



A study on the level of stress based on gender and course of study among D.T.Ed student teachers

P. Santhi* and S. AKILA

Government College of Education for Women, Coimbatore - 641 001, Tamil Nadu, India.

Article History : Received 8 February 2013, Accepted 29 March 2013,

Abstract

This study gave emphasis to find out the level of stress among D.T.Ed students in Coimbatore. The sample of 200 student teachers is randomly selected for the study. A questionnaire coupled with the Student's Stress Rating Scale (SSRS) developed and standardized by M. Balamurugan and D. Kumaran is applied to identify the level of stress among student teachers. Statistical measures like mean, median, standard deviation, chi-square test, Students test and ANOVA test are used to generalize and drawing conclusions based on the problem undertaken. Results derived from the analyses are; 1. There is a significant difference in the stress level among D.T.Ed students. This shows that the D.T.Ed students are affected by the stress levels. 2. There is a significant association between stress levels and gender. This indicates that stress level have an impact on gender. 3. There is no significant association between stress levels and the course of the study. This denotes that the stress levels do not have any impact on the course of the study.

Key words : Stress, questionnaire, statistical measures and D.T.Ed students,

Introduction

Stress is the abnormal reaction that the organism displays against threatening environmental elements (Luthans, 1994). Stress, which is a general term used for pressure that people are exposed to in life (Jepson and Forrest, 2006) may be defined as the individual harmony effort that the person displays against a stimulant which has excessive psychological and physical pressure on the person (Griffin, 1990). When a person feels insufficient in dealing with the demands and challenges faced in life, she/he experiences stress. Being harmed by this situation or taking advantage of it mainly depends on the person because stress may either be a factor threatening the organism physically or psychologically or a power which gives energy in dealing with life (Baltas, 2002). Sources of stress may be classified as individual, organizational and

outside of the organization (Gupta, 1981; Kreitner and Kinick, 1992) or it is possible to divide them into two groups as individual and organizational components (Nahavandi and Malekzadeh, 1999; Smith and Milstein, 1984). Organizational stress, which is also called professional stress, is the interaction between working conditions and the working person in environments in which the work demand exceeds the skills of the worker (Ross and Altmaier, 1994).

The elements that cause stress in organizations are environmental factors and the behaviour formed as a result of the pressure of these elements on the individual (Amason *et al.*, 1999). These factors may be monotony, change of technology, excessive workload, job security, ergonomics, management problems (Cooper and Davidson, 1987; Sutherland and Cooper, 1990), the

hindrance of the drive for success, personal ambitions, the lack of harmony between person-role (Yates, 1989) and individual characteristics (Quick and Quick, 1984), the feeling of insufficiency (Ivancevich *et al.*, 1990). Shortly, organizational policies, the structure and the climate of the organization, physical conditions and process are the basic factors of stress in the organization (Luthans, 1994). In addition, cultural and geographical factors such as climate and religion may shape factors of stress (Cooper and Davidson, 1987).

Stress in working people results in various feelings such as worry, fear and depression (Margolis *et al.*, 1974). The first symptoms of stress in workers are; tardiness, absenteeism at work (Furnham, 1997) and the decrease in performance and production (Atkinson, 1994; Schafer, 1996). Distress results in loss of service in the organization, increase in costs, and loss of work of different types (Robbins, 1986), dissatisfaction and loss of spirits in workers (Griffin, 1990), lack of harmony between managers and workers (Hubbard, 1995), lack of productivity, burnout (Dunham, 1992), lack of job satisfaction (Van Dick *et al.*, 2001) in addition to creating personal problems. Apart from these, it is possible that workers may become ill or lose their lives (Allen, 1983). Distress is one of the most important hindrances in the realization of organizational aims (Klarreich, 1988).

