



The Impact Of Occupational Stress On Teacher Effectiveness In Secondary School

Mr. Chandra shekara K. Research scholar, University of Mysore

Dr.Praveena K B. Professor, DOS in Education, University of Mysore, Karnataka, India.

Abstract

The development of society comes from the cultivation of people's critical thinking, education, professionalism, and progression, which makes it an essential aspect of society's advancement. Pertinent people in the society's development, whom we consider as crucial elements in the education system, are teachers. It's more essential to understand the dynamics of teaching in society, especially effectiveness of teachers together with their occupational happiness and stress, as they profoundly impact the value of education also development of the society. Tutors have an even more important role in secondary education, where students go through crucial phases of intellectual and personal growth. Active teaching goes beyond imparting knowledge; it instils values, attitudes and skills that students require for wholesome development. There are several factors that affect occupational stress and satisfaction, and to a great extent, these impact how effective a teacher's work is. The school's overall pedagogical performance largely depends on the level of professional satisfaction among instructors. Performance of students and the overall quality of education are positively affected by instructor satisfaction as motivation, participation willingness, and work inspiration usually lead to better results. Moreover, work-related stress can make teachers ineffective from burnout, low job satisfaction and low quality of teaching. This article seeks inspect interplay among secondary school teacher professional worry and teacher efficiency, looking for clues and patterns that may sharpen practice and policy. The need to address these concerns is quite clear. Education stakeholders can design and implement specific interventions aimed at improving working and teacher-stress outcomes to improve teaching satisfaction, well-being, and eventually, educational results. In this article, we seek to contribute to the on-going discourse on effectiveness of teaching and its impact education and social progress.

Keywords: Occupational Stress, Teacher Effectiveness, Secondary School, Stakeholders, Satisfaction.

1. Introduction

Stress is not a new phenomenon, and humanity has been battling it since the beginning of civilization. Like countless comforts, the modern way of life has put immeasurable stress and strain on both the body and mind. The difference is in its intensity and frequency, which now poses a serious detriment to human life. Stress is everywhere, be it family, education, social interactions, work, or even self-organization. Disparity among expectations related to job role and the person's capability towards encountering those demands creates occupational or work stress. Due to multiple stressors impacting the profession, teaching is becoming increasingly complex and strenuous on a daily basis and immensely difficult on a global scale (Johnson et.al, 2005: Brown and Hepburn,2001) The modern combative landscape entails that all schools must set and accomplish new goals in order to successfully compete on both local and global scales. Teachers at the core of an educational system have main responsibility for preparing the next generation to create a deliberate nation and solve future issues. To achieve the intended outcome, the teacher's involvement becomes crucial in preparing effective learners. Good students are prepared and trained by these secondary school teachers. As a result, secondary school teachers endure a significantly higher amount of stress compare to other teachers. (Blasé, 1986) According to studies conducted on educators, stress has a startlingly detrimental impact on their mental, bodily, and behavioural reactions. To name a few from the long list, the adverse effects include gastrointestinal issues, musculoskeletal issues, low appetite and other severe health issues (Hayward, Calabrese, Forlin et al., 1996). Teachers who are exposed to stressful conditions on a regular basis develop low self-esteem, a sense of self-apathy, a less inspiration, commitment to teach, less sureness, irritation between coworkers, a refusal to work together, and regular unreasonable confrontations on job. Disengagement after encouraging connections, unsuitable cynical humour, and inefficient student management, all of which eventually result in a decline in complete work. Although completely we can't eradicate pressure It becomes important to look for strategies to reduce stress in order to protect teachers from experiencing it. Occupational stress is the term used to describe the physical, mental, and emotional strain caused by a misalignment among the requirements related to work and the labourer's capabilities, assets, and requirements to handle them. Adeyemo¹⁴, Akinboye, and Akinboye (2002). Well-defined job stress as the failure to handle demands of one's employment. Role ambiguity, role conflict, lack of administrative assistance, emotional tiredness, and job failure are some of the factors linked to occupational stress. "Occupational stress is a physical and mental condition that disrupts a person's competence, personal healthiness, effectiveness, and excellence of labour," according to Swindle and Comish (1994). The negative emotional and physical reactions that occur when a worker's resources and talents do not match the demands of their job is known as occupational stress. Barr (1952), teacher effectiveness is a connection that is influenced by the immediate situation's restricting and facilitating elements and involves instructors, students, and other stakeholders involved in the educational endeavour.

