REDVET - Revista electrónica de Veterinaria - ISSN 1695-7504
Vol 25, No.2 (2024)
http://www.veterinaria.org
Received: 06.09.2024 Revised: 21.10.2024 Accepted: 29.11.2024

Work Stress And Stress Management Among Higher Secondary School Teachers In Tenkasi District

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ABSTRACT
Teaching at the higher secondary level involves several academic, administrative and interpersonal responsibilities. Teachers are expected to complete the syllabus within a prescribed period, evaluate students, maintain records, participate in school activities and respond to the expectations of students, parents and management. These responsibilities may create work stress when teachers experience excessive workload, time pressure, inadequate resources or insufficient organisational support. Effective stress management is therefore important for maintaining teachers' well-being, job satisfaction and teaching effectiveness. The present study examines work stress and stress management among higher secondary school teachers in Tenkasi District. The study is based on primary data collected from 297 higher secondary school teachers using a structured questionnaire. A five-point Likert scale was used to measure different dimensions of work stress and stress management. Exploratory Factor Analysis using Principal Component Analysis with Varimax rotation was employed to identify the underlying dimensions of the study. The factor analysis identified five major dimensions, namely Workload and Time Pressure, Role and Administrative Stress, Student and Parent-Related Stress, Organisational Support and Work Environment, and Stress Management and Coping Practices. The KMO value and Bartlett's Test indicate the suitability of the data for factor analysis, while the extracted factors explain a substantial proportion of the total variance. The study suggests that reducing unnecessary workload, improving organisational support, strengthening communication and encouraging healthy coping practices can help teachers manage work-related stress effectively.

Keywords: Work Stress, Stress Management, Higher Secondary Teachers, Occupational Stress, Coping Strategies, Teacher Well-being, Tenkasi District

Introduction

Teaching is an important profession that contributes significantly to the development of individuals and society. Teachers at the higher secondary level have the responsibility of preparing students for higher education, competitive examinations and employment opportunities. Along with classroom teaching, teachers are involved in lesson planning, evaluation, record maintenance, meetings, co-curricular activities and various administrative responsibilities. The combination of academic and non-academic duties can increase work pressure and may contribute to occupational stress. Work stress refers to the physical and psychological strain experienced by employees when the demands associated with their work exceed their perceived ability or available resources to deal with them. In the teaching profession, stress may arise from excessive workload, time constraints, large classes, examination duties, administrative responsibilities, student behaviour, parental expectations and organisational issues. When such pressures continue for a prolonged period, they may affect teachers' motivation, job satisfaction, health and teaching effectiveness. Higher secondary school teachers face particular pressure because this stage of education is closely associated with students' academic performance and future career choices. Teachers may experience pressure to complete the prescribed syllabus, prepare students for examinations, produce good academic results and provide individual attention to students. In addition, teachers may be required to undertake responsibilities beyond classroom teaching, such as maintaining records, participating in school functions, conducting examinations and attending meetings. Stress management refers to the techniques and practices used by individuals and organisations to reduce, control or cope with work-related stress. Teachers may use different individual coping strategies such as time management, physical exercise, relaxation, social interaction, positive thinking and recreational activities. Organisational measures such as reasonable workload, supportive leadership, adequate resources, recognition, professional development and effective communication can also contribute to stress reduction. The importance of teacher well-being has increased as educational institutions increasingly focus on academic performance, digital learning, administrative documentation and continuous assessment. Therefore, understanding the sources of work stress and the methods teachers use to manage such stress is important for educational institutions. Tenkasi District has a substantial number of higher secondary schools serving students from

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urban, semi-urban and rural areas. Teachers working in these institutions may face different levels of workload and organisational pressure depending on school conditions, student population and available resources. Hence, the present study attempts to analyse work stress and stress management among higher secondary school teachers in Tenkasi District.

objectives of the study

The study has the following three objectives:

1. To identify the major dimensions of work stress and stress management among higher secondary school teachers in Tenkasi District.
2. To examine the perceptions of higher secondary school teachers regarding work-related stress and stress management practices.
3. To suggest suitable measures for reducing work stress and improving stress management among higher secondary school teachers.

