



A Study on Stress Level and its Influencing Factors Among Female Teachers in self Financing Schools

*Dr.P.T.Saleendran **Ms.D.S.Latha

* Associate Professor, Department of Management, D.J.Academy For Managerial Excellence, Pol-lachi Highway, Othakkalmandapam (p.O), Coimbatore-32

** Asst.Professor, Department of Management, Sree Narayana Guru College, K.G.Chavadi, Coimbatore-105.

ABSTRACT

Teachers are very often been given names like "Master" "Mentor" and "Guru". To achieve this status teachers throughout the history of civilization have come up to the expectations of the world around them. The vacations, holidays, fixed working time; fixed breaks are the factors that allure female species to teaching profession. But in the present it has transformed into a very demanding, threatening and competitive profession. The working status of the female in balancing the family and profession has made this job into a stressful occupation. Hence the researcher has made a humble attempt to study the stress level of teachers. Researcher has adopted descriptive design and systematic sampling technique to select 60 samples from the universe of 112 teachers in ISS senior secondary School, Perinthalmanna. The instrument used for collecting data was in the form of questionnaire. The questions framed were to identify workload, interpersonal relationship, student's discipline problem and the rules of the school. The data was analyzed using SPSS for windows. Descriptive and inferential statistics were computed the level of stress and relationships between the variables respectively. Results showed that the level of stress among school teachers were in medium level. The results also showed that there was a significant relation between workload and experience of teaching, age and number of children. The most dominant stress factor was students discipline problem.

Keywords : Occupational stress, Profession, Teaching.

Stress has now become an area of concern for all types of occupations. The survey conducted by the Trade Union Congress (TUC, 1996) concluded that people working in the voluntary sector and in education, constituted occupational groups most affected by occupational stress. Studies of the teaching profession, in particular commonly reveal high levels of stress, which often manifest themselves as exhaustion, anxiety, depression, irritability and increased levels of stress-related illness. Travers and cooper (1991) found teachers to be significantly poor in mental health in comparison with other highly stressed occupational group.

Teachers Stress:

Teaching has been identified as one of the most stressful professions today. The reasons for that are quite similar to other stressful occupations in the world. By all definitions the profession of teaching has a very prestigious place in all professions. A teacher is a king pin in the entire system of education. Almost all cultures of the civilized world have considered their teachers in a very high esteem.

Times have changed and the societies and cultures have drastically diversified, but the tasks of a teacher are primarily the same, which is the transfer of knowledge to the next generation. With change in cultural norms and traditions in the societies there has been a drastic change in the expectations from a teacher. Some of these changes have limited the measures which a teacher in the past could exercise in disciplining a student and some have put additional burden on teachers in respect their preparation of lessons and adopting and maintaining their teaching styles. This is because most of the school systems prefer to maintain uniformity in all of their branches.

Teaching has now become a very demanding occupation with a lot of stresses for a teacher who has a lot of deadlines to meet and a lot of responsibilities to shoulder besides teaching a child what are in a text book.

Overview of a Teacher's Responsibilities:

One of the important responsibilities of a teacher is that lesson planning and teaching. The teachers have the full and full responsibilities of how to plan the lessons and what is the best way of to teach the students. Another responsibility of a teacher is accountability for student performance. The teachers find out the level of performance of each student and give importance to the backward students.

Another stressful responsibility is class room management and discipline. Maintain the discipline in the Classroom is a risk taking effort by every teacher. All the teachers are undertaking a supervisory role in the classroom while teaching the students. And also motivates the students to participate extracurricular activities.

Effects of Stress in teacher

Stress is considered as an involuntary response to a dangerous situation. When we face a situation which our brain is incapable of handling, it puts the body on alert by producing hormones which are required in fight or flight situation. It causes increasing the blood pressure of the teachers. When stress increases the blood pressure also increased of a human being and also rapids the heartbeat.

All these actions are a perfect requirement if we come across a physically stressful situation, like being attacked by a large predator, but most unbecoming in a classroom scenario. All these actions which are mentioned above have a very long lasting negative effect if these stressful situations are to become frequently occurring feature. Workplace bullying also leads to stress. In some natural causes of stress having female teachers is that misbehavior of other peoples or co-workers or the management sides. Some time it may come from parents and intruders also.

In these cases one of the major things is to increase the stress level of teachers is that lack of support from the bureaucracy

for filling and routine tasks. And also the teachers feeling that lack of job security in the institution due to redundancy and fixed term contracts and all. In another case the teachers feels that they lose the control over the assigned job or the management didn't give the full authority of the assigned jobs. In another cause of stress is that the teachers have to force to early retirement for the teachers and also denigration of profession by politicians & media. The teacher also feels that they loose their public esteem in to the society.

