

## OCCUPATIONAL STRESS AMONG COLLEGE TEACHERS IN CHENNAI REGION OF TAMIL NADU

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### **Abstract**

*The teacher is the most crucial component of any educational program and is in charge of carrying out the learning process at all times. Education cannot be improved by the amount of money invested in upgrading the physical and educational facilities unless there is a sufficient number of highly qualified teachers willing to carry out the educational process in a way that result in the students' desired educational development. As a result, it's critical that the teacher's necessity is to be ready to work effectively and efficiently. Tension, which can be both physical and emotional, is known as stress and is brought on by demands placed on the body, mind, and environment. The current study is exploratory in nature and is empirical in nature. Teachers at government and private colleges in Chennai, Tamil Nadu, provided data for the current study. Teachers in private and public colleges between the ages of 25 and 55 were the subjects of the current study. One hundred professors from government and private colleges make up the study's sample. Additionally, a stratified random sampling technique was used to draw the sample at the College level. Half of the teachers come from government colleges, and the other half come from private universities. In each category, the sample is further split into 50% male teachers and 50% female teachers. Teachers at government and private colleges were asked to rate their level of occupational stress using the Occupational Stress Index, which Srivastava and Singh developed and standardised. It is noted that 72% of respondents concur that stress arises from being fully absorbed in a non-teaching role. Sixty-eight percent of respondents cite a lack of research and personal growth opportunities as the primary cause of occupational stress, while sixty-nine percent agree that job insecurity is the cause.*

**Keywords:** *Occupational Stress, Immersion in Non-teaching duty, Lack of Research & Personal Growth.*

### **1. INTRODUCTION**

Education is the process of imparting knowledge, skills, attitudes, or character traits on people in order to equip them to live meaningful lives. An individual becomes rational through education. In actuality, without it, the human mind's training is incomplete. A country's strength is determined by the level of education of its people. Arguably, the most significant group of

professionals for a country's future are its teachers. However, it has been noted over time that teachers are more likely to experience stress because they are in charge of managing students and making sure they perform better throughout the day, which can be a stressful situation in and of itself. Teachers report that one of the biggest sources of stress in their lives is College. Teachers deal with a variety of issues on a daily basis, including missing students, special needs students, inadequate funding, and a lack of one-on-one support. Teachers also have a lot of work to do when they get home, such as preparation, note-book correction, evaluation, etc. These all suggest that teachers are under constant stress. Any educational program's success is mostly determined by how well teachers carry out their duties. The most crucial component of our educational system is the teacher. They are referred to as "nation builders" because they give all of the College activities with a purpose, inspiration, and direction. Therefore, a teacher's position in our educational system is crucial. The entire educational system would fall apart if the teacher is unable to perform his or her duties in an efficient manner. Our educational system is going through a period of significant change as a result of advancements in education. Teachers experience increased stress because they are required to fulfil a variety of roles for their students, including those of administrator, friend, philosopher, and counsellor. It follows that teacher in the modern era experience a great deal of stress in their line of work. One of the crucial aspects of our everyday lives that stress us out a lot is our occupation. Owing to the highly competitive nature of the work environment, the majority of people worldwide are neglecting their personal lives in favour of work-related activities. Typically, people are more concerned with the results of their work, which may even have an impact on how they interact with others and interact with their peers. We can generally state that individuals with higher occupation stress percentages might not be happy at work because they are not satisfied with their jobs, which makes them unhappy. Thus, it is imperative that educators understand the stress that is the root cause of all the adverse consequences.

### **Occupational stress**

One kind of occupational stress in particular is teacher stress. It is defined as "a teacher's experience of unpleasant emotions resulting from aspects of his work as a teacher, such as tension, frustration, anger, and depression" (Kyriacou, 1987). A teacher's relationship with his students is important and deserving. A teacher's attitude has the potential to both positively and negatively impact a student's progress. Teachers are aware of how they behave and uphold human values. They are regarded as the cornerstone of an effective educational framework. It's common knowledge that teaching is a physically demanding and mentally taxing profession (Basu, S. 2009). When a teacher is happy in their position, they can carry out their responsibilities with efficiency and effectiveness and have a positive attitude toward teaching; however, when they are stressed, they are unable to work effectively and have a negative attitude toward their work. Teachers may quit their jobs due to extreme stress. One of the many reasons teachers quit their jobs is stress; sadly, many engineering colleges are currently experiencing a teacher shortage as a result of their inability to find enough replacements. Illness and absenteeism can result from stress. Student achievement suffers when a qualified teacher is absent from the classroom (Woods and Montagno,

