

Stress Tolerance and Occupational Self-efficacy Among Teachers

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ABSTRACT

Stress tolerance and Occupational Self-efficacy directly influence the performance of the teachers. Different sources of stress affecting the teacher are time pressure, low salary, workload, being evaluated by others, problems with co-workers, coping with novelty, administrative reasons, conflict of duties, and family problems. Occupational self-efficacy was measured among other groups such as factory workers (Çetin and Aşkun, 2018), doctors (Ramakant *et al.* 2016), nurses (Mahdizadeh *et al.* 2016), and legal professions (Teichmann *et al.* 2015). The present study was conducted on a group of teachers (160) from various types of schools (Govt. N-11, Aided N- 113, Private N-36). The primary objectives of the study were to examine the influence of gender and type of school on stress tolerance and occupational self-efficacy. The results revealed that gender did not have any influence upon both of these factors. But in the case of Occupational self efficacy, a significant group difference was observed. Teachers from the private sector showed a higher level of occupational self-efficacy than teachers from the government sector.

HIGHLIGHTS

- ① Stress Tolerance helps a teacher to be relaxed and composed when faced with personal and professional stressors.
- ① Occupational Self- efficacy of a teacher, is an important factor in determining his/her job satisfaction and self-efficacy.
- ① A scientific study on teachers' stress tolerance and self efficacy will help to understand the effective teaching-learning process in education.
- ① Occupational self-efficacy will help the teachers to handle classroom challenges very effectively with ease.

Keywords: Stress Tolerance, Occupational Self-efficacy, Teachers, Gender, Kerala

Each profession needs occupational self-efficacy to perform the assigned task. At the same time, people experience a specific level of work-related stress in their professional field. Both occupational self-efficacy and stress are differently experienced by each person in his/her professional field. By definition, occupational self-efficacy represents judgments made regarding individual capabilities necessary to perform in their jobs (Jungert *et al.* 2013). Stress tolerance represents the ability to withstand stress without becoming seriously impaired. (Remya and Sylaja 2017). Several

studies (Thoker, 2018) support the fact that teachers do experience a higher level of stress than many other professionals.

Occupational Self-efficacy and Professional Effectiveness

Occupational self-efficacy, the determining factor for

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the professional effectiveness of a teacher, will help a teacher to perform in an appropriate and effective manner to attain specific goals in one's profession. Both occupational self-efficacy and stress are individualistic in nature. Different people experience it differently. Apart from materialistic benefits, a profession will give a certain level of psychological satisfaction or job satisfaction to a person. It is occupational self-efficacy that helps maintain the psychological mechanism of an individual, which fundamentally ensures his academic optimism for the effective teaching-learning process in education. Occupational self-efficacy leads a teacher to feel that his professional work brings positive changes among the learners. Thoker (2018) opined that high self-efficacy enables the successful use of professional knowledge and skills and vis versa.

In general, studies reported that self-efficacy and performance are strongly associated. That means a teacher with high self-efficacy can handle classroom challenges very effectively (Aikaterini *et al.* 2014). According to Lim, better management of work, stress tolerance requires increased self-efficacy and a positive attitude (Lim *et al.* 2004). A study conducted by Olson *et al.* (2012), clearly revealed the fact that an individual's self-efficacy beliefs and resistance against stress have a positive relation.

Stress Tolerance

Studies revealed that sources of stress faced by teachers are from different backgrounds. Some of the sources of external stressors are time pressure, workload, disciplinary environment, being evaluated by others, problems with co-workers (Turna 2014), and internal stressors are status, family problems (Baştuğ 2009), and health-related problems. These stressors decrease teachers' efficacy and may negatively influence students even in a large scale society (Turna 2014). Teachers' inefficiency and stress will directly affect the student and all other associated environmental academic conditions like co-workers, families, and steadily to the whole society (Baştuğ 2009). The dual responsibilities of home and work hinder teachers' ability to manage work stress and give teachers greater, more significant strain. When a teacher can manage work and family stress effectively, their quality of life will increase.