Causes of stress for Teachers:

According to a research the major causes of teacher stress are denoted that excessive working hours and workload is the major causes of stress in teachers. In some cases rising the class sizes causes increasing the stress level of teachers. Because once they unable to manage all the students or maintain the proper discipline in the classroom it may also causes increasing the stress level of the teachers.

David (2004) conducted a research on the topic of a model of teacher stress and its implications for management. Recent surveys have shown that between 20%-40% of teachers experience considerable stress when working in schools. Following a summary of research into the sources and correlates of reported teacher stress, this paper proposes a definition and a model of work-related stress in school that incorporates current concepts and research findings.

John McCormick (1997) conducted a research on the topic of Occupational Stress of teachers: biographical differences in a large school system. The main findings of this research were to presents the result of an analysis of questionnaire and interview data revealing significant differences in occupational stress. Between groups of public school teachers, in New South Wales, Australia. In particular, emphasizes the importance of differentiating between executive and classroom teachers, primary/infants and secondary teachers, teachers at different career stages and teachers in geographical location the future. The fact that primary/infants teachers reported greater stress attributable to student misbehavior than secondary teachers reinforces the need to distinguish between the perceived "objective strength" of a stressor and the degree of distress felt by a teacher.

Statement of problem:

Teachers a main domain for community formation process, and students are the product of teacher's educating efforts. Indirectly, teachers need to be aware of every problem faced by students including disciplinary problem. Teachers feel stress because they have to face many disciplinary challenges and social problem. At the same time, they also have to educate the students. On student disciplinary aspect, student acts such as rules obedience, late or not attending class, vandalism, causing noise, bullying, etc. are normal phenomena in today's school.

Teachers and school management have no choice in facing many problems caused by students. Another factor leads into teacher stress is school rules. Examples of school rules are teacher's disciplinary aspect, teacher's attendance in school activity and valuation system of teacher's promotion. Teacher always see these particular aspects closed mindedly, and as a result, some teachers feel unsatisfied with their school rules.

Based on the above stated problems, researcher decides to identify how far stress could influence teachers level of teaching achievement and whether these factors could denying them from being succeed in teaching profession.

OBJECTIVES

- 1) To identify the level of stress based on teachers workloads.
- 2) To identify the level stress based on teachers interpersonal relationship.
- 3) To identify the level of stress based on student disciplinary problem.
- 4) To identify the level of teacher stress based on school rules aspect.

- 5) To identify the most dominant stress factor among the teachers.
- 6) To identify the stress difference between male and female teachers.
- 7) To identify the relation of stress among the teachers from the aspects of workloads, student disciplinary problem, interpersonal relationship and school, rules with teaching experience, age, and the number of children.

Importance of study:

In the present situation teaching profession is a stressful profession. Day by day the level of stress of this profession is on the increase. Many recent happenings in the country put teaching profession in morbid fear and danger. As a result the stress of daily living increases. In this study the researcher has attempted to analyze the causes leading to occupational stress.

Methods and Materials:

The sample consists of 112 teachers of I.S.S Senior Secondary School, Perinthalmanna. 60 teachers were selected through systematic sampling technique. The researcher used self-prepared questionnaire for data collection. It includes personal profile and socio economic details, stress level of the school teachers on aspects of workloads, interpersonal relationship, student disciplinary problem, and school rules of the respondents. It consists of thirty two questions which can be answered on four point scale.

Results and Discussion:

Analysis of results for stress level from workloads, interpersonal relationship, student disciplinary problem and school rules aspects, are done by separating the category into low, medium and high category. Mean from the respondent answers are categorized into a scale below:

S.No	Category	Scale
1	1.00 – 2.33	Low
2	2.34 - 3.66	Medium
3	3.67 – 5.00	High

Table 1: Respondents Based On Workload

S.No	Level	Frequency	Percentage
1	Low	3	5.0
2	Medium	42	70.0
3	High	15	25.0
	Total	60	100.0

The above table shows the level of stress among respondents based on workloads aspect. Result shows that majority of respondent lies at medium stress level on workloads aspect, which is 42 (70%), followed by high stress level, 15 (25%) and low stress level, 3 (5 %).

Table 2: Respondents Based on Interpersonal Relationship.

S.No	Level	Frequency	Percentage
1	Low	0	0.0
2	Medium	44	73.0
3	High	16	27.0
	Total	60	100.0

Table 2 shows the level of stress among respondents based on interpersonal relationship aspect. Result shows that majority of respondent lies at medium stress level on interpersonal relationship aspect, which is 44 (73.0 %), followed by high stress level, 16 (27.0 %). No respondent fall in low stress level on interpersonal relationship aspect.

Table 3: Respondents Based on Student Disciplinary Problem

S.No	Level	Frequency	Percentage
1	Low	1	0.6
2	Medium	30	50
3	High	29	48.4
	Total	60	100.0

The above table shows the level of stress among respondents based on student disciplinary aspect. Result shows that majority of respondent lies at medium stress level on student disciplinary problem aspect, which is 30 (50 %), followed by high stress level, 29 (48.4 %) and Low stress 1 (0.6 percent).