1997). There is a significant correlation between the total number of days teachers miss from college and their level of stress. The teacher is currently dissatisfied with his job because of a variety of factors, including harassment, powerlessness, role conflict, poor pay, job insecurity, bias in promotions, and work overload. Stress can affect people in both positive and negative ways. Stress that has positive outcomes is referred to as eustress, or positive stress, and stress that has negative outcomes is referred to as distress, or negative stress. Stress's detrimental effects will ruin teachers' behavior. Thus, the accumulation of negative stress (distress) is the main topic of the current study. People's awareness of the importance of a higher education, young people's growing aspirations for better employment opportunities, and parents' desire for a secure future for their children through education are all on the rise. Both the parents and the students have very high expectations. This in turn leads to the demand that college instructors perform at a higher level. Stress from this causes a decrease in teaching effectiveness.

The prevalence of occupational stress has grown in the teaching profession, primarily due to increased job complexity and personal financial strain. The inability of the school to satisfy the social needs and professional demands of the teachers is a major cause of distress for the teachers. Teachers need to be aware of his obvious pace of national development. The regular teaching load overwhelms teachers. A teacher's personality cannot develop in a healthy way without occupational satisfaction. Currently, a teacher's position is vulnerable. Teachers at colleges complain that their pay is insufficient. The significance of compensation as a factor in the workplace has received a lot of attention.

## PREVIOUS STUDIES

Duhan K (2023) evaluated the levels of occupational stress and self-efficacy among male and female teachers at Indian state universities. Four universities in the districts of Hisar and Rohtak, in the state of Haryana, conducted the study. There were two hundred responders from the districts of Hisar and Rohtak, for a total sample size of four hundred respondents from four universities. Two hundred male and two hundred female respondents made up the equal sample size for each gender. According to the findings, male respondents had higher occupational self-efficacy than female respondents, but female respondents experienced higher levels of occupational stress as a result of an overwhelming workload at home and at university.

The purpose of Iqbal Ahmad, Rani Gul, and Muhammad Kashif's (2022) study was to investigate the working conditions that stress university instructors out. To look into the issue, a qualitative case study design was used. Purposive sampling was used to gather data from 20 university teachers through semi-structured interviews. Thematic analysis was used to examine the gathered data. The primary conclusion of this study is that among university instructors, stress-inducing workplace variables included increased workload, workspace, job security, delays in promotions, and work environment. It is concluded that offering opportunities for ongoing professional development and creating a favorable work environment can help university teachers experience less workplace stress.

The purpose of the Wadhera et al (2020) study is to investigate the connection between college instructors' levels of occupational stress, and emotional stability. Fifty college instructors from a self-financing private college in Delhi were chosen for this study. Using a purposeful sampling technique, the respondents were chosen. Responses were gathered through structured questionnaires that employed the emotional stability, spiritual competence, and occupational stress scales. To get the results, the data was analyzed using a one-group design and the correlation and regression methods. The study's variables were all found to be substantially correlated. The findings show that certain personality traits, such as emotional stability and workplace spirituality, have a negative correlation with occupational stress and may therefore be useful in reducing occupational stress in college instructors.

Kavithamani & David Soundararajan's (2019) study to investigate faculty perceptions of occupational stress. Data were gathered from several private colleges in and around Coimbatore. The respondents concurred that stress is caused by a variety of factors, including job insecurity, low motivation, involvement in non-teaching duties, a lack of opportunities for research and personal growth, inadequate pay, work-home conflicts, pressure to produce good student results, lack of teaching staff, poor communication system, and lack of performance appraisal procedures. In terms of the stress-inducing elements, respondents feel that inadequate staff performance, poorly behaved students, and their pessimistic attitude toward learning have been neutralized. There is disagreement among respondents regarding management politics, ineffective departmental leadership, and low motivation, all of which lead to stress.

The purpose of the Gahlawat, S. (2017) study was to evaluate the levels of occupational stress and job satisfaction among college instructors at private and public universities. The sample comprised 100 college instructors between the ages of 25 and 35 who were randomly selected (50 from the government and 50 from the private sector). The subjects were given the Occupational Stress Index (created and standardized by Srivastava and Singh) and the Job Satisfaction Scale (created and standardized by Singh and Sharma). According to the study's findings, instructors at government colleges report higher levels of job satisfaction and lower levels of occupational stress than those at private universities. The study also helps private authorities understand the root causes of stress and discontent in order to increase private college instructors' feelings of security and fulfilment. A structured questionnaire was used in.

