

Research Paper

## A Psychological Exploration of Workplace Stress and Compassion Satisfaction in Teaching Professionals

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### ABSTRACT

In today's rapidly evolving world, stress has become an unavoidable part of everyday life. While a manageable level of stress may boost motivation and productivity, persistent or excessive stress can severely impact both mental and physical health, often resulting in anxiety, depression, decreased work efficiency, and diminished overall well-being. This study explores workplace stress and compassion satisfaction among Indian teaching professionals working in schools, colleges and universities, and special education settings. Drawing upon established psychological frameworks—including Selye's General Adaptation Syndrome, the Transactional Model of Stress, the Job Demands-Resources model, and Stamm's Professional Quality of Life theory—the research addresses the growing concern over elevated burnout levels among educators in India. It employing a quasi-experimental design, data were collected using standardized psychological instruments and statistically analyzed through correlation and variance methods. Results indicated a clear inverse relationship between levels of stress and compassion satisfaction. Special educators were found to experience the most stress and the least satisfaction, while college faculty demonstrated relatively higher satisfaction despite moderate stress levels. School teachers reported the least stress and moderate satisfaction. These findings underscore the urgent need for mental health support systems, effective workload management, and context-specific policy interventions, particularly for educators working in specialized environments. The study highlights the importance of fostering professional well-being among teachers and calls for further research that considers cultural and long-term influences on educator mental health and job satisfaction.

**Keywords:** *Workplace Stress, Compassion Satisfaction, Indian Teachers, Educational Settings, Special Educators, Proqol-5, WSS, Teacher Well-Being*

In today's fast-paced society surrounds people with unavoidable stress which penetrates deeply into every aspect of their daily routines. While manageable level of stress can inspire people to reach their highest potential but uncontrollable stress puts their entire mental and physical wellbeing at risk which include anxiety, depression, decreased workplace performance, broken personal connections and diminished well-being. Hans Selye (1950) identified stress as "the nonspecific response of the body to any demand".

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Among the numerous sources of stress in daily life, workplace stress is especially salient. (Kumar & Professor, 2023), described *workplace stress* as physical, mental, and emotional tension that occurs due to overburdening job demands and pressures. As a result of rising globalization and economic crises, workplace stress has become a common problem, impacting professionals, families, and societies all over the world. According to a report by MediBuddy and the Confederation of Indian Industry (CII), 62% of Indian employees report experiencing burnout—a rate over three times higher than the global average of 20%, largely linked to elevated work-related stress and inadequate work-life balance (Pti, 2024). So it is high time for our country to address workplace stress as a concern, affecting every domain of our life as its consequences.

### ***Theories of Stress***

To understand the effect of stress we can rely on valuable theoretical insights like—according to Selye’s General Adaptation Syndrome moves from alarm to resistance and finishes in exhaustion. Stress above an individual’s adaptive limits results in persistent harm even death according to (Selye, 1978). Based on Selye’s model, McEwen’s Allostatic Load Theory demonstrate how body systems impaired from the repeated stress response up to various health issues including hypertension and obesity (McEwen, 1998, 2005). (Neuman 2002) in his Neuman’s Systems Theory emphasizes on personal perception determines how stressors from various sources influence stability. (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984)’s Transactional Model highlights on cognitive appraisal shaping stress response before. People experience stress according to their methods of evaluating and managing environmental requirements. According to (Elder, 1994)’s Life Course Perspective early life stress and socio-cultural settings interact over time to affect health and development until showing full effects of stress (Lynch et al., 2022).

### ***Compassion Satisfaction & It’s Determinants***

Parallel to workplace stress, *Compassion satisfaction* (CS) is defined as the fulfillment and pleasure one experiences in helping others, being committed to work, and feeling efficient in one's work (Halamová et al., 2024). It was first described by Dr. Barbara Stamm. Professional caregivers, as described by Stamm, experience both compassion satisfaction (the positive) and compassion fatigue (the negative). Compassion fatigue (CF) can arise due to direct (primary) trauma or due to care given to trauma-experienced individuals (secondary trauma). Contrariwise, CS stands as a protective factor that helps professionals retain emotional resilience by acting as a buffer against burnout and CF. By encouraging a sense of effectiveness in giving care and assistance, high CS levels improve job satisfaction. CS help in better work life-balance, promotes job longevity and general well-being (Alreshidi & Rayani, 2023).