Review Of Literature

Natchatrakani, D. and Devi, P. (2024) studied the physical stress faced by higher secondary school teachers in Tenkasi District. The study focused on the importance of physical fitness for teachers to perform their duties effectively and efficiently. It examined the physical stress experienced by teachers and explored the coping mechanisms adopted to manage such stress. The study highlighted that maintaining good physical fitness is important for teachers to carry out their professional responsibilities successfully. The study also emphasized the need to understand and manage physical stress among higher secondary school teachers for better work performance and well-being.

Dr. N. Samson Lawrence (2021) studied teacher morale among teachers working in matriculation higher secondary schools in Tirunelveli Educational District. The study aimed to analyse the level of teacher morale and its importance in achieving organisational goals. The study explained that high morale is reflected through enthusiasm, loyalty, reliability, commitment and a positive work atmosphere, whereas low morale may be associated with apathy, lack of interest, suspicion, indiscipline and laziness. The study highlighted that teacher morale plays an important role in creating a positive working environment and improving teachers' willingness and ability to perform their responsibilities effectively.

S. **Priya and Dr. A. Antony Sagaya Ruban (2017)** studied job anxiety and burnout among high school teachers in Tenkasi Educational District. The study aimed to examine the levels of job anxiety and burnout among teachers in relation to their background variables. Data were collected from 154 high school teachers using a self-developed scale, and simple random sampling was adopted for selecting the respondents. The study tested suitable null hypotheses to identify significant differences in job anxiety and burnout. The findings revealed that job anxiety and burnout were significant among the high school teachers of Tenkasi Educational District. The study highlights the importance of understanding work-related anxiety and burnout among teachers and addressing factors that may affect their professional well-being.

Research Methodology

Research Design

The study follows a descriptive and analytical research design. The descriptive approach is used to understand the perceptions of teachers regarding work stress and stress management, while the analytical approach is used to identify the underlying dimensions through factor analysis.

Area of the Study

The study was conducted among higher secondary school teachers in Tenkasi District, Tamil Nadu.

Population of the Study

The population consists of teachers working in higher secondary schools located in Tenkasi District.

Sample Size

A total of 297 higher secondary school teachers participated in the study.

Sampling Technique

The study adopted convenience sampling to select teachers who were available and willing to participate in the survey.

Data Collection

Primary data were collected using a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of statements relating to:

- Workload and time pressure
- Administrative and role-related stress
- Student and parent-related stress
- Organisational support and work environment
- Stress management and coping practices

Statistical Tool

The collected data were analysed using SPSS. Exploratory Factor Analysis was performed using Principal Component Analysis (PCA) the major dimensions of work stress and stress management.

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Factor Analysis

Factor analysis was conducted to identify the underlying dimensions represented by the statements included in the questionnaire. A total of 25 statements were considered for the factor analysis.

Table 1 - Reliability Statistics

Factor	No. of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Workload and Time Pressure	5	0.874
Role and Administrative Stress	5	0.861
Student and Parent-Related Stress	5	0.883
Organisational Support and Work Environment	5	0.892
Stress Management and Coping Practices	5	0.901
Overall Scale	25	0.946

Source: SPSS Output

The reliability analysis shows that the Cronbach's Alpha values range from 0.861 to 0.901 across the five factors. The overall Cronbach's Alpha value is 0.946, indicating a high level of internal consistency among the 25 statements. Therefore, the scale can be considered reliable for further statistical analysis.

Table 2 - KMO and Bartlett's Test

Test	Value
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy	0.912
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity – Approx. Chi-Square	3897.426
Degrees of Freedom	300
Significance	0.000

Source: SPSS Output

The KMO value of 0.912 indicates that the sample is highly adequate for factor analysis. The value is substantially above the minimum acceptable level of 0.50. Bartlett's Test of Sphericity produces a Chi-Square value of 3897.426 with 300 degrees of freedom and a significance value of 0.000. Since the significance value is less than 0.05, the correlation matrix is statistically significant. Therefore, the data are suitable for conducting Exploratory Factor Analysis.

Table 3 - Total Variance Explained

Factor	Eigenvalue	% of Variance	Cumulative %
1	5.846	23.384	23.384
2	4.231	16.924	40.308
3	3.412	13.648	53.956
4	2.876	11.504	65.460
5	2.147	8.588	74.048

Source: SPSS Output

The factor analysis extracted five factors with eigenvalues greater than one. The first factor explains 23.384 per cent of the total variance, followed by the second factor with 16.924 per cent. The third, fourth and fifth factors explain 13.648 per cent, 11.504 per cent and 8.588 per cent respectively. The five factors together explain 74.048 per cent of the total variance, indicating that the extracted factors adequately represent the information contained in the original variables.

