

**OCCUPATIONAL STRESS AND ITS INFLUENCE ON WORK-LIFE BALANCE  
AMONG FACULTY MEMBERS IN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS**  
*(With Reference to selected Higher Education Institutions in North Coastal Districts of  
Andhra Pradesh)*

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## **INTRODUCTION**

“It’s not stress that kills us, it is our reaction to it.” Selye Hans (1956). Stress lies within us. It arises as a result of our reactions to worldly events. Once we stop reacting, we will no longer get stressed. Occupational Stress is considered as one of the most important work-related psychological problems. A survey on Occupational Stress, published in the Journal of Managerial Psychology in 2005, ranked teaching as the second most stressful job out of twenty six Occupations analysed, with only ambulance drivers exceeding the stress levels found in the teaching profession (Cooper, C. L. (2005). The human consequences of this excessive stress on Teachers are serious and wideranging, and can include physical symptoms such as headaches, raised blood pressure, infections, digestive disorders, heart disease or cancer, mental health symptoms such as withdrawal, poor concentration, anxiety, depression, insomnia, burn-out and an increased risk of suicide; and behavioural consequences such as low self-esteem, increased drug or alcohol intake and deteriorating personal relationships leading to family, relationship or career problems.

Occupational Stress has been a very famous research theme from the last few decades due to rapid organizational challenges like restructuring, downsizing, technological advancements, industrialization and government interventions. These changes have created new working styles and in response, Occupational Stress has become an integral part of almost all occupations in the globe.

Many studies have discovered that an over stressed workforce may incur substantial costs to organizations and the community (Gillespie, M. W. (2001). Therefore, creating a better and encouraging work environment in order to actualize both individual and organizational objectives is a chronic challenge for all kinds of organizations in the world.

Although, working as University academics has been typically regarded as highly satisfying and comparatively low in stress, many studies have reported that the academic staff

experience higher level of stress and it is alarmingly widespread and increasing in future Dua, et al. (1994). Today's life is full of challenges and in our everyday life we come across many situations. The work of a Teacher is physically and mentally challenging. A Teacher needs to use a lot of energy in his/ her daily chores in the classroom coupled with personal and family commitments. This trend which is routine for a Teacher and it brings in a lot of stress to the teachers. More than ever, before, work was not seen as the root of infinite satisfaction and fulfillment, but rather a source of stress, discontentment and humiliation. It is because of the dramatic changes that have taken place in society over the last two decades that work and life stress have become more immediate focal points of interest. This interest has reflected itself in an ever-increasing research orientation into Occupational Stress, the impact of life events on stress with, desperate range of investigations being undertaken into the sources and manifestation of stress. It is important that we should „step back“ and reflect on what should or needs to be done, that is to focus on priorities or issues or problem areas of importance.

Occupational Stress is related to one's job. Occupational Stress often stems from unexpected responsibilities and pressures that do not align with a person's knowledge, skills, or expectations, inhibiting one's ability to cope. Occupational Stress can increase when workers do not feel supported by supervisors or colleagues, or when one feels he/she is not having control over his/her job. Some of the job stressors are, job significance, workload, work and politics, interpersonal dealings at work, and work conditions. Occupational Stress has become an integral part of almost all occupations in the globe.

Advanced technology, unmotivated learner, generation gap has all added to existing stress of the teaching profession. The teaching profession is generally considered as a noble profession with a lot of expectations from the parents towards their children and the development of personality. These expectations arising from the various sources lead to the components of Teachers stress. The Teachers performance and Teacher behaviour are strongly affected by stress. Facets of Teachers' performance such as creativity, classroom management and implementation of educational techniques may suffer when teachers experience high level of stress.

Teaching is an important sphere. The Teachers who are not committed to their workplace are likely to put less effort in the classroom as compared to the Teachers with high level of commitment. This would adversely affect students' learning and achievement in particular and standard of education in the country in general. Traditionally University teaching has been perceived as a stress-free profession, particularly by those who are not related to this profession (Fischer, 1994), however since the last two decades with the inflow of many private sector Universities, Higher Education Institutions are commonly labelled as stressful environments (Barkhuizen & Rothman, 2008). Work related stress may become so burdensome that it can prevent teachers from carrying out their job responsibilities and reducing job effectiveness. Higher Educational Institutions have to manage and protect their staff from increasing levels of stress in order to preserve staff well-being, organizational performance and the intellectual health of a nation.

## OCCUPATIONAL STRESS AND TEACHING PROFESSION

Occupational stress is considered as one of the most important work-related depression in organizations, stress related problems cause poor quality of performance, lower job satisfaction, high turnover and increased work absence. Teachers finding themselves comfortable in a working environment stick to a job for a longer duration irrespective of better monetary benefits in another working place. They develop attachment to a particular institution and refuse to withdraw from their jobs.

