

Research Paper

## Teaching Competency of Secondary School Teachers in Relation to Their Occupational Stress

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### ABSTRACT

Teacher is one of the major stakeholders in education system. His knowledge, experience, skills, and professional expertise largely determine the quality of education. In performing his duties efficiently teacher needs to be competent in all affairs of teaching and learning. Changing situations of 21<sup>st</sup> century have brought drastic changes in whole process of education and in socio-economic situation. In today's era of cut-throat competition, teacher is overloaded with expectations from the parents and society. In these changing and complex situations, teacher's teaching competency and his well-being are the most concerning areas where more attention is required. It is clear from many previous studies that teaching competency plays a cardinal role in effective teaching-learning. Present study is an attempt to find out whether there is any significant relationship between teaching competency and occupational stress of secondary school teachers. Results show significant negative relationship between teaching competency and occupational of secondary school teachers. This study recommends measures to decrease teachers' occupational stress and enhance teaching competency.

**Keywords:** *Teaching competency, occupational stress, teacher, secondary schools*

It is said that, education is the key to unlock the world. It provides opportunities for people and society to develop to the best of their abilities. In making this notion true, teacher is a cardinal and basic element who leads generation for a better and bright future. In present context, it is worth saying that teacher is an agent of sustainable future. He not only guides the pupils in academic field but also empower them to face future challenges. Researches in the field of education ascertain that teaching competency plays a crucial role in achieving the goal of quality in education. **Hakim (2015)** in his study found that, 'all the teaching competencies play significant role in improving the quality of learning process.' Development of teaching competency and stress-free environment of teaching-learning is the guarantee of quality in education. Competition and challenges due to rapid growth in science and technology, structural change in socio-culture and education system have widely affected the teaching profession. In these changing circumstances, teachers often find it difficult to adjust. When this problem increases, it takes the form of

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occupational stress. For achieving the goal of all-round development, competent, committed, and stress-free teachers are the foremost requirements of any society.

Secondary education enables pupils to understand the reality of the world. It gives strength to the foundation of pupils' academic growth and all-round development. Secondary stage of education is the transition period, child shifts from childhood to adolescence. It demands teachers' sensitive and responsible role. Keeping the importance of secondary education in view, it is most relevant to study the teaching competency, well-being, and occupational stress of secondary school teachers.

### TEACHING COMPETENCY

In performing his professional responsibilities successfully, teacher needs some pre-requisite abilities, attitudes, and skills. Collectively these abilities, attitudes, and skills are called teaching competency. Teaching competency is the essence of effective teaching-learning and quality in education. It enables teachers to make effective plan of teaching, manage classroom effectively, make teaching-learning interactive, and encourage active participation of the students in learning. Thus, teaching competency represents some special features of a teacher helpful in performing his tasks efficiently. **Hoyle (1969)** considers, teacher having awareness about his changing role, skills to form accurate perception of the classroom situations, and adaptability to changing situations are the characteristics of a competent teacher.

### OCCUPATIONAL STRESS

Changing socio-economic situations, scientific and technological advancement and global situations have rapidly changed the style and objectives of life in 21<sup>st</sup> century. No area of life is untouched by these changes which have imposed various new demands in the education system. With many positive effects, stress has become reality of the 21<sup>st</sup> century which negatively affects life. **Coleman (1970)** defines stress as a demand of adjustment by an internal or external force. Mainly personal traits or traits related to environment can be the main cause of stress. Occupational stress disrupts employee's normal functioning (**Jarvis, 2002**). It weakens the employee physically, mentally, and emotionally, which has a negative impact on his efficiency and performance.

Teaching is a profession of great responsibility which determine the destiny of any nation. Being influenced by the changing circumstances and facing various complexities, the teacher works to meet the changing needs of the society. Teacher plays a crucial role in achieving learning outcomes and making teaching-learning effective. During the past few decades teaching profession comes among the top stressful profession. Survey of **Johnson, Cooper, Cartwright, Donald, Taylor, and Millet (2005)** on occupational stress, analyzed twenty-six occupations and ranked teaching as the second most stressful profession. **Jamal & Raheem (2012)** observed work load, students' misbehaviour, lack of professional recognition, lack of resources, and poor interpersonal relations as the main causes of teachers' occupational stress. **Alan, Chan, Chen, and Elaine (2010)** studied occupational stress in terms of health problems of teachers and found over workload, pressure of time bound work, implementation of new education reforms and policies, and managing students' behaviour and learning are the prominent factors responsible for teachers' occupational stress.

