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Sources of Teachers' Occupational Stress and Effects on their Self-Efficacy

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Abstract

The themes in this narrative inquiry represent the sources of occupational stress and further investigate their effects on teachers' self-efficacy. Poor occupational support, low salary and job insecurity, and the role of teachers are the major sources of occupational stress. Furthermore, these stressors have negative effects on the teachers' self-efficacy on students' motivation and engagement, teacher preparedness and planning, and their emotional well-being. This study employed a semi-structured interview with five EFL teachers in the Rupandehi district to explore their lived experiences. Participants were selected purposively from private schools, as existing research indicated teachers in private schools faced more occupational stress than public school teachers. The findings showed that teachers' occupational stress negatively affects their self-efficacy and professional well-being. Additionally, it exhibited that a positive organizational climate, a supportive environment, and strong relationships with students, parents, and colleagues can significantly boost a teacher's professional well-being and self-efficacy. This research recommends school administrators and stakeholders ensure that teachers have access to adequate resources and support and that their working conditions are improved to maximize teacher effectiveness and well-being.

Keywords: Occupational Stress, Effects, Self-Efficacy, Job Satisfaction, Teachers, Performance

Introduction

The phenomenon of teachers leaving their jobs before their formal retirement has become common in many countries. A large number of teachers leave school for non-retirement reasons, especially during their first years of teaching (Hong, 2012). In the context of Nepal, some of them shift their profession; some quit teaching and search for other jobs and some others go abroad. Several reasons may contribute to this but high occupational stress is the most significant one. Not surprisingly, teaching has been identified as one of the professions associated with high to very high levels of occupational stress (Punch & Tuetteman, 1996). Even some qualified, energetic, knowledgeable, creative, and motivating teachers leave their jobs. Factors like workload, lack of support, and low salaries contribute to high teacher turnover in Nepal affecting highly qualified educators (Shrestha, 2022). The high level of occupational stress is a key factor to discourage people from choosing a certain profession. The shortage of teachers has become a global problem today as many people avoid this profession. According to Indersoll, 2001 and Hong 2012, the shortage of well-qualified teachers has long been a problem in many countries. There is a shortage of efficient and qualified teachers in schools in Nepal as well (Khadka & KC, 2023). This problem is increasing because of teacher attrition – the departure of well-qualified and experienced teachers from their teaching jobs. On the other hand, there is a declining enrollment of new teachers in teacher development courses in Nepal.

Teachers' Occupational Stress

Stress is the response of our body and mind in unexpected situations. Person whether a child, adult man, woman, employed, or unemployed everyone is facing stress in his/her way (Mondal, Shrestha & Bhaila, 2011). There are several sources of stress in the lives of humans. One of them is the experience of negative emotional states such as frustration, worry, anxiety, and depression attributed to work-related factors, which is known as occupational stress (Poudel & Wagle, 2022). It is the feeling down on the job when work makes people frustrated, worried, anxious, or even depressed. (Kyriacou, 2001). Occupational stress is an individual experience, depending on the traits of individuals, in that not all people react to events the same way (Manthei & Gilmore, 1996; McKenna, 1987). Furthermore, stress has been characterized as an element that functions inside or outside and makes adjustment difficult; therefore, more attempts are required from the person to sustain balance in himself or herself and from the outer setting (Abebe & Mariam, 2011).

Professional stress is the stress generated from work and its inconvenient responsibilities. Due to the nature of work, level of income, condition of work and work environment, workload, work complexity, lack of autonomy in work, and lack of skills are some of the stressors. Overall, they are work inconveniences: individual and contextual. Xin et al., (2017) describe teachers' occupational stress as individual embarrassment and contextual inconveniences. According to them, feeling awkward at work because of something the teacher did or thought is an individual embarrassment whereas if things get messy outside his/her control like students arguing, is a contextual inconvenience. Inconveniences are common, but people's responses to stress vary widely. This means that stress reactions are not universal, as some individuals can handle internal stress more effectively than other (Xin et al., 2017; Rajabi & Ghezelsefloo, 2020).

