

Teachers' Occupational Stress in Sustainable Workplace Performance: A Review based Research Study

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Abstract

A Sustainable workplace performance of a teacher in an academic institution is the combination of knowledge, skill, attitude, participative abilities of the teacher by applying which, a teacher can bring desirable changes in the behaviour of the learner. Sustainable workplace performance is a stable maintained workplace performance of a teacher which makes the teacher and his students dynamic and progressive physically, mentally, academically, socially, and emotionally. But while performing the task, sometimes a teacher faces psychological stress, anxiety related with the job that gives him occupational stress. Occupational Stress occurs when a teacher has failed to maintain his mental health stable and sustainable in his dynamic work environment. There are different factors which create occupational stress among teachers in his workplace. Simply saying this is not enough. A strong research-based literature review is needed to prove such statements.

The objective of the Study: In this research paper, the researcher had analysed the factors resulting in occupational stress among teachers by reviewing the related research literature.

The methodology of the Study: The researcher did a thorough study of the previous research literature from journals, research articles, thesis, dissertations their findings and made an objective analysis of different factors resulting in occupational stress among teachers. Summary of the findings of the previous research was collected, recorded, evaluated, and systematically presented related to the occupational stress among teachers

Results and Findings of the Study: After reviewing the previous research literature, it was found that occupational stress does have an impact on teacher's work performance and there are several factors of occupational stress which influence a teacher in his profession.

Policy Implications: Moreover, the researcher further suggested some important educational strategies to weaken the occupational stress and strengthen the work performance of a teacher.

Keywords: - Occupational Stress, Teachers, Factors, Educational Strategies, Sustainable Workplace Environment.

Introduction

Every individual has his own needs, abilities, and attitude related to his particular work of interest. An individual wants to work freely in a conducive environment. His physical and psychological state of body and mind are important conditions that help him to work freely. But when his physical, psychological, and environmental conditions are not smooth enough and he is unable to maintain a balance between his needs and his actions, then stress occurs. The main source of stress is one's occupation [1]. Stress is a common phenomenon of all organizations no matter how big or small the organization is. Due to modern demands growing complexities, workplace stress has been increasing day by day. Workplace stress has an impact on human mind especially when a human work in an organization and try his level best to achieve success at any cost [2]. "Any challenge, change, demand or threat that exceeds the coping abilities of the individual is known as stress" [3]. Stress is the pattern of responses that comes haphazardly and disturbs the equilibrium of thinking to understand and responding [4]. Stress is a response that creates psychophysical changes in the body, creates tension and problems to cope up with the situation [5]. In the initial stage, the level of stress is normal, it does not hamper much. But as time goes it creates tension, frustration, worry, conflict, and affects the work pattern of an individual. The individual does not like to do any work due to stress [6]. A sound mind with a sound body can give a proper working environment and the desired output. But such output can be weakened if a person feels constant stress in his workplace. People who hanker after money take excess workload and face stress. Such occupational stress has many sources, such as the nature of the individual as well as the organization [7]. Adaptive response to an external situation that results in physical, psychological, and or behavioural deviations for organizational participation [8].

Occupational stress is that where a worker is not satisfied with his present working situation. Occupational stress is that kind of physical and

psychological-emotional state of mind which occurs when the worker is unable to make a balance between his work demands and the resources available to him to fulfil those demands. In such a situation, a psychophysical tension, restlessness, discomfort, emotional imbalance occurs by which both his body and mind gets affected [9]

Significance of the Study:

