J. Farm Sci., 35(2): (278-281) 2022

RESEARCH PAPER

Factors influencing occupational stress among government and aided high school principals

SUPRIYA PADANAD, LATA PUJAR, MANJULA PATIL AND VEENA JADHAV

Department of Human Development and Family Studies, College of Community Science
University of Agricultural Sciences, Dharwad - 580 005, Karnataka, India
E-mail: supriyapadanad12@gmail.com

(Received: February, 2022 ; Accepted: May, 2022)

Abstract : Principals play a vital role in the society by helping students acquire knowledge, moral values and strengthen the school. A study was conducted to examine the factors influencing occupational stress among government and aided high school principals. Study sample comprised of 60 principals from Belagavi District and 60 principals from Kalburgi District who attended State Institute of School Leadership and Educational Planning (SISLEP) training at Dharwad. Occupational Stress Index were used to know the nature and condition of job experience and Socio Economic Status scale of the principals.Results revealed that, majority of government and aided high school principals had moderate level of occupational stress and principals who belonged to 46-50 years in government school and 51-55 years in aided schools had more of occupational stress. Female principals and those who had below 3 years work experience as headmaster and 10-20 years of teaching experience had high level of occupational stress. Study results indicates the need for guidance/ counselling, orientation programme to high school principals to reduce their occupational stress.

Key words: Occupational stress, High school principals, Socio economic status

Introduction

In any educational pyramid, teaching personnel are considered as the architects of future generation and success of any educational system depends on their requisite qualities. Principals play a vital role in the society by helping students to acquire knowledge, moral values and improvement of the school as a whole. Principal should create an environment conducive for the teaching staff, non teaching staffs and students through their leadership style, co operation and managerial skills. Principals have multiple roles to play in school through proper communication, implementation of educational policies, management of physical facilities and supervision of school curriculum (Bogg and Cooper,1995).

Due to work load pressures,if principals express their anger and frustration that adversely impact on educational outcome and work related stress. Working in a closed and unhealthy organizational climate brings about negative emotions including dissatisfaction, psychological pressure, indifference and finally job alienation leading to occupational stress. Lack of resource for teaching, delay in promotion, teaching a large class and poor attitude of students towards teaching were the major sources of occupational stress. Occupational stress is a state of physical and psychological pressure experienced by administrator in the course of managing an organization. According to World Health Organization (WHO,2020) defined occupational or work related stress as the response with work demands, pressures that are not matched to their knowledge/ abilities and challenge their ability to cope. Wafula and Nyaboga (2019) defined occupational stress as an unpleasant emotional situation that an individual experiences when the requirements of a job are not counter balanced with the ability to cope up with the situation. There are many sources responsible for occupational stress among principals but heavy work load or job overload found to be the most prominent causal factor of stress.

Material and methods

The population for the study comprised of 60 principals from Belagavi District and 60 principals from Kalburgi District who attended State Institute of School Leadership and Educational Planning (SISLEP) training at Dharwad were selected. At the time of survey a five days training on Vruthi shrestatha tarabethi was going for principals from Belagvai and Kalburgi District were purposively selected. Totally 80 principals from Belgavi and 70 principals of Kalburgi from both Government and Aided high schools were attended the training. But out of which 60 principals from Government schools and 60 principals from Aided schools were selected. The schedules were distributed to the principals at the training hall and filled questionnaire was collected from all the principals. It took around 50-60 minute to complete the questionnaire. The doubts regarding the questions were clarified by the researcher.

Tools used for assessment

Occupational Stress Index

The occupational stress index scale was developed by Srivastav and Singh (1981) describes the nature and condition of ones job experience and feeling about various aspects of job was used for assessment of occupational stress. The scale consists of 46 items with 12 dimensions with five alternative answers on four point scale with the scoring is 5,4,3,2 and 1 for positive statements and reverse scoring for negative statement. The Score ranges between 46 to 230. The higher the score indicator of high level of occupational stress and vice versa. Based on these total scores respondents were categories as low stress (46-115), moderate stress of stress (116-161) and high stress level (161-230) respectively.

General information schedule and SES scale by Aggarwal *et al* (2005) were used for collecting personal information and socio economic status of the principals.

Results and discussion

Results pertaining to occupational stress of government and aided high school principals are depicted in Fig 1. It was observed that 45 percentage of government principals and 44.20 percentage of aided principals belonged to moderate level of occupational stress. Whereas, an equal percentage (5%) of government and aided high school principals belonged to high level of occupational stress and none of them belonged to low level of occupational stress.