According to a substantial body of literature, teaching can be a very stressful occupation and teacher stress appears to have increased (Laughlin, 1984; Bernard, 1990; Chaplain, 1995; Kyriacou, 2001). The situation of teachers' occupational stress is even more alarming in Nepal. On the one hand, due to stress, the number of teachers choosing other professions and foreign jobs is increasing on the other hand, some teachers are forced to continue their professions in stressful situations due to their constraints. This has resulted in negative self-efficacy in those teachers which significantly causes poor performance (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2011).

Teaching is also considered as one of the most difficult and stressful professions since this profession requires student's trust and several challenges put the teacher at high risk of stress and burnout (Ghanizadeh & Jahedizadeh, 2015). According to Kyriacou, (2011), stress is a negative experience in the teachers' sensation, which raises a threat to well-being and happiness. that their professional conditions pose a threat to their happiness and well-being. Those threats to happiness and well-being affect teachers' self-efficacy and performance, affecting students' learning outcomes. They are not able to perform any task as expected by the school administration or even by themselves. Stress has been regarded as a deconstructive encounter that jeopardizes both educators' self-confidence and well-being and hinders the educational cycle (Klassen & Durksen, 2014).

English language teachers in the EFL context are more vulnerable. Particularly, they face more challenges and stress as it is a second language for students and teachers themselves. Therefore, it is difficult for teachers to master proficiency and guide learners to language proficiency (Shah et al., 2013). The value of teaching is significantly affected by such stresses. It changes the perception of teachers towards teaching and causes distraction. This declines the involvement and continuation of novice teachers in the teaching profession, which causes a shortage of qualified and capable teachers. Potential concerns about teacher

stress can lead to reduced self-efficacy, lower job satisfaction, decreased involvement, increased burnout, and higher attrition rates. (Collie et al., 2012; Klassen et al., 2013).

Even though some teachers suffer from high occupational stress, they cannot leave their jobs for several reasons. Circumstances are not similar for all. On the one hand, there is occupational stress, while on the other hand, there is the need to manage household expenses, children's education, and other expenses in the family. Due to this situation, one has to continue the profession despite the high occupational stress. In such a situation, the main agenda of this research is to study the self-efficacy of teachers who are continuing their profession under stress in private schools in Nepal. Do stressed teachers have positive self-efficacy? How does their stress interfere with teaching? Can a stressed mind perform better? How does the stress affect the teachers' classroom performance and student achievement? This study aims to discover the answer of these questions.

Teachers' Self-efficacy

The concept of teacher self-efficacy is typically understood as teachers' ability to perform their professional tasks at an optimum level. It is the belief in the ability to influence students' outcomes (Soodak & Podell, 1996; Wheatley, 2005). According to this conceptualization, people are self-organizing, proactive, self-regulating, and self-reflecting (Bandura, 2006). Bandura (2006) argues that self-efficacy is the core mechanism of human agency that shapes how individuals perceive environmental opportunities and challenges. Self-efficacy beliefs influence people's goals and actions, and their activity choices. It also influences the amount of effort they put into tasks and their persistence in the face of obstacles. It has been consistently demonstrated that teacher stress and teacher self-efficacy are negatively correlated and predict teachers' cognitive, emotional, and behavioral responses differently. For instance, when teachers are stressed, they tend to be less satisfied and less committed to their jobs. They experience higher levels of burnout and are more likely to leave the profession. On the other hand, when teachers have high self-efficacy, they are more satisfied and committed to their jobs, and they experience less burnout and are less likely to leave the job. (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2017). Einar, et al., 2017 propose a model of relations between stressors in the school environment, social support, teacher self-efficacy, teacher stress, and outcome variables such as work engagement and burnout. It is assumed that a major source of teacher self-efficacy is prior perceptions of successful or less successful teaching experiences, including experiences of classroom management, instructing and motivating students, and cooperating with colleagues and parents (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2015). Stressful working conditions may affect such experiences. Stressors that interfere with their actual teaching negatively affect teachers' self-efficacy. Self-efficacy may also be diminished if they are forced into unfamiliar practices without prior training.

