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Teacher Morale and Occupational Stress as the Predictors of Teacher Effectiveness of Secondary School Teachers

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ABSTRACT

The present study was conducted to find out the impact of Teacher Morale and Occupational Stress on Teacher Effectiveness of Secondary School Teachers. A sample consisting of 352 government secondary school teachers of District Muzaffarpur of Bihar, India was administered a self-constructed Teacher Effectiveness Scale and two standardized scales namely Teacher Morale Scale (2013) and Teachers' Occupational Stress Scale (2012). The obtained data were analysed by using Pearson Product Moment Correlation and Stepwise Multiple Regression Analysis. The study claims that there is a significant positive correlation between Teacher Morale and Teacher Effectiveness whereas; there exists a significant negative correlation between occupational stress and Teacher Effectiveness. Further, the study reveals that various components of Teacher Morale and Occupational Stress have significant impact on Teacher Effectiveness.

INTRODUCTION

The well-being of the citizens of a country depends on the quality of education, which more than any other aspect depends on the quality of the teachers. Teachers play a vital role in the entire education process. Teachers strengthen not only the foundation of students' career but also give the positive direction to their study. Simultaneously, they recognize the value of human potential, consider learners' diverse needs and enrich the environment for their development. The teachers can perform such important roles effectively and efficiently if they are knowledgeable and well-equipped with different professional skills, which ensure their effectiveness.

Teacher Effectiveness

Teacher Effectiveness means teacher's ability to perform his/her responsibilities effectively. Medley and Shannon (1994) defined teacher effectiveness as a matter of the degree to that a teacher achieves the required/desired effects upon the learners. It means there are numbers of requirement to be an effective teacher.

According to Ryan (1969), teacher effectiveness is a certain professional characteristic that “helps in the development of basic skills, understandings, proper work habits and desirable attitudes, values judgment and adequate personal adjustment of the student.” Flanders and Simon (1969) contemplate the teacher effectiveness as an association between teacher characteristics/attributes, teaching activities and their effects on educational outcomes. Lease and Garrison (2008) stated that teacher effectiveness has a positive impact on the academic achievement of the students. Anderson (1991) noted that “an effective teacher is one who quite consistently achieves goals which either directly or indirectly focuses on the learning of their students.” In nutshell the word “teacher effectiveness” is commonly used to denote the set of teacher attributes, skills and behaviours at all levels of education that allow students to achieve desired outcomes. It includes the achievement of specific learning objectives as well as broader goals such as problem solving, critical thinking, collaborative work and becoming successful citizens. Naturally, teacher effectiveness has significant correlation with teacher competence as well as teacher performance.

There are various studies which have identified different components that influence teacher effectiveness such as inter-personal relationship with students (Gao & Liu, 2012; den Brok et.al, 2010), teaching- learning process (Gao & Liu, 2012), teacher qualities (Johnson,1957), classroom management (Anderson,1991), professional responsibilities and attitude (Gao & Liu, 2012), ethical practices (Boon, 2011), abilities (Chiero, 1996), teaching (Johnson, 1957; Gao & Liu, 2012), performance of the students (McBer, 2001) and students’ feedback (Phipps & Claxton,1997; Balachandran, 1981; Renoud and Murray, 1996), job satisfaction (Abdollahpoor, 2017; Gupta & Srivastava, 2016), self-efficacy (Klassen & Tze, 2014), occupational/job stress (Borkar, 2013; Jeyaraj, 2013) and self-esteem (Mbuva, 2017). Besides the above mentioned factors, studies have claimed that teacher effectiveness influences students’ academic achievement (Lease & Garrison, 2008; Wentzel, 2002; Klassen & Tze, 2014; Duckworth, Quinn & Seligman, 2009; Weisberg & et.al, 2009) and students’ motivation (Wentzel, 2002), burnout (Singh & Babita, 2014).

Teacher Morale

Morale means a general attitude of employees based on their trust and confidence in fairness in the practices and actions of employer, soundness of immediate leadership, a sense of organizational involvement and a general conviction that the organization is worth working for. According to Bentley and Rempel (1980), morale means “the professional interest and enthusiasm that a person displays towards the achievement of individual and group goals in a given job situation.” Evans (1992) defines morale as “a state of mind determined by the individual’s anticipation of the extent of satisfaction of those needs which he/she perceives as significantly affecting his/her work situation.” Consequently, aspects of job experience that are deeply satisfying or dissatisfying to individuals also have the potential to impact on both teacher morale and motivation and thus lead to the likelihood of retention or discontinuation from the job. The definition of morale leads to define the term teacher morale as the amount of trust, confidence and enthusiasm felt in a school / institution climate by a teacher or a group of teachers. It has been

pointed out that the morale of teachers has a direct effect on the performance of teachers and student achievement, which implies that where morale is high, school shows an increase in student achievement (Ellenberg, 1972; PISA, 2000).

