

A Study Of Occupational Stress Between College Teachers And Senior Secondary School Teachers

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of the study was to investigate the level of occupational stress experienced by the college teachers and the higher secondary school teachers (HSST). The sample consisted of 40 respondents from each group, that responded on the Occupational Stress Index (OSI). Significant mean difference on the variables related to role overload, role ambiguity, and responsibility, under participation, powerlessness, peer relation and unpredictability was observed. The study shows difference in the overall stress experience between the two groups on various sub-scales of the OSI. Conclusively, academicians too experience stress, so they need to learn coping strategies to overcome the negative effects of job stressors.

Key words

Blood pressure, Alcoholism, Job tension, Management, Comparision, Job satisfaction, Mental Illness,

INTRODUCTION

There is increasing evidence that work related stress can contribute to a variety of ailments; like tension headaches,

backaches, high blood pressures, cardiovascular disease and mental illness. It can also lead to alcoholism and drug abuse, the problems that are reaching

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epidemic proportions in society.

Job stress researchers have reported different physical and psychological conditions at different type of work as potential occupational stressors (Bogg & Cooper, 1995; Chandrashekher et al, 1995; Dang & Gupta, 1994; Gmelch, 1993; Kirkcaldy et al, 1983; Thakar & Mishra, 1999)

Indian researchers, have studied role stress, job tension, and job satisfaction in relation to job level, and length of service among different occupational groups (Singh, 1990). Teachers work under different managements and at different levels (college, school etc.) where the working conditions are not alike. Teachers' personal variables, working conditions and effects on students' achievements have often been significant areas of investigation. However, the effects of existing system on teachers' psychological state is, by and large, a neglected area where it is accepted that teachers are not working in stable working conditions of social demands and homogeneous classroom, which are responsible for teachers' stress and burnout (Upadhyay & Singh, 1999). The working conditions account for stress and burnout feeling in the life of teachers (Mishra & Panday, 1996).

Scanty teacher stress studies are drawing more researchers now.

The aim of the present study was to compare the level of experienced stress between the college teachers (teachers teaching graduate and postgraduate classes) and higher secondary school teachers (HSSTs) These groups were tested for role stress, responsibilities; inter group relationship, working conditions, status etc.

METHODOLOGY

80 subjects in all were randomly selected to participate in this study. Forty teachers from Polur Sri Renugambal Edl. Trust Colleges and an equal number of 40 teachers of different senior secondary / secondary school teachers from Thiruvannamalai District were also requested to participate in the study. The average age of the college teachers was 33.4 years and that of the senior secondary school teachers 30.2 years.

TOOL AND PROCEDURE

The 5-point Lkert scale, Occupational Stress Index (OSI) standardized by Srivastave & Singh (1984) was administered to all the subjects to assess the occupational stress level. Forty-six items comprised the OSI under the broad category of 12 sub-scales.

TABLE - 1 : Mean, SD and t-values of occupational Stress scores

SLNo.	Sub Scale	College Teachers		HSSTs		t-Value
		M	SD	M	SD	
1.	Role Overload	17.10	3.57	19.70	2.49	1.68
2.	Role Conflict	13.95	3.66	14.55	2.53	0.61
3.	Role Ambiguity	9.50	2.90	11.10	1.88	2.08
4.	Unreasonable Group and Political Pressure	11.25	3.19	11.55	2.51	0.33
5.	Responsibility for persons	9.00	1.38	10.00	2.59	1.97
6.	Under Participation	11.20	2.48	12.95	2.50	2.22
7.	Powerlessness	7.82	2.24	9.20	2.13	1.96
8.	Poor peer Relation	12.30	2.31	10.80	2.64	2.54
9.	Intrinsic	10.50	1.76	10.50	1.70	0
10.	Low status	7.50	1.50	7.55	1.99	0.89
11.	Strenuous work condition	9.25	2.39	10.30	2.78	1.36
12.	Unpredictability	5.75	1.79	6.80	1.52	1.98
	Overall score	126.15	3.21	135.9	3.30	

HSSTs = Higher Secondary (Senior Secondary) School Teachers

RESULT'S AND DISCUSSION OF FINDING'S

Table-1 contains the mean scores, SDs and t-values of the two groups on all subjects of the OSI.

The HSSTs show a significantly higher level of stress than the college teachers on role overload, role conflict and role ambiguity factors which may be attributed

to the fact that the HSSTs are performing more multiple roles than their counterparts.

The number of teaching hours of the HSSTs per week seems to be higher than that of college teachers. Besides teaching, the HSSTs are also involved in supervising, games, maintaining discipline in classrooms and school premises, organizing school functions etc.

The table also reveals a significant difference between these two groups on the dimension of responsibility, some previous studies (e.g., Kyriacou & Sutcliffe, 1987) have focused responsibility factor as an important stressor for the teachers. The HSSTs have more responsibility in regard to their pupils' performance and face higher expectation demand from the students' parents as well as the students than the college teachers.

CONCLUSION

Significant difference on factors like under-participation and powerlessness between the HSSTs and college teachers reveals that different managements demanded different roles and gave out different expectation from their employees. This may be a plausible answer for this difference. Autonomy to work is found to be associated more with college teachers than the HSSTs. Lack of recognition for good teaching, lack of participation in decision making, large classes, students non acceptance of teachers authority, etc. may be the cause for the HSSTs reporting

higher stress on these factors than their counterparts.

Poor relationship with the peer group is always a cause of stress to anyone. College teachers and HSSTs differed significantly on this factor. The desire to get closer to the head of the Institution (e.g./ Head of Department, Deans and Registrar for some personal benefits may be a potent cause for college teacher's peer group stress. In addition, since the HSSTs shoving about equal responsibility of their students, among themselves, may have prompted them to score lower on the group stress sealer than the college teachers.

Unpredictability was also found to be responsible for stress among the HSSTs and college teachers. When compared with the responsibilities and problems shared by the HSSTs the college teachers are more comfortable. The college teachers get more time to attend to their personal works, have enough time, enjoy higher salary and associated benefits and have higher career expectations etc. than the HSSTs.

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