

Research Article

A Study on the Stress Experienced by Women Teachers Working in High Schools

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ABSTRACT

A teacher can perform her duties well only if she is free from stress. Stress free teaching creates interest and enthusiasm among students towards teaching-learning. Stress is a negative psychological state with cognitive and emotional components and on its effects on the health. Present study is an attempt to identify the amount of stress experienced by the women teachers working in high schools. Survey method was adopted for the study and 150 women teachers from Kollam district were selected as the sample. Results of the study reveals that there is significant difference exists with respect to the age group, marital status and type of management. Teachers below 35 years of age feel high stress than those of above 35. Married teachers are in a state of high stress than the unmarried. The variables such as teaching experience, educational qualification and type of family have no significant difference on the scores of stress.

Keywords: Teacher Stress, Women Teachers, High School Teachers, Stress Factors, Age and Stress, Marital Status, Type of Management, Occupational Stress, Psychological Well-being

INTRODUCTION

Teachers that exhibit enthusiasm can lead to students who are more likely to be engaged, interested, energetic, and curious about learning the subject matter. Recent research has found correlation between teacher enthusiasm and students' intrinsic motivation to learn and vitality in the classroom. The teacher has a significant role in all levels of education. At primary level, the teacher role is concerned with socialisation process. At the secondary level, importance is given to instruction and the assessment of performance. Each role is constrained by a number of matters and problems.

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The teacher has to face these problems. These pressures may exert stress among teachers. The teachers under stress may not fulfil their duties and responsibilities according to the demands.

Stress is an inevitable and unavoidable component of life due to increasing complexities and competitiveness in life styles. In the fast changing world, no individual is free from stress and no profession is stress free. The concept of stress was first introduced by Seyle Hans in 1936. Sayle: defined stress as the non-specific response of the body to any demand placed upon it. Stress refers to any environmental, organisational and individual or internal demands which require the individual to readjust the usual behaviour pattern. Stress results because of the individual's interaction with environmental stimuli or factors such as social or technological changes, political and economical uncertainties, community conditions, etc. Kyriacou and Sutcliffe (1979) describe teacher stress as: response syndrome of negative affect such as anger and depression, usually accompanied b) physiological changes (such as increased heart rate) resulting from aspects of the teaching job and mediated by the perception that the demands made upon the person constitute a threat to his or her self-esteem.

NEED & SIGNIFICANCE

Women today are more goal oriented and independent. The modern women want to be a multitasker, an efficient career woman, a loving mother, a caring wife and an active member in the society. In this process, she gets stressed without even realising it. Working women have to face many crises. It has been seen that majority of working women in our society are engaged to teaching. Generally it is considered that teaching is comparatively smooth and relax job for women, but practically this is not true. Since teaching demands an appropriate responsibility in fostering the development of young, women teachers should be an active member at schools. Teachers are not immune to stress. Work stress in teachers produces many negative effects. These effects may be physical or psychological. The advanced technological and complex society and personal and work stressors have contributed to an increasing teacher crisis in schools. It has also produced adverse stressful classroom situation that have led to increased emotional and physical disabilities among teachers.

The focus of the present study is only on women secondary school teachers. The problem of women teachers are far more than their counterparts i.e. men teachers. Some of these problems are social; eg. social conservatism, rigid and oppressive cultural traditions, that may restrict the functioning of women teachers and some of the problems are related to the job

environment; eg. school location, transportation, long distance travelling, accommodation and security of the problems of unmarried women, etc. All these problems may lead to stress among teachers. Hence the need for the study.

THE PROBLEM

A study on the stress among women teachers working in high schools in relations to some select variables

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- ❖ To find out the level of stress among women teachers working in high schools
- ❖ To compare the level of stress of women teachers in relation to age, teaching experience, marital status, type of management, qualification and type of family.

HYPOTHESES

- ❖ There is no significant difference between stress and age group of women teachers working in high schools
- ❖ There is no significant difference between stress and teaching experience of women teachers working in high schools
- ❖ There is no significant difference between stress and marital status of women teachers working in high schools
- ❖ There is no significant difference between stress and type of management of women teachers working in high schools
- ❖ There is no significant difference between stress and qualification of women teacher: working in high schools
- ❖ There is no significant difference between stress and type of family of women teacher: working in high schools

METHODOLOGY

Method: Normative survey method was adopted for the present study

Sample: The total sample consists of 150 teachers of Kollam district in Kerala.

Tool used: The investigator used a modified version of the tool developed by Vijayalakshmi Ghali to measure the level of stress among high school women teachers. The instrument consists of 40 item with three responses mainly 1,2 and 3 depending on the intensity on the stress inducer.

DATAANALYSIS

The data were analysed in terms of means, standard deviation and 't' values.