Occupational Stress

Stress at work place is simply defined as occupational stress. Occupational stress is also referred to as physical and emotional reaction when workers experience an imbalance between their demands and their ability or resources to fulfil their educational obligations/responsibilities in a highly qualitative way. According to Margolis et.al (1974), "Occupational stress is a condition worth interacting with worker characteristics is to disrupted psychological and physiological homeostasis. The causal situation conditions are job stressors and the disrupted homeostasis is job related stress." There are seven categories of occupational stressors in organisations identified by Schuler (1982): job qualities, relationships, organisational structure, physical qualities, career development, change and role in the organisation. Stress is concerned in an environmental situation viewed as raising demand that threatens to surpass the ability/capabilities and resources of the individual to satisfy it, under circumstances where he or she expects a considerable difference in the rewards and costs of meeting the demand versus not meeting the demand (Mc Grath, 1970). According to Comish and Swindle (1994), occupational stress is a mental and physical condition that affects the productivity, efficiency, effectiveness, personal health and working quality of an employee.

Nelson and Thompson (1968) examined the reasons why the teachers quit the profession. Their study reported that teaching loads, inadequate supervision, poor assignment during first year at teaching, discipline problems, pressure groups, poor faculty relationships, marriage, and inadequate preparation in the subject field etc. are the stressors for teachers. There is also research evidence that teachers with job-related stress have serious implications for their work performance, wellbeing, health and psychological status (Capel, 1987; Cooper, 1986; Pierce & Molloy, 1990). The other stressors which have been reported are: inabilities and inappropriate knowledge (Leka et.al., 2004), perceived lack of efficacy/achievement, inadequate access to facilities, lack of collegial support, excessive societal expectations, lack of influence, student misbehaviour and lack of praise/recognition (Punch & Tuetteman, 1990; Manthei & Solman, 1988; Borg et al. 1991).

RATIONALE OF THE STUDY

The teachers have a great responsibility of moulding the behaviour of their students with their commitment and dedication. This is possible only when they are stress free. Teacher effectiveness has somehow related with how they are discharging their responsibilities qualitatively as per the societal demands. Everywhere teachers are overburdened government schools are not exception. They are not only overburdened with regard to their regular teaching load but to some extent non-teaching work also like election duties, census duties; Aadhar card preparation duties, purchasing food items duties for mid-day meal and cooking process monitoring duties, etc. Often there are complaints on their part regarding their overburdened. Due to which they are frustrated and stressed and their morale is low. As a result, they gradually become an escapist and do not take interest in the teaching-learning process, resulting in their low

self-esteem and self-efficacy. Within the limited review of the literature, the researcher could not find even a single study, which studies teacher morale and occupational stress as the predictors of teacher effectiveness, that is why the present study was taken up empirically know how the above mentioned variables predict teacher effectiveness of secondary school teachers.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The following objectives were framed for the present study:

1. To study the correlation between independent variables (Teacher Morale and Occupational Stress) and dependent variable (Teacher Effectiveness) for the total sample, the male teachers and female teachers.
2. To study the relative contribution of the various components of the independent variables (Teacher Morale and Occupational Stress) to the dependent variable (Teacher Effectiveness) for the total sample, the male teachers and female teachers.

HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

The following null hypotheses were framed for the empirical verification:

1. There is no significant correlation between independent variables (Teacher Morale and Occupational Stress) and dependent variable (Teacher Effectiveness) for the total sample, the male teachers and female teachers.
2. There is no significant contribution of the various components of the independent variables (Teacher Morale and Occupational Stress) to the dependent variable (Teacher Effectiveness) for the total sample, the male teachers and female teachers.

METHODOLOGY OF THE RESEARCH

Correlational survey method was used in the present study. In this study, Teacher Morale and Occupational Stress served as the independent (or predictive) variables and Teacher Effectiveness as the dependent (or criterion) variable.

Sample

For the present work, 352 Secondary School Teachers were selected from government schools of District Muzaffarpur, Bihar through stratified random sampling technique, out of which 175 teachers were male and 177 were female.

