

OCCUPATIONAL STRESS AMONG SCHOOL TEACHERS WORKING IN KATHMANDU, NEPAL

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to explore the effect of occupational stress among male and female school teachers working in Kathmandu, Nepal. The study was conducted on 210 male (105) and female (105) teachers were chosen as convenient sampling method. For this study, the occupational stress index (OSI) developed by Srivastava and Singh, 1981 was used. A Pearson correlation coefficient was computed between age and occupational stress which was statistically insignificant, $R = .001$, $N=210$, $p=0.988$. A Chi-Square test between gender and occupational stress was significant, $\chi^2 (2, N=210) = 28.007$. T-test was conducted to compare occupational stress for males and females. There was a significant difference in the scores for male ($M=132.81$, $SD=17.504$) and female ($M=145.72$, $SD=21.708$); $t (199.056) = -4.745$.

Keywords: Occupational stress, Stress management, School teachers.

Introduction

Stress has been known as one of the most common threats in contemporary eras. It has developed into a substantial hold as well as severe human issues. The qualities of life have distorted substantially during the very last century and are continuing to do so. Globalization impact, as well as periodic technological breakthroughs and upgrades, the fast-track profession, and the ever-changing lifestyles of modernization, has had a significant impact on various cultures around the globe. Alter has an impact on each portion of life, put persons under growing pressure. Individual biological evolution is falling behind technological and lifestyle advancements.

Today world is an era of increasing complexity and strain where individual contribution and capability are being faced many times. The stresses relating to occupation have become main attribute of contemporary life, exerting for reading effects as off the employment. This is the reason that systematic studies of stress in occupational setting have increased rapidly over the nowadays. Job stress and unemployment is the common issues amongst youths. Revival of job stress has come into major work related study issue. Job stress is

generally define noise time of relationship between person and environment. Nowadays, psychologists and management scientists have great debate about possible psychological situational circumstances or job factors which cause job stress. The antecedent results of job stress have reported different physical and psychological circumstances at occupation as potential occupational stressors.

Occupational stress has two main dimensions, biological stress and psychological stress. Biological stress is frequently viewed as a physiological reaction of the body headache, abdominal pain, backache, fatigue, heart palpitation, sleep disturbance and muscle ache, as well as changes in eating, drinking, sleeping and smoking habits to various stressful triggers at the workplace. (Antoniou AS, Polychroni F, Vlachakis AN 2006).

While psychological stress creates the harmful thought and decision in organization such as dispute among co worker, job related stress like depression, anxiety, feelings of isolation, reduced empathy towards other people. Cognitive signs of Stress, inability to concentrate and stay on task, forgetfulness.

Teaching in schools is challenging job here in Nepal. Education policy opens the private and boarding schools as companies. So there is vast competition to maintain the qualities of all round area in private sector school which are classified as A, B, C categories by Education Department of Nepal where every Nepalese citizen raises voices against the discriminated educational school shops in one side and the government and community schools, on the other .There has been priority for everyone in the private schools but last choice for the people who can't afford private schools has been the government community sector schools. The imperfect education system in Nepal has caused many students to study abroad. Most of school teachers have limited knowledge about subject matter they teach and many of them have no clear idea about the subject. They have been teaching more than six subjects in their courses which are not their own specialization. This is due to lack of resources sometimes it appears business prospective and motive of institutional owners. In many government and community schools there are malpractices by local political parties where they do biases on the basis of political ideology or nepotism. Lack of practices in maintaining teachers and students numerical ratio is a major cause of job stress in schools.

Literature Review

Occupational stress plays an important role in determining a professional identity of an individual. When a professional perceives an imbalance between the occupation demands and her/his ability, several physical, cognitive, behavioral and emotional responses emerge .These responses are known as occupational stress.

Occupational stress is a relatively new model of modern life style. The nature of occupation is rapidly changing today. Occupational stress has the potential to affect the professional of the all the categories.

Teaching is the most crucial profession; the one makes all other professions. Human societies and cultures have dramatically changed within last two decades, but role of teacher is primarily remained same that is to “to transfer the knowledge to the next generation”.

Teaching is classified as high –stress occupation by Hunter, He writes, surgery, air traffic and teaching are three of the most stressful occupation in the world (Younghusband, Garlie, church, 2003).

The effect of occupational stress on teachers not only influences their own mental health and psychological well being but also the lives of their families, friends and own personal as well as professional life.

According to Thakre “Role conflicts, role ambiguity, role overload and under load, is widely examined individual stress. (Thakre, 2009).

Paton (2003) in his study title “Stress in disaster response: a risk management approach” emphasized the susceptibility of stress to emergency service personnel when dealing with disaster incidents. He has developed a model, based on risk management principles and aimed at supporting managers, who incorporate personal, group, and organizational characteristics. He divided stress-causing events into alarm and mobilization, response and let-down, and reintegration stages.

According to Cooper, “Job satisfaction has been identified as a key indicator of employee well-being and a predictor of employee physical and mental health”. (Cooper, 1994).

Beeha and Newman (1978) titled on article “The current debate about the meaning of job stress” defined occupational stress as 'A condition arising from the Interaction of people and their jobs and characteristics by changes within people that force them to denote from their normal functioning.

According to French and Caplan (1975) titled on article had said, “Effects of work load, role ambiguity” Pressure of both qualitative and quantitative overload can result in excessive hours, which is an additional source of stress. Having to work under time pressure in order to meet deadlines is an Inter-dependence source of stress.

Public and private schools differ from each other on several dimensions, like, class size, facilities, teaching, budgets and administrative support. Teachers in both schools work for the similar general objectives, with very different environment. This study is an attempt to assess the occupational stress among the teachers working in public and private schools.