### *Significance of the Study*

For making teaching-learning process possible and attaining the goals of life, teacher constantly plays multi-dimensional role and performs multiple tasks inside and outside the classroom. He basically works for academic excellence and good education. For realizing these aims every education system demands excellent and satisfied teacher. Teacher's excellence, stress free state and satisfaction in teaching motivates him to make efforts at personal and collective level and help him to design an effective plan of teaching and execute it. Educational researches vividly show that competency and well-being of a teacher is an important aspect, determining teacher's effectiveness and performance. **Kumar and Kayalvizhi (2024)** made an attempt to study academic stress and teaching competency of school teachers. Academic stress and teaching competency of school teacher were found negatively correlated to each other and significant difference was found academic stress and teaching competency of school teachers in terms of their gender. **Rafiq and Kiran (2022)** investigated occupational stress of secondary school teachers in relation to teaching competency, gender, and teaching subject. Findings of the study reported no impact of occupational stress on teaching competency. **Vijayalakshmi (2017)** examined teaching competency and occupational stress of high school teacher in relation to work motivation and interest in teaching. Results revealed that stress is the main cause of poor performance in teaching and teaching competency and occupational stress of high school teachers were significantly correlated. **Satvinderpal Kaur (2017)** studied occupational stress of college teachers and found female teachers working in rural areas have higher level of occupational stress. **Chauhan, R., and Gupta, P. (2014)** studied teaching competency in relation to gender and locality and found female and urban teachers have higher level of teaching competency as compared to the male and rural teachers. **Mariya Aftab, Tahira Kahtoon (2012)** in their study of occupational stress of secondary school teachers found, male teachers were having high level of stress than female. A Chinese study by **Pie, Wang; Guoli, Zhang (2007)** highlights occupational stress of secondary and elementary school teachers affect their health and performance. These studies show that gender and locality of the teachers have role in determining teaching competency and the level of stress. Teaching competency has been studied with many educational and psychological variables but study of teaching competency in relation to occupational stress are rare. Investigator found no such study with reference to Uttarakhand. Thus, this study will help to fill this research gap and will be useful for the teachers and the management to improve teaching competency and manage occupational stress.

### *Statement of the Problem*

The research problem of the study is stated as follows:

*“Teaching Competency of Secondary School Teachers in Relation to Their Occupational Stress”*

### *Definition of the Key Words*

- **Teaching Competency:** Teaching competency refers to a unique combination of pre-requisite knowledge, skills, experience, and attitude of a teacher required for discharging teaching-learning activities successfully.
- **Occupational Stress:** Occupational stress shows the stress of a person related to his job resulting from some personal, environmental, and organizational factors. It creates hindrance in the way of teacher's well-being and decrease job satisfaction.
- **Teacher:** Teacher is a person working in any educational institution for achieving the goals of education. Teaching is the basic unit of teacher's professional works.

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- **Secondary Schools:** Secondary schools are the institutions handling the classes from standard 6 to 12.

### RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND PROCEDURE

Investigator adopted descriptive survey methods for conductive the present research. Teachers working in government secondary schools in Chamoli District of Uttarakhand constitutes the population of the study. 100 secondary school teachers (50 male teachers and 50 female teachers) were selected randomly from 25 schools. Investigator used General Teaching Competency Scale (GTCS) by B. K. Passi & Mrs. M. S. Lalitha and Teacher's Occupational Stress Scale (TOSS) by Sajid Jamal and Abdul Raheem for collecting the data from the subjects. Pearson's product moment 'r' was computed between teaching competency scores and occupational stress score by using SPSS.

#### Objectives of the Study

- To study teaching competency and occupational stress among secondary school teachers.
- To find out there is any relationship between teaching competency and occupational stress of secondary school teachers.

#### Hypotheses

- There is no significant relationship between teaching competency and occupational stress of secondary school teachers.
- There is no significant relationship between teaching competency and occupational stress of male secondary school teachers.
- There is no significant relationship between teaching competency and occupational stress of female secondary school teachers.
- There is no significant relationship between teaching competency and occupational stress of urban secondary school teachers.
- There is no significant relationship between teaching competency and occupational stress of rural secondary school teachers.

### ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

**Table 1: Correlation coefficient r of between teaching competency and occupational stress of secondary school teachers**

Correlation Coefficient r		Occupational Stress					
		WL	SM	LPR	LCR	PCR	Total OS
Teaching Competency	Planning	-.599**	-.706**	-.725**	-.754**	-.371**	-.794**
	Presentation	-.451**	-.533**	-.579**	-.450**	-.527**	-.652**
	Closing	-.256*	-.097	-.054	.028	-.503**	-.242*
	Evaluation	-.570**	-.385**	-.446**	-.453**	-.316**	-.544**
	Managerial	-.147	-.175	-.102	-.222*	-.409**	-.284**
	Total TC	-.548**	-.582**	-.604**	-.548**	-.562**	-.728**

*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). \*\**

*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed). \**

Table 1 shows the correlations between teaching competency and occupational stress. Correlation is computed between the dimensions of teaching competency (planning, presentation, closing, evaluation, and managerial) and occupational stress [work load (WL),

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students' misbehaviour (SM), lack of professional recognition (LPR), lack of classroom resources (LCR), and poor colleague relations (PCR)].

Planning dimension of teaching competency shows negative correlations with work load ( $r = -.599$   $p < 0.01$ ), students' misbehaviour ( $r = -.706$   $p < 0.01$ ), lack of professional recognition ( $r = -.725$   $p < 0.01$ ), lack of classroom resources ( $r = -.754$   $p < 0.01$ ), poor colleague relations ( $r = -.371$   $p < 0.01$ ), and overall occupational stress score ( $r = -.794$   $p < 0.01$ ). The second dimension of teaching competency is presentation which also shows negative correlations with work load ( $r = -.451$   $p < 0.01$ ), students' misbehaviour ( $r = -.533$   $p < 0.01$ ), lack of professional recognition ( $r = -.579$   $p < 0.01$ ), lack of classroom resources ( $r = -.450$   $p < 0.01$ ), poor colleague relations ( $r = -.527$   $p < 0.01$ ), and overall occupational stress score ( $r = -.652$   $p < 0.01$ ). It is significant at 0.01 level of significance. Closing dimension is statistically significant and shows negative correlations with work load ( $r = -.256$   $p < 0.05$ ), moderate negative correlations with poor colleague relations ( $r = -.503$   $p < 0.01$ ), and low negative correlations with overall occupational stress score ( $r = -.242$   $p < 0.05$ ). But there is no significant correlations with students' misbehaviour ( $r = -.097$   $p > 0.05$ ), lack of professional recognition ( $r = -.054$   $p > 0.05$ ), and lack of classroom resources ( $r = .028$   $p > 0.05$ ). Evaluation shows moderate negative correlations with work load ( $r = -.570$   $p < 0.01$ ), students' misbehaviour ( $r = -.385$   $p < 0.01$ ), lack of professional recognition ( $r = -.446$   $p < 0.01$ ), lack of classroom resources ( $r = -.453$   $p < 0.01$ ), poor colleague relations ( $r = -.316$   $p < 0.01$ ), and overall occupational stress ( $r = -.544$   $p < 0.01$ ) which is significant at 0.01 level of significance. Managerial dimension shows moderate negative correlations with poor colleague relations ( $r = -.409$   $p < 0.01$ ) and low negative correlations with lack of classroom resources ( $r = -.222$   $p < 0.05$ ) and overall occupational stress ( $r = -.284$   $p < 0.01$ ). There is no significant correlations with work load ( $r = -.147$   $p > 0.05$ ), students' misbehaviour ( $r = -.175$   $p > 0.05$ ), lack of professional recognition ( $r = -.102$   $p > 0.05$ ). Total score shows high negative correlations with work load ( $r = -.548$   $p < 0.01$ ), students' misbehaviour ( $r = -.582$   $p < 0.01$ ), lack of professional recognition ( $r = -.604$   $p < 0.01$ ), lack of classroom resources ( $r = -.548$   $p < 0.01$ ), poor colleague relations ( $r = -.562$   $p < 0.01$ ), and overall occupational stress ( $r = -.728$   $p < 0.01$ ) which is significant at 0.01 level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis, 'there is no significant relationship between teaching competency and occupational stress of secondary school teachers' is rejected.

**Table 2: Correlation coefficient  $r$  of between teaching competency and occupational stress of male secondary school teachers**

Correlation Coefficient $r$	Occupational Stress	Remark
Teaching Competency	-.725**	Significant

Significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).\*\*

Table 2 indicates that there is negative correlation between teaching competency and occupational stress ( $r = -.725 < 0.01$ ) of male secondary school teachers, which is significant at 0.01 level of significance. Hence, the hypothesis, there is no significant relationship between teaching competency and occupational stress of male secondary school teachers is rejected.

