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A Psychological Study of Occupational Stress Among Government and Private Teachers

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Abstract - This study is presented to investigate occupational stress in government and private teachers. Occupational stress has become a significant psychological concern among teachers due to increasing workload, administrative pressure, conflict and changing educational demands. The aim of the present study was to investigate the level of occupational stress among government and private school teachers and to analyze the differences based on regional location, i.e. urban, semi-urban and rural areas. Descriptive and Comparative Research Design A 2×3×2 factorial research design was used. The sample consisted of 120 teachers selected from government and private schools using convenience sampling method. Occupational stress was assessed using the validated and reliable occupational stress scale developed by Shrivastava and Singh (1981). Descriptive statistics and inferential analyses, including one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) and independent samples *t* test, were employed to analyze the data. The results of ANOVA showed differences in mean occupational stress scores across regions. Urban teachers reported a mean score of 141.32 (SD = 19.26), semi-urban teachers reported a mean score of 142.60 (SD = 22.53), and rural teachers showed a relatively high mean score of 146.07 (SD = 19.17). However, these differences were not statistically significant. Independent samples * t * test further indicated that there was no significant difference in occupational stress between government and private school teachers, * t * (118) = −0.89, * p * = .373.

The findings suggest that occupational stress is a common psychological issue among teachers regardless of school type or regional background. This study highlights the need for effective stress management interventions, supportive administrative practices, and mental health programs to promote teachers' well-being and professional effectiveness.

Keywords: Occupational Stress, Government and Private Schools teachers, Regional location, Gender.

I. INTRODUCTION

Teaching is widely recognized as one of the most intellectually demanding and socially significant professions. Teachers play a crucial role in shaping students' cognitive, emotional, social, and moral development and contribute directly to societal progress and nation-building. Despite the noble nature of the profession, teaching has increasingly been identified as a highly stressful occupation. Rapid changes in educational systems, increasing accountability, technological integration, and rising expectations from parents, administrators, and policymakers have intensified occupational stress among teachers.

Occupational stress refers to the psychological and physiological strain experienced when job demands exceed an individual's coping abilities and available resources. From a psychological perspective, stress arises not only from external work pressures but also from the interaction between job demands and personal coping capacities. In the teaching profession, occupational stress often manifests in the form of emotional exhaustion, anxiety, frustration, reduced job satisfaction, and diminished professional commitment.

Teachers are expected to perform multiple roles beyond classroom instruction. These roles include lesson planning, curriculum implementation, student assessment, administrative documentation, co-curricular supervision, parental communication, and participation in institutional development activities. Increasing class sizes, limited instructional time, continuous evaluation systems, and frequent curriculum reforms further intensify work-related pressure. Additionally, role conflict and role ambiguity

arising from unclear expectations and contradictory demands contribute significantly to teachers' occupational stress.

In the Indian educational context, occupational stress among teachers has emerged as a serious psychological concern. Many teachers work under conditions characterized by inadequate infrastructure, limited teaching resources, large student–teacher ratios, and administrative workload. Government initiatives and policy reforms, while aimed at improving educational quality, often increase documentation and reporting responsibilities for teachers. Furthermore, teachers are frequently assigned non-academic duties such as election work, surveys, and administrative tasks, which add to their workload and stress levels.

Differences between government and private school systems may further influence teachers' experiences of occupational stress. Government school teachers generally benefit from job security, standardized pay scales, and regulated service conditions; however, they may experience stress due to bureaucratic procedures, limited autonomy, and additional non-teaching responsibilities. In contrast, private school teachers often face high performance expectations, longer working hours, job insecurity, and comparatively lower salaries. Continuous monitoring, performance-based evaluations, and competition may further elevate stress among private school teachers. These institutional differences highlight the importance of comparing occupational stress across school types.

Regional location is another important factor influencing occupational stress among teachers. Urban teachers may experience stress due to overcrowded classrooms, competitive academic environments, time pressure, and high parental expectations. Teachers in semi-urban areas often function in transitional settings where resources are limited but expectations continue to rise. Rural teachers frequently face challenges such as inadequate infrastructure, lack of teaching aids, professional isolation, limited access to training opportunities, and additional community responsibilities. These regional disparities may significantly shape teachers' stress experiences.

