

EFFECT OF STRESS ON TEACHERS' PERFORMANCE WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO JAFFNA DISTRICT SCHOOLS

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ABSTRACT

Stress is an unavoidable and dreaded, yet needed, part of everyday life. Although life's stressors are usually thought of as only damaging to physical and mental health , they also motivate people to live actively and productively. Teaching is becoming more challenging as a profession and it is one of the most significant and visible profession in the world. Schools are as important as any other organization in the world. These are tough times to be a teacher. Main objective of this study is to identify sources of work stress in school teachers. Work-Stress Questionnaire by Jaws was adapted to collect data. Random sampling was used to gather the responses of teachers from schools in Jaffna District. Multiple regression was used to find out the impact on the performance of teachers. The stress of the teachers is measured in the questionnaire based on the factors Such as Time Management , Work Related stressors , Professional distress, Discipline of the students and Professional investments. The finding of this study is teachers' stress significantly impact on the performance of them.

Keywords: Time Management, Work Related stressors, Professional investments and Professional distress

1.1 BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Numerous definitions of stress exist in the literature and there is some controversy over the nomenclature as to whether the term *stress*, *stressor*, or *strain* should be used to define various aspects of stress (Thatcher & Miller, 2003). Buunk, De Jonge, Ybema & De Wollf (1998:148) identify three broad theoretical approaches to stress which may determine the ways in which the term can be used. They argue that some theories address stress primarily as a stimulus — "in other words, as an event or situation that affects the individual and is potentially harmful". This theoretical approach is associated with the term stressor and implies the potential for stress inherent in a particular situation/environment. Many workplace studies of stress adopt this theoretical approach as they attempt to identify the work-related factors that place individuals' physical and psychological health at risk and which contribute to negative organisational outcomes.

From an empirical perspective, concern over teachers' stress has generated a large amount of research both internationally and in South Africa. For example, research has examined the causes and consequences of stress and burnout amongst teachers (Buwalda & Kok, 1991, Monteith, Smith & Marais, 2001; Ngidi & Sibaya, 2002, Van der Linde *et al.*, 1999) the impact of personality characteristics on the work-related stress of teachers (Ngidi & Sibaya, 2002) and the differences in stress across different hierarchical levels in schools (Monteith *et al.*, 2001). The findings of these studies all point to the high levels of stress teachers experience and the impact that this may have on their performance. It may be expected therefore that teacher stress will differ across schools with differing levels of performance.

Even though there are some researches in the area of effect of stress on performance of teachers in various parts of Sri Lanka; there is no major attempt in Jaffna district in this regard. Due to the effect of earlier war situation teachers in Jaffna District face various kinds of stress. Thus this is an important attempt to analyze the impact of stress on the performance of teachers.

1.2 REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Kyriacou (2001) observes that, due to variation between countries and national education systems, there are differences in the main sources of teacher stress (ibid.: 30). He also observes that job satisfaction is a complex issue in that 'even in the context of feeling overloaded, taking on additional duties in a valued area of work need not create more stress, and may indeed enhance job satisfaction' (ibid.: 30).

Kyriacou (2001) lists the main sources of stress facing teachers: teaching pupils who lack motivation; maintaining discipline; time pressures and workload; coping with change; being evaluated by others; dealings with colleagues; self-esteem and status; administration and management; role conflict and ambiguity; and poor working conditions (ibid.: 29). Overall, the factors that have been found to impact on the job satisfaction of teachers and principals can be divided into three broad categories: micro level (teacher background factors); meso level (schoollevel factors); and macro level (factors associated with society and the education system). Meso-level factors can further be divided into different domains, namely, school, teacher and student domains.

