

A Study of Organizational Role Stress among Teachers: A Critical Literature Review

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Abstract

The present paper is based on the objective of impact of Organizational Role Stress on teachers of Haryana state universities. In the present scenario with the change in teaching pedagogy and increased competition among Education Institutes, stress on professional teachers is increasing day by day. Literature review revealed that there may be a need of HRD department in the Universities to address the stress related issues and disputes so that optimum use of the employees can be made in the organization. Hence it was decided that the study of organizational role stress among teachers in Universities in Haryana state are also needed to be explored so that Government policies can be formulated and implemented in Universities. So the Universities are able to achieve their goals and objectives

Keywords: Role ambiguity; Role overload; Role stress; Stress Management.

1. Introduction

1.1 Organizational Stress

Stress is dynamic condition in which an individual is confronted with an opportunity, demand, or resource related to what the individual desires and for which the outcome is perceived to be both uncertain and important. Stress has been a popular area of study and various researches have tried to define it in different ways. It has also been studied from different perspectives over a long period of time. Stress has often been used as a “umbrella concept” indicating a field of the research where many of different variables have been studied for example physiological changes like high blood pressure, faster heartbeat, sexual problems, mental disorders, work satisfaction, absenteeism, violence and even accidents (buunk, de jonge, bema, de wolff, 1998).

1.2 The Concept of Occupational Role Stress

Newman (1978) defines occupational stress as “a condition arising from interaction of people and their jobs and characterized by changes within people which force them to deviate from their normal functioning. Stress may result in problems such as anxiety, hyper irritability, sleep disturbances, disturbed interpersonal relationships detrimental to the individual with negative

economic implications such as poor quality of work, low productivity, absenteeism, high turnover etc, (Cooper and Cartwright, 1994 Edworthy, 2000).

1.3 Sources of Occupational Role Stress

A lot of research has been done on role stresses, their nature and correlates. Stress can be derived from any, all or a combination of three sources: physical, mental and situational. Physical stress can be caused by overwork, mental stress is caused by person's state of mind and situational stress is derived from the interaction with outside world.

Cooper and Marshall (1976), identified over 40 interacting factors which could be identified as sources of work stress. There are six categories of major causes of stress, these are:

- Factors intrinsic to the job
- Role in the organization
- Relationships at works
- Career development
- Organizational structure and climate
- Organizational interface with outside environment

1.4 Managing Organizational Stress

Stress is not automatically bad for individual employees or their organisational performance. It is the dysfunctional aspects of the high level of stress that should be and are a major concern for contemporary society in general and for effective human resource management.

2. Literature Review

Role stress has received a lot of research attention. Studies have been carried out from various different field like academic, medical, business, psychological, sociological etc.. This section presents a review of the literature

2.1 Studies at the International Level

Cooper and Marshal (1976) stated that occupational stress includes the environmental factors or stressors such as work overload, role ambiguity, role conflict and poor working conditions associated with a particular job. Bacharach et al. (1986), found role ambiguity to be a strong predictor of general stress among both elementary and secondary school teachers. The question of whether teacher role stresses contribute more to individually or organizationally valued outcomes, however, has not been addressed. Ramirez et al, (1996) conducted a study on 1133 consultants working in the UK. In this study, work overloads and influencing home life; poor administration and resources; administrative responsibilities and dealing with patients pain were perceived as sources of stress. In the same study, radiologists reported the highest level of burnout in terms of low personal accomplishment. Rees, D. W. and Cooper (1997) conducted a comparative study between different occupational groups. The most important part of the study was that the health care professionals, comparing with non-health care employees got significantly higher levels of pressure within their workplace.

Swanson & Power, 1999 conducted a comparative study between perceived stress, satisfaction and conflict for professional male and female doctors in National Health Service in Scotland. The study came with the result that the work of male doctors is more stressful and less satisfying than females. Dollard and Walsh (1999), reported that private sector workers in Queensland, Australia, had made twice as many stress claims as public sector workers. A British Medical Association

(BMA) report (2000) suggests that many senior doctors suffer high levels of stress as a result of their work which directly hampers their ability to provide high quality care to patients. Work stress is increasingly recognized as one of the most serious occupational health hazards reducing workers satisfaction and productivity, and increasing absenteeism and turnover (Gianakos, 2001). Hospital staff in particular is subject to work related stress simply because they are severely challenged by their rapidly changing environment. Cinemon and Rich (2005) have revealed that the women teachers experience high stress as they attributed high importance to both their roles at home and work. Also they are not considered to be as efficient as men and they face discrimination at workplace and household activities.

