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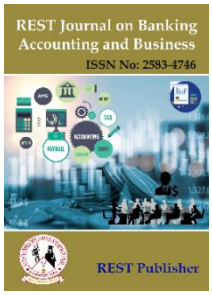

A Study of Occupational Stress Level Among Teachers in Public and Private Educational Institutions in Solan District of Himachal Pradesh

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Abstract: *This study examines the occupational stress levels among teachers in public and private educational institutions in the Solan district of Himachal Pradesh. The research aims to identify the key factors contributing to stress, compare stress levels across the two sectors, and explore the coping mechanisms employed by teachers. Data was collected through structured questionnaires and interviews from a representative sample of 180 teachers across various educational institutions. statistical tools including mean, standard deviation (SD), Chi-square test, t-test, one-way ANOVA, and Post Hoc analysis to assess and compare stress levels between the two sectors. The findings reveal significant differences in stress levels, with private sector teachers reporting higher stress due to job insecurity and workload, while public sector teachers experience stress primarily from bureaucratic challenges and lack of resources. The study provides insights into the implications of occupational stress on job satisfaction and performance, offering recommendations for stress management and policy interventions to improve teachers' well-being.*

Keywords: *stress level, educational institutions and Public and Private.*

1. INTRODUCTION

Occupational stress is an increasingly prevalent phenomenon affecting individuals across various professions, with teaching being no exception. The education sector, which plays a critical role in shaping the intellectual and social fabric of society, often exposes its workforce to unique stressors. Teachers in both public and private educational institutions face challenges that can impact their mental well-being, job satisfaction, and overall effectiveness. Factors such as administrative pressure, workload, job insecurity, limited resources, and societal expectations contribute significantly to occupational stress.

In the context of Himachal Pradesh, the Solan district, with its diverse educational institutions, offers a fertile ground for understanding the dynamics of occupational stress among teachers. Public institutions often grapple with bureaucratic delays and resource constraints, while private institutions frequently experience high demands for performance and job instability. These contrasting environments create unique stress patterns among teachers, warranting an in-depth comparative analysis.

Stress: Stress is commonly defined as a psychological and physiological response to external or internal demands that are perceived as challenging or threatening to an individual's well-being. Accourding to Lazarus and Folkman (1984) describe stress as a dynamic interaction between an individual and their environment, emphasizing that it arises when the perceived demands exceed the individual's coping resources.

Components of Stress:

- Stressors: These are the external or internal stimuli that trigger stress. They can be physical (e.g., noise, illness), psychological (e.g., work pressure, interpersonal conflicts), or social (e.g., societal expectations).
- Appraisal: Stress is not merely the result of an event but also how an individual interprets or appraises the event. Lazarus and Folkman (1984) highlight that the perception of stress involves both primary appraisal (assessing the threat) and secondary appraisal (evaluating coping resources).

- Physiological Responses: Stress activates the body's fight-or-flight response, involving the release of stress hormones like cortisol and adrenaline, which prepare the body to respond to the perceived threat.
- Coping Mechanisms: These are the strategies individuals use to manage or mitigate stress. Coping mechanisms can be problem-focused (addressing the cause) or emotion-focused (managing emotional responses).

Occupational Stress Levels in Public and Private Educational Institutions: Occupational stress among teachers in public and private educational institutions is influenced by various factors unique to each sector. Teachers in public institutions often face challenges such as bureaucratic delays, inadequate resources, and rigid administrative structures, which contribute to their stress levels. On the other hand, teachers in private institutions frequently report higher stress due to job insecurity, excessive workloads, and performance pressures associated with the competitive nature of the private education sector. The differences in stressors between these two settings highlight the need for a tailored approach to managing occupational stress in educational institutions.

