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Analytical study of occupational stress among physical education teachers of Meerut District

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Abstract
The purpose of the present study was to examine the levels of occupational stress experienced by physical education teachers of Meerut district, Uttar Pradesh. The sample consisted of 288 physical education teacher respondents working in secondary schools of Meerut District of Uttar Pradesh State. The respondents were responded to the Occupational Stress Index (Shrivastava and Singh, 1984). This Occupational Stress Index is used with some modifications. The data were analyzed with the help of programs called SPSS 17.0. The research findings point out that physical education teachers generally suffer from a moderate level of occupational stress in most of the components of occupational stress and total occupational stress. Only in role ambiguity and unprofitability physical education teachers had significantly low levels of stress. Lastly alleviating stress among physical education teachers has been discussed.

Keywords: Occupational stress, Physical education teachers.

Introductions
The historical perspective of physical education is no more. Today, tremendous developments have taken place in this field at the global level. Today, physical education teachers are playing a number of diverse as well as specialized roles as teachers, officials, organizers and administrators. It is not easy to encourage and inspire the students to sports activities. "The activities and tasks performed by a teacher of physical education may be divided into five categories; namely planning, teaching, evaluating, administrative and various unclassified duties". He has the responsibility to help the students develop skills, master knowledge and acquire attitudes and social qualities that help a person become all that he/she is capable of. The responsibilities of physical education teachers have increased manifolds in modern scientific age. "From an idealistic point of view, a physical education teacher ought to have loyalty towards profession, alertness of body and mind, adjustability, initiative, fitness for work, discipline, enthusiasm, sincerity, self control, sociability, super motor capacity, sense of humour, honour, dignity, self confidence, impartiality, communicative skills, sportsman's spirit etc. He must be a model for his students and colleagues with regard to his character, conduct and behaviour" (Kamlesh, 2002) [6]. With the change in the concept of physical education, the role of the physical education teachers has gone beyond the playground and entered the classroom teaching. Modern physical education recognizes its responsibility for man's total development i.e., physical, mental, educational and intellectual. Due to these responsibilities the physical education teachers work is more stressful. To find out their stress level the researcher has planned and conducted a study of the secondary school physical education teachers. Teaching in physical education is an exciting and challenging profession that combines classroom skills with emphasis on excellence in sports. The physical education teachers while playing a number of diverse as well as specialized roles as teachers, officials, organizers and administrators easily become prone to job stress. Job stress among physical education teachers working in schools has received the attention of researchers during the last few years. The stress in school teaching has not been a new topic all over the world including India. The results of the study would help to find out the degree/level of occupational stress among the physical education teachers working in various types of schools in Meerut District of Uttar Pradesh State. The results would also help to understand the factors responsible for occupational stress among physical education teachers. The study might be useful in identifying the levels of stress of the teachers as related to the three variables. This would help them to understand various dimensions of adjustment and find out ways and means to be well adjusted persons. The

study would help the administrators to create a congenial atmosphere in the institutions which would benefit both the sides.

Review of Literature

Tam and Mong (2005) [10] indicated job stress means people experience psychological state which is incongruence and misfit between worker's perceptions of the demands on them and their ability to cope with those demand. "In the case of teacher stress, it is used to describe 'a demand made upon the adaptive capacities of the mind and body... which if continued beyond the ability of these capacities to respond, leads to the physical and psychological exhaustion and possibly the ultimate collapse referred to by Seyle" (Fontana, 1989) [4]. Konukman, Agbuga and Erdogan (2010) [9] found stress to be associated with role conflict. The study revealed that teaching and coaching are two different occupational roles, each having specific stress and burnout problems. These two different roles when performed together result into role conflict and thus job stress among Physical Education teachers who also coach.

