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A Study of Occupational Stress with its Coping Mechanism among the Teaching Community of RPCAU, Pusa

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ABSTRACT: The study examined the extent of occupational stress along with outcome of occupational stress with its coping mechanism of teachers working at RPCAU, Pusa. For the purpose one hundred and sixty teachers from nine constituent colleges were selected, by using multistage purposive sampling technique and administered with an Occupational Stress Index. In order to assess the outcome of occupational stress and coping mechanism among the teachers, the checklist used by Kalpana (2018) was adopted. The statistical techniques employed were frequency(*f*), percentage(%), mean and standard deviation (SD) and the obtained results were analyzed accordingly. The results revealed that majority (39.37%) of teachers were working with medium level of occupational stress. Also, it is evident from the findings that majority (43.80%) of the Assistant Professor were found to had high level of occupational stress while majority of Associate Professors and Professor had low level of occupational stress. The result further suggest that majority of teachers were found to have medium level of health and behavioural problem followed by medium level of coping methods to overcome on these occupational stress.

Keywords: Occupational Stress, Teacher, Outcome and Coping Mechanism.

INTRODUCTION

Stress is a subjective feeling or tension experienced in the physical, mental and/or emotional realms as a response to environmental events that are perceived as threatening. It is the reaction of body's to a change that requires a mental, physical, or emotional response and adjustment which generally acknowledged as a global phenomenon with significant health and economic consequences in both developed and developing countries (ILO, 2016). The stress related to work environment is known as occupational stress. Occupational stress is a term used to define the ongoing stress that is related to the work place. Occupational stress is the perception of a discrepancy between environmental demands (stressors) and individual capacities to fulfill these demands (Topper, 2007). It has become one of the most serious health issues in the modern world (Lu *et al*., 2008). Occupational stress results from a "toxic" work environment such as poor control, high work demands, lack of information extreme pressure and low decision-making latitude (Murtaza *et al.* 2015). It may be operationalized as the physical and emotional responses that occur when workers perceive an imbalance between their work demands with their capability and /or resources to meet these demands.

It has been seen as a harmful part of the workplace environment, which severely compromise employees' well-being and thereby provoking health-related impairments globally (Wang *et al.*, 2017).

Several studies have shown that occupational stress can lead to various negative consequences for the individual and the workplace. A negative association exists between job satisfaction and occupational stress of school teachers (Laxman, 2017). Teachers are subjected to job stressors that have been related to negative mental health effects on a regular basis, and epidemiologic evidence shows that as compared to other classes, teachers have higher rates of mental disorders (Schonfeld *et al.* 2017). The, extreme stress can lead to decreased productivity and an overall negative impact on the organization itself. People with a higher percentage of occupational stress may not be satisfied with their job and therefore they will not feel happy while working in the organization. Therefore, it is imperative for employer and employees to realize the stress and the stressor that cause all the negative effects (Bhatti *et al.*, 2011). Keeping the facts in mind an effort was made to investigate the extent of occupational stress, outcome and coping strategy among the faculty members of RPCAU, Pusa.

