

Occupational stress and mental health of teacher educators- A Co-relational analysis

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ABSTRACT

In the scientific age of today, the explicit progress and prosperity of man both in terms of material and intellect has put forward a challenge to the educational institutions. Schools as the most vital agency educating the human beings have always been the symbol of progress and the center of values in the past and even today. So apart from quantity, the quality of education provided by schools has been and continues to be a major concern in our society. The present investigation is a forward step on the way, where various researchers have laid foundations of their researches. In the present study, the investigator has made an attempt to study the mental health and occupational stress among the teacher educators working in the government and private colleges of education in comparative perspectives. This would be of tremendous importance for the personnel engaged with the administration of government and private teacher training institutions. In what ways the stress at workplace influences the personality factors of the teacher educator is the matter of research. The teacher educators are also supposed to go through a number of problems as the other professionals. They also have to face the problems more or less similar to the teachers or can say in a more complicated way that may lead to the reduction in their level of job satisfaction or their performance too. The present investigation is a forward step on the way, where various researchers have laid foundations of their researches. In the present study, the investigator has made an attempt to study the mental health and occupational stress among the teacher educators working in the government and private colleges of education in comparative perspectives. This would be of tremendous importance for the personnel engaged with the administration of government and private teacher training institutions.

KEY WORDS: - Occupational Stress, Mental Health, Teacher Educators.

INTRODUCTION

The need of the hour to lay due emphasis on the factors influencing the performance of teachers in one or another way It is of quiet significance to identify various factors affecting teachers' performance, recognize their impact and to find the means improving the performance of the teacher. Conceptual Clarity

Concept of Occupational Stress

Occupational stress is the stress that one feels at his workplace because of one or the other conditions prevailing there. Stress is an emotional state that is experienced by an individual or in other words it is the body's physiological response to the stressor. A stressor is the agent, event or set of condition that causes the stress. According to PEF Health and Safety

Department describes the occupational stress as the workplace conditions whereby a worker perceives high level of responsibility for output or deadlines but little control over the resources to meet demands.

Landsbergis (1995) regards the increased workloads, downsizing, overtime and hostile work environments as the measure of occupational stress.

Concept of Mental Health

the second half of the twentieth century, mental health was considered as the absence of mental disease but now it has been described in its more positive connotation, not as the absence of mental illness. Mental health has been mentioned as the ability of person to balance one's desires and aspirations, to cope with life stresses and to make psycho-social adjustment. A mentally healthy person is inspired to live a fuller and happier life. His approach to himself and to others is positive, dynamic and purposeful. It is well established fact that mentally healthy persons are well and constructively disposed towards their occupations and professions. On the other hand, individuals with impaired mental health tend to remain ill at ease, with the activities they have to perform in relation to their occupations or professions. This clearly meant that mental health is the person's ability to make positive self-evaluation, to perceive the reality, to integrate the personality, autonomy group oriented attitudes and environmental mastery. In the present context, the mental health of the teacher educators is the score obtained by the teacher educators on the Mental Health Inventory by **Dr. A.K. Srivastava and Dr. Jagdish (1983)**.

Teacher Educators

Teacher is a more experienced person who tends to modify the behaviour of the less experienced person through teaching, training and/or instructions. The teacher educators are the professionals who give training to the teachers under training in the colleges of education and other teacher training institutions at either level i.e. pre-primary, primary or secondary. In present context, the professionals who are giving training to the pupil teachers in the B.Ed. colleges have been taken as the teacher educators.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

G. M. Steyn and G. D. Kamper (2010) in their article, "Understanding occupational stress among educators: an overview" had made an attempt to provide an overview of the occurrence of stress among educators. In this article the author focused on different models of occupational stress and identified key factors that might have an impact on occupational stress among educators.

Sharma P. (2011) conducted a study entitled, "Teacher Stress and Burnout and The Role of Physical Activity and Parent Involvement" This study tested the hypothesis that teachers who participate in aerobic exercise and have increased parent involvement in their classrooms will have lower stress and consequently are significantly less likely to experience burnout and job dissatisfaction. The results provided some support for both hypotheses. The results found that teachers who participated in moderate physical activity reported less stress. The data also suggested that teachers who have positive relationships with parents expressed less burnout. These findings are congruent with the theory that teachers who complete moderate physical activity and have strong teacher and parent relationships will be less likely to experience stress and burnout.

