Level of stress and coping mechanism among teaching community

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ABSTRACT *In this paper an attempt is made to study the self-reported perceived occupational stress among teaching community working in private and government educational institutions working in Andhra Pradesh. For achieving the objectives of the study nearly 600 sample respondents are selected base on convenient sampling. Data is collected with the help of self-administration of questionnaire and analysed with the help of SPSS by using descriptive and inferential statistics. The results found private teacher reported high level of occupational stress comparing with government teachers further the study identify main sources of occupational stress in teaching are Role Overload, Role Ambiguity, Unreasonable Group and Political Pressures, Responsibility for Persons, Under Participation, Powerlessness Role Conflict, Poor Peer Relations, Intrinsic Improvement, Low Status and Strenuous Working Conditions and Unprofitability.*

Keywords: *Intrinsic Improvement,Low Status, Poor Peer Relations Role Ambiguity,Role Conflict and Role Overload.*

Introduction

The cultural, social and economic development of any country depends upon the human resource it devours. Globalization of both public and private sector organizations in India makes HRM more challenging because it has raised a number of issues like cross cultural training, advanced technology, compensation and benefits, etc, hence, competent human resources and their commitment is essential for effective management of organization and appropriate organization and motivation can grow and develop their potential in the long run. It is the human resources which can make a difference and which can have an everlasting impact on the survival of any organization. In this context, Oliver Sheldon observed that, "no industry can be rendered efficient services and products so long as, the basic fact remains unrecognized that it is principally human. It is not a mass of machines and technical processes but a body of men. It is not a complex of matter, but a complex of humanity. It fulfils its functions, not by virtue of some impersonal force, but by human energy. Its body is not an intricate maze of mechanical device but a magnified nervous system'". Therefore, human resources should be handled prudently by predicting their behaviour to the possible extent, in view of the complexities involved in managing them.

Review of literature

Abrol (1990) had examined the strains experienced and coping strategies used by 27 male and 27 female teachers. Results indicated that subjects reported interpersonal and psychological stress. They used social support to deal with stress.

Reddy and Ramamurthy (1991) analysed the influence of age on stress experience of a person. The sample consisted of 200 executives. The results revealed that executives in the age group of 41-50 experienced more stress than the age group of 51-60. Moderating variables among executives experiencing stress include not only age but also the years of service in the employment.

Beena and Poduval (1992) conducted a study on sample of 80 (40 male and 40 female) executives in different organizations. They found that when age increases, experienced stress also increased due to the increase in the responsibility of the executives. Female executives showed higher rate of stress because women experience greater amount of work change than men do.

Blix *et al.* (1994) conducted a study on occupational stress among university teachers and found that faculty having less than 10 years of experience had higher stress than faculty with more than 20 years of experience.

Mayes (1996) conducted a study on police officers, fire fighters, electrician and executives aged 18-63 years. Multiple regression revealed that age moderated the relationship among various stressors and physiological symptoms as well as psychological depression and life satisfaction.

Ryhal and Singh (1996) studied the correlates of job stress among university faculty. A sample of 100 faculty members 30 professors, 31 associate and 39 assistant professors. Results revealed that assistant professors experienced higher job stress than associate professors and professors.

Orpen (1996) examined the moderating effects of cognitive failure on the relationship between work stress and personal strain. He compared the work stress among 136 nurses and 12 college lecturers. The results found that nurses experienced more stress than the lecturers.

Ryhal and Singh (1996) considered university faculty for their study comprised sample of 100 faculty members 30 professors, 31 associate and 39 assistant professors. Results revealed that those with 26-35 years' experience had higher job stress than those with teaching experience of16-25 years and 5-15 years. Those with 16-25 years' experience had higher job stress than those with teaching experience of 5-15 years.

Ansari and Singh (1997) made an attempt to explore the contribution of demographic variables to the nature of stress experienced by the teachers in an agriculture university. The study comprised sample of 235 faculty members (23 professors, 74 associate and 138 assistant professors). The professors were either in moderate or in high stress categories as compared to associate and assistant professors.

