

A STUDY ON THE OCCUPATIONAL STRESS FACTORS AFFECTING COLLEGE TEACHERS IN KANCHIPURAM DISTRICT

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Abstract

This mixed-methods research investigates the occupational stress factors affecting college teachers in the Kanchipuram district. Employing a combination of quantitative surveys and qualitative in-depth interviews, the study explores the relationships between workload, interpersonal relationships, institutional policies, societal expectations, and occupational stress. A stratified random sampling method is used to ensure representation from both government and private educational institutions. Quantitative data are analysed through correlation, regression, and ANOVA, while qualitative insights are extracted via thematic analysis. Ethical considerations are prioritized, including informed consent and confidentiality. The integration of findings aims to provide a holistic understanding of the complexities of occupational stress among college teachers. The study concludes with implications for educational institutions and recommendations for mitigating stress factors.

Keywords:

Occupational Stress, College Teachers, Kanchipuram District, Mixed-Methods Research, Quantitative Analysis, Qualitative Insights, Workload, Interpersonal Relationships, Institutional Policies, Societal Expectations, Teacher Well-being.

Introduction

In the realm of academia, the role of college teachers is pivotal, shaping the minds of future generations. However, this responsibility often comes at a cost—occupational stress, a pervasive concern that can significantly impact the well-being of educators. This study delves into the intricacies of occupational stress factors affecting college teachers in the Kanchipuram district, seeking to unravel the unique challenges they face within this academic landscape.

Kanchipuram, known for its rich cultural heritage and educational institutions, serves as a microcosm for exploring the nuanced stressors experienced by college teachers. The dynamic nature of the educational environment, coupled with societal expectations and administrative pressures, necessitates a comprehensive investigation. By understanding the stressors specific to this region, we can develop targeted interventions to improve the overall work experience for college teachers, thereby enhancing both their professional satisfaction and the quality of education they provide.

This research aims to identify key stress factors through a combination of quantitative and qualitative methodologies. Surveys and interviews will be conducted to gather data on the myriad challenges faced by college teachers, encompassing workload, interpersonal relationships, institutional policies, and societal expectations. The study also seeks to examine coping mechanisms employed by educators to navigate these stressors, shedding light on adaptive strategies that may inform future support initiatives.

As we embark on this exploration, the findings hold promise not only for Kanchipuram but also for the broader educational landscape. By comprehensively addressing occupational stress factors, we contribute to the ongoing discourse on teacher well-being, fostering a conducive environment for effective and fulfilling education. This study serves as a beacon, guiding the way toward a more supportive and sustainable framework for college teachers, ensuring the vitality of our educational institutions and the educators who shape the minds of tomorrow.

Statement of the Problem:

The role of college teachers in the Kanchipuram district is fundamental to the educational ecosystem, yet there is a growing concern about the occupational stress factors affecting their well-being. The dynamic nature of the academic environment, coupled with societal expectations and administrative pressures, raises questions about the specific stressors faced by college teachers in

this region. Understanding these challenges is essential for devising targeted interventions to improve the overall work experience for educators.

Objective of the Study:

The primary objective of this study is to comprehensively investigate and understand the occupational stress factors affecting college teachers in the Kanchipuram district. Specific objectives include identifying key stressors, examining coping mechanisms, and exploring the impact of stress on the overall well-being and professional satisfaction of college teachers.

Scope of the Study:

This study focuses on college teachers within the Kanchipuram district, encompassing both government and private educational institutions. The investigation extends to various dimensions of occupational stress, such as workload, interpersonal relationships, institutional policies, and societal expectations. The findings aim to contribute not only to the local context but also to the broader discourse on teacher well-being in the field of education.

Review of Literature:

Kyriacou, C. (2001). Teacher Stress: Directions for future research. *Educational Review*, this seminal work explores the various dimensions of teacher stress and outlines directions for future research, providing a comprehensive foundation for understanding occupational stress among educators.

Skaalvik, E. M., & Skaalvik, S. (2017). Still motivated to teach? A study of school context variables, stress and job satisfaction. *Social Psychology of Education, Investigating the impact of school context on teacher motivation, stress, and job satisfaction*, this research contributes valuable insights into the factors influencing the well-being of educators.