Kristina Gyllensten and Stephen Palmer (2005), the main aim of this study review was to evaluate research relating to the role of gender in the level of workplace stress. The review concluded that the evidence regarding the role of gender in workplace stress and stressors was inconsistent. The research indicated that women reported higher levels of stress compared to men. Macklin et al. (2006) surveyed 84 public and 143 private sector employees to assess any significant difference in their stress levels. They concluded that there is no significant difference between employees on the basis of sector, but that there is a significant difference between genders, i.e., female employees are subject to greater stress than males.

D'Aleo et al. (2007) examined a sample of 559 public and 105 private sector employees to assess their respective risk profiles with respect to stress. They found that public sector employees face more stress than private sector employees. Malik (2011) collected data on 200 bank employees in Quetta, Pakistan, of which 100 were of public sector banks and the remaining 100 were of private sector banks. The researcher found that there is a significant difference in the level of stress to which both groups are subject, and that public sector bank employees face a high level of occupational stress as compared to private sector bank employees.

Ahmad et al. (1985) assessed stress levels among 30 executives from both the public and private sector, using an ORS scale to measure ten dimensions of role stress. Their study reveals significant differences between public and private sector employees in three dimensions of role stress—role isolation, role ambiguity, and self-role distance. The authors also established the insignificant effect of several background factors, such as age, level of education, income, marital status, and work experience on the stress level. Jha and Bhardwaj's (1989) empirical study of job stress and motivation among 120 frontline managers from both the public and private sector finds that the latter score more than the former in factors such as the need for sachievement and total motivation. Chaudhary (1990) probes the relationship between role stress and job satisfaction among bank officers. The author's results indicate that role erosion and resource inadequacy act as dominant stressors while role ambiguity and role expectation conflict are remote contributors to role stress in the sample population.

Srivastava (1991) surveyed 300 employees of the Life Insurance Corporation and reported that there is a significant positive correlation between various dimensions of role stress and symptoms of mental ill health. Stress arising from role ambiguity and role stagnation is the most intensively correlated with anxiety. Dwivedi (1997) assessed the magnitude of trust, distrust, and ORS to determine the extent of this relationship among public and private sector organization. Surveying 55 executives from the public sector and 62 from the private sector, the author finds that stress levels are low in high-performance organizations and high in low-performance organizations. Pareek and Mehta (1997) studied three groups of Indian workers i.e. gazetted officers, bank employees and school teachers on type of role stresses experienced by them. This research found that gazette officers reported significantly higher on all the dimensions of role stress and school teachers were found low on all dimensions, bank employees reported medium stress on all

dimensions.

P. Chand and A. S. Sethi (1997), in their study examined the organizational factors as predictors of job related strain. The respondents were 150 Junior Management Scale-1 officers working in various banking institutions in the state of Himachal Pradesh. The findings showed significant positive relationships between job related strain and role overload, role conflict and strenuous working conditions. The relationships of other organisational variables were also in the expected direction, though not significant. Role conflict, strenuous working conditions and role overload were found to be the most significant predictors of job related strain.

Satish C. Pandey (1998) presented a study, based on a sample of 450 employees of BHEL, Hardwar and explored the relationship between personality dimensions of individuals and their perceived organisational role stress. The findings of the study indicated that psychoticism -reality and neuroticism-stability dimensions are found positively associated with individuals' perceived organisational role stress; whereas extroversion-introversion dimension is found negatively associated with perceived organisational role stress. Pestonjee (1999) while analyzing stress among special occupational groups reviewed role stress and job satisfaction among doctors. He studied the relationship between these two variables. The result of the study revealed that job satisfaction correlated negatively with all the dimensions of role stress.

