

Determinants of occupational stress among urban Indian school teachers

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Abstract

Occupational stress among teachers has become a matter of increasing concern. It is not only evidenced from the large body of studies on the subject but also through factors that predispose educators to work related stress. The present study also tends to identify demographic patterns of workplace stress as well as examine the role of correlates like socio-economic status and work experience on stress levels. It further explores specific workplace stressors reported by Indian teachers. The sample consisted of 398 teachers, 31.9% males and 68.1% females, from urban centre, New Delhi, India. The measures included the National Stress Awareness Day Stress Questionnaire and a self-report questionnaire designed for the purpose of the research. Results showed that with 52% public and rest private school employees, stress levels were found to be high among 28% (111 participants) of the sample. All demographic variables, Socio Economic Status (SES) categories, promotional and experience factors were contributing significantly to the stress prediction model but age group, work experience and promotion opportunities were reported as prime explanatory variables for the model ($B = 2$ approx.; $p < 0.05$). For every unit/category change in these variables, the stress score was seen to increase by 2. The optimal stress score that culminates to larger stressor of affecting general health was 10.8 and was 88% sensitive while a stress score beyond 11.5 is seen to affect work deliverables to students as reported by teachers. Findings were also reviewed in the context of practical implications they may render with probable reasoning. We recommend a constant evaluation of stress levels, for teachers, and providing appropriate counselling may be the stepping stone to reduce stress and improve quality of life for the teachers.

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