mean age of teachers in the samples was 41.3 years (M = 36.72 years, SD = 11.19 years [4].
A study on Primary and Secondary School Teachers by Mekhla Chadha, observed that the mean age of primary teachers was 37.48 years and the mean age of secondary teachers was 35.76 years [5].
Among 138 teachers some 27(19.6%) were highly stressed total score > 3.49, majority 111(80.4%) were moderately stressed total score 1.82- 3.48 and no one was in the mildly stressed group.
The means for the five sources of stress (time management, work related stressors, professional distress, discipline/motivation, and professional investment) ranged from 3.25±0.36 to 3.60±0.57. The means for the five manifestations of stress (emotional, fatigue, cardiovascular, gastrointestinal, and behavioral) ranged from 2.71±0.90 to 3.24±0.65.
Stress was more reported in professional distress domain among teachers. This domain had items to assess mainly about progression, promotion, status, respect and salary satisfaction. This reflects more work demand and less reward to the teachers which has significant consequence on the performance of teachers.
Total TSI scores in a study by Richard Emmett Hasty yielded a mean of 2.52 and a standard deviation of 0.57. The mean fell between mild strength: barely noticeable to medium strength: moderately noticeable. That higher stress is not associated with stronger intentions to leave at the end of the school year.

Sagara Rose Kendi[6] studied head teachers in Kenya as management as source of the stress; two (11.1%) rated as somewhat stressful, six (33.3%) as moderately stressful, five (27.8%) as very stressful and two (11.1%) as extremely stressful. shows the scale of the levels of stress;

In current study the mean subscale score was highest in the area of professional distress in both government (3.67) private (3.55) and total (3.60) teacher group. Least mean score was in area of Gastronomical manifestations i.e 2.68 in government school, 2.74 in private school group.

There is no significant difference in government and private school teachers in total scores of occupational stress. However there is significant difference in government and private school teachers in subscales of occupational stress in time management ($p < 0.01$) and cardiovascular manifestations ($p = 0.05$). From the existing literature many studies supported the above finding.

Richard Emmett Hasty showed means for the five sources of stress (time management, work related stressors, professional distress, discipline/motivation, and professional investment) ranged from 2.22 to 3.45 with the highest means for time management (3.45) and work related stressors (3.37). They observed almost no relationship between teachers' sources of stress and their intentions to leave at the end of the school year. However, due to p-values below the study's .05 level of significance, the null hypothesis was rejected for time management (.0019), professional distress (.0430), and professional investment (.0106).

The means for the five manifestations of stress (emotional, fatigue, cardiovascular, gastrointestinal, and behavioral) ranged from 1.51 to 2.45 with the highest means for emotional manifestation (2.45) and fatigue manifestation (2.44), there was no correlation observed between teachers' manifestations of stress and their intentions to leave at the end of the school year. With p-values above .05, the null hypothesis was accepted for all five manifestations of stress, as they relate to intentions to leave at the end of the school year.

A study Mekhla Chadha[5] Comparison of Organisational stress dimensions between primary and secondary teachers, the $p = 0.0038$ for Self Role Distance is highly significant between primary and secondary school teachers

5. Conclusion

Mean subscale score of TSI was highest in the area of professional distress in government, private, total teachers group. Least was in the area of gastronomical manifestations in government, private, total teachers group.

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