METHODOLOGY

The present study has been carried out in Dr. Rajendra Prasad Central Agricultural University, Pusa, Bihar taking the sample from Pusa-Dholi campus of the Central Agricultural University. A multistage purposive sampling method was used for the selection of the respondents of the study. A separate list of all the faculties presently working in all the colleges of RPCAU, Pusa along with their date of joining in the service was prepared. Out of which 160 teachers were identified in which Professors, Associate Professors and Assistant Professor were 35, 20 and 105 respectively. The measurement of occupational stress of faculty members in the study was relied upon the Occupational Stress Index (OSI), which was developed by Srivastava and Singh (1984). Occupational Stress Index consist of 46 items, each of which had to be scored on a five-point scale viz., strongly agree (SA), agree (A), undecided (UD), disagree (DA) and strongly disagree (SDA) with a score of 5, 4, 3, 2, and 1, respectively for positive statements and 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 for negative statements. 28 out of the 46 objects are true keyed, whereas the remaining 18 are false keyed. Role-overload, role-ambiguity, role conflict, group and political pressure, responsibility for individuals, under participation, powerlessness, poor peer relationships, intrinsic impoverishment, low status, strenuous working conditions, and unprofitability are the dimensions of job life that were considered related to almost all relevant which creates in stress in some or other way. The split half (odd-even) technique for reliability index and Cronbach's Alpha Coefficient for the scale as a whole were found to be 0.935 and 0.90, respectively. The instrument's validity was assessed by calculating the coefficient of correlation between the OSI scale and several measures of job attitudes and job behaviour. Based on the mean and half standard deviations (SD), the faculty members were grouped into three perception categories *viz*., low, medium and high level of occupational stress. In order to assess the outcome and coping strategy, the checklist used by Kalpana (2018) was adopted which includes 21 items and 19 items respectively. All items in the checklist were given to the respondent with 5 level of response i.e., Very High. High, Moderate, Low and Very Low. In terms of quantification 5,4,3,2,1 score were also assigned and final summed up scores were calculated and they were grouped into three categories as low medium and high.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The results borne out from the study are being discussed here through different tables.

The results given table 1 revealed that 39.37 per cent of faculty members were working with medium level of occupational stress followed by high (33.12%) and low (27.50%) level of occupational stress respectively. With respect to the assistant professor's category majority (43.80%) of the respondents were found to have medium level of occupational stress followed by high (35.20%) and low (20.95%) level of occupational stress, whereas, majority (45.00%) of associate professors had medium level of occupational stress followed by low (30.00%) and high (25.00%) level of occupational stress respectively. In case of professors, 45.71 per cent of total respondents had low level of occupational stress followed by 31.42 per cent had high and 22.85 per cent were found to have low level of occupational stress respectively. Similar observations were also found in the studies of Sing and Katoch (2017) and Shalini (2018). From perusal of the results contained in Table 2, it is evident that majority (41.25%) of the respondents had high level of occupational stress due to role overload followed by medium (33.12%) and low (25.62%) level respectively. It was also observed from the findings that majority (55.38%) of the assistant professor had high level of occupational stress due to role overload as compared to their counterparts. During the study it was found that majority (60.00%) of associate professor had low level of occupational stress due to their role overload followed by medium (30.00%) and high (10.00%) level of occupational stress respectively. Similarly, in group of professors, majority (48.57%) of them had low level of occupational stress due to role overload followed by medium and high (25.71% for each) respectively. So, it was observed from the results that majority (40.62%) of total respondents had high level of occupational stress followed by medium (35.62%) and low (23.75%) respectively. It was also inferred from the table that majority (47.61%) of assistant professor had high level of occupational stress due to role ambiguity followed by medium (42.85%) and low (9.52%) level of occupational stress.

Table 1: Extent of occupational stress as perceived by teachers of RPCAU.

Occupational Stress	Teachers of RPCAU							
	Assistant Professor(N=105)		Associate Professor(N=20)		Professor(N=35)		Total (N=160)	
	f	%	*f*	%	*f*	%	*f*	%
Low(124-149)	22	20.95	06	30.00	16	45.71	44	27.50
Medium(155-174)	46	43.80	09	45.00	8	22.85	63	39.37
High(166-204)	37	35.20	05	25.00	11	31.42	53	33.12
Mean- 157.6	Half SD- 7.85							

Table 2: Results of Occupational Stress among teachers across different dimensions.