The results of table 1 represents association and comparison between age and occupational stress of government and aided high school principals. There was significant association (c^2= 13.71)and difference between age and occupational stress of government high school principals. However, principals who belonged to age group of 46-50 years had more of occupational stress as compared to others. There was no significant association and difference between age and occupational stress of aided high school principals. However, principals who belonged to age group of 51-55 years had high occupational stress than other age groups.The reason might be that principals during middle adulthood period (40-50 years) often reached a stage of higher position in their job, that leads tomore of responsibilities such as disciplining, spending more time forplanning ofeducational program, management of getting work done through teachersandleadership role might have created job related stress. Similar results also reported that Aftab and Kahtoon (2012) study in which middle age between 31-50 years experienced more stress compared to the younger age (20-30 years) and older age (51-60 years). Sumanta *et al.* (2016) revealed that principals between 40-50 years suffer from high level of occupational stress compared to older staff.

Fig. 1. Percentage distribution of level of occupational stress of high school principals

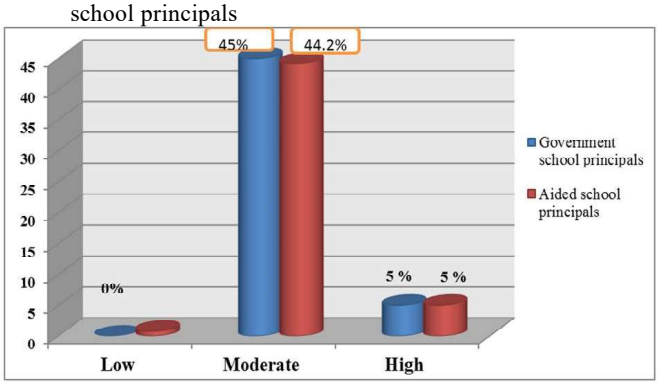

Table 2 depicts the influence of gender on occupational stress of government and aided principals. There was significant association and difference between gender and occupational stress of both government and aided high school principals. The possible reason could be that female principals are taking care of family responsibilities, care of children and parents, cooking responsibilities, household cores, attending office workand management of the school responsibilities, inconvenient transport facility, overtime work and attending paper work evaluation might have created stressful situation. Similar results also found that Nagra and Sarita (2013) found that female principals were more stressed out than male counterparts because they had lots of family responsibilities and hardly get support from neighbours and relatives. Similarly, Singh (2012) found that there was significant difference in the occupational stress of the secondary school principals in relation to gender.

The results of Table 3 represent information regarding association and comparison between experience as headmaster and occupational stress of government and aided high school

Table 1. Association and comparison between age and occupational stress among high school principals N=120

Age (years)	Levels of occupational stress			Modified x^2	Mean ± SD	F- value
	High	Moderate	Total			
			Government school principals (n=60)			
40 -45	1(17.00)	5(83.00)	6(100.00)	13.71*	126.56±10.59[a]	2.75*
46-50	6(18.00)	29(82.00)	35(100.00)		132.75±14.97[b]	
51 -55	-	19(100)	19(100.00)		127.80±11.72[ac]	
			Aided school principals (n=60)			
40-45	1 (12.00)	8(88.00)	9(100.00)	0.920[NS]	129.02±11.33[a]	3.987*
46-50	4(13.00)	27(87.00)	31(100.00)		120.85±16.42[ab]	
51-55	1(6.00)	19(94.00)	20(100.00)		130.72±12.81[c]	

Figure in the parenthesis indicates percentage, * Significant at 0.05 level, NS Indicates non significance, a, b, c Tukey values

Table 2. Association and comparison between gender and occupational stress among high school principals N=120

Gender	Level of occupational stress			Mean ± SD	t-value
	High	Moderate	Total		
			Government school principals (n-=60)		
Male	6(12.50)	42(87.50)	48(100.00)	126.56±10.59	2.659*
Female	1(9)	11(91.00)	12(100.00)	132.75±14.97	
			Aided school principals (n=60)		
Male	3(6.40)	44(93.60)	47(100.00)	129.02±11.33	2.023*
Female	1(7.70)	12(92.30)	13(100.00)	136.85±16.24	

Figures in the parenthesis indicates percentage,*Significant at 0.05 level, NS non significance

principals. With respect to government high school principals,there was no significant association between experience as headmaster and occupational stress. But significant difference was observed between experience as headmaster and occupational stress. There was no significant association and difference between experience as headmaster and occupational stress of aided high school principals. Table 4 represent association and comparison between length of service and occupational stress of government and aided high school principals. There was no significant association and between length of service and occupational stress of government high school principals.Analysis showed that there was significant difference between length of service and occupational stress of government high school principals. Where the principals belonged to 10-20 years had higher occupational stress as compared to 20-30 and 30 and above years of service. There was no significant association between length of service and occupational stress. ANOVA analysis revealed that no significant difference between length of service and occupational stress.The reason might be that those who joined as a principals recently and directly recruited, have to face new challenges, management of school functioning, adjust with the job responsibilities might have created more job stress. Kyriacou and Chien (2004) which reported that teaching experience was found to had no significant association with occupational stress. Holley and Kirpatrick (1987) reported that there was no significant association between occupational stress and length of service. Similarly, Furnham and Payne (1987) showed that greater stress was reportedby those with least teaching experience and lowest levels of stress by the highly experienced principals.