When an employee in a workplace is unable to adjust, then a stress situation occurs [10] Stress is a common occurrence among people. People face different physical and mental issues with them due to stress. Different problems like severe health hazards, laziness in the body, and lack of interest in work and no physical and mental activities are some of them [11]. A businesswoman must play multiple roles in society. On one hand, the woman is a homemaker, plays her role beautifully in society, and on the other hand, the woman performs her duty for the community. She is a traditional role player again at the same an entrepreneur best suited for an industrial society. Such workload and pressure which women carry make her task of an entrepreneur more challenging and difficult [12]. Now these days due to competition and the trend of getting quick and best results, the companies need talented skilled people who are fast and can immediately adjust with the changing society and with the growing complexities. The companies these days demand few employees but the best employees for their organization. As a result of which, the employees work under excessive work pressure and in return bring physical and psychological imbalances in their physical and mental functions. These employees experience tensions, anxieties in their life and at all level of the organization [13]. An individual in his life takes higher education with high expectations. He knows that after receiving higher education, there is a chance that he may get an occupation based on his capacity, quality and own desire [14]. *"In the workplace, women are always discriminated in the hiring, promotions, job assignments compensation bonus and other facilities. They always need to provide more evidence of job-related skills than their male*

counterparts before they viewed as competent. Additionally, women are allowed fewer mistakes than men before they are judged incompetent. They are always treated as second category employees therefore their works are always neglected. Such kind of discrimination gives stress and weakens the work capacity [15]"

Occupational stress has become an important topic for the study of organizational behaviour for several reasons. The stress has different physical and psychological aspects which need to be studied. It is because of stress that many employees of the organization either quit their jobs or love to being absent from their job. The complete success of the management of an organization is dependent on managing the stress level of its employees [16]. Job stress is very common among the teaching community. There is a difference in stress in other professions and stress in teaching professions. The socio-educational responsibilities are higher among teachers and this makes a teacher different from others. Teachers with the help of his skills and attitudes are expected to bring desirable social change in society. Teaching is a respectful profession and is a highly emphasized profession in society. The teachers are expected to express organized behavioural patterns. When such expectations and responsibilities are imposed upon a teacher, then he experiences stress. Plans and policies framed by the institution, innovations for educational reforms, students' unpredictable behaviour sometimes, role conflict, excessive workload, etc. are some of the very specific reason of teacher's stress [17]. Systematic study regarding the relationship of teacher's accountability with occupational stress of secondary school teachers in an unexplored area that needs research to be conducted [18]. The performance of a teacher is mainly depending upon his psychological state of mind [19]. *"As occupational stress affects the physical as well as psychological well-being of the teacher, it influences his efficiency, his performances. Stress is a hurdle to effectiveness. It may be a priority area to identify how teachers can avoid and cope with stress. The effect of growing stress and tension on teacher's life and work requires carefully designed research [20]"*

Considering all these points, the researcher had decided to study teachers occupational stress by reviewing the related research literature.

Objectives of The Study

The major objectives of this research are –

- To study the occupational stress of teachers working in academic institutions by reviewing the related research literature
- To study the factors influencing teachers occupational stress by reviewing the related research literature
- To suggest different educational strategies for weakening teachers' occupational stress and for building a sustainable conducive workplace environment

Delimitation of the Study

This study was review-based. In this study different research literatures of journals, thesis, research articles, dissertations related to the area were carefully compiled, recorded, and systematically presented. Based on the reviews of related research literature, the impact of occupational stress on teacher's work performance was analysed.

Materials and Methods:

This study was review-based. All the necessary information was collected by reviewing the related research literature from journals, Ph. D thesis, research articles, and M. Phil dissertations. After that those related research works of literature were carefully recorded, compiled, analysed, and presented in the form of discussion.

Results and Discussions

It was found that very few research studies have been conducted on occupational stress. The findings of these previous research literature were carefully collected, reviewed, analysed and presented under the following headings-

Impact of occupational stress on teacher

Most of the Teachers in Workplace Experience Occupational Stress: An almost equal percentage of teachers in his study experienced a moderate and high level of occupational stress. The study further reported that the percentage of male respondents with a high level of occupational stress was quite higher than that of females. Among the teachers with a high level of occupational stress, there was a large percentage among unmarried than among the married. This shows that teachers in the workplace experience occupational stress [21].