Stress is not only a problem for developing information societies but also for developing countries. However, there may be differences in these countries in the sources of stress that people face and their degree of importance (Bhagat *et al.*, 2007). Stress is not always a negative fact (Palmer and Hyman, 1993). While a low level of stress results in immobility and laziness, stress at the optimal level (eustress) has the effect of motivating (Nydegger, 2002), exciting, increasing creativity (Griffin, 1990) and success (Schermerhorn *et al.*, 2000; Newstron and

Davis, 1997). In fact, a bit of stress is necessary to gain outstanding success. Because of this, successful people are those who convert their stress into creative energy and creative power (Krüger, 1993). Some experts argue that those who work at a moderate level of stress work with a higher performance (Steers, 1981). Besides, a moderate level of stress may have a motivating effect if the individual's comprehension of roles is positive (Little *et al.*, 2007). Each profession causes a specific level of stress. However, teaching is among the profession that causes more stress compared to other professions (Hargreaves, 1999; Pithers, 1995). Stress effects both the teacher and the learners in the teaching process (Forlin *et al.*, 1996). Kyriacou (1987) who has carried out various studies on teacher stress, defines teacher stress as the experiencing of unpleasant feelings such as depression, anger, worry, irritableness and tension which are formed as a result of working as a teacher.

Stress sources of teachers may be summarized as low motivation in students, discipline problems, the pressure of time and the work load, being assessed by others, colleague relationship, conflict and indefiniteness of roles, bad working conditions and self-respect, students' discipline problems, the inadequate support of colleagues, family and friends (Detert *et al.*, 2006; Kyriacou, 2001). In addition, students' being late to school, their failure and students' not doing homework may cause stress in teachers (Adams 2001 and Joseph, 2000). It is important for educational organizations to study and manage rationalistically the stress sources of teachers who have the important duty of educating individuals. Although stress in educational organizations has been determined by various studies, the number of researchers who have studied in different societies is limited (Kyriacou, 2001).

The present study aims to recognize the level of stress and understand the factors underlying

the dynamics because of which one can feel relatively more stressed. Above all, it is necessary to make the student teachers to consider the stressful situations as 'wear the crown of authority in their heart and not in their mind while dealing with them' to live stress-free life.

Objectives of the Study

1. To identify the level of stress that is experienced by D.T.Ed student teachers.
2. To identify the association of stress levels based on sexes among D.T.Ed student teachers.
3. To identify the association of stress levels based on course of study among D.T.Ed student teachers.

Hypotheses of the Study

- There is no significant difference in the level of stress among D.T.Ed student teachers.
- There is no significant association between stress levels and gender among D.T.Ed student teachers.
- There is no significant association between stress levels and course of study among D.T.Ed student teachers.

Limitations

- This study is limited to D.T.Ed students studying in the period of 2009-2010 .
- This study is confined to Coimbatore district only.
- This study is confined to 200 samples.
- This study is confined to the Government and Private Teacher Training Institutes in Coimbatore.

Methodology

The 200 student teachers samples were selected from the Government and Private Teacher Training Institutions in the Coimbatore district for the present study (2009-2010). Normative survey method was used for the present study. In this study the investigator used the following standardized tool with the proforma sheet. The Personal data

sheet (Proforma sheet) used by the investigator, Students' Stress Rating Scale (SSRS) was constructed and standardized by Balamurugan and Kumaran (2008). The stratified random sampling technique was used in the selection of the students. In this study, the subgroups are selected in accordance with the demographic variables such as gender, location, course of the study, marital status, and type of teacher training institutions and qualification of parents. The collected data were analyzed to find out the significant difference and the association between the demographic variables by using mean, median, standard deviation, chi-square test, Students 't' test and ANOVA test.

Results

Table -1 inferred that the mean score of over stress is found to be 122.66 and the mean score of under stress is 156. Hence there is a difference in the mean score of stress level between over stress and under stress levels among student teachers. The mean score of over stress is higher than that of under stress.