Bhagawan (1997) conducted a study on 100 teachers selected from 20 schools in Orissa. The sample consisted of 100 teachers (53 male and 47 female teachers). The study revealed that higher the teaching experience, lesser the perceived burn out.

Aminabhavi and Triveni (1998) revealed that managers experience significantly higher occupational stress than clerks. The fact is that managers have greater responsibility of his position than the clerks.

Upadhayay and Singh (1999) studied the level of occupational stress experienced by the 20 college teachers and 20 executives. The executives showed significant higher levels of stress than college teachers on role over load, role ambiguity, role conflicts factor.

Aminabhavi and Triveni (2000) in their study found that age, sex, coping strategies of bank employees have not influenced their occupational stress.

Gaur and Dhawan (2000)examined that the relationship between work related stressors and adaptation pattern among women professionals. A sample of 120 women professionals (30 teachers, 30 doctors, 30 bank officers and 30 bureaucrats) participated in the study. It showed that the four professionals' groups have shared almost similar level of stress except in the categories of career development and stressors specific to working women.

Pandey and Srivastava (2000) had studied the female personnel working in rail way, bank and teaching institutions. A sample of 96 females, 16 subjects in each professional area were taken. The study identified that respondents among all the three dimensions, clerks of bank and railway experienced more work stress as compared to teachers.

Pandey and Srivastava (2000) had studied the female personnel working in railway, bank and teaching institutions. A sample of 96 females, 16 subjects in each professional area both from nuclear and joint family were taken. The study identified that respondents belonging to nuclear family had expressed more interpersonal work stress.

Virk *et al.* (2001)conducted a study on occupational stress and work motivation in relation to age, job level and type-A behaviour. He reported that age and job level can have strong influence on job stress.

Rastogi and Kashyap (2001) conducted a study on "occupational stress and work adjustment among working women". Sample consisted of 150 nurses, clerks, and teachers. The average age of the sample is quite matured and experienced, which help them to ignore the stress and maintain the smooth adjustment in the organization.

Vashishtha and Mishra (2004) observed that social support from the family, co-workers, supervisors and other people could minimize stress among the employees.

Bhatia and Kumar (2005) studied on occupational stress and burn out in industrial employees. A sample consisted of 100 employees belonging to supervisor and below supervisor level. Their experience/length of service varied from 2-6 and 7-12 years. Industrial employees at supervisor rank and below supervisor rank with more experience of service had more occupational stress due to more feeling of depersonalization and more emotional exhaustion.

Anitha Devi (2007) aimed at identifying the degree of life stress and role stress experienced by professional women. A total sample of 180 women professionals belonging to six occupations were chosen for the study. The results revealed that, the older person experience lower life stress and role stress. Younger people experience more stress as compared to older people. The greater the numbers of years of service the greater life and role stress. The lower the income, greater stress experienced *i.e.* stress decreases with increase in income.

Ansari (2007) had studied the nature and extent of stress in agriculture university teachers. Sample consisted of 235 respondents comprising 30 professors, 74 associate professors and135 assistant professors. The result revealed that the correlation between the nature of stress and qualification of teachers in different cadres was found to be non-significant.

Chand and Monga (2007) examined the correlates of job stress and burn out among 100 faculty members from two universities. He found that, higher education can combat stress and burn out related problems among the faculty members.

Anitha Devi (2007) aimed at identifying the degree of life stress and role stress experienced by professional women. A total sample of 180 women professionals belonging to six occupations were chosen for the study. The result showed science and technology professionals and doctors experienced significantly greater life and role stress followed by administrators and self-employed. Teachers and bankers experienced comparatively lesser stress in both role as well as life.

Chand and Monga (2007) examined the correlates of job stress and burn out among 100 faculty members from two universities. Respondents with internal locus of control, high social support and high job involvement experience less stress. Results also revealed that, maximum stress is reported by professors and minimum by assistant professors.

Kaur and Kaur (2007) attempted to make a study on occupational stress and burn out among women police. The sample comprised of 80 women police and age ranges between 25-45. The results concluded that police work is most stressful occupation and as the occupational stress increases the level of the burn out also increases.

