

# Occupational Stress among Male and Female Elementary School Teachers of District Pulwama

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## Abstract

Stress, in general, and occupational stress in particular is a fact of modern day life that seems to have been on the increase. Teacher stress is a real phenomenon and is associated with problems of recruitment, health and retention of teachers. The main purpose of the study was to find out and compare the occupational stress level among male and female elementary school teachers of District Pulwama (J & K) India. The sample consisted of 100 elementary school teachers, 50 male and 50 female teachers. A. K Srivastava and A. P Singh's Occupational Stress Index was administered on selected sample for collection of data. The collected data was statistically analyzed and interpreted by applying Mean, S.D and t-test. The investigators found that male and female elementary school teachers differ significantly on overall occupational stress level. It was found that female elementary school teachers have more occupational stress level than their male counter parts.

**Keywords:** Occupational Stress, Male, Female, Elementary School Teachers

## Introduction

Stress is defined in terms of its physical and physiological effects on a person, and can be a mental, physical or emotional strain. It can also be a tension or a situation or factor that can cause stress. The concept of stress was first introduced in the Life-sciences by Hans Selye in 1936. It was derived from the Latin word 'stringere'; it meant the experience of physical hardship, starvation, torture and pain. Hans Selye, 1974 defined stress as "the non-specific response of the body to any demand placed upon it". Stephen Robbins (1999) defined stress as "a dynamic condition in which an individual is confronted with an opportunity, constraint or demand related to what he / she desires and for which the outcome is perceived to be both uncertain and important." Occupational stress can occur when there is a discrepancy between the demands of the environment/workplace and an individual's ability to carry out and complete these demands.

A variety of factors contribute to workplace stress such as negative workload, isolation, extensive hours worked, toxic work environments, lack of autonomy, difficult relationships among coworkers and management, management bullying, harassment and lack of opportunities or motivation to advancement in one's skill level.

In general, occupational stress arises from the working conditions/environment of a system. Rutter, Herzberg and Paice (2002) found that high self expectation, securing financial support for research, insufficient development in the field, inadequate salary, manuscript preparation, role overload, conflicting job demands, slow progress on career advancement, frequent interruptions and long meetings are the causes of stress among academic staff. Within the general area of occupational stress, teaching has been identified as one of the most stressful occupations in many countries (Cooper, Sloan, and Williams, 1988).

Teaching related stress, commonly termed 'teacher stress', is defined as a teacher's experience of "unpleasant, negative emotions, such as anger, anxiety, tension, frustration, or depression, resulting from some aspect of their work as a teacher" (Kyriacou, 2001, p. 38). Like other forms of occupational stress, it can have serious implications for the healthy functioning of the individual as well as for the organization in which the individual serves. At a personal level, teaching related stress can affect a teacher's health, well-being, and performance (Larchick and Chance, 2004). From an organizational perspective, it translates to unproductive employee behaviours such as alienation, apathy, and absenteeism (Gugliemi and Tatrow, 1998). Hence, even after nearly three decades of research effort, the study of teacher stress, particularly its sources

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and manifestations, continues to attract widespread interest and attention.

Pervez and Hanif (2003) in their study with Pakistani female teachers concluded that stress manifestations could be physical, psychological, or emotional in nature. On comparing stress manifestations between teachers of private and government schools, they found that the former had significantly more complaints with cardiovascular and gastronomic problems than

### Need and Importance

The phenomenon of work stress of teachers has been receiving increased global attention and concern in recent years. Several studies had been undertaken to examine the prevalence, level and major sources of work stress among school teachers in England (Kyriacou and Sutcliffe 1978). Research has shown that teacher stress is reliably associated with a number of variables, including those intrinsic to job, individual cognitive vulnerability and systemic factors. There are however important gaps in our understanding of teachers stress, most regarding effective interventions.

