

# OCCUPATIONAL STRESS IN UPPER PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS

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## ABSTRACT

*Teaching as a profession has an esteemed place among all professions. However teaching as a profession at any level becoming more demanding day by day. Teaching has also become more like a managerial job and is having multidimensional job responsibilities. All these situations greatly enhances the stress among teachers. The present study was designed to explore the relationship of occupational stress of the upper primary school teachers with demographic variables like gender, teaching experience and location of the school in which they were teaching. The sample comprised of 100 male and female upper primary school teachers of government schools of Bhopal district. Occupational Stress Scale constructed and standardized by Dr. Sajid Jamal and Dr. Abdul Raheem, having 30 items was used as research tool. After the data collection, statistical techniques like Mean, SD and t-value was used to interpret the results. Results of the study revealed that male teachers experienced more occupational stress than female teachers. Teachers with an experience of below 10 years face more occupational stress than those teachers with teaching experience of above than 10 years. There was no significant difference in the occupational stress between the rural and urban teachers.*

Keywords: Occupational Stress, Upper Primary School Teachers

## INTRODUCTION

From time immemorial, teaching has a very prestigious place among all professions. Teacher is a kingpin in the entire system of education and are very often been given names like “Master” “Mentor” and “Guru”. To achieve this status teachers throughout the history of civilization have come up to the expectations of the world around them. The role of teacher is multi-faceted, comprising academic, pedagogical and social roles. Academic roles cover teaching, counseling and supervisory roles, pedagogical roles include instructional, evaluation and facilitating roles and social roles of the teacher includes preparing pupils to participate in the way of life of the society.

Teaching has now been identified as one of the most stressful professions today. Earlier, teaching profession has traditionally been regarded as low stress occupation (French et.al.,1982) but during the past two decades the situation is somersaulted (Olivier & Venter,2003). With the changing socio-economic scenario and increasing unemployment, stresses and hassles of teachers have increased. There are a lot of stresses for a teacher who has a lot of deadlines to meet and a lot of responsibilities to shoulder besides teaching a child what are in a text book. It is seen that the common sources of stress for teachers are misbehaviour of students, poor working conditions, lack of resources for teachers, poor relationships with colleagues, overload with teaching and non teaching duties, and poor administrative support. Teachers are also over burdened with regular teaching work and non-teaching work as election duties, duty in census etc. As a result of these stresses teachers generate dissatisfaction, which in turn affect teacher competence and lack of recognition for effective teaching. Dunham (1992) further identified four kinds of effects of stress. They are (a) behavioural (e.g. heavy smoking, absenteeism, and turnover); (b) emotional (e.g. nervousness, anxiety, and depression); (c) mental (e.g. inability to concentrate); and (d) physical (e.g. headache and gastro-intestinal problems).

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Nomita Punia and Shanti Balda (2016) reported that majority of the teachers experience moderate level of stress due to role overload, role ambiguity, role conflict, lack of control, poor peer relations, and strenuous working conditions in CBSE schools. Karthikeyan and Babu, (2016) was observed that the married teachers have felt maximum level of occupational stress than unmarried teachers. Hasan (2014) observed that the primary school teachers have found to be highly stressed levels. Jeyaraj (2013) observed that there is a meaningful difference in the stress level points of Government and Aided Higher Secondary Teachers. Nagra (2013) reported no significant differences regarding occupational stress among teacher educators in relation to gender, and subject streams. Aftab and Khatoon (2012) reported the demographic differences and occupational stress of secondary school teachers in a population of 608 teachers from 42 schools of Uttar Pradesh (India). Mondal et al. (2011) found a significant difference between male and female teachers, with male teachers having more psychological stress and physical stress than the female teachers. Ahghar (2008) studied the influence of organizational climate in occupational stress among secondary school teachers in Tehran. Kyriacou (2001) also reported that the main sources of teacher stress are teaching students who lack motivation, maintaining discipline in the classroom, confronting general time pressures and workload demands.