Verma (1997) [7] investigated the job stress and job satisfaction of physical education teachers working in Govt., Private and Public schools of U.T. Chandigarh. He found significant difference between physical education teachers working in govt. and public schools in their job stress and job satisfaction. Physical education teachers working in Govt., and Private schools were also found to be significantly different in their job stress and job satisfaction. Sharma (2000) [14] conducted a comparative study on 110 male college physical education teachers of Himachal Pradesh, Punjab and Union Territory Chandigarh in job stress, job satisfaction and adjustment variables. The study revealed that Physical Education teachers of Himachal Pradesh State experienced more job stress than their counterparts in Punjab State and Union Territory Chandigarh. However, no significant difference was observed in their academic & general environment, professional relationship in education teachers working in Punjab and Chandigarh were found better than teachers working in the colleges of Himachal Pradesh. Teachers of physical education working in Punjab and Chandigarh were found overall better adjusted than the teachers working in the State Himachal Pradesh. Rathod (2006) [11] study on job-stress of physical education teachers indicated inclination towards 'moderate job stress'. The graduate only teachers, teachers working in local bodies schools, teachers working in girls only schools have expressed more job stress. The older aged physical education teachers have expressed more job stress. The teachers with lesser experience and highly experienced have expressed greater job stress.

Pal (2001) [8] in his study attempted to examine the job stress, job satisfaction and adjustment among 140 physical education teachers (79 male and 61 female). Analysis of variance statistical procedure was used to compare the three categories of physical education teachers i.e., working in government, private and public schools. The study concluded that there was a significant difference among physical education teachers working in different types of schools in their job stress, job satisfaction and a number of adjustment variables. No significant difference was observed between male and female physical education teachers working in government and private schools whereas, this difference was significant in teachers working in public schools in four of the adjustment variables namely socio-psycho, professional, personal life and overall adjustment variables. He also found significant positive relationship of job stress with job satisfaction and three of adjustment variables. Similarly, significant positive relationship of job satisfaction was also observed with four of the adjustment variables. Capel (1997) [3] questioned student physical education teachers following first and second teaching practices on their levels and sources of anxiety. Evaluation apprehension emerged as the stressor in both practices, although it declined in the second teaching practice. It was suggested that stress can be reduced by exposure and positive experiences of observation feedback.

The main objective of the study is to study the find out the status/level of occupational stress among Physical Education teachers working in secondary schools of Meerut District of Uttar Pradesh State, since not many studies have explored stress among physical education teachers.

Methods and Material

Sample

The sample of the study comprised of 288 secondary teachers drawn from government, aided and private schools in the Meerut District, Uttar Pradesh. In total 288 physical education teachers of secondary schools of Meerut District have been responded.

Tool

Occupational Stress Index by Shrivastava and Singh (1984) was the base to administer to assess the level of stress among the physical education teachers. Basically the scale consists of 46 items, each related on the five points scale. As the scale is general in nature so the researchers have been modified the index in relating to the physical education. Two different patterns of scoring have adopted for two types of items. For true items, strongly disagree -1, disagree - 2, undecided – 3, agree – 3, strongly agree – 5 and false keyed items, the reverse components of the job life, which cause stress in one way or others, such as role overload, role ambiguity, role conflict, group and political pressure, responsibility for persons, under participation, powerlessness, poor peer relations, intrinsic improvement, low status, strenuous working conditions, and un-profitability.

Procedure

The questionnaire was personally administered to the physical education teachers. The researcher has briefed about the purpose of conducting the study. The sufficient time was given for the respondents to carefully read, understand the questions before answering, rather than stereotyped answering.

Scoring and Analysis

In the present study chi-square test has been employed to test the significance of the different means of subclasses of occupational stress of physical education teachers.

Results and Discussion

Table 1 presents mean scores on each sub-scale of occupational stress index along with results of chisquare test.

1. **Role Overload:** On the whole we find that 67.7% of the selected sample falls under moderate levels of stress, 27.8% of the sample selected experienced low levels of stress and only 4.5% of the sample experienced high levels of stress. Further, chi-square test revealed a significant (X^2= 176.52; P= .000) difference between these three categories of stress, highlighting that majority of the sample had moderate levels of role overload.

2. **Role Ambiguity:** In role ambiguity, it was observed that majority of the sample experienced lower levels of stress (50.7%), which was closely followed by moderate levels of stress and very few of the selected sample shown high levels of role ambiguity (5.9%). Between these groups of frequencies, chisquare test revealed a significant difference (X^2 = 99.81; P = .000) having low and moderate levels of frequencies high.