Tools

One self-constructed tool namely Teacher Effectiveness Scale and two standardized scales 'Teachers' Morale Scale' (2013) and Teacher's Occupational Stress Scale (2012) developed by Sajid Jamal and Abdul Raheem were used to collect the data. The description of the tools is given below:

Teacher Effectiveness Scale

Teacher Effectiveness scores were obtained by the self-constructed teacher effectiveness scale in English and Hindi which was developed by the researchers. The scale includes six (6) areas namely Inter-Personal Relationship with Students, Preparation for Teaching and Learning, Teacher Capabilities, Classroom Management, Professional Responsibilities and Ethical Practices, with 46 items in total. The highly significant reliability of the scale was determined by calculating the value of Cronbach alpha 0.985. The scale items were both framed with positive and negative statements. The

answers were collected with the help of ‘always’, ‘most often’, ‘sometimes’, ‘rarely’ and ‘never’ category. A score of 5 was given to the response in the category ‘always’, 4 to the response in the category ‘most often,’ 3 to ‘sometimes,’ 2 to ‘rarely’ and 1 to ‘never’ whereas the process was reversed for the negative statements. High score indicates higher teacher effectiveness while low score represents less effectiveness of teachers.

Teachers’ Occupational Stress Scale

Teacher’s Occupational Stress Scale (TOSS) developed by Sajid Jamal and Abdul Raheem (2012). The reliability by obtaining the value of Cronbach Alpha yielded as 0.89. The validity of the scale was highly significant as it was highly correlated with the two other similar nature standardized scales, the coefficient of correlation was found to be 0.71 & 0.89 respectively. It consists of 30 items pertaining to various aspects of Occupational Stress spread over five areas– Work Load, Students’ Misbehaviour, Lack of Professional Recognition, Lack of Classroom Resources, Poor Colleague Relations with each dimension possessing six items each. Out of 30 items, 15 items were positively framed and 15 items were negatively framed. It is based on a five point scale with the response categories – strongly agree, agree, undecided, disagree and strongly disagree with maximum possible score being 150 while the minimum is 30. High scores on the TOSS are indicative of high levels of Occupational Stress in teachers.

Teacher Morale Scale

Teachers’ Morale Scale (TMS) developed by Sajid Jamal and Abdul Raheem (2013). The reliability by obtaining the value of Cronbach Alpha yielded as 0.91. The validity of the scale was highly significant as it was highly correlated with the two other similar nature standardized scales, the coefficient of correlation was found to be 0.69 & 0.88 respectively. It consists of 30 items pertaining to various aspects of Teacher Morale spread over five areas– Fairness of Policies and Behaviour (FPB), Sense of Belongingness (SOB), Adequacy of Immediate Leadership (AIL), Regard and Appreciation (RAA), Opportunity of Professional Development (OPD) with each dimension possessing six items each. It is based on a five-point scale with maximum possible score being 150 while the minimum is 30. High scores on the TMS are indicative of high levels of teacher morale. Reliability and validity

Statistical Techniques

Pearson Product Moment Coefficient of Correlation and Stepwise Multiple Regression Analysis were used to analyse the data.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The first objective was to study the correlation between independent variables (Teacher Morale-TM and Occupational Stress- OS) and dependent variable (Teacher Effectiveness- TE) for the male teachers, female teachers and total sample. The data were analysed with the help of Pearson Product Moment Correlation and the results are given in the Table 1.

Table 1: Correlation between Independent Variables (Teacher Morale and Occupational Stress) and Dependent Variable (Teacher Effectiveness) for the Total Sample, Male Teachers and Female Teachers

Independent Variable (TM and OS) and Dependent Variable (TE)	Total Sample (N=352)	Male Teachers (N=175)	Female Teachers (N=177)
Teacher Morale	.930 ^{**}	.972 ^{**}	.888 ^{**}

Occupational Stress	-.799**	-.828**	-.776**
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**Significant at the 0.01 level ($p < 0.01$).

From Table 1, it can be seen that the correlation values are significant at 0.01 level. It indicates that there is a highly significant positive correlation between Teacher Morale and Teacher Effectiveness for the total sample, the male teachers and female teachers whereas there is a highly significant negative correlation between Occupational Stress and Teacher Effectiveness for the total sample, the male teachers and female teachers. In other words, an increase in Teacher Morale leads to an increase in Teacher Effectiveness of the teachers with the same proportion and vice-versa whereas an increase in occupational stress leads to a decrease in effectiveness of teachers and vice-versa.