Sukumar, M. A., & Kanagarathinam, M. (2016) used an established questionnaire and data gathered from five departments in private colleges to investigate how faculty members perceived occupational stress. to learn what people think about handling and teaching students, what causes stress, and what methods college faculty members use to deal with stress.

K.P. Sindhu (2014) The majority of college teachers report feeling stressed out at work, according to research the researcher conducted on stressors in the teaching profession. According to the study, there was a significant difference between stressors and designation.

In this study, Adnan Iqbal and Husam Kokash (2011) examined how teaching faculty members perceived occupational stress. They discovered that stress experienced by teaching faculty should be the management and administration's primary concern. Similar to other

professions, teaching has become stressful due to the need for teachers to manage multiple responsibilities while adhering to deadlines.

Allison (2010), stress among prospective teachers on student-teacher distress may have an effect on those aspiring to become teachers as well as the teaching profession and educational system. This review looks at the effects of psychological distress that are known to exist in college students, instructors, and student teachers, as well as the demands placed on them during their practical experiences. Also provided is a succinct synopsis of current stress management techniques. According to the reviewer, addressing the potential issue for aspiring teachers calls for a comprehensive strategy that starts with an awareness of the modern approaches that are available to specific college students and the preventative stress management programs offered in higher education that future student teachers may be able to access.

Kaur, Ravinder (1997) conducted research on the socio-psychological issues that female instructors in Punjabi colleges and schools face. This paper examines the socio-psychological issues that female teachers face in relation to their institutions. Administrators and policymakers alike should contribute to the establishment of a work environment that fosters justice and compassion. Teachers may have high levels of work and family enrichment and satisfaction if they believe that the organizational climate supports them in juggling work and family obligations. Organizational policies that support families may help teachers deal with socio-psychological issues.

## **2. MATERIALS AND METHODS**

### **Statement of the Problem**

Teachers play a crucial role in the lives of all people; they mold, inspire, and shape human behavior in addition to helping pupils develop better attitudes. For the purpose of running interactive classes, teachers must receive the appropriate training, Seminars, assignments, workshops, using Google Forms to conduct internal assessments, etc. Only when teachers have access to all the necessary tools to conduct online classes using various educational support programs, such as Zoom, Google classroom, GoogleMeet, Google Teams, etc., can they increase their productivity. Teachers play a crucial role in the educational system; they support student achievement as well as that of institutions, other teachers, and even the growth of the educational system. Even so, occupational stress has a detrimental effect on teachers' physical and mental health, which will eventually affect how well they perform. Occupational stress can result from a number of factors, such as the strain of utilizing modern technology, growing work demands, a lack of confidence when using online resources, and outdated technology. Annoyance, different types of workplace harassment, and disagreements with colleagues. Individual factors that cause stress, such as family issues, financial difficulties, etc., will raise the stress level of college teachers and have an impact on their performance. These issues could result in mental illness, absenteeism, etc. College instructors will choose to leave the teaching profession if their workload becomes too much for them to handle and they are unable to handle the stress. Stress demonstrates the thought-

frustrating abilities and individual efficacy and efficiency, and it even demonstrates the degree of discontent among college instructors.

The relationship between teachers' job satisfaction and occupational stress has been extensively studied in research studies. While a wide range of subjects, including elementary and secondary education, are covered in this research, higher education receives less attention when it comes to teacher satisfaction and work-related stress. Thus, the current study compared the occupational stress of government and private college teachers in the Chennai Region of Tamil Nadu based on a review of the literature.

### Objective & Methodology

The main objective of this present study is to compare the occupational stress of government and private College teachers in Chennai Region of Tamil Nadu. The present study is exploratory in nature and is empirical in nature. Teachers at government and private colleges in Chennai, Tamil Nadu, provided data for the current study. Teachers in private and public colleges between the ages of 25 and 55 were the subjects of the current study. 100 (One hundred) professors from government and private colleges make up the study's sample. Additionally, a stratified random sampling technique was used to draw the sample at the college level. Half of the teachers come from government colleges, and the other half come from private universities. In each category, the sample is further split into 50% male teachers and 50% female teachers. Teachers at government and private colleges were asked to rate their level of occupational stress using the Occupational Stress Index, which Srivastava and Singh developed and standardised. There are five options for each of the thirty items in the inventory: Strongly Agree, Agree, Neutral, Disagree and Strongly Disagree. Using the test-retest method, the inventory's reliability was determined to be 0.88. The secondary data were very useful in creating a conceptual framework and selecting an appropriate methodology for the study. Numerous secondary sources, including books and journals, research papers, seminar reports, newspapers, expert committee study reports, departmental publications, plan documents, unpublished dissertations, etc., were surveyed for these purposes.

