

OCCUPATIONAL STRESS: AMONG TEACHERS OF HIGHER SECONDARY SCHOOLS

Mr. Rajashekhargouda. I. Hiregoudar* | Dr. Parampal Kaur Cheema**

*Ph.D. Scholar, Himalayan University, Itanagar, Arunachal Pradesh, India.

**Research Supervisor, Himalayan University, Itanagar, Arunachal Pradesh, India.

ABSTRACT:

The teachers produce the future citizens of the country and the world. Thus, they are the source of light. They are the source of inspiration. In higher secondary schools teachers play a very crucial role. They are dealing with students who are in the school but are readying themselves to enter the world of college education. Such young minds are very difficult to tackle as they are struck in between two worlds, the world of school education and that of college education. These young minds find it difficult to fit themselves in the society, in the school, in the family, among friends, between parents. This is that phase of life when a student has a lot of questions in his/ her mind but he/ she does not know whom to ask those questions. At this critical stage of their lives, the higher secondary school teachers take care of these young minds and get them readied for the rest of their lives. Thus, occupational stress levels are very high among higher secondary school teachers and that provided an excellent opportunity to research on this area.

The result of occupational stress is physical ailments, irritation and lack of time. Among these three, the last one is the most fatal, when the teacher does not get time to think, to ponder, to plan for the future and to work on his/ her development. Thus, the teachers of higher secondary schools most of the time are in a sort of vicious circle of occupational stress. They are in occupational stress, so they cannot come out of it and since they cannot come out of it, they remain in it. It is very important to break this vicious circle if their welfare and development is to be ensured. Otherwise, the result of it will be devastating. The occupational stress levels of the higher secondary school teachers will march ahead to ruin many citizens of tomorrow and their aspirations. The matters related to occupational stress of higher secondary school teachers have to be dealt with utmost importance. These are the teachers who are probably dealing with the most diverse age group of students, as well as the most diverse bunch of students in terms of their mental and physical maturity. The teachers have to be kept motivated.

KEY WORDS: Occupation, stress, teachers, higher secondary schools etc.

ABOUT AUTHORS:



Mr. Rajashekhargouda. I. Hiregoudar is Ph.D. Scholar at Himalayan University, Itanagar, Arunachal Pradesh, India. He has published papers in various National and International Journals.



Author Dr. Parampal Kaur Cheema is an active researcher with many publications in his name. She has attended and organized various National and International conferences and has given extensive lectures.

INTRODUCTION:

Globalization has impacted human lives to a great extent in the recent era. Occupations, which are a part of human lives, were also forced to undergo this sort of a change. In the pre globalization era, the world was a simpler place. In all occupations, the nature of the competition was more or less regional. This was because there was not much communication among the various parts of the world. So the type and level of occupational stress during these times was relatively less. However, the situation changed in the post globalization times. This period experienced a tremendous growth and development in transport and communication. And, this happened for the first time in the history of the world. As a result of this, different parts of the world came closer to each other. The volume of interactions increased rapidly between them. This resulted in a change in the nature of occupational competition. Previously, the competition that was more or less regional suddenly became global in the post globalization era. Thus, occupational stress also started to increase.

Teachers are the pillars of the human civilization. They are the source of knowledge and development. That is why, in most ancient civilizations and cultures teachers are treated like God. In modern day system of school education school teachers play a vital role. They sow the seeds that would become important in the future times to come. They produce the future citizens of the country and the world. Thus, they are the source of light. They are the source of inspiration. In higher secondary schools teachers play a very crucial role. They are dealing with students who are in the school but are readying themselves to enter the world of college education. Such young minds are very difficult to tackle as they are struck in between two worlds, the world of school education and that of college education. These young minds find it difficult to fit themselves in the society, in the school, in the family, among friends, between parents. This is that phase of life when a student has a lot of questions in his/ her mind but he/ she does not know whom to ask those questions. At this critical juncture of their lives, the higher secondary school teachers take care of these young minds and get them readied for the rest of their lives. Thus, occupational stress levels are very high among higher secondary school teachers and that provides an excellent opportunity to research on this area.