A large body of research reveals a low to moderate negative correlation between teacher stress and teacher self-efficacy (Einar, et al., 2017). According to Bandura (1997), people with low self-efficacy tend to dwell on their shortcomings and magnify the severity of possible threats, which may be both energy-consuming and lead to increased anxiety. On the other hand, high self-efficacy is associated with increased engagement, and self-efficacious individuals are expected to persist in facing obstacles. Several researchers have analyzed theoretical models assuming that teacher stress affects teacher self-efficacy. For instance, student behavior stress may reduce the teachers' expectations of being able to motivate the students and of being able to carry out the instruction according to their intentions. On the other hand, teachers with low mastery expectations may perceive the school and classroom contexts as being more stressful efficacy (Einar, et al., 2017). Several recent international studies have shown that teacher self-efficacy is positively correlated with adaptive outcome

variables such as job commitment, engagement, and job satisfaction (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2014; Collie, et al., 2012; Avanzi et al., 2013; Klassen et al., 2013) whereas it is negatively correlated with teacher burnout or its dimensions, (Avanzi et al., 2013). The findings indicate that student behavior stress is more strongly correlated with teacher self-efficacy than workload stress (Collie et al., 2012; Klassen et al., 2013).

It has been found that stress caused by students' misbehaviors in the classroom has more negative effects on the teacher's self-efficacy than other stress in the teaching profession as Klassen and Chiu (2010) found that student behavior stress negatively predicted classroom management self-efficacy although relation with self-efficacy for instruction and students' engagement was weaker. Also, Klassen and Chiu (2010), in a study among 813 elementary to secondary level school teachers in Canada explored that classroom stress predicted classroom management self-efficacy stronger than workload stress. This stress has adverse effects on students learning too. Students' misbehaviors in the classroom cause teacher distractions and they fail to implement lesson plans affecting students' learning achievement. There are several self-efficacy issues challenging teachers to maintain their personal and professional life. Teachers can make a lot of difference in their teaching when they are highly motivated. However, a teacher with poor motivation struggles in classroom management, instructional preparation and classroom instruction. Teachers struggle to maintain discipline and manage destructive behavior among students (Njoku et al., 2017). They even find it difficult to manage their behavior in the class; showing more aggressive manner, irritation, depression, and burnout. They cannot motivate the learners in their study. Teachers are not motivated to prepare a lesson plan, deliver the lesson effectively, design materials, and provide individual care to the learners (Shah and Bhattarai 2023). Their relationships with students determine teachers' self-efficacy, their opinions of school leaders, their confidence in their teaching abilities, and their belief in their ability to influence students.

Objectives of the Study

This study aims to explore the sources of teachers' occupational stress and its effect on their self-efficacy among private school teachers in Nepal. It also intends to develop a richer and deeper understanding of teacher's occupational stress and self-efficacy.

Research Questions

1. What are the sources of occupational stress experienced by teachers in Private schools?
2. How do private school teachers' occupational stresses affect their self-efficacy?

Methodology

This narrative inquiry involved five EFL teachers of private schools in the Rupandehi district, as some research reported that private school teachers have less freedom and autonomy in their jobs (Lama, 2023) and suffer highly from occupational stress. The participants were selected purposively as per the research agenda. Among the five participants, four of them were male and one was female. A higher number of male teachers was selected among the participants as it was found that male teachers were having more psychological stress than females (Mondal et al., 2011). Individual interviews were conducted in a semi-structured format to obtain data. I collected data to explore individuals' experiences through their stories. I transcribed data and coded it to identify key themes. Data interpretation was done by tying the findings to the research questions through the voices of participants (Creswell, 2014). I used an interactive model of qualitative data analysis (Miles & Huberman, 1994) to analyze the data.

Sources of Occupational Stress

The research explored that teachers in private schools experienced a range of occupational stressors that hurt their self-efficacy. It was also found that the teachers experienced a range of negative emotions in response to occupational stress such as feelings of burnout, frustration, and helplessness. Participants reported a decrease in motivation and enthusiasm when they faced job stress, which in turn affected their self-efficacy. Major stressors affecting self-efficacy were workload, low salary, lack of support from colleagues and superiors, inadequate resources, and lack of professional development and autonomy at work. Participants' stressors and effects on their self-efficacy are explored and presented under different themes; occupational support at work, the teacher's role and level of experience, low salary and job insecurity, the relational context of schooling, and systemic factors in educational policy.