It is a reality that stress affects human beings in the workplace, and the problems of coping with stress in the workplace are actual. Coping with stress is defined as "a complex of cognitive and behavioral efforts to manage, reduce or tolerate specific external and internal demands that threaten or exceed the resources of the individual" (Nekoranec and Kmošena 2015). Stress Tolerance is the capacity to withstand pressures and strains and the consequent ability to function effectively and with minimal anxiety under stress conditions. In order to deal with stressful events and alleviate feelings of distress, teachers use means of coping that include cognitive, emotional and behavioral strategies of comforting and adaptation to the stressful situation (Admiraal *et al.* 2000; Kyriacou, 2001). A review of available literature revealed that a few detailed study on teachers' stress tolerance and occupational self-efficacy has so far been attempted in Kerala.

Objectives

1. To find out whether there are any gender differences in stress tolerance and occupational self-efficacy among teachers.
2. To find out whether there are any differences in stress tolerance and occupational self-efficacy among teachers categorised based on the type of school.
3. To find out whether there is any relationship between age, stress tolerance, and occupational self-efficacy among teachers.

Hypothesis

1. There be a significant gender differences in stress tolerance and occupational self-efficacy among teachers.
2. There will be a significant difference in stress tolerance and occupational self-efficacy among teachers categorised based on the type of school.
3. There will be a significant relationship between age, stress tolerance, and occupational self-efficacy among teachers.

METHOD

A descriptive research design was used in this study. Sample ($N = 160$) selected among teachers ($M = 47$, and $F = 113$) from Idukki district.

Tools

1. Demographic data sheet prepared by the researcher.
2. The Stress Tolerance scale by Resmy and Sananda Raj (1999).
3. Occupational Self-efficacy Scale by Sanjyot Pethe, Sushama Chaudhari, and Upinder Dhar (1999).

Reliability and Validity

Split half reliability method was used to estimate the reliability test. The test was split into two halves based on odd items and even items (odd-even reliability method). A correlation coefficient between the two halves was found using Karl Pearson's product-moment formula. Thus the whole test was found out using Spearman Formulae and was found to be 0.82. This index of reliability shows that stress tolerance is highly reliable.

The odd-even reliability of the scale was determined by calculating the reliability coefficient corrected for full length for a sample of 220 subjects. The reliability of the scale is 98. Besides face validity, as all items in the scale are concerned with the variable under focus, the scale has high content validity. It is evident from the assessment of judges/ experts that items of the scale are directly related to the concepts of self-efficacy. In order to find out the validity from the co-efficient of reliability, the reliability index was calculated. The latter has indicated high validity on account of being 99.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The following session explained the variations based on stress and occupational self-efficacy among teachers.

A close observation of table 1 clearly shows that in the case of stress tolerance, men teachers have obtained (64.10) low scores than women teachers (66.60). But the difference is not statistically significant. In this study, the finding indicates that gender does not influence stress tolerance. The result of the present study supported the finding of Fadia & Alhija (2015). In their study, among five stress factors, gender exerts a significant effect only on workload, indicating that women experience higher stress levels due to workload. Compared to men, women also evaluated behavioral change, seeking social support, and distancing work at school. Several studies have indicated the comparatively stressful nature of teaching. However, the result of the study indicates that irrespective of stressors of life and gender difference, being a teacher is capable of showing high tolerance towards stressors.

These gender differences can be attributed to different gender roles and social norms regarding different gender-related behaviors. It may be because of the particular conditions which favour women empowerment and welfare activities carried over in Kerala through Kerala Development Model. Some of the situations that stress academic background are pupil- teacher ratio, the pyramid of teacher distribution, infrastructure, a network of the education system, high enrolment rate, and low drop-out ratio. According to Tilak (2015), for improved conditions of education, developmental changes reduced academic stressors from teaching-learning situations. As a result, it helped to reduce gender inequalities in education situations in Kerala. The improved conditions led the teachers to

Table 1: Mean, Standard deviation, and corresponding t' value of stress tolerance and occupational self-efficacy obtained by male and female teachers

Variable	Male mean N= 47	SD	Female mean N= 113	SD	't' values
Stress Tolerance	64.1064	10.90120	66.6018	10.37643	1.365
Occupational self-efficacy	70.7447	14.65616	71.5398	10.63270	.384

cope up with stress. It may be the reason for the result, which shows no gender difference in teachers' stress tolerance.

