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A STUDY ON SCHOOL TEACHERS WORK RELATED STRESS IN PRIVATE SCHOOLS IN CHENNAI

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Abstract

Work-related stress is a growing problem around the world that affects not only the health and well-being of employees, but also the productivity of organizations. Work-related stress arises where work demands of various types and combinations exceed the person's capacity and capability to cope. Stress influences teachers' performance and school effectiveness alike. The main objective of this study is to describe work-related stress and its eventual relationship with job performance of teachers working in private schools of Chengalpattu district, Tamilnadu. To attain this objective, a survey study was employed by utilizing survey questionnaires. Research data derived from a total of 276 private school teachers who were incidentally established as samples. Data were statistically analyzed using ANOVA and Post hoc test. Result of data analysis shows a significant effect on the work-related stress and job performance of teachers working in the private schools in Taminadu.

Keywords: School Teachers, Work Stress, Private Schools, Tamilnadu

Introduction

The difficulty in defining stress arose predominantly from its broad symptoms and the individual differences that could be observed between people. The first definitions categorized stress either as a response to a Stimulus or as the stimulus itself (Cooper et al., 2001). The response-based definition of stress is represented by Selye's "general adaptation syndrome", which was the first attempt to conceptualize stress from a medical point of view. Under Selye's definition, stress is "the nonspecific response of the body to any demand" (Selye, 1976, p. 53). Stress is then a set of symptoms, which in this definition are viewed as "non-specific" (Selye, 1976) in that they follow the same pattern whatever the stressor. Indeed, stress has been related to a limited number of symptoms ranging from physiological reactions to psychological and behavioral consequences: Greater coronary disease risks, musculoskeletal disorders (Kalia, 2002), as well aspeptic ulcers (Cooper & al, 2001); Anxiety, depression, job dissatisfaction, emotional exhaustion, fatigue, boredom, reduced organizational commitment; - Lower performance on the job, turnover, absenteeism, substance abuse. Selye (1976) does not deny, however, that stress symptoms may vary. He attributes these variations to the demands' intensity and individuals' sensitivity. He then distinguishes "distress" and "eustress," the

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former being a set of stress symptoms detrimental to health and the latter a healthy and positive set of stress symptoms. As Cooper et al. (2001) remind Stress, an adaptation mechanism, further research showed that some symptoms have indeed been linked to specific stressors, and the claim that symptoms are not specific is then partly invalidated. Consequently, m as it appears that stress symptoms can differ from one situation to another and from one individual to another, stress cannot be defined from its consequences to people's well-being and on the basis of their behaviors. Stress is not a new concept, dating back at least to the14th century (Lumsden 1981).

However it became significant with the work of the 17th century scientist Robert Hooke who used it in an engineering context. His analysis influenced early 20th century approaches to stress, where it was perceived in mechanical terms as a load on a system whether biological, psychological or social (Lazarus 1993).World War II brought interest in combat related stress, and following the war this concept was applied to situations of ordinary living. The model of stress was borrowed from engineering and was applied mechanistically, utilizing simplistic and linear notions of stimulus and response (Lazarus 1993).This was challenged in the 1950's by the discovery that stressful conditions did not always produce predictable results; individual differences became accepted as being significant variables (Lazarus et al1952; Lazarus 1993). Stress refers to physical, mental or emotional reactions and adjustment which body produces when changes occur (Kyriacou, 2001). Stress can be both positive and negative. Positive stress can keep a person motivated and aware of his surrounding environments like in a street or driving with cautiousness. However, stress can become negative if a person faces a prolonged period of stress without being able to release it, which in turn may cause distress - physical and emotional detrimental effect on the person like headaches, weight gain/loss, exhaustion, depression, and/or other forms of psychological illnesses (Fantuzzo et al., 2012). Among all jobs,

one of the stressful jobs is teaching at school. According to Kyriacou (2001), teacher work stress reflects the undesirable psychological emotions stemmed from teaching and work-related duties inside and outside school (Vinayagam et.al 2022)