Occupational Stress has an impact on Employee's Output: The stress of the individual affects the organization, employees' output well-being, the family, and life. He mentioned in his study that jobholder at any level and in any type of organization undergoes a tremendous amount of stress. He predicted in his study that the effects of such stress would lead to health disorders like heart diseases, ulcers, cancer, etc [22].

Constant Sitting in Workplace has an Impact on Teacher's Work: No physical movement but simply sitting has an impact on teacher's work. She found that such no movement activities make the work repetitive and stressful [23].

Class Hierarchy has an Impact on Skill: The superiors are identified themselves with an upper class or upper-middle class while the skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled groups are identified themselves with lower middle class [24]

The Restrictions in Workplace Weaken the Skills: Dual responsibility both at home and at work, lack of family support, social support, etc. are some restrictions create work pressure and weaken the skills [25]

Psychological State of Mind has an impact on Teachers Work: The mental and emotional well-being of citizens improves their performance and broadens the intellectual, physical, and social resources of a nation. Happy people have better health habits, lower bold

pressure, a stronger immune system, and higher endurance levels. Citizens with better emotional and mental health are easier to relate with work, tend to better decision-makers, creative, and outperform peers in problem-solving innovation, persistent and productive. The findings of his study indicate that a person with less occupation stress and a happier mood can enrich his capacity towards his work [26].

Occupational Stress has been influenced by the Designation and Work Hierarchy: Professors had more stress and degree-college lecturers had less stress among the categories of teachers included in the study and this hinder their work performance as well [27].

University/college teachers are going through occupational stress due to family's economic responsibility [28].

Changing Role in Society Cause Occupational Stress and Weaken the Capacity: Management at home and work are the factors that influence a person especially in the case of women. The researcher of this study viewed that when women join the workplace outside the home then the women have to face two sets of expectations one at work and one at home. Traditionally women were given a role in every social institution's family, economy, policy, education, and religion which they are bound to follow. Now the responsibilities of women have shifted and as their level of occupational stress [29].

Particular Relation between the Employee and his or her Work Environment: Job stress is the harmful physical and emotional response that occurs when there is a poor match between job demands and their capacities, resources, or needs of the worker. The study further reported that a relationship has been found between the employee and his or her work environment. Environmental factors are there which work as job stressors and an individual's reactions towards these job stressors determine the base of his work performance [30].

Qualification and Job Experience have Impacted on Occupational Stress: In a study, a significant difference was found between the mean scores of undergraduate and postgraduate teachers as far as their stress level is concerned. The study further concluded that there exist a significant difference in stress between teachers of below five years and above fifteen years of experience. Most experienced teachers have a low level of stress [31]. The findings of the study indicate that occupational stress does have an impact. In another study, a similar result was found by the researcher. The study showed a significant difference between male and female teachers of high schools concerning occupational stress [32]

Stressful Work Environment has an impact on Teacher's Work Performance: The teachers are in more stress because dealing with students and carrying for their better performance throughout the day is itself a stressful situation. The researcher further revealed that school is considered to be a major source of stress in the lives of both students and teachers. In his study, it was found that stressful situations weaken the teacher's performance at the workplace [33].

Job satisfaction among secondary school teachers and the climate of secondary schools are two important factors influencing the achievement index. He concluded the study by saying that effective teaching requires a feeling of satisfaction and identification with the secondary schools. He further found in his study that the feeling of dissatisfaction affects efficiency, thinking, and emotional reactions to the totality of the teacher's behaviour [34].

