

## Research Article

# A SILENT STRUGGLE: OCCUPATIONAL STRESS AMONG SECONDARY SCHOOL TEACHERS IN KRISHNA DISTRICT, ANDHRA PRADESH

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## Abstract

The present study, titled "A Silent Struggle: Occupational Stress Among Secondary School Teachers," aims to examine the level of occupational stress among teachers with respect to selected demographic variables such as gender, teacher-pupil ratio, type of management, and educational qualification. The sample consisted of 50 secondary school teachers (16 males and 34 females) selected through simple random sampling. The Occupational Stress Index was used to measure the stress level. Descriptive statistics such as mean and standard deviation were calculated, and independent samples t-tests were employed using MS Excel to identify group differences. The findings revealed no significant difference in occupational stress between male and female teachers ( $t(48)=0.73$ ,  $p=0.463$ ), between teachers with different pupil ratios ( $t(48)=1.187$ ,  $p=0.241$ ), between government and private school teachers ( $t(48)=1.568$ ,  $p=0.123$ ), and between graduate and postgraduate teachers ( $t(48)=1.976$ ,  $p=0.054$ ). These results indicate that occupational stress among secondary school teachers is not significantly affected by demographic variables. The study suggests that factors such as workload, administrative pressure, and classroom management challenges may have a greater influence on teachers' stress levels, highlighting the need for institutional support and stress management programs.

**Keywords:** Occupational Stress, Secondary School Teachers, Gender, Management, Qualification, Teacher-Pupil Ratio

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Teaching is one of the most demanding and responsible professions in modern society. Secondary school teachers play a crucial role in shaping the intellectual, emotional, and moral development of young learners. However, the increasing demands of academic accountability, administrative responsibilities, and classroom management have created an environment that can generate significant levels of occupational stress. The phenomenon of teacher stress is now recognized globally as a pressing issue that affects not only the well-being of teachers but also the overall quality of education. Occupational stress among secondary school teachers arises from a combination of internal and external pressures such as workload, student behaviour, role ambiguity, time constraints, and interpersonal conflicts. The teaching profession often requires long hours of preparation, assessment, and emotional labour that extend beyond formal school hours. These factors contribute to chronic stress, leading to mental fatigue, job dissatisfaction, and decreased teaching efficiency. Prolonged stress may also result in higher absenteeism and turnover rates within educational institutions, creating long-term impacts on school

performance and student learning outcomes. Studies have shown that workplace stress among teachers is influenced by multiple organizational and personal variables, including administrative support, peer collaboration, leadership style, and access to professional development opportunities. In the context of secondary education, teachers often face additional pressures related to adolescent behaviour, examination performance, and parental expectations. The dynamic and evolving nature of education, coupled with limited resources and policy changes, amplifies these stressors. Understanding the nature and extent of occupational stress among secondary school teachers is therefore essential for promoting teacher well-being and institutional effectiveness. Identifying the sources of stress can help policymakers, administrators, and mental health professionals design targeted interventions to foster a healthier work environment. This study aims to analyze the levels, causes, and patterns of occupational stress among secondary school teachers, examining both personal and professional dimensions of this pervasive issue. Through this analysis, the research seeks to contribute to the ongoing discourse on teacher welfare and educational reform.

## **2. LITERATURE REVIEW**

1. Kyriacou (2001) conducted an extensive review of research on teacher stress, identifying workload, student misbehaviour, lack of time, and poor administrative support as key sources of stress. The author emphasized that teacher stress is a serious occupational issue affecting performance and well-being, and recommended longitudinal studies for deeper insights.
2. Maslach and Jackson (1981) conceptualized burnout as a multidimensional syndrome comprising emotional exhaustion, depersonalization, and reduced personal accomplishment. Their development of the Maslach Burnout Inventory (MBI) became a foundational tool for measuring teacher burnout in occupational-stress research.
3. Madigan and Kim (2023) performed a systematic review linking teacher burnout with various physical health issues such as fatigue, headaches, and somatic symptoms. The study highlighted that prolonged occupational stress has detrimental physiological as well as psychological effects on educators.
4. Agyapong et al. (2022) carried out a global meta-analysis and found that teachers experience high levels of stress, burnout, anxiety, and depression. The results showed substantial variation across countries, but consistently pointed to the teaching profession as one of the most mentally demanding occupations
5. Rajesh and colleagues (2022) explored psychological well-being and coping strategies among secondary school teachers. They found that teachers using positive coping styles—such as planning, active coping, and positive reframing—reported better mental health and job satisfaction compared to those using avoidance strategies.
6. Tesfaye et al. (2023) investigated occupational stress among school teachers during the COVID-19 pandemic. Their findings revealed that pandemic-related fears, increased workload, and online teaching demands significantly heightened teachers' stress levels
7. Lavanya (2024) examined perceived stress among private school teachers in Chengalpattu District and found that excessive workload, lack of recognition, and classroom management challenges were major stressors. The study recommended supportive supervision and time management training to alleviate stress
8. Ibrahim (2021) analyzed occupational stress factors among secondary school teachers using regression techniques. The study identified role conflict, lack of resources, and inadequate administrative support as strong predictors of stress, suggesting the need for institutional reforms

## **3. METHODOLOGY**

### **STUDY AREA**

This study was conducted in both private and government schools located in and around Krishna district , Andhra Pradesh. The survey was conducted over 50 secondary school teachers.