### **SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

Teachers form the crux of the education system, preparing the young adolescents to build their nation with purpose and responsibility and confront the challenges of tomorrow. The teaching profession at the upper primary stages of education, gives a set of challenges in which teachers have to demonstrate or display emotions which they may not actually feel because the upper primary school students have a unique set of wants and needs that separate them from the childhood years of elementary school but do not find them ready for the late adolescence of high school. Stress is often accepted as inescapable aspect of teaching. Demographic variables that are proven to relate to teachers' job stressor/health relationships include gender, location of schools and teaching experiences of teachers. Studies of these demographic factors in the upper primary school teachers will help to give an insight to the problems and to know the gravity of problems of these teachers so as to find the possible solutions to make their teaching much more easier, effective and interesting for the children.

### **STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

Occupational stress not only affects the individual concerned but also the co-workers through strained interpersonal relations and ultimately affects the students' education which forms the very core for the success of education department.

Hence, in the present study the researcher has made an attempt to study entitled, "*Occupational Stress In Upper Primary School Teachers.*"

The research questions of this study include the following:

- a. What is the level of occupational stress in upper primary school teachers?
- b. Do the demographic factors like gender, locality and teaching experience, explain the differences in occupational stress of upper primary school teachers?

### **OBJECTIVES OF STUDY**

1. To know the level of occupational stress among upper primary school teachers..
2. To compare the occupational stress of male and female upper primary school teachers.
3. To compare the occupational stress of rural and urban teachers of upper primary schools teachers
4. To compare the occupational stress of upper primary school teachers having different levels of teaching experiences (Above and below 10 years).

## HYPOTHESES

The following null hypotheses have been formulated while dealing with the present problem.

1. There is no significant level of occupational stress among the upper primary school teachers.
2. There is no significant difference in the level of occupational stress of male and female upper primary school teachers.
3. There is no significant difference in the level of occupational stress of rural and urban upper primary school teachers.
4. There is no significant difference in the level of occupational stress of upper primary teachers having different levels of teaching experience (Above and below 10 years).

## METHODOLOGY

The present work is a descriptive study investigating whether the occupational stress faced by the school teachers differed significantly to their level of occupational stress and demographic factors.

### Sample

A random sample of 100 male and female teachers were collected from consisted of 100 teachers were collected from various government upper primary schools of Bhopal District (MP).

### Tools

Teachers' Occupational Stress Scale constructed and standardized by Dr. Sajid Jamal and Dr. Abdul Raheem .The inventory included sources of occupational stress like Work load (WL), Students Misbehavior (SM), Lack Of Professional Recognition (LPR), Lack Of Classroom Resources(LCR) and Poor Colleague Relations (PCR). The first part of the questionnaire was related to personal details of teachers, second part relates with measuring of occupational stress among the teachers with the help of Chi-square test. All the closed-ended questions were designed to generate responses on a five point likert scale to measure the occupational stress indicated as 1 strongly disagree,2 disagree, 3 no opinion, 4 agree and 5 strongly disagree.

### Statistical techniques

To analyze the data and interpret the data, the investigator used the following statistical techniques.