Table 1

Mean and S.D values of the level of stress of high school teachers

Variable	N	Mean	Standard Deviation
Stress scores of Women high school teachers	150	64.65	2.98

The above table reveals that the mean obtained on the scores of teachers is 64.65 and the standard deviation is 2.98.

Table 2

Mean, SD and 't' values of the level of stress of high school women teachers with respect to age group

Age Group	N	Mean	S.D	t-value	Level of Significance
Below 35 yrs	76	65.37	2.83		
Above 35 yrs	74	63.91	2.98	3.08	0.01

The above table reveals that the calculated t value, 3.08 is greater than the table value 2.58 at 0.01 level of significance. Therefore the null hypotheses that 'there is no significant difference between stress and age group of high school women teachers' is rejected.

Table 3

Mean, SD and t values of the level of stress of high school women teachers with respect to teaching experience

Teaching Experience	N	Mean	S.D	t-value	Level of Significance
Below 10 yrs	81	65.04	2.81		
Above 10 yrs	69	64.17	3.14	1.78	NS

The above table reveals that the calculated 't' value, 1.78 is less than the table value 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore the null hypotheses that 'there is no significant

difference between the stress and teaching experience of high school women teachers' is accepted.

Table 4

Mean, SD and t values of the level of stress of high school women teachers with respect to marital status

Marital Status	N	Mean	S.D	t-value	Level of Significance
Married	77	66.83	2.15		
Unmarried	73	62.34	1.76	13.94	0.01

The above table reveals that the calculated t value, 13.94 is greater than the table value 2.58 at 0.01 level of significance. Therefore the null hypotheses that 'there is no significant difference between stress and marital status of high school women teachers' is rejected.

Table 5

Mean, SD and F values of the level of stress of high school women teachers with respect to Type of management

	Type of Management									F Ratio	Level of significance	Groups differed Significantly			
	Govt (1)			Aided			Unaided								
	N	Mean	S.D	N	Mean	S.D	N	Mean	S.D						
Level of stress	49	64.06	2.85	55	65.60	2.96	46	64.13	2.94	4.64	0.05	1 & 2 (0.01) 2 & 3 (0.05)			

The obtained 'F' value for the stress of the women high school teachers with regard to type of management is 4.64 which is significant at 0.05 level. Hence the null hypotheses that 'There is no significant difference between stress and type of management of women teachers working in high schools' is rejected. Post-hoc comparison of means revealed that teachers working in aided schools had significantly high stress score than that of teachers working in government schools ($p<0.01$). Also it is found that teachers working in unaided schools possess significantly low stress scores than that of teachers working in aided schools ($p<0.05$).

Table 6

Mean, SD and 't' values of the level of stress of high school women teachers with respect to Qualification

Qualification	N	Mean	S.D	t- value	Level of Significance
PG	75	65.03	3.04		
UG	75	64.27	2.91	1.56	NS

The above table reveals that the calculated 't' value, 1.56 is less than the table value 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore the null hypotheses that 'there is no significant difference between the stress and qualification of high school women teachers' is accepted.

Table 7

Mean, SD and t values of the level of stress of high school women teachers with respect to Type of family

Type of family	N	Mean	S.D	t- value	Level of Significance
Nuclear	78	64.95	2.92		
Joint	72	64.30	3.05	1.33	NS

The above table reveals that the calculated 't' value, 1.33 is less than the table value 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance. Therefore the null hypotheses that 'there is no significant difference between the stress and type of family of high school women teachers' is accepted.

FINDINGS

From the analysis of data, it is found that

- ❖ The mean and standard deviation of stress scores of teachers for the total sample are 64.65 and 2.98 respectively.
- ❖ There is significant difference between teachers of different age groups with regard to stress. It was found that the stress experienced by women teachers who are below 35 years was greater than that of the other group.
- ❖ There is no significant difference between stress and teaching experience of women teachers working in high schools.

- ❖ There is significant difference between stress and marital status of women teacher working in high schools. It was found that the stress experienced by married teachers was greater than that of unmarried.
- ❖ There is significant difference between stress and type of management of women teachers working in high schools
- ❖ There is no significant difference between stress and qualification of women teacher: working in high schools
- ❖ There is no significant difference between stress and type of family of women teacher working in high schools

CONCLUSION

A teacher can perform his duties well only if he or she is free from stress. Stress free teaching creates interest and enthusiasm among students towards teaching-learning. Teachers must be provided with some ways to cope up with stress and by which they can regulate external and internal stressors. From the above findings it can be concluded that the variables such as teaching experience, qualification and the type of family the teachers belong to have no significant difference on the scores of stress. While considering the age group of teachers, teachers below 35 years feel high stress may be due to the lack of knowledge and experience in the field of teaching. They should get professional support and in service training to manage the stress. Married teachers are in a state of high stress probably due to their domestic work. Their physical and mental strain should be minimised to work effectively in the school. It is impossible to remove all the pressures from life, but we can learn strategies to stop excessive pressure leads to stress.

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