Dimensions of Occupational Stress	Faculty of RPCAU							
	Assistant Professor (N_1=105)		Associate Professor (N_2=20)		Professor (N_3=35)		Total (N=160)	
	f	%	*f*	%	*f*	%	*f*	%
Role overload								
Low (13-19)	12	11.42	12	60.00	17	48.57	41	25.62
Medium (20-22)	38	36.19	06	30.00	09	25.71	53	33.12
High (23-27)	55	52.38	02	10.00	09	25.71	66	41.25
Role ambiguity								
Low (8-12)	10	9.52	13	65.00	15	42.85	38	23.75
Medium (13-15)	45	42.85	03	15.00	09	25.71	57	35.62
High (16-24)	50	47.61	04	20.00	11	31.42	65	40.62
Role conflict								
Low (11-17)	14	13.33	12	60.00	16	45.71	42	26.25
Medium (18-20)	50	47.61	07	35.00	19	54.28	76	47.50
High (21-24)	41	39.04	01	5.00	00	00	42	26.25
Unreasonable group & political pressures								
Low (8-13)	20	19.04	13	65.00	13	37.14	46	28.75
Medium (14-15)	34	32.38	03	15.00	07	20.00	44	27.50
High (16-20)	51	48.57	04	20.00	15	42.85	70	43.75
Responsibility for persons								
Low (4-9)	43	40.95	09	45.00	09	25.71	61	38.12
Medium (10)	34	32.38	09	45.00	05	14.28	48	30.00
High (11-14)	28	26.66	02	10.00	21	60.00	51	31.87
Under participation								
Low (7-12)	26	24.76	15	75.00	16	45.71	57	35.62
Medium (13-14)	62	59.04	05	25.00	12	34.28	79	49.38
High (15-18)	17	16.19	00	00	07	20.00	24	15.00
Powerlessness								
Low (5-9)	29	27.61	13	65.00	14	40.00	56	35.00
Medium (10)	35	33.33	03	15.00	03	8.57	41	25.62
High (11-13)	41	39.04	04	20.00	18	51.42	63	39.37
Poor peer relations								
Low (4-2)	23	21.90	16	80.00	16	45.71	55	34.37
Medium (13-14)	52	49.52	04	20.00	11	3142	67	41.875
High (15-18)	30	28.57	00	00	08	22.85	38	23.75
Intrinsic impoverishment								
Low (4-11)	5	4.76	08	40.00	08	22.85	21	13.12
Medium (12-13)	48	45.71	10	50.00	20	57.15	78	48.75
High (14-17)	52	49.52	02	10.00	07	20.00	61	38.12
Low status								
Low (7-8)	21	20.00	04	20.00	09	25.72	34	21.25
Medium (9-10)	56	53.33	12	60.00	21	60.00	89	55.62
High (11-13)	28	26.66	04	20.00	05	14.28	37	23.12
Strenuous working conditions								
Low (7-12)	22	20.95	13	65.00	18	51.42	53	33.12
Medium (13-14)	43	40.95	04	20.00	10	28.57	57	35.62
High (15-20)	40	38.09	03	15.00	07	20.00	50	31.25
Unprofitability								
Low (3-5)	2	1.90	07	35.00	14	40.00	23	14.37
Medium (6-7)	62	59.05	11	55.00	17	48.57	90	56.25
High (8-9)	41	39.05	02	10.00	04	11.42	47	29.37
Total	**105**	**100.00**	**20**	**100.00**	**35**	**100.00**	**160**	**100.00**

The 65.00 per cent of associate professor had low level of occupational stress due to role ambiguity followed by high (20.00%) and medium (15.00%) respectively. Similarly, in case of professors too, majority (42.85%) of them had low level occupational stress due to role ambiguity followed by high (31.42%) and medium (25.71%) respectively. Further results displayed in table 2 indicates that majority (47.50%) of the total respondents had medium level of occupational stress due to role conflict followed by high (26.25%) and medium (26.25%) respectively. In the same manner among the assistant professor majority (47.61%) of

them had medium level of occupational stress due to role conflict followed by high (39.04%) and low (13.33%) level of occupational stress.