Poor Occupational Support

Teachers experienced a lack of support and autonomy, freedom and power to engage in decision-making at work, which includes decisions about their teaching methods and ways of assessing students, about their school and its policies and administrators, and routine and decisions at the school and classroom level (Friedman, 1999; Pearson & Hall, 1993). Participants in this research reported that they did not feel free in the school environment. They felt like they were being judged or monitored in every activity in school. During any dispute, administrators always took the support of parents and students. Participants reported that professional stress was created when they were not able to use the knowledge and skills they mastered during their study and work experience.

P2: I could do far better if I had proper support from the institution. Instead of performing the job in the best way, I feel like only sustaining the job and performing whatever and however is said. Most of the teachers don't develop professionalism. They just teach them to use their spare time. Three of my friends did the same. One taught for three years and went abroad. The next prepared Public Service Commission exam during his two years teaching and passed the exam. Another of my friends is teaching part-time now. He is running a stationery shop and spends most of his time there. If the shop goes well, he leaves teaching. Various stressors make the teacher pessimistic in their profession and work passively until another option is ready.

Participants stated that lack of occupational support has adversely affected the efficacy. Due to a lack of support, teachers have low confidence and motivation, which reduces their professional capabilities. They expected support for professional development opportunities to stay up-to-date with new teaching methods, educational trends, and technology. They also expect classroom management support and financial support besides salary to cover the costs of supplies, materials, and other necessary items to pursue additional classroom activities.

P5: Besides moral support, teachers also need professional development opportunities, technological support, and financial support. However, schools never like to invest in these regards. Quality teaching can't be ensured without such support. When teachers lack such support, they are not able to perform according to their expectations, which makes them anxious and frustrated, affecting their self-efficacy.

The participants reported that the lack of professional development opportunities and technological support, which are crucial for enhancing self-efficacy, diminished their sense of efficacy. According to the participants, Poor occupational support at work hurt their self-efficacy. They experienced low job satisfaction and were demotivated for effective classroom

performance. They reported that lack of support limited professional development opportunities and fostered isolation. They felt undervalued and struggled to implement effective teaching strategies.

Low Salary and Job Insecurity

The teachers are more stressed due to the hardships of running family expenses with their very low salaries. According to the participants, their salary is insufficient for their families' expenses. They are always struggling to run the family, especially the teachers, who are the sole earners in the family who have hardships. They reported that they are always scared of emergencies because they have no savings since their salary is always insufficient, even for monthly expenses.

Regarding stress related to low salary, P3 said,

"I am only to earn for the family. My father is a kidney patient. Out of three, two children read in the school where I teach. Fortunately, one has a full scholarship in the school, being a teacher's son. The elder daughter reads in college. There is no other source of income. It is very difficult to run the family. It is already fixed where the salary I receive is to be paid. Sometimes the salary is not on time. I have to search for a bride for my daughter very soon. I have to arrange my father's frequent doctor visits. There is no saving at all. Due to these stresses, I have very poor motivation for my job. Since I work for the institution, at least my life should be easy economically".

Similarly, they are also worried because of job insecurity in private schools. The participants of the study said that the decreasing trend of the number of students has resulted in more insecurity in jobs in private schools. The low salaries and job insecurity have made teachers frustrated and they are not dedicated to their jobs. These issues harm their self-efficacy. They take the profession so lightly that they even put less effort into their work which may negatively impact students' learning and performance. According to the participants, financial constraints and job insecurity were the major causes of high attrition and turnover.

Role of Teachers and Level of Experience

According to the participants of this study, teachers in private schools have a handful of roles and responsibilities. Generally, a teacher had to plan lessons and activities, monitor student progress, assess student work, and provide feedback. Besides, they were also responsible for creating a positive learning environment, managing classroom behavior, and collaborating with other teachers and staff.

Additionally, they were asked to take on additional roles like contacting parents, preparing students for the competitions of extra-curricular activities, and so on. These responsibilities made their work overloaded and hurt their satisfaction and commitment to the profession. The intensity of the stress was different among the teachers based on their experience. The participants with more experience remarked less stress in comparison to novice ones.