Occupational stress has serious implications for teachers' mental and physical health as well as for educational quality. Prolonged exposure to stress may lead to burnout, emotional exhaustion, depression, absenteeism, and reduced motivation. Stressed teachers may show decreased teaching effectiveness, weakened teacher–student relationships, and lower commitment to the profession, which can negatively affect students' academic performance and overall development. Therefore, teacher well-being is increasingly recognized as a critical determinant of educational effectiveness.

Although numerous studies have examined occupational stress among teachers, findings regarding differences based on school type and regional location remain inconsistent. Some studies report higher stress levels among private school teachers, while others find no significant differences between government and private institutions. Similarly, research on regional variations has produced mixed results. These inconsistencies indicate the need for systematic and comparative research using well-defined methodological frameworks.

The present study aims to examine occupational stress among government and private school teachers across urban, semi-urban, and rural regions. By adopting a descriptive and comparative research design, the study seeks to understand whether school type and regional location significantly influence occupational stress. The findings are expected to provide valuable insights for educational administrators, policymakers, and mental health professionals in designing effective stress management strategies and supportive institutional practices to enhance teachers' psychological well-being and professional effectiveness.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The review of literature provides a comprehensive overview of previous research related to occupational stress among teachers, with particular emphasis on school type and regional location. Examining existing studies helps in understanding the nature, sources, and consequences of occupational stress and in identifying research gaps that justify the present investigation.

Occupational stress has been widely studied within the framework of organizational and educational psychology. Early research conceptualized occupational stress as a response to excessive work demands, role conflict, role ambiguity, and lack of

control over work conditions. In the teaching profession, stress has been consistently linked to workload, time pressure, classroom management problems, administrative demands, and interpersonal relationships. Researchers have emphasized that teaching is a human service profession that requires continuous emotional involvement, which makes teachers particularly vulnerable to stress.

Several international studies have documented high levels of occupational stress among teachers. Kyriacou (2001) identified workload, student misbehavior, time constraints, and educational reforms as major stressors for teachers. Similarly, Klassen and Chiu (2010) reported that excessive job demands and low self-efficacy significantly predicted stress and burnout among school teachers. Research conducted in different cultural contexts has consistently shown that prolonged occupational stress negatively affects teachers' mental health, leading to burnout, emotional exhaustion, and reduced job satisfaction.

Studies conducted in developing countries have highlighted contextual factors influencing teacher stress. Inadequate infrastructure, lack of teaching resources, overcrowded classrooms, and limited professional support systems have been identified as significant contributors to occupational stress. Research has also shown that teachers working in resource-constrained environments experience higher levels of frustration and emotional exhaustion due to their inability to meet instructional goals effectively.

In the Indian context, occupational stress among teachers has received increasing scholarly attention in recent years. Studies have reported that Indian teachers experience moderate to high levels of occupational stress due to workload, administrative pressure, role overload, and lack of recognition. Srivastava and Singh (1981), who developed the Occupational Stress Scale widely used in Indian research, emphasized organizational role stress, powerlessness, and responsibility for persons as key stress dimensions among employees, including teachers.

Research comparing occupational stress between government and private school teachers has produced mixed findings. Some studies have reported higher stress levels among private school teachers, attributing this to job insecurity, longer working hours, performance pressure, and lower salaries. For instance, studies have found that private school teachers often experience stress related to performance appraisals, student results, and expectations from management and parents.

III. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To assess the overall level of occupational stress among school teachers.
2. To compare the level of occupational stress between government and private school teachers.
3. To examine the differences in occupational stress among teachers working in urban, semi-urban, and rural areas.
4. To study the interactional effect of school type and regional location on occupational stress among teachers.
5. To analyze occupational stress among teachers with reference to gender differences.
6. To identify the need for stress management interventions and supportive administrative practices for enhancing teachers' psychological well-being and professional effectiveness.

