

Association between Job Stress and Demographic Factors and Coping Strategies Adopted by Primary School Teachers

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Abstract: *This Study was conducted with the objective of studying the association between job stress and demographic factors and coping strategies adopted by primary school teachers of missionary and government schools. An Interview schedule has been used to explore association between job stress and demographic factors and coping strategies adopted by 100 primary school teachers of missionary and government schools. The results indicated that the association between age, income, educational qualifications, teaching experience and job stress did not indicate any definite trends. But a significant association was noticed between training received and job stress. In majority of cases the most effective coping strategies were adopted by teachers of Missionary and Government schools included actively involvement in their work, working together for a common goal, time management, watching T.V, getting proper sleep, reading books, taking good balanced diet, preplanning and taking counseling in order to cope up with their job stress.*

Keywords: Job stress, demographic factors, coping strategies, primary school teachers

1. Introduction

Stress can hit anyone at any level of Jobs and recent research shows that work related stress is widespread and is not confined to particular sectors, jobs or industries. According to the current World Health Organization (WHO) definition, occupational or work-related stress “is the response people may have when presented with work demands and pressures that are not matched to their knowledge and abilities and which challenge their ability to cope”.

In recent years Psychologists have witnessed an upsurge to interest in the study of stress and stress management. Stress among teachers is a wide spread phenomenon (Geving, 2007). In studies conducted in Eastern countries it was found that the stress level among teachers was very high and widely prevalent (Kyriacou and Chien, 2004; Meng and Liu, 2008), while those conducted in Arab countries also reported a high level of stress among teachers (Al-Mohannadi and Capel, 2007). Teaching is a very emotional, difficult and complex work (Burchielli and Bartram, 2008).

Teachers differ in their aspirations and way of working as they are mostly self-disciplined, creative and they require recognition, status and opportunities for their professional growth. The situation of primary education today indicates that primary schools do not have sufficient number of teachers to handle the classes. It is also necessary that teachers do not have stress that degrades their activity and becomes an obstacle in their effective teaching. Stress is also a combination of physiological and psychological reactions that negatively affect individuals as a result of the conditions in their environment (Okeke and Dlamini 2013; Dlamini et al., 2014).

Stress is inevitable component of any profession and there is no way out but cope up with stress or fight out with it. Researchers have found that a large percentage of humans are suffering from stress. Rational coping behaviors are a resource which help teachers overcome work-related

stressors and burnout and achieve their valued outcomes with students, while avoidance coping predicted high level of stress and burnout (Alexander-Stamatios Antoniou, Aikaterini Plompi, Marina Ntalla 2013).

Towards this aim, this investigation is attempted to study the association between job stress and demographic factors and coping strategies adopted by primary school teachers.

2. Significance of the study

This investigation is aimed at identifying the association between job stress and demographic factors and coping strategies adopted by primary school teachers of Government and Missionary. The results of the study would be useful in framing of recommendations to address the association of job stress and demographic factors among primary school teachers. In addition, this study serves as a guide to teachers by adopting different coping strategies to get relief from stress. This study can serve as a guide to policy makers and school administrators. Finally the study could contribute to the research on different stressful factors by adding to present existing literature.

Objectives

- 1) To study the general profile of preschool teachers.
- 2) To study the association between job stress and selected demographic factors.
- 3) To study the coping strategies adopted by primary school teachers to overcome stress.

Methodology

Selection of Sample

The total sample for the study comprised 100 primary school women teachers selected randomly from Missionary and Government primary schools of twin cities of Hyderabad.

Conceptual model

Conceptual model was developed for the study which diagrammatically represents the important dimensions and postulated relationship among the variables. Eight demographic factors representing age, marital status, family type, family size, income, educational qualifications, teaching experience and training received were chosen based on reviews relevant literature and experts in the field to examine the association of Job stress among primary school teachers of Missionary and Government schools and to find out the coping strategies adopted by the teachers to cope up with stress.

Tool

- 1) General information schedule is used to collect information about selected demographic factors like age, income, educational qualification, experience in teaching, training received etc.
- 2) An Interview schedule developed for the purpose of the study was used to find out the coping mechanisms adopted.

Data collection

The schools selected for data collection were visited personally and the purpose of the study was explained to the respondents, general information and coping strategies were collected by using pre tested general information schedule and Interview schedule prepared for the purpose respectively.