Research like this showed that compassion satisfaction is an essential component for mental wellbeing that counterbalances the risks like burnout and compassion fatigue. By understanding the determinants of CS we understand its necessity for helping professionals. Self-Compassion; Durkin et al. (2016) found that helping professionals with higher levels of self-compassion experience less burnout and greater well-being and increased job satisfaction. Social Support; positive workplace relationships and support from colleagues, managers, and personal networks enhance emotional resilience; reduce stress and promote CS (Balinbin et al., 2019; Hinderer et al., 2014; Stamm, 2010). Workplace Support and Self-Care; Organizational factors such as peer support, opportunities for growth, meaningful job role and coping resources contribute to sustained compassion satisfaction (Hinderer et al.,

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2014). Positive Affect and Outlook; Zhang et al. (2018) indicated that positive emotions and strong social ties enhance compassion satisfaction. Resilience; (Unjai et al.,2023) and (Dehlin & Lundh, 2018) found that resilience and a balanced passion for work are significant predictors of compassion satisfaction. Age and Expertise; (Berger & Nott, 2023) noted that older teachers with greater confidence and experience are better in managing student suffering and report higher levels of compassion satisfaction than educators exposed to trauma or with a history of mental health challenges are more susceptible to CS.

### *Teacher Workplace Stress & Compassion Satisfaction*

Teachers are both experience work stress and compassion satisfaction. They shoulder multiple responsibilities from classroom management, lesson planning, administrative tasks, and meeting institutional expectations—factors that can become overwhelming over time. While all educators share core duties but the nature and intensity of their roles vary across educational settings. College faculties often engage in additional responsibilities like research, publishing, and mentoring while, school teachers typically take on more pastoral and supervisory roles. Special educators, meanwhile, work with children facing diverse challenges, including learning disorders, autism spectrum conditions, speech impairments, and behavioral issues. To support these students effectively, special education teachers must continually adapt their methods and materials. The emotionally intensive nature of this work can result in high levels of stress and fatigue, highlighting the demanding nature of their profession (Lamba & Roy Som, 2020). The study by (Thapa & Jala, 2023) in Gurugram, India aimed to compare stress levels between teachers in regular schools and those in special education settings. The finding suggested there are significant differences in their stress levels.

Despite these stressors, many educators experience a profound sense of fulfillment through their work, particularly when they positively impact students' growth. This sense of gratification is known as Compassion Satisfaction. The present study aims to explore the complex balance between workplace stress and compassion satisfaction among teachers.

## **REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

This section aims to focus on what is known about workplace stress and compassion satisfaction among different teaching professions and how other studies approached understanding these factors. It will highlight gaps in existing literature and establish the need for the purpose of study.

### *Workplace Stress among Teachers*

Workplace stress levels are varying among different professions. Helping professionals such as nurses, doctors, mental health professionals, teachers and police officers are at higher risk of having stress and burnout levels as they experience compassion fatigue (Ondrejková & Halamová, 2022). Among all helping professionals, what was initially a relatively stress-free profession is now one of the most demanding professions. Educators do not just teach subjects; they are also expected to cope with the changing world around them, be able to discipline students, manage their interactions with parents, as well as abide by societal demands. Additionally, educators frequently experience tremendous pressure to have their students perform well on international and standardized tests. Such overwhelming work demands may disrupt time management, and hence educators find it challenging to establish an optimal work-life balance. Therefore, educators are more likely to experience psychological distress and cite lower job satisfaction than other professionals.

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Teaching is an interactive process that aims to impact and improve someone else's capacity to learn and acquire new behaviors, according to Gage (1963). It is often considered as one of the most rewarding yet demanding professions as education professionals are the backbone of society as they shape and construct minds and future. It demands significant emotional, cognitive and physical effort. Teachers in various settings- Schools, higher educational institutions and special educational institutions facing diverse challenges often contribute to workplace stress.

Educators experience numerous stressors within their working environment. Some of the most common sources of stress include bad working conditions, overwork, student disciplinary problems, limited opportunities for career progression, and tense relationships with peers. Other causes like long hours of work, over scheduled classes, bureaucratic chores, low salaries, restricted autonomy, and bureaucratic rigidity all contribute to the level of stress. Such conditions may result in both physical and psychological health problems, reduced productivity, higher absenteeism, reduced morale, conflicts between people, and a poorer overall quality of life. Ongoing exposure to high levels of stress has a negative impact on mental and physical well-being, raising the chances of cardiovascular conditions, diabetes, tuberculosis, and psychological illnesses like depression, anxiety, and hopelessness. Teaching experience is also a major factor in stress levels and general well-being. One study in India discovered that junior college professors have much higher stress levels compared to their seniors. Further statistical analysis showed that job satisfaction and years of experience were significant predictors for reduced stress levels. Teachers' age and experience were also very much related to burnout rates (Mathew, 2023).