1. Mean and Standard Deviation
2. t-test to compare groups .

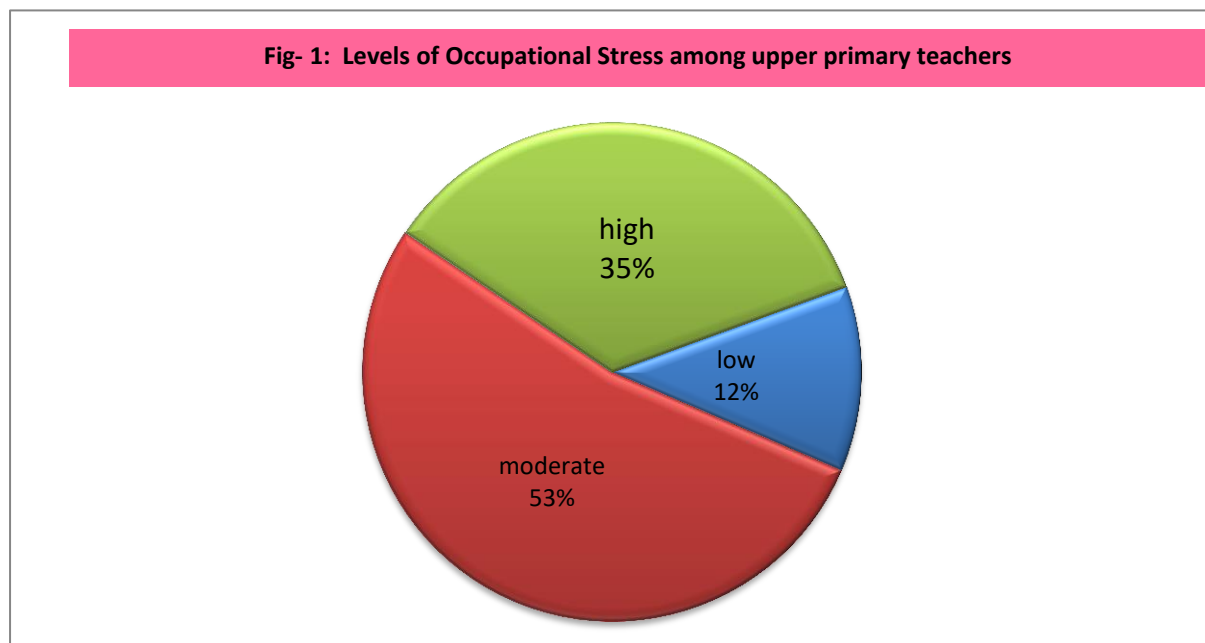
## RESULTS AND INTERPRETATIONS

The results obtained are depicted in the following tables and interpreted accordingly.

**Table- 1: Levels of Occupational Stress among upper primary teachers**

S.No.	Stress Level	No. of Teachers	Percentage (%)
1	Low	12	12
2	Moderate	53	53
3	High	35	35
Total		100	100

It is observed from table 1 and figure 1, that 53% teachers have a moderate level of stress, which is followed by teachers who were having high level of stress (35%) and low level of stress (12%) in teaching profession. Thus, the null hypothesis that “There is no significant level of occupational stress among the upper primary school teachers,” is rejected. Similar results have also been reported by Hasan (2014), Jeyaraj (2013), Reddy and Anuradha (2013), Aftab and Khatoon (2012), Rao (2010) Poornima(2010), John (2007), Ushasri (2007)



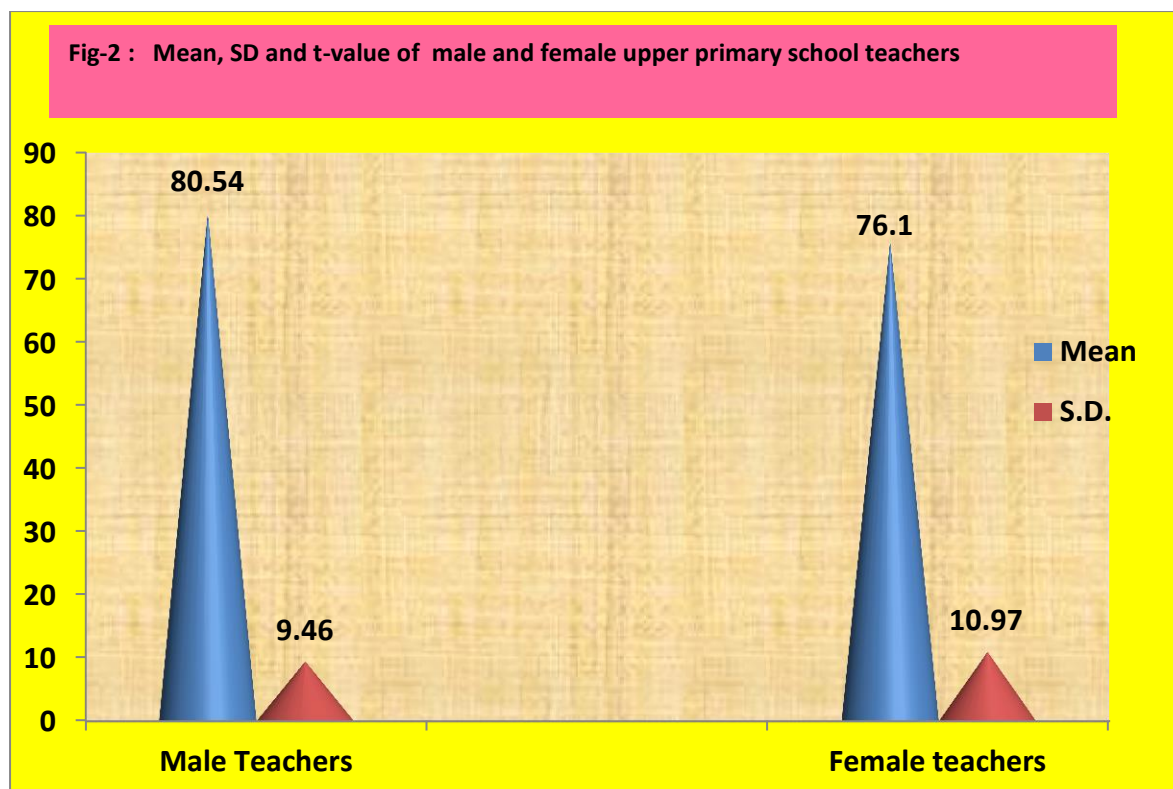
**Table -2 : Mean, SD and t-value of male and female upper primary school teachers**