Different stress levels existed among the trainees of D.T.Ed students according to their conscious level. In day-to-day activities the student teachers are facing different life situations which may be harmful and peaceful that leads to over stress and under stress level. They are managing these life situations based on their adaptability. The students who change their selves to fit new situations have under stress level whereas who are struggling to adapt new situations have over stress levels. This may cause difference in the mean scores of their stress levels of over stress and under stress among the teacher trainees.

The calculated 't' value (21.89) is higher than that of the table value (2.60) at the 0.01 level of significance. Therefore there is a significant difference in the stress level among D.T.Ed students.

Table – 2 inferred that in over stress level, the mean score of male is found to be 123.45 and

Table - 1. Stress Levels among the Student teachers

Stress level	Number (N)	Mean (M)	Standard deviation (S.D)	't' value
Over stress	44	122.66	10.88	21.89*
Under stress	156	80.29	12.83	

*Significant 0.01 level of significance

Table – 2. Stress levels and Gender

Stress Level	Over Stress			Under Stress			df	X ² value
	Gender	N	Mean	S.D.	N	Mean		
Male	22	123.45	10.69	29	84.17	14.65	1	17.82
Female	22	121.86	11.26	74	80.39	12.06		

*Significant 0.01 level of significance

Table – 3. Stress levels and the Course of the Study

Stress Level	Over Stress			Under Stress			df	X ² value
	Course of study	N	Mean	S.D.	N	Mean		
First Year	18	123.78	12.03	82	80.21	13.55	1	1.88
Second year	26	121.88	10.18	74	80.39	12.06		

*Significant 0.01 level of significance

the mean score of female is 121.86. In under stress level, the mean score of male is 84.17 and the mean score of female is found to be 79.41. Therefore there is a difference in the mean scores of over stress and under stress level between male and female student teachers. In both the stress levels, males are observed to be higher mean scores than the females.

The calculated 'chi-square' value (17.82) is higher than that of the table value (6.635) at the 0.01 level of significance. Therefore there is a significant association between stress levels and gender. The following graph represents an association between stress levels and gender.

Table – 3 inferred that in over stress level, the mean score of first year students is found to be

123.78 and the mean score of second year students is 121.88. In under stress level, the mean score of first year students is 80.21 and the mean score of second year students is found to be 80.39. Hence there is differences in the mean scores both at the over stress and under stress levels between first and second year student teachers.

In over stress level, the first year student teachers are found to be higher in the mean score than the second year student teachers. This may be due to the fact that the first year student teachers are newly appearing in the course and they thought that the works are forced on them and appeared burden which leads to over stress. But the second year students are well trained and

practiced over a period of year provided lesser in the mean score when compared to that of first year student teachers.

In under stress level, the mean score of the second year student teachers is found to be slightly higher than the first year student teachers. Though they have been familiar with the course of study, they exhausted their potential due to heavy workload. This may cause difference in the mean score of under stress level between first and second year student teachers.

The calculated 'chi-square' value (1.88) is less than that of the table value (3.841) at the 0.05 level of significance. Therefore there is no significant association between stress levels and the course of the study.

Discussion

Research findings showed that student teachers experience stress at different levels. Student teachers achieved high over stress rather than under stress according to their mean scores. It reveals that there is a significant difference between over stress and under stress among the student teachers. The research finding is parallel to the findings of a few previous research as carried out by Tajularipin Sulaiman *et al.* (2009) and Banu Sayiner (2006). Tajularipin Sulaiman *et al.* (2009). Found that there is a different stress level among school students. The same result obtained in the research finding of Banu Sayiner (2006) among university students.

The result of the research reveals that different stress levels exist between male and female students. This finding supported a past research as carried out by Tajularipin Sulaiman *et al.* (2009) and Banu Sayiner (2006) found that there is a significant difference in the stress level between male and female students. But in the source of stress, the present study is contrary to the past studies in which male student teachers have achieved high stress when compared to the female student teachers whereas in all the past

studies found that the female students experienced high stress when compared to that of male students. Thus the present study is supported the past studies in the significant difference obtained at the level of stress based on gender and contrary to them in the source of stress achieved.