Thus the first null hypothesis that there would be no significant correlation between independent variables (Teacher Morale-TM and Occupational Stress-OS) and dependent variable (Teacher Effectiveness- TE) for the total sample, the male teachers and female teachers is rejected and it is concluded that there exists a significant positive correlation between Teacher Morale and Teacher Effectiveness and a significant negative correlation between Occupational Stress and Teacher Effectiveness.

The second objective was to study the relative contribution of the various components of the independent variables (Teacher Morale and Occupational Stress) to the dependent variable (Teacher Effectiveness) for the male teachers, female teachers and total sample. The data were analysed with the help of Step-wise Multiple Regression Analysis and the results of the regression analysis for the components of Teacher Morale and Teachers' Occupational Stress are presented separately for the total sample, for the male teachers and for the female teachers. First the results are presented for the total sample in the following Table-2 and Table-3, the results for the male teachers have been presented in Table-4 and Table-5 and similarly the results for the female teachers have been presented in the Table-6 and Table-7 respectively.

Table 2: Stepwise Multiple Regression Analysis between Criterion Variable (Teacher Effectiveness) and the Components of Predictive Variable (Teacher Morale) for the Total Sample (N = 352)

Components of Predictive Variable (Teacher Morale)	df	R	R Square	R Square Change	F Change
Sense of Belongingness (SOB)	350	.317	.101	.101	39.185**
Sense of Belongingness (SOB) & Regard and Appreciation (RAA)	349	.431	.186	.085	36.616**
Sense of Belongingness (SOB), Regard and Appreciation (RAA) & Adequacy of Immediate Leadership	348	.447	.200	.013	5.844*

**Significant at .01 level ($p < .01$), *Significant at .05 level ($p < .05$)

From the Table 2 it may be seen that 'Sense of Belongingness (SOB)' is the most important component of teacher morale which influences the teacher effectiveness of the total sample most and it causes 10.1% variance whereas 'Regard and Appreciation (RAA)' and 'Adequacy of Immediate Leadership (AIL)' contribute 8.5% and 1.3% variance respectively. Fairness of Policies and Behaviour (FPB) and Opportunity of Professional Development (OPD) are

not found to be the significant predictors of the teacher effectiveness of the total sample.

Table 3: Stepwise Multiple Regression Analysis between Criterion Variable (Teacher Effectiveness) and the Components of Predictive Variable (Occupational Stress) for the Total Sample (N = 352)

Component of Predictive Variable (Occupational Stress)	df	R	R Square	R Square Change	F Change
Work Load	350	.462	.213	.213	94.771**
Work Load & Students' Misbehaviour	349	.482	.232	.019	8.666**
Work Load, Students' Misbehaviour & Poor Colleague Relations	348	.513	.263	.031	14.492**

** Significant at .01 level ($p < .01$)

Table 3 shows that 'work load' is the most important predictor of teacher effectiveness for the total sample and it is causing 21.3% variance, followed by student misbehaviour (1.9%) and Poor Colleague Relations (3.1%). From the Table 3 it may be inferred that Lack of Professional Recognition and Lack of Classroom Resources are not significant predictors of teacher effectiveness for the total sample. Thus, the null hypothesis is partially rejected.

Table 4: Stepwise Multiple Regression Analysis between Criterion Variable (Teacher Effectiveness) and the Components of Predictive Variable (Teacher Morale) for the Male Teachers (N = 175)

Component of Predictive Variable (Teacher Morale)	df	R	R Square	R Square Change	F Change
Sense of Belongingness (SOB)	173	.316	.100	.100	19.231**
Sense of Belongingness (SOB) & Regard and Appreciation (RAA)	172	.433	.188	.088	18.596**

** Significant at .01 level ($p < .01$)

Table 4 indicates that 'Sense of Belongingness (SOB)' is the most important component of teacher morale which influences the teacher effectiveness of male teachers most and it causes 10% variance whereas 'Regard and Appreciation (RAA)' contributes 8.8% variance. Fairness of Policies and Behaviour (FPB), Opportunity of Professional Development (OPD) and Adequacy of Immediate Leadership (AIL) are not found to be the significant predictors of the teacher effectiveness of the male teachers.

