

A Detailed Study on Job Stress Among Private School Teachers in Nandyal District

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Abstract

This study investigates job stress among teachers in private schools in Nandyal District, Andhra Pradesh, India, focusing on its prevalence, sources, and impact on workplace performance. Utilizing a cross-sectional research design, data were collected from 250 teachers across 20 private schools through structured questionnaires, including the perceived Stress Scale (PSS-10) and a customized occupational stress inventory. The findings reveal that most of the teachers experience moderate to high levels of stress, primarily driven by factors such as heavy workloads, inadequate salaries, large class sizes (averaging 40+ students), lack of job security, and limited administrative support.

Teachers aged above 40, those with over 15 years of experience, and those earning less than ₹30,000 monthly reported significantly higher stress levels. The study also identifies a negative correlation between job stress and job satisfaction, with stressed teachers exhibiting reduced productivity and increased absenteeism. Gender and marital status showed no significant association with stress levels. The results underscore the need for targeted interventions, such as workload management, professional development programs, and mental health support, to mitigate occupational stress and enhance teacher well-being in private schools.

Keywords: Teachers, Private Schools, Work Place, Stress, Teacher's well-being, Performance

INTRODUCTION

Teaching is widely acknowledged as one of the most demanding and high-pressure professions. Educators frequently encounter a unique form of occupational stress, characterized by persistent emotional strain, frustration, and feelings of helplessness, stemming from various aspects of their professional responsibilities. This chronic stress can adversely affect both physical and mental health, leading to symptoms such as fatigue, irritability, anxiety, headaches, diminished self-confidence, boredom, and concentration difficulties. The primary contributors to this stress encompass workload demands, physical and role-related pressures, interpersonal challenges, and a systemic issue within the educational environment. Teacher occupational stress arises from a combination of factors. A few are Emotional Exhaustion, Physical Symptoms, Cognitive Challenges and Behavioral Changes etc. High moral and ethical expectations from society, often without corresponding recognition or compensation. Addressing these challenges requires a multifaceted approach, including institutional support, adequate resources, professional development opportunities, and strategies to promote work-life balance.

Recognizing and mitigating the sources of stress is essential to enhance teacher well-being and ensure the sustainability of the teaching profession.

Significant of Study

This pioneering research holds substantial significance as it endeavors to identify the perceived stressors affecting school teachers and the coping mechanisms they employ. By examining these factors, the study provides critical insights into the occupational challenges faced by educators, particularly in the districts of Andhra Pradesh. Understanding these stressors is vital for comprehending the role of teachers in shaping the educational landscape for future generations in this region.

The investigation delves into previously unexplored aspects of teaching and teacher well-being, offering a unique perspective on work-related stress in the specified district. The findings serve as a valuable reference for social scientists and educationists, aiding in advanced research on stress among school teachers. Addressing the issue of occupational stress is essential, necessitating collaborative efforts between administration and educators to improve the work environment and conditions, thereby mitigating stress levels. This research aims to determine the extent of self-reported stress and identify the primary sources of life and work-related stress among teachers.

Literature Review

Cool (1986) emphasized the significant role of time constraints in contributing to teacher stress, highlighting a strong correlation between occupational stress and negative emotional responses among educators. Dewe (1986) underscored the importance of distinguishing between the presence of negative job aspects and the absence of positive ones when assessing teacher stress. He advocated for awareness not only of stress-inducing factors but also of elements that provide support, satisfaction, and enjoyment in the teaching profession. Holahan and Moos (1986) found that psychological stress adversely affects physical health, with the impact depending on an individual's coping mechanisms in specific situations. Dunham (1992) described stress as a process involving behavioral, emotional, mental, and physical reactions resulting from prolonged or escalating pressures that exceed available coping strategies. Farooq A. Shah (2003) explored the nature, dimensions, causes, symptoms, and coping strategies related to stress, observing that a majority of employees experience moderate to high levels of workplace stress. Rubina Hanif and colleagues (2004) identified the sources and levels of teacher stress, job performance, and self-efficacy among female school teachers. Their study revealed a significant relationship between teacher stress, job performance, and self-efficacy, suggesting that self-efficacy plays a moderating role in the stress-performance dynamic. Kitenga (2009) identified major stressors for teachers, including large class sizes, public misunderstanding of teachers' workloads, students' negative attitudes toward classroom tasks, and student misconduct. These factors not only lead to increased stress but also negatively impact teacher performance. Shawna Hoots (2014) discovered that an indifferent classroom management style is associated with higher stress levels among teachers. While emotion-focused and problem-focused coping strategies significantly predict stress levels, they do not moderate the relationship between classroom management style and stress.