Group	Total	Mean	S.D.	T Value	Df	p	Result
Male Teachers	50	80.54	9.46	2.17	98	1.98	S
Female teachers	50	76.10	10.97				

P>.05

s = significant

Table 2 and figure 2 depicts that t-value (2.17) obtained for occupational stress of upper primary teachers with respect to the variable gender is significant at 0.05 level. This indicates that men and women teachers are differ significantly in their occupational stress. The mean value of occupational stress of male (80.54) and female (76.10) teachers also revealed that male teachers experienced more stress than the female teachers. Thus, the null hypothesis, “There is no significant difference in the level of occupational stress of male and female Upper Primary School teachers,” is rejected. The result is similar to the findings of Aftab and Khatoon (2012), Reddy (2011), Okoza et al. (2010), Anbuchelvan (2010), Chopra and Gartia (2009), Yang et al. (2009) and DeNobile and McCormick (2007), but is contradicted by the results of Mazzola et al. (2011), Sabu and Jangaiah (2005) and Doyle and Hind (1998).



**Table -3: Mean SD and t- value of rural and urban upper primary teachers**

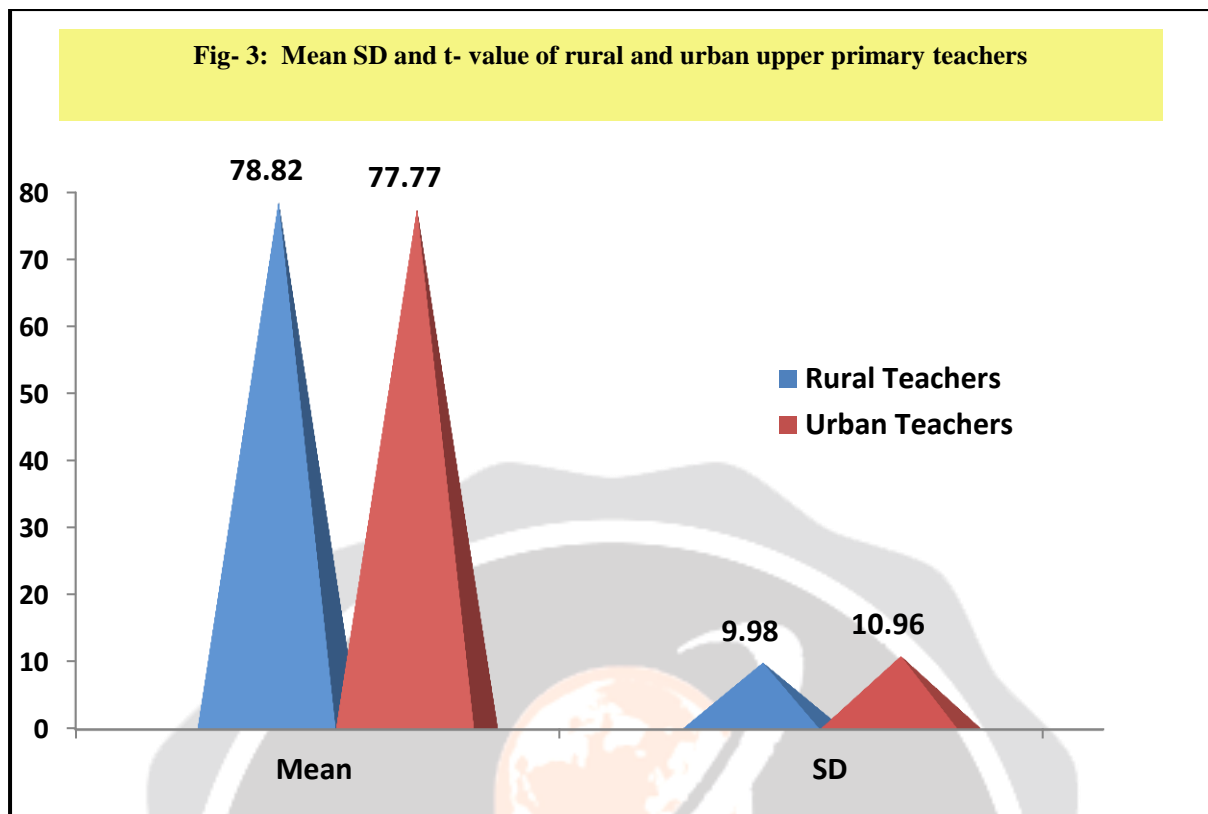
GROUP	TOTAL	MEAN	SD	T VALUE	DF	p	result
Rural Teachers	50	78.82	9.98	0.5	98	1.98	ns
Urban Teachers	50	77.77	10.96				