Data analysis

The data thus obtained was analyzed by using Frequencies, Percentages and Correlation analysis.

3. Results and Discussion

Table 1: General profile of the sample N=100

S. No.	Profile details	Number	Percentage
1.	<i>Age in Years</i>		
	30-35	33	33
	35-40	46	46
	40-45	21	21
2.	<i>Monthly income in Rs.</i>		
	2000-3000	32	32
	3000-4000	50	50
	> 4000	18	18
3.	<i>Educational qualification</i>		
	SGBT	14	14
	TTC	17	17
	B.Ed.	59	59
	M.Ed.	4	4
	Diploma	6	6
4.	<i>Years of experience</i>		
	5-10years	5	5
	10-15	78	78
	> 15 years	17	17
5.	<i>In service training in weeks</i>		
	1	41	41
	2	49	49
	4	10	10

Table 1 reveals the distribution of sample by demographic factors viz., age, educational qualification, income, teaching experience and training particulars. It is apparent from the table that nearly 50 percent of the sample was in the age

group of 35-40 years and one third was in the age range of 30-35 years. Majority of the sample had required qualifications as it is essential requisite to be posted as permanent teachers. The job experience of the respondents ranged from 10-15 years and above in majority of the cases. It is noteworthy to mention here that 90 percent of teachers had attended in service training with the duration of one to two weeks.

Table 2: Association between job stress and selected demographic factors

S.No.	Demographic factors	r-value
1.	Age	-0.042NS
2.	Income	0.1066NS
3.	Educational qualification	-0.0294NS
4.	Teaching experience	-0.1761NS
5.	Training received	0.35038**

** Significant at 1percent level. NS: Non-significant.

Correlation between personal variables and Job stress were worked out which have been presented in Table 2. A cursory glance at Table 2 reveals that age, income, educational qualifications and teaching experience had insignificant effect on Job stress. The effect of training received was significant at 1 percent level which clearly depicts that as the duration of training received increases, the stress experienced by teachers also increases. It is supported with the study conducted by Mariya Aftab, Thahira Khatoon(2016). They also revealed that trained teachers are found to have higher occupational stress than untrained teachers. If they have undergone several trainings, then the organization or administrators demands high for competence or efficacy of programme, curriculum planning, implementation and evaluation when compared with other untrained colleagues. In order to achieve their targets they must do work too hard or too fast as well as it requires high mental task demands such as work that requires high level decision making or prolonged periods of concentration.

In these days we can observe that there is a lot of competition between primary school teachers of government and missionary. Hence, the head of the organization has been keeping pressure and set high standards of goals on teacher who has under gone training programmes during service to ensuring the provision of quality education (Republic of Kenya/UNESCO, 2012, Republic of Kenya, 2013).If teacher felt constant stress, she might be burnout at any time. When a teacher is burnt out problems seems insurmountable, everything looks blank, and it's difficult to muster up the energy to care for students (Roche & Jarrod, 2014). The results are in line with the research conducted by Kyriacou and Chien (2004) among elementary school teachers in Taiwan. They also found that the desire for competition and higher achievements were the factors causing stress among school teachers. Bhatnagar et al. (1985) and Reddy & Ramamurthy (1992) from their studies confirmed that age and stress were not at all related to each other. Demographic variables and work-related educators' Holley and Kirpatrick (1987) found insignificant association between Job stress and years of experience where as Ryhal & Singh(1996) did not confirmed the same as they found that teachers with more teaching experience exhibited low Job stress.

Coping strategies adopted

Coping is defined as the effort to control situations of harm or any kind of challenge when automatic reaction is not

possible (Monat and Lazarus, 1977). Coping does not require success but only effort and forms the link between environmental stress and adjustment of the individual.