Occupational Stress harm Job Performance: Excessive stress harms the job performance of the employees. Vijayalakshmi identified the various symptoms of stress which affect job performance. These symptoms are

- Physiological
- Ulcer
- Digestive problem
- Headache
- Sleep disruption
- Psychological
- Emotional instability

- Moodiness
- Nervousness and tension
- Chronic worry
- Burnout
- Behavioural
- Excessive smoking
- Abuse of alcohol and drug
- Absenteeism
- Aggression
- Safety problems
- Performance problems [35]

Occupational Stress reduces the Accountability of a Teacher towards his Job: Indian Secondary schools demand responsible accountable teachers without whom the emerging issues of universalization of secondary education cannot be achieved. It was reported in the study that the higher level of occupational stress among secondary school teachers reduces accountability towards their job. The study concluded that occupational stress generates a substantial negative impact on the accountability of secondary school teachers. And high occupational stress leads to low accountability among the teachers [36].

Low Self-Esteem Creates Occupational Stress and Weakens the Performance: A women's teacher plays a vital role in moulding the personality of an individual. He further concluded that for this task, a woman teacher must have enough accountability and capacity to do justice with her job. The study further reported that a woman finds it difficult to carry her job responsibility and social responsibility altogether. Many a time, woman suffer guilty consciousness and finds themselves torn between home, college, and society. The study concluded that this kind of situation creates a stressful situation and develops mental disorders [37].

Occupational Stress influences the Teacher's Efficiency: The performance of a teacher mainly depends upon the psychological state of mind. He further reported in his study that as occupational stress affects the physical and psychological well-being of the teacher, it influences his efficiency and performance. He concluded by saying that teaching is a human service profession and to

understand the psychology of the students and teach accordingly, the teacher must have a sound body and sound mind first. One of the major findings of the study was that occupational stress affects the performance of a teacher [38].

The Occupational Stress Experienced by Female Teachers is more: As female teachers have to do both household activities as well as academic activities, assignments equally, hence, the extent of occupational stress is found more in female teachers than male teachers. The study further concluded that in the case of female college teachers, the extent of occupational stress is more as they need to prepare the classes, the assignments in a more effective manner. For which the female teacher in between all her household activities, needs to devote time to her class preparation also. This is one of the reasons for stress that female teachers experience more at the workplace [39].

Occupational Stress has an impact on Teacher's Effectiveness: Less effective teachers are under a higher level of occupational stress than the highly effective and total group of teachers. Further, it was reported in the study that female secondary school teachers are significantly under more occupational stress than their male counterparts. The correlational analysis clarifies that occupational stress is negatively correlated with the teacher effectiveness, as the stress among teacher increase as their teaching effectiveness decreases [40].

From these above research studies, it was found that most of the teachers experience occupational stress which influences their work culture, teacher effectiveness, teacher's accountability.

Factors influencing occupational stress

1 In a study, the following factors were highlighted by the researcher

- Female teachers are more stressed than male teachers.
- Teaches in the age range of 20-30 years are more stressed and the least stressed teachers are in the age group of 31-40 years.

- Married teachers are found more stressed in the profession than a single teacher.
- About the experience, it is found that the most and the least stressed teachers are having 1-10 years and 21-30 years of experience [41].

2 Stress in occupation is also associated with recruitment, health, and the retention level of the teacher. He further identified several variables associated with occupational stress. These are the nature of the job and individual cognitive vulnerability [42]

3 Four major factors or categories of stress at work. The occupational stress can be Physical Environments like noise, light, temperature, polluted air, etc., Individual Stressors like role conflict, role ambiguity, work overload, responsibility, working conditions, Group Stressors like a poor relationship with peers, subordinates, boss, etc., and organizational stressors like poor structural design, no specific policy. She further reported in her study that these stressors work differently on different individuals due to individual differences in their cognitive, affective, and psychomotor domains [43].

.4 The productivity of the workforce is the most decisive factor as far as the success of an organization is concerned. They further found that productivity, in turn, is dependent on the psychological well-being of the employees. They further revealed that in this era of modernization and competition, women are in more stress [44].

.5 Workload, no bar between work and pay, multiple assignments, tasks at one time are the main causes of stress among the employees [45].

