



## Occupational Stress in Public Sector School Teachers in Western Province of Sri Lanka

### KEYWORDS

Work, Environment, Psychological, Sociological,

**Dr.W.R.P.K. Fernando**

Department of Commerce and Financial Management, University of Kelaniya, Kelaniya – 11600 (Colombo), Sri Lanka.

**ABSTRACT** Prolong stress is a significant factor in the improvement of physical sickness as heart illness and high blood pressure, including causes of death. The study aims to understand occupational stress in public sector school teachers in the Western Province of Sri Lanka. The variables of the study are, Income, Co-workers, Work Related Sources, Environment Related Sources, Psychological Related Sources, Sociological Related Sources, Emotional Sources, Cultural, and demographic factors. The problem is male hesitated to obtain appointments as teachers. The sample size is 332 of public sector school teachers in the Western Province of Sri Lanka. Chi Square analysis, coefficient of correlation and Multiple Regression Analysis were used as the statistical tools. The study concluded that the occupational stress affected public sector school teachers in the Western Province of Sri Lanka.

### Introduction

Stress has become an integral and essential part of the modern life. The challenge is made to recognize various stresses which influence such stress among them. Stress can create disorder of emotional stability, mental functioning, and even the body's normal physiological activities. Prolong stress is a significant factor in the improvement of physical sickness, including such leading causes of death as heart illness and high blood pressure.

Stress can be Defined as "a state of mental, emotional or other strain" (the Concise Oxford Dictionary, 1999). The first scientific investigation, Hans Selye (1936) considered as Stages of Stress. He was forwarded a concept; General Adaptations Syndrome (GAS) theory. Further, he explained the problems relate to stress and to explain the three phases of stress; the initial Alarm Reaction, Resistance and Exhaustion (Jex Steve M., 2002). In 1932, Walter B. Cannon first described the "flight or fight response" which he theorized as an advancement survival mechanism, present in every living organism, including human beings.

"Many international organizations such as the International Labour Office and the World Health Organization are addressing issues surrounding occupational stress. The Canadian Association of University Teachers (2003) has explained stress as the result of any emotional, physical, social, economic or other factors that require a response or change".

### Problem statement

Majority of School teachers which are educated and qualified make a great sacrifice for increased economic pressures. The situation is that school teachers live in a system that requires them to perform both social as well an economic role. Based on the situation, increased social competition and increase in workload psychological problems related to tension have increased rapidly. Though apparently happy with their roles, such teachers have great tension created by certain factors. However, the teachers provide an unbalance experience of personal satisfaction, career growth and social acceptance. Its' also represent a common source of tension and can put a great deal of strain on daily teachers life. According to the Ministry of Education (2014) details are available, total public sector

school teachers 223333, male teachers 62,789 and female teachers 160,544. The facts highlighted that a problem this field; percentage of male teachers are 28% and female teachers are 72% of the total. The male hesitated to obtain appointments as teachers. Because they are seeking alternative opportunities to more benefit.

### Objectives;

The study is carried out understand the variables which influenced the occupational stress among the public sector school teachers in the Western Province of Sri Lanka.

### Review of Literature

Sajjan Kumar, Krupa Jejurkar (2005) the purpose of this study was to quantify the stress of undergraduate & post-graduate occupational therapy students during their education. The study has used four variables such as Academic factor, Physical factors, Social factors and Emotional factors. Stress levels were found to vary among the different year students. Canadian Association of University Teachers (2003), Stress is the result of any emotional, physical, social, economic, or other factors that require a response or change.

The case study explores the sources of stress and use of coping strategies amongst Higher Education lecturers (Tracey et al., 2007). All participants described examples of stress resulting from an unbalanced workload, often exacerbated by insufficient time allowance for task completion. Gillespie et al. (2001) the study has identified stressors as causing the most distress were: insufficient funding and resources; work overload; poor management practice; job insecurities and insufficient reward; and recognition. And they have explored stress among university staff, concentrating on five areas, causes, experience and level of stress; moderators, consequences and recommendations for stress reduction.

### Variables of the Study

Main Variables

- F<sub>1</sub> = Income
- F<sub>2</sub> = Co-workers
- F<sub>3</sub> = Work Related Sources
- F<sub>4</sub> = Environment
- F<sub>5</sub> = Psychological Sources

F<sub>6</sub> = Emotional Sources  
 F<sub>7</sub> = Sociological Sources  
 F<sub>8</sub> = Culture

Demographic Factors

D<sub>1</sub> = Gender  
 D<sub>2</sub> = Marital status  
 D<sub>3</sub> = Age  
 D<sub>4</sub> = Education Qualification,  
 D<sub>5</sub> = Number of Dependents and  
 D<sub>6</sub> = Working Hours

Methodology

Primary data obtained from the respondents through a well formulated questionnaire. Secondary Data has been collected from the references; published and unpublished dissertation, journals, websites, annual report and other reports.

