

## **JOB STRESS OF TEACHERS WORKING IN THE HIGH SCHOOLS IN THOOTHUKUDI DISTRICT**

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### **ABSTRACT**

This research paper focuses its attention on the job stress of teachers working in the high schools in Thoothukudi district of Tamilnadu State. The researcher used survey method research. The population of the study is all the teachers working in the high schools in Thoothukudi district. From the population, the researcher has chosen 200 teachers using simple random sampling technique. The data were collected using a self-constructed scale for measuring the job stress of teachers. Mean, SD and 't' test were used for analysing the data. The findings of the study revealed that majority of the high school teachers have reported high level job stress and the locality of school has played a significant role in influencing the job stress of teachers.

**Keywords:** Job Stress, Teachers, High Schools, Thoothukudi District.

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### **INTRODUCTION**

The teacher is the torchbearer of the society and should be a social reformer. He should be a good and democratic leader, enforcing the discipline among the learners without fear and favour. The teacher has strong faith in equality, fraternity, liberty and justice. At the same time, he should have a positive attitude towards his profession. So, a teacher should go to the class punctually and with adequate preparation. He should be the role model to the students by following certain characteristics like gentleness, honesty, simplicity and cooperativeness. He must have sympathy and tactfulness to guide his pupils. He must always be cheerful and optimistic.

The teacher is the second parent of the child and realizing this responsibility, he executes his profession with utmost care and affection while handling the students not only in the classroom but also outside the school premises. The teacher must be a lover of his students. He is essentially a nation-builder. On him depend the future of the whole mankind of the country. Prof. Humayun Kabir says, "Without good teachers even the best system of education is bound to fail. With good teachers even the defects of the system can be largely overcome" (Madhavan Nair, 1989, P. 90).

### **STRESS**

The concept of stress was first introduced in the life sciences by Hans Selye in 1936 (Jones, W.K., 1985). It is a concept derived from the Latin word 'Stringere', popularly used in the seventeenth century to mean hardship, strain, adversity or fiction. It was used

in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries to denote force, pressure, strain or strong efforts with reference to an object or person.

According to Oxford Advanced Learner's Dictionary, "Stress means pressure, tension or worry resulting from problems in one's life. It is considered to be factor of several illness".

The secret of a successful man depends upon his defending nature of handling the stress. Nowadays, the world is becoming more and more complex and the capacity to manage stress in work is also increasing. The modernized living style of the people is full of hazardous because of his own activities not only in their house but also in their working place. Hence, their living era is occupied by strains, frustrations, tensions, anxiety and conflicts. These things are inevitable in the modern world.

Stress is usually thought of in negative terms. It is thought to be caused by something bad, is a form of 'distress'. But there is positive stress also - the pleasant side of stress caused by good things - termed 'eustress'. There is an optimum amount of stress, which is good for people, and below and more commonly, above this optimum level, the health and work performance of individuals are affected (Luthans, 1995).

Stress is one of the most pervasive phenomena in the modern world and it affects people from all walks of life. Right from the time of birth till the last breath drawn, an individual is invariably exposed to various stressful situations. In the past, the term 'stress' designated both a stimulus (a force or pressure) and a response (adversity, affliction). More recently, it has usually been used to denote a set of changes that people undergo in situations that they appraise as threatening to their well being (Averbach, 1996).

Every profession has some stressful situations. Among all the professions, teaching profession is most responsible as well as respectable profession. In this profession, the stress is invariably found in all the activities of the teacher population. The following paragraphs explain the stress of teachers.

### **JOB STRESS OF TEACHERS**

The commonly used nomenclature to mean the stress that people undergo in different walks of professional life is job stress. Therefore, the present study is very much pertaining to the problem area 'job stress'. Since, the mid 1980's job stress has regularly found its way into the media, and has been the subject of much discussion, concern and ill-conceived rumour. It is only in recent years that people have begun to recognize its existence and have attempted to investigate into it in order to try to do something about it.

Teachers' job stress can be identified in the state of exhaustion, irritability and fatigue that are markedly decrease the teacher's effectiveness and capabilities. An inability to cope equitably with the stress of teachers' work, because of external demands on teacher's physical or mental energy are the job stress of teachers. It is also a condition produced by working too hard for too long in a high-pressure environment. It is a debilitating psychological condition resulting from work related frustrations, which results in poor academic achievement of students.

### **NEED AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

The teacher occupies the unique place in the education system because he is the heart and soul of an educational institution. He acts as the pivot for the transmission of intellectual traditions and technical skills from generation to generation, and helps to keep the lamp of civilization burning. The destiny of the country is being made in the classroom and the teacher has an important role to play in the entire programme of national development and social change.

The teachers play an important role in the educational system for its success or failure. Teaching profession is different from other professions. Few teachers realize this fact. Every teacher should know the peculiarities of his profession and the new role assigned to him in the educational system. The importance of the teacher in any educational system less in the commitment possessed by them towards their profession.

The status of teachers deteriorated over the last few decades mainly due to poor service conditions of teachers, stress in their profession, phenomenal, expansion of the educational system, lowering standards of teacher education, negligence of duty by many of the teachers and changes in the value system in the society. It is therefore necessary to make an intensive and continuous effort to raise the economic, social and professional status of teachers in order to attract the younger generation of the ability to the profession and to retain them in it as dedicated, enthusiastic and contented workers.

A general impression is that a very large number of teachers do not perform their duty due to their poor working condition, having different levels of job stress and so on. Unless capable and satisfied teachers are in service, the education system cannot become a suitable and potential instrument of the national development. Under these circumstances, the present study was planned.