6 Age had significance in role overload, role ambiguity, role conflict, unreasonable group and political pressure, poor peer relations, low status strenuous, working conditions, and profitability where initially we find a decrease and at the retirement stage, there was an increase in the score. Experience had significant influence in role overload, role conflict, unreasonable group, and political pressure, responsibility for a person's strenuous working conditions unprofitability where initially we find a decrease, and at the retirement

stage, there was an increase in the score. Marital status had significant influence over occupational stress with unmarried women teachers having higher level stress in role overload, role ambiguity, role conflict, unreasonable group, and political pressure, poor peer relations low status, and unprofitability [46].

So, these are the main causes of occupational stress prevalent among the teaching community.

Observations and discussions:

Based on the findings of the present study, the following observations have been made-

Objective 1: Impact of Occupational Stress on Teachers Work Performance

After analysing the related literature, it is found that there is a positive correlation between job satisfaction and the professional role of a teacher. The higher level of occupational stress reduces the accountability of a teacher towards his job. Occupational Stress does have an impact on teacher's work performance. A teacher at any level at any type of organization may suffer from occupational stress in his lifetime Teachers occupational stress affects both his family life and the organizational output. Occupational Stress creates health-related issues also. The female teachers are more stressed than male teachers. Dual responsibility both at home and work make the female teachers more stressed than male teachers. The mental and emotional wellbeing of a teacher contributes to all-round personality development of a teacher including his physical, mental, moral, social and emotional aspects.

Objective 2: Factors Influencing Teachers Occupational Stress

After analysing the related literature, it was found that there are several factors such as Teachers Happiness, Psychological State of Mind, Unsustainable Work Environment, Gender, Marital Status, Workplace Experience, Age, Individual Cognitive Vulnerability, Physical Environment, Individuals own Physical and Mental Well-being, Group Dynamics, Productivity of the Workforce, Modernized and Competitive World, No

Bar between Work and Pay, Multiple Assignments which influence teachers occupational stress. No physical movement but simply sitting and working constantly has an impact on teaches occupational stress. Designation of a teacher is also a factor increases the level of occupational stress. Professors are more stressed than lecturers. The work style, the work quality and quantity matters. Furthermore, female teachers are more stressed than male teachers. Dual responsibility both at home and work make the female teachers more stressed than male teachers. Management at home and work are the factors which influence teachers work performance especially in case of women. Social expectations, family responsibilities, duties towards social institutions are the factors which give occupational stress, especially to a female teacher.

Objective 3: Educational Strategies for weakening Teachers' Occupational Stress and for Strengthening Conducive Educational Environment for Teacher

About the factors affecting occupational stress, there are some educational strategies suggested by the researcher of this present study for weakening Teachers' Occupational Stress and for Strengthening Conducive Educational Environment for teacher.

- *Sound Psychological State of Mind:* Yoga education should get important. Yoga education indeed becomes an indispensable part of B. Ed Curriculum and the teacher trainees are getting very much benefit for this. Along with B. Ed Teacher trainees, the school, college, and university professors should also get benefitted. For this reason, compulsory one-hour Yoga sessions for school, college, and university teachers can be introduced. Teachers of any discipline can be encouraged to participate in refresher courses or workshops on yoga education.
- *Sustainable Work Environment:* Cordial relationship among the staff, healthy discussions, progressive environment, scope of self-expression, materialistic and non-materialistic facilities to grow altogether make a stress-free sustainable work environment. Such a sustainable work environment should be maintained in an academic institution. Celebrations should make a part of the workplace.

By participating in such activities, a teacher can make his workplace experience interesting.