Bhagawan, as cited in Nayak (2008), researched 100 educators from 20 schools in Orissa, India. The sample consisted of 53 male and 47 female teachers. This study revealed that the higher the teaching experience, the lesser the burnout as perceived by the teachers. In the same study, gender differences were also investigated. It was found that male teachers experienced more stress than female teachers. Blix et al., as cited in Nayak (2008), recorded in their research on occupational stress among university teachers that the educators with fewer than 10 years' involvement in teaching experienced higher stress levels than those with more than 20 years' experience.

In regard to gender, a study done by **Barkhuizen and Rothmann (2008)** recorded no significant differences between male and female academics regarding the amount of occupational stress experienced. In a Canadian study, female teachers experienced more stress from workload and student behaviour than their male counterparts (Klassen, 2010).

Raveeswaran, Raveendran and Ananthasayanan (2011), conducting a study to determine whether teacher stress was associated with demographical factors, discovered significant differences in teacher occupational stress based on age, sex, experience and parenthood. The focus in this present study is on age, gender, highest level of education and teaching experience. Aftab and Khatoon (2012) concluded in their study of 608 teachers from 42 schools that male teachers had more job stress than females.

In a study by **Okeke and Dlamini (2013)**, stressors with teachers in Swaziland were discussed. A weak relationship was found between job stress and gender, marital status and qualifications. In a 2007 educator study in China, the greatest stress however was found with new teachers (fewer than six years) and teachers with between 16- and 20-years' service experience.Veteran teachers (25 years and more experience), experienced the least stress (Pei & Guoli, 2007). Age was found to have a moderately significant relationship with job stress.

Statement of The Problem

Occupational Stress is the study of all those aspects of work that either have or threaten to have bad effects on the organism such as physical properties of working environment, pollution, extreme heat or cold, humidity, pressure, noise, bad man machine design, time pressures, deadlines, non-standard working hours, organizational or administrative irrationality, poor management relations, demotion, transfer, non-availability of extrinsic rewards (increase pay scale), conflict with boss or subordinates, ambiguity about job security and many more.

The transactional model of stress is one in which stress is regarded as an individual's perceptual phenomenon rooted in psychological processes (Mackay, Cox, Burrows, & Lazzerini, 1978; Lazarus, 1976). Role Stressors can also be significant sources of problems in the workplace. Role conflict and role ambiguity have been studied extensively (Fisher & Gitelson, 1983), as have responsibility, efficiency, boundary problems, and overload (Kahn, 1974).

The present study is attempted to know the source of stressor in teaching occupation and the coping strategies adopted by the teaching community to combat stress in teaching.

Significance of the study

Workings conditions or academics have changed considerably over the last decade. It has been argued that university lecturers and researchers currently experience similar pressures of professionals in any large organisation (Thorsen, 1996). Compared to other occupational groups, however, little research has focused on the job stressors experienced by academics. Even less is known about the extent of strain in the higher education sector, and how job stressors are related to the health, wellbeing and satisfaction of employees.

Objectives of The Study

The objectives of the current study are:

- To assess the Occupational stress of teachers working in private and government educational institutions.
- To know the main source of occupational stress among the teachers working in private and government educational institutions.
- To study the coping strategies adopted by teachers working in private and government educational institutions.

Research Questions

1. What are the main occupational stressors perceived by teaching community?
2. What strategies teachers are adopting for combat occupational stress?

Scope of the Study

To fulfil the objectives of this research, the study is undertaken to analyse the level of occupational stress and sources of occupational stress among teacher community working in government and private owned educational institutions in Rayalaseema region of Andhra Pradesh. The scope of the study is extended to only to know sources of occupational stress and coping strategies.

Research Method and Design

Research Strategy

In this study, researcher decided to utilize the qualitative method because its use allows researchers to characterize and capture the complex nature and life experiences of the phenomena being researched (Birkinshaw, Brannen, & Tung, 2011).

