



**Research Article**

## **THE HIGHER SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS OCCUPATIONAL STRESS**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This study examined the Occupational Stress of teachers working at higher secondary level. Six Hundred and Fifty teachers from Tamilnadu, viz., Cuddalore, Villupuram, Nagai and Tiruvannamalai districts, were chosen as sample, by using Simple Random Sampling Technique and administered with an Occupational Stress Scale. The statistical techniques employed were percentage, mean, SD, t-test, and correlation analysis. The obtained results are analyzed accordingly. To overcome occupational stress, the researchers have suggested some measures which could prove beneficial to teachers in coping with stress are: improve self esteem, build self confidence, work on building emotional intelligence competencies, develop a good sense of humour, practice yoga and meditation, exercise regularly, foster a supportive friend circle, cultivate hobbies, develop effective communication skills, and seek professional help, if necessary.

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### **INTRODUCTION**

Stress is a common feature in our lives, especially as the pace of development increases. Work is a common term which is applied for all sorts of occupation. It is a basic condition for most people and is an important component of the atmosphere for human survival. It is also a major element for the development of the individual as well as the economy of the nation. Many adults spend half of their lives in work related activities. It is natural to experience work related stress on tension or strain in the body or the mind if there is no release or outlet for the bent-up feelings. The word “stress” is defined by the Oxford Dictionary as “a state of affairs involving demand on physical or mental energy”. In medical parlance „stress” is defined as a perturbation of the body’s homeostasis. Extreme stress conditions are detrimental to human health. But in moderation stress is normal and in many cases, proves useful. An occupational stress can be caused by too much or too little work, time pressure and deadlines, fatigue from physical strains of work environment, excessive travelling, long hours, having to cope with changes in work. 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.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The progress of a nation is limited to its productive capacity, which in turn depends upon the calibre of its higher secondary education. The education system in general and the higher secondary education system in particular are instruments to develop the human capital as economic assets for wealth generation and also as social assets for improving the quality of the life of the people. The education system should provide scope for understanding several major socio-economic changes affecting the society that include global economic integration, national economic reforms, changing demographic pattern, increased school’s enrolment reduced drop-out rate, social norms favouring women and weaker sections, increasing environmental consciousness, changing family finances, demands of labour market and so on.

The individuals entering into teaching field are professionals. They enter into professions and then they professionalize themselves and so they find themselves at loggerheads. Further, in teaching jobs are structured in a way that a worker is simultaneously exposed to both overload and acute time pressure. Generally people under stress express their frustration through some common ways like excessive criticism of government and management and displaying inability to get along with others. A general knowledge of this behaviour in higher secondary school teachers increases the understanding of individuals as well as of groups became, if furnishes one with certain principles. These principles help in recognition of the symptoms of distress and indicate the kind of behaviour one may expect so that steps can be taken to deliberately shape the environment to elicit expected responses. But, in the education department such individual

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behaviour cannot be easily identified, as individual performance cannot be quantitatively measured as precisely as in teaching field. Symptoms of stress take a long time to erupt. Once it erupts, it not only affects the individual concerned but also the co-workers through strained interpersonal relations and ultimately affects the student's education which forms the very core for the success of education department. Hence occupational stress situations and their perceived impact on higher secondary school teachers are taken up for the present study. The researcher has made an attempt to study the occupational stress among higher secondary school teachers of working in the four districts of Tamilnadu, viz., Cuddalore, Villupuram, Nagapatnam and Tiruvannamalai districts.

**Need and significance of the study**

The success of any educational programme depends upon the performance of the teachers, whether it is primary school education or secondary education or his/her education. The effectiveness with which the teachers play their role is very decisive factor. In the present situation, teachers are concerned mostly with the units of curriculum they are assigned to complete. They are not fully aware of the quality of teaching procedure and learning attainments. Secondly, the components of rights and benefits of teachers have been emphasized much more than the duties and obligations of teachers. Like the same the occupational stress evolves from the teaching community will affect the students' growth in all aspects and leads to a social catastrophe. A very few studies were done earlier separately in the area of teachers with regard to occupational stress. Hence a study is attempted and the heading is the occupational stress of the teachers.

**Objectives of the Present Study**

The following were the objectives formulated for the present study

1. To study the level of the occupational stress of the teachers.
2. To study if there is any significant difference in occupational stress between
  - a. The male and female teachers.
  - b. The teachers working in urban school and rural schools.
  - c. The teachers teaching arts subject and science subjects.
  - d. The teachers whose medium of instruction was English and Tamil.
  - e. Graduate teachers and Post graduate teachers.

**Hypotheses of the Present Study**

The following were the hypotheses framed from the formulated objectives

1. The teacher shows a high level of occupational stress.
2. There is no significant difference in occupational stress between
  - a. The male and female teachers.
  - b. The teachers working in urban school and rural schools.
  - c. The teachers teaching arts subject and science subjects.
  - d. The teachers whose medium of instruction was English and Tamil.

- e. Graduate teachers and Post graduate teachers.

**Method**

Normative survey method has been employed in the present study.

**Sample**

As many as 650 teachers have been selected as the sample for the present study.

**Tools**

The tool used for the present study were Occupational Stress Scale (OSS) constructed and validated by the investigator.

**Statistical techniques used**

The mean and standard deviation for the entire sample and its sub-samples were computed for occupational stress scores. The test of significance ('t' test) was used in order to find out the significance of the difference between the means of the internet aversion score. The collected data were computed with the SPSS 11.5 and the results were furnished accordingly in the Table1.

**Table I** The Mean and the Standard Deviation of The Occupational Stress Scores of The Entire Samples And Its Sub-Samples

S.No	Samples	Sub-samples	N	Mean	SD	't' Value	Significant at 0.05. Level
1	Entire sample		650	84.98	9.33	-	-
2	Sex	Male teachers	312	85.27	9.11	0.76	Not Significant
		Female teachers	338	84.71	9.3		
3	School locality	Rural area	306	84.39	9.54	1.52	Not Significant
		Urban area	344	85.51	9.11		
4	Subject group	Arts group	263	85.85	8.84	2.00	Significant
		Science group	387	84.39	9.61		
5	Medium of instruction	Tamil medium	373	84.55	9.59	1.39	Not Significant
		English medium	277	85.57	8.95		
6	Designation	Graduate Teachers	309	85.27	9.14	0.74	Not Significant
		Post Graduate Teachers	341	84.7	9.49		

**Findings of the Study**

The following are the important findings of the present investigation which were inferred from the Table-1.

1. The higher secondary school teacher shows a average level of occupational stress.
2. There is no significant difference in occupational stress between the male and female teachers.
3. There is no significant difference in occupational stress between the teachers working in Urban school and rural schools.
4. There is a significant difference in occupational stress between the teachers teaching arts subject and science subjects.
5. There is no significant difference in occupational stress between the teachers whose medium of instruction was English and Tamil.
6. There is no significant difference in occupational stress between the Graduate teachers and Post graduate teachers.

**CONCLUSIONS**

The present investigation revealed that the higher secondary school teachers working in the four districts of Tamilnadu,

viz., Cuddalore, Villupuram, Nagapatnam and Tiruvannamalai districts, were found to have an average level of occupational stress which in turn gives a very low level of achievement for teachers. So it can be revealed from the investigation that the higher secondary school teachers should get low level of occupational stress.

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