

A Study of relationship between Occupational Stress and Mental Health among Primary School Teachers

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Abstract

The aim of the study was to investigate the extent of occupational stress in the primary school teachers in relation to their gender in Ropar city of Punjab and to examine how occupational stress can be reduced. The study adopted the mixed methodology and used a survey research design as the operational frame work for data gathering. Data was collected by Occupational Stress Inventory developed by Dr. A.K Srivastva and Dr. A.P Singh (1989) from 61 teachers of ten private primary schools in Ropar city. It was found that Occupational Stress is high in male primary teachers as compared to female primary teachers. The main causes of occupational stress were high demand of performance, Job insecurity, excessive workload, short span of time to complete the work, strict rules and regulations and inadequate salary etc.

Introduction

Among the greatest of all the services that can be rendered by a man to Almighty God, is the education and training of children, so that they can foster by grace in the way of salvation, growing like pearls of divine bounty in the shell of education and will be one day the jewel in the crown of abiding glory.

Teacher is the pivot of any educational system of the students. The teacher is the yardstick that measures the achievements and aspirations of the nation. The worth and potentialities of a country get evaluated in and through the work of the teacher. The people of a country are enlarged replica of their teacher. It is said that teaching is essentially a spiritual process, involving contact mind with mind. A good teacher exerts a powerful and abiding influence on the life of educand. In shaping the child teacher not only shape the future man but also the future of the nation and the entire human society as such. Teachers are considered as the creators of Leaders, Scientists, Philosophers, Doctors, Politicians and Administrators. They are the real nation builders. Thus the teaching profession occupies important and prestigious place in the society. Our former President **Mr. A.P.J. Abdul Kalam** has said that there is urgent need to bring up the new generation to effectively meet challenges of society and build a strong nation. In order to realize this objective dynamic and committed teachers are necessary. Focus of education has to be on the all round development of child's personality.

Teacher is the principal means for implementing all educational programmes. A teacher can be effective teacher only when he/she is mentally fit and free from all the stress and strains. His knowledge, wisdom and classroom management will solely depend upon the level of mental health he/she is possessing. It is said that ' if a teacher runs, students will walk; if a teacher walks, students will sit; and if a teacher sit, students will sleep'. So, a

teacher's good mental health helps in motivating his pupils. The responsibility of making the future generation better than best lies on the shoulders of a teacher.

Thus the role, responsibilities and teaching activities of teachers at schools have undergone a change with the recent change in the education process. Due to their nature of the profession, which demands various duties, continuous dealing with children varying adjustment problems and complexities of the society, there is maladjustment among teachers. As there teacher is directly going to influence the students. So, this maladjustment will transfer to them through the teacher's behavior, teaching and interaction, which will lead to adjustment problems among the children. Thus mentally alert and better-adjusted teachers are the asset to any school and are required to face the challenges.

As far as the success of education system in school is concerned, the efficiency of the work force is the most decisive factor. In turn, the efficiency is dependent on the psychological well being of the teachers. In the era of highly competitive and dynamic world, the teachers are confronted with the problem of dual role conflict i.e. the work role and family role. In an attempt to balance both these roles, the teachers experience stress. Therefore the teachers are under considerable pressure and stress throughout the year.

Occupational Stress

Occupational stress has become a common problem throughout the world. Occupational stress is a term used to define ongoing stress that is related to the workplace. Occupational stress or work related stress generally occurs when there is a disparity between the demands of the job and the resources and capabilities of the individual worker to meet those demands. Work stressors may refer to any characteristic of the work place that poses a threat to individual (**Donovan and Kleiner, 1994**).

Often a stressor can lead the body to have a physiological which in turn will result on a strain on a person physically as well as mentally. One of the main causes of occupational stress is work overload. Occupational stress is often caused by an increased workload without the addition of employees to take on that additional work instead the increased amount of work is given to the current employees to finish in the same time span that they would be asked to finish their regular or standard workload. A uniform work load for all the teachers may not be a satisfactory solution but differential work generates discontent among teachers, occupational satisfaction is a necessary condition for a healthy growth of teacher's personality. A teacher at present has a vulnerable position and has low self esteem and that is the main reason for psychological stress. Normally the person who has high interpersonal desirability by their fellow employee is the most satisfied with their Jobs. Schools teachers protest that they are not paid enough. The importance of pay as a factor in job satisfaction has been greatly over emphasized.