The teacher's experience level played a crucial role in stress management and the development of the spirit of positive self-efficacy. Participants who have long teaching experience expressed a more positive attitude towards the stressors. They have already understood teaching as a stressful job and are prepared in advance to handle the stress and grow in the profession. They exhibited more adaptive capabilities and a positive mindset towards the stressors, demonstrating determination to the profession.

Relational Context

Teaching is relational work as it involves effectively interacting both formally and informally with colleagues, students, and parents. A teacher needs to have sound relations with colleagues to plan and teach, with students to best engage them in learning and effectively manage the classroom, and with parents to share news about their child's experiences and development. These relationships, when they are negative, increase teachers'

stress and decrease their self-efficacy. In this study, the relational context of schooling is further discussed below.

Teacher-Student Relationships

Teacher-student relations are key factors for successful teaching, but they can be a source of occupational stress and have a negative effect on teachers' self-efficacy if trust, respect, communication, and expectations go wrong among them. Adaptive teacher-student relationships are a central factor in determining teachers' experiences of stress and well-being (Spilt, Koomen, & Thijs, 2011). Participants in this study shared their experience that students' misbehavior in the classroom challenged them for proper classroom management. The number of students in the classroom and their diverse abilities also added challenges to the teachers. Teachers facing these challenges were found to invest less time preparing engaging and creative lessons and distanced themselves from their students and work.

P3: Some students are problematic and challenging. No matter if they are weak in studies if they lack discipline it is frustrating. One of my friends had a bitter experience during virtual classes. One of the students entered in virtual class on the Zoom platform and scolded her using rough words. She was very disappointed because of the incident and didn't take class for about a week. Some students publish memes of their teachers on social media through fake IDs. These activities frustrate the teachers and they display lower work commitment. Furthermore, teachers who have such stress, and have low motivation, are also shown to have lower self-efficacy in their abilities to teach.

Participants reported that sometimes the students' behavior in the class makes the teacher have poor motivation towards the teaching profession. They do not want to go to such classes, and even if they go, they develop a negative attitude towards teaching. Due to this, they lose their confidence and reduce their sense of accomplishment and self-efficacy.

According to the participants of this study, the relationship between students and teachers often deteriorates when students exhibit a lack of respect and obedience toward their teachers. This disrespect is shown in various behaviors, such as ignoring instructions and talking back challenging classroom environment.

Teachers reported that their respect for them is declining day by day. According to them, some students hold the belief that teachers are merely employees working for the salaries paid by student fees. In this sense, the teacher-student relationship is perceived as one of service provider and customer rather than a mutual educational partnership. Due to this situation, teachers lose their self-esteem and deteriorate self-efficacy. This negative relationship between students and teachers ultimately hurts students' learning.

However, teachers assume that they do not have the right to make such complaints about the students. Students are immature learners, and teachers should be able to guide them properly and cultivate positivity in their minds. In this context, P3 said, "This is the bitter reality but I don't think that my complaint about students is not justifiable because I am the one who is responsible for changing the mindset of students".

Teacher-Parents Relationships

Successful teaching requires proper coordination among three dimensions: students, teachers, and parents (Epstein, 2011). The participants in this research claimed that teachers and parents were the key factors in fostering a positive educational environment. Proper communication and understanding between parent and teacher resulted in high academic achievement of a child. The lack of this coordination sometimes created misunderstandings between parents and teachers. Parents blamed their children for not doing well because teachers did not take proper care.

P1: Parents never understand the constraints of teachers while working in private schools. They have high expectations, but a teacher is never able to fulfill all the parents' expectations. Sometimes, they raise some unreasonable issues and like to dominate teachers. School administration, at the same time, supports them and creates problems for a teacher. Such behavior is also a significant cause of teacher burnout and stress, diminishing teacher self-efficacy.

The participants highlighted the importance of the school-parent relationship;

P4: The major subject of concern for schools and parents is student development and learning. Mobilizing the support of parents for organizational effectiveness is the major concern of schools, whereas dedicated cooperation with the school to contribute to the overall development and learning of their child should be the parents' concern.

Relationships with Colleagues

Similar to the research on teacher-student relationships, the literature has shown that high-quality collegial relationships are associated with reduced educator stress and burnout and greater well-being (Collie et al., 2016). All the participants in this study accepted that high-quality relationships with colleagues significantly reduced occupational stress. However, they claimed that if the relationship was not positive and quality, the stress would increase and it would become an uncomfortable environment to work together. P1 expressed his inconvenience of working in an unhealthy collegial relationship. It was during the time he had just started teaching as a basic-level English teacher that he behaved differently.