Mohan et al, (2000) In their study of 240 army officers found that neuroticism were positively related with various dimensions of role stress. Daga and Hussain(2001) measured the effect of social support on social and family role stress on a sample of 300 Indian working women comprising of Clerks, Doctors and Teachers in a sample. This research reported that relationship between social support and stress. The role stress among 150 doctors, with specialties in Gynaecologists, Ophthalmologists, and Surgeons, from private hospitals and nursing homes of Aligarh city was conducted by Hussain and Singh (2002). In this study the gynaecologists and surgeons scored significantly higher than the Ophthalmologists on perceived stress effects. Thus, they came to the conclusion that the surgery or performing an operation is the source of stress for both gynaecologists and surgeons.

Nirmala (2002) attempted to identify main sources of occupational stress and the relationship between various sources of occupational stress and job performance. The respondents were 175 cashiers-cum-clerks of nationalized banks of Haryana. The findings showed significant negative co relation between the major sources of occupational stress and job performance. Chandraiah et al (2003) randomly selected a sample of 105 industrial managers working in different large scale organizations and administered Occupational Stress Index (OSI) and Job Descriptive Index(JDI). The discovery of this study examined higher levels of job stress and job satisfaction among managers of 25-35 years of age than their counterparts in the middle age 35-45 years and the older age groups 46-55 years. The study also concluded the age to be negatively correlated with occupational stress and positively with job satisfaction.

In a study by Aziz (2004) on role stress among women in the Indian Information Technology sector, resource inadequacy emerged to be most potent stressor followed by personal inadequacy. Along with this study Aziz also researched the gender differences in organisational role stress and found similar level of stress for the male and female employees. Jeyakumaran. M (2004) conducted a study on occupational stress among the managers of Cement Industries, This study was carried out by using various tools like Occupational Stress Index developed by Srivastava and Singh (1981), Type-A Type-B Personality scale by Friedman and Resenman's (1974) job satisfaction Scale developed by Radindra N. Kanungo (1982) . The data were collected from 400 managers of top, middle, and junior levels. From this study, he pointed out that female managers have more stress than male managers. Lehal and Singh (2005) studied Organisational Role Stress

among college teachers of Patiala district. The study indicated that the level of organisational role stress in government college teachers in Patiala district was significantly low than that being experienced by private college teachers.

Sanjay Kumar Singh (2005) concluded a survey of 100 newspaper reporters divided into five major groupings; newspaper reporters as a whole, the lower level, the higher level, the male, and the female reporters. The results of this study indicated significant positive relationships of perceived internal environment of the organization and attitudes towards journalistic writing but significant negative relationship of felt role stress with journalistic writing attitude among all the five groups of newspaper reporters studied. Hardik Shah & Sanjyot Pethe (2006) surveyed 84 employees of NGOs. This study concluded that there is a positive relationship between ORS and LH (learned helplessness). This relationship is found significantly correlated. These results imply that in NGOs helplessness has strong correlation with four factors of ORS namely Role expectation Conflict, Self-Role Distance, Role Ambiguity, and Resource Inadequacy.

Ritu Lehal (2007) The study consists of two variables related to Organisational role stress and Job satisfaction. It evaluated the whole State of Punjab and 200 executives (men and women) from both public and private sector units. The study concluded that in case of ORS and JS (job satisfaction) both, the results of public sector are better than private sector. This study concludes that in public sector, female executives are more stressful than males. But in case of JS, in the same sector, female executives are more satisfied with their jobs. The researcher used correlation and t-test analysis that there is a strong but negative relationship between two variables. Bhattacharya and Basu (2007) in their study revealed that among IT professionals of Kolkata, subjectively experienced distress and wellness were closely associated with Organizational role stress. In other words, personal and professional stressors exert cumulative effect on the individuals. Women professionals had a greater feeling of wellness and less organizational stress than men professionals.