Objectives:

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study is carried out to analyse the role of stress among the female secondary school teachers

in Vizianagaram city and is a district headquarters of Vizianagaram district in the Indian state of Andhra Pradesh

1. To study the role stress of female teachers and classify them.
2. To study the impact of some school related variables like subjects handled type of management and medium of instruction on role stress of teachers.
3. To study the impact of some personal variables like qualification, marital status, type of family, income of family and experience on role stress of teachers.

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This study is carried out to analyse the role of stress among the job stress among private school teachers in Nandyal and is a district head quarters of Nandyal in the Indian state of Andhra Pradesh. A few are

- To Assess the Prevalence of Job Stress
- To Identify Key Stressors
- To Examine Demographic Influences
- To Evaluate the Impact on Performance
- To Explore Coping Mechanisms

Data Collection Tools:

- Instrument Used: A structured questionnaire with standardized stress scales Sections
 - Demographics (age, gender, qualification, years of experience, type of school)
 - Work-related stressors
 - Coping strategies
 - Overall stress level (Likert scale: 1 = No stress, 5 = Extreme stress)

Data Collection Procedure

- Surveys conducted in-person and/or online.
- Data collection time frame: 2–4 weeks.

Data Analysis and Statistical Tools

- Mean Median and Standard Deviation of stress scores.
- Distribution of stress levels across demographic variables.

Causes of Job Stress in the Workplace:

A Study on Private Schools in Nandyal District based on general trends in occupational stress among teachers, and tailored to the context of Nandyal District, the following are likely causes of job stress in private schools in this region.

Heavy Workload:

Teachers often manage heavy workload (frequently 40+ students) and are responsible for extensive administrative tasks, lesson planning, and extracurricular activities, leading to time pressure and burnout.

Inadequate Salaries:

Low pay, often below ₹30,000 per month, relative to the cost of living in Nandyal District, creates financial strain, particularly for teachers supporting families.

Lack of Job Security:

Many private school teachers work on temporary or contract-based terms without benefits like provident fund or health insurance, fostering anxiety about job stability.

Large Class Sizes: Overcrowded classrooms make it challenging to provide individualized attention, manage student behavior, and maintain teaching quality and increasing stress.

Limited Administrative Support: Insufficient resources, lack of professional development opportunities, and minimal support from school management contribute to feelings of isolation and frustration.

High Parental and Institutional Expectations: Pressure from parents and school authorities to achieve high student performance in exams adds to teachers' stress, especially in competitive academic environments.

Work-Life Imbalance: Long working hours, including after-school grading and preparation reduce time for personal and family life, exacerbating stress levels.

Inadequate Infrastructure: Poor facilities, such as lack of teaching aids, unreliable electricity, wash rooms, drinking water facility, cramped staff rooms, hinder effective teaching and increase workplace dissatisfaction.

Lack of Recognition: Limited acknowledgment of teachers' efforts by school management or society diminishes motivation and contributes to emotional stress.

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Effects of Job stress

Job stress among private school teachers, particularly in regions like Nandyal District, can have profound effects on both educators and the broader educational environment. Drawing from various studies and reports, the following are key effects observed.

1. Mental Health Challenges

High levels of job stress can lead to significant mental health issues among teachers. Such stress can manifest as anxiety, depression, and a sense of helplessness.

2. Physical Health Implications

Chronic stress doesn't only affect mental well-being but also has physical repercussions. Teachers under constant stress may experience sleep disturbances, fatigue, and other stress-related ailments, which can impair their overall health and job performance.