Table 5: Stepwise Multiple Regression Analysis between Criterion Variable (Teacher Effectiveness) and the Components of Predictive Variable (Occupational Stress) for the Male Teachers (N = 175)

Component of Predictive Variable (Self-Esteem)	df	R	R Square	R Square Change	F Change
Work Load	173	.507	.257	.257	59.827**
Work Load & Students' Misbehaviour	172	.546	.298	.042	10.178**
Work Load, Students' Misbehaviour & Poor Colleague Relations	171	.573	.328	.030	7.509**

** Significant at .01 level ($p < .01$)

Table 5 shows that out of various components of teachers' occupational stress the work load is the most important predictor of teacher effectiveness for the male teachers and it is causing 25.7% variance, followed by student misbehaviour (4.2%) and Poor Colleague Relations (3%). From this table it may be inferred that Lack of Professional Recognition and Lack of Classroom Resources are not significant predictors of teacher effectiveness for the male teachers. Thus, the second null hypothesis is partially rejected.

Table 6: Stepwise Multiple Regression Analysis between Criterion Variable (Teacher Effectiveness) and the Components of Predictive Variable (Teacher Morale) for the Female Teachers (N = 177)

Component of Predictive Variable (Teacher Morale)	df	R	R Square	R Square Change	F Change
Sense of Belongingness (SOB)	175	.320	.103	.103	20.028**
Sense of Belongingness (SOB) & Adequacy of Immediate Leadership (AIL)	174	.442	.195	.092	19.967**

** Significant at .01 level ($p < .01$)

Table 6 reveals that out of the five components of Teacher Morale, 'Sense of Belongingness (SOB) and Adequacy of Immediate Leadership (AIL)' are the significant predictors of the teacher effectiveness for female teachers and causes 10.3% and 9.2% variance respectively. The rest of the two components are not found to be the significant predictors of the teacher effectiveness for the female teachers. Thus, the null hypothesis is partially rejected.

Table 7: Stepwise Multiple Regression Analysis between Criterion Variable (Teacher Effectiveness) and the Components of Predictive Variable (Occupational Stress) for the Female Teachers (N = 177)

Components of Predictive Variables (Self-Esteem)	df	R	R Square	R Square Change	F Change
Poor Colleague Relations	175	.429	.184	.184	39.583**

** Significant at .01 level ($p < .01$)

Table 7 shows that out of the various components of occupational stress, 'Poor Colleague Relations' is the only significant predictor of the teacher effectiveness of female teachers and it causes 18.4% variance. From this table it may be inferred that workload, students' misbehaviour, lack of professional recognition and lack of classroom resources are not significant predictors of teachers' occupational stress for the female teachers. Thus, the null hypothesis is partially rejected.

Results and discussion are given below on the basis of data analyses and interpretation.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Teacher Morale is found to be significantly and positively correlated with teacher effectiveness of government secondary school teachers. This study revealed that the leadership qualities in teachers, their performance, ability to manage classroom, commitment towards their profession, sense of responsibility, regards and attitude, their teaching abilities and their students'

academic achievement and learning outcomes will be better if the teachers possess high morale. If teachers get their due regard and appreciation, get the sense of belongingness and adequacy of immediate leadership (AIL) then their teaching will be effective. Other finding of this present work shows that teachers' occupational stress is significantly and negatively correlated with teacher effectiveness of government secondary school teachers. It may be concluded that if the teachers are free from stress they will be more productive and effective. There are various components of occupational stress such as workload, student misbehaviour and poor colleague relations which contribute significantly to the effectiveness of teachers. If all these factors are taken into consideration by the administrators, principals, planners, managers and bureaucrats then the level of effectiveness of teachers would be increased.

IMPLICATIONS OF THE STUDY

Though the study was conducted on a small sample even then the researchers very humbly submit the following implications:

- ❖ It should be ensured by the principals that the teachers are provided ample opportunities to listen to experienced speakers and training programmes should be regularly organized for them.
- ❖ Teachers should try to maintain harmonious relationship with their colleagues and should offer helping hand to their fellow staff as and when need arises.
- ❖ The administrators should provide such an environment where, teachers may feel a sense of belongingness. As far as possible decisions should be based on humanitarian ground and should avoid scolding and humiliating the teachers publicly as this may be fatal for their self-esteem.
- ❖ Policy makers should try to keep the esteem and morale of the teachers high. All necessary steps for boosting the morale of the teachers should be taken on priority basis. And adequate opportunities should be provided to the teachers for their professional growth and
- ❖ Teachers are the nation builders and no society can survive without good teachers. Teachers have always enjoyed respectable status in the society. But due to deterioration in the values parents often quarrel with the teachers during parent teacher interaction (PTI). Parents' demands are often unrealistic resulting in teachers working in stressful situations. Apart from teachers there are several other factors on which success and failure of the students depend. For effective and fruitful interaction between teachers and parents blame game should always be avoided.

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