Chaplain (1995) identified biographical factors with regard to job stress in UK primary schools and found significant differences between men and women, and teachers of different ages and length of teaching experience. Male teachers reported more stress than their female counterparts in relation to professional tasks and pupil behaviour/ attitude. Female teachers scored higher than men on professional concerns. According to the author, just over one-third of all teachers were satisfied with their job. When specific facets of job satisfaction were examined, teachers were most satisfied with their professional performance and least satisfied with teaching resources. Teacher stress and job satisfaction were found to be negatively correlated, with high reports of occupational stress related to low levels of job satisfaction.

Ma and MacMillan (1999) surveyed over 2,000 elementary school teachers. The study found that female teachers were more satisfied with their professional role as a teacher compared to their male

counterparts. The gender gap in professional satisfaction grew with increased teaching competence. The study also found that teachers who stayed in the profession longer were less satisfied with their professional role. Gender was also a significant factor in a study by Klecker and Lodman (1999) in the US who found that female elementary teachers rated their job satisfaction more positively, even across years of teaching experience.

Crossman and Harris (2006), exploring job satisfaction among secondary school teachers in the UK, demonstrate a significant difference in the overall job satisfaction scores of teachers by type of school. Teachers in independent and privately-managed schools exhibited the highest satisfaction levels while those in foundation schools exhibited the lowest.

Sewell (1999) in the US found that urban secondary school teachers experienced significantly more stress from poor working conditions and poor staff relations than did rural school teachers. Poor working conditions and time pressures predicted burnout for rural school teachers while pupil misbehavior and poor working conditions predicted burnout for urban school teachers.

1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE RESEARCH STUDY

- To identify levels and sources of work stress in school teachers
- To find out the relationship of teachers stress, job performance
- To find out the relationship of teachers stress, job performance with some demographic variables i.e age, job experience, marital status etc.
- To compare the levels and sources of work stress in teachers of Primary schools and secondary School

1.4 Methodology

Research Design

A structured questionnaire was administered to receive the responses of the teachers of different school on the variables of research study.

Sampling Procedure

Random sampling was used to gather the responses of teachers from schools in Jaffna District .