The occupational stress among teachers is of great significance. One's abilities are reflected through the performance and that performance is directly related to the mental state and physique. The school is a place where future nation is shaped. A school under stress is an expensive organization to run, both in cost to teacher's well-being and in financial terms. A general tendency exists in the literature according to which females experience

### Statement of the Problem

The problem formulated for the study reads as under:  
*"Occupational Stress among Male and Female Elementary School Teachers of District Pulwama."*

### Objectives

The following objectives have been formulated for the study:

1. To assess the occupational stress level among male elementary school teachers of district Pulwama.
2. To assess the occupational stress level among female elementary school teachers of district Pulwama.
3. To compare male and female elementary school teachers of district Pulwama on occupational stress level.

those working in government schools. Geetika Singla (2006) found that doctors and teachers are highly stressed as compared to the employees from other professions. Both the teachers and doctors face a significant amount of work load. It also revealed that females are most stressed as compared to male. Sandeep Kumar Lath (2007) found that in role insufficiency (RI) and role ambiguity (RA), less experienced teachers have more stress.

higher levels of stress regarding gender, specific stressors and have different ways of interpreting and dealing with the problems related to their work environment (Offerman and Armitage, 1993 in Antonion et al., 2006).

The health of teachers could be seriously affected by stress. Moreover, apart from teachers themselves, work stress suffered by them can also adversely affect their students and the learning environment. In addition, stress problems of teacher might cause an increase in teaching costs. It was sympathetic and worth studying this issue so as to minimize the adverse effects of work stress of teachers on students, classrooms, schools and teachers themselves. Studying on the issue of work stress of teachers was essential and it was important for the management and teachers to work together to improve the working environment and conditions so as to combat stress. Therefore, in the present study, an attempt has been made to highlight the level of occupational stress among elementary school male and female teachers.

### Hypotheses

1. There exists no significant occupational stress level among male elementary school teachers of district Pulwama.
2. There exists no significant occupational stress level among female elementary school teachers of district Pulwama.
3. There exists no significant difference in occupational stress level among male and female elementary school teachers.

**Design of the study**

**Sample**

Fifty (50) male and fifty (50) female elementary school teachers were taken as sample for the study. The

sample was collected randomly from different govt. run elementary schools of district Pulwama.

**Tool**

The data was collected with A. K. Srivastava and A. P. Singh's Occupational Stress Index. The Scale has Twelve (12) sub-scales viz.: Role over-load, Role ambiguity, Role conflict, Unreasonable group and political pressure, Responsibility for persons, Under participation, Powerlessness, Poor peer relations, Intrinsic impoverishment, Low status, Strenuous working conditions and Unprofitability.

and female elementary school teachers of District Pulwama. Investigators visited various elementary schools of District Pulwama and collected data.

**Statistical Treatment of Data**

The data collected was statistical analyses by applying Mean, S. D and t-test.

**Analysis and Interpretation of Data**

The analysis and interpretation of data was arranged in a tabular form in the following manner:

**Procedure**

A. K. Srivastava and A. P. Singh's Occupational Stress Index was administered to collect the data from male

**Table – I**

**Mean comparison of male and female elementary school teachers on sub-scale – I (Role overload) (N = 50) in each group.**

Group	Mean	S.D	t-value	Level of Significance
Male Elementary School Teachers	17.4	2.5	0.5	Insignificant
Female Elementary School Teachers	17.2	2.4		

The perusal of table – I shows that the two groups do not differ significantly on Role overload.

**Table – II**

**Mean comparison of male and female elementary school teachers on sub-scale – II (Role ambiguity) (N = 50) in each group.**

Group	Mean	S.D	t-value	Level of Significance
Male Elementary School Teachers	8.0	1.1	2.58	Significant at 0.05 level
Female Elementary School Teachers	8.8	1.2		

The perusal of table – II shows that the two groups differ significantly at 0.05 level on Role ambiguity.

**Table – III**

**Mean comparison of male and female elementary school teachers on sub-scale – III  
 (Role conflict) (N = 50) in each group.**

Group	Mean	S.D	t-value	Level of Significance
Male Elementary School Teachers	13.1	1.9	4.0	Significant at 0.01 level
Female Elementary School Teachers	15.5	2.1		

The perusal of table – III shows that the two groups differ significantly at 0.01 level on Role conflict.

**Table – IV**

**Mean comparison of male and female elementary school teachers on sub-scale – IV  
 (Unreasonable group and political pressure) (N = 50) in each group.**

Group	Mean	S.D	t-value	Level of Significance
Male Elementary School Teachers	8.7	1.2	3.5	Significant at 0.01 level
Female Elementary School Teachers	9.9	1.4		

The perusal of table – IV shows that the two groups differ significantly at 0.01 level on Unreasonable group and political pressure

**Table – V**

**Mean comparison of male and female elementary school teachers on sub-scale – V  
 (Responsibility for persons) (N = 50) in each group.**

Group	Mean	S.D	t-value	Level of Significance
Male Elementary School Teachers	8.3	1.2	1.72	Insignificant
Female Elementary School Teachers	8.9	1.3		

The perusal of table – V shows that the two groups do not differ significantly on Responsibility for persons.