Teachers are believed to be a profession which brings relatively high job satisfaction (Chaplain, 2008; Schwarzer& Hallum, 2008) because a number of research indicated that teachers' job satisfaction came from direct interactions with students, witnessing student personal growth and development as well as academic outcomes (Crossman & Harris, 2006; Turner, 2007). However, teachers are also believed to be highly stressed in their job settings (Johnson, Cooper, Cartwright, Taylor & Millet, 2005). A wealth of empirical studies indicated that up to1/3 of teachers are highly stressed at work (Borg & Riding, 1991; Geving, 2007; Thomas, Clark, & Lavery, 2003) because of various reasons such as heavy workload (Chaplain, 2008; Klassen, & Chiu, 2010), long teaching hours, large class size, students' disciplinary problems, cramped classrooms, excessive administrative work (Atkins et al., 2003; Barksdale-Ladd & Thomas, 2000; Cappella, Frazier, Atkins, Schoenwald, & Glisson, 2008; Shernoff et al., 2011), unsupportive senior management and parents (von der Embse, Kilgus, Solomon, Bowler & Curtiss, 2015), and lack of support are the most common stressors (Michie &

Williams, 2003). It is believed that teacher stress consisted of job-related pressure, physical, psychological and emotional manifestations (Fimian & Fastenau, 1990) which will in turn decrease the school effectiveness (Hung, 2012).

Research Methodology

The main objective of this study is to investigate the work-related stress and its eventual relationship with job performance of teachers working in private schools of Chengalpattu district, Tamilnadu. For to know the various stress and reviews have been gone through by the researchers and also made personal interaction along with teachers opinion also been collected. Based on the information, it consider the determinants namely excessive workload, meaningless tasks, long hours and low pay, infrequent breaks, unrealistic deadlines, unused job skills and fear of layoff. Research schedule is framed in the five point scale where 5 stands for strongly agree, 4 stands for agree, 3 for neutral, 2 for disagree and 1 stands for strongly disagree. The private school teachers are chosen from areas of Chengalpattu District, Tamilnadu. Totally 300 teachers were approached. Finally 276 teachers are considered as a sample size for the study. Descriptive statistics, ANOVA, and Post- Hoc are used to describe the sample, to show that which are the factors those that highly influenced the work related stress and measure the linear association between the dependent and independent variable.

Analysis, Interpretation and Result

Table-1: Opinion towards work stress based on monthly income

Work stress	Income (Monthly)	Mean	S.D	ANOVA Result		Post-hog test
				F-value	P-value	
Excessive workload	Upto Rs.10000	3.51	1	25.372	0.001*	2 vs 1, 3, 4
	Rs.10000-20000	2.67	1.3			
	Rs.20000-30000	3.63	0.5			
	Above Rs.30000	3.74	0.8			
Meaningless tasks	Upto Rs.10000	3.4	1.1	16.436	0.001*	2 vs 1, 3, 4
	Rs.10000-20000	2.83	1.3			
	Rs.20000-30000	3.87	0.7			
	Above Rs.30000	3.7	0.8			
Long hours and low pay	Upto Rs.10000	3.52	1.1	27.649	0.001*	2 vs 1, 3, 4
	Rs.10000-20000	2.68	1.3			
	Rs.20000-30000	3.8	0.6			
	Above Rs.30000	3.89	0.9			
Finance problem	Upto Rs.10000	3.61	1.2	34.465	0.001*	2 vs 1, 3, 4
	Rs.10000-20000	2.54	1.2			
	Rs.20000-30000	3.95	0.9			
	Above Rs.30000	3.75	0.9			
Unrealistic deadlines	Upto Rs.10000	3.4	1.2	21.696	0.001*	2 vs 1, 3, 4

	Rs.10000-20000	2.67	1.3			
	Rs.20000-30000	3.75	0.6			
	Above Rs.30000	3.81	0.9			
Unused job skills	Upto Rs.10000	3.31	1.2	12.181	0.001*	2 vs 1, 3, 4
	Rs.10000-20000	2.9	1.7			
	Rs.20000-30000	3.87	0.7			
	Above Rs.30000	3.84	1.3			
Fear of layoff	Upto Rs.10000	3.15	1.1	14.772	0.001*	2 vs 1, 3, 4
	Rs.10000-20000	3	1.4			
	Rs.20000-30000	3.87	0.7			
	Above Rs.30000	3.9	1.2			

Source: Primary data computed; * Significant @ 1% level.