Mental Health

Working in education is existing yet highly demanding, especially when children are in the picture. The impact that a teacher may have on a child's development and well – being is profound, and as a result the role of the teacher often extends beyond the

traditional classroom. This can be challenging for some teachers, particularly when they are facing mental health problems. In schools, students consider their teachers as their role model of the life. Students try to imbibe the qualities of their teachers. So teachers have great impact on students' life. Thus a teacher with sound mental health can be helpful in all round development of the child.

Mental health is an important aspect of the total health of a person because it is both cause and effect of other types of health. Mental health is the balance between all aspects of life – Social, Physical, Spiritual and emotional. It impacts one how we manage our surrounding make choice in our lives clearly it is an integral part of our overall health.

Mental Health is not just the absence of mental disorder. It is defined as a state of well-being in which every individual realizes his or her own potential, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully, and is able to make a contribution to her or his community.

According to the modern concept mental health is the capacity to keep oneself integrated in the face of stress and strain through integrative adjustment. Actually mental health is a condition which permits the maximum development of physical, intellectual and emotional states of the individual so that he can contribute maximum to the welfare of the society and can also realize his ideas and aims of life. It is psychological state of well being.

Significance of the Study

Fast changing educational process in the present century has influenced the role of teachers, their responsibilities and teaching activities in schools. For all this, the whole responsibility lies on the shoulders of teacher and a teacher cannot fulfill his duties till he is not mentally sound. The conflict between the urgent demands of work and pressure at home induce problems which lead to stress. The problem of balancing between job and family demands may all put a strain on the teachers at work, in the same way the stress at work may spill over and have negative impact on their family and personal life. Stress in their day to day life through common work and non work stressors, ultimately lowering down their psychological well being.

Keeping in view, students try to imbibe the qualities of their teachers as teachers directly influence the development of the students, the scientific development of knowledge and skills, it is essential that teachers must possess sound physical and mental health with minimal stress, only then the system of education can prove to be useful for the furtherance of our society.

Statement of the Problem

A Study of relationship between Occupational Stress and Mental Health among Primary School Teachers

Objectives of the Study

The following are the objectives of the present study

- This study aims to determine the Occupational Stress of Primary School Teachers in relation to their gender
- To study the occupational stress of Primary School Teachers in relation to mental health.
- To study the relationship between occupational stress and mental health of Primary School Teachers

Hypotheses of the Study

The following hypotheses were tested in the present study

- There exists no significant difference in Occupational Stress of male and female Primary Teachers.
- There exists no significant difference in Occupational stress of male Primary School Teachers with good and poor mental health.
- There exists no significant difference in Occupational stress of female Primary School Teachers with good and poor mental health.
- There exists no significant relationship between Occupational stress and mental health of Primary School Teachers.

Delimitations of the Study

The proposed study is delimited in following manner

- The present study is delimited to the Private Schools only.
- The present study is delimited to Ropar city of Punjab only.
- The present study was delimited to the Primary School Teachers only.
- The sample of teachers is delimited to 10 teachers in case the number of teachers in the school exceeds 20.

Statistical Techniques

Sample

For the present study the sample constituted of 61 primary school teachers of 10 private schools. Both male and female teachers were included from private schools of Ropar city.

Tools

The following tools are used:

- Occupational Stress Inventory developed by Dr. A.K Srivastva and Dr. A.P Singh (1989).
- Mental Health check- list by Pramod Kumar (1992).

Techniques

The data was analyzed by using the following statistical techniques:

- Descriptive statistics Mean and Standard Deviation were employed.

- t - test was used.
- Karl Pearson’s Coefficient of Correlation was employed.

Survey Method: The descriptive Survey method was adopted by Investigator for the conduct of the present study.

Analysis and Interpretation

The results of the present study are analyzed under the following headings

1. Significance of difference in Occupational Stress of male and female Primary Teachers.
2. Significance of difference in Occupational Stress of male Primary School Teachers with good and poor Mental Health.
3. Significance of difference in Occupational Stress of female Primary School Teachers with good and poor Mental Health.
4. Significance of relationship between Occupational Stress and Mental Health of Primary School Teachers.