IV. HYPOTHESES

The following null hypotheses were formulated for the present study:

H_{01}: There is no significant difference in occupational stress between government and private school teachers.

H_{02}: There is no significant difference in occupational stress among teachers working in urban, semi-urban, and rural areas.

H_{03}: There is no significant interaction effect of school type and regional location on occupational stress among teachers.

H_{04}: There is no significant difference in occupational stress between male and female teachers.

V. METHODOLOGY

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- Research Design

The present study adopted a descriptive and comparative research design to examine occupational stress among government and private school teachers

across different regional locations. A 2 × 3 × 2 factorial design was employed, where school type (government and private), regional location (urban, semi-urban, and rural), and gender (male and female) were treated as independent variables, while occupational stress served as the dependent variable. This design enabled the assessment of both main effects and interaction effects among the variables.

➢ Variables of the Study

Independent Variables:

1. School Type: Government and Private
2. Regional Location: Urban, Semi-Urban, and Rural
3. Gender: Male and Female

➢ Dependent Variable:

OCCUPATIONAL STRESS

➢ Operational Definition

Occupational Stress: Occupational stress refers to the psychological and physiological strain experienced by teachers as a result of job-related demands, responsibilities, and pressures. In the present study, occupational stress was operationally defined as the total score obtained on the Occupational Stress Scale developed by Shrivastava and Singh (1981).

➢ Sample and Sampling Method

The sample consisted of 120 school teachers selected from government and private schools. Teachers were drawn from urban, semi-urban, and rural areas. The convenience sampling method was used due to accessibility and feasibility. The sample included both male and female teachers, ensuring representation across school type, regional location, and gender.

➢ Tool Used for Data Collection

Occupational stress was measured using the Occupational Stress Scale developed by Shrivastava and Singh (1981). The scale is a standardized and widely used instrument in Indian psychological research. It assesses multiple dimensions of occupational stress such as role overload, role ambiguity, role conflict, powerlessness, responsibility for persons, and poor peer relations. The scale has been reported to possess satisfactory reliability and validity. Higher scores indicate higher levels of occupational stress.

➢ Procedure

Prior permission was obtained from the concerned school authorities before data collection. The purpose of the study was explained to the participants, and informed consent was obtained. Participants were assured of confidentiality and anonymity, and participation was voluntary. The Occupational Stress Scale was administered individually or in small groups during school hours following standardized instructions. No time limit was imposed, and participants were encouraged to respond honestly.

➢ Statistical Techniques

The collected data were analyzed using appropriate descriptive and inferential statistics. Mean and standard deviation were computed to assess the level of occupational stress. One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to examine differences in occupational stress across regional locations. Independent samples t-test was applied to compare occupational stress between government and private school teachers and between male and female teachers. The level of significance was set at 0.05.

➢ Ethical Considerations

Ethical principles were strictly followed throughout the study. Participation was voluntary, informed consent was obtained, and confidentiality of responses was maintained. Data were used solely for academic research purposes.

VI. RESULT & DISCUSSION

TABLE-1 Descriptives

Occupational stress

Occupational stress	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Urban	38	141.32	19.257	3.124	134.99	147.65	94	182
Semi Urban	40	142.60	22.528	3.562	135.40	149.80	96	186

Rural	42	146.07	19.174	140.10	140.10	152.05	101	191
Total	120	143.41	20.308	139.74	139.74	147.08	94	191

TABLE-2 Test of Homogeneity of Variances

		Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
Occupational stress	Based on Mean	0.914	2	117	0.404
	Based on Median	0.928	2	117	0.398
	Based on Median and with adjusted df	0.928	2	116.302	0.398
	Based on trimmed mean	0.919	2	117	0.402

TABLE-3 ANOVA

Occupational stress

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square F	F	Sig.
Between Groups	490.395	2	245.198	0.590	0.556
Within Groups	48586.596	117	415.270		
Total	49076.992	119			

TABLE-4 T Test for Occupational Stress based on Gender

Group Statistics

Gender Occupational stress	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Female	60	141.75	20.801	2.685
Male	60	145.07	19.837	2.561