Research emphasizes that while public teachers may experience more stable job conditions, they often encounter stress from institutional inefficiencies and external policy demands. Conversely, private teachers face intense scrutiny over their performance, with limited control over organizational decisions, further exacerbating stress levels. Both groups experience a shared burden of balancing professional responsibilities with personal well-being, yet the specific stressors differ significantly between the two environments. Understanding these dynamics is crucial for implementing effective stress management interventions. Strategies such as professional development programs, resource allocation, and creating supportive work environments can mitigate stress and enhance job satisfaction among teachers in both sectors.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Skaalvik and Skaalvik (2011) analyzed the relationship between teacher stress, self-efficacy, and job satisfaction. The study found that role conflict and lack of administrative support were significant contributors to occupational stress, negatively affecting teacher morale. **McCarthy et al. (2016)** examined stress and coping mechanisms in teachers, highlighting the importance of personal and organizational support in reducing occupational stress and preventing burnout. **Antoniou et al. (2013)** investigated the role of gender in occupational stress among teachers, finding that women were more likely to experience role conflict and stress due to societal expectations and multiple responsibilities. **Kim and Asbury (2020)** explored how the COVID-19 pandemic affected teachers' stress levels, highlighting increased workloads and the challenge of adapting to online teaching as key stressors. **Collie (2021)** examined workplace conditions and teacher well-being, finding that supportive leadership and professional development opportunities significantly reduced occupational stress in educational institutions. **ereira et al. (2020)** investigated the impact of stress on the mental health of teachers, particularly during the pandemic. The study suggested that emotional support and counseling could help mitigate stress. **García-Carmona et al. (2019)** studied the influence of workload and interpersonal relationships on teacher stress, emphasizing that fostering collaboration among staff could alleviate occupational stress. **Li et al. (2021)** analyzed stress levels among teachers in public and private institutions, highlighting the influence of organizational structure and job security on stress. **De Simone et al. (2016)** examined how work-family conflict contributes to occupational stress among teachers, finding that work-life balance significantly influences stress levels. **Sezer and Sahin (2023)** investigated occupational stress and coping mechanisms among teachers in rural and urban settings, finding that rural teachers reported higher stress due to resource limitations.

Research Gap: Despite extensive research on occupational stress among teachers, significant gaps remain, particularly in the context of smaller regions like Solan district in Himachal Pradesh. Limited studies address the distinct stressors faced by teachers in public versus private institutions in such localized settings. Furthermore, there is a lack of comprehensive analysis on the influence of demographic variables like age, gender, and experience on stress levels. This study aims to fill these gaps by providing a detailed analysis of occupational stress levels and contributing factors in Solan's educational institutions.

3. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study uses a quantitative approach to assess occupational stress among teachers in public and private institutions in Solan district, Himachal Pradesh. Primary data will be collected through direct interviews and a structured questionnaire, while secondary data will be gathered from relevant books, journals, and reports. Statistical tools like mean, standard deviation, Chi-square, t-test, ANOVA, and post-hoc analysis will be used for data interpretation. The research aims to identify key stress factors and compare stress levels across institutions.

Need of The Study: The teaching profession is increasingly recognized as one of the most stressful occupations, with significant implications for teachers' well-being and institutional effectiveness. In regions like Solan district of Himachal Pradesh, where socio-economic and cultural factors uniquely influence workplace dynamics, understanding occupational stress levels is crucial. This study is needed to identify and compare the stressors faced by teachers in public and private institutions, analyze the role of demographic variables, and address the gap in region-specific research. Insights from this research will contribute to developing targeted interventions and support mechanisms to enhance teacher well-being and improve organizational outcomes.

Scope of The Study: The scope of this study is limited to measuring the occupational stress levels of teachers working in public and private educational institutions in the Solan district of Himachal Pradesh. The study will focus on identifying key stress factors, comparing stress levels between public and private institutions, and analysing how demographic variables such as age, gender, marital status, and years of experience influence stress.

Objectives of The Study

- To compare the occupational stress levels among teachers in public and private educational institutions in the Solan district of Himachal Pradesh.
- To identify the key factors contributing to occupational stress and analyze the influence of demographic variables.

Hypothesis of The Study

- There is no significant difference in occupational stress levels between teachers in public and private educational institutions in the Solan district of Himachal Pradesh.
- Demographic variables such as age, gender, and experience have no significant influence on occupational stress levels among teachers.