Table 4 - Rotated Component Matrix

Statements	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Factor 5
I have a heavy teaching workload.	0.824				
I have insufficient time to complete all my teaching responsibilities.	0.851				
Preparing lessons and examinations creates considerable pressure.	0.817				
I often have to work beyond my normal working hours.	0.793				

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Statements	Factor 1	Factor 2	Factor 3	Factor 4	Factor 5
I find it difficult to balance teaching and other responsibilities.	0.836				
Administrative duties increase my work stress.		0.824			
Excessive documentation and record keeping create pressure.		0.851			
Meetings and additional school duties increase my workload.		0.816			
I experience stress due to multiple roles and responsibilities.		0.839			
Changes in administrative requirements create stress.		0.801			
Managing student behaviour is stressful.			0.837		
Students' academic expectations create pressure.			0.819		
Parents' expectations increase my work pressure.			0.851		
Handling academically weak students requires additional effort.			0.828		
Examination-related student performance creates stress.			0.844		
I receive adequate support from school management.				0.831	
My school provides adequate teaching resources.				0.814	
Communication between management and teachers is effective.				0.847	
I receive appreciation for good performance.				0.806	
The school provides a supportive working environment.				0.856	
I use time management to control work pressure.					0.824
I take adequate breaks and rest to reduce stress.					0.801
I discuss work-related problems with colleagues.					0.846
I engage in physical or recreational activities to reduce stress.					0.833
I maintain a positive attitude when facing work pressure.					0.817

Source: SPSS Output

Factor 1 – Workload and Time Pressure

The first factor contains five statements relating to heavy teaching workload, insufficient time, examination preparation, extended working hours and difficulty balancing multiple responsibilities. The factor loadings range from 0.793 to 0.851. Therefore, the factor is named Workload and Time Pressure. This factor indicates that the amount of work and the time available to complete professional responsibilities are important sources of stress among teachers.

Factor 2 – Role and Administrative Stress

The second factor consists of administrative duties, documentation, meetings, multiple responsibilities and changing administrative requirements. The factor loadings range from 0.801 to 0.851. Hence, it is named Role and Administrative Stress. This factor highlights the stress that may arise when teachers are required to perform several academic and administrative roles simultaneously.

Factor 3 – Student and Parent-Related Stress

The third factor includes student behaviour, academic expectations, parental expectations, academically weak students and examination-related performance pressure. The factor loadings range from 0.819 to 0.851. Therefore, the factor is named Student and Parent-Related Stress.

Factor 4 – Organisational Support and Work Environment

The fourth factor consists of management support, teaching resources, communication, appreciation and the overall working environment. The factor loadings range from 0.806 to 0.856. Hence, the factor is named Organisational Support and Work Environment. This factor represents organisational conditions that may help reduce or intensify teachers' work stress.

Factor 5 – Stress Management and Coping Practices

The fifth factor consists of time management, adequate rest, interaction with colleagues, recreational activities and maintaining a positive attitude. The factor loadings range from 0.801 to 0.846. Therefore, the factor is named Stress Management and Coping Practices.

Major Findings Of The Study

The major findings of the study are as follows:

1. The overall reliability of the questionnaire is high, with a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.946.

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2. The KMO value of 0.912 confirms that the sample is adequate for factor analysis.
3. Bartlett's Test of Sphericity is statistically significant, confirming the suitability of the correlation matrix for factor analysis.
4. Five factors were extracted from the 25 statements, explaining 74.048 per cent of the total variance.
5. Workload and Time Pressure emerged as an important dimension of work stress among higher secondary school teachers.
6. Role and Administrative Stress indicates that administrative responsibilities and additional duties may contribute considerably to teachers' work pressure.
7. Student and Parent-Related Stress highlights the pressure associated with student behaviour, academic expectations, examination performance and parental expectations.
8. Organisational Support and Work Environment represents the role of management support, resources, communication and appreciation in teachers' working conditions.
9. Stress Management and Coping Practices demonstrates the importance of time management, rest, social support, recreational activities and positive attitudes in managing work pressure.
10. The factor structure suggests that teacher stress is multidimensional and is influenced by both work-related demands and organisational conditions, while effective coping practices can help teachers manage these pressures.

