

## Occupational Stress and Emotional Intelligence of Government Secondary School Teachers



### Education

**KEYWORDS :** Occupational stress, Emotional intelligence, Gender, Age, Marital status.

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### ABSTRACT

*The present study aims at finding out the level of occupational stress and emotional intelligence of 191 government school teachers in relation to their gender, age and marital status. The results reveal that government school teachers experienced moderate level of occupational stress while emotional intelligence levels were found to be high. Significant differences are indicated regarding occupational stress among government school teachers in relation to marital status. There is no significant difference in emotional intelligence of these teachers in relation to gender, age and marital status. However, correlation analysis reveals that significant and positive relationship exists between occupational stress and emotional intelligence.*

### INTRODUCTION

Stress has become an inseparable part of human life and its intensity is increasing in the present era of globalization which is marked with competition and excellence. A stressful event has direct and indirect impact on the human health. Some of the common symptoms of stress include **physical stress symptoms** (breathlessness, churning stomach, dizziness, fatigue, headaches, indigestion), **psychological stress symptoms** (abrasive, anxious, cynical, depression, frustration, impatience, hopelessness) **behavioral stress symptoms** (aggression, avoidance behavior, difficulty with relationships, gambling, increased alcohol and smoking) **work related stress symptoms** (resistance to work, loss of concentration, poor decision making, poor interaction with colleagues, losing temper).

School teachers generally face stress problems due to poor management, excessive work hours, rigid institutional policies, heavy workload, poor student behavior, poor working conditions that include diminishing resources and poor physical features of school building, lack of reward, role ambiguity, accountability, regular checking, un-educational workload like surveys, election duties, etc. If the stress situations are not checked and coped then aggravated conditions can arise. Studies by Reglin and Reitzammer (2008), Olaitan et al. (2010), Eres & Atanasoska (2011), Yadav & Verma (2012) also suggest that teachers regardless of what level they teach experience high levels of stress.

Emotional intelligence plays a vital role in social sciences. It is a type of social intelligence that enables to control one's own and others emotions, make a choice between them and the ability to use these emotions to set his life. To cope with stress, emotional intelligence can play an effective role. Emotional intelligence can increase teacher effectiveness and reduce occupational stress. Emotional intelligence enables to manage and regulate one's emotions effectively according to the situations being faced. Thus, the teachers must be emotionally intelligent to lower down their stress levels.

### HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

1. The level of occupational stress among government secondary school teachers will be moderate.
2. There will be no significant difference in occupational stress among government secondary school teachers in relation to gender.
3. There will be no significant difference in occupational stress among government secondary school teachers in relation to age.
4. There will be no significant difference in occupational stress among government secondary school teachers in relation to marital status.

5. The level of emotional intelligence among government secondary school teachers will be moderate.
6. There will be no significant difference in emotional intelligence among government secondary school teachers in relation to gender.
7. There will be no significant difference in emotional intelligence among government secondary school teachers in relation to age.
8. There will be no significant difference in emotional intelligence among government secondary school teachers in relation to marital status.
9. There will be no significant relationship between occupational stress and emotional intelligence of government secondary school teachers.

### METHOD AND PROCEDURE

#### Sample

The sample of the study consisted of 191 government secondary school teachers of Shaheed Bhagat Singh Nagar and Ropar District.

#### Tools

Occupational stress level was measured by using Occupational Stress Index developed by Srivastava and Singh (1981). This standardized tool consisted of 46 items each to be rated on five point scale as 5 for strongly agree, 4 for agree, 3 for undecided, 2 for disagree and 1 for strongly disagree. The scoring for false keyed items was reversed. Emotional intelligence scale by Anukool Hyde, Sanjyot Pethe & Upinder Dhar (2002) was used. The scale consisted of 34 items scored as 5 for strongly agree, 4 for agree, 3 for undecided, 2 for disagree and 1 for strongly disagree.

#### Statistical Analysis

The mean and standard deviation of the total sample and relevant sub samples based on gender, age and marital status were computed, group comparisons were done by applying t tests and coefficient of correlation was applied to find the correlation between occupational stress and emotional intelligence.

### RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

The scores of the total sample were distributed into various levels to assess respondents with high occupational stress (156-230), moderate stress (123-155) and low occupational stress (46-122). Likewise, the scores were distributed to assess the emotional intelligence into high (85 and above), moderate (52-84) and low (51 and below) levels.