Over stress level were found to be more in the first year student teachers than the second year student teachers. This result relatively supported the findings of Sajjan Kumar (2005) who found that the first year UG students have more stress than PG students.

Conclusion

The present study makes the student teachers to ensure stress-free life. Commitment to an attitude of positive expectancy is the key to a stress-free situation. This attitude helps in transforming problems into upturns, stumbling blocks into stepping stones to reduce stress. In the teacher training institutions, the professionals will have some useful information from the research to motivate the student teacher to achieve their goal.

Acknowledgement

My sincere thanks to Dr. (Mrs). Mary Lily Pushpam, Principal in/charge (Retired), Govt. College of Education for Women, Coimbatore, for giving permission to undertake the investigation and all the faculty members for their suggestions. I express my gratefulness to Dr. D. Kumaran (Former President), University of Madras, Chennai and Balamurugan. M for their valuable support. I am very much gratitude to all the Principals, faculty members of Government and Private Teacher Training Institutions for giving permission to proceed with the survey and the student teachers who responded well during the survey through which the investigation has been successfully completed.

References

Adams, E. 2001. A proposed causal model of vocational teacher stress. *Journal of Vocational Education and Training*, 53(2) : 223-246.

- Allen, R.J. 1983. *Human Stress: Its nature and control*. New York: Macmillan Publishing Company.
- Amason, P., Allen, M.W. and Holmes, S. 1999. Social support and acculturative stress in the multicultural workplace. *Journal of Applied Communication Research*, 27(4) : 310 - 334.
- Balamurugan, M. and Kumaran, D. 2008. Development and Validation of Students' Stress Rating Scale (SSRS). *Meston Journal of Education*, 7 (1): 17 - 25.
- Baltas, Z. 2002. *Verimli is hayatinin sirri*. Istanbul: Remzi Kitapevi.
- Banu Sayiner (2006). Stress level of university students. Vol.5 (10) : 23 - 34.
- Bhagat, R.S., Steverson, P.K. and Segovis, J.C. 2007. International and cultural variations in employee assistance programmes: Implications for managerial health and effectiveness. *Journal of Management Studies*, 44(2) : 222 - 242.
- Cooper, C. and Davidson, M. 1987. *Sources of stress at work and their relations to stressors in non-working environments*. In Kalimo, R., El-Batawi, M. and Cooper, C. (Eds.). *Psychosocial factors at their relations to health*. Geneva: World Health Organization. pp. 99-111.
- Detert, R.A., Derosia, C., Caravella, T. and Duquette, D. 2006. Reducing stress and enhancing the general well-being of teachers using T'ai Chi Chih® movements: A pilot study. *Californian Journal of Health Promotion*, 4(1) : 162-173.
- Dunham, J. 1992. *Stress in teaching*. New York: Routledge Publishing.
- Forlin, C., Douglas, G. and Hattie, J. 1996. Inclusive practices: How accepting are teachers?. *International Journal of Disability, Development and Education*, 43(2) : 119-133.
- Furnham, A. 1997. *The Psychology of Behavior at Work*. Hove East Sussex: Psychology Press.
- Griffin, R.W. 1990. *Management* (3rd ed). Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co.
- Gupta, N. 1981. Some sources and remedies of work stress among teachers. Available: <http://www.eric.ed.gov/PDFS/ED211496.pdf> (August 12 2010).
- Hargreaves, G. 1999. *Stresle Bas Etmek*. (Çev: A. C. Akkoyunlu), Istanbul: Dogan Yayincilik.
- Hubbard, A.S. 1995. The human side of technology. *Mortgage Banking*, 55(7) : 48 - 53.
- Ivancevich, J., Matteson, M., Freedman, S. and Philips, J. 1990. Workside stress management interventions. *American Psychologist*, 45, 252-261.
- Jepson, E. and S. Forrest. 2006. Individual contributory factors in teacher stress: The role of achievement striving and occupational commitment. *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, 76 : 183 - 197.
- Klarreich, S.H. 1988. *Stress Solution: A rational approach to increasing corporate and personal effectiveness*. Canada: Key Porter Publishing.
- Kreitner R. and Kinick, A. 1992. *Organization behavior*. USA: Richard Irwin Inc.
- Krüger, I. 1993. *Performance power: transforming stress into creative energy*. Tempe, Arizona: Summit Records Inc.
- Kyriacou, C. 1987. Teacher stress and burnout: an international review. *Educational Research*, 29(2) : 146 - 152.
- Kyriacou C. 2001. Teacher stress: Directions for future research. *Educational Review*, 53: 27-35.
- Little, L.M., Simmons, B.L. and Nelson, D.L. 2007. Health among leaders: Positive and negative affect, engagement and burnout, forgiveness and revenge. *Journal of Management Studies*, 44(2) : 241 - 260.
- Luthans, F. 1994. *Organizational behavior*. Boston: Mc Graw Hill Publishing.

