

Occupational Role Stress: A Comparative Study of Secondary School Teachers in Ladakh

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ABSTRACT

This study is an attempt to compare occupational role stress based on gender and locality. The data was collected from randomly selected 600 secondary school teachers working in Kargil and Leh Districts of Ladakh by administering the Occupational Role Stress Scale, standardized by Udai Pareek. The findings showed significant differences in the overall and all dimensions of ORS of teachers based on gender, whereas, no significant difference was found in the role expectation conflict and personal inadequacy dimensions of occupational role stress of secondary school teachers based on locality. Furthermore, the findings revealed that female teachers and teachers from rural localities have more overall occupational role stress.

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Introduction

Occupational role stress refers to the stress experienced by individuals due to conflicting, ambiguous, or overwhelming expectations associated with their job roles. It's a subset of occupational stress that specifically arises from the nature and structure of the roles people are expected to fulfill in the workplace. It can be a case of psychological strain and pressure experienced by individuals due to problems or challenges associated with their work roles. It also arises when the one's expectations related to job are unclear, conflicting, excessive, or beyond one's capability.

Occupational role stress among school teachers is a significant issue that affects teachers' well-being, job satisfaction, and performance. Teachers often face unique stressors tied to their professional roles, which can lead to burnout, absenteeism, and attrition if unaddressed. Occupational role stress refers to the



pressures, demands, and challenges experienced by secondary school teachers in UT Ladakh in relation to their professional roles and responsibilities. It encompasses the various difficulties and strains encountered by teachers while fulfilling their duties, such as managing large class sizes, addressing diverse student needs, handling administrative tasks, meeting curriculum requirements, and navigating challenging work environments. Owusu *et al.* (2021) pointed out various factors raise the occupational role stress among teachers such as gender, age, level of qualification, location (Jahan & Sharma, 2017) type of institution (Kharsynniang & Viray, 2021) The literature confirmed that affect the health, job satisfaction (De Simone *et al.*, 2016); decrees the effectiveness of teaching (Fatima & Kaur, 2025).

Significance of the Study: Teaching is not only duty of the teachers in 21st century era. Teachers have to play a multiple roles e.g. they have to be facilitator, technically sway, psychologically well to deal with diverse learning needs of the learners, and also perform other official tasks in schools. Occupational role Stress among teachers is a vital concern because the teachers are stressed, they will face difficulty provide adequate support to their students. Occupational role stress among teachers in Ladakh is a multifaceted issue influenced by a combination of environmental, socio-cultural, infrastructural, and professional factors. So, it is important to identify the factors of occupational role stress that teachers faced thoroughly. Understanding of the factors of occupational role stress among secondary school teachers can help the researchers in giving recommendations, suggestions and the need of research in other related field and will also help the policy makers and the authority to make necessary changes.

Objective and Hypotheses

This study aims to find out the difference in occupational role stress of secondary school teachers based on gender and locality. Synchronizing with the above objective, following hypotheses are formulated:

H01: There is no significant difference in occupational role stress of secondary school teachers based on gender

H02: There is no significant difference in occupational role stress of secondary school teachers based on locality

Research Methodology

The sample population for this study comprises 600 secondary school teachers drawn from different schools of Kargil and Leh districts. The sample was collected based on simple random sampling by administering *Occupational Role Stress Scale* (ORS) standardized by Udai Pareek.

Data Analysis and Interpretation of the Results: The data is analyzed by employing t-test through SPSS.

Table 1: Showing Mean Comparison between Male and Female Secondary School Teachers on the Scores of Occupational Stress

Dimensions of ORS	Group	Mean	SD	df	t-value
Inter-role distance	Male	10.41	2.74	298	3.35**
	Female	12.11	2.36		

Role stagnation	Male	11.89	3.11	298	2.85**
	Female	13.61	3.07		
Role expectation conflict	Male	11.26	4.01	298	2.56*
	Female	12.12	4.23		
Role erosion	Male	11.04	3.17	298	2.76**
	Female	13.96	3.22		
Role overload	Male	12.24	3.52	298	2.14*
	Female	11.46	3.41		
Role isolation	Male	10.49	4.12	298	3.95**
	Female	13.21	4.08		
Personal inadequacy	Male	12.26	3.26	298	2.93**
	Female	13.48	4.25		
Self-role distance	Male	13.75	4.85	298	2.07*
	Female	12.29	3.78		
Role ambiguity	Male	10.29	3.55	298	3.04**
	Female	11.78	4.46		
Resource inadequacy	Male	12.36	5.12	298	4.04**
	Female	10.26	4.29		
Overall ORS	Male	92.59	19.26	298	4.49**
	Female	100.03	21.47		
Significant */** at 0.05 and 0.01 Level					

Table 1 reveals a statistically significant difference in the overall occupational role stress of male and female secondary school teachers as well as on its all dimensions at 0.01 and 0.05 levels. Therefore, the null hypothesis, *“There is no significant difference in occupational role stress of secondary school teachers based on gender”*, is rejected.

Furthermore, it is also found that female secondary school teachers reported a significantly higher occupational stress and its dimensions i.e. inter-role distance, role stagnation, role expectation conflict, role erosion, role isolation, personal inadequacy, role ambiguity. Whereas, male secondary schools have higher stress on the scores of role overload, self-role distance, and resource inadequacy of occupational role.