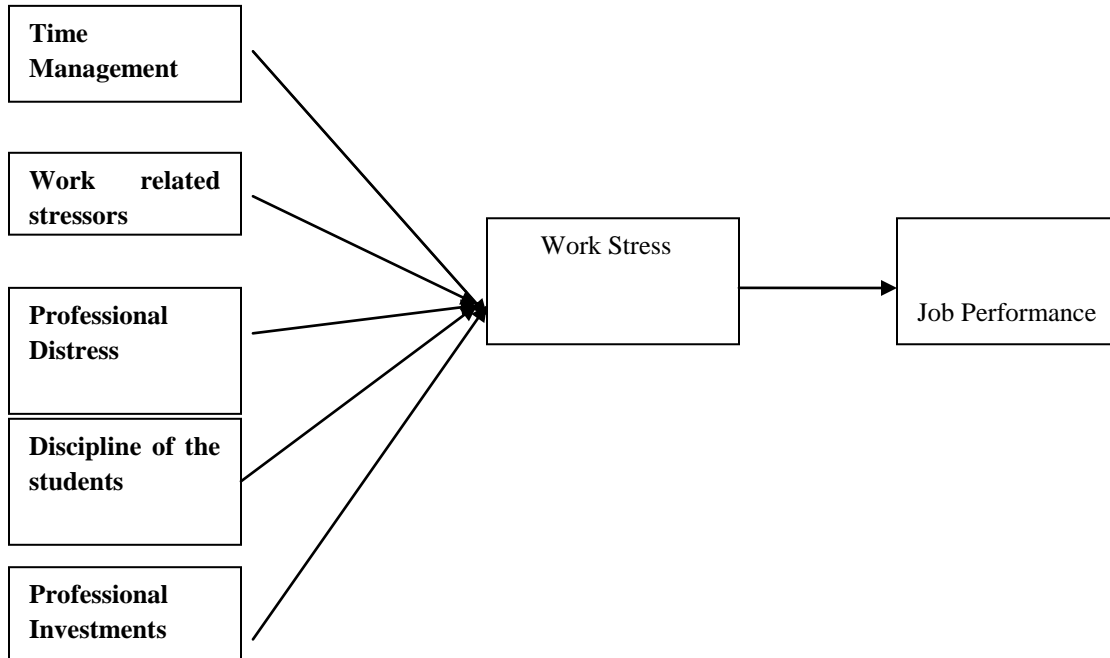
Instrument

Work-Stress Questionnaire by Jaws was adapted to collect data. It included two parts Part I included questions pertaining to the demographic features and stress related questions. whilst Part II comprised of the questions that measure the of the teachers. Likert scale was used in the questionnaire ranging from Never (1) to nearly all the time (5) to take the ratings of the employees.

1.5 Conceptualization Model

After careful study of the review of literature, researcher developed the following conceptualization model.

Figure 1.1



Source : Developed by researcher

1.6 Hypothesis :

The hypothesis of this research is

H1: Teacher stress factors significantly impact on job performance

1.7 Distribution of Samples:

Distribution of sample based on sex

By considering 1AB schools in Jaffna zone in Jaffna district as population 150 teachers were selected as sample randomly. The distribution of sample based on sex are as follows.

Table 01 :Distribution of sample based on sex

Sex	No of teachers	Percentage
Female	98	65.33
Male	52	34.67
Total	150	100

Source: Survey Data

The percentage of female to the total sample size is 65.33% and male is 36%. The percentage of female is greater than male sample by 28%.

Distribution of sample based on age:

The following Table shows the distribution of sample teachers based on age.

Table 02 : Distribution of sample based on Age

Age distribution	No of teachers	Percentage
26-35	20	13.33
36-45	70	46.67
46-55	40	26.67
Above 55	20	13.33
Total	150	100

According to the above Table , 13% of sample are in the age group between 26-35 years and 48% of sample are in the age category between 36-45. Similarly 27% are in the age group of 46-55 and the balance 13% are in the Age category of above 55years. The highest number of samples are within the age category of 36-45years and the lowest number of samples were within the age category of above 55 Years.

Table 03 Distribution of Sample based on marital Status

Civil Status	No of Teachers	Percentage
Unmarried	28	19%
Married	122	81%
Total	150	100%

In the total sample 28 teachers are un marrieds and the balance 122 teachers are married. According to the sample distribution the most of the sample teachers are married.

Table 04 Distribution of Sample based on Year of Services

Year of Service	No of Teachers	Percentage
1-5	27	18%
6-10	29	19%
11-15	66	44%
16-20	17	11%
Above 21	11	8%
Total	150	100%

The Table 04 shows the distribution of sample based on year of service experience. Out of total sample size of 150 teachers 11% of teachers have 1-5 years service experience and 13% of sample teachers have 6-10 years experiences. The highest percentage of teachers (44%) is in the range of 11-15 years experience and only 8% of samples have the experiences of more than 21years.

Table 05 Stress and Individual Differences

Sex	Low Level		Moderate Level		High Level	
	No of Teachers	Percentage	No of Teachers	Percentage	No of Teachers	Percentage
Male	24	44%	20	37%	10	19%
Female	20	21%	30	31%	46	48%

According to the Table 05 44% of the male have low level of stress, 37% of male have moderate level of stress and 19% male teachers experiences high level of stress. But in the case of female teachers 21% have low level of stress 31% have moderate level of stress and the balance 48% have high level of stress. There are higher number of male teachers in the low level of stress category and higher number of female teachers in the high level of stress category.

Table 06 Age and Stress

Age	Low Level		Moderate Level		High Level	
Sex	No of Teachers	Percentage	No of Teachers	Percentage	No of Teachers	Percentage
26-35	8	44%	7	39%	3	17%
36-45	26	37%	15	21%	30	42%
46-55	12	27%	17	39%	15	34%
Above 55	3	15%	5	29%	9	53%

44% of teachers in the age group between 26 to 35 experience low level of stress, 39% have moderate level of stress and 17% have high level of stress. In the age category of 36-45 37% of sample have low level of stress and 42% have high level of stress. Similarly 27% of teachers experience low level of stress in the age category of 46-55 years.