#### **HYPOTHESES:**

- There is no significant difference between the male and female secondary teachers in their occupational stress.
- There is no significant difference between the secondary school teachers having below 25 pupils and above 25 in their occupational stress.
- There is no significant difference between the government and private secondary teachers in their occupational stress.
- There is no significant difference between the secondary school teachers having the educational qualifications whether graduation or possible graduation.

#### **The demography and their details are presented in table 1.**

The table indicates that among 50 secondary school teachers, 62% exhibit mild levels of occupational stress, 34% experience moderate levels of occupational stress and 4% report severe levels of occupational stress.

#### **Research Instruments**

All participants underwent the following methods,

A predesigned questionnaire was administered , covering socio demographic details (such as age, gender, management, experience, teacher pupil ratio)

The scores are:

- Strongly Agree-5
- Agree-4
- Neutral-3
- Disagree-2
- Strongly Disagree-1

#### **4. DATA ANALYSIS**

The researcher employed appropriate statistical methods tailored to their study to inference and conclusions. They utilised descriptive statistics, including standard deviation techniques. All data analysis was conducted using the MS-EXCEL.

Table-2 and figure-vi examines the mean scores, SD's, the mean difference of Stress level over Male and Female teachers. An independent samples t-test was conducted to compare occupational stress scores between males (n=16) and females (n=34). The results indicated that there was no significant difference in occupational stress scores between males (M= 2.822, SD=1.271) and female (M=2.948,SD=1.182),  $t(48)=0.73, p=0.463$ , two tailed. Since the p-value is greater than the significance level of 0.05, we fail to reject the null hypothesis. This suggests that, in this sample, males and females did not differ significantly in occupational stress levels.

Table-3 and figure-vii examines the mean scores, SD's, the mean difference of Stress level over teacher pupil ratio whether it is less than 25 or greater than 25. An independent samples t-test was conducted to compare occupational stress scores between greater than 25 (n=23) and less than 25 (n=27). The results indicated that there was no significant difference in occupational stress scores between greater than 25 (M= 3.008 ,SD=1.254) and less than 25 (M=2.822,SD=1.175),  $t(48)=1.187, p=0.241$ , two tailed. Since the p-value is greater than the significance level of 0.05, we fail to reject the null hypothesis. This suggests that, in this sample, greater than 25 and less than 25 pupil ratio did not differ significantly in occupational stress levels.

Table-4 and figure-viii examines the mean scores, SD's, the mean difference of Stress level over Govt. and Private teachers. An independent samples t-test was conducted to compare occupational stress scores between Govt. teachers(n=26) and Private teachers(n=24). The results indicated that there was no significant difference in occupational stress scores between

Govt. teachers(M= 2.79 ,SD=1.22) and Private teachers (M=3.036,SD=1.196),  $t(48)=1.568$ ,  $p=0.123$ , two tailed. Since the p-value is greater than the significance level of 0.05, we fail to reject the null hypothesis. This suggests that, in this sample, Govt. and Private teachers did not differ significantly in occupational stress levels.

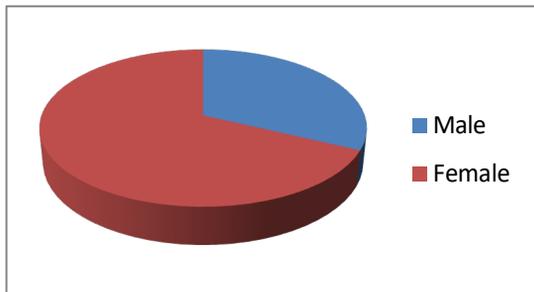
Table-5 and figure-ix examines the mean scores, SD's, the mean difference of Stress level over teachers on the basis of their qualification, whether they are graduate or post graduate. An independent samples t-test was conducted to compare occupational stress scores between graduates (n=31) and post graduates (n=19). The results indicated that there was no significant difference in occupational stress scores between graduates