- Margolis, B., Kroes, W. and Quinn, R. 1974. Job stress: An unlisted occupational hazard. *Journal of Occupational Medicine.*, 1(16) : 659 - 661.
- Nahavandi, A. and Malekzadeh, A.R. 1999. *Organizational behavior: Person-organization fit*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall.
- Newstrom, J.W. and Davis, K.A. 1997. *Organizational behavior: Human behavior at work*. New York: Mc Graw Hill Publishing.
- Nydegger, R.V. 2002. Stress and job satisfaction in white- and blue-collar workers. *International Business and Research Journal.*, 1(12) : 35 - 44.
- Palmer, M. and Hyman, (1993). *Yönetimde Kadınlar*. (Çev:V. Öner). Istanbul:Rota Yayinlari.
- Pierceall, Emily A., Keim., Marybelle, C. 2006. Stress and coping strategies community Colleges students. *Community Journal of Research and Practice.*, 31(9) : 703 -712.
- Pithers, R.T. 1995. Teacher stress research: Problems and progress. *British Journal of Educational Psychology.*, 65 : 387-392.
- Quick, J.C. and Quick, J.D. 1984. *Organizational stress and preventive management*. New York: McGraw- Hill Publishing.
- Reda Abouserie 1994. Sources and Levels of Stress in Relation to Locus of Control and Self Esteem in University Students. *Educational Psychology: An International Journal of Experimental Educational Psychology.*, 14(13) : 323 - 330.
- Robbins, S. 1986. *Organizational behavior*. New Jersey: Prentice Hall Publishing.
- Schermerhorn, J., Hunt, J. and Osborn, N. 2000. *Organizational behavior*. USA: John Wiley & Sons Inc.
- Smith, D. and Milstein, M.N. 1984. Stress and teachers: Old wine in new bottles. *Urban Education.*, 19, 39-51.
- Steers, R.M. 1981. *Introduction to organizational behavior*. Glenview: Scott-Foresman Publishing.
- Sulaiman, Tajularipin. *et.al.* (2009). The Level of Stress among Students in Urban and Rural Secondary Schools in Malaysia. *European Journal of Social Sciences.*, 10 (2). 180-184.
- Sutherland, V. and Cooper, C.L. 1990. *Understanding stress a psychological perspectivefor health professionals*. London: Chapman and Hall Publishing.
- Van Dick, R., Phillips U., Marburg, M. and Wagner, U. 2001. Stress and strain in teaching: A structural equation approach. *British Journal of Educational Psychology.*, 71 : 243 - 259.
- Yates, J.E. 1989. *Gerilim altindaki yönetici*. (Çev:F. Dilber). Istanbul: Ilgi Yayincilik.