Research design

Research design of the present study is descriptive cum explanatory in nature as the study aimed at achieving new insights into a phenomenon and to gain familiarity with the various aspects occupational stress and coping strategies adopted for combat stress.

Population of The Study

The population of the present study is the all private and government owned higher educational institutions (formal and engineering education) institute situated in Anantapur, Chittoor, Kadapa and Kurnool cities of Rayalaseema Region in Andhra Pradesh.

Sampling Frame

The sampling frame for the present research study would be comprised of selected private and government owned higher educational institutionssituated in Anantapur, Chittoor, Kadapa and Kurnool cities of Rayalaseema Region in Andhra Pradesh.

Sampling Unit

The sample subjects for the present research are selected teachers working in selected private and government owned higher educational institutions situated in Rayalaseema Region of Andhra Pradesh.

Table 1 Selected private and government owned higher educational institutions

S.No	City	Nature of Ownership	Name of the Institution
1	Kurnool	Government	Government Degree College for Men Kurnool
		Private	G Pulla Reddy Engineering College
2	Kadapa	Government	Government Degree College for Men
		Private	Kandula Sreenivasa Reddy Memorial College of Engineering
4	Anantapur	Government	Government Degree College for Men
		Private	Chiranjeevi Reddy Institute of Engineering & Technology
3	Chittoor	Private	Sree Vidyanikethan Engineering College
		Government	Government (PVKN) Degree College

Sample Size Determination

The size of the sample was determined on the basis of Cochran's (1963:75) equation, which he developed to yield a representative sample for proportions. Since, there is a large population but that we do not know the variability in the proportion; therefore, assuming p=0.5 (maximum variability) at 95 per cent confidence level and + 4.0 per cent precision (Malhotra, N. K., & Dash, S. 2010).

The resulting sample size was taken as:

$$N = \frac{Z^2\ p\ q}{e^2} = \frac{(1.96)^2\ (0.5)\ (0.5)}{(0.04)^2} = 600 \text{ respondents.}$$

N= Sample Size; Z= Z- value (1.96 for a 95 per cent confidence level); p= maximum variability in population; q=l-p and e= level of precision.

Table 2 Sample size for the study

S. No	City	Nature of Ownership	Name of the Institution	Sample size for the study
1	Kurnool	Government	Government Degree College for Men Kurnool	50
		Private	G Pulla Reddy Engineering College	100
2	Kadapa	Government	Government Degree College for Men	50
		Private	Kandula Sreenivasa Reddy Memorial College of Engineering	100
4	Anantapur	Government	Government Degree College for Men	50
		Private	Chiranjeevi Reddy Institute of Engineering & Technology	100
3	Chittoor	Private	Sree Vidyanikethan Engineering College	100
		Government	Government (PVKN) Degree College	50
Total				**600**

Sampling Technique

In the present study, convenience sampling method was followed to gather the data from the targeted respondents.

Sources of Data

The main sources of data for the present research consists of both primary and secondary sources. The primary data is collected with the help of administration of well-structured questionnaire. The secondary sources of data are journals, books, articles, reports, records and through internet sources.

Date collecting procedure

The data used for the present study is primary in nature. The primary data was collected through the field survey by using questionnaire.

Description of Scales

Table 3 Scale Description

S. No	Variable	Components	Source
1	Level of Stress	1	Self-designed
2	Sources of Occupational Stress	47	occupational stress scale given by A.K. Srivastava and A.P. Singh
3	Coping Strategies	56	Stress Coping Check List standardized by Rao, et al (1989)

Reliability of the instrument

In this study, the coefficient alpha analysis is performed on each scale. The coefficient alpha values are shown in the table no 4.