3. **Role Conflict:** Chi-square test revealed significant difference among low, moderate and high levels of role conflict with X^2 value of 141.44 and P value of .000. From the table it is clear that majority of them experienced moderate levels of stress (56.6%), followed by 42% of them experienced low levels of stress and remaining 1.4% of them experienced high levels of role conflict which was found to be statistically significant.

4. **Unreasonable Group and Political Pressure:** On the whole we find that 79.27% of the selected sample falls under moderate levels of stress, 15.3% of the sample selected experienced low levels of stress and only 5.6% of the sample experienced high levels of stress. Further, chi-square test revealed a significant (X^2 = 276.33; P=.000) difference between these three categories of stress, highlighting that majority of the sample had moderate levels of Unreasonable group & Political Pressure.

5. **Responsibility for Persons: In** responsibility for persons, it was observed that majority of the sample experienced moderate levels of stress (55.6%), which was followed by low levels of stress (26.4%) and few of the selected sample shown high levels (18.1%) of role ambiguity. Between these groups of frequencies, chi-square test revealed a significant difference (X^2 =67.00; P=.000) having low and moderate levels of frequencies high.

6. **Under participation:** On the whole we find that 61.5% of the selected sample falls under moderate levels of stress, 29.58% of the sample selected experienced low levels of stress and only 9% of the sample experienced high levels of stress. Further, chi-square test revealed a significant (X^2 = 176.52; P=.000) difference between these three categories of stress, highlighting that majority of the sample had moderate levels of under participation.

7. **Powerlessness:** In powerlessness component, it was observed that majority of the sample experienced moderate levels of stress (69.4%), which was followed by high levels of stress (16.0%) and few of the selected sample shown low levels of role ambiguity (14.6%). Between these groups of frequencies, chisquare test revealed a significant difference (X^2 =176.52; P=.000) having moderate and high levels of frequencies high.

8. **Poor Peer Relations:** Chi-square test revealed significant difference among low, moderate and high levels of frequencies on poor peer relations with X^2 value of 105.44 and P value of .000. From the table it is clear that majority of them experienced moderate levels of stress (59.4%), followed by 37.2% of them experienced high levels of stress and remaining 6.9% of them experienced low levels of poor peer relations which was found to be statistically significant.

9. **Intrinsic Impoverishment:** On the whole we find that 56.6% of the selected sample falls under moderate levels of stress, 29.9% of the sample selected experienced high levels of stress and remaining. 26.4% of the sample experienced low levels of stress. Further, chi-square test revealed a significant (X^2 = 73.94; P=.000) difference between these three categories of stress, highlighting that majority of the sample had moderate levels of intrinsic impoverishment.

10. **Low Status:** In low status, it was observed that majority of the sample experienced moderate levels of stress (59.4%), which was followed by high levels of stress (29.4%) and remaining sample has shown low levels (10.8%) of low status. Between these groups of frequencies, chi-square test revealed a significant difference (X^2 =103.65; P=.000) having moderate and high levels of frequencies high.

11. **Strenuous Working Condition:** Chi-square test revealed significant difference among low, moderate and high levels of frequencies on strenuous working conditions component with X^2 value of 93.08 and P value of .000. From the table it is clear that majority of them experienced moderate levels of stress (59%), followed by 27.1% of them experienced low levels of stress and remaining 13.9% of them experienced high levels of strenuous working conditions which was found to be statistically significant.

12. **Unprofitability:** In unprofitability component, it was observed that majority of the sample experienced low levels of stress (55.2%), which was followed by moderate levels of stress (44.4%) and few of the selected sample shown low levels of unprofitability (0.3%). Between these groups of frequencies, chi-square test revealed a significant difference (X^2 = 146.02; P = .000) having low and moderate levels of frequencies.

13. When total occupational stress scores were verified, it was observed that majority of the sample experienced moderate levels of stress (59.4%), followed by 29.9% of the sample experienced high levels of stress and remaining 10.8% of the sample expressed low amount of stress. Between these groups of frequencies, chi-square test revealed a significant difference (X^2 =103.65; P =.000) having moderate and high levels of frequencies high.