P> .05

ns=not significant

It is evident from table 3 and figure 3 that the mean scores of rural teachers (Mean=78.82 SD= 9.98) is higher than the urban teachers (Mean=77.77, SD=10.96) but it with small variations. The t- value obtained (0.05) is not significant at 0.05 level, which shows that rural and urban teachers do not differ significantly in their occupational stress . Therefore, the formulated null hypothesis which states that, “Rural and urban upper primary teachers do not differ significantly on occupational stress” is accepted. The result obtained is supported by Soyibo (1994), Reddy and Annuradha, (2013) and contradicted by Dhull (2016) Naik (2011) and Ramkumar(2007).





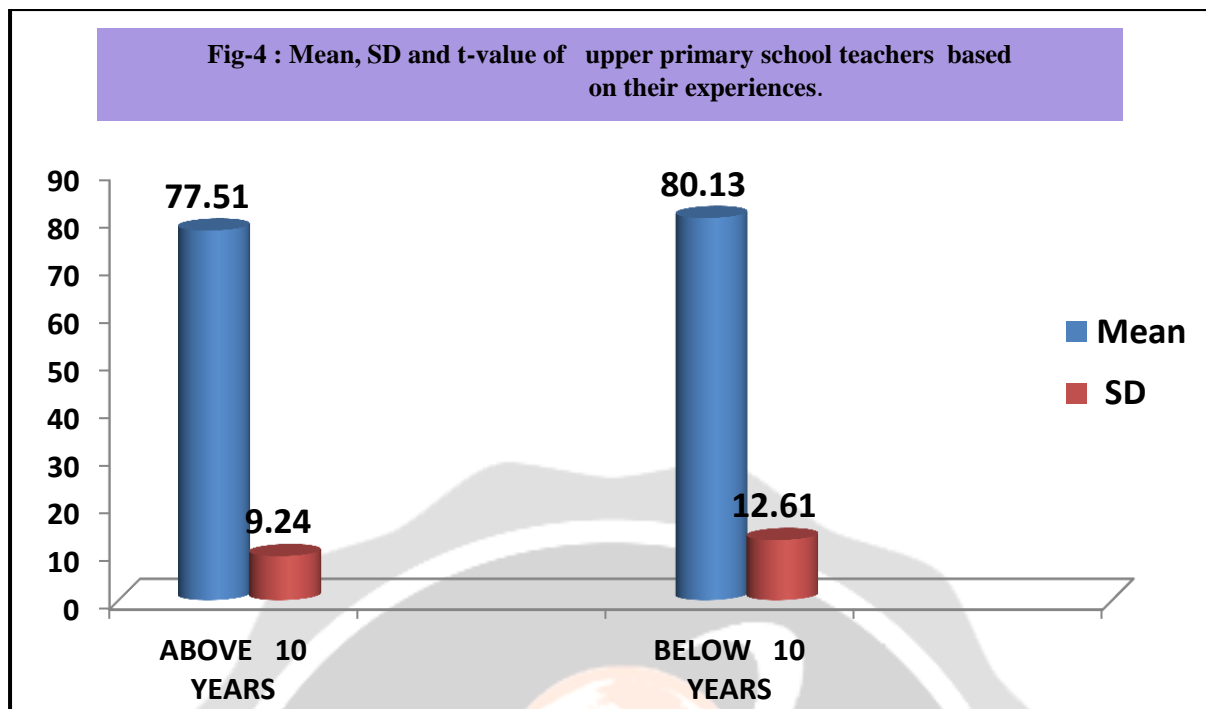
**Table -4: Mean, SD and t-value of upper primary school teachers based on their experiences.**