TABLE-5 Independent Samples Test

Occupational stress	Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means					Interval of the	
	F	Sig.	T	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	Lower	Upper
Equal variances assumed	0.152	0.697	-0.894	118	0.373	-3.317	3.711	-10.665	4.032
Equal variances not assumed			-0.894	117.735	0.373	-3.317	3.711	-10.665	4.032

VII. DISCUSSION

➢ TABLE-1

A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted to examine differences in occupational stress across regions (urban, semi-urban, and rural). Descriptive statistics indicated that the mean occupational stress scores were 141.32 (SD = 19.26) for urban participants, 142.60 (SD = 22.53) for semi-urban participants, and 146.07 (SD = 19.17) for rural participants.

➢ TABLE-2

The assumption of homogeneity of variances was met, as Levene's test was not statistically significant, F(2, 117) = 0.91, p = .404.

➢ TABLE-3

The ANOVA revealed that the effect of region on occupational stress was not statistically significant, F(2, 117) = 0.59, p = .556, indicating no significant differences in occupational stress levels across the three regions.

➢ TABLE-4

An independent samples t test was conducted to examine whether there was a statistically significant difference in occupational stress between the two groups. Prior to conducting the t test, the assumption of homogeneity of variances was assessed using Levene's test, which was not statistically significant, F(1, 118) = 0.15, p = .697. This indicated that the assumption of equal variances was met, and therefore, the results for equal variances assumed were interpreted.

➢ TABLE-5

The results of the independent samples t test indicated that there was no statistically significant difference in occupational stress between the two groups, t(118) =

−0.89, p = .373. The mean difference between the groups was −3.32 (SE = 3.71), with a 95% confidence interval ranging from −10.67 to 4.03.

These findings suggest that Gender does not have a significant effect on occupational stress levels in the present sample.

VIII. CONCLUSION

The present study examined occupational stress among government and private school teachers with reference to regional location and gender. Teaching is a demanding profession that requires continuous emotional, cognitive, and administrative engagement, making teachers susceptible to occupational stress. The findings of the study indicate that occupational stress is a common psychological issue among teachers, regardless of school type or regional background.

Although differences were observed in mean occupational stress scores among teachers from urban, semi-urban, and rural areas, these differences were not statistically significant. Similarly, no significant difference was found between government and private school teachers in terms of occupational stress. Gender-based differences were also found to be non-significant, suggesting that occupational stress among teachers is primarily influenced by professional and organizational factors rather than demographic characteristics.

The study highlights that teachers across various educational settings face similar stressors, including workload, administrative responsibilities, role conflict, time pressure, and changing educational demands. Persistent exposure to these stressors may adversely affect teachers' mental health, job satisfaction, and professional effectiveness. Therefore, addressing occupational stress is essential for ensuring teacher well-being and maintaining the quality of education.

The findings emphasize the need for supportive administrative practices, effective stress management interventions, and institutional policies that promote a healthy work environment for teachers. Educational institutions should focus on balanced workloads, participative decision-making, and access to mental health support services. In conclusion, occupational stress among teachers is a widespread concern that requires systematic attention at both institutional and policy levels to enhance teachers' psychological well-being and professional performance.

IX. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The present study has several limitations. The sample size was limited to 120 teachers, which may restrict the generalizability of the findings. The use of convenience sampling may have introduced sampling bias. Occupational stress was measured using a self-report scale, which may be affected by social desirability and response bias. Additionally, the study focused only on selected variables such as school type, regional location, and gender, while other factors like age, teaching experience, subject specialization, and organizational climate were not considered. These limitations should be addressed in future research.

X. SUGGESTIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Future research should involve larger and more representative samples using random or stratified sampling techniques. Studies may examine additional psychological and organizational variables, including emotional intelligence, resilience, job satisfaction, and burnout. Longitudinal and qualitative designs could provide deeper insights into occupational stress over time. Further research may also explore the effectiveness of stress management programs, mindfulness interventions, and institutional support systems. Such studies would contribute to developing evidence-based strategies for improving teachers' psychological well-being and professional effectiveness.

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