In the case of occupational self-efficacy, men teachers have obtained (70.74) low scores than women teachers (71.53). But the difference is not statistically significant. It clearly indicates that gender does not influence the occupational self-efficacy of the teachers. Both of these groups are more or less similar. The present study's findings contradict the findings of Seema (2012) and Loeb (2016). The findings from these studies stated that male teachers have more occupational self-efficacy than female teachers. In the light of the results reported above, the hypothesis, which reads as "There be a significant gender difference in stress tolerance and occupational self-efficacy among teachers," is rejected.

Table 2: ANOVA with respect to type of school

Variable		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Squares	F
Stress Tolerance	Between Groups	168.455	2	84.227	.753
	Within Groups	17563.789	157	111.871	
	Total	17732.255	159		
Occupational self-efficacy	Between Groups	1186.437	2	593.219	4.357*
	Within Groups	21377.557	157	136.163	
	Total	22563.994	159		

*Significant at 0.05 level.

The table 2 shows teachers' stress tolerance and occupational self-efficacy concerning the type of teachers. The calculated F value of occupational self-efficacy is 4.357, greater than the table value. So it is statistically significant at 0.05 level. The result of the group analysis is given below.

Table 3: Occupational self- efficacy

Aided	N	Subset for alpha = 0.05	
		1	2
Government	11		
Private	36	63.1818	70.9735
Aided	113	70.9735	74.8338

Comparison of group means indicate that the government group keeps a distance from with private. The aided group did not differ from any other group. Occupational self-efficacy is higher among private than others. The result of the present study supported the finding of Thoker (2018). In his study, it is revealed that private school teachers were found a high level of Occupational Efficacy compared to Government School teachers. In yet another study conducted by Appadurai and Saraladevi (2015), the impact of the type of school on the self-efficacy of teachers is significant.

The results from the present study revealed that the private aided school teachers were found to have more efficacy beliefs than the Government teachers. Eremie and Chikweru (2015) found a significant mean difference between private schools teachers and public schools teachers on self-esteem. The investigators also observed private school teachers with a high level of self-esteem as compared to public school teachers. The reason behind private school teachers having a high level of self-efficacy than government teachers may be because of their better confidence, command, adaptability, personal effectiveness, positive attitude, and individuality (Thoker 2018) as compared to Government teachers. In Kerala private schools, teachers are monitored and guided by efficient school management. As a result, their occupational self-efficacy and confidence are higher compared to others. The private school teachers are significantly guided to be competitive and expected to update their scholastic profile periodically, which will obviously keep them in the frontline of the profession. At the same time, the government teachers are not competent as private teachers since their job is secured. In the light of the results reported above, the hypothesis, which reads as, "There will be a significant difference in stress tolerance, and occupational self-efficacy among teachers categorized based on the type of school," stands retained.

Table 4: Correlation

Variable	Age
Stress tolerance	.022
Occupational self-efficacy	-.009

The table 4 shows that both stress tolerance and occupational self-efficacy, and age are not correlated. Age is not associated with both of these variables. But in another study conducted by Klassen and Chiu (2010), the relationship is obtained between the year of experience and occupational self-efficacy. The results revealed that self-efficacy increased based on years of experience. The reason behind this result might be that the education system of Kerala periodically updates the efficiency of its professionals. It is a fundamental reality that a teacher can perform his or her multifarious tasks and responsibilities only if they are updated professionally and personally (Thoker 2018). With this in mind, each year State Council of Educational Research and Training, Kerala, organizes teacher development programs and in-service training for teachers at all levels - from pre-primary to higher secondary sectors. It is compulsory for all government and aided teachers to attend such in-service training and development programs. Moreover, perceptibly it helps the education professionals in Kerala to maintain their stress tolerance and occupational self-efficacy with respect to any sorts of variables, including age.

CONCLUSION

From the foregoing analysis, it is clear that gender is not an influencing factor in stress and occupational self efficacy. It is also revealed that teachers from the private sector showed higher level of occupational self efficacy than teachers from the government sector. It means that government teachers' occupational self-efficacy needs to be improved and taken care of by appropriate methods and programs by respective departments. From the findings, it is clear that age is not related to stress tolerance and occupational self-efficacy. But it may be related to many other variables.

So further detailed examination of such factors is required. All these factors clearly show that the development of Kerala's education system has been a success story due to the availability of sound infrastructure, the social value of the society and the influential role of the state. Suppose any other Indian states wish to set up a sound education system like Kerala. In that case, they will first have to ensure significant infrastructural

development accompanied by a vital role played by the state governments to ensure that education is accessible to all.

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