### **OBJECTIVES**

1. To find the level of job stress of teachers working in the high schools in Thoothukudi district.
2. To find the significant difference in the job stress of teachers with regard to background variables - gender, type of school, locality of school, additional qualification, and employment status.

**NULL HYPOTHESES**

1. There is no significant difference in the job stress of high school teachers with regard to gender.
2. There is no significant difference in the job stress of high school teachers with regard to type of school.
3. There is no significant difference in the job stress of high school teachers with regard to locality of school.
4. There is no significant difference in the job stress of high school teachers with regard to additional qualification.
5. There is no significant difference in the job stress of high school teachers with regard to spouse employment status.

**ANALYSIS OF DATA**

**Objective – 1**

1. To find the level of job stress of teachers working in the high schools in Thoothukudi district.

Table - 1. Level of Job Stress of High School Teachers

| Variable   | Low |       | High |       |
|------------|-----|-------|------|-------|
|            | N   | %     | N    | %     |
| Job Stress | 84  | 42.00 | 116  | 58.00 |

It is found from the above table that 42% of high school teachers have low level job stress and 58% of them have high level job stress.

**Null Hypothesis – 1**

There is no significant difference in the job stress of high school teachers with regard to gender.

Table - 2. Difference in Job Stress of High School Teachers with regard to Gender

| Gender | N   | Mean   | SD   | Calculated 't' Value | Table Value | Remark |
|--------|-----|--------|------|----------------------|-------------|--------|
| Male   | 100 | 135.57 | 5.25 | 0.17                 | 1.96        | NS     |
| Female | 100 | 135.71 | 6.35 |                      |             |        |

Since the calculated 't' value is less than the table value for 198 degrees of freedom at 5% level of significance, the null hypothesis is accepted.

**Null Hypothesis – 2**

There is no significant difference in the job stress of high school teachers with regard to type of school.

Table - 3. Difference in Job Stress of High School Teachers with regard to Type of School

| Type of School | N   | Mean   | SD   | Calculated 't' Value | Table Value | Remark |
|----------------|-----|--------|------|----------------------|-------------|--------|
| Government     | 100 | 135.78 | 5.84 | 0.34                 | 1.96        | NS     |
| Private        | 100 | 135.50 | 5.81 |                      |             |        |

Since the calculated 't' value is less than the table value for 198 degrees of freedom at 5% level of significance, the null hypothesis is accepted.

**Null Hypothesis – 3**

There is no significant difference in the job stress of high school teachers with regard to locality of school.

Table - 4. Difference in Job Stress of High School Teachers with regard to Locality of School

| Locality of School | N   | Mean   | SD   | Calculated 't' Value | Table Value | Remark |
|--------------------|-----|--------|------|----------------------|-------------|--------|
| Rural              | 107 | 137.15 | 5.50 | 4.08                 | 1.96        | S      |
| Urban              | 93  | 133.90 | 5.70 |                      |             |        |

Since the calculated 't' value is greater than the table value for 198 degrees of freedom at 5% level of significance, the null hypothesis is rejected.

**Null Hypothesis – 4**

There is no significant difference in the job stress of high school teachers with regard to additional qualification.

Table - 5. Difference in Job Stress of High School Teachers with regard to Additional Qualification

| Additional Qualification | N   | Mean   | SD   | Calculated 't' Value | Table Value | Remark |
|--------------------------|-----|--------|------|----------------------|-------------|--------|
| M.Ed.                    | 162 | 135.54 | 5.96 | 0.56                 | 1.96        | NS     |
| M.Phil.                  | 38  | 136.08 | 5.17 |                      |             |        |

Since the calculated ‘t’ value is less than the table value for 198 degrees of freedom at 5% level of significance, the null hypothesis is accepted.

**Null Hypothesis – 5**

There is no significant difference in the job stress of high school teachers with regard to spouse employment status.

Table - 6. Difference in Job Stress of High School Teachers with regard to Spouse Employment Status

| Spouse Employment Status | N   | Mean   | SD   | Calculated ‘t’ Value | Table Value | Remark |
|--------------------------|-----|--------|------|----------------------|-------------|--------|
| Employed                 | 100 | 135.78 | 5.84 | 0.34                 | 1.96        | NS     |
| Unemployed               | 100 | 135.50 | 5.81 |                      |             |        |

Since the calculated ‘t’ value is less than the table value for 198 degrees of freedom at 5% level of significance, the null hypothesis is accepted.

**FINDINGS**

1. 42% of high school teachers have low job stress and 58% of them have high job stress.
2. The male and female teachers do not differ significantly in their job stress.
3. The high school teachers working in government schools and private schools do not differ significantly in their job stress.
4. The teachers working in rural schools and urban schools differed significantly in their job stress. The teachers working in rural schools have more job stress.
5. The teachers having M.Ed. and M.Phil. qualifications do not differ significantly in their job stress.
6. The teachers with employed spouses and unemployed spouses do not differ significantly in their job stress.

**CONCLUSION**

From the findings of the study, it is concluded that majority of the high school teachers have high level job stress. The gender, type of school, additional qualification and spouse employment status do not have significant influence on the job stress of teachers. But, the location of school has significantly influenced the job stress of teachers. Moreover, the rural school teachers have more job stress than their counterparts in urban schools. Hence, it is the duty of educational authorities of state and central governments should take necessary steps to wipe out the job stress of teachers to draw better outcome in their profession, i.e., reaching of the ultimate goal of education system by making the civilized, educated and qualified youths for the better tomorrow.

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