**Table – VI**

**Mean comparison of male and female elementary school teachers on sub-scale – VI  
 (Under participation) (N = 50) in each group.**

Group	Mean	S.D	t-value	Level of Significance
Male Elementary School Teachers	10.6	1.5	2.44	Significant at 0.05 level
Female Elementary School Teachers	11.7	1.7		

The perusal of table – VI shows that the two groups differ significantly at 0.05 level on Under participation.

**Table – VII**

**Mean comparison of male and female elementary school teachers on sub-scale – VII  
 (Powerlessness) (N = 50) in each group.**

Group	Mean	S.D	t-value	Level of Significance
Male Elementary School Teachers	10.1	1.4	2.70	Significant at 0.01 level
Female Elementary School Teachers	9.1	1.3		

The perusal of table – VII shows that the two groups differ significantly at 0.01 level on Powerlessness.

**Table – VIII**

**Mean comparison of male and female elementary school teachers on sub-scale – VIII  
 (Poor peer relationships) (N = 50) in each group.**

Group	Mean	S.D	t-value	Level of Significance
Male Elementary School Teachers	8.6	1.2	6.92	Significant at 0.01 level
Female Elementary School Teachers	11.3	1.6		

The perusal of table – VIII shows that the two groups differ significantly at 0.01 level on Poor peer relationships.

**Table – IX**

**Mean comparison of male and female elementary school teachers on sub-scale – IX  
 (Intrinsic impoverishment) (N = 50) in each group.**

Group	Mean	S.D	t-value	Level of Significance
Male Elementary School Teachers	9.2	1.3	3.07	Significant at 0.01 level
Female Elementary School Teachers	10.4	1.5		

The perusal of table – IX shows that the two groups do not differ significantly at 0.01 level on Intrinsic impoverishment.

**Table – X**

**Mean comparison of male and female elementary school teachers on sub-scale – X (Low status) (N = 50) in each group.**

Group	Mean	S.D	t-value	Level of Significance
Male Elementary School Teachers	6.0	0.8	3.04	Significant at 0.01 level
Female Elementary School Teachers	6.7	0.9		

The perusal of table – X shows that the two groups differ significantly at 0.01 level on Low status.

**Table – XI**

**Mean comparison of male and female elementary school teachers on sub-scale – XI (Strenuous working conditions) (N = 50) in each group.**

Group	Mean	S.D	t-value	Level of Significance
Male Elementary School Teachers	9.0	1.3	1.89	Insignificant
Female Elementary School Teachers	9.7	1.4		

The perusal of table – XI shows that the two groups do not differ significantly at strenuous working conditions.

**Table – XII**

**Mean comparison of male and female elementary school teachers on sub-scale – XII (Unprofitability) (N = 50) in each group.**

Group	Mean	S.D	t-value	Level of Significance
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<b>Male Elementary School Teachers</b>	6.1	0.9	1.72	<b>Insignificant</b>
<b>Female Elementary School Teachers</b>	5.7	0.8		

The perusal of table – XII shows that the two groups do not differ significantly on Unprofitability.

**Table – XIII**

**Mean comparison of male and female elementary school teachers on overall occupational stress level (N = 50) in each group.**

<b>Group</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>S.D</b>	<b>t-value</b>	<b>Level of Significance</b>
<b>Male Elementary School Teachers</b>	124.7	16.3	2.31	<b>Significant at 0.05level</b>
<b>Female Elementary School Teachers</b>	115.1	17.5		

The perusal of table – XIII shows that the two groups differ significantly at 0.05 level on overall occupational stress level.

**Conclusions**

The following conclusions were drawn:

1. The male and female elementary school teachers do not differ significantly on sub-scales: Role overload, Responsibility for persons, strenuous working conditions and Unprofitability.
2. The male and female elementary school teachers differ significantly on sub-scales: Role ambiguity, Role Conflict, Unreasonable group and political pressure, Under participation, Powerlessness, Poor peer relationships, Intrinsic impoverishment and Low Status.
3. The male and female elementary school teachers differ significantly on overall occupational stress level. Female elementary school teachers have more stress level than male elementary school teachers.

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