Chris Kyriacou and Pei-Yu Chien (2012) in their study entitled, "Teacher stress in Taiwanese primary schools" made attempt to identify the sources of stress among the primary school teachers in Taiwan. A questionnaire was used to

explore teacher stress amongst 203 teachers in primary schools in Taiwan. Twenty-six per cent of the teachers reported that being a teacher was either very or extremely stressful. The main source of stress identified was the changing education policies of the government. The most effective coping action reported was having a healthy home life. Teachers reported that the most effective action that schools or the government could take to reduce teacher stress was to decrease teachers' workload.

Melissa Monfries & Gavin Hazel (2013) in their study entitled, "Teacher Stress: Cognitive implications for teacher "burnout" attempted to review the factors that have been commonly associated with teacher stress and burnout. They showed that neither sex nor SES or school system result in differences in teacher stress levels. However, the teachers at the low SES school reported more fear of negative evaluation, higher levels of public self consciousness and perceived that they were performing beyond what they felt they ought to be (high on ought self) in comparison to the high SES schools. In addition Monfries suggested that the FNE in fact tapped a form of cognitive anxiety (i.e. the articulation of a fear that at some point could lead to behavioural anxiety) that may precede the development of pathological anxiety.

Patricia Houghton (2014) entitled "Finding Allies" the author told about the positive effects of parents and teachers joining forces. She discussed how feeling alone as a teacher could be a source of stress, and when teachers are supported-the healthier they are likely to be. Working together in a team (with parents) setting can also make the job easier and less stressful and help students to do better.

Isaac Friedman (2015), he examined the discrepancy between expected and observed levels of professional self efficacy and how this impacts teacher stress and burnout. The study found that teachers must not dwell on failures, maintain a good sense of humor and keep expectations realistic. Results also suggested that to improve the classroom environment parents should supervise children between classes and undertake some of the educational tasks required of teachers. The point of this activity would be to give parents a new perspective on what it is like to be a teacher. This change would have a positive effect on teachers' perceptions of parents.

Susan Lasky (2016) conducted another study that examined parent-teacher interactions during parent volunteering, fundraising, and at school events. In this study 53 primary and secondary teachers were interviewed on a variety of professional topics but only the parent teacher interaction was analyzed. The study found that there are two types of relationships between parents and teachers interactions (which are sporadic, rule bound and formal) and relationships (which included sustained contact, equality, depth and shared meaning). The study found that many teachers felt hopeless, ineffective, and powerless due to a lack of support in formal interactions with parents. In order to strengthen the bond between teachers and parents the study suggests that a commitment and emotional understanding needs to occur between teachers and parents. There is a need to develop a more significant teacher-parent relationship if stress is to be lessened.

Andrew Smith, Carolyn Brice et.al. (2016) carried out a study entitled, "The scale of occupational stress: A further analysis of the impact of demographic factors and type of job". The aim of the analyses was to identify factors associated with perceptions of stress at work. Analyses of the demographic variables showed that gender had little overall effect although it did interact with other factors, such as full-time/part-time employment. The middle aged workers (30-50 year olds) had slightly higher proportions in the high reported stress category than those at the extremes of the age range. Educational attainment was found to be an important factor, with those educated to degree level (or equivalent) having a higher proportion in the high reported stress category. Marital status also influenced the reporting of stress, with those

who were widowed/ divorced or separated having a greater proportion in the high reported stress category. Ethnicity also influenced reporting of stress, with the non-white group having a greater proportion in the high reported stress category.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Occupational stress and mental health of teacher educators- A Co-relational analysis

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study is carried out by the investigator with the following objectives:-

1. To study the occupational stress among male teacher educators
2. To study the occupational stress among female teacher educators
3. To compare the level of occupational stress between the male and female teacher educators
4. To study the level of mental health among male teacher educators
5. To study the level of mental health among female teacher educators
6. To compare the level of mental health between male and female teacher educators
7. To see the correlation between the occupational stress and mental health among teacher educators

HYPOTHESES

The study has been undertaken on the basis of following hypotheses:-

1. There exists no significant difference in level of occupational stress between male and female teacher educators
2. There exists no significant difference in level of mental health between male and female teacher educators
3. There exists no significant correlation between the occupational stress and mental health among teacher educators

METHODOLOGY

In research there are various methods and procedures to be applied.

- (1) Historical method
- (2) Experiment method
- (3) Descriptive method

DESIGN OF THE STUDY

The present study is comprised to Normative Survey Design. Data was collected with the help of a questionnaire. The responses were in multiple choices.