Table 4 *Reliability of instruments*

Sno	Variables	Components	Reliability-Cronbach Alpha (α)
1	**Organisational Role Stressors Sub-Scales**	47	**Composite Reliability-.831**
1.1	Role Overload	6	.721
1.2	Role Ambiguity	4	.743
1.3	Role Conflict	5	.681

1.4	Unreasonable Group and Political Pressures	4	.881
1.5	Responsibility for Persons	3	.764
1.6	Under Participation	4	.786
1.7	Powerlessness	3	.814
1.8	Poor Peer Relations	4	.861
1.9	Intrinsic Improvement	4	.784
1.10	Low Status	3	.813
1.11	Strenuous Working Conditions	4	.678
1.12	Unprofitability	3	.821
2	**Coping Strategies Sub-Scales**	56	**Composite Reliability-.821**
2.1	Healthy Cognitive Mechanism	15	.887
2.2	Social Support Coping	5	.895
2.3	Spiritual Religious Coping	6	.921
2.4	Physical Activity Coping	6	.892
2.5	Problem Solving Coping	5	.920
2.6	Unhealthy Coping Habits	4	.871
2.7	Unproductive coping mechanism	11	.850
2.8	High Risk Coping	4	.731

Variables of The Study

Dependent variable

For the present study Occupational stress have been taken as dependent variable.

Independent variables

The independent variable of the study is coping strategies.

Data anlysis

The data collected through the questionnaire was analysed using the SPSS 21.0. Researcher has used Descriptive Frequency analysis and exploratory factor analysis.

Results and Discussion

Table 5 Perceived self-reported level of stress among private institute teachers

Occupational stress level	Frequency	Percent	Mean	Sd. Deviation
Level 1	60	15.0	**6.5**	**2.32**
Level 2	70	17.5		
Level 3	123	30.8		
Level 4	38	9.5		
Level 5	17	4.3		
Level 6	35	8.8		
Level 7	19	4.8		
Level 8	8	2.0		
Level 9	16	4.0		
level 10	14	3.5		
Total	400	100.0		

Note: Level 1 – 3 = Low, Level 4 – 7 = Average, Level 8 – 10 = Extreme (American Psychological Association, 2011).

From the table 5 it is inferred that the perceived self-reported occupational stress among private institute teachers mean value is 6.5 (SD 2.32) which is moderate in teaching.

Table 6 Perceived self-reported level of stress among government institute teachers

Occupational stress level	Frequency	Percent	Mean	Sd. Deviation
Level 1	22	11.0	**4.71**	**2.50**
Level 2	18	9.0		
Level 3	41	20.5		
Level 4	19	9.5		

Level 5	17	8.5		
Level 6	35	17.5		
Level 7	19	9.5		
Level 8	8	4.0		
Level 9	16	8.0		
level 10	5	2.5		
Total	200	100.0		

Note: Level 1 – 3 = Low, Level 4 – 7 = Average, Level 8 – 10 = Extreme (American Psychological Association, 2011).

From the table 6 it is inferred that the perceived self-reported occupational stress among government institute teachers mean value is 4.71 (SD 2.50) which is moderate in teaching.

Table 7 Factor analysis-sources of occupational stress

Pattern Matrix[a]											
	Component										
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
RO1	**.986**										
RO2	**.964**										
RO3	**.952**										
RO4	**.909**										
RO5	**.956**										
RO6	**.943**										
RA1							**.909**				
RA2							**.909**				
RA3							**.819**				
RA4							**.890**				
RC1			**.927**								
RC2			**.849**								
RC3			**.884**								
RC4			**.932**								
RC5			**.929**								
UGPP2						**.916**					
UGPP3						**.899**					
UGPP4						**.938**					
UGPP5						**.844**					
RP1										**.906**	
RP2										**.916**	
RP3										**.837**	
UP1								**.951**			
UP2								**.850**			
UP3								**.794**			
UP4								**.811**			
PW1											**.761**
PW2											**.728**
PW3											**.883**
PPR1									**.900**		
PPR2									**.930**		
PPR3									**.825**		
PPR4									**.722**		
II1				**.925**							
II2				**.893**							
II3				**.914**							
II4				**.910**							
LS1		**.955**									
LS2		**.915**									
LS3		**.941**									
SWC1					**.964**						
SWC2					**.953**						

SWC3					**.891**						
SWC4					**.819**						
UNP1.								**.812**			
UNP2								**.710**			
UNP3								**.754**			
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Promax with Kaiser Normalization.											
a. Rotation converged in 7 iterations.											
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy **.639**											
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity Approx. Chi-Square **1528.831**											
df **153**											
Sig. **000**											
Total Variance 75.365											

Results of Principal Component Analysis for sources of occupational stress among teacher working in private and government educational institutions are tabulated in Table 7. Retaining only the variables with eigen values greater than one (Kaiser's criterion), from the study of total variance explained (table no 58) it is 75.36%.

