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RESEARCH EXPLORER-International Journal on Economic and Business Management

ISSN: 2250-1940 (P) 2349-1647 (O)

Impact Factor: 3.655(CIF), 2.78(IRJIF), 2.77(NAAS)

Volume XIV, Issue 48 (2)

July - September 2025

Formally UGC Approved Journal (63185), © Author

THE IMPACT OF OCCUPATIONAL STRESS ON THE TEACHING PERFORMANCE OF SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS

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ABSTRACT

Teaching is widely regarded as a noble profession, yet it comes with its fair share of challenges. Within the dynamic landscape of the Indian education system, secondary school teachers hold a pivotal position in shaping the nation's future. However, they are frequently subjected to a variety of occupational stressors that can adversely affect their teaching performance. This study investigates the complex link between occupational stress and the teaching effectiveness of secondary school teachers. A descriptive survey method was adopted for the research, targeting secondary school educators as the population. A total of 100 secondary school teachers from institutions across Bangalore Metro City, Karnataka, were randomly selected as the sample. For data collection, two standardized instruments were employed: the Teacher Effectiveness Scale (2006) developed by Umme Kulsum, and the Teacher's Stress Scale (TSS) created by K.S. Misra, which measures occupational stress levels. These tools were administered to the sample group, and the data collected were subjected to statistical analysis using Karl Pearson's Product Moment Coefficient of Correlation, as well as F-test analysis, with a significance level set at 0.05.

KEYWORDS: Teaching Effectiveness, Stress, professional challenges and Student engagement.

INTRODUCTION

Secondary school teachers play a vital role in the educational system, as they are responsible not only for delivering academic content but also for nurturing students' intellectual and social development. Their contributions are essential to the growth and progress of society. The effectiveness of teaching at the secondary level significantly influences students' academic performance, personal growth, and future opportunities. However, in the Indian educational landscape, teachers often face numerous professional challenges and stress-inducing factors that can negatively impact their ability to teach effectively.

OCCUPATIONAL STRESS

Secondary school teachers frequently encounter significant levels of occupational stress, particularly within the Indian education system. Contributing factors include demanding workloads, overcrowded classrooms, extensive administrative responsibilities, challenging

student behavior, and the constant pressure to achieve academic benchmarks. Additionally, issues such as insufficient remuneration further intensify these stressors. Given the often-unfavorable teacher-student ratios, educators are required to exert considerable effort to address the varied learning needs of their students. Such ongoing pressures can lead to physical exhaustion, emotional fatigue, and mental stress. If not properly managed, these challenges may ultimately result in burnout and a decline in teaching effectiveness.

TEACHING EFFECTIVENESS

Teaching effectiveness encompasses a teacher's capacity to engage students, communicate clearly, and facilitate meaningful learning experiences that promote students' academic achievement and personal development. This effectiveness is crucial for cultivating a knowledgeable and dynamic future generation. However, occupational stress can hinder teachers' ability to sustain these high standards. Stress may reduce teachers' enthusiasm, impair their communication, and weaken student engagement, which negatively affects educational outcomes. To combat stress and preserve their teaching quality, educators often adopt various coping strategies, such as effective time management, seeking support from peers, and employing relaxation techniques like mindfulness or physical activity. Assessing the success of these coping mechanisms is essential. Several studies have explored the connection between occupational stress and teaching effectiveness. For instance, Periasamy and Prabhu (2021) found a strong correlation between teacher effectiveness, occupational stress, and the school's organizational climate. Torreón and Trabajo (2019) reported a slight negative relationship between occupational stress and teaching effectiveness, noting that demographic profiles did not significantly influence teaching outcomes. Mailumo (2018), studying Nigerian secondary schools, identified several stressors—including poor working conditions, lack of resources, and student discipline problems—that substantially reduced teacher effectiveness. Comparative research by Dhar and Magotra (2018) revealed significant differences in stress levels between teachers affiliated with JKBOSE and CBSE boards in Jammu District. Rani and Dalal (2017) emphasized the importance for teachers to understand the causes and impacts of occupational stress to improve both their professional growth and teaching effectiveness. Similarly, Prakash, Cherian, and Archana (2017) found significant links between occupational stress, morale, and teacher effectiveness. Prasad, Vaidya, and Kumar (2016) identified gender differences in occupational stress and coping strategies, which influenced teacher performance. Jeyaraj (2013) concluded that higher stress levels correlated with lower job satisfaction among higher secondary teachers in Tamil Nadu. Kauts and Saroj (2010) highlighted the role of emotional intelligence in reducing occupational stress and enhancing teaching effectiveness.

This body of research holds valuable implications for educational policymakers and school leaders. Understanding these relationships can guide the creation of targeted policies and support systems to alleviate teacher stress, thereby improving the overall quality of education, particularly in the Indian context.

NEED FOR THE STUDY

This study was undertaken to explore the impact of occupational stress on the teaching effectiveness of secondary school teachers, recognizing the urgent need to address the challenges educators face within this critical tier of the education system. As teachers hold a key responsibility in shaping the nation's future, it is essential to examine how work-related stress—particularly widespread in the Indian educational context—may hinder their capacity to educate and mentor students effectively. The findings aim to offer valuable insights to educational policymakers, school leaders, and teachers, helping to develop improved working environments and support mechanisms, thereby contributing to the overall enhancement of education quality in India.