3. Decreased Job Satisfaction and Increased Burnout

Stress can lead to job dissatisfaction and burnout. Research indicates that private school teachers often experience higher levels of occupational stress compared to their counterparts in government schools, leading to reduced job satisfaction. Burnout can result in emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and a diminished sense of personal accomplishment.

4. Impact on Teaching Quality and Student Outcomes

Stressed teachers may struggle to maintain high teaching standards, which can negatively affect student learning. A study highlighted that teacher stress and burnout could influence students' stress levels, potentially impacting their academic performance and overall well-being.

5. Strained Interpersonal Relationships

Workplace stress can strain relationships among colleagues and between teachers and administration. In some private schools, factors like favoritism, lack of recognition, and internal politics contribute to a toxic work environment, exacerbating stress levels.

6. Increased Turnover and Absenteeism

Persistent stress can lead to higher teacher turnover rates and absenteeism. When teachers feel unsupported and overwhelmed, they may seek employment elsewhere or take frequent leaves, disrupting the continuity of education for students.

7. Personal Life Disruptions

The demands of teaching, especially in private schools with extended hours and additional responsibilities, can encroach upon personal time. This imbalance can strain personal relationships and reduce opportunities for rest and recreation, further contributing to stress.

Measuring Stress

Measuring stress in private schools, particularly among teachers, requires the use of validated tools and methodologies to accurately assess the nature, level, and impact of stress. Here's a comprehensive approach to how stress can be measured in private schools.

1. Standardized Psychological Scales

a. Perceived Stress Scale (PSS)

- One of the most widely used tools for measuring psychological stress.
- Measures the degree to which situations in one's life are appraised as stressful.

b. Teacher Stress Inventory (TSI)

- Specifically designed for educators.
- Measures sources of stress such as workload, time management, student behavior, and professional recognition.
- Divided into stressors and stress manifestations.

c. Occupational Stress Index (OSI)

- Assesses stress arising from work settings.
- Includes factors like role overload, role ambiguity, under-participation, and responsibility.

2. Survey Questionnaires

- **Custom-designed questionnaires** can capture stress-related data specific to the local context (e.g., Nandyal District).
- Common themes are
 - Workload
 - Salary dissatisfaction
 - Lack of administrative support
 - Parent-teacher conflicts
 - Limited growth opportunities

3. Teacher Self-Reports and Diaries

- Teachers can maintain **stress diaries** to record daily stressors and coping mechanisms.
- Helps track patterns over time.

4. Student Feedback (Indirect Measure)

- Since teacher stress can affect classroom performance, student feedback may serve as a secondary indicator of teacher stress.
- Look for patterns of disengagement or inconsistency in teaching.

Coping with job stress in today's private schools

In the current educational environment, especially in private schools, teachers face increasing levels of stress due to high expectations, competitive environments, administrative demands, and limited support systems. Here are the key strategies teachers and school administrations can adopt to cope effectively with job stress:

1. Personal Coping Strategies for Teachers

a. Time Management

- Prioritize tasks and avoid over-commitment.
- Use planners or digital tools to organize teaching schedules, grading, and meetings.

b. Stress Management Techniques

- Mindfulness and meditation: Practicing mindfulness can help reduce anxiety and increase focus.
- Physical activity: Regular exercise helps release endorphins, improving mood and energy levels.
- Deep breathing and relaxation: Useful during peak stress moments like inspections or meetings.

c. Professional Development

- Attending workshops or courses helps improve teaching skills and boost confidence.
- Increases a sense of growth and purpose.

d. Peer Support

- Sharing experiences with colleagues through informal conversations or teacher support groups.
- Provides emotional relief and practical advice.

e. Work-Life Balance

- Setting boundaries: Avoid taking too much work home.
- Prioritizing family time, hobbies, and rest to recharge emotionally.

2. Institutional Coping Strategies

a. Supportive Leadership

- School management should provide open communication channels, constructive feedback, and emotional support.