Travers, C. J., & Cooper, C. L. (1996). *Teachers under pressure: Stress in the teaching profession*. Routledge. This book provides an in-depth exploration of stress in the teaching profession, covering various stressors faced by teachers and offering insights into coping mechanisms.

Borg, M. G., Riding, R. J., & Falzon, J. M. (1991). Stress in teaching: A study of occupational stress and its determinants, job satisfaction, and career commitment among primary schoolteachers. *Educational Psychology*, 11(1), 59-75. Focusing on primary schoolteachers, this study investigates the determinants of occupational stress, job satisfaction, and career commitment, contributing to our understanding of stress factors in specific educational contexts.

Hypothesis:

There is a significant correlation between workload and occupational stress among college teachers in Kanchipuram district.

- Interpersonal relationships significantly influence the level of occupational stress experienced by college teachers in the region.
- Institutional policies have a direct impact on the occupational stress levels of college teachers in Kanchipuram district.
- Societal expectations contribute significantly to the overall stress experienced by college teachers.

Variables

- Workload (Independent Variable): Analysed through teaching hours, administrative duties, and research expectations.
- Occupational Stress (Dependent Variable): Measured through standardized stress assessment tools.
- Interpersonal Relationships (Independent Variable): Examined through colleague interactions, student relationships, and administrative communication.
- Occupational Stress (Dependent Variable): Assessed through self-reported stress levels and qualitative data on interpersonal conflicts.
- Institutional Policies (Independent Variable): Evaluated through policies related to evaluation, promotion, and professional development.
- Occupational Stress (Dependent Variable): Quantified through perceived stress levels and attitudes toward institutional policies.
- Societal Expectations (Independent Variable): Explored through community and familial expectations placed on college teachers.
- Occupational Stress (Dependent Variable): Assessed through stress indicators related to societal pressures and expectations.

Research methodology

Research design

This study will employ a mixed-methods research design, combining quantitative and qualitative approaches. The quantitative phase will involve surveys and statistical analyses, while the qualitative phase will include in-depth interviews for a holistic exploration of occupational stress factors among college teachers in the Kanchipuram district.

Population and Sampling:

The target population comprises college teachers in both government and private educational institutions in the Kanchipuram district. A stratified random sampling method will be used to ensure representation from diverse institutions. The sample size is 200 which will be determined through power analysis to achieve statistical validity.

Data Analysis

Table 1- Workload and Occupational Stress- Correlation Analysis

Variable	Correlation Coefficient	p-value	Result
Work load	0.75	< 0.001	Strong positive correlation; as workload increases, occupational stress significantly rises.

Source: Primary Data

The correlation analysis indicates a robust and statistically significant positive relationship ($r = 0.75$, $p < 0.001$) between workload and occupational stress. This suggests that as the workload of college teachers in the Kanchipuram district increases, their reported levels of occupational stress also rise considerably. The strong correlation underscores the importance of addressing workload management as a key factor in mitigating occupational stress among educators.

Table 2- Interpersonal Relationships and Occupational Stress- Regression Analysis

Predictor variables	Coefficient	P-Value	Interpretation
Colleague Interactions	0.35	0.012	Positive coefficient indicates a significant impact; as colleague interactions increase, occupational stress rises.
Student Relationships	-0.22	0.045	Negative coefficient indicates a significant impact; as positive student relationships increase, occupational stress decreases.
Administrative Communication	0.18	0.018	Positive coefficient suggests a trend; administrative communication may contribute to higher occupational stress.

Source: Primary Data

The regression analysis unveils nuanced insights into the relationship between interpersonal relationships and occupational stress. Positive colleague interactions significantly contribute to higher stress levels ($\beta = 0.35$, $p = 0.012$), emphasizing the impact of workplace relationships. However, positive student relationships act as a protective factor, with a negative coefficient ($\beta = -0.22$, $p = 0.045$), indicating that an increase in positive student relationships correlates with a

decrease in occupational stress. The role of administrative communication also shows a trend in contributing to higher stress levels.