Research design:
Sampling method has been used to carry out an exhaustive and in depth study of the occupational stress level among teachers in public and private educational institution. The empirical results of the study are based on the primary data collected through survey of 180 respondents. Convenience sampling is used to draw sample for this purpose of study. A sample of 60 respondents from universities, 60 for colleges and 60 for schools

TABLE 1. Sampling Design

	Sample Size		
Education Institutions	**Public**	**Private**	**Total**
University (1 each from public and private)	30	30	60
College (3 each for public and private)	30	30	60
School (5 each for public and private)	30	30	60
Total	90	90	180

Data Collection: Both primary and secondary data were essential for achieving the objectives of this study.

Primary Data:
The primary data was collected through interviews, personal visits, and a structured schedule/questionnaire.
• **Direct Personal Interview**: Direct personal interviews were conducted to gather precise and accurate responses from the respondents. The researcher visited the respondents personally to ensure reliable data collection.
• **Schedule/Questionnaire Method**: A structured questionnaire was used to collect first-hand information from respondents. The questions were designed to focus on the key aspects related to the study, ensuring they captured relevant insights into the occupational stress experienced by educators.

Secondary data:
Secondary data was used to enrich the study, providing background and context. This data was sourced from various materials, including books, journals, relevant publications, research papers, project reports, and annual reports.

Tools for The Study: The study utilized various statistical tools for data analysis, including mean, standard deviation, Chi-square, t-test, ANOVA, and post-hoc analysis.

4. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

TABLE 2. Gender Wise Important Factor for Job Satisfaction

Gender	Salary	Management	Task and Responsibility	Colleague	Total
Male	17(9.4)	8(4.4)	47(26.1)	28(15.6)	100(55.5)
Female	9(5)	7(3.9)	42(23.3)	22(12.2)	80(44.4)
Total	26(14.4)	15(8.3)	89(49.4)	50(27.8)	180(100)

Chi square value: - 1.323, DF: -3 (P-value: - .734)

Nature of Education Institution	Salary	Management	Task and Responsibility	Colleague	Total
Government	16(8.9)	5(2.8)	42(23.3)	27(15)	90(50)
Private	10(5.6)	10(5.6)	47(26.1)	23(12.8)	90(50)
Total	26(14.4)	15(8.3)	89(49.4)	50(27.8)	180(100)

Chi square value 3.652 Df: - 3 P-value: - .302

Designation	Salary	Management	Task and responsibility	Colleague	Total
Primary teacher	3(1.7)	3(1.7)	7(2.2)	4(2.2)	17(9.4)
Lecture (TGT, PGT)	7(3.9)	3(1.7)	29(16.1)	4(2.2)	43(23.9)
Professor	16(8.9)	9(5)	53(29.4)	42(23.3)	120(66.7)
Total	26(14.4)	15(8.3)	89(49.4)	50(27.8)	180(100)

Chi square value: - 13.664 Df: - 6 P-value: - .034

Educational Qualification	Salary	Management	Task and Responsibility	Colleague	Total
Up to graduation	0(0)	1(0.6)	9(5)	3(1.7)	13(7.2)
Post-graduation	16(8.9)	6(3.3)	41(22.8)	15(8.3)	78(43.3)
M.Phil.	7(3.9)	3(1.7)	18(10)	2(1.1)	30(16.7)
Ph. D	3(1.7)	5(2.8)	21(11.7)	30(16.7)	59(32.8)
Total	26(14.4)	15(8.3)	89(49.4)	50(27.8)	180(100)

Chi square value: - 31.652 Df: - 9 P-value: - .000

Annual income	Salary	Management	Task and Responsibility	Colleague	Total
50000-100000	0(0)	0(0)	10(5.6)	9(5)	19(10.6)
100000-500000	16(8.9)	14(7.8)	52(28.9)	29(16.1)	111(61.7)
500000-1000000	8(4.4)	1(0.6)	26(14.4)	11(6.1)	46(25.6)
More than 1000000	2(1.1)	0(0)	1(0.6)	1(0.6)	4(2.2)
Total	26(14.4)	15(8.3)	89(49.4)	50(27.8)	180(100)

Chi square value: - 17.104 DF: - 9 P-value: - .047

The study reveals distinct gender-wise variations in job satisfaction factors, with males emphasizing "Task and Responsibility" as the most important factor, while females prioritize "Salary." Regarding the type of educational institution, both government and private sectors highlight "Task and Responsibility" as the key factor, although government institutions placed higher importance on "Salary." Professors, in comparison to other designations, gave significant weight to "Task and Responsibility." Educational qualification also influenced the prioritization of factors, with Ph.D. holders valuing "Task and Responsibility" more. Age-wise, younger educators (21-30 years) prioritized "Task and Responsibility," while older groups leaned towards "Colleague." Income also played a role, as those with higher incomes (100,000-500,000) considered "Task and Responsibility" the most important. Chi-square analysis indicated that these variables significantly impacted job satisfaction, highlighting the diverse factors across different demographic categories.