In this age category 38% have moderate level of stress and 34% experience high level of stress. In the age category of teachers above 55 years , 18% of teachers have low level of stress, 29% experience moderate level of stress and 53% have high level of stress and the most of the teachers in the age category of 26-35 have low level of stress.

In this age category 39% have moderate level of stress and 34% experience high level of stress. In the age category of teachers above 55 Years experience high level of stress and the most of the teachers in the age category of 26-35 have low level of stress.

Table 07 Stress and Civil Status.

	Low Level		Moderate Level		High Level	
Civil Status	No of Teachers	Percentage	No of Teachers	Percentage	No of Teachers	Percentage
Married	17	14%	55	45%	50	41%
Unmarried	8	29%	14	46%	7	25%

Among the married teachers 14% of teachers have low level of stress, 45% experience moderate level of stress and the balance 41% have high level of stress. Similarly in the case of unmarried teachers 29% have low level and 46% have moderate level and 46% have moderate level of stress . 25% of unmarried teachers experience high level of stress . Therefore when compare with married teachers higher number of unmarried teachers experience high level of stress,

1.7 Results and Discussion

Stress Factors of Teachers Influence on the Job Performance of Teachers.

In order to indentify the impact of stress on teachers performance multiple regression analysis was carried out. In this analysis stress related factors such as Time Management , Work related stressors ,

Professional Distress , Discipline of the students and Professional Investments considered as independent variables and teachers performance were considered as dependent variable.

Table 08 Multiple regression summary

	Beta	Standard Error	Significant
Constant	70.72	11.476	.000
Time Management	-0.031	0.004	.000
Work related stressors	-.518	.433	0.0233
Professional Distress	-0.012	0.32	0.034
Discipline of the students	-0.65	.532	0.022
Professional Investments	-0.451	-0.503	0.061
$R^2 = .49$			

The multiple regression analysis were conducted to show the combined impact of the above factors on teachers performance.

In the multiple regression analysis beta value of time management is -0.031 and P value is 0.000. since $P < 0.05$. Time management factors has significant impact on teachers performance. In the multiple regression analysis beta value of work related stressors is -0.518 and P value is 0.0233. Since $P < 0.05$, the work related aspects have considered negative impact of teachers performance.

Beta value of the Professional distress stress factors is -0.012 and P value is 0.0348. Since $P < 0.05$ it is obvious that Professional distress factors have considerable impact on teachers performance. When there is an increase in the professional distress it will lead to decrease the teachers performance.

In this analysis beta value is -0.65 and P value is 0.0224. Since $P < 0.05$, it is acceptable that when there is an increase in the student discipline related stress it will lead to a decrease in performance of teachers.

Beta value of the professional related stress factors is -0.451. and P value is 0.61. Since in the analysis $P < .10$. Professional investments factors have considerable impact on job satisfaction. According to the regression summary H1 is accepted. That is teachers stress significantly impact on the performance. In the regression analysis R^2 is 0.49. Therefore 41.9 of teachers performance is explained by the factors in the teachers model.

CONCLUSION :

Teachers under stress cannot perform well. Their job satisfaction and motivation levels are decreased and they show unwanted behaviors like absenteeism, mistakes during work and violence at work. Furthermore they have more health related physical and psychological complaints. Their students' satisfaction level is also decreased in such way that they cannot impart quality instructions to the students. Resultantly complaints come from parent and employers' side, which have hired students as their employees thus the overall image of the

educational institution gets damage. Therefore the findings of this research will help to find what are the factors will associate with the teachers stress and How the stress affect the teachers performance in Jaffna district.

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