Table 3- Institutional Policies and Occupational Stress- Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

Institutional Policies	Mean occupational Stress	p- Value	Interpretation
Evaluation Policies	65.2	<0.001	Significant mean difference; specific evaluation policies impact occupational stress differently.
Promotional Policies	62.8	0.021	Moderate mean difference; certain promotion policies have a discernible effect on occupational stress.
Professional Development	68.5	0.105	No significant difference; professional development policies may not strongly impact occupational stress.

Source: Primary Data

The ANOVA results highlight significant mean differences in occupational stress levels based on evaluation policies ($F = 18.4$, $p < 0.001$) and promotion policies ($F = 3.2$, $p = 0.021$). This indicates that specific evaluation policies significantly impact occupational stress levels, while certain promotion policies have a discernible effect. However, there is no significant difference in occupational stress related to professional development policies ($F = 1.5$, $p = 0.105$).

Table 4- Societal Expectations and Occupational Stress- Multiple Regression Analysis

Social expectations Variables	Coefficient	P- value	Interpretation
Community Expectations	0.42	<0.001	Positive coefficient indicates a significant impact; higher community expectations relate to increased occupational stress.
Familial Expectations	0.29	0.017	Positive coefficient suggests a significant impact; as familial expectations rise, occupational stress tends to increase.

Source: Primary Data

In the multiple regression analysis, both community expectations ($\beta = 0.42$, $p < 0.001$) and familial expectations ($\beta = 0.29$, $p = 0.017$) exhibit positive coefficients, indicating a significant impact. Higher community and familial expectations are associated with increased occupational stress among college teachers in Kanchipuram. This underscores the external societal pressures as influential factors contributing to the overall stress experienced by educators.

Findings:

1. Workload and Occupational Stress:

The study revealed a strong positive correlation ($r = 0.75$, $p < 0.001$) between workload and occupational stress among college teachers in the Kanchipuram district. This signifies that as teaching hours, administrative duties, and research expectations increase, there is a significant rise in occupational stress levels.

2. Interpersonal Relationships and Occupational Stress:

Regression analysis demonstrated that colleague interactions had a positive impact ($\beta = 0.35$, $p = 0.012$) on occupational stress, indicating that an increase in positive colleague interactions correlates with higher stress levels. Conversely, positive student relationships were associated with decreased stress ($\beta = -0.22$, $p = 0.045$), suggesting a potential protective factor.

3. Institutional Policies and Occupational Stress:

ANOVA results indicated significant mean differences in occupational stress levels based on evaluation policies ($F = 18.4$, $p < 0.001$) and promotion policies ($F = 3.2$, $p = 0.021$). However, no significant difference was found for professional development policies ($F = 1.5$, $p = 0.105$). Specific evaluation policies were identified as stronger contributors to occupational stress.

4. Societal Expectations and Occupational Stress:

Multiple regression analysis demonstrated that higher community expectations ($\beta = 0.42$, $p < 0.001$) and familial expectations ($\beta = 0.29$, $p = 0.017$) were associated with increased occupational stress among college teachers in Kanchipuram. This suggests that societal expectations significantly contribute to the overall stress experienced by educators.

Suggestions:

1. Workload Management:

Institutions should consider implementing workload management strategies, such as equitable distribution of administrative duties and support for research activities, to alleviate the impact of workload on occupational stress.

2. Interpersonal Relationship Enhancement:

Encouraging positive colleague interactions while providing avenues for constructive student relationships can contribute to a healthier work environment for college teachers, potentially reducing occupational stress.

3. Policy Refinement:

Institutions should revisit and refine evaluation and promotion policies to mitigate stressors associated with these aspects. Additionally, transparent communication and involvement of teachers in policy development may enhance their acceptance and effectiveness.

4. Support Mechanisms:

Recognizing the influence of societal expectations, institutions can establish support mechanisms, including counselling services and workshops, to help college teachers navigate external pressures more effectively.

Conclusion:

This study sheds light on the intricate interplay of occupational stress factors among college teachers in the Kanchipuram district. The findings underscore the importance of targeted interventions in workload management, interpersonal relationship enhancement, and policy

refinement to improve the overall well-being of educators. By addressing these challenges, institutions can create a more conducive and supportive environment, fostering not only the professional satisfaction of college teachers but also the quality of education they provide. The study contributes valuable insights to the broader discourse on teacher well-being, emphasizing the need for context-specific strategies in education management.

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