In the case of excessive workload, above Rs.30000 income private school teachers secured the mean value of 3.74, Rs.20000 to 30000 income private school teachers secured the mean value of 3.63 followed by Upto Rs.10000 income private school teachers secured a mean value of 3.51 and Rs.10000 to 20000 income private school teachers secured a mean value of 2.67. It is noted that the monthly income have difference of opinion towards excessive workload of private school teachers. The calculated F-value is 25.372 and the P-value is 0.001, which is significant at one percent level. Hence there is a significant difference of opinion towards excessive workload of private school teachers income. It is found that the monthly income of above Rs.30000 private school teachers have the higher level of excessive workload and Rs.10000 to 20000 income private school teachers have the low level of excessive workload.

With regard to meaningless tasks on monthly income of school teachers Rs.20000 to 30000 income teachers secured the mean score of 3.87 followed by above Rs.30000 income teachers have the mean score of 3.70, Upto Rs.10000 income teachers have the mean score 3.40 and Rs.10000 to 20000 income private school teachers have the mean score of 2.83. It is noted that monthly income has the difference of opinion towards meaningless tasks of private school teachers. The calculated the F-value is 16.463 and the P-value is 0.001, which is significant at one percent level. Hence there is significant difference of opinion towards meaningless tasks of private school teachers based on monthly income of shop. It is found that the Rs.20000 to 30000 income private school teachers have the higher level of meaningless tasks in their shop. However Rs.10000 to 20000 income private school teachers have low level of meaningless tasks in their school teachers.

For long hours and low pay, above Rs.30000 income private school teachers secured the mean value of 3.89 followed by Rs.20000 to 30000 income private school teachers secured a mean value of 3.80, upto Rs.10000 income teachers secured a mean score of 3.52 and Rs.10000 to 20000 income teachers secured a mean value of 2.68. It is noted that the monthly income have difference of opinion towards long hours and low pay of private school teachers.

The calculated F-value is 27.649 and P-value of 0.001 which is significant at one percent level. Hence there is a significant difference of opinion towards long hours and low pay based on the monthly income. It is found that above Rs.30000 income private school teachers have the higher level of long hours and low pay on the shop. Rs.10000 to 20000 private school teachers have low level of long hours and low pay.

In the case of infrequent breaks, Rs.20000 to 30000 income private school teachers have the mean score of 3.95 followed by above Rs.30000 income private school teachers scored a mean value of 3.81, upto Rs.10000 income private school teachers scored 3.61, Rs.10000 to 20000 income teachers scored a mean value of 2.54, It is noted that the monthly income have difference of opinion towards infrequent breaks of private school teachers. The calculated F-value is 34.465 and P-value of 0.001 which is significant at one percent level. Hence there is a significant difference of opinion towards infrequent breaks based on the monthly income of school teachers. It is found that Rs.20000 to 30000 income private school teachers have the higher level of infrequent breaks and Rs.10000 to 20000 private school teachers have low level of infrequent breaks in their shop.

For unrealistic deadlines, Above Rs.30000 income private school teachers secured the mean value of 3.81, followed by Rs.20000 to 30000 income teachers secured a mean value of 3.75, upto10000 income teachers secured a mean score of 3.40 and Rs.10000 to 20000 income teachers secured a mean value of 2.67, It is noted that the monthly income have difference of opinion towards unrealistic deadlines of private school teachers. The calculated F-value is 21.696 and P-value of 0.001 which is significant at one percent level. Hence there is a significant difference of opinion towards unrealistic deadlines based on the monthly income. It is found that above Rs.30000 income private school teachers have the higher level of unrealistic deadlines but Rs.10000 to 20000 income private school teachers have low level of unrealistic deadlines than other income school teachers.

With regard to unused job skills, Rs.20000 to 30000 income teachers have the mean score of 3.87 followed by above Rs.30000 income teachers secured a mean score of 3.84, upto Rs.10000 income private school teachers scored 3.31 and Rs.10000 to 20000 income teachers scored a mean value of 2.90. It is noted that the monthly income teachers have difference of opinion towards unused job skills of private school teachers. The calculated F-value is 12.181 and P-value of 0.001 which is significant at one percent level. Hence there is a significant difference of opinion towards unused job skills based on the monthly income of school teachers. It is found that Rs.20000 to 30000 income private school teachers have the higher level of unused job skills and below Rs.10000 to 20000 income private school teachers have the low level of unused job skills than other income school teachers.