P1: I had just started teaching. I had no teaching experience. It was a bit uncomfortable to arrange the register, prepare the continuous assessment file of the students, to communicate with the parents during the home visit. The work was not tough, but I especially needed to know how everyone else was doing. Not all of them, but some of my colleagues were ignoring me and not trying to help. They also reported the common mistakes I made in the classroom to the principal's office. Maybe I was weak in some aspects compared to others, but if I had got their help, it would have been easier for me to adjust. For a while, I thought I would quit my job, but a couple of my friends helped me a little and told me not to panic, so I was patient for a while.

According to his experience, the stress due to poor support from school administration and colleagues leads to feelings of helplessness. This may diminish motivation to adopt new teaching strategies, ultimately hindering students' learning achievements.

Effects on Self-Efficacy

The finding showed that occupational stress directly affected teachers' self-efficacy. The more stressful the environment they were exposed to, the less self-efficacy they experienced. This was all about teacher motivation. The stressors demotivated the teacher and ultimately affected the self-efficacy. Following are the self-efficacy issues caused by high occupational stress among the participants in this study.

Student Motivation and Engagement

Occupational stress negatively affects the self-efficacy of the teachers, leading to decreased student motivation and engagement. According to the participants, they could not focus on the classroom activity when they entered the class with stress. The teachers' confidence in their ability to motivate and engage students often weakened when they experienced high

levels of stress. Some of the participants reported that since the stress was high, the teaching remained just like a time pass until the next option was ready.

P2: a few years before, when I was a teacher in a school in the countryside, I taught more than half of an academic session without any effort. I did not care if either student was doing homework and they passed or failed. When I knew the school administration was not supportive of me, I decided to leave the job immediately, but there was no option ready. Then, I applied to the People Service Commission and started preparation. I used to go to class without any preparation. Later during my exam, I left the job. However, I did not pass the exam and joined this school later.

This shows that when a teacher is stressed and quite sure to quit the job shortly, he doesn't put any effort into the betterment of students. This period is very unproductive for both the teacher and the students. Regarding this p1 said, "It is better for the teacher either to overcome the stress or to leave the job as soon as possible in such a situation". When P3 mostly remained stressed due to low salary, He thought of leaving his job several times but doing it for about 5 years. Once he resigned. However, he continued as the principal gave the words to review his salary.

Teachers also reported that relations with students and parents played a vital role in students' motivation. P3 shared a bitter experience as;

Once, I found an electric cigarette in a student's bag. When I investigated it, it was found that he had been bringing it for 3 days and smoked even on the school bus, sitting in the last seat. When I called his mother in school but she refused to accept that the cigarette belonged to her son. She was annoyed with me for blaming her so-called innocent son. Guardians sometimes take things negatively and even blame teachers. This frustrated me.

After this encounter, the teacher found himself having poor self-efficacy in students' motivation and engagement. According to P4, guardians and the office sometimes generalize the things isolating its context and blame that makes the teacher feel incapable of doing things in class.

Teacher Preparedness and Planning

P3 was planning to purchase a laptop to use it for preparing lessons better and use audiovisual materials in the classroom. The cost of the laptop he wanted to purchase was equivalent to his four-month salary. Therefore, he did not buy it. He was not satisfied with his salary. "Whenever some extra effort is necessary, I remember salary," he said. He believed that the school should pay him more to get better work done. "How can they expect more work with minimum pay?" he added. The participants believed that a highly-paid job could be more valuable, allowing them to feel a strong connection with the job and the institution. On the other hand, a lower salary job decreased their sense of attachment and value toward their job and the school.

Furthermore, P1 did not exactly do what the principal said because the principal was not supportive. He said, "If they are kind and supportive, we teachers also like to support them and work more hard, but since they are rude, we also do tit for tat." Regarding salary, P5 said, "The school compares our results and other output with renowned schools but does not realize those schools pay better."