Among teachers also stress can differ based on their job roles, educational set-ups and genders. A study conducted (Ali & Kumar, 2022) aimed to compare occupational stress levels between government and private school teachers. Using a cross-sectional design, 40 female teachers from Bareilly were randomly selected, with equal representation from both groups. The Occupational Stress Index (Hindi version) by Srivastava and Singh (1984) was used for assessment. Results showed that both groups experienced a moderate level of stress, with no significant difference between them. The study by (Bhriju et al., 2021) examined occupational stress among school teachers in Rudrapur, Uttarakhand. It highlights teaching as a stressful profession, especially in overcrowded classrooms. Using a sample of 90 teachers from government, semi-government, and private schools, the study found that female teachers experienced higher stress than males, and private and semi-government school teachers reported more stress than government school teachers. The authors recommend stress management training, supportive work culture, and teacher involvement in decision-making to reduce stress levels. Another study by (Bhain, 2017), indicate that teaching is a globally stressful profession. In the context of private educational institutions in West Bengal, a survey was conducted among school teachers to assess work-related stress using a validated scale. Findings revealed that nearly one-third of the teachers experienced high levels of stress. While the situation is concerning, it is not critical. ANOVA analysis showed that age, teaching experience, and place of residence significantly influenced stress levels among teachers, whereas factors like gender, income, job status, and qualifications had less impact. A descriptive survey conducted by (Bhattacharjya & Choudhuri, 2023) among higher secondary school teachers in Murshidabad, West Bengal, found that a significant portion—92.5%—experienced moderate levels of occupational stress, while 7.5% reported above-average stress levels. The study also revealed a statistically significant but weak negative correlation between occupational stress and job satisfaction ( $r = -0.201$ ,

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$p < 0.05$ ), suggesting that as stress levels increased, job satisfaction declined. Additionally, age was found to be significantly associated with stress levels among the teachers. These studies revealed that school teachers have experienced low to moderate work stress which has many contributing factors like the institution culture and their different working environment. The College stress also studied in many literatures from the decades. Such a research study examined various aspects of work life among college teachers, focusing particularly on stress-related experiences. It found that junior college teachers reported significantly higher levels of stress across most dimensions when compared to senior teachers. Additionally, female teachers were found to experience greater stress related to role overload and inter-role distance than their male colleagues. Another study explored workplace stress among university teachers using a qualitative case study approach. Interviews with 20 teachers revealed that key stressors included extra workload, inadequate working space, job insecurity, delayed promotions, and poor work atmosphere (Ahmad, Gul & Kashif, 2022). The study by (Dutta, 2018) aimed to identify factors causing occupational stress among college teachers and suggest coping strategies. It found that stress among college teachers can stem from both external and internal factors. External stressors include large, mixed-ability classes, student discipline issues, lack of resources, uneven workload distribution, poor communication, and unclear expectations. Internal stressors include a 'Type A' personality, workaholic, negative attitudes toward students, and unrealistic self-expectations. The College of University teaching staff are responsible to manage the balance between their academic responsibility towards students as well as research work that can be another contributing factor to their work stress.

On the other hand, special educators have other kinds of responsibility that contributes to their stress, explained by the study conducted by (Tyagi, 2021) suggested that, Special educators experience significant occupational stress, which contributes to a shortage of teachers in this field. Their stress levels and fatigue are higher compared to mainstream schoolteachers, and factors like depression and burnout often lead to them leaving the profession. The study found a weak negative relationship between occupational stress and wellbeing among special educators, indicating that those with higher stress levels tend to have lower wellbeing. This highlights the importance of addressing the stressors that affect special educators' health and their overall job satisfaction. Another study by Special educators teaching children with disabilities like autism and emotional disorders often face high stress and fatigue, especially when dealing with emotional challenges. Stress is worsened by heavy workloads and poor classroom conditions, leading to low self-efficacy. This study found that teachers with lower self-efficacy experienced significantly higher job stress, emphasizing the importance of self-belief in managing work-related challenges. Motivation is one of the important factors that can help to manage work stress especially for special educators who have to deal with an exceptional population but if the work stress is overwhelming then it can reduce the motivation. This study examined how stress affects the motivation of special educators in Uttarakhand using a sample of 154 teachers. It found that high stress—caused by heavy workload, lack of student cooperation, and poor work conditions—reduces educators' motivation and focus. Motivation helps them manage job demands, but stress negatively impacts their mental stability and performance. The study also suggested stress management strategies to improve motivation levels.

Thus, the existing literature shows teacher stress is common nowadays but according to different teaching roles teachers experience different stress levels and their contributing factors are also different. But the stress of teachers from three independent teaching roles -

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school teachers, college or university teachers and special educators have limited study in a single study. Therefore, this study aims to bridge that gap and study the workplace stress among teachers of these three different teaching roles and areas of teaching.

### *Compassion Satisfaction among Teachers:*

The study on compassion satisfaction is very limited as compared to study on compassion fatigue of teachers or study of compassion satisfaction and fatigue of other helping professionals such as nurses, doctors and mental health health professionals. The three-year, cross-sectional research study aimed to understand and monitor the experiences of compassion satisfaction and related emotional health among teachers and educational staff.