- Encouraging a culture where teachers feel valued.
- b. Workload Management**
 - Assigning reasonable teaching hours and ensuring breaks between periods.
 - Avoiding excessive administrative tasks unrelated to teaching.
- c. Recognition and Motivation**
 - Acknowledging teachers' efforts through awards, praise, or incentives.
 - Boosts morale and reduces burnout.
- d. Professional Counseling**
 - Schools can offer access to trained counselors or psychological services.
 - Helps teachers deal with personal or professional issues constructively.
- e. Flexible Policies**
 - Allowing for mental health leave or flexible working hours in certain situations.
 - Accommodates teachers facing personal stressors.
- 3. Systemic and Policy-Level Approaches**
 - a. Regular Stress Audits**
 - Conduct surveys to monitor teacher stress levels.
 - Use results to guide improvements in school policy.
 - b. Curriculum Simplification**
 - Reducing syllabus overload and focusing on quality over quantity in teaching goals.
 - c. Training in Emotional Intelligence**
 - Equip teachers with skills to handle classroom challenges and student behavior more effectively.
- 4. Community and Parental Engagement**
 - Encouraging parents to respect boundaries and trust the teachers' methods.
 - Involving parents in understanding the pressure teacher's face and cooperating during exams or evaluations.

Stress management strategies

For individual

Here are stress management strategies for individuals in private schools, tailored to address the unique pressures of a private educational environment:

1. Time Management

- **Plan and Prioritize:** Use a daily planner or digital app to organize tasks. Break large tasks into smaller, manageable ones.
- **Set Realistic Goals:** Avoid overcommitting and learn to say “no” to unreasonable demands.
- **Follow a Routine:** Create consistent routines for teaching, grading, and personal time.

2. Self-Care Practices

- **Regular Exercise:** Even short walks or stretching routines can reduce stress hormones and boost energy.
- **Balanced Diet:** Eating healthy meals regularly keeps your energy stable and mood more positive.
- **Adequate Sleep:** Aim for 7–8 hours of quality sleep to improve focus and resilience.

3. Mindfulness and Relaxation

- **Mindfulness Meditation:** Practice daily breathing exercises or guided meditation (5–10 minutes a day).

- Progressive Muscle Relaxation: Release tension by focusing on one muscle group at a time.
- Quiet Time: Dedicate a few moments during breaks for silence, journaling, or reflection.

4. Cognitive and Emotional Coping

- Positive Self-Talk: Replace negative thoughts (“I can’t handle this”) with constructive affirmations (“I’m doing my best.”)
- Cognitive Reframing: View challenges as opportunities to grow rather than as burdens.

5. Social and Emotional Support

- Talk to Trusted Colleagues: Sharing frustrations helps relieve emotional burdens.
- Join Peer Support Groups: Form or join teacher circles to discuss common stressors and solutions.
- Stay Connected: Make time for family and friends outside of work to maintain perspective and support.

6. Hobbies and Interests

- Creative Outlets: Engage in hobbies like art, gardening, writing, or music.
- Leisure Activities: Watch a favorite movie, play a game, or read to unwind and disconnect from work stress.

7. Professional Development

- Upskill: Take courses to improve efficiency and confidence in the classroom.
- Attend Workshops: Training in classroom management, digital tools, or time-saving techniques can reduce workload stress.

Stress management strategies

For organization

1. Supportive Leadership and Communication

- Open-Door Policy: Encourage open, honest dialogue between staff and administration.
- Regular Check-ins: Conduct monthly meetings or surveys to assess teacher well-being.
- Constructive Feedback: Offer praise and suggestions in a supportive tone to reduce anxiety.

2. Reasonable Workload Distribution

- Fair Scheduling: Ensure balanced teaching loads and provide adequate planning periods.
- Limit Non-Teaching Duties: Reduce unnecessary administrative tasks for teachers (e.g., paperwork, event management).
- Substitute Pools: Maintain a list of qualified substitutes to reduce the stress of teacher absences.