### 3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

**Table 1**  
**Demographic profile of sample respondents**

Particulars	Description	Frequency
Age	25 - 35 Years	48
	36 - 45 Years	25
	45 - 55 Years	15
	Above 55 Years	12
Marital Status	Married	72
	Unmarried	28
Qualification	PG& NET	18
	M.Phil& NET	45

	Ph.D	37
Designation	Assistant Professor	72
	Associate Professor	20
	Head of the Department	8
Experience	Upto 5 Years	46
	6 - 10 Years	25
	11- 15 Years	18
	Above 15 Years	11
Income	Below Rs.30,000	44
	Rs.30,001 to Rs.40,000	34
	Rs.40,001 to Rs.50,000	14
	Rs.50,001 to Rs.60,000	8
Type of Family	Nuclear family	65
	Joint family	35
Family Size	Upto 4 Members	65
	5 to 6 Members	20
	Above 6 Members	15

Source: Computed from Primary data.

From Table 1, it is observed that 46% of respondents are between the ages of 25 and 35; 72% of respondents are married; 45% of respondents have an M.Phil. with NET as their educational background; 72% of respondents are assistant professors; 46% of respondents have experience up to five years; 44% make less than Rs. 30,000 ; 65% of respondents are from nuclear families; and 65% of respondents are from families with four or more members.

**Table 2**  
**Factors creating Occupation stress**

Factors	Agree	Disagree	No response	Total
Unwarranted Additional duty	71	17	12	100
Job Insecurity	69	13	18	100
Lack of Motivation	74	11	15	100
Immersion in non-teaching duty	72	16	12	100
Lack of Research & Personal Growth Opportunities	68	22	10	100
Work-home struggles	62	24	14	100

Adverse Attitude of Colleagues	66	12	22	100
Ineffective leadership at Department Level	60	30	10	100

Source: Computed from Primary data.

According to Table 2, which is above, 71% of respondents claim that unjustified extra work is the cause of their stress, while 74% acknowledge that a lack of motivation is also a contributing factor. Stress is caused by immersion in non-teaching duties, according to 72% of respondents. Sixty-eight percent of respondents cite a lack of research and personal growth opportunities as the primary cause of occupational stress, while sixty-nine percent agree that job insecurity is the main reason for occupational stress.

**Table 3**  
**Occupational Stress of college teachers**

	N	Govt. College Teachers		Private College Teachers		t value
		Mean	S.D	Mean	S.D	
Occupational Stress	100	128.58	10.12	141.22	10.17	3.56*

Source: Computed from Primary data.

Table 3 shows that because the computed value is higher than the table value, the "t" value of 3.56 for the mean scores of the occupational stress variable is significant at the 0.01 and 0.05 level. Therefore, based on the results, it can be concluded that teachers at government colleges experience less occupational stress than teachers at private colleges. Thus, the hypothesis that "between college instructors employed by government and private colleges, there is a significant difference in the level of occupational stress" is accepted.

### Recommendations for Improvements

- The establishment of a staff academy, whose responsibility it will be to maintain a lively and enjoyable atmosphere in the staff room in order to maintain employee motivation.
- Staff counselling sessions with licensed counsellors to address internal mental health issues, which will inevitably result in a decrease in stress.
- Regular communication between management and employees is essential for making informed decisions about policies and procedures.



#### 4. CONCLUSION

Stress is a modern problem that needs to be addressed right away because it is a workplace risk for those in the teaching profession. When stress is recognized and appropriately managed, it can actually help someone be productive and constructive. Whenever there is intense stress or misfortune, it is advisable to stay occupied and channel your negative energy towards something constructive. Having a positive outlook and practicing meditation can help you manage your stress. A more expansive outlook on life will undoubtedly alter how stress is perceived. Let's hope that we can effectively transform stress into distress for the sake of both organizational health and our own healthy lifestyle.

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