The study results indicate a decline in overall workplace wellbeing and a decrease in compassion satisfaction, with trends cutting across gender and professional roles (Kendrick et al., 2025). There is limited existing literature on compassion satisfaction of teachers especially in countries like India, therefore this study conducted with the aim to study the compassion satisfaction among the teaching professionals from three different teaching areas and also the intended to study the correlation between workplace stress and compassion satisfaction.

## **METHODOLOGY**

### *Aim*

This study explores the experiences of teachers across diverse educational roles—including special education, colleges, and schools—in relation to workplace stress and compassion satisfaction. It also aims to examine the relationship between these two variables.

### *Objectives*

- To assess the levels of Workplace Stress and Compassion Satisfaction among teachers in various educational setups such as schoolteachers, college/university faculty, and special educators.
- To examine the relationship between Workplace Stress and Compassion Satisfaction among teachers in various educational setups such as school teachers, college/university faculty, and special educators.
- To study the differences in Workplace Stress among teachers in various educational setups such as schoolteachers, college/university faculty, and special educators.
- To study the differences in Compassion Satisfaction among teachers in various educational setups such as schoolteachers, college/university faculty, and special educators.

### *Hypotheses*

- **H1-** There is a significant relationship between workplace stress and compassion satisfaction among teachers in various educational setups such as school teachers, college/university faculty, and special educators.
- **H2-** There is a significant difference in workplace stress among school teachers, college/university faculty, and special educators.
- **H3-** There is a significant difference in compassion satisfaction among school teachers, college/university faculty, and special educators.

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### *Description of Sample*

This study employs a quasi-experimental survey design using a quantitative approach to examine workplace stress and compassion satisfaction among teachers in various educational settings, including school teachers, college/university faculty, and special educators. It seeks to identify differences in work stress and compassion satisfaction levels across these groups and the factors contributing to their experiences, it also explores the relationship between workplace stress and compassion satisfaction among teachers. The study sample consists of teachers from three educational settings (N=150), with equal distribution among the 3 groups (School teachers including primary and secondary school [N= 50], college/university faculty [N= 50], special educators [N= 50]). The data is collected from teachers using the Snowball sampling technique, within the age group of 25-55, with approximately equal distribution across the three groups. The quasi-experimental survey design allows for group comparisons, while the quantitative approach ensures objective data measurement. The use of snowball sampling helps in accessibility and representativeness, and the chosen age range and sample distribution provides a balanced and meaningful dataset.

### *Inclusion & Exclusion Criteria*

<b>Inclusion Criteria</b>	<b>Exclusion Criteria</b>
<p>This study includes-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School Teachers, college/university faculties and special educators.</li> <li>• The teaching professionals must be currently employed to certain intuitions.</li> <li>• The teaching professionals must have at least 1 year of work experience to ensure familiarity with workplace stress and compassion satisfaction.</li> <li>• The teaching professionals must fall under the age range of 25 to 55.</li> <li>• The teaching professionals must provide informed consent and voluntarily participate in the study.</li> </ul>	<p>This study excludes-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• School/college/university employees who are not actively teaching (e.g., administrative staff, counselors, or researchers).</li> <li>• Teaching professionals who are no longer actively engaged in teaching.</li> <li>• Teaching professionals with less than one year of experience.</li> <li>• Teachers who are still in training or undergoing internships who do not have full teaching responsibilities.</li> <li>• Teachings professionals who are below/above the age range of 25 to 55.</li> <li>• Teaching professionals who submit incomplete survey responses or provide inconsistent data</li> </ul>

### *Demographic Criteria*

This study includes certain demographic criteria to include participants in accordance are represented below in the demographic table:

<b>Demographic Criteria</b>	<b>Categories</b>
<b>Age</b>	25-55
<b>Gender</b>	Male, female and others.
<b>Educational Qualification</b>	10+2, graduation and post-graduation and higher education in respective fields of study.
<b>Occupation</b>	Respective designation
<b>Years of Work</b>	More than 1, Less than 5, 5-10, 11-20, More

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<b>Experience</b>	than 20 years
<b>Educational Setups</b>	School, College/University, Special Education
<b>Type of Institution</b>	Government, Private, NGO-based

### *Tools Used*

This study employs two standardized tools given the description below:

- 1. The Workplace Stress Scale by Marlin Company (2001):** The Workplace Stress Scale (WSS) was utilized to assess the level of stress experienced by teachers. Originally developed by North Haven and the American Institute of Stress, Marlin Company NY (2001), this scale has been adapted to align with the specific requirements of the present study. It consists of eight items, each rated on a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (Never) to 5 (Very Often). In previous research, the WSS demonstrated a high reliability, with an alpha coefficient of 0.85, indicating strong internal consistency (Khalid, et al., 2023).
- 2. The Professional Quality of Life Scale- 5 (ProQOL):** This is a 30-item self-report questionnaire designed to assess compassion fatigue, work satisfaction, and burnout among helping professionals. This broadly includes individuals working in healthcare (psychologists, nurses, doctors), social services, education (teachers), law enforcement (police officers, firefighters), and other first responders. The scale is particularly valuable for professionals engaged in emotional labor or those frequently exposed to traumatic situations. The Professional Quality of Life refers to the overall experience of individuals in helping professions, encompassing both positive (compassion satisfaction) and negative (burnout, secondary traumatic stress) aspects of their work.