(M= 3.026 ,SD=1.14) and postgraduates (M=2.714,SD=1.305),  $t(48)=1.976$ , $p=0.054$ , two tailed. Since the p-value is greater than the significance level of 0.05, we fail to reject the null hypothesis. This suggests that, in this sample, graduates and postgraduates did not differ significantly in occupational stress levels

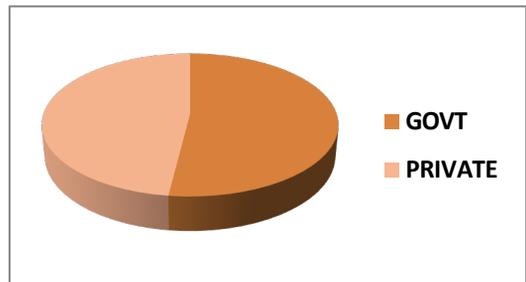
**Table 1:** Demographic Details

<b>DEMOGRAPHIC DETAILS</b>				
<b>S.No.</b>	<b>DEMOGRAPHIC FEATURE</b>		<b>No.</b>	<b>%</b>
1	Gender	Male	16	32
		Female	34	68
2	Pupil ratio	Below 25	27	54
		Above 25	23	46
3	Management	Govt	26	52
		Private	24	48
4	Qualification	Graduation	31	62
		Post-graduation	19	38
<b>Occupational Stress Index</b>				
1	Mild		31	62
2	Moderate		17	34
3	Severe		2	4

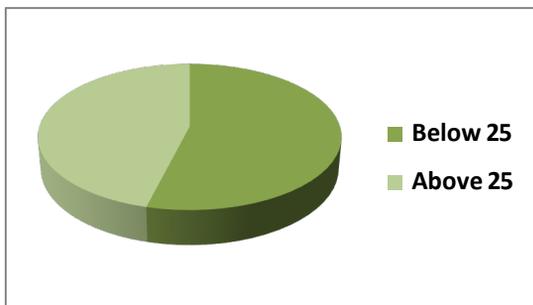
**FIG-I: DISTRIBUTION OF SAMPLE (GENDER BASED)**



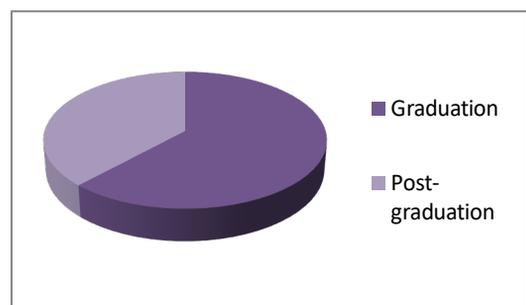
**FIG-III: DISTRIBUTION OF SAMPLE (MANAGEMENT BASED)**



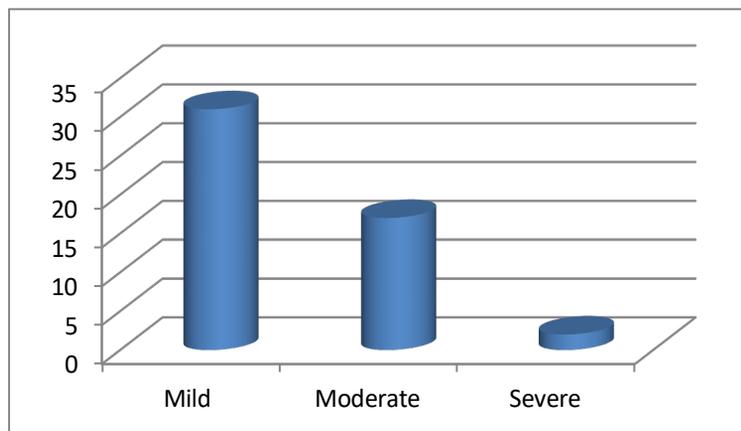
**FIG-II DISTRIBUTION OF SAMPLE (TEACHER PUPIL RATIO BASED)**



**FIG-IV: DISTRIBUTION OF SAMPLE (QUALIFICATION BASED)**



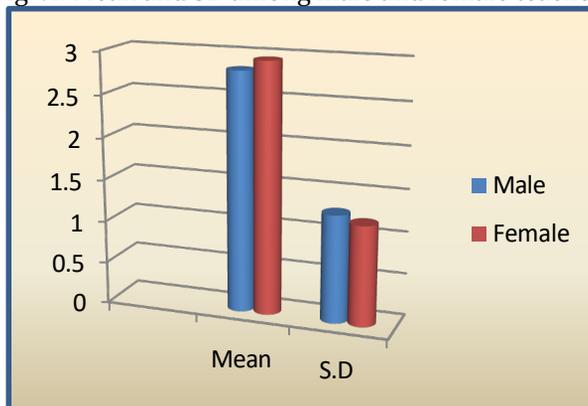
**Fig-v: OCCUPATIONAL STRESS INDEX**



**Table 2: Mean scores, S.Ds, t-value and level of significance among male and female**

Name of the group	Subjects	Mean	S.D	p-value	t(48)
Male	16	2.822321	1.271537	0.463207	0.739
Female	34	2.947899	1.182682		