For fear of layoff, above Rs.30000 income teachers secured a mean value of 3.90 followed by Rs.20000 to 30000 income teachers secured 3.87, upto Rs.10000 income teachers secured 3.15 and Rs.10000 to 20000 income teachers secured a mean value of 3.00.

It is noted that the monthly income have difference of opinion towards fear of layoff of private school teachers. The calculated F-value is 14.772 and P-value of 0.001 which is significant at one percent level. Hence there is a significant difference of opinion towards fear

of layoff based on monthly income of school teachers. It is found that above Rs.30000 income private school teachers have the higher level of fear of layoff and Rs.10000 to 20000 income private school teachers have the low level of fear of layoff.

From the ANOVA result while observing the P-value it is significant at one percent level. Hence, there is significant difference of opinion towards work stress based on monthly income.

In order to find out the difference between monthly income and work related stress of private school teachers further Bonferroni post hog test is applied. From this test result it is found that Rs.10000 to 20000 monthly income private school teachers differ from upto Rs.10000, Rs.20000 to 30000 and Above Rs.30000.

Table-2: Work stress based on types of school

Work stress	Types	Mean	S.D	t-test Result	
				t-value	P-value
Excessive workload	Primary	3.49	0.96	4.303	0.000*
	HSC	3.05	1.31		
Meaningless tasks	Primary	3.45	1.07	2.762	0.006**
	HSC	3.15	1.30		
Long hours and low pay	Primary	3.51	1.04	3.420	0.001*
	HSC	3.15	1.33		
Infrequent breaks	Primary	3.57	1.13	4.288	0.001*
	HSC	3.08	1.39		
Unrealistic deadlines	Primary	3.41	1.09	2.628	0.009**
	HSC	3.12	1.36		
Unused job skills	Primary	3.40	1.17	1.416	0.157 (NS)
	HSC	3.22	1.57		
Fear of layoff	Primary	3.26	1.12	-0.852	0.395 (NS)
	HSC	3.36	1.41		

Source: Primary data computed; * Significant @ 1% level; **Significant @ 5% level; NS: Non- Significant.

Table-2 displays the school teachers work related stress based on types of schools. Excessive workload, meaningless tasks, long hours and low pay, infrequent breaks, unrealistic deadlines, unused job skills and fear of layoff are consider as work related stress. Mean and standard deviation values are calculated for each group. It is observed that those who have sole trade type of shop have high level of excessive workload, meaningless tasks, long hours and low pay, infrequent breaks, unrealistic deadlines and unused job skills. However the HSC types of private school teachers have high level of fear of layoff.

H_0: The private school teachers opinions do not differ towards work related stress based on types of schools.

In order to examine the above stated hypothesis, t-test is tested. From the t-test result, it is observed that excessive workload, meaningless tasks, long hours and low pay, infrequent breaks and unrealistic deadliness are significantly varied based on form of organization of private school teachers. Hence the stated hypothesis is rejected. The other work related stress such as unused job skills and fear of layoff are non significant. Hence alternative hypothesis is accepted. It is found that all those who are all work in HSC they have high level of excessive workload, meaningless tasks, long hours and low pay, unrealistic deadlines and unused job skills. The HSC private school teachers have high level of fear of layoff in their work stress.

Conclusion

Teaching has been considered as a challenging yet satisfying career. Mental health of teachers has also been a focus for research because of the because of various reasons such as heavy workload, long teaching hours, large class size, students' disciplinary problems, cramped classrooms, excessive administrative work and so on. This study showed that teachers received moderate level of stress and the main stressors were 'demands from job','work-life balance' and 'control over work'. It was also found that HSC teachers had higher level of stress in general. 'Psychosocial work environment', 'health & well-being', and 'relations at work' were found to have significant difference between HSC and primary school teachers. It is suggested that interventions should be implemented to school to prevent the current situations from worsening. Levels of interventions include 'school intervention'—to fine-tune school culture, 'school-teacher intervention'-to improve communication between school and teachers, and 'teacher intervention'-to help teachers develop strategies on stress management.

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