Sarvanan et al (2017) pursued a study, the aim of which was to find out the occupational stress levels of government and private higher secondary school teachers living in different environmental situations. The scale used in the study was developed by researches. 60 private school teachers and 60 government teachers had participated in the present study. At the end of the study, it was seen that private school teachers had less occupational stress levels than government school teachers. There was a meaningful difference in the stress level points of government and private higher secondary teachers. Policy-makers were advised to analyze the teacher training and assessment system with the assumption that personal and social characteristics and working conditions may have an effect on teacher occupational stress. Sample teachers were selected by using simple random sampling from three segments by using lottery method because of easy accessibility and affordability, analyzed by using statistical package of simple percentage.

Jeyaraj (2013) pursued a study with the aim to determine the occupational stress level of government and aided higher secondary school teachers living in different socio-cultural and economic situations. The scale used in the study was developed by researches. 185 aided school teachers and 120 government teachers

participated in this study. At the end of the study it was seen that aided school teachers had more occupational stress levels than government school teachers. There was a meaningful difference in the stress level points of government and aided higher secondary teachers. Policy makers were advised to analyze the teacher training and assessment system with the assumption that personal and social characteristics and working conditions may have an effect on teacher occupational stress. Results also showed that teachers who reported greater stress were less satisfied with teaching, reported greater frequency of absences and a greater number of total days absent, were more likely to leave teaching (career intention), and less likely to take up a teaching career again (career commitment).

Reddy et al (2013) wrote that they pursued a study to examine the occupational stress of teachers working at higher secondary level. Three hundred and twenty seven higher secondary teachers from Vellore district in Tamil Nadu were chosen as sample, by using simple random sampling technique and administered with an occupational stress rating scale. The statistical techniques employed were percentage, mean, S.D., mean \pm 1SD, t-test, F-test, and step wise multiple regression analysis and the obtained results were analyzed accordingly. To overcome occupational stress, the researchers suggested some measures which could prove beneficial to teachers in coping with stress. These were improvement of self-esteem, building self-confidence, working on building emotional intelligence competencies, developing a good sense of humor, practicing of yoga and meditation, exercising regularly, fostering a supportive friend circle, cultivating hobbies, developing effective communication skills and seeking professional help, if necessary.

ANALYSIS & CONCLUSIONS:

The occupational stress levels are very high among higher secondary school teachers. They are dealing with students who are neither too young, not too matured. These higher secondary students are in the process of growing up. But apart from that there are other younger students, too, in the school. The teachers of the higher secondary schools have to teach them also. So the tremendous flexibility that they have to maintain while being in their work place is not to be found among professionals in too many other professions.

Teachers in the higher secondary schools have to maintain a wall of segregation among students of different age groups. The higher secondary level students in terms of maturity are much more ahead of the rest of the sections of the students in these types of schools. Hence, arises the need of such segregation. The teachers in higher secondary schools have to maintain a constant vigilance on the students of different age group.

The result of such a volume of occupational stress is physical ailments, irritation and lack of time. Among these three, the last one is the most fatal, when the teacher does not get time to think, to ponder, to plan for the future and to work on his/ her development. Thus, the teachers of higher secondary schools most of the time are in a sort of vicious circle of occupational stress. They are in occupational stress, so they cannot come out of it and since they cannot come out of it, they remain in it. It is very important to break this vicious circle if their welfare and development is to be ensured. Otherwise, the result of it will be devastating. The occupational stress levels of the higher secondary school teachers will march ahead to ruin many citizens of tomorrow and their aspirations.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

The matters related to occupational stress of higher secondary school teachers have to be dealt with utmost importance. These are the teachers who are probably dealing with the most diverse age group of students, as well as the most diverse bunch of students in terms of their mental and physical maturity. The teachers have to be kept motivated. It will have to be proved in front of them that they are doing a great job for the students, for the society and for the world as a whole. One way of doing it is by recognizing their priceless contributions in social platforms.

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