OBJECTIVES

1. To examine the correlation between occupational stress (including its various components) and the teaching effectiveness of secondary school teachers.

- To analyze the variations in teaching effectiveness among secondary school teachers based on differing levels of occupational stress.

STATEMENT OF HYPOTHESES

The following null hypotheses have been formulated for the study:

- There is no statistically significant correlation between teaching effectiveness and occupational stress, including its various components, among secondary school teachers.
- There is no statistically significant difference in teaching effectiveness between secondary school teachers experiencing low and moderate levels of occupational stress.
- There is no statistically significant difference in teaching effectiveness between secondary school teachers experiencing moderate and high levels of occupational stress.
- There is no statistically significant difference in teaching effectiveness between secondary school teachers experiencing low and high levels of occupational stress.

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a descriptive survey research design, targeting secondary school teachers as the population. A total of 100 teachers from various schools in Bangalore Metro City, Karnataka, were selected through a simple random sampling method. To collect data, two standardized instruments were used: the Teacher Effectiveness Scale (2006) developed by Umme Kulsum to measure teaching effectiveness, and the Teacher’s Stress Scale (TSS) developed by K.S. Misra to assess occupational stress levels among teachers. These tools were administered to the selected participants. The data collected were analyzed using Karl Pearson’s Product Moment Coefficient of Correlation and the F-test, with the level of significance established at **0.05**.

RESULTS OF THE STUDY

Table No : 1

Table shows correlation results (‘r’ value) pertaining to Teaching Effectiveness and Occupational Stress and its components of secondary school teachers.

Variable	Mean Scores	Std. Deviation	‘r’ Value	Sig. Level
Teaching Effectiveness	354.180	116.046		
1. Admission	14.070	3.576	□0.333	*
2. Examination	15.380	3.440	□0.399	*
3. Student Quality	14.740	2.077	□0.234	*
4. Research	14.180	3.880	□0.239	*
5. Academic Support	13.810	4.150	□0.362	*
6. Interpersonal Relations	15.160	1.829	□0.223	*
7. Ethics	14.800	1.959	□0.257	*
8. Professional Growth	14.980	2.131	□0.123	NS
9. Family	15.180	2.090	0.162	NS
10. Economic	15.060	1.625	0.312	*
Occupational Stress	147.360	13.043	□0.445	*

(N=100;df=98;*Significant at 0.05 level confidence (‘r’ table value=0.195)

In this research, the investigators explored the association between Teaching Effectiveness and Occupational Stress among secondary school teachers. The findings reveal several important patterns. Most notably, several key elements of teaching effectiveness—such as Admission, Examination, Student Quality, Research, Academic Support, Interpersonal Relations, and Ethics—were found to have a negative correlation with occupational stress. This suggests that as performance in these areas declines, teachers are likely to experience an increase in stress levels. These negative correlations were statistically significant, indicating a strong and meaningful relationship. However, not every component followed this pattern. Elements like Professional Growth and Family showed no significant correlation with occupational stress, suggesting that these aspects may have a lesser impact on teachers’ stress levels or may be influenced by other external factors. An unexpected finding was the positive correlation between the Economic component of teaching effectiveness and occupational stress. This result implies that as economic factors improve—potentially through better salaries or job stability—occupational stress may actually increase. This highlights the complex and sometimes contradictory influences within the teaching profession, where certain improvements might bring additional pressures or expectations. In summary, the study underscores the complex and varied relationship between different dimensions of teaching effectiveness and occupational stress. While many factors are linked to lower stress levels, the economic aspect appears to contribute differently. These insights are valuable for educational leaders and policymakers in crafting targeted interventions aimed at reducing teacher stress while enhancing their effectiveness, ultimately leading to better teacher well-being and job satisfaction.

Table No: 2

Shows One-Way ANOVA results related to Teaching Effectiveness of secondary school teachers working with different levels of occupational stress.

Variable	Source of Variance	Sum of squares	Degree of Freedom	Mean Square	'F' Value	Sig. level
Teaching Effectiveness	Between Groups	219494.642	2	109747.321	9.56	*
	Within Groups	1113712.118	97	11481.568		
	Total	1333206.760	99			

F(*=3.09)

From Table-4.2, it appears that a One-Way ANOVA (Analysis of Variance) was conducted to assess the differences in Teaching Effectiveness among secondary school teachers with varying levels of occupational stress. The results show that there is a statistically significant difference in Teaching Effectiveness among the groups with different levels of occupational stress. This is indicated by the 'F' value of 9.56, which is significant at the 0.05 level (denoted by*). The analysis divides the variance into "Between Groups" and "Within Groups," which helps in understanding the source of differences in Teaching Effectiveness scores.

scores between the low, moderate, and high levels of occupational stress. The 'Mean Difference' provides insights into the specific differences in Teaching Effectiveness scores. Significance at 0.05 level and in this case, a significant difference is found only between the "Low" and "High" groups (149.220) with a significance level of 0.05.

