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## ASSESS THE LEVEL OF STRESS AMONG SCHOOL TEACHERS IN SELECTED SCHOOLS AT VELLORE

\*Alfred Solomon, D., David Robinson, P. and Thephilah Cathrine, R.

Faculty, Saveetha College of Nursing, Saveetha University, Chennai, Tamil Nadu, India

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### ABSTRACT

**Aim of the study:** Assess the level of stress among school teachers in selected schools at Vellore  
**Background:** Stress has touched almost all professions posing threat to mental and physical health. Teachers especially working at university level are under a great deal of stress related to various occupational stressors. The occupational stressors occur due to various factors and it has greater ill effect on the physical and mental health of the teachers thus the study is clearly focuses on identifying stress level of teachers to promote early detection and positive management for stress.

**Design:** Non-experimental descriptive research design was used to assess the level of stress among school teachers and to associate the level of stress with selected demographic variables.

**Methods:** 80 higher secondary school teachers were selected by using convenient sampling technique from two schools of Vellore District. Descriptive and inferential statistics was used to analyze the data collected.

**Results:** The study results showed that a majority of teachers i.e. 34 (42.5%) had moderate level of stress followed by 23 (28.75%) of teachers had mild stress and severe level of stress respectively. The study results also revealed that educational status and years of experience had statistical significance with level of stress at  $p < 0.05$

**Conclusion:** The study finding reveals the importance of being self-aware about stress and taking steps to keep it under control by using various stress management techniques.

#### \*Corresponding author

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## INTRODUCTION

There are many professions which man has adopted according to his knowledge and ability. All profession are equally important for the human development. However, the teaching is the profession, which has lead people on the high way of progress and prosperity. No development had been possible if there had been no teacher. All the sciences all the arts and crafts and all the civilizations and cultures are due to the teaching and it is the outcome of a teacher. A teacher is the person who shapes the future of everyone by providing best education to his or her students. Teacher plays a great role in the education of every student. A good teacher has many qualities and fully able to make their students successful in life.

A teacher should have the multiple faces of intelligence, creativity, communicative skills, and presence of mind to attract their students. Among this, the greater quality of the teacher is to understanding the positives and negatives of the each student and motivating them for a better future. Occupational stressors contribute to organizational inefficiency, high staff turnover, absenteeism due to sickness, decreased quality, and quantity of practice, increased costs of health care, and decreased job satisfaction. When there is a prolonged experience of occupational stress, it leads to various physical and psychological health issues. Various factors have been identified linked with teacher's occupational stress. The most important of these factors are: business requirements, many different activities within the school environment, lack of professional recognition, discipline problems in the classroom, bureaucracy, lack of support, workload, time

pressure, lack of benefits (Mearns & Chain, 2003). It has been argued that when teachers feel that they invest more in students, colleagues, and school than they receive from them, then they are more likely to face emotional, psychological and occupational difficulties (Van Horn, Schaufeli, Taris, 2001). The sources of stress experienced by a particular teacher are unique to him/her and depend on the interaction between personality, values and skills and the circumstances. All mentioned stressors have been shown to lead to teachers stress. The teachers are one who faces many of the hard challenges from students and the management or higher authorities and become direct victims of occupational stress. Thus, the current study focuses in identifying the stress among the Teacher. Identifying and solving the underlying causes for stress will bring the healthier life of the teacher which brings drastic positive changes in students educational performance and the quality of education of the nation.

**Background:** Stress has touched almost all professions posing threat to mental and physical health. Teachers especially working at university level are under a great deal of stress related to various occupational stressors. The occupational stressors occur due to various factors and it has greater ill effect on the physical and mental health of the teachers thus the study is clearly focuses on identifying stress level of teachers to promote early detection and positive management for stress.