Table 5 represents the association and comparison between type of family and occupational stress of government and aided high school principals. There was no significant association and difference between type of family and occupational stress. Among aided high school principals,there was no significant association and difference between type of family and occupational stress. These results are in accordance with the reports of Jenifer and Sasikumar (2018) found that there was no significant difference between nuclear family and joint family of school principals with respect to their occupational stress.

Table 3. Association and comparison between experience as headmaster and occupational stress among high school principals N=120

Experience as headmaster	Level of occupational stress			Modified x^2	Mean ± SD	F-value
	High	Moderate	Total			
			Government school principals(n=60)			
1 to 3 years	3(15.00)	17(85.00)	20(100)	2.223^{NS}	128.30 ± 14.68^{a}	2.111^{*}
3 to 6 years	2(8.34)	22(91.66)	24(100)		122.92 ± 10.04^{b}	
6 and above	2(12.50)	14(87.50)	16(100)		119.50 ± 10.53^{bc}	
			Aided school principals(n=60)			
1 to 3 years	3(13.04)	20(86.95)	23(100)	3.646^{NS}	130.65±12.28	0.540^{NS}
3 to 6 years	3(11.53)	23(88.46)	26(100)		132.19±14.39	
6 and above	1(9.09)	10(90.90)	11(100)		127.36±10.06	

Figures in the parenthesis indicates percentage.*Significant at 0.05% NS non significance, a, b, c Tukey values

Table 4. Association and comparison between length of service and occupational stress among high school principals N=120

Length of service	Level of occupational stress			Modifiedc²	Mean ± SD	F –value
	High	Moderate	Total			
			Government school principals(n=60)			
10-20	-	2(100)	2(100)	0.757^{NS}	139.50 ± 9.19^{a}	3.965*
21-30	2(7.14)	26(92.85)	28(100)		129.11 ± 10.04^{b}	
31 and above	4(13.33)	26(86.66)	30(100)		126.66 ± 12.35^{bc}	
			Aided school principals(n=60)			
10-20	-	11(100)	11(100)	2.664^{NS}	130.73±14.11	0.782^{NS}
21-30	10(41.66)	14(58.33)	24(100)		134.75±8.59	
31 and above	4(10.80)	21(89.20)	25(100)		129.41±13.56	

Figures in the parenthesis indicates percentage, * Significant at 0.05 level, NS non significance , a, b, c Tukey values

Table 5. Association and comparison between type of family and occupational stress among high school principals N=120

Type of family	Level of occupational stress		Modifiedc²	Mean ± SD	t-value	
	High	Moderate	Total			
			Government school principals (n=60)			
Nuclear	3(9.38)	29(90.62)	32(100)	2.116^{NS}	128.69±11.90	0.591^{NS}
Joint	4(14.29)	24(85.71)	28(100)		126.89±11.86	
			Aided school principals (n=60)			
Nuclear	-	31(100)	31(100)	4.898^{NS}	132.65±12.38	0.199^{NS}
Joint	4(13.79)	25(86.20)	29(100)		128.64±13.40	

Figures in the parenthesis indicates percentage, NS non significance

Table 6. Association and comparison between socio economic status and occupational stress among high school principals N=120

SES	Level of occupational stress		Modifiedc²	Mean ± SD	t-value	
	High	Moderate	Total			
			Government school principals (n=60)			
Upper high	6(28.58)	15(71.42)	21(100)	7.823**	129.47±15.36	1.657NS
High	2(5.13)	37(94.87)	39(100)		122.56±10.09	
			Aided school principals (n=60)			
Upper high	2(10.53)	17(89.47)	19(100)	0.368NS	137.29±14.97	0.972NS
High	4(9.76)	37(90.24)	41(100)		129.16±11.53	

Figures in parenthesis indicates percentage,**Significant at 0.01 level. NS non significance

Table 6 depicts that association and comparison between SES and occupational stress of government and aided high school principals. With respect to government high school, chi square value indicates that (c^2=7.823**) there was significant association between socio economic status and occupational stress. ANOVA analysis revealed that no significant difference between socio economic status and occupational stress of government school principals. There was no significant and difference between socio economic status and occupational stress of aided high school principals. Present results endorse the findings by Jaiyeoba and Jibril (2013) reported that there was no significant influence on occupational stress of high school principals. Similarly, Orizu and Mmaduakonam (2014) confirmed that socio economic status is no significantly associated with occupational stress among high school principals.

Conclusion

Majority of government and aided high school principals had moderate level of occupational stress. With regard to age of principals who belonged to 46-50 years in government school and 51-55 years from aided schools had more of occupational stress. Female principals had high level of occupational stress when compared to male principals in both the schools. With regard to experience as headmaster and length of service, principals with 1 to 3 years and 10-20 years of teaching experience had higher occupational stress among government school principals. However, type of family and SES had no significant association with occupational stress of principals. There is a need for guidance, counseling and orientation programmes to high school principals to reduce their occupational stress and enhance the quality of life and work efficiency.

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