Sample Size

There are three districts in western province of Sri Lanka. It was decided to select 450 public sector school teachers under the random sampling from three districts ( there are three districts in Western Province of Sri Lanka), 332 teachers were filled and returned the questionnaire. (Male 90 and female 242).

Analysis

Chi Square analysis, coefficient of correlation and Multiple Regression Analysis were used as the statistical tools, the test was calculated at the 5% level of significance and all the analyses were carried out using SPSS - 17.0 version.

Relationship between Demographic Factors and Stress Variable

Table - 1 describes the Demographic Factors, the Chi-Square Values, and their significance on stress variables among the public sector school teachers in the western province in Sri Lanka.

Table – 1: Chi-Square Relationship between Demographic Factors and Stress Variable

Stress Variables	F <sub>1</sub>	F <sub>2</sub>	F <sub>3</sub>	F <sub>4</sub>	F <sub>5</sub>	F <sub>6</sub>	F <sub>7</sub>	F <sub>8</sub>
Demographic Factors								
D <sub>1</sub>	4.89	6.059*	1.561	16.576*	4.274	2.745	11.319*	8.228*
D <sub>2</sub>	5.388*	1.583*	4.867	7.923*	2.713	1.553	5.671	0.433
D <sub>3</sub>	22.746*	9.243	5.241	1.291	7.104	7.954	3.363	7.194
D <sub>4</sub>	8.199	3.435	5.911	5.898	4.118	10.209	10.882	6.601
D <sub>5</sub>	11.386	18.561*	15.813*	7.325	13.097*	13.826*	11.392	3.513
D <sub>6</sub>	10.256*	4.212	1.317*	8.652	4.317	2.915	8.083	2.828

\*-Significant (p value ≤ 0.05)

It is found from the above Table that the chi-square value was significant in three cases of Income (F<sub>1</sub>), Co – workers (F<sub>2</sub>), two cases of Work Related stress (F<sub>3</sub>), Environment (F<sub>4</sub>). And one case in Psychological (F<sub>5</sub>), Emotional (F<sub>6</sub>), Sociological (F<sub>7</sub>) and Cultural (F<sub>8</sub>) Related stress. It is inferred that the demographic factors, exerted significant influence on the stress related variables. Otherwise, table explained that the chi- square value was significant in four cases of gender (D<sub>1</sub>) and number of dependents (D<sub>5</sub>), three cases in marital status (D<sub>2</sub>), two cases in working hours(D<sub>6</sub>) and one case in age (D<sub>3</sub>). Though Education

qualification (D<sub>4</sub>) was insignificant for the stress.

Different Categories of Stress in Public Sector Schools teachers of Western Province – Sri Lanka

The results of inter correlation (at 5% level of significance by using t-test) analysis between the different categories of stress among the public sector school teachers working in the Western Province are presented in Table - 2 in the form of Correlation Matrix. Further, the significance of the correlation is indicated.

Table – 2: Correlation Matrix – Different Categories of Stress variables in Public Sector Schools of Western Province – Sri Lanka

Category of Stress	F <sub>1</sub>	F <sub>2</sub>	F <sub>3</sub>	F <sub>4</sub>	F <sub>5</sub>	F <sub>6</sub>	F <sub>7</sub>	F <sub>8</sub>
F <sub>1</sub>	1							
F <sub>2</sub>	0.580*	1						
F <sub>3</sub>	0.495*	0.550*	1					
F <sub>4</sub>	0.276*	0.606*	0.403*	1				
F <sub>5</sub>	0.411*	0.688*	0.551*	0.834*	1			
F <sub>6</sub>	0.376*	0.358*	0.359*	0.606*	0.620*	1		
F <sub>7</sub>	0.402*	0.485*	0.228*	0.544*	0.613*	0.446*	1	
F <sub>8</sub>	0.348*	0.341*	0.370	0.253*	0.364*	0.188*	0.054	1

\*- Significant at 5% level

The Table - reveals that there exists a significant inter correlation between the different categories of stress among the public sector school teachers working in the Western Province of Sri Lanka. It is inferred that there exists a significant inter correlation between the various stress related factors for the public sector school teachers in the Western Province of Sri Lanka.