Table 4: Respondents Based on School Rules

Sl.No	Level	Frequency	Percentage
1	Low	2	3.3
2	Medium	41	68.3
3	High	17	28.4
	Total	60	100.0

The above table shows the level of stress among respondents based on school rules aspect. Result shows that majority of respondent lies at medium stress level on school rules aspect, which is 41 (68.3 %), followed by high stress level, 17 (28.4 %) and low stress level, 1 (3.3 %).

ANALYSIS ON DOMINANT FACTOR OF STRESS

Table 5: Mean Stress Factors

S.No	Stress Factors	Mean
1	Workloads	2.83
2	Interpersonal relationship	3.35
3	Student disciplinary problem	3.94
4	School rules	3.07

The above table shows the mean for the stress factor. Result shows that the most influencing factor is student disciplinary problem, with mean value Of 3.94, followed by interpersonal relationship factor (3.34), school rules factor (3.07), and workloads factor (2.83).

Table 6: Relation of Stress Factors with Teaching Experience

S.No	Factors	Correlation value	Sig
1	Workloads	0.042	0.30
2	Interpersonal Relationship	0.406	0.05
3	Students Disciplinary Problems	0.047	0.34
4	School Rules	-0.037	0.45

The above table shows that the relation between stress factors with teaching experience. The correlation between interpersonal relationship and teaching experience is 0.406 ($P < 0.05$). The results reveal that there no correlation between teaching experience and workload, students disciplinary problems and school rules. It reveals that there is significant relation between interpersonal relationship and teaching experience.

Table 7: Relation of Stress Factors with Age

Sl.No	Factors	Correlation value	Sig
1	Workloads	0.502	0.05
2	Interpersonal Relationship	0.093	0.62
3	Students Disciplinary Problems	0.062	0.100
4	School Rules	-0.065	0.194

The above table shows the relation between stress factors with age. It is found that the correlation 0.502 between workloads factor and age is significant ($P < 0.05$). The coefficient of correlation with age and interpersonal relationship, student's disciplinary problems and school rules is not significant. It can be concluded that there is significant relation between workloads with age.

Table 8: Relation of stress factors with the number of children

S.No	Factors	Correlation value	Sig
1	Workloads	0.448	0.05
2	Interpersonal Relationship	0.057	0.255
3	Students Disciplinary Problems	0.500	0.046
4	School Rules	-0.027	0.584

The above table shows the relation between stress factors with the number of children. The correlation coefficient with work load and student's disciplinary problem with the number of children is 0.448 and 0.500 ($P < 0.05$) respectively. No correlation is established between interpersonal relationship and school rules with the number of children. It can be emphasized that there is significant relation between workloads and students disciplinary problem with the number of children.

DISCUSSION

Results show that stress level among the female secondary school teachers caused by workloads, interpersonal relationship, student disciplinary problem and school rules aspects lie at medium level. The most dominant factors of stress among respondents are student disciplinary problem aspect. It shows that student disciplinary problem is the main factor in causing stress among the teachers.

Research analysis also reveals that a no significant relation between workloads factor and teaching experience. This means, both experienced and less experienced teachers in secondary schools equally feel that workloads have made them feel stress. It is also the same for student disciplinary problem and school rules aspects. However, there is significant relation between interpersonal relationship factor and teaching experience. It means that more experienced teachers could suit themselves better with stress compared to less experienced teachers in terms of interpersonal relationship factor.

It is also found that no significant relation between interpersonal relationship and student disciplinary problem, and school rules factors with age. This means both older and younger teachers in secondary school equally feel that these three factors have made them feel stress. However, there is significant relation between workloads factor and age. Assumption is made by saying that older teachers found them feel more stress on workloads factor compared to younger teachers.

The results also reveal that no significant relation between interpersonal relationship and school rules factor with the number of children. Both teachers with children and teachers without children experience similar stress. However, there are significant relation between workloads and student disciplinary problem factor with the number of children. Teachers with children found them feel more stress on workloads and student disciplinary problem factors compared to teachers without children. This is because, teachers with children have their own family problem and stress caused by these two factors, affect them more.

CONCLUSION

From the research, results show that overall level of stress among respondents lie at medium level. Researcher feels that level of stress among female secondary school teachers is still in normal condition. However, we should not take for granted on this matter, in order to avoid continuous increasing of stress level among the teachers. If this is happened, ultimately our educational institutions will be harmed. Teachers should be positive in facing their challenges. This will help them in reducing their stress, which could affect their profession.

Besides that, everybody in our society must give their support to help teachers by not making ourselves as sources of stress. Our youth success is much relies on the quality of their teachers. Teachers also have to presume their stress as a challenge towards achieving the best quality of education.

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