**Aim of the study:** Assess the level of stress among school teachers in selected schools at Vellore

## MATERIALS AND METHODS

Non-experimental descriptive research design was used to assess the level of stress among 80 higher secondary school teachers and to associate the level of stress with selected demographic variables. The higher secondary school teachers were selected by using convenient sampling technique from two schools of Vellore District. The tool used for the study to collect the data was demographic variable which includes age, religion, gender, marital status, type of family, type of residence, educational status, and year of experience and Allen Elkin stress rating scale to assess the level of stress. It consists of 30 questions. It is rated on a four point scale such as never, occasionally, frequently and always. The interpretation of scoring is graded as 0= None, 1= Mild, 2= Moderate, 3= Severe and the scoring between 0-50 indicates mild stress, 51-75 indicates moderate stress, the scoring >75 indicates severe stress.

**Ethical consideration:** The project has been approved by the ethics committee of the institution. Informed consent was obtained from the participants before initiating the study.

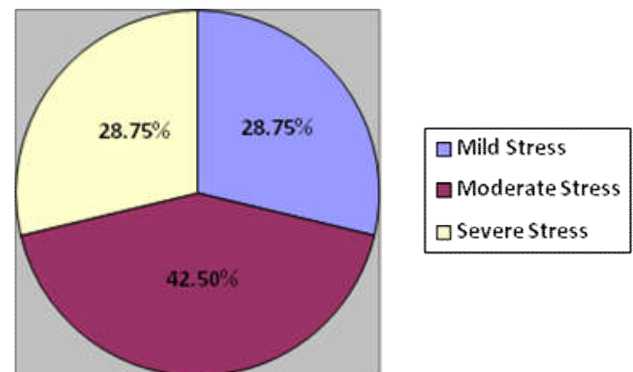
## RESULTS

The study results showed that a majority of teachers i.e. 34 (42.5%) had moderate level of stress followed by 23 (28.75%) of teachers had mild stress and severe level of stress respectively. The study results also revealed that educational status and years of experience had statistical significance with level of stress at  $p < 0.05$ . The data present in the Table 1 reveals that 43 (53.75%) teachers are between 25 - 34 years of age, 67 (24%) teachers were married, 54 (67.5%) teachers belong to nuclear family, the monthly income for 37 (46.25%) teachers were below 10,000, 68 (85%) teachers were under

graduates and 60 (75%) teachers have less than 3 years of experience.

**Table 1. Frequency and percentage distribution of demographic variables among school teachers (n=80)**

DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES	Frequency	Percentage
1. Age		
a) 25-34 years	43	53.75%
b) 35-44 years	31	38.75%
c) > 45 years	6	7.5%
2. Gender		
a) Male	16	20%
b) Female	64	80%
3. Religion		
a) Hindu	45	56.25%
b) Christian	25	31.25%
c) Muslim	10	12.5%
d) Others	-	-
4. Marital Status		
a) Married	67	24%
b) Unmarried	13	34%
c) Widow	-	28%
d) Separated	-	14%
5. Type of Family		
a) Nuclear Family	54	67.5%
b) Joint Family	26	32.5%
6. Income		
a) Below 10,000 per month	37	46.25%
b) 10,000 - 20,000 per month	25	31.25%
c) Above 20,000 per month	18	22.5%
7. Residential area		
a) Own house	57	71.25%
b) Rented house	23	28.75%
8. Educational Status		
a) Under Graduate	68	85%
b) Post Graduate	12	15%
9. Years of Experience		
a) 0 - 3 years	60	75%
b) 4 - 7 years	16	20%
c) 8 years and above	4	5%



**Figure 1: Percentage distribution of level of stress among school teachers (n=80)**

Figure 1 reveals that out of 80 school teachers, majority (42.50%) of them had moderate level of stress and 28.75% had mild and severe level of stress respectively

### Major Findings of the Study

- The study results shows that a majority of teachers i.e. 34(42.5%) had moderate level of stress followed by 23(28.75%) of teachers had mild stress and severe level of stress. Chi square test reveals that educational status and years of experience had statistical significance with level of stress at  $p < 0.05$
- Family income is significant to the level of stress