Agrawal & Chahars (2007) examined the extent and types of role stresses present among the engineering and management students in India and found that students experience role overload, role stagnation and self-role distance. They also examined that male students experience higher levels of role stagnation than female students. No significant difference could be observed on any of the role stressors between first year student and their seniors or between management and engineering students. Hirak Das Gupta and Suresh Kumar (2009) surveyed 150 doctors in a government hospital in Shimla and examined the stress level among male and female doctors in the hospital. The study found that there is no difference between the stress levels among male and female doctors except in case of the factors- Inter-role distance and Role inadequacy. And in these factors, the stress level among female doctors is much more than male doctors.

Bushara Bano and Rajiv Kumar Jha (2012) surveyed 182 public and 120 private sector employees in Uttar Pradesh, India, whose responses were measured according to an occupational role stress scale. The results revealed that there is no significant difference between public and private sector employees in terms of total stress levels, and main limitation of this study is that it was conducted in Uttar Pradesh only, while the work culture of organizations in other states, cities etc may be different. Deepti Pathak (2012) studied a sample of 200 managers belonging to Private Sector Organizations of Delhi/NCR region to study the understanding of the relationship between Organizational Role Stress and job satisfaction and to test the moderating effect of Perceived Organizational Support on their relationship. This study showed that Organizational Role Stress is negatively & significantly related with job satisfaction. Perceived Organizational Support were found to lessen the stress level of the employees, thereby indirectly affecting job satisfaction.

Supran Kumar Sharma et al (2012), The aim of this paper is to identify the determinants of clusters of employees segmented on the basis of role stress experienced at the workplace using empirical data collected from 550 frontline employees of commercial banks of Jammu and Kashmir State (India). Multinomial Logic Regression was used to investigate the impact of organizational, demographic, personality and performance determinants on the clusters of employees using E-Views 6.1 and SPSS 14.

Ashok Pratap Singh and Kedar Nath (1991), the aim of this study was to explore the effects of organizational role stress, organizational climate and locus of control on job involvement. The results showed that subjects with high organizational role stress (overall as well as dimension wise) were less involved in comparison to the subjects of low organizational stress (overall and dimension wise) group. The respondents who scored high on achievement, expectation and affiliation) and dependency dimensions of organizational climate were observed to be highly involved in their job than those respondents who scored low on these dimensions of organizational climate), namely 'extension' and 'control'. Further, the subjects categorized as external locus of control group show lower degree of job involvement than their counterparts categorized as internal locus of control group.

The literature review suggests that the studies have covered the areas of research on Organizational Role Stress with respect to medical sector, Banks, IT industry, Schools, NGO's, Power Sector, Manufacturing Sector, etc. but the researcher was unable to find any study on occupational role stress among the members of higher education institutions, except one study conducted on teachers in Patiala.

Teacher in HEIs (higher education institutions) are expected to perform duties much beyond teaching and spend time in the institution besides teaching hours. For non-teaching staff also, work challenges are immense especially in government Universities where the scope of functioning is much wider including the welfare function of the government. In recent times, there is also pressure on HEIs of learning to manage with lesser funding from the government which again becomes stressful for the members of institutions. With the changing dynamics of higher education sector, it is necessary that, we conduct a study on Organizational Role Stress among the members of higher education institutions.

3. Objective and Significance of the Study

- Investigate and assess the level of Organizational Role Stress among teachers in Universities with special reference to Haryana state.
- Compare the Organizational Role Stress among the teachers in the private and governmental Universities.

After carrying out an elaborate review of literature on organizational role stress and its sources, it was thought appropriate to include the most emerging work setting variables namely gender, age, marital status, and ten role stressors (Inter Role Distance (IRD), Role Stagnation (RS), Role Expectation Conflict (REC), Role Erosion (RE), Role Overload (RO), Role Isolation (RI), Personal Inadequacy (PIN), Self Role Distance (SRD), Role Ambiguity (RA), Resource Inadequacy (RIN) These may have a significant influence on employee performance and health. Literature review revealed that there may be a need of HRD department in the Universities to address the stress related issues and disputes so that optimum use of the employees can be made in the organization. Hence it was decided that the study of organizational role stress among teachers in Universities in Haryana state are also needed to be explored so that Government policies can be formulated and implemented in Universities. So the Universities are able to achieve their goals and objectives.

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