	TOTAL	MEAN	SD	t- VALUE	DF	Result
Above 10 Years	50	77.51	9.24	0.17	1.98	ns
Below 10 Years	50	80.13	12.61			

P> .05

ns=not significant

Table 4 and figure 4 shows that the teachers having teaching experience below 10 years have higher scores of mean value (M=80.43,SD=12.61) than the mean value (M=77.50,SD=9.24) obtained with teachers with above 10 years of teaching experience. Similarly, the results of t-value (0.17) also indicates that there is a significant difference in the occupational stress of upper primary school teachers having teaching experiences of above and below 10 years respectively. Hence the null hypothesis which states that “There is no significant differences in the occupational stress of upper primary teachers having different teaching experiences is rejected.” Further, this result is also supported by the earlier findings of Prasad et.al.(2016), Aftab and Khatoon (2012),Balaswamy (2011), Anbuchelvan (2010), and Al-Amir (2004).



## FINDINGS

From the results of the above study it is clear that the Upper Primary School Teachers as a whole are found to be stressed. This is also evident from the past researches which reported that the teaching profession is one of the most stressful profession (Olivier & Venter, 2003). It was found that the Upper Primary School Teachers differed significantly with each other in their occupational stress wherein, the male teachers were found to be more stressed than their female counterparts. The reason may be attributed to their higher aspirations and more workload than female teachers. When the data obtained on the variables like location was studied, it was found that the mean scores of rural and urban teachers did not varied much although the rural teachers showed a little more stress than urban teachers. This may be due to the reason that the Upper Primary School teachers working in rural areas have to work under limited resources and unhealthy conditions than that of their urban counterparts. The results obtained on the studies with teaching experience indicated that there is an association between years of teaching experience and the level of occupational stress among the Upper Primary School Teachers. The teachers having lesser teaching experience had higher level of occupational stress than that of more experienced teachers. It might be because they may not be confident enough in teaching/dealing with disruptive pupils, due to less experience in their profession in comparison to their senior colleagues.

## CONCLUSIONS

The teaching at upper primary level of schools is found to be a very stressful, as the teacher has to deal with young adolescents who experience an acceleration of their growth and development. They are sensitive and easily offended and can be moody at certain instances. The teachers therefore, face disinterest of students towards education, poor academic achievement, difficulty level of the syllabus etc. In addition to these, other factors, such as teaching methods, non-availability of models, much clerical works, other works assigned-by the government etc. also causes occupational stress.

As long as our teacher remain under the grip of frustration and under stress and strain we cannot hope for a healthy and strong nation. It means that in any educational setting, the teachers need to be kept satisfied in their job by channelizing their energies in a manner which keeps the ego up and mental health sound. Stresses of teaching job can be conveniently managed in the following way.

- a. Selection of suitable and qualified teachers, proper curriculum designing and training, adequate work conditions,

- b. Moderating the intensity of integral job stressors through the other variables of positive values, such as high or extra salary, non-financial incentives, social support, generating team feeling, and participation in programmes and plannings etc.
- c. Minimizing the frequency and intensity of stressful situations ,effective supervision and incentive system.
- d. Besides this., teachers should practice yoga and meditation, exercise regularly, foster a supportive friend circle, cultivate hobbies, develop effective communication skills, and seek professional help, to overcome stress in their day today life.

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