POPULATION

Population refers to any collection of specified group of human beings or non-human entities such as objects, educational institutions, and geographical areas.

SAMPLE

Most of the educational phenomena consist of a large number of units. It would be impracticable, if not impossible, to test, to interview or observe each unit of the population under controlled condition in order to arrive at the principles having universal validity. Sampling is the process by which a relatively small number of individuals, object or events are

selected and analyzed in order to find out something about the entire population from which it was selected. It is often desirable to reduce expenditure, save time and energy and to produce greater precision and accuracy. This can be achieved through sampling.

A good sample is the true representative of the population i.e. ideally it must provide whole information about the population from which it has been selected. A sample of 100 teachers was selected the institution-wise distribution of the sample.

TOOLS TO BE USED

For the present investigation, the investigator has decided to use following tools-

1. Mental Health Inventory by Dr. A. K. Srivastava and Dr. Jagdish (1981).
2. Hari's Stress Inventory by Dr. Hari S. Chandran

STATISTICAL TECHNIQUES EMPLOYED

For the analysis of the data following statistical techniques will be employed-

- mean,
- standard deviation,
- standard error of difference,
- t-test
- Pearsons' product moment correlation.

MAIN FINDINGS

The following main findings are stated:-

1. Most of the male teacher educators exhibited either good or the average level of mental health. A very small percentage of the male teacher educators exhibited very good level of mental health. Only a little percentage of male teacher educators exhibited poor level of mental health. A still smaller percentage of the male teacher educators were possessed very poor level of mental health.
2. Most of the female teacher educators exhibited either average or poor mental health. A very small percentage of the female teacher educators were enjoying very good or good level of mental health. Besides only a small percentage of the female teacher educators were exhibited very poor level of mental health.
3. The male teacher educators differ significantly from the female teacher educators with regard to their level of mental health.
4. The higher mean value for male teacher educators than the mean value for the female teacher educators showed that the male teacher educators exhibited better level of mental health than the female teacher educators.
5. A large majority of the male teacher educators experienced moderate level of occupational stress. Comparatively a smaller percentage of male teacher educators were feeling almost negligible or no occupational stress. In contrast to that a little percentage of male teacher educators were experiencing a high level of stress.

6. Majority of the female teacher educators were feeling moderate level of occupational stress. Likewise a fairly good percentage of female teacher educators were experiencing high level of occupational stress. On the other hand comparatively a low percentage of female teacher educators exhibited almost negligible or no stress.
7. The male teacher educators differ significantly from the female teacher educators with regard to their perceived level of occupational stress.
8. The higher mean value for the female teacher educators than the mean value for the male teacher educators indicated that the female teacher educators were bearing higher of occupational stress than the male teacher educators.
9. The mental health of the teacher educators had a little impact over their perceived level of occupational stress. Better the mental health of the teacher educators lesser would be the occupational stress felt by them.

DISCUSSION OF THE RESULTS AND CONCLUSION

In the light of the above findings the investigator come to the conclusion that the mental health of the teacher educators has a little impact over the occupational stress felt by them.

It has been found in the present investigation that a large majority of the male teacher educators possessed good or average level of mental health. Besides, a few were enjoying very good mental health. All that is attributed to positive self evaluation and environmental competence aspects of the mental health. A small fraction of whole population of male teacher educators was experiencing the poor or very poor level of mental health. This is in contrast to the findings of the project done by **the Local Government Employers (2009)** an employer's organization registered in England and Wales which emphasized that the male teacher educators cope with common mental health problems including anxiety and depression. This may be attributed to autonomy and group-oriented attitude dimensions on the mental health.

A large majority of the female teacher educators were found to be having average, poor or very poor level of mental health. This is due to perception of reality and autonomy aspects of the mental health. Further, a very small percentage of the female teacher educators were enjoying good or very good level of mental health. This may be attributed to positive self-evaluation and integration of personality aspects of the mental health.

The female teacher educators have been found to be enjoying poor level of mental health in comparison with the male teacher educators. This is because of the obvious reason i.e. the autonomy and environmental competence aspects of the mental health.

These findings of the present investigation were in tune with the findings of **Sushma (2006)** who established the differential status of mental health among the male and female college students. Besides, the present findings gain support from the findings of **Alegria and Williams (2003)** who found ethnic and racial disparity in mental health not the sexual disparity.