It could be clearly seen from the results of table 2 that majority (43.75%) of the respondents had high level of occupational stress due to unreasonable groups and political pressures followed by low (28.75%) and medium (27.50%) level respectively. It is also evident from the table that majority of the assistant professor had high level of occupational stress due to unreasonable groups and political pressures followed by medium (32.38%) and low (19.04%) respectively. When it comes to associate professor it was found opposite, majority (65.00%) of them had low level of occupational stress due to unreasonable groups and political pressures followed by high (20.00%) and medium (15.00%) level of occupational stress respectively.

A glimpse of the table 2 also revealed that majority (38.12%) of the respondents had low level of occupational stress due to responsibility for persons followed by high (31.87%) and medium (30.00%) level. In case of professor results were little bit different, most (60.00%) of them had high level of occupational stress due to responsibility for persons followed by low (25.71%) and medium (14.28%) level of occupational stress. With regards to level of occupational stress due to under participation it was observed that majority of the assistant professor, associate professor (75.00%) and Professor (45.71%) had medium level of occupational stress due to under participation. The findings laid down in table 2 revealed that half (39.37%) of the respondents had high level of occupational stress due to powerlessness followed by low (35.00%) and medium (25.62%) level respectively. Similarly, majority (65.00%) of associate professor had low level of occupational stress due to powerlessness followed by high and medium respectively. In case of professors, half (51.42%) of them had high level of occupational stress due to powerlessness followed by low (40.00%) and medium (8.57%) respectively.

The results further denote that occupational stress due to poor peer relations was of medium level among majority (41.87%) of teachers followed by low (34.37%) and high level (23.75%) respectively. Similarly, it was found that almost half (48.75%) of the total respondents had medium level of occupational stress due to intrinsic impoverishment followed by high (38.12%) and low (13.12%) level of occupational stress respectively. In the case of assistant professor, high level of occupational stress was observed due to intrinsic impoverishment while in case of associate professor and professor majority of them had medium level of occupational stress due to intrinsic impoverishment. During the study it was also observed that majority (55.62%) of the respondents had medium level of occupational stress due to low status followed by high (23.12%) and low (21.25%) level of their occupational stress, respectively

It is also interesting to note through table 2 that occupation stress due to strenuous working conditions was of medium level among 35.62 per cent of total respondents followed by low (33.12%) and high (31.25%) level of occupational stress respectively.

The findings from the table 2 also revealed that occupation stress due to unprofitability was of medium level among majority (56.25%) of total respondents followed by high (29.37%) and low (14.37%) respectively. Occupational stress of assistant professor due to unprofitability was found similar as compared to overall respondents, i.e.; majority (59.05%) of them had medium level of occupational stress followed by high (39.05%) and low (1.90%) respectively. Majority of associate professor too had medium level of occupational stress due to unprofitability followed by low (35.00%) and high (10.00%) respectively.

Table 3: Results related with Outcome of Occupational Stress.

Outcome of Occupational Stress	Teachers of RPCAU							
	Assistant Professor (N_1=105)		Associate Professor (N_2=20)		Professor (N_3=35)		Total (N=160)	
	f	%	*f*	%	*f*	%	*f*	%
a) Health Problem								
Low (10-11)	38	36.19	08	40.00	10	25.57	72	45.00
Medium (12-15)	47	44.76	07	35.00	12	34.28	47	29.38
High (16-30)	20	19.04	05	25.00	13	37.14	41	25.62
b) Behavioural problem								
Low (5)	35	33.33	10	50.00	12	34.28	57	35.62
Medium (6-8)	45	42.85	09	45.00	10	28.57	64	40.00
High (9-16)	25	23.80	01	5.00	13	37.14	39	24.38
c) Family problem								
Low (6-7)	49	46.66	10	50.00	13	37.14	72	45.00
Medium (8-10)	21	20.00	07	35.00	10	28.57	38	23.75
High (11-18)	35	33.33	03	15.00	12	34.28	50	31.25