**Table 1. Relation between Occupational Stress and Emotional Intelligence**

Occupational Stress					Emotional Intelligence		
Sub- Samples	Total (N)	Mean (M)	Standard deviation ( $\sigma$ )	t- value	Mean	Standard Deviation	t- Value
Total Sample	191	138.82	6.55		141.94	9.25	
Male	91	137.98	8.03	1.34	140.76	8.47	0.68
Female	100	139.64	9.01		141.64	9.54	
Above40 years	61	138.21	6.95	0.84	143.95	7.90	2.42
Below40 years	130	139.21	9.19		140.82	9.17	
Married	108	140.66	7.72	2.96**	142.76	8.92	1.87
Unmarried	83	137.13	8.72		140.34	8.80	

**\*\*Significant at 0.01 level.**

Table 1 show that the mean calculated for the whole sample is 138.82 and standard deviation is 6.55. This indicates that there exists moderate level of occupational stress among government secondary school teachers. Therefore, hypothesis 1 is accepted.

Moderate or optimum level of stress is considered desirable for an individual to improve performance, efforts for work, diligence and stimulate creativity. Results of Dhanalakhsmi, (2008) and Eres & Atanasoska, (2011), Johannsen, (2011); Nagra (2013) and Nagra & Kaur (2014) are in line with the present study.

The result of t-test of significance of the means (Table 1) applied to each group indicate that male and female government school teachers do not differ significantly in their occupational stress scores. Thus, hypothesis 2 is accepted. Findings of studies conducted by Johannsen, (2011); Anubucheivan (2012) and Nagra (2013) are in line with present study.

Results from Table 1 also depicts that government school teachers with age above 40 years and below 40 years do not show any significant difference in occupational stress scores. Thus, hypothesis 3 is accepted. Studies of Chona & Roxas (2009) and Okoza et al. (2010) supported the non influence of age on occupational stress.

Similarly the t- test results of married and unmarried government school teachers differ significantly in their occupational stress scores. Hence, hypothesis 4 is rejected.

The mean calculated for the whole sample for emotional intelligence is 141.94 and standard deviation is 9.25 (Table 1). The mean calculated for the whole sample falls in the high level category. Therefore, hypothesis 5 is rejected. High level of emotional intelligence predicts that teachers of the sample have the ability to accurately identify their own emotions, as well as those of others. Results of study by Edannur (2010) and Krishanakumar and Lalitha (2014) also suggest same results.

The result of t-test of significance of the means (Table 1) applied to each group indicate that male and female government school teachers do not differ significantly in their emotional intelligence scores. Thus, hypothesis 6 is accepted. Findings of the study conducted by Tyagi (2004); Edannur (2010); Dilsathbegam (2014) and Paul and Thavaraj (2015) also suggest that emotional intelligence has no significant relationship with gender.

Results from Table 1 also depicts that government school teachers with age above 40 years and below 40 years do not show any significant difference in emotional intelligence scores at 0.01 level of significance. Thus, hypothesis 7 is accepted. Results of the study conducted by Dilsathbegam (2014) and Paul and Thavaraj (2015) also confirm that emotional intelligence is higher among teachers of all age groups.

Similarly the t- test results of married and unmarried government school teachers do not differ significantly in their emotional intelligence scores as the values of t-test applied are found to be insignificant at 0.01 level of confidence. Hence, hypothesis 8 is accepted. Study by Paul and Thavaraj (2015) also highlight that marital status does not affect the emotional intelligence of teachers.

**Table 2. Coefficient of Correlation between Occupational Stress and Emotional Intelligence**

Sample group	N	Correlation (r)
Total sample	191	0.23
Male	91	0.28
Female	100	0.11
Above 40 yrs	61	0.12
Below 40 yrs	130	0.23
Married	108	0.25
Unmarried	83	0.21

The coefficient of correlation (r) between occupational stress and emotional intelligence is positive and significant at 0.01 level (Table 2). Hence, the hypothesis 9 is rejected. Therefore, emotional intelligence enables teachers to cope with their occupational stress and reduce their stress level. Kumar and Roopari (2009) and Krishanakumar and Lalitha (2014) also indicated that there is a significant relationship between emotional intelligence and stress.

### **Educational Implications**

Advancements all around the globe had posed tremendous challenges for the teaching community thus, generating lot of stress for the teachers leading to detrimental emotional, cognitive, physiological, and behavioral impact on their health, work, and personal lives. One should emphasize on developing emotional intelligence to overcome stress and anxiety at workplace and to get success in life. Innovative programmes of emotional intelligence can be practiced within teacher education programme to provide teachers with additional skills to meet the challenges.

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