The ability to foster a meeting and interaction between students' physical, intellectual, and psychological interests is what the Dictionary of Education (2005) defines as teacher effectiveness. A teacher's skill is to connect the learning activities to the student's developmental stage as well as to their present needs and interests. The ability of a teacher to successfully influence the desired behavioural changes in his students is known as teacher effectiveness. In addition to the teacher's academic endeavours and classroom instruction, it is evaluated based on the overall impact the instructor has on the children. It is also well known that a teacher's psychological condition has a major impact on how effective he is. Since stress at work has an impact on a teacher's physical and mental health, it undoubtedly impacts his productivity and performance. It is widely believed that teaching is turning into a tough job in the modern era. Heavy workloads, time constraints, issues with students and staff, a lack of appreciation for their work, a negative public perception of teaching, delayed pay, and additional responsibilities like election duty, pulse polio, social surveys, etc. are the main causes of stress for teachers.

2. Reviews of Related Literature

Manjul.C(2007). The study sought to identify system, interpersonal, and personality factors that contribute to stress. 150 teachers in all, drawn from 20 different schools, were chosen by hand. A 30-item questionnaire that was self-developed served the study's purpose. According to the study, teachers who are over 40 are incredibly worn out, which can lead to stress.

Khan, Anwar et al. (2012), the study also attempts to ascertain whether the resources offered to teachers at work significantly moderate their stress levels and levels of success. The study came to the conclusion that teachers' performance at work is being adversely affected by certain needless environmental job stressors, and that there are a number of services available to teachers that may help to lessen the negative effects of stress.

K.R. Selvakumar (2014) examined how job stress affected the mental health, emotional intelligence, and self-esteem of one thousand teachers working in primary, middle, and upper secondary schools in the Ariyalur district. The study examined teachers in elementary, secondary, and higher secondary education as well as teachers in total schools. The report's findings indicate that high levels of job stress are experienced by 14.80% of school teachers. According to the research, the most common job stressors were maintaining one's interpersonal relationships, one's honour, and one's teacher function. Furthermore, it was discovered that 17.70 per cent of school teachers had good mental health. The study found a significant correlation between maintaining one's dignity and honour and maintaining one's interpersonal relationships.

Nagra and Arora (2013) looked into teachers' marital status and gender in relation to their level of occupational stress and how it affected their health. According to descriptive analysis, female teachers had higher occupational stress scores. Additionally, it was discovered that married teachers experienced higher levels of stress than single teachers.

Bullock (1952) clarified job satisfaction as a combination of attitudes toward one's career, emphasizing its inherent connection to both professional and personal fulfilment.

Furthermore, the importance of job satisfaction is highlighted by the crucial role that work plays in a person's life.

Davidson (2007) emphasizes the complex nature of teacher stress by linking it to a range of personal traits and workplace stressors. Time constraints, teaching difficult students, heavy workloads, organizational changes, interpersonal dynamics, and unfavourable working conditions are some of these stressors. In summary, the relationship among stress, job satisfaction, and teacher effectiveness highlights the complex interactions influencing educational results. A multifaceted strategy including professional development, organizational support, and methods to improve teacher well-being is required to address these problems. By creating a positive work atmosphere and putting teacher well-being first, educational institutions can develop a pool of skilled teachers ready to help students have the best possible learning experiences.

3. Causes of Occupational Stress in Secondary School Teachers

Occupational stress in secondary school teachers arises from several factors, including:

- ❖ **Administrative Needs:** Teachers' stress levels are increased by bureaucratic processes, excessive paperwork, and frequent policy changes.
- ❖ **Problems with Student Behaviour and Discipline:** Dealing with unruly pupils and behavioural issues can lead to emotional exhaustion.
- ❖ **Lack of Resources:** Teachers find it challenging to provide high-quality instruction due to a lack of funding, obsolete technology, and inadequate teaching materials.
- ❖ **Low Pay and Job Insecurity:** A lot of teachers deal with low pay and contractual uncertainty, which has an impact on their motivation and general well-being.
- ❖ **Social Pressure and Parental Expectations:** Teachers frequently experience pressure to live up to the community's and parents' academic standards, which makes them feel even more stressed.
- ❖ **Student Behaviour:** Issues with classroom management.
- ❖ **Lack of Administrative Support:** Insufficient funding and acknowledgment. Time pressure and workload: Teachers frequently manage big class sizes, lesson planning, grading, and extracurricular activities, which results in long workdays, exhaustion, and administrative duties.