In case of professors too majority (48.57%) of them had medium level of occupational stress due to unprofitability followed by low (40.00%) and high (11.42%) respectively. The findings of table 3 revealed that majority (45.00%) of the respondent had low level of health problem followed by medium (29.38%) and high (25.62%) respectively. In case of assistant professor, it was found that majority (44.76%) of assistant professor had medium level of health problems followed by low (36.19%) and high (19.04%). Similarly in case of associate professor, majority (40.00%) of them had low level of health problems followed by medium (35.00%) and high (25.00%) respectively. In case of professors, majority (37.14%) of them had high level of health problem followed by medium (34.28%) and low (25.57%) respectively. The results of table 3 demonstrate that majority (40.00%) of respondent had medium level of behavioural problem followed by low (35.62%) and high (24.38%) respectively. It was also inferred from the table that majority (42.85%) of assistant professor had medium level of behavioural problem followed by low (33.33%) and high (23.80%) respectively. About half of the associate professor had medium level of behavioural problem followed by medium (45.00%) and high (5.00%) respectively. In case of professors, majority (37.14%) of them had high level of behavioural problem followed by low (34.28%) and medium (28.57%) respectively. It could clearly be stated from the table 3 that majority (45.00%) of the respondents had low level of family problems followed by high (31.25%) and medium (23.75%) respectively. It was also observed from the table that majority (46.66%) of the assistant professor had low level of family problems followed by high (33.33%) and medium (20.00%) respectively. Similarly, half (50.00%) of the associate professor had low level of family problems followed by medium (35.00%) and high (15.00%). In case of professors, majority (37.14%) of them too had low level of family problems followed by high (34.28%) and medium (28.57%) level respectively.

Table 4: Coping mechanism of the teachers of RPCAU from occupational stress.

Level of coping mechanism	Teachers of RPCAU							
	Assistant Professor (N_1=105)		Associate Professor (N_2=20)		Professor (N_3=35)		Total sample (N=160)	
	f	%	*f*	%	*f*	%	*f*	%
Low (19-36)	28	26.66	8	40.00	13	37.14	49	30.62
Medium (36-45)	41	39.04	8	40.00	12	34.28	61	38.12
High (46-78)	36	34.28	4	20.00	10	28.58	50	31.25

An attempt was also made to explore the level of coping mechanism followed by faculty members in order to overcome with different problems arising out from occupational stress as confronted by them. The details of findings were given in the table 4 which reveals that majority (38.12%) of total respondents had followed medium level of coping mechanism followed by high (31.25%) and low (30.62%) respectively. The findings from the table also revealed that 39.04 per cent of assistant professor had followed medium level of coping methods followed by high (34.28%) and low (26.66%) respectively while in case of associate professor 40.00 per cent of each had followed low and medium level of coping methods followed by high (20.00%). Similarly, majority (34.28%) of professors had followed medium level of coping methods followed by high (31.25%) and low (30.62%) respectively.

CONCLUSION

The study shown that in the beginning of teaching career, the occupational stress was found as increasing trend but as the faculty member were becoming well-versed with the teaching and research environment, the level of occupational stress either become static or it became flexible in some extent with regards to most of occupational stress dimension, it was observed that in case of role conflict, peer relationship, intrinsic impoverishment, strenuous working conditions and unprofitability medium level of occupational stress was found among the teaching faculty while in the case of role overload, unreasonable group and political pressure, and powerlessness it was found somehow higher occupational stress. It is intensity interesting to observe here that among the different manifestations of occupational stress, the associate professor or the middle level group was group was found more prone to the vulnerability as compared to the other counterparts. Therefore, they are found to had more coping mechanism as compared to other groups of faculty members. Since, RPCAU, Pusa is residential University hence, the faculty members residing in the university were having somehow less family problems followed by lower level of coping mechanism due to campus life.

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