In this study, the ProQOL is used to evaluate the level of compassion satisfaction among teachers, recognizing them as helping professionals.

It is the most widely used tool for measuring the positive and negative effects of working with individuals who have undergone highly stressful or traumatic experiences (Stamm, 2010). Originally introduced as the Compassion Fatigue Self-Test by Charles Figley in the late 1980s, the 5th edition of the ProQOL was developed in 2009. For a detailed overview of the scale's psychometric properties, refer to the Concise ProQOL Manual (2nd Ed.), available at ProQOL.org (Stamm, 2010), which provides normative data for helping professionals across different fields (Buchanan, 2024). The 30-item ProQOL 5 is the most recent version of the scale, following several revisions. Since it uses standardized scoring, data from ProQOL III, ProQOL IV, and ProQOL 5 can be compared. While there are some differences between versions, the subscales remain largely consistent, with only minor refinements. The ProQOL has consistently demonstrated well to very strong internal reliability, enhancing the feasibility of cross-version comparisons. This is particularly evident in the Compassion Fatigue subscale, which has maintained an alpha reliability between 0.84 and 0.90. However, when comparing data across versions, the primary concern is a potential loss of precision, as older versions contained more statistical error than ProQOL IV and ProQOL 5, which have a very small standard error of the estimate (Stamm, 1995).

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### *Statistical Analysis*

This study employs two types of statistics. Through descriptive statistics (Mean, Standard Deviation and Frequencies) it intends to measure and summarize demographics and study variables – workplace stress and compassion satisfaction and to understand data trends. The study uses Pearson correlation to analyze the relationship between workplace stress and compassion satisfaction among all teachers. Finally, through utilization of Inferential statistics like Pearson's product-moment correlation help in identifying the relationship between Workplace Stress and Compassion Satisfaction among teachers and with the utilization of One-way ANOVA, the study aims to assess differences in workplace stress and compassion satisfaction across three different teacher groups- school teachers, collage /university faculty and special educators.

### *Assumptions of Statistics*

The Present study utilized Pearson's product-moment correlation and one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) to explore the relationship between workplace stress and compassion satisfaction, as well as to identify differences among teachers from various educational contexts. Before conducting these analyses, we carefully examined several assumptions to ensure the appropriateness of the inferential statistical techniques employed.

For the Pearson correlation, we considered key assumptions such as linearity, normality, homoscedasticity, and the appropriate measurement level. We assumed a linear relationship between workplace stress and compassion satisfaction. To test the normality of both variables, we inspected the data using histograms. Homoscedasticity was assumed, indicating that the variance of one variable remained consistent across the levels of the other. Both workplace stress and compassion satisfaction were measured on an interval scale, which satisfied the requirement for measurement level.

In the case of the one-way ANOVA, we took into account the assumptions of independence of observations, normality, homogeneity of variances, and the appropriate measurement level. We assumed that the responses from schoolteachers, college/university faculty, and special educators were independent. The normality of the dependent variables within each group was assessed through graphical methods. All variables were measured on continuous interval scales, thereby fulfilling the measurement level requirement.

### *Procedure*

The study was conducted with the help of online (in Google Forms) and offline survey format. The data collection is completed within 45 days with proper ethical considerations, Institutional approval and informed consent are obtained from participants.. The Participants completed the demographic questionnaire, workplace stress scale, and compassion satisfaction scale. The data collected anonymously and analyzed using statistical software. The results are interpreted, and conclusions drawn based on the findings.

## **RESULTS**

Data were organized in the primary step of analysis. The research adopted physical and online data collection methods to obtain data. The research checked demographic frequencies to verify that no data was missing from the present study.

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**Table 1: Descriptive statistics indicating Mean and Standard Deviation in terms of Workplace stress and Compassion Satisfaction in Teachers (N=150)**

<b>N</b>		<b>Overall M of Each Group</b>		<b>Overall SD of Each Group</b>	
Total of Workplace Stress	Total of Compassion Satisfaction	Total of Workplace Stress	Total of Compassion Satisfaction	Total of Workplace Stress	Total of Compassion Satisfaction
Valid- 150 Missing- 0	Valid- 150 Missing- 0	19.15	38.00	5.971	8.124

Note: N= Sample Size, M= Mean, SD= Standard Deviation

The data set was complete, with no missing values (N=150). The preliminary analysis revealed that the overall mean workplace stress score was 19.15 (SD = 5.97) that showed that overall teacher stress is fairly low, while the overall compassion satisfaction score was 38.00 (SD = 8.12) suggested that overall teachers compassion satisfaction is also low, indicating a moderate level of stress and relatively high satisfaction across participants.