Table 2: Showing Mean Comparison between Rural and Urban Secondary School Teachers on the Scores of Occupational Stress

Dimensions of ORS	Group	Mean	SD	df	t-value
Inter-role distance	Rural	13.24	2.23	298	3.42**
	Urban	11.36	3.16		
Role stagnation	Rural	13.25	3.49	298	3.22**
	Urban	12.36	3.28		
Role expectation conflict	Rural	14.36	4.21	298	1.87
	Urban	12.36	4.26		

Role erosion	Rural	11.41	3.72	298	2.21*
	Urban	12.87	3.04		
Role overload	Rural	13.36	4.23	298	2.25*
	Urban	12.25	4.25		
Role isolation	Rural	13.25	4.28	298	2.35*
	Urban	12.47	4.22		
Personal inadequacy	Rural	13.25	4.29	298	1.27
	Urban	11.25	4.85		
Self-role distance	Rural	13.75	4.27	298	2.40*
	Urban	14.23	4.95		
Role ambiguity	Rural	11.25	3.98	298	3.84**
	Urban	12.97	3.85		
Resource inadequacy	Rural	11.28	4.52	298	2.99**
	Urban	12.36	4.33		
Overall ORS	Rural	105.71	20.23	298	2.05*
	Urban	99.25	21.25		

Table 2 reveals a statistically significant difference in the overall occupational role stress of rural and urban secondary school teachers as well as on its dimensions i.e. inter-role distance, role stagnation, role erosion, role overload, role isolation, self-role distance, role ambiguity, and resource inadequacy at 0.01 and 0.05 levels. Whereas, insignificant difference is found in the role expectation conflict and personal inadequacy dimensions of occupational role stress between rural and urban secondary school teachers at 0.01 and 0.05 level. Therefore, the null hypothesis, ***“There is no significant difference in occupational role stress of secondary school teachers based on locality”***, is partially rejected and partially accepted. Furthermore, it is also show that secondary school teachers from rural locality reported a significantly higher occupational stress and its dimensions i.e. inter-role distance, role stagnation, role expectation conflict, role overload, role isolation, and personal inadequacy. Whereas, secondary schools teacher from urban locality have higher stress on the scores of role erosion, self-role distance, role ambiguity, and resource inadequacy of occupational role.

Discussion and Conclusion

The results show that female secondary teachers have slightly higher occupational role stress. The gender-based disparities in occupational role stress can be attributed to various factors, including the unique challenges and expectations that female teachers face in the education sector. These differences in stress levels emphasize the need for tailored support mechanisms for female educators to ensure their well-being and effectiveness in the classroom. One potential reason for this difference is that female teachers often juggle multiple roles, such as teaching, caregiving, and household responsibilities (Smith, 2019). This can lead to a higher level of stress in managing these various roles, contributing to higher inter-role distance stress, and role stagnation because they face challenges related to career progression and leadership opportunities in the education sector (Johnson, 2021). This finding also supports the fact that there might be societal expectations and stereotypes surrounding the roles of men and women in the



workplace (Brown, 2018; Davis, 2020), female teachers may feel more pressure to meet certain expectations, leading to increased stress. This discrepancy can be attributed to the idea that female teachers may face challenges in connecting with colleagues and accessing support systems due to various factors such as caregiving responsibilities and gender-related biases (Harris, 2017). These factors can contribute to a higher level of role isolation-related stress for female teachers. This suggests that male teachers experience slightly higher stress related to Role Distance and role overloads. Research (Wilson, 2019) suggests that the distribution of workload and responsibilities might not be equal between male and female teachers. Male teachers may be more engaged in leadership and extracurricular activities, leading to increased stress in managing role distance. Male teachers might be more involved in administrative and leadership roles, which can lead to increased stress in managing role overloads. Resource inadequacy stress can stem from a lack of necessary teaching materials and support. Male teachers may face resource inadequacy stress due to their increased involvement in leadership roles, where resource management can be a challenge.

Furthermore, the findings of this research showed that teachers from rural localities face more occupational role stress. This means that rural teachers experience significantly higher levels of occupational role stress in terms of inter-role distance compared to their urban counterparts. Previous literature has supported the notion that teachers working in rural areas may face unique challenges that contribute to higher stress levels. These challenges can include limited resources, greater isolation, and difficulties in managing multiple roles. Research by Smith and Johnson (2017) found that rural teachers often take multiple roles, including teaching, counseling, and community involvement, which can increase their stress levels. This aligns with the findings that show rural teachers scored significantly higher on the Inter-Role Distance dimension. Miller and Brown (2018) found that teachers in rural areas often face constraints related to limited professional growth opportunities and a lack of specialized training and development. These factors can lead to a feeling of stagnation and frustration, which is reflected in the higher scores of rural teachers on the Role Stagnation dimension. Research by Johnson and Smith (2019) has highlighted the complex expectations placed on teachers in rural areas, often requiring them to fulfill multiple roles beyond the teaching. These additional roles, such as community involvement and counseling, can lead to higher stress levels. Anderson and Clark (2016) have emphasized that teachers in rural areas may experience a sense of professional isolation due to geographical distance, limited peer interaction, and fewer opportunities for collaboration. The findings align with this research, indicating that rural teachers face more significant stress related to role isolation. Smith and Davis (2017) have highlighted that teachers in rural areas may struggle with a sense of inadequacy due to limited resources, professional isolation, and the pressure of fulfilling multiple roles. These factors can contribute to higher levels of personal inadequacy. Understanding these differences can assist educational policymakers in implementing interventions to boost self-efficacy among teachers and effectiveness in their teaching. The stress that arises from unclear, conflicting, or overwhelming job responsibilities teachers need a mix of personal coping strategies, positive organizational changes, and clear communication.

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