**Table 2. Association between selected demographic variables with the level of stress (n=80)**

DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES	Mild Stress		Moderate Stress		Severe Stress		Chi-square test and df
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
1. Age							$\chi^2=6.723$ df=4
a) 25-34 years	14	17.5	14	17.5	15	18.75	P=0.1512 (NS)
b) 35-44 years	8	10	18	22.5	5	6.25	
c) > 45 years	1	1.25	2	2.5	3	3.75	
2. Gender							$\chi^2=2.378$ df=2
a) Male	3	3.75	6	7.5	7	8.75	P=0.304 (NS)
b) Female	20	25	28	35	16	20	
3. Religion							$\chi^2=5.255$ df=6
a) Hindu	11	13.75	17	21.25	17	21.25	P=0.262 (NS)
b) Christian	9	11.25	13	16.25	3	3.75	
c) Muslim	3	3.75	4	5	3	3.75	
d) Others	-	-	-	-	-	-	
4. Marital Status							$\chi^2=2.311$ df=6
a) Married	20	25	30	37.5	17	21.25	P=0.314 (NS)
b) Unmarried	3	3.75	4	5	6	7.5	
c) Widow	-	-	-	-	-	-	
d) Separated	-	-	-	-	-	-	
5. Type of Family							$\chi^2=2.029$ df=2
a) Nuclear Family	17	21.25	20	25	17	21.25	P=0.362 (NS)
b) Joint Family	6	7.5	14	17.5	6	7.5	
6. Income							$\chi^2=12.17$ df=4
a) Below 10,000 per month	7	8.75	15	18.75	15	18.75	P=0.016 (S)
b) 10,000 - 20,000 per month	11	13.75	7	8.75	7	8.75	
c) Above 20,000 per month	5	6.25	12	15	1	1.25	
7. Type of Residence							$\chi^2=1.848$ df=2
a) Own house	18	22.5	25	31.25	14	17.5	P=0.396 (NS)
b) Rented house	5	6.25	9	11.25	9	11.25	
8. Educational Status							$\chi^2=0.174$ df=2
a) Under Graduate	20	25	29	36.25	19	23.75	P=0.916 (NS)
b) Post Graduate	3	3.75	5	6.25	4	5	
9. Years of Experience							$\chi^2=4.208$ df=4
a) 0 - 3 years	19	23.75	24	30	17	21.25	P=0.378 (NS)
b) 4 - 7 years	2	2.5	8	10	6	7.5	
c) 8 years and above	2	2.5	2	2.5	-	-	

- Note: \*\* - P<0.05 Level of Significant, N.S. – Not Significant
- Table 2 shows that family income is significant to the level of stress

## DISCUSSION

Teaching is regarded as a very stressful occupation. Increasing consciousness for education due to increasing competitions among students for achieving their goals added more pressure and stress on teachers. It is an established fact that the performance of teacher mainly depends upon his psychological state of mind. As occupational stress affects the physical and psychological well-being of the teacher; it definitely influences his efficiency and performance. Now when taken consideration of the government school teachers they have a very hectic schedule. They are involved in all the academic activities and also other activities. The school teachers are made to take census and participate in conducting the general election and so many activities they are being involved. Despite of this the change in educational system also has had an impact on the stress levels of the school teachers. The government school teachers are selected for their qualification, knowledge and capabilities in the field of teaching. Their time is supposed to be dedicated for classroom and related curricular and co-curricular activities of the students. But now, as we can observe in government schools, the teachers are loaded with other works other than teaching in the class like managing school records, filling up student scholarship/ other forms, census, attending trainings conducted by the department, etc.

The main objective of educating children is being hampered many times because of these activities. This is a serious issue faced by the teachers, which in turn is affecting quality of education. So the teachers should not be blamed for low quality in education. Rather the counseling should be provided. The teachers are asked to complete the syllabus in a very short period and we are asked to give intense training to the students who are attending the board exams. And also the change in the education system, and the trouble caused by the students and their parents are also much annoying to them. And hence it can have an impact on the level of stress on the school teachers.

## Conclusion

The study finding reveals the importance of being self-aware about stress and taking steps to keep it under control by using various stress management techniques.

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## Conflict of Interest

Authors declares no conflict of interest

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