Table 3. Analysis of Occupational Stress Level Teachers in Public and Private Educational Institutions

Statements	Public			Private			
	Mean	S.D.	Std. Error of Mean	Mean	S.D.	Std. Error of Mean	P. Value
Involvement in Decision Making	3.78	.992	.105	3.09	.920	.97	.000
Leadership Opportunities	3.82	1.051	.101	3.44	1.388	.111	.012
Social Security	3.78	1.388	.146	2.66	1.018	.107	.000
Salary Scale	4.13	.962	.101	2.90	.849	.089	.000
Duty hours	4.30	.626	.066	3.81	.669	.070	.000
Job Security	4.11	.953	.100	2.99	1.022	.108	.000
Pressure on Result	2.94	1.125	.119	3.59	.847	.089	.000
Admission Work	2.74	.894	.094	3.47	.877	.092	.000
Non Related Work	2.84	1.090	.115	3.16	.898	.095	.038
Organizational Behavior	3.74	.829	.087	3.73	.761	.080	.925
Smart Classroom	3.24	1.310	.138	3.44	.937	.099	.240
Transportation Facilities	2.20	.902	.095	3.22	1.197	.125	.000

The analysis of occupational stress levels among teachers in public and private educational institutions reveals significant differences across various factors. Public sector teachers reported higher levels of stress in areas like "Involvement in Decision Making," "Leadership Opportunities," and "Social Security," with mean values of 3.78, 3.82, and 3.78 respectively, compared to private sector teachers, whose means were lower. Public teachers also expressed more stress regarding "Salary Scale," "Job Security," and "Duty Hours," with notably higher mean scores of 4.13, 4.11, and 4.30. Private teachers, however, felt greater stress related to "Pressure on Results" and "Admission Work," with mean scores of 3.59 and 3.47, respectively. Significant differences in "Non-Related Work" were also observed, with private institutions showing higher stress levels. "Organizational Behavior," "Smart Classroom," and "Transportation Facilities" showed no substantial stress differences. The overall findings, supported by the p-values (all less than 0.05), suggest that public sector teachers experience higher occupational stress across most factors, especially related to decision-making, security, and working conditions.

5. FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

Findings:

- Males tend to place more importance on task and responsibility, followed by salary and colleagues, while females focus more on salary and task-related responsibilities. It shows that both genders equally value salary, management, task responsibility, and colleague relationships. Thus, while individual preferences may vary, the overall pattern indicates a shared perspective on the key elements contributing to job satisfaction across both genders.
- In government institutions, task and responsibility are the most important factors, while in private institutions, salary and task-related responsibilities hold greater importance. The analysis shows that both government and private institutions place emphasis on similar factors, though the level of importance varies. Despite the differences, the overall findings suggest that salary, task responsibility, and colleague relationships are the key elements contributing to job satisfaction across both types of institutions.
- Primary teachers, task and responsibility are the most important, while lecturers (TGT, PGT) place greater importance on task and responsibility as well. Professors, however, prioritize salary and task-related responsibilities more than other factors. The results indicate that professors tend to focus more on salary and task responsibilities, while primary teachers and lecturers give more weight to their specific duties and responsibilities within their roles.
- Job satisfaction factors differ based on gender, educational qualifications, and designation. Males focus more on task responsibilities, while females prioritize salary and management. Higher education levels, particularly Ph.D., emphasize colleagues and task responsibilities. Government employees value salary and job security, while private sector employees highlight leadership and non-related work. Professors report higher satisfaction than primary teachers and lecturers. Overall, salary, task responsibilities, and colleagues are key factors influencing job satisfaction.
- The factors influencing job satisfaction vary with annual income. For employees earning between 100,000 to 500,000, task responsibility and salary are the most significant factors. Higher-income groups (500,000-1,000,000) place more importance on task responsibilities, while those earning more than 1,000,000 show less concern for salary and management. Lower-income groups (50,000-100,000) show minimal importance to salary and management but value task responsibilities and colleagues. Overall, task responsibility stands out as the key driver of job satisfaction across income brackets.
- Public school teachers experience significantly higher levels of involvement in decision-making compared to private school teachers, which contributes to lower occupational stress.
- Public school teachers also report greater leadership opportunities than their private school counterparts, helping reduce stress in the workplace.
- Public school teachers benefit from better social security benefits, leading to lower stress levels, whereas private school teachers feel less secure.
- Salary scales are notably higher in public institutions, which seems to play a role in reducing stress compared to the private sector, where salaries are comparatively lower.
- Public school teachers have more manageable duty hours, which helps in reducing stress compared to private school teachers who face longer working hours.
- Job security is a significant stress-reliever in public institutions, with public school teachers reporting higher levels of job stability compared to their private school counterparts.
- Private school teachers experience higher pressure related to results, admission work, and non-related work, leading to higher stress levels compared to public school teachers.