4. Impact of Occupational Stress on Teacher Effectiveness

- Teacher effectiveness is adversely impacted by occupational stress in a number of ways:
Decreased Job Satisfaction: Stress causes discontent, which can lead to a diminished dedication to teaching.
- Lower Teaching Quality: Stress can impair teachers' ability to deliver lessons creatively and engagingly, which makes it challenging for them to deliver high-quality instruction.
- Higher Absenteeism and Burnout: Extended stress can wear people out physically and emotionally, which raises absenteeism and teacher turnover rates.
- Drop in Student Performance: Stress-related ineffective teaching can impede students' academic development by influencing their motivation and learning results.
- Poor Teacher-Student Relationships: Teachers under stress may find it difficult to establish a solid rapport with their students, which can affect classroom management and student participation.

5. Strategies to Reduce Occupational Stress and Improve Teacher Effectiveness

To enhance teacher effectiveness and reduce occupational stress, the following strategies should be implemented:

- Stressed out teachers should adopt sustainable teaching practices.

To reduce stress and improve teaching practices, teachers should establish a clear vision for their classroom, including the use of bell-ringers, class discussions, and exit tickets. These practices help teachers engage students from the start, provide opportunities for critical thinking, and assess their learning. Bell-ringers should be prepared a week in advance, while class discussions offer numerous benefits for both students and teachers. Exit tickets can be premade or off-the-cuff questions.

- Stressed out teachers should simplify lessons.

The most successful lessons are not always produced by spending time replicating the wheel of teacher lessons and activities. Your classroom doesn't have to be filled with incredibly dynamic lessons every day, but when you come up with those incredibly creative lesson ideas, you should definitely take the necessary steps to implement them. You will only end up burning the candle at both ends and becoming one of the many stressed-out teachers if you try to keep up with that one "unbelievable teacher on Instagram."

To keep your lessons straightforward, follow this advice:

- Don't fix anything that isn't broken. When something is effective with your students, simply switch up the content and use it again and again. Be adaptable. When things don't work out the way you had hoped, don't worry about the little things. Find something else that works if something doesn't work out the way you wanted it to.
 - Develop a close relationship with the internet. Utilize the thousands of pre-made lessons that are accessible online from marketplaces such as Teachers Pay Teachers or other websites that you can locate by just searching for the subject matter you are studying. To make these lessons work for your students, you will probably need to modify them, but that is much less
- Exhausted Instructors ought to arrange their workspace and supplies. A neat, orderly workspace not only improves your mood but also greatly simplifies your life. Clear out the clutter from your desk, filing cabinets, shelves, and other classroom areas. Make it simple for you to access your students to access theirs.
- Do these things to help with your classroom organization:
To improve classroom organization, use a system for easy access to lesson plans, activities, and worksheets, either in paper or digital formats. Store hands-on activities in plastic tubs for easy reuse. Have a designated spot for students to access necessary materials, even teen students, to build responsibility and ensure they are prepared for class. This will help streamline the learning process and ensure students are well-prepared for the classroom.
- Teachers who are under a lot of stress should be good time managers. Without a doubt, a teacher's list of things to do could never end. To make it easier to handle, prioritize all of your tasks. After setting priorities for everything, including your personal life, make a schedule using a planner.
- Stressed out teachers should build relationships.

Relationships are crucial in both our personal and professional lives, as I believe we all understand. Develop a good rapport with your coworkers. Collaboration will result from establishing these connections. Better ideas will result from the collaboration. Better lessons will result from better ideas. And more success will result from better lessons. Teachers become less stressed as a result of this entire series of events. Positive working relationships have the following advantages:

- Better outcomes come from collaboration;
- You have someone to turn to for support or guidance.
- To make everyone's lives a little bit easier, productive teams can assign tasks to one another.