According to the participants, when they were stressed, they did not plan the class well, and if they planned the class well they failed to implement it effectively. They believed

that professional well-being is essential to better plan the class. They could not effectively conduct the class when they had stress in their mind. P3 said, "I sometimes plan the lesson very well, but when something wrong goes in school, I cannot implement it in the right way. However, when I am happy and stress-free I do better than my plan."

The participants also mentioned that the over-controlled environment and poor self-efficacy are also responsible for teachers having low self-efficacy in teacher preparedness and planning. According to them every decision and work had to be done based on what and how others had told. This made teachers' experience of being over-controlled. They mentioned that the unsupportive and over-controlled environment they work in has decreased their self-efficacy. Teachers sometimes did not get technological support to use some materials in the classroom. One of the participants mentioned that he could prepare audiovisual materials but due to lack of technological support, he stopped trying them. There was a projector in the school but the school did not repair it for a long time.

Teacher Emotional Well-being

Maintaining emotional well-being among teachers in the context of Nepal is challenging. If we view other professionals and their lifestyles, it is frustrating to be a teacher in our context (Nepal, 2019). On the other hand, they have very little respect in society. Teachers are living a life full of compromise (Thapa, 2018). According to the participants, they had busy schedules, additional responsibilities, poor support, and declining respect at the same time; they had low salaries and poor lifestyles. These circumstances were highly responsible for challenging teachers to maintain their well-being. They had poor efficacy in maintaining their well-being. They were maintaining the well-being of the institution and students. However, their well-being was in a poor state.

P1: We are working for others, forgetting our pain and sorrow. The administration always wants the school should have more students, it should go into profit, there should be learner well-being in the class, parents should not have any complaints, and every aspect of school and schooling should run smoothly, but what about the teacher? Who thinks about the teacher, since we have no time to think about our happiness? Our professional stresses are the challenges to our emotional well-being.

According to participants, stress led to poor well-being. They reported that they were living a miserable life. They could not run their daily expenses with only the teacher's income without additional income or income of other family members. Besides, a teacher had to be more aware of discipline, social norms, and values. They also had to compromise their personal life to some extent. P4 said, "In our contest, a teacher has to be a teacher not only in school, he has to be a teacher everywhere".

The participants reported that teachers often feel overwhelmed and stressed due to their heavy workload, difficult students, and less support from the administration. This harms mental health, making them feel anxious, frustrated, and burned out. It also affects their relationships with students and colleagues, making it harder to enjoy their job.

Conclusion

The article has explored the sources of occupational stress and its effects on self-efficacy among private school teachers. This study has connected teachers' professional stress, self-efficacy, and students' achievement in a chain and explored their relationship. It also developed a richer and deeper understanding of teacher's occupational stress and self-efficacy. Furthermore, it investigated the major sources of occupational stress experienced by EFL teachers in Private schools and discovered effects on self-efficacy. It is explored that a teacher's professional stress negatively impacts teacher self-efficacy and ultimately hampers students' learning achievement.

The major findings are explored and represented in different themes, namely, occupational support at work, the role of the teacher and level of experience, relational context student-teacher relationship, teacher-parent relationship, and relationship with colleagues), and systemic factors in educational policy. Furthermore, it is found that these stressors negatively affected teachers' self-efficacy, particularly student motivation and engagement, teacher preparedness and planning, and teacher emotional well-being. The participants reported that their occupational stress hampered their ability to motivate students in class. Due to the stress, they also had less confidence in student engagement, preparing and presenting lessons, and overall planning.

This research concludes and recommends that to maximize teacher effectiveness and well-being, private school administrators and stakeholders should ensure teachers have access to adequate resources and support and improve their working conditions. The existence of a healthy organizational climate, a supportive environment, and healthy relationships with students, parents, and colleagues support a teacher's professional well-being. Ultimately, when teachers are supported and empowered, they can do their best in the classroom, leading to better learning outcomes for students and healthier, happier teachers. Furthermore, the study recommends teachers be optimistic and professional in teaching to minimize the stressors sourced from the individual teachers themselves. They also have to develop a sense of positivity even when parents and students exhibit negative attitudes because teachers are the professionals responsible for changing every negative aspect of people and society into a positive. They are recommended to search for solutions to the problems rather than developing negative attitudes and affecting their self-efficacy.

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