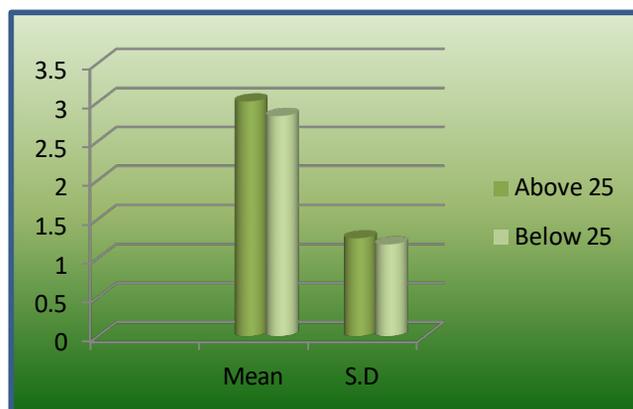
Fig-vi: Mean and SD among male and female teachers



**Table 3:** Mean scores, S.Ds, t –value and level of significance of occupational stress on the basis of teacher pupil ratio

Group	Subjects	Mean	S.D	p-value	t(48)
Above 25	23	3.008696	1.253926	0.241081	1.187
Below 25	27	2.821693	1.175466		

Fig-vii: Mean,SD basis on teacher pupil ratio



**Table 4:** Mean scores, S.Ds, t –value and level of significance of occupational stress on the basis of Management

Group	Subjects	Mean	S.D	p-value	t(48)
Govt	26	2.790659	1.220865	0.123445	1.568
Private	24	3.034524	1.196082		

Fig-viii: Mean,SD basis on Govt and private teachers

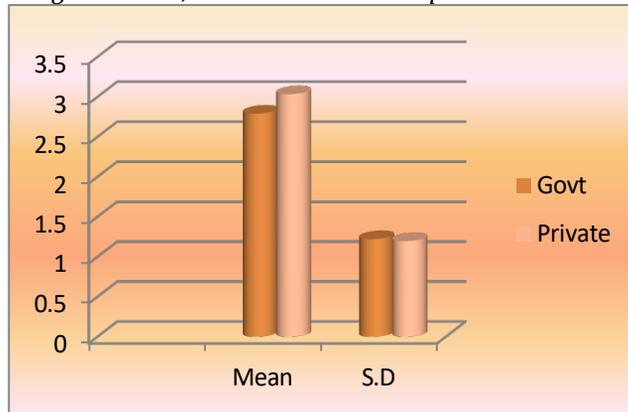
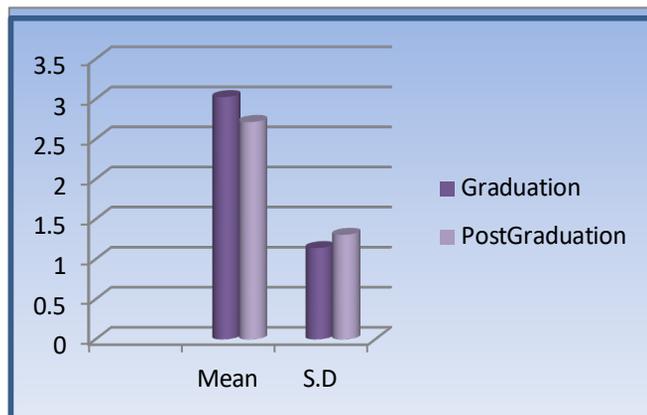


Table 5: Mean scores, S.Ds, t -value and level of significance of occupational stress on the basis of Qualification

Name of the group	Subjects	Mean	S.D	p-value	t(48)
Graduation	31	3.026267	1.14054	0.053834	1.977
PostGraduation	19	2.714286	1.305031		

Fig-ix: Mean,SD basis on Qualification



5. CONCLUSION

The study concludes that while there are minor variations in occupational stress levels among secondary school teachers based on gender, teacher-pupil ratio, management type, and qualification, none of these differences are statistically significant at the 0.05 level, except a near-significant difference concerning qualification. This implies that occupational stress is a common issue among teachers, affecting both male and female educators across different school types and workloads. The findings highlight that factors such as large class size, administrative workload, and limited support may contribute to stress regardless of demographic or institutional background. Therefore, effective stress management programs, counseling support,

and teacher welfare measures should be implemented in both government and private schools to enhance teachers' mental well-being and job satisfaction.

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