On the basis of Varimax Rotation with Kaiser Normalization, 11 sources of occupational stress are extracted. Each factor is constituted of all those variables that have factor loadings greater than or equal to 0.5. the major sources of occupational stress in teaching profession are Role Overload, Role Ambiguity, Unreasonable Group and Political Pressures, Responsibility for Persons,Under Participation,Powerlessness Role Conflict, Poor Peer Relations,Intrinsic Improvement, Low Status and Strenuous Working Conditions andUnprofitability.

Table 8 Factor Analysis-Coping Strategies

Pattern Matrix[a]								
	Component							
	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
HCM1	**.998**							
HCM2	**.931**							
HCM3	**.936**							
HCM4	**.941**							
HCM5	**.947**							
HCM6	**.929**							
HCM7	**.922**							
HCM8	**.921**							
HCM9	**.980**							
HCM10	**.971**							
HCM11	**.957**							
HCM12	**.964**							
HCM13	**.976**							
HCM14	**.951**							
HCM15	**.950**							
SSC1						**.948**		
SSC2						**.813**		
SSC3						**.861**		
SSC4						**.947**		
SSC5						**.983**		
SRC1				**.987**				
SRC2				**.907**				
SRC3				**.914**				
SRC4				**.974**				
SRC4				**.969**				
SRC5				**.962**				
PAC1			**.998**					

PAC2			**.980**					
PAC3			**.965**					
PAC4			**.978**					
PAC5			**.977**					
PAC6			**.928**					
PSC1					**.991**			
PSC2					**.936**			
PSC3					**.902**			
PSC4					**.977**			
PSC5					**.953**			
UCH1								**.906**
UCH2								**.929**
UCH3								**.866**
UCH4								**.909**
UNCM1		**.925**						
UNCM2		**.924**						
UNCM3		**.955**						
UNCM4		**.943**						
UNCM5		**.944**						
UNCM6		**.962**						
UNCM7		**.939**						
UNCM8		**.956**						
UNCM9		**.957**						
UNCM10		**.958**						
UNCM11		**.954**						
HRC1							**.992**	
HRC2							**.954**	
HRC3							**.972**	
HRC4							**.942**	
Extraction Method: Principal Component Analysis. Rotation Method: Promax with Kaiser Normalization.								
a. Rotation converged in 6 iterations.								
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy .943								
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity Approx. Chi-Square 67388.860								
df **1540**								
Sig. **000**								
Total Variance 91.64								

It can be concluded that there are eight factors extracted from the 56 variables and explaining about 91.64 percent of the variance in the eight factors are relating coping strategies adopted by teacher in combating stress in their profession. The factors were labeled according to the factor loadings and while considering the loading values the factor loading with more than .50 is considered. The above table reveals that there are eight main coping strategies are adopted by the teacher for overcoming stress in work among them they are Healthy Cognitive Mechanism, Social Support Coping, Spiritual Religious Coping, Physical Activity Coping, Problem Solving Coping, Unhealthy Coping Habits,Unproductive Coping Mechanism and High-Risk Coping.

Conclusion

There is widespread concern over the high levels of reported work-related stress, job dissatisfaction and psychological distress associated with teaching and the effects of stress on teacher's sense of well-being and their willingness to stay in the profession. Much of the traditional research on teacher stress has been carried out by external 'experts' using quantitative survey type approaches to analyse occupational stress levels resulting in restrictive data analysis unrepresentative of the true picture of stress in the teaching profession. Researchers have advocated a more holistic approach incorporating mixed methods combining both qualitative and quantitative methods in order to gain subjective teacher reports of stress and coping mechanisms resulting in a fuller picture on teacher stress with future recommendations grounded in research.

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