Methods

Study area: This study is positivist and quantitative in nature. It was carried out in Kathmandu district.

Sample: The 105 females and 105 males' teachers working in Kathmandu district were chosen by non random- convenient sampling procedure from according to their working school addresses boarding and government. From 103 boarding school teachers (52 females, 51 males) and 107 government school teachers (53 females, 54 males) were selected.

Data Collection Tools

The Occupational Stress Index manual is developed by Srivastava and Singh, in 1981. This scale was administered to assess the level of stress among the employees. The scale consists of 46 items, each to be rated on a five-point scale. Out of 46 items, 28 are true 'keyed and the balance 18 is false'keyed. The scale measures the extent of employees' perceived stress arising from various constituents and conditions of their job. The items measures job overload, role ambiguity, role conflict, group and political pressure, responsibility for persons, under participation, powerlessness, poor peer relations, intrinsic impoverishment, low status, strenuous working conditions and unprofitability were included.

Reliability: The reliability index ascertained by split half (odd-even) method and Cronbach's alpha co-efficient for the scale as a whole were found to be 0.94 and 0.90 respectively.

Validity: The validity of the OSI was determined by computing coefficient of correlation between the scores on OSI and various measures of job attitudes and behavior and they were found to be sufficiently high.

Data Analysis

The true keyed items were rated as 5 for strongly agree, 4 for agree, 3 for undecided, 2 for disagree and 1 for strongly disagree while the false keyed items were rated as reversed.

Statistical package for social science (SPSS 20.0) software was used to analyze the result. The results were presented through descriptive statistics.

Data Interpretations

Score in the range of 40 to 59 indicate normal levels of stress and strain. Score below 40 indicate a relative absence of occupational stress and strain. For the PRQ scales, score below 30 indicate a significant lack of coping resources. Score in the range of 30 to 39 suggest middle deficits in coping resources.

Result

Total occupational stress of the respondents shown that the frequency of respondents 15.2% of respondents has low occupational stress, 65.7% of respondents have moderate occupational stress and 19.0% of them have high occupational stress levels. (Table: 1 and 2 in annex.)

A Chi-Square test was performed to examine the relationship between gender and occupational stress. The relation between these two variables was significant, $\chi^2 (2, N=210) = 28.007, p=.000$. This means there was significant relationship between gender and occupational stress. (Table: 3 in annex.)

Similarly, an independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare occupational stress for males and females. There was a significant difference in the scores for male ($M=132.81, SD=17.504$) and female ($M=145.72, SD=21.708$); $t (199.056) = -4.745, p = 0.00$. (Table: 4 in annex.)

Above results suggested that the occupational stress level of female teacher is more than that of male teachers. Therefore, the hypothesis “occupational stress level of female teachers is more than male teachers at school was accepted.” A Pearson correlation coefficient was computed to determine whether there was a correlation between age and occupational stress. There is no relation between age and occupational stress which was statistically insignificant, $R = .001, N=210, p=0.988$, which was less than $p<0.1$. The reason behind the no relation between age and occupational stress was that there is no age bar for occupational stress.

Discussion

Stress has been known as one of the most common threats in contemporary eras. It has developed into a substantial hold as well as severe human issues in the daily life as well as professional life. According to the Marlin Company and American Institute of stress, for 33 percent of working population stress will not be an issue. For 68 percent of the working population stress does not bother in their profession.

The present study was directed at exploring occupational stress among school teachers were 15.2% of respondents has low occupational stress, 65.7% of respondents have moderate occupational stress and 19.0% of respondents have high occupational stress levels.

A Chi-Square test was performed to examine the relationship between gender and occupational stress. The relation between this was significant, $\chi^2 (2, N=210) = 28.007, p=.000$. This means there was significant relationship between gender and occupational stress.

Similarly an independent-samples t-test was conducted to compare occupational stress for males and females. There was a significant difference in the scores for male ($M=132.81, SD=17.504$) and female ($M=145.72, SD=21.708$); $t (199.056) = -4.745, p = 0.00$.

Conclusion

Today world is an era of increasing complexity and strain where individual contribution and capability are being faced many times. The stresses relating to occupation have become main attribute of contemporary life. This study revealed that the occupational stress level of female teachers was more than that of male teachers. Therefore, the

occupational stress levels of female teachers were more than male teachers at school hypothesis was accepted. There is no relation between age and occupational stress which was statistically insignificant, $R = .001$, $N=210$, $p=0.988$, which was less than $p<.01$. The reason behind the no relation between age and occupational stress was that there is no age bar for occupational stress.

Annexes

Table 1: Occupational stress of the respondents

Occupational Stress	Frequency (n=210)	Percent
Low	32	15.2
Moderate	138	65.7
High	40	19.0
Total	210	100

Table 2: Characteristics of respondents according to gender

S. No.	Gender	Frequency	Percent
1.	Male	105	50
2.	Female	105	50
	Total	210	100

Table 3: Results of Chi-square Test and Descriptive Statistics for occupational stress by gender

Gender	Low-Level Stress	Moderate Level Stress	Severe Level Stress	Total
Male	20(14.67)	80(13.00)	5(21.67)	105(50.0)
Female	12(17.00)	58(11.67)	35(22.00)	105(50.0)
Total	32(31.67)	138(24.67)	40(43.67)	210(100)

Note. $\chi^2 = 28.007$, $df = 2$. Numbers in parentheses indicate column percentages. * $p < .05$

Table 4: Relationship between male and female by using t-test

	Male		Female		t-test
	M	SD	M	SD	
Occupational Stress	132.81	17.504	145.72	21.708	-4.745

$p<.01$.

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