**Percentage of Stress Category on Total Stress in public sector School Teachers of Western Province in Sri Lanka -- Multiple Regression Analysis**

**Table - 3** describes the results of Multiple Regression Analysis of the respondents in the Western Province in terms of R (Multiple Correlation Co-efficient), R<sup>2</sup> (co-efficient of determination) and the incremental value of R<sup>2</sup>.

**Table – 3: Results of Multiple Regression Analysis Public Sector School Teachers in Western Province of Sri Lanka**

Independent Variables	School Teachers		
	R	R <sup>2</sup>	Incremental value R <sup>2</sup>
F <sub>1</sub>	0.636	0.404	0.404
F <sub>2</sub>	0.833	0.693	0.289
F <sub>3</sub>	0.868	0.754	0.061
F <sub>4</sub>	0.961	0.924	0.170
F <sub>5</sub>	0.982	0.964	0.040
F <sub>6</sub>	0.993	0.987	0.023
F <sub>7</sub>	0.997	0.994	0.007
F <sub>8</sub>	1.000	1.000	0.006

Source: Primary Data

It is noted from the above Table that among the eight stress factors, the Income Related Stress explains gets 40.4% while Co – Workers Related Stress explains 28.9% on the total stress of the respondents. It is also noted from the above Table that nearly 14% and 10% increase are recorded in the Co – workers Related Stress and Environment Related Stress respectively public sector school teachers in the Western Province.

**Findings of the Study**

1. The study explained that Income, Co – workers stress and Environment Related Stress were the important causes of occupational stress. Next main reasons Work Related stress and Environment Related Stress. Other factors, Psychological Related Stress, Emotional Related Stress, Sociological Related Stress and Cultural Related stress also were effected in equal level of occupational stress.

2. And otherwise, it is inferred that the demographic factors, Gender and number of dependents were the main causes of stress, Marital status was second reason, Working hours was next reason, and Age was last reason. Though Education qualification was insignificant for the stress.

3. The study found that there exists significant inter correlation between the various stress related factors for the public sector school teachers in the Western Province of Sri Lanka.

4. It was found that majority of public sector school teachers in western province were female category.

**Conclusion**

The result of the present study clearly showed that the occupational stress affected public sector school teachers in the Western Province in Sri Lanka. The study has evaluated eight main variables and they had significantly influenced the total occupational stress. The above variables were the causes of occupational stress which had an adverse effect on education filed of Sri Lanka. Income Related Stress is the key issue of them. It is found that majority of Stress Related Factors are inter correlated and they have significantly influenced the total level of stress. As well as t the demographic factors excluding education qualification had significantly influenced the level of stress among the school teachers in the Western Province of Sri Lanka.

**REFERENCE**

1. Canadian Association of University Teachers (2003), Occupational Stress, Occupational health and safety Bulletin, ,Ottawa issue 01 | 2. Gillespie, N.A., Walsh, M.J., tough, Winefield, A.H., C.K. and Dua, J.K. (2001) Occupational stress within Australian universities: staff perceptions of the causes, consequences and moderators of stress. *Work and Stress*, 15, 53-72. | 3. Jex Steve M. (2002): *Organizational Psychology*, John Wiley & Sons (Asia) Pte Ltd, 2 Clementi Loop, Singapore. | 4. Ministry of Education. (2014), Sri Lanka Education Information 2013, Data Management Branch, Colombo | 5. Oxford University Press. (1999). *the Concise Oxford Dictionary*, New Delhi | 6. Sajjan Kumar, KrupaJejurkar. (2005). Study of Stress Level in Occupational Therapy Students During Their Academic Curriculum, *The Indian Journal of Occupational Therapy*. Vol.37( 1), 5-14. | 7. Tracey J Devonport , Kay Biscomb and Andrew M Lane. (2007). Sources of Stress and Coping Strategies, *Journal of Hospitality, Leisure, Sport and Tourism Education* , Vol.7 (1 ), 70 – 81. [www.heacademy.ac.uk/johlste](http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/johlste) | 8. [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Education\\_in\\_Sri\\_Lanka](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Education_in_Sri_Lanka), | 9. [http://www.colombopage.com/archive\\_12A/Oct02\\_1349186244CH.php](http://www.colombopage.com/archive_12A/Oct02_1349186244CH.php) | 10. [http://www.moe.gov.lk/sinhala/images/Statistics/sri\\_lanka\\_education\\_information\\_2012.pdf](http://www.moe.gov.lk/sinhala/images/Statistics/sri_lanka_education_information_2012.pdf) | 11. [www.unisa.ac.za](http://www.unisa.ac.za) | 12. [www.heacademy.ac.uk/johlste](http://www.heacademy.ac.uk/johlste) |