Conclusion:

Public school teachers experience lower stress due to higher involvement in decision-making, better leadership opportunities, superior social security benefits, competitive salary scales, and more manageable duty hours. These factors contribute to enhanced job satisfaction and reduced stress. In contrast, private school teachers face higher stress levels due to longer working hours, increased pressure related to results and non-teaching responsibilities, and fewer job security benefits. To reduce occupational stress, private schools could benefit from improved decision-making involvement, leadership opportunities, better social security, and a more balanced workload.

Suggestions:

- In the govt. education institution teachers' contract system in job must be wave off. There should be a proper promotion and transfer policy and should free from political pressure.
- It has been observed that, pressure on result was found more among primary teachers in comparison to lectures and professor. Mean score of perception of primary teachers was found 4.06 The main reason behind it, the primary teachers are found involved in doing Non Related work like as admission work, clerical work, administrative work, making result and other maintain reports and 91 documents. So it is suggested that Government should have appointed, at least two teachers and one clerk in all primary schools.
- Government institutions could benefit from offering greater emphasis on salary and management, while private institutions may want to further focus on task-related responsibilities and offer better career development opportunities. Both types of institutions should strive for a balance between salary, task responsibilities, and colleague relationships to enhance job satisfaction.
- Offering personalized benefits, such as salary adjustments, leadership training, and focus on colleagues and task responsibilities, can improve job satisfaction across different employee groups. Ensuring that employees feel supported according to their educational background and role can lead to more engaged and satisfied staff.
- For higher-income groups, focusing on task responsibilities and providing meaningful work could increase satisfaction. For lower-income groups, salary and colleague relations should be emphasized to boost job satisfaction. Tailoring strategies to income-based preferences can help create a more satisfying work environment across income levels.
- Public schools should continue fostering environments with high involvement in decision-making and leadership opportunities, which contribute to reduced stress. Ensuring better work-life balance with manageable duty hours and offering strong job security can further enhance the well-being of teachers.
- Private schools should consider offering more decision-making involvement and leadership opportunities for teachers to reduce stress. Additionally, providing better social security benefits and addressing workload concerns, particularly regarding pressure related to results and non-related work, can help reduce teacher stress.
- Public institutions should continue to offer competitive salaries, strong job security, and manageable work hours to alleviate teacher stress. Implementing additional support systems for teachers in high-stress areas can further help in managing occupational stress.
- It is essential for both public and private institutions to regularly assess and improve salary scales to ensure that teachers are adequately compensated. This would help alleviate financial stress and increase overall job satisfaction.
- Both public and private institutions should consider reducing duty hours or providing more flexible working conditions to lower occupational stress levels. Regular assessments of work hours in relation to stress should be conducted to maintain a balanced work environment.
- Enhancing job security should be a priority in both public and private institutions. For private institutions, offering more stable employment contracts and providing long-term career growth opportunities would help reduce stress.
- Private schools should work on reducing pressures related to results, admissions, and non-related work. Providing teachers with adequate support, resources, and a clearer work-life balance could significantly reduce stress levels.

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