- *Stress Management Courses for Teachers:* If possible, different faculty development programs can be organized with special reference to Teachers Stress Management. Female teachers will get more benefit from this. As the researcher has found by reviewing the research literature that female teachers are more stressed than male teachers due to their dual responsibilities of work and home so, such stress management courses should be more beneficial for female teachers. Hands-on sessions should be there along with different tricks regarding how to handle occupational stress practically in day to day life situations.
- *Time for Home:* Though a teacher teaches value education to students, the importance of family to students but due to the excessive work schedule, the teachers sometimes don't give enough time to their own family. The teacher should maintain a proper schedule for his own family too no matter how busy he is. The complete work plan of the teacher should be planned in such a manner where he can perform both his academic duties and his family duties in a proper balance. Conducive home environment will work as a great stress relief element for a teacher having occupational stress at the workplace.
- *A Positive Motivational Perspective of a Teacher is of utmost necessity.* The teacher must develop self-motivational skills inside him which can help a teacher to make himself free from negative thoughts, feelings, and actions which he gets from his work environment. Sometimes small training sessions on health education can be organized for teachers in their educational institutions by the authority. This will help the teacher to work on his healthy diet chart properly.
- *Co-Curricular Sessions for Teachers in Academic Institutions:* Along with academic activities, educational institutions must organize co-curricular sessions also for the teachers. Activities like cricket, football, volleyball, singing, recitation, and some other interesting competitions can be organized by the educational institution which can work as a great indicator for minimizing the occupational stress of a teacher and will contribute to strengthening the work capacity of the teacher.
- *Cognitive Restructuring:* Cognitive restructuring is the best measure to deal with a cognitive vulnerability which is a factor of occupational stress among teachers. Cognitive vulnerability is the negative, faulty beliefs if developed can destroy the intellectual growth of a teacher. There are self-evaluative thoughts, thoughts about other judgments which make stress in mind. Cognitive restructuring is the therapeutic technique to deal with such negative thinking. Proper family attention, love care affection, sustainable work environment, the scope of self-progress will help the teacher to restructure his cognitive thinking from negative to positive
- *Teamwork:* Productivity of a workplace creates an excessively competitive environment and lead to occupational stress of a teacher. It is often found that the same teachers who are obedient and show active participation in all activities are hired for works again and again. They feel the work pressure more than their other colleagues. To reduce this, the organizational authority must ensure equal participation of all the teachers in all scholastic and non-scholastic activities. Teamwork will reduce the workload and the same productivity can easily be achieved with less stress.
- *Modernized and Competitive World:* Knowledge Explosion, Population Explosion and Explosion of Expectations are the three major areas demand competency from the side of the teacher to adjust with this changing society and with this growing complexity. Now the present necessity of Indian education is education through online mode due to this pandemic situation of COVID 19. Teachers who are adjustable with classroom teaching are now bound to adapt to this modern technology. To get rid of such stress, simple systematic online training sessions are made available for teachers right now in the form of seminars, webinars, conferences, faculty development programs and workshops. Such online training sessions should make easy and available throughout the year so

that maximum teachers get benefitted and can reduce their occupational stress.

- *Application of Innovative techniques to reduce Excessive Workload:* Teacher generally has excessive workload like taking classes, course completion, evaluation of multiple assignments. To reduce such workload, innovative strategies can be adapted. The teacher should work as a facilitator, innovator, motivator, counsellor inside the class. The complete opportunity should be given to students to explore the learning of their own. Class seminars, workshops, conferences, group discussions should get more priority. In this way, a teacher can make the learning environment more joyful and stress-free for him. Moreover, those activities which can be undertaken outside the class time like Webinars, Online Seminars, Online Group Discussions in Google meets can be organized according to teachers own convenient. In this way, systematic classroom activities can be maintained without taking much stress.

Conclusion

Occupational stress in a job can play both a positive and negative role in the life of the employees. Occupational stress either strengthens or weakens the job performance of the employee. Occupational stress if properly handled, can work as a motivator and can bring necessary job satisfaction towards the job. Occupational stress develops the creativity index of an individual. But if the employee is in excessive work stress, then unconsciously, the person may develop negative behaviour in him like anger, anxiety in him which is not good for his overall growth as well as the growth of the organization [47]. It is also the responsibility of the curriculum planner and the policymakers to plan Education in such a manner that all-round stress-free personality development of both teacher and student can make possible.

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