Table No:2 (a)

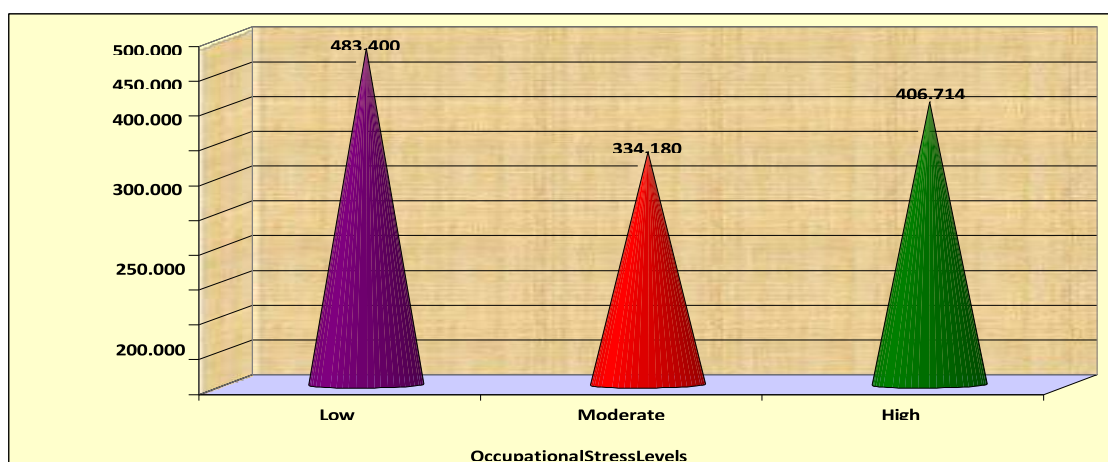
Shows Post Hoc Test results related to Teaching Effectiveness of secondary school teachers due to variation in their occupational stress.

Variable	Groups			Mean Difference
	Low	Moderate	High	

Occupational Stress	483.400	334.180	-	149.220*
	-	334.180	406.714	72.534
	483.400	-	406.714	76.686

Significant at 0.05 level of confidence (Table 't' value is 1.98)

Table 2(a) displays the results of the Post Hoc Test, conducted following the ANOVA to enable more detailed pairwise comparisons between groups. Specifically, this analysis compares the mean scores of Teaching Effectiveness among teachers experiencing low, moderate, and high levels of occupational stress. The Mean Difference highlights the extent of variation in teaching effectiveness between these groups. At a significance level of 0.05, a statistically significant difference was observed only between the 'Low' and 'High' stress groups, with a mean difference of 149.220.



In conclusion, the data indicate that Teaching Effectiveness varies significantly depending on the level of occupational stress, particularly between those with low and high stress levels. These results underscore the importance for educational administrators and policymakers to recognize the detrimental effects of high stress on teaching performance and to develop targeted strategies to support teachers working under high-stress conditions.

Fig.-1: Bar graph shows the mean scores of teaching effectiveness of school level teachers having low, moderate and high levels of occupational stress.

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The correlation analysis revealed a negative relationship between Teaching Effectiveness and Occupational Stress across several components, including Admission, Examination, Student Quality, Research, Academic Support, Interpersonal Relations, Ethics, and overall occupational stress. This suggests that higher levels of stress are associated with lower teaching effectiveness in these areas. These findings underscore the importance of supporting teachers through targeted training and development initiatives. Strengthening skills in classroom management, assessment practices, and teacher-student relationships can help reduce stress and enhance instructional quality, ultimately leading to improved student learning outcomes.

Interestingly, a positive correlation was found between the Economic component of Teaching Effectiveness and Occupational Stress. This indicates that although better financial incentives and job security may attract teachers, they may also be associated with increased stress levels—possibly due to rising expectations or workload. This highlights the need for educational policymakers to strike a careful balance: providing fair compensation while simultaneously offering support systems to manage the stress that may arise from economic pressures.

The study emphasizes the need for a comprehensive, multi-faceted approach to teacher support. Schools and education authorities should prioritize ongoing professional development,

mentorship opportunities, and mental health resources to help educators cope with occupational stress and maintain high levels of teaching effectiveness. Such efforts can contribute to a more positive teaching environment, benefiting both educators and their students.

Additionally, F-test analysis demonstrated significant differences in Teaching Effectiveness scores among teachers with low, moderate, and high levels of occupational stress. This confirms that occupational stress has a measurable impact on teacher performance. The Post Hoc Test further identified specific differences between these groups, showing that teachers experiencing low levels of stress consistently scored higher in teaching effectiveness compared to those under moderate or high stress. These differences are statistically significant, indicating that stress level is a critical factor influencing how effectively teachers fulfill their professional responsibilities.

CONCLUSION

The occupational stress significantly affects Teaching Effectiveness among secondary school teachers. Addressing stress and providing support for teachers is not only essential for their well-being but also for ensuring quality education in schools. Educational institutions should take proactive measures to support their teaching staff and create an environment where teachers can perform at their best, ultimately benefiting students and the entire education system.

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