The present research examined Workplace Stress and Compassion Satisfaction levels among teachers working in different educational settings that included school teachers and college/university faculty along with special educators. Standard Deviation and Mean together with Standard Error of Mean were determined for all three groups during the descriptive analysis.

**Table 2: Descriptive Analysis of Three Group of teachers (N=150)**

<b>Workplace Stress</b>	<b>Area of Teaching</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Standard Deviation (SD)</b>
	School Teachers	50	16.1	5.19
	College/ University Faculty	50	19.3	5.17
	Special Educators	50	21.7	5.96
<b>Compassion Satisfaction</b>	<b>Area of Teaching</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>SD</b>
	School Teachers	50	38.6	8.71
	College/ University Faculty	50	40.5	5.91
	Special Educators	50	35.9	8.16

Note: N= Sample Size, M= Mean SD= Standard Deviation

Group wise descriptive statistics showed variation in workplace stress and compassion satisfaction across different teaching roles. The special educators show moderate level of workplace stress (M= 21.7, SD = .96) but low levels of compassion satisfaction (M = 35.9, SD = 8.16). College/university faculty had a fairly low work stress level (M = 19.3, SD = 5.17) and low compassion satisfaction (M = 40.5, SD = 5.91). On the other hand, School teachers showed fairly low workplace stress (M = 16.1, SD = 5.19) and also low level high satisfaction (M = 38.6, SD = 8.71).

The current research investigated the association between workplace stress and compassion satisfaction among teaching professionals. It utilized the IBM-SPSS software for this correlational analysis.

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**Table 3: Table shows Pearson correlation between two continuous variables (workplace stress & compassion satisfaction) among teachers.**

Variables	R	Sig. (2 tailed)	N
WS Total * CS Total	-.238**	.003	150

Note: WS Total= Workplace stress scores of all three groups of teachers, CS Total= Compassion Satisfaction scores of all three group of teachers, r= Pearson Correlation, Sig. (2 tailed)=\*\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed), N= Sample Size

A Pearson correlation analysis was performed to assess the relationship between [WS Total] and [CS Total]. The results indicated a statistically significant negative correlation ( $r = -.238$ ,  $p = .003$ ) although it shows a modest negative relationship between workplace stress and compassion satisfaction, suggesting that higher scores on one measure tend to be associated with lower scores on the other. However, the effect size was small, indicating that while the relationship is significant, and other unmeasured factors likely contribute to the variability in these scores.

**Table 4: Table shows the mean difference (One Way ANOVA) of the continuous variables (workplace stress and compassion satisfaction) across the three group of teachers.**

Workplace Stress	Area of Teaching	N	Mean	SD	F Value	P Value
	School Teachers	50	16.1	5.19		
	College/ University Faculty	50	19.3	5.17		
	Special Educators	50	21.7	5.96		
Compassion Satisfaction	Area of Teaching	N	Mean	Standard Deviation (SD)	F Value	P Value
	School Teachers	50	38.6	8.71		
	College/ University Faculty	50	40.5	5.91		
	Special Educators	50	35.9	8.16		

Note: N= Sample Size, M= Mean, SD= Standard Deviation, \*\*. Mean difference of compassion satisfaction among three group of teachers significant at 0.01 level, \*\*\*. Mean difference of workplace stress among three group of teachers significant at 0.001 level

The result of one-way ANOVA revealed significant differences in workplace stress among school teachers, college/university faculty, and special educators ( $F = 12.61$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Special educators reported the highest workplace stress ( $M = 21.7$ ) as compared to college faculty ( $M = 19.3$ ) and school teachers ( $M = 16.1$ ). Similarly, compassion satisfaction varied significantly across groups ( $F = 5.34$ ,  $p = .006$ ), with college faculty scoring highest ( $M = 40.5$ ) showed highest compassion satisfaction as compared to special educators lowest ( $M = 35.9$ ). These findings suggest that teaching role significantly impacts both stress and satisfaction levels, highlighting the need for targeted well-being interventions in educational settings.

### DISCUSSION

The present study was conducted with the purpose of examining workplace stress and compassion satisfaction across three distinct teaching groups—school teachers,

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college/university faculty, and special educators—and explored the relationship between these two constructs. The findings revealed significant differences in both workplace stress and compassion satisfaction among the groups, as well as a statistically significant negative correlation between the two variables overall. These results contribute to the growing body of literature on occupational well-being in educational settings and offer actionable insights for mitigating stress and enhancing satisfaction among educators.