1. Significance of difference in Occupational Stress of male and female Primary Teachers.

Hypothesis I : There exists no significant difference in Occupational Stress of male and female Primary Teachers.

Table 1
Comparison of Occupational Stress of male and female Primary Teachers

Variable	Gender	N	Mean	S.D	S.E _D	df	t-value	Result
Occupational Stress	Males	21	137.14	14.544	4.747	54	4.039	Significant
	Females	35	117.97	18.581				

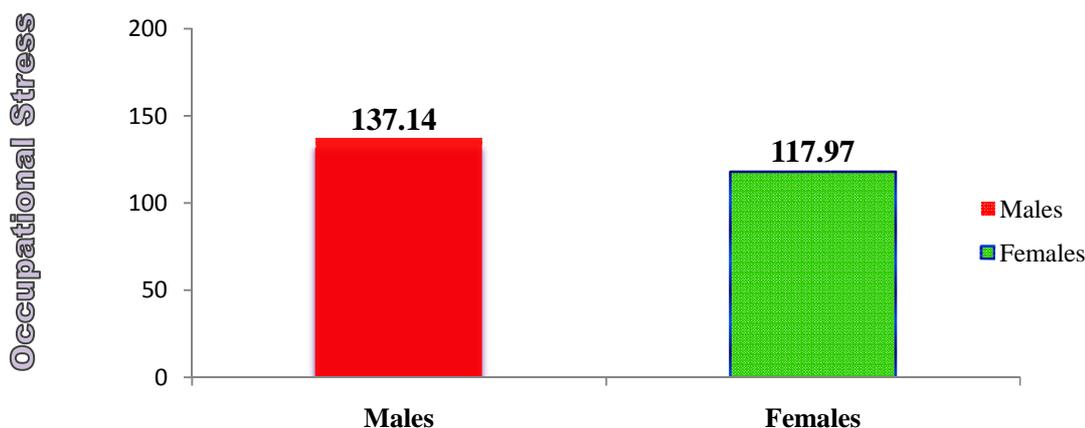


Figure 1: Showing Mean Scores of Occupational Stress of male and female Primary Teachers

The t – ratio is 4.039 which is statistically significant at .05 level of significance. Therefore the data provides sufficient evidence to reject the hypothesis. Therefore the hypothesis “There exists no significant difference in Occupational Stress of male and female Primary Teachers” is rejected.

It is clear from the table that there is significant difference in Occupational Stress of male and female Primary Teachers. The mean score of occupational stress of male primary teachers is more than mean score of occupational stress of female primary teachers. It shows that Occupational Stress is high in male primary teachers as compared to female primary teachers.

2. Significance of difference in Occupational Stress of male Primary School Teachers with good and poor Mental Health.

Hypothesis II: There exists no significant difference in Occupational stress of male Primary School Teachers with good and poor mental health.

Table 2

Comparison of Occupational stress of male Primary School Teachers with good and poor mental health

Variable	Mental Health (Males)	N	Mean	S.D	S.E _D	df	t- value	Result
Occupational Stress	Good	13	130.77	22.313	7.417	18	1.442	Not Significant
	Poor	13	141.46	14.740				

The t – ratio is 1.442 which is statistically not significant at .05 level of significance. Therefore the data provides sufficient evidence to accept the hypothesis- II. Therefore the hypothesis “There exists no significant difference in Occupational stress of male Primary School Teachers with good and poor mental health” is accepted.

It is clear from the table that there is no significant difference in Occupational stress of male Primary School Teachers with good and poor mental health.

3. Significance of difference in Occupational Stress of female Primary School Teachers with good and poor Mental Health.

Hypothesis III: There exists no significant difference in Occupational stress of female Primary School Teachers with good and poor mental health.