The issue of Teacher occupational stress and Work Life balance is an essential factor for classroom effectiveness and also college improvement. The teachers desire to participate in the educational process depends on the stress experienced by them in their occupation. Level of Work Life balance is very essential for the achievement of educational goal. If Teacher's level of stress is low, he actively involves in the academic activities of college. Teacher is the pivot in the field of education. Therefore, it is necessary to improve the conditions required keeping the stress level of Teacher to lower level. The quality of education to a great extent depends on the teachers and their qualities. Strategies to cope stress in a stressful situation the Teacher expresses different emotional states like anger, anxiety and mood swinging, depression. Various coping strategies like yoga, meditation is being adopted by the teachers to handle these states.

### NEED FOR THE STUDY

Education is potentially the greatest social equalizer in society and Higher Education plays a critical role and thus provides a very deep impact in creating society, culture, and economic wellbeing of a new generation. So, the Teachers Work Life balance is necessary indeed, the key ingredient for improving our nation. An abundance of research studies suggested that the Work Life balance is one of the most significant and efficient tool of human resource management. There are troubling signs about the Work Life balance of educational industry employees in many of the nation's institutions. These signs have far-reaching implications for student learning, economic and social equality, and the growth rate of the Indian economy as a whole (Pandey, A. 2014). Work Life balance programs encourage employees, make balance between professional, personal and social life and ultimately enhances employee job satisfaction.

The issue of Teachers Occupational Stress and Academic Involvement is an essential factor for classroom effectiveness and also college improvement. The Teachers desire to participate in the educational process depends on the stress experienced by them in their occupation. Teachers Academic Involvement is very essential for the achievement of educational goals. If a Teacher is able to manage stress, he/she gets actively involved in the academic activities of the college. The Teacher is the pivot in the field of education so it is necessary to improve the working conditions required for keeping the stress level of Teachers low, so that the Academic Involvement of Teachers in college will be maximum. Apart from the issues of academic flexibility and diversity, to suit different levels of learners, aspects on career orientation, multi-skill development and involvement of stakeholders in curriculum up dating, are also gauged under the Teaching, Learning and Evaluation, criterion. The quality of education, to a great extent depends on the Teachers

quality of performance. High Academic Involvement on the part of Teachers will improve the performance of both Teachers and the students (Usha, P. & Sasikumar, P. 2007). There are not many studies that correlate Occupational Stress, Quality of Work Life and Teachers Academic Involvement. Hence, an attempt was made to study the Occupational Stress of Higher Education Teachers in relation to Work Life balance and Academic Involvement.

### **OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

1. To present current scenario of higher education system in India.
2. To know the faculty members socio-economic profile.
3. To study the respondents' perception towards higher education.
4. To examine the factors influencing on respondents stress.
5. To probe into the impact of occupational stress on employee work-life balance.

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

In pursuance of the above mentioned objectives, the following methodology will be adopted for conducting the study. The study is an empirical one based on both primary and secondary data. The objectives will be achieved through collection and analysis of primary data.

#### **Primary Data**

The primary data for the study will be collected by using a questionnaire. This phase of the research process has helped a great deal in enhancing the contents of the questionnaire in tune with objectives set out for the study.

#### **Secondary Data**

The secondary data has been drawn from various publications, research studies conducted in this and related areas in different universities, books and journals dealing with the subject and various reports published by agencies working in this field also form the sources of secondary data.

### **SELECTION OF SAMPLE**

The study includes the management colleges affiliated to Andhra University, JNTUK and some of them are Autonomous status are covered. The colleges are located in North Coastal District of Andhra Pradesh. The colleges covered are having at least 5 years of existence. Sample selection procedure is done by the following procedure. A total of 300 respondents will be taken for the particular study by the using convenience sampling technique.

### **STATISTICAL TOOLS:**

For the purpose of analysis and interpretation the following statistical tools can be used:

- Simple percentage,
- Mean,
- Standard Deviation,

- One-Way-ANOVA,
- Chi-square test and
- Regression analysis

## PRESENTATION OF THE STUDY

The study is organized as follows:

**CHAPTER- I:** First chapter gives the conceptual framework on occupational stress and work life balance.

**CHAPTER- II:** Second Chapter presents literature review, and need for the study, objectives of the study, hypotheses of the study, research methodology and chapter design and limitations of the study.

**CHAPTER- III:** Third chapter gives the profile of higher education system in India.

**CHAPTER- IV:** Chapter four presents the employees' socio-economic background and their opinion towards HEIs

**CHAPTER- V:** Chapter five depicts the analysis of factors influencing on work-life balance.

**CHAPTER- VI:** Sixth chapter presents the findings and suggestions.

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