In tune with the mental health status, the majority of the male teacher educators were found to be experiencing moderate, negligible or almost no occupational stress. A very few male teacher educators were found to be feeling high level of occupational stress. These findings provide support to the findings of **Chris Kyriacou and Pei-Yu Chien (2004)** who also found in their study that twenty six percent of teachers consider teaching as either very or extremely stressful job.

While, a large majority of the female teacher educators experienced moderate or high level of occupational stress in comparison with the male teacher educators. This is because of the indifferent attitude of the pupil teachers towards the female teacher educators. The pupil teachers may underestimate the female teacher educators. This may create a stressful environment for the female teacher educators.

It has also been found in the present investigation that like mental health and occupational stress also vary with the sex of the teacher educators. This is in contrast with the findings of **Melissa and Gavin (2003)** that showed that sex did not

result in the differences in the teachers' stress level. But this gained support from the findings of **Elizabeth Tuettmann (1991) and Andrew Smith et.al.(2000)** that indicated that differences exist in the extent to which male and female teachers perceive stress at work place.

Overall, the present investigation shows the definite negative correlation between the occupational stress and the mental health of the teacher educators. This establishes the mental health as potential factor influencing the occupational stress among teacher educators. This adds to the findings of the **Boyle et.al. (1995)** who identified four component i.e. students' misbehaviour, lack of time and resources, professional recognition and poor relationships with colleagues affecting the teacher' stress levels.

EDUCATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

In the scientific age of today, the explicit progress and prosperity of man both in terms of material and intellect has put forward a challenge to the educational institutions. Schools as the most vital agency educating the human beings have always been the symbol of progress and the center of values in the past and even today. So apart from quantity, the quality of education provided by schools has been and continues to be a major concern in our society. The effectiveness of any educational system is gauged through the extent the pupils involved in the educational system achieve and that depend entirely on the input given by the teachers/ teacher educators. Thus, the different aspects affecting the teachers/ teacher educators performance must be given due consideration.

The present investigation was carried out to study the mental health status and level of occupational stress among the teacher educators in comparative perspectives. Thus it keeps its implication for all those who are engaged with the managerial and administrative aspects of the teacher educators in the institutions of educations i.e. the teacher training institutions.

It has been found in the present investigation, the male teacher educators were enjoying better level of mental health in comparison with the female teacher educators. This is because of the perception of reality and autonomy aspects of the mental health. The male teacher educators may feel more or less freedom of work in comparison with the female teacher educators. Thus the administrators in the educational institutions should also pay attention in this regard. They should take utmost care of their teacher educators and should lay due emphasis on the healthy working environment in the institution.

Besides this, it has also found in the present investigation that the female teacher educators experience high level of occupational stress in comparison with the male teacher educators. The chief cause of this stress was perceived heavy workload, unequal distribution of the work, indifferent attitude of the managing personnel and pupil teachers towards their female teacher educators. All these contributed to the poor level of mental health and hence high level of occupational stress among the female teacher educators. Thus, the managing personnel and the administrators in the educational institutions should consider the reduction in these very factors as their prime responsibility so as to improve the mental health status of their female teacher educators and hence to reduce the level of occupational stress among them.

The present investigation also indicated a slight negative correlation between the mental health and the occupational stress among teacher educators. This means that the increased level of mental health reduces the occupational stress among the teacher educators. So the due care is to be taken to improve the mental health of the teacher educators so as to reduce their level of occupational stress and to achieve their higher level of performance.

SUGGESTION FOR FURTHER RESEARCHES

Each and every study has some scope for further improvement. The present research is not an exception to this fact. The present study was undertaken to see the possible correlation between the mental health and occupational stress among teacher educators. The following suggestions may be considered for further research: -

1. The present study was confined to teacher educators in B.Ed. colleges only; the similar studies may be extended to DIET and institutions for the NTT courses.
2. The study was confined to only Sirsa district of the state Haryana. Similar studies may also be conducted in the other districts/states too.
3. The present study was confined to a small sample of thirty teacher educators only. Similar studies may be extended to a large sample to get more reliable results.
4. The replication of study can be done using other tools and techniques.
5. The extended studies may also be carried out by considering other factors such as job satisfaction in relation to the mental health and occupational stress among teachers.
6. A comparative study of rural and urban teacher educators or teacher educators in govt. and private institutions may also be undertaken.

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