Table 3
Comparison of Occupational stress of female Primary School Teachers with good and poor mental health

Variable	Mental Health(F)	N	Mean	S.D	S.E _D	df	t- value	Result
Occupational Stress	Good	13	106	14.213	5.328	18	4.505	Significant
	Poor	13	130	12.923				

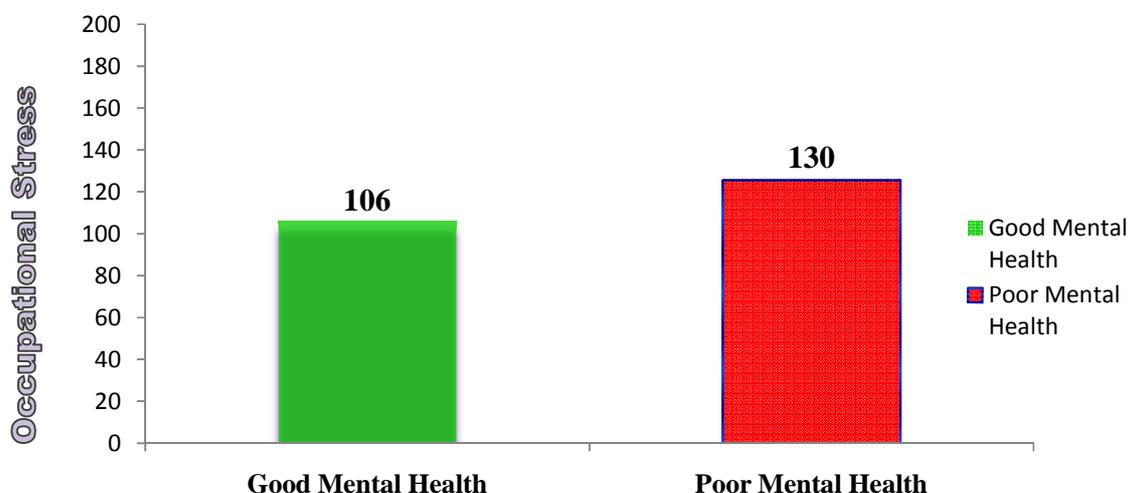


Figure 3: Showing Mean Scores of Occupational stress of female Primary School Teachers with good and poor mental health

The t – ratio is 4.505 which is statistically significant at .05 level of significance. Therefore the data provides sufficient evidence to reject the hypothesis- III. Therefore the hypothesis “There exists no significant difference in Occupational stress of female Primary School Teachers with good and poor mental health” is rejected.

It is clear from the table that there is significant difference in Occupational stress of female Primary School Teachers with good and poor mental health. The mean score of occupational stress with poor mental health of female primary teachers is more than mean score of occupational stress with good mental health of female primary teachers. It shows that occupational stress in female primary teachers with poor mental health is high as compared to female primary teachers with good mental health.

4. Significance of relationship between Occupational Stress and Mental Health of Primary School Teachers

Hypothesis IV: There exists no significant relationship between Occupational stress and mental health of Primary School Teachers.

Table 4
Correlation between Occupational stress and Mental Health of Primary School Teachers

Variable	N	Coefficient Of Correlation	Interpretation
Occupational Stress	56	0.531	Moderate degree of positive correlation
Mental Health	56		

The coefficient of correlation is 0.531 which is statistically significant at .01 level of significance which provides sufficient evidence to reject the hypothesis IV, "There exists no significant relationship between Occupational stress and mental health of Primary School Teachers". So it is clear that there exists significant relationship between Occupational stress and Mental Health of Primary School Teachers.

Table 4 shows that Occupational Stress and Mental Health are positively correlated to each other i.e. more the score of mental health (Poor Mental Health), more the Occupational Stress.

Findings of the Study

- Occupational Stress is high in male primary teachers as compared to female primary teachers
- There is no significant difference in Occupational Stress of male Primary School Teachers with good and poor Mental Health.
- Occupational stress in female primary teachers with poor mental health is high as compared to female primary teachers with good mental health.
- There exists a positive and moderate correlation between Occupational Stress and Mental Health among Primary School Teachers.

Conclusion

- There is significant difference in Occupational Stress of male and female Primary Teachers.
- There is no significant difference in Occupational stress of male Primary School Teachers with good and poor mental health.
- There is significant difference in Occupational stress of female Primary School Teachers with good and poor mental health.
- There exists significant relationship between Occupational stress and Mental Health of Primary School Teachers.

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