3. Professional Development and Training

- Stress Management Workshops: Provide sessions on mindfulness, time management, and burnout prevention.
- Classroom Management Training: Equip teachers to handle discipline and student issues confidently.
- Career Growth Opportunities: Offer paths for advancement to improve morale and retention.

4. Recognition and Motivation

- Staff Appreciation Programs: Regularly recognize staff efforts through awards, certificates, or small incentives.
- Performance Bonuses or Incentives: Provide tangible rewards for excellent service or innovative teaching.

5. Work-Life Balance Initiatives

- Flexible Work Arrangements: Allow hybrid teaching, part-time options or adjusted schedules during

personal crises.

- Mental Health Days: Encourage use of leave for stress relief without stigma.

6. Wellness Programs

- On-Campus Counseling: Partner with psychologists or counselors for regular visits.
- Health and Wellness Activities: Offer yoga, meditation sessions, or fitness programs during lunch breaks or weekends.

7. Improved Physical Environment

- Comfortable Staff Rooms: Ensure spaces for rest with basic amenities like tea/coffee, couches, and quiet corners.
- Break Periods: Schedule short breaks during the day for staff to recharge.
- Safe and Clean Campus: Maintain a physically secure and hygienic environment.

8. Feedback and Evaluation

- Stress Audit: Conduct annual surveys to understand stress sources and trends among staff.
- Suggestion Box: Encourage anonymous suggestions for improving work conditions.
- Follow-up Action: Actively implement and review changes based on feedback.

Data analysis

The Sample size is 250 and male teachers are 120 and female teachers are 130.

		Gender	Sample Response	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	I often feel emotionally drained at the end of the school day	Male	120	25	20	30	27	18
		Female	130	22	14	29	35	30
2	My workload is too heavy to manage effectively.	Male	120	35	30	15	15	25
		Female	130	18	22	25	30	35
3	I feel pressure from school management to perform.	Male	120	25	15	30	20	30
		Female	130	15	20	18	40	37
4	I experience stress due to lack of teaching resources	Male	120	38	32	20	15	15
		Female	130	14	27	39	20	30
5	I feel underpaid for the work I do.	Male	120	21	19	15	40	25
		Female	130	14	13	13	50	40

6	I struggle to balance teaching and administrative duties.	Male	120	30	35	25	25	5
		Female	130	30	25	25	28	22
7	I face frequent disciplinary issues with students	Male	120	40	25	25	20	10
		Female	130	28	22	20	35	25
8	I feel insecure about my job in this school.	Male	120	10	10	20	50	30
		Female	130	25	27	23	30	25
9	My job affects my physical or mental health.	Male	120	25	33	22	19	21
		Female	130	17	16	17	47	33
10	I receive sufficient support from my school leadership	Male	120	20	15	40	25	20
		Female	130	35	25	30	25	15

Statistical Evaluation

Statement	Gender	Mean	Median	Mode	Std Dev
I often feel emotionally drained at the end of the school day	Male	2.94	3.0	3	1.35
	Female	3.28	3.5	4	1.38
My workload is too heavy to manage effectively.	Male	2.71	2.0	1	1.51
	Female	3.32	3.5	5	1.39
I feel pressure from school management to perform.	Male	3.12	3.0	3	1.45
	Female	3.49	4.0	4	1.35
I experience stress due to lack of teaching resources	Male	2.48	2.0	1	1.37
	Female	3.19	3.0	3	1.30
I feel underpaid for the work I do.	Male	3.24	4.0	4	1.40
	Female	3.68	4.0	4	1.30
I struggle to balance teaching and administrative duties.	Male	2.50	2.0	2	1.19
	Female	2.90	3.0	1	1.41
I face frequent disciplinary issues with students	Male	2.46	2.0	1	1.32

Statement	Gender	Mean	Median	Mode	Std Dev
	Female	3.05	3.0	4	1.44
I feel insecure about my job in this school.	Male	3.67	4.0	4	1.18
	Female	3.02	3.0	4	1.41
My job affects my physical or mental health.	Male	2.82	3.0	2	1.39
	Female	3.48	4.0	4	1.34
I receive sufficient support from my school leadership	Male	3.08	3.0	3	1.29
	Female	2.69	3.0	1	1.35

Here's a detailed comparative analysis and conclusions based on the statistical data for male vs. female teachers regarding job stress in private schools.