The findings from the descriptive analysis (Result Table1) reveal notable variations in workplace stress and compassion satisfaction across different teaching roles, highlighting the complex interplay between occupational demands and emotional fulfillment in educational settings. Overall, the sample demonstrated relatively low workplace stress ( $M = 19.15$ ,  $SD = 5.97$ ) and moderate compassion satisfaction ( $M = 38.00$ ,  $SD = 8.12$ ). However, group-wise comparisons (Result Table2) reveals distinct patterns among school teachers, college/university faculty, and special educators, suggesting that contextual factors inherent to each teaching role significantly influence these outcomes.

Special educators reported the highest workplace stress ( $M = 21.7$ ,  $SD = 5.96$ ), aligning with prior research indicating the unique challenges faced by this group, such as managing diverse learning needs, resource limitations, and emotional labor associated with supporting students with disabilities. Despite their critical role, their compassion satisfaction was the lowest ( $M = 35.9$ ,  $SD = 8.16$ ), potentially reflecting burnout risks or insufficient institutional support. In contrast, college/university faculty exhibited moderate workplace stress ( $M = 19.3$ ,  $SD = 5.17$ ) and slightly higher compassion satisfaction ( $M = 40.5$ ,  $SD = 5.91$ ), which may stem from greater autonomy, research opportunities, or reduced direct care giving responsibilities compared to school-based roles. School teachers, while reporting the lowest stress levels ( $M = 16.1$ ,  $SD = 5.19$ ), still demonstrated only moderate compassion satisfaction ( $M = 38.6$ ,  $SD = 8.71$ ), possibly due to high workloads, administrative pressures, or emotional exhaustion despite their engagement with students.

The first hypothesis (H1) of this study hypothesized that there is a significant correlation among workplace stress and compassion satisfaction among teachers which is established by the result that showed The significant negative correlation between workplace stress and compassion satisfaction ( $r = -.238$ ,  $p = .003$ ) reinforces the theoretical framework of the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model, which posits that excessive job demands (e.g., stress) deplete emotional resources, reducing satisfaction (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). However, the small effect size suggests that other unmeasured factors—such as personal resilience, social support, or institutional policies—likely modulate this relationship. For instance, college faculty's high satisfaction despite low stress might reflect compensatory resources like research autonomy or mentorship opportunities.

The second hypothesis (H2) of the study was hypothesized the significant difference in workplace stress among teachers of three groups are established by the study result that showed that Special educators reported the highest levels of workplace stress ( $M = 21.7$ ), followed by college/university faculty ( $M = 19.3$ ) and school teachers ( $M = 16.1$ ). This hierarchy aligns with prior research that emphasizes that special educators' work often involves additional occupational challenges such as the demands of designing individualized therapeutic plans, managing the slow developmental progress of children, unclear financial frameworks, and addressing challenging behaviors in special needs students (Shah & Mansuri, 2022). Compare to special educators college/university teachers stress level is low

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but they also experience workplace stress as discussed by (Tasleem et al., (2023) in their study found that several key workplace-related factors—such as excessive workload, inadequate working conditions, concerns over job security, delays in promotion, and overall institutional environment—significantly contribute to stress among university teaching staff. However, the fairly low workplace stress among school teachers contrasts with a report by (Parihar & Mahmood, 2016) that stress levels among school teachers were significantly high. Among the various stressors identified, workload emerged as the most significant contributor to stress.

Teachers reported feeling overwhelmed by long teaching hours, administrative responsibilities, and a general lack of time for rest or personal tasks. Job satisfaction was ranked as the second most critical factor, with low satisfaction levels intensifying stress. Other stressors noted included interpersonal conflicts, lack of recognition, and limited opportunities for career advancement. The study also found some variation in stress perception based on demographic factors. Gender differences were evident, and younger teachers were particularly impacted by workload, while older teachers tended to feel more stressed due to a perceived lack of recognition or stagnation in their careers.

The third hypothesis (H3) is also established with the result and exhibited a significant difference in compassion satisfaction among teachers of all three groups. College/university faculty exhibited the highest compassion satisfaction ( $M = 40.5$ ), followed by school teachers ( $M = 38.6$ ) and special educators ( $M = 35.9$ ). All though there is all the group shows low compassion satisfaction despite their workplace stress. A study on “Three Year Quantitative Study of Compassion Satisfaction and Fatigue Among Teachers and Educational Workers in Alberta, Canada” by (Kendrick et al., 2025). ), The results of the study indicate that mental and emotional health distress among teachers and educational workers is both widespread and worsening over time. Data collected at three points between 2020 and 2023 revealed a notable increase in the prevalence and severity of distress, pointing to a decline in overall workplace wellbeing. This deterioration was observed across various demographic groups, including different genders, job roles, and levels of experience within the education sector. The findings also highlight the growing impact of compassion fatigue, along with the decreased level of compassion satisfaction, underscoring the psychological toll that educational work continues to take on teaching professionals.