**Table 3: Correlation coefficient  $r$  of between teaching competency and occupational stress of female secondary school teachers**

Correlation Coefficient $r$	Occupational Stress	Remark
Teaching Competency	-.676**	Significant

Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).\*\*

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Table 3 shows negative correlation between teaching competency and occupational stress ( $r = -.676 < 0.01$ ) of female secondary school teachers significant at 0.01 level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis, there is no significant relationship between teaching competency and occupational stress of female secondary school teachers is rejected.

**Table 4: Correlation coefficient  $r$  of between teaching competency and occupational stress of urban secondary school teachers**

Correlation Coefficient $r$	Occupational Stress	Remark
Teaching Competency	-.604**	Significant

*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).*\*\*

Table 4 reports significant negative correlation between teaching competency and occupational stress ( $r = -.604 < 0.01$ ) of secondary urban teachers at 0.01 level of significance. Thus, the null hypothesis, there is no significant relationship between teaching competency and occupational stress of urban secondary school teachers is rejected.

**Table 5: Correlation coefficient  $r$  of between teaching competency and occupational stress of rural secondary school teachers**

Correlation Coefficient $r$	Occupational Stress	Remark
Teaching Competency	-.572**	Significant

*Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).*\*\*

Table 5 indicates negative correlation between teaching competency and occupational stress ( $r = -.572 < 0.01$ ) of rural secondary school teachers, which is significant at 0.01 level of significance. Thus, the null hypothesis, there is no significant relationship between teaching competency and occupational stress of rural secondary school teachers is rejected.

### Findings of the Study

- The study ascertains significant negative correlations between maximum dimensions of teaching competency and occupational stress.
- Closing dimension of teaching competency is not significantly correlated with three dimensions of occupational stress namely, students' misbehaviour (SM), lack of professional recognition (LPR), and lack of classroom resources (LCR).
- Managerial dimension of teaching competency is not significantly correlated with work load (WL), students' misbehaviour (SM), and lack of professional recognition (LPR) dimensions of occupational stress.
- There is significant negative correlation between teaching competency and occupational stress of male secondary school teachers.
- Teaching competency and occupational stress of female secondary school teachers are found to be negatively correlated.
- It is found significant negative correlation between teaching competency and occupational stress of urban secondary school teachers.
- Teaching competency of rural secondary school teachers is found negatively correlated with their occupational stress.
- Thirty one out of forty correlations are found to be significant at 0.01 level and three are found to be significant at 0.05 level of significance.
- All correlations are found to be negative.
- Results shows that higher level of teaching competency is associated with lower level of occupational stress.

### CONCLUSION

The results of the study show significant negative correlation between teaching competency and occupational stress of secondary school teachers. There is also significant negative correlation between teaching competency and occupational stress in relation to gender (male and female) and location (urban and rural) i.e. teaching competency and occupational stress of male, female, urban, and rural secondary school teachers are negatively correlated. It indicates that lower the occupational stress and higher will be the teaching competency. Results of this study are supported by **Purushothaman and Soundararajan (2021)** as they also found occupational stress and teaching competency of higher secondary school teachers had significant negative correlation. But results are contradictory to **Kumar and Sharma (2015)** as they found occupational stress and teacher effectiveness of secondary teachers had no significant relationship.

Teaching competency is a big determiner of teacher's satisfactory performance and his positive attitude towards all educational affairs. Teaching competency guarantees teacher's quality performance inside and outside the classroom, commitment and accountability to the learner and society. Teacher's dissatisfied and occupational stress negatively affect teaching competency. Results of the present study strongly support the fact that as a teacher's occupational stress increase, his teaching competency decrease. Thus, there should be focus on teachers' well-being through introducing mental health programs like yoga and meditation. Emotional support should be provided to teachers in their tough time. Healthy and co-operative environment should be maintained at school. Induction and refreshers programs should be launched for acquainting teachers with new changes in the system. There should be counseling cell mandatorily for teachers at cluster or block or district level. Development of interpersonal relationship skills should also be focused area during teacher training programs. With many other core subjects, stress management programs should also be essential part of teacher training program.

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### **Conflict of Interest**

The author(s) declared no conflict of interest.

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