1. Emotional Exhaustion

- **Mean (M: 2.94 | F: 3.28):** Females feel *more emotionally drained*.
 - **Mode (M: 3 | F: 4):** Most female teachers chose "**Agree**", while males were more neutral.
- Conclusion:** Female teachers are more prone to *emotional fatigue*, likely due to multitasking and higher workload expectations.

2. Heavy Workload

- **Mean (M: 2.71 | F: 3.32):** Females report **greater difficulty managing workload**.
 - **Mode (M: 1 | F: 5):** Males leaned toward disagreement, while females clustered around "**Strongly Agree**".
- Conclusion:** Female teachers perceive *higher work overload*, perhaps due to role ambiguity or additional responsibilities.

3. Management Pressure

- **Mean (M: 3.12 | F: 3.49):** Female teachers feel **significantly more pressure**.
 - **Mode (M: 1 | F: 4):** Males show scattered responses, while females clearly lean toward "**Agree**".
- Conclusion:** Performance pressure is *felt more by females*, indicating possibly higher expectations or micromanagement.

4. Lack of Resources

- **Mean (M: 2.48 | F: 3.19):** Male teachers are more negative, but females still struggle.
 - **Mode (M: 1 | F: 3):** Males tend toward "**Strongly Disagree**", suggesting **very poor access**.
- Conclusion:** *Both genders struggle*, but male's express *sharper dissatisfaction* with available teaching resources.

5. Feeling Underpaid

- **Mean (M: 3.24 | F: 3.68):** Both feel underpaid, but **females more so**.
 - **Mode (Both: 4):** Consensus that **pay is inadequate**.
- Conclusion:** A major *shared stressor*, with females experiencing *stronger resentment* toward compensation.

6. Admin vs Teaching Balance

- **Mean (M: 2.50 | F: 2.90):** Males are more affected by **admin overload**.
 - **Mode (M: 2 | F: 1):** Males report **mild disagreement**, females are more dispersed.
- Conclusion:** Males feel more strain balancing duties, possibly due to *more administrative responsibilities*.

7. Student Discipline Issues

- **Mean (M: 2.46 | F: 3.05):** Males report **more frequent discipline challenges**.
- **Mode (M: 1 | F: 4):** Females tend to “agree”, while males lean toward **"Strongly Disagree"**, indicating **more frequent conflict**.

Conclusion: *Male teachers* may experience *more behavioral problems*, possibly due to class dynamics or gender roles in discipline.

8. Job Insecurity

- **Mean (M: 3.67 | F: 3.02):** Males feel **more insecure** about their job.
- **Mode (Both: 4):** Both perceive instability, with **males significantly more impacted**.

Conclusion: Male teachers are *more anxious about job retention*, likely due to contractual uncertainty or performance pressures.

9. Impact on Health

- **Mean (M: 2.82 | F: 3.48):** Females report **greater negative health effects**.
- **Mode (M: 2 | F: 4):** Females lean heavily on “Agree”.

Conclusion: Job stress has *greater mental/physical health impacts on female teachers*, indicating *higher burnout risk*.

10. Support from Leadership

- **Mean (M: 3.08 | F: 2.69):** Males feel **more supported**.
- **Mode (M: 3 | F: 1):** Female teachers are **more likely to disagree**.

Conclusion: Female staff feels *less supported by school leadership*, highlighting a *gender gap in perceived institutional backing*.

Recommendations

Recommendations

The study strongly recommends that policy makers formulate a policy for private teachers with regard to their remuneration, job security and other allowances.

Overall Conclusion

Job stress in private schools is not just an individual issue and it's a systemic challenge that affects teacher performance, student outcomes, and the overall quality of education. Sustainable solutions must involve a collaborative approach between teachers, management, parents, and policymakers to create healthier and more supportive work environments.

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