### ***Implication***

The findings of this study carry significant implications for educators, institutional leaders, and policymakers. The inverse relationship between workplace stress and compassion satisfaction underscores the urgent need for targeted psychological interventions within educational settings. Implementing structured stress reduction programs—such as resilience-building workshops, mindfulness training, and access to psychological counseling—can play a vital role in enhancing teachers’ well-being. These interventions not only help manage stress but also promote emotional resilience and compassion satisfaction, ultimately contributing to better teaching outcomes.

Special educators, in particular, require focused support, as they face the highest levels of occupational stress and the lowest levels of job satisfaction. Tailored mental health services, reduced caseloads, and peer support groups could significantly ease their emotional burden. In contrast, college faculty benefit from greater professional autonomy and career

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development opportunities, factors that positively influence their psychological health—strategies that could be adapted across other teaching contexts.

The study also highlights the need for institutional reforms, including streamlined administrative processes, transparent promotion systems, and recognition programs to foster a more supportive work environment. Educational leadership must adopt a more empathetic, mental health-centered approach, cultivating workplace cultures that prioritize teacher well-being and growth.

These insights align with recent calls for regular assessments of educator mental health and deeper research into emotional exhaustion, burnout prevention, and the impact of institutional climate. Longitudinal studies are essential for designing sustainable, evidence-based strategies that reduce stress and improve professional satisfaction in the education sector.

### ***Future Scope of the Study***

This study opens several pathways for future research to deepen understanding of workplace stress and compassion satisfaction among educators. Longitudinal studies are needed to examine how these variables evolve over time, especially in response to changes in policy, workload, or mental health interventions—helping to establish causality and evaluate long-term impact. Investigating cultural and systemic influences, such as regional disparities, school funding, and societal expectations across Indian states or in cross-cultural contexts, can reveal structural stressors and barriers to satisfaction.

Further, exploring individual-level factors—like coping styles, resilience, personality traits, and social support—can help identify what protects or exacerbates stress among teachers. Qualitative approaches, such as interviews and focus groups, can offer rich, context-specific insights into everyday challenges (e.g., bureaucratic demands, parental pressure) and sources of fulfillment (e.g., student growth, collegiality). Comparative studies across public, private, and NGO-run institutions may also shed light on how organizational factors—such as autonomy, promotion systems, and workload distribution—impact psychological well-being. Future research should also focus on designing and testing tailored interventions, including mindfulness programs, peer support systems, and workload management strategies—especially for high-risk groups like special educators. Additionally, emerging challenges like post-pandemic fatigue, digital teaching demands, and hybrid work models warrant exploration to ensure comprehensive mental health support for educators. These research directions are vital for informing evidence-based practices that foster sustainable teacher well-being and professional satisfaction.

### ***Limitation of the Study***

While this study offers important insights into teacher workplace stress and compassion satisfaction, several limitations must be noted. The equal distribution of participants across three teaching groups, despite a sufficient sample size, may limit generalizability to the broader educator population. Convenience sampling also introduces bias, reducing the representativeness of the findings.

Reliance on self-reported data may have led to inaccuracies due to social desirability bias, potentially distorting participants' true emotional states. The study also overlooked key

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factors such as coping strategies, organizational support, and personal resilience, which may influence stress and satisfaction levels.

Its cross-sectional design further restricts causal interpretation, capturing only a snapshot in time without assessing changes or long-term trends. Additionally, cultural, institutional, and policy-related factors—critical to understanding educator well-being—were not examined. Future research should incorporate these variables for a more comprehensive and context-sensitive understanding.

### CONCLUSION

This study explored workplace stress and compassion satisfaction among school teachers, special educators, and college/university faculty. Special educators experienced the highest stress and lowest satisfaction, while college faculty reported higher satisfaction despite moderate stress levels. School teachers had the lowest stress but only moderate compassion satisfaction. A significant negative correlation between stress and satisfaction supports the Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model, which posits that excessive job demands deplete emotional resources, reducing professional fulfillment.

The findings highlight the impact of role-specific stressors—such as emotional labor, institutional demands, and professional responsibilities—on educator well-being. They underscore the need for tailored mental health support, particularly for special educators, and call for institutional policies that reduce stress and foster professional satisfaction. From an interventional perspective, implementing programs like resilience training, peer support, and workload management could help mitigate stress and enhance well-being across roles. Future research should employ longitudinal approaches and examine diverse psychosocial factors to inform comprehensive, evidence-based strategies for educator support.

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