



# Assessment of Occupational Stress of Teaching Professionals during Covid-19 Pandemic

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## ABSTRACT

The COVID-19 showed worldwide impact on educational sector. The schools lock all across the countries and the mode of teaching was online which impacted on teaching and learning process. It also affected the physical, socio-emotional and mental health of the teachers due to work related stress during the pandemic. A study was conducted to determine the problems responsible for occupational stress of the teachers working in different government and private schools of Odisha. The information collected through filling of online questionnaire. The data revealed that the timing of online class was not suitable for 77.78 per cent teachers as they were performing duties from home and simultaneously taking care of their children. While dealing with students in online platform, 88.89 percent teachers faced difficulties. About 63.33 per cent of the respondents complained about pain in neck and shoulders. Maximum participants (90%) reported feeling vulnerable because of physical and mental health stress along with family burden and unknown fear factor of consequences of corona disease. Impact of fear of Covid 19 on physical and psychological health was got the highest mean rank which was reported by 90 per cent of the respondents. The effect of very hectic schedules of job created stress as expressed by 86.67 per cent respondents considered in mean rank II. These may be due to the work related digital teaching and working environment, work load, lifestyles etc. involving family tensions and financial insecurities. These may develop a number of problems such as anxiety, depression or stress and responsible for occupational stress among teachers during Covid 19 pandemic.

**Key Words:** Health, Occupation, Online, Physical, Psychological, Stress, Teaching.

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## INTRODUCTION

The COVID-19 showed impact on educational sector as schools locked all across the world. Globally, over 1.2 billion children were out of the classroom. Because of this reason, education has changed significantly, with the unique rise of e-learning. This initiated teaching on digital platforms and undertaken remotely. Many research suggested that online learning has been shown to increase retention of information, and take less time. While countries are at different points in their COVID-19 infection rates, worldwide there are currently more than 1.2 billion children in 186 countries affected by school closures due to the

pandemic. Sharma (2020) reported that there are numerous complaints about the education system being followed by the private and other schools yet the parents realized that regular schools are must in students' life for his or her holistic growth. As the regular school does not only cater to academic skill building but also hones the mental, social and emotional skills which are termed as life skills. Now a day when there was a complete shutdown followed by curfew in the city. Parents were worried about the study of their wards but most of the schools took initiative to go for online system through internet. With this sudden change from the classroom in many parts of the world, some are

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thinking whether the acceptance of online learning will continue to persist post-pandemic, and how such a shift would impact the worldwide education market. Hence, a study was conducted to determine the problems responsible for occupational stress of the teachers working in different government and private schools of Odisha.

## **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

The study was conducted to determine the problems responsible for occupational stress of the teachers (both male and female) working in different government and private schools of Odisha. The information collected through filling of online questionnaire and questionnaire were sent to more than 50 respondents but only 30 among them responded. In most of the questions they were asked to tick the most appropriate choice. Questions were also asked on their feeling and perception at work. The teachers were requested to fill the questionnaire with a calm mind. The after receiving the responses, the data were analyzed and tabulated.

## **RESULTS AND DISCUSSION**

### **General Information about the Respondents**

The data revealed that among the 30 teachers, 87.67 per cent were female and 13.33 per cent male respondents. About 37 per cent of the respondents were imparting teaching to primary classes whereas 23.33 per cent were teaching to high school classes, 16.67 per cent were teaching upper middle classes, 10 percent were teaching to nursery and 6.67 were teaching to graduation level students. It was worth mentioning that during the pandemic 40 per cent were giving education offline where as 53.33 per cent were using online platform for teaching and only 6.67 per cent were using both online and offline mode.

### **Different problems experience during lock down**

During pandemic, schools were shut up at most the places especially in the urban areas. The mode

of teaching was online whereas in rural areas they were opting for offline normal classes. The various problems faced by the teachers are given as under (Table 1).