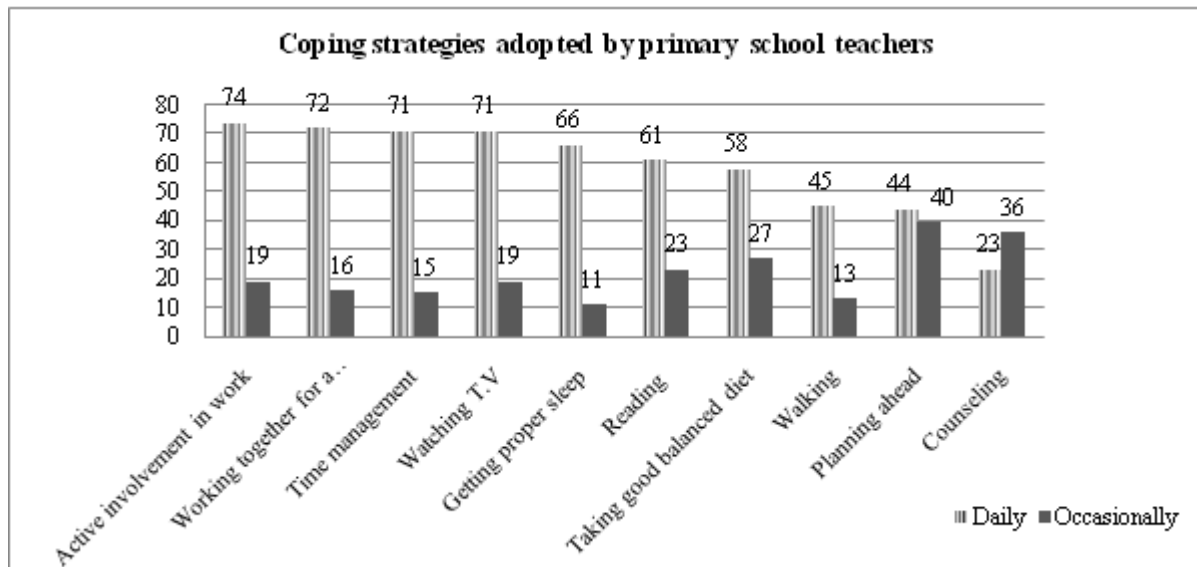


Figure 1: Coping Strategies adopted by primary school teachers

Table 3: Coping strategies adopted by primary school teachers of Missionary and Government (N=100)

S.No.	Coping strategies	Daily	Occasionally
1.	Active involvement in work	74	19
2.	Working together for a common goal	72	16
3.	Time management	71	15
4.	Watching T.V	71	19
5.	Getting proper sleep	66	11
6.	Reading	61	23
7.	Taking good balanced diet	58	27
8.	Walking	45	13
9.	Planning ahead	44	40
10.	Counseling	23	36

Based on the findings of the study, it was noted that majority (74%) of the respondents were relieved from stress by actively involved in their work, it was supported by Yeung (2012); Brackenreed (2011) and are working together for a common goal as a measure to cope up with stress. This is on par with the studies of Hazril Izwar Ibrahim (2014); Murray-Harvey et al., (2010). These studies found results like the importance of talking to colleagues, supervisors and other formal structures within the school about specific problems as a common coping mechanism among educators. Other coping strategies adopted include time management (71%), watching television (71%), and sleep (66%), reading books (61%), eating good food (58%), preplanning (44%). It was found in the study of Yeung (2012); Brackenreed (2011) as teachers cope with their work conditions and stress by being well-organized in terms of preparation and planning. Various studies also reported the common coping mechanisms as social support Sharplin et al., (2011) from friends and family, management practices, staff relationships, planning and goal setting, time management, confronting stress full situations (Ghadially1989, Richard, 1993 and Srivastava,1992). Mapfumo and Chireshe (2012) also supported that physical strategies that help cope with stress include: exercising, eating etc.

These Findings corresponded with those in the research of Kyriacou.C. and Pie-Yu Chien (2004) who found that the best way to overcome stress was “a healthy family life” alongside someone standing beside the person and understanding the person. Other research studies (Hemmings and Hockley,2002) support the efficiency of the strategies for active and emotional coping for the reduction of stress. Several strategies were found for coping with stress, and all of them are considerable influence in exerted by self care(regular exercise and sport ,eight hours sleep a day, maintaining a correct diet, applying relaxation techniques) on the reduction of stress and improvement in the quality of life(Yang et al.,2009).

4. Conclusion

Findings of this study revealed that a significant association was observed between the sources of job stress and selected demographic variables like the type and nature of training received. No significant association was found between the sources of job stress and selected variables like age, marital status, family type, family size, income, educational qualifications and teaching experience. Majority of the teachers of Missionary and Government schools adopted coping strategies which include actively involved in their work, working together for a common goal, time management, watching T.V, getting proper sleep, reading books, taking good balanced diet, preplanning and taking counseling in order to cope up with their job stress.

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