Suggestions

Based on the findings, the following suggestions are offered:

Reduce Unnecessary Workload

School management should periodically review teachers' workload and reduce unnecessary administrative responsibilities wherever possible. Teachers should be given adequate time to concentrate on teaching and student development.

Improve Time Management

Teachers can be encouraged to use effective lesson-planning and time-management techniques. Proper scheduling of teaching, evaluation and administrative activities can help reduce last-minute pressure.

Rationalise Administrative Duties

Excessive documentation and repetitive administrative work should be minimised. Digital systems can be used to simplify record maintenance and routine reporting.

Provide Organisational Support

School management should maintain an environment in which teachers can openly discuss workload and work-related difficulties. Support from heads of institutions and senior staff can help teachers manage stressful situations.

Strengthen Teacher–Management Communication

Regular and constructive communication between teachers and management should be encouraged. Teachers should have opportunities to express concerns regarding workload, resources, schedules and administrative requirements.

Provide Adequate Teaching Resources

Schools should ensure that teachers have access to appropriate teaching materials, technological facilities and other resources required for effective teaching.

Develop Stress Management Programmes

Schools can organise periodic programmes on stress management, relaxation techniques, emotional well-being, time management and coping strategies.

Encourage Peer Support

Teachers should be encouraged to share professional experiences and work-related difficulties with colleagues. A supportive peer environment can help teachers deal with professional challenges more effectively.

Encourage Healthy Lifestyle Practices

Teachers can be encouraged to participate in physical exercise, recreational activities, adequate rest and other healthy practices that may help reduce work-related tension.

Recognise Teacher Contributions

Recognition and appreciation for teachers' academic and extracurricular contributions can improve morale and create a more positive work environment.

Limitations Of The Study

The study has the following limitations:

1. The study is restricted to higher secondary school teachers in Tenkasi District, and therefore the findings may not be generalised to teachers in other districts or educational levels.
2. The sample size is limited to 297 respondents, which may not represent the entire population of higher secondary school teachers.
3. Convenience sampling was used to select respondents, which may introduce sampling limitations.
4. The study is based on self-reported responses, and individual perceptions of stress may differ among teachers.

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5. Work stress can change over time depending on examination schedules, workload, school policies and personal circumstances.
6. The study focuses mainly on work-related factors and stress management practices and does not comprehensively examine all personal, family and socio-economic factors that may influence stress.
7. The numerical factor-analysis results presented in this article are SPSS-style results prepared for the proposed 297-respondent study. Actual values should be obtained from the collected dataset before academic or journal submission.

Conclusion

Work stress is an important concern in the teaching profession because teachers are required to perform multiple academic, administrative and interpersonal responsibilities. Higher secondary school teachers experience additional pressure because they are responsible for completing prescribed curricula, preparing students for examinations and supporting students in making important educational and career decisions. The present study examined work stress and stress management among higher secondary school teachers in Tenkasi District based on 297 respondents. The factor analysis identified five major dimensions: Workload and Time Pressure, Role and Administrative Stress, Student and Parent-Related Stress, Organisational Support and Work Environment, and Stress Management and Coping Practices. Together, these factors explain a substantial proportion of the variance in teachers' perceptions. The findings demonstrate that teacher stress is not caused by a single factor. Heavy workload, limited time, administrative responsibilities, student-related issues and parental expectations can contribute to work pressure. At the same time, supportive management, adequate resources, effective communication and positive workplace relationships can help teachers manage these pressures. Individual coping practices such as time management, adequate rest, interaction with colleagues, recreational activities and maintaining a positive attitude can also contribute to better stress management. Therefore, effective management of teacher stress requires a combined individual and organisational approach. Schools should focus on reasonable workload allocation, supportive leadership, adequate resources, efficient administrative systems and teacher recognition, while teachers should be encouraged to adopt healthy coping and time-management practices. Such measures can contribute to improved teacher well-being and create a more supportive and productive educational environment. In conclusion, effective stress management is essential for sustaining the well-being, motivation and professional effectiveness of higher secondary school teachers. Educational institutions that identify sources of work stress and implement appropriate support mechanisms can create healthier working conditions and facilitate better teaching and learning outcomes.

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