Discussion and Conclusion

Main findings of the present study are:

In total occupational stress, majority of the physical education teachers experienced moderate levels of stress, followed by high levels of stress and very few of them experienced lower levels of stress. In subcomponents of occupational stress- Role overload, Role conflict, Unreasonable group & Political Pressure, Responsibility for persons, Under participation, Powerlessness, Poor peer relations, Intrinsic impoverishment, low status, and strenuous working conditions, majority of the respondents expressed moderate levels of stress.

Only in 2 components of occupational stress-role ambiguity and unprofitability, physical education teachers experienced lower levels of stress.

Al-Mohammadi and Capel (2006) [2] conducted their study with a view to identify the causes of stress among physical education teachers in Qatar and also to explain any differences in stress according to: gender, nationality, type of school and experience. Results showed that there were different causes of stress for different groups of teachers which could be related to different backgrounds and experiences and different roles and responsibilities in society as a result of different cultural and social expectations and environmental factors. In India, the major reasons for experiencing stress among physical education teachers could be remuneration, low status and under participation. Even today, physical education teachers are paid less when compared to teachers who teach other subjects in the class rooms. Many a times the appointments are purely temporary, which adds to existing burden.

Further, the physical education teachers are given additional responsibilities in their institutions, since they are 'free' during working hours. Infact, the workload will be more for them when compared to other teachers, as they have to come early and leave late from their respective institutes. Again these physical education teachers significantly experience low status in their institute as well as outside the institute compared to other teachers. The physical education teachers job is usually considered as second grade job compared to academic teachers. Due to these there will be lesser job satisfaction among physical education teachers, which further increases their stress.

According to Singh (2010) [12] occupational stress among physical education teachers has become quite inevitable these days due to manifold increase in job complexities and challenges. The expectations of the society towards physical education teachers are very high in the sense that they are looked upon as the only leaders who can protect and save general fitness of the sedentary people in the machine age. With the change in the concept of the subject, a physical education teacher has to concentrate upon success factors rather than think about failures in order to achieve proper results. However, the status of physical education teacher has deteriorated over the past few decades due to more than one reason.

To reduce stress among physical education teachers few of the activities could be planned. Relaxation exercises like JPMR (Jacobson's Muscular Relaxation Therapy) or JAPMR (Jacobson's Advanced Muscular Relaxation Therapy) could be practiced by the teachers. Yoga, meditation, 63 undergoing stress management programmes are the other alternatives to reduce the stress in a effective way. Lastly educationists and policy makers should plan appropriate and effective measures to reduce the stress by adopting user friendly approaches to improve the life style of physical education teachers, where one can expect best output from these physical education teachers.

Table 1: Frequency and Percent of Teachers Falling under Different Categories of Stress Levels in Various Components of Occupational Stress Index

Variable	F/%	Low	Levels Moderate	High	Chi-square/P value
Role overload	F	80	195	13	X^2 = 176.52;
	%	27.8	67.7	4.5	P=.000
Role ambiguity	F	146	125	17	X^2 = 99.81;
	%	50.7	43.4	5.9	P=.000
Role conflict	F	121	163	4	X^2 =141.44 ;
	%	42.0	56.6	1.4	P = .000
Unreasonable Group &	F	44	228	16	X^2 = 276.33;
Political Pressure	%	15.3	79.2	5.6	P = .000
Responsibility for persons	F	76	160	52	X^2=67.00 ;
	%	26.4	55.6	18.1	P = .000
Under participation	F	85	177	26	X^2 = 176.52;
	%	29.5	61.5	9	P=.000
Powerlessness	F	42	200	46	X^2 = 169.08;
	%	14.6	69.4	16	P=.000
Poor peer relations	F	20	161	107	X^2 =105.44 ;
	%	6.9	55.9	37.2	P=.000
Intrinsic impoverishment	F	76	163	49	X^2 = 73.94;
	%	26.4	56.6	17	P = .000
Low status	F	31	171	86	X^2 = 103.65;
	%	10.8	59.4	29.9	P=.000
Strenuous working conditions	F	78	170	40	X^2 = 93.08;
	%	27.1	59	13.9	P = .000
Unprofitability	F	159	128	1	X^2 = 146.02;
	%	55.2	44.4	0.3	P = .000
Total occupational stress	F	31	171	86	X^2 = 103.65;
	%	10.8	59.4	29.9	P =.000

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