- Offering Professional Support: To assist educators in managing stress, schools ought to provide professional development opportunities, mentorship programs, and counseling services.
- Improving School Infrastructure: Teachers' workloads can be reduced and their efficacy increased by providing them with sufficient technology and instructional materials.
- Promoting Work-Life Balance: Schools ought to support leisure activities, mental health breaks, and flexible work schedules.
- Improving Teacher Pay and Benefits: Teachers' motivation and job satisfaction can be increased by competitive pay, job security, and performance-based incentives.
- Creating a Supportive School Culture: Teachers can work in a more positive atmosphere if they collaborate, communicate openly, and participate in decision-making.
- Professional Development: Stress management training sessions.
- Support Systems: Peer support groups and counselling.
- Institutional Changes: Reforming policies to lessen workload.

6. Educational Implications

School administrators should encourage greater connection with teachers and offer communication opportunities in order to lower occupational stress and improve teaching effectiveness. It is important to offer social support, government assistance, and updates on local developments. The management could increase pay scales, cut down on lengthy hours, and lighten the workload. Internalizing ideals, personal liberty, and accountability should be the main goals of an action plan for educators. Performance can be enhanced by stronger connections between responsibilities. Facilities for self-care and recreation can aid in stress reduction. Clarity regarding their responsibilities, regular communication between management and supervisors, and offering training to broaden job knowledge are all examples of coping mechanisms for educators. Additionally, organizations ought to concentrate on instructors' career advancement, emphasizing work enrichment and advancement. Better job involvement increases teachers' productivity and happiness as well as their ability to adjust to kids. In order to increase primary school teachers' job involvement, educational authorities should set up circumstances that allow them to highlight their abilities and draw attention to them. Involvement at work improves teachers' productivity and enjoyment as well as their ability to adjust to kids. In order to increase primary school teachers' job involvement, educational authorities should set up circumstances that allow them to highlight their abilities and draw attention to them.

7. Recommendations

The study comes to the conclusion that teacher performance is greatly impacted by occupational stress. To ensure a more engaged and productive teaching workforce, schools and policymakers must employ focused initiatives to enhance teachers' well-being.

- ❖ Every secondary school teacher ought to understand their duties and obligations. For the school to run well, everyone in the community should participate, and teachers should continue to work together with the community.
- ❖ Periodically, secondary school instructors in the area should receive programming training. Simulated training on managing occupational stress, team teaching, interaction analysis, and teacher effectiveness must all be included in teacher training programs.
- ❖ Differentiated education, cultural sensitivity, job satisfaction, and open communication should be highlighted in teacher training curricula.
- ❖ The assessment of the quality of teacher training programs should be based on the effectiveness of the teachers and also there is a need to strengthen the teachers training programs at the secondary level.
- ❖ The administration of secondary schools, which includes the government, parents, and other education stakeholders, should improve the working conditions for teachers by giving greater consideration to their needs for motivation, such as well-maintained offices, a canteen, and recreational facilities, among other things.
- ❖ To help teachers feel less stressed and execute their jobs more effectively, there should be a positive principal-teacher relationship in addition to a calm, cool, tidy, and attractive atmosphere.
- ❖ Teaching Service Board and all other relevant stakeholders involved in the management of schools should work tirelessly in making sure that adequate infrastructural facilities such as; buildings, furniture, sanitary facilities, electricity, recreational facilities, libraries, laboratories, computer system, school records and teaching aids are provided. This will go a long ways in reducing the stress of teachers and make them happy to be part of the school and use the facilities towards actualization of the school goals.

8. Conclusion

The intricate relationship between occupational stress and teacher effectiveness in secondary schools highlights the need for a balanced, supportive educational environment. Teachers are central to shaping students' intellectual and emotional development, but persistent stress undermines their ability to teach effectively. Factors such as administrative demands, student behaviour issues, limited resources, and societal pressures contribute to elevated stress levels, diminishing job satisfaction, teaching quality, and ultimately student outcomes. Addressing these challenges requires a multifaceted approach. By fostering positive school cultures, providing professional development opportunities, promoting work-life balance, and ensuring adequate resources, educational stakeholders can mitigate the adverse effects of stress. In turn, teachers can build resilience, enhance their well-being, and stay motivated to deliver high-quality education. Strengthening these support systems will not only benefit educators but will also contribute to the overall success and advancement of the education system. Investing in teacher well-being is, therefore, an investment in the future of society.

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