It was evident that the teachers fixed their timing as per the instruction from the higher authority and in some places they were taking opinion of parents. The data revealed that the timing of online class was not suitable for 77.78 per cent teachers which was more than the half. Rest of teachers opined that timing was not suitable for them as they were performing duties from home and simultaneously taking care of their children. About 88.89 per cent expressed that they felt hectic while taking online classes. While dealing with students in online platform, 88.89 per cent teachers faced difficulties. About half of the teachers (55.56) felt not comfortable or used to handle PCs or mobiles for long hours teaching. The work environment at home was not encouraging for teaching as told by 72.22 per cent respondents. About 88.89 per cent of them were doing multi-tasking job as it involved numbers of different tasks apart from teaching. About 83.33 per cent respondent got training about technologies involved for online teaching platform. Taking online classes was perceived as burden for 66.67 per cent teacher while doing work from home. It was observed that half of the teachers (50.00%) satisfied with the online interactive session to communicate with their students. About 55.56 per cent told that they were getting leisure time during pandemic and agreed that there was reduction in your leisure time. It was interesting to note that about 88.89 per cent were respondents not able to manage time to pursue your hobby during lockdown within busy schedule. About 61.11 per cent were facing problems while managing both professional work and household work. Adopting COVID appropriate behavior was difficult for 83.33 per cent respondents and they had problems to follow SOPs related to Covid. There was positive impact on their private life during lockdown as expressed by 77.78 per cent respondents. Mukherjee ( 2021)

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**Table 1. Problems Experienced During Online Teaching.**

Sr. No.	Statement	Yes (frequency)	Percentage (%)
1.	Non-Suitability of time for online classes	14	77.78
2.	Feel hectic while taking online classes	16	88.89
3.	Facing difficulties while dealing with students on online platform	16	88.89
4.	Difficulties faced while teaching with for long hours in laptops or PCs or mobiles	10	55.56
5.	Work environment at home is not encouraging for teaching	13	72.22
6.	Job involves doing a number of different tasks apart from teaching	16	88.89
7.	Pre- training about technologies required for online teaching platform	15	83.33
8.	Feel burden as taking online classes	12	66.67
9.	Satisfaction of the online interactive session with students	9	50.00
10.	Getting less time for leisure during pandemic	10	55.56
11.	Not getting any personal time to pursue hobby during lockdown	16	88.89
12.	Facing problem while managing both professional work and household work	11	61.11
13.	Problems while adopting COVID appropriate behavior	15	83.33
14.	Negative impact on private life during lockdown	14	77.78

conducted a study on 220 teachers in Hyderabad which revealed that 100 percent of the teachers have used all their life savings so far. The report throws light on how the Covid-19 pandemic has affected the mental, physical and financial health of teachers from 50 budget private schools in the city. Pandemic has been remained a stressful period for teachers. About 62 per cent of budget private school teachers in Hyderabad didn't have a job during pandemic. A large section of these teachers between 18-40 yr of age who were the sole earners of their families and were feeling hopeless and are highly vulnerable to stress. Before and during the pandemic, the teachers cited stress as the common reason for leaving the profession, suggest the findings of a new survey. The RAND Corporation survey was conducted of nearly 1,000 former public-school teachers. Three of four former

teachers said work was often or always stressful in the most recent year in which they taught in a public school (Diliberti and Schwartz, 2021). Vatta and Tewari (2020) reported that lock down had created a pressure on their leisure time. More than 70 per cent respondents told about reduction in leisure time whereas 65 per cent respondents believe that family members extended full helps in day to day work. Salaries were not received on time and decreased income was reported by 67 per cent of respondents.

### **Problems experienced related to physical and psychological health during pandemic**

The problems experienced related to physical and psychological healths experienced during pandemic were recorded through the online questionnaire. The respondents expressed their problems which were perceived as matter of concerns ( Table 2).

**Table 2. Types of Physical and Psychological problems Experienced by Teachers during Pandemic. (N=30)**

Sr. No.	Health Problem	Frequency (f)	Percentage (%)
I	Physical problems/ discomforts in body parts		
1.	Headache due to stress	11	36.67
2.	Pain in neck and Shoulders due to prolong sitting	13	43.33
3.	Pain in Lower and upper back	19	63.33
4.	Discomfort in eyes due to continuous watching to the computer	15	50.00
II	Psychological/ Mental Stress		
5.	Frequent Irritation	17	56.67
6.	Lack of concentration	19	63.33
7.	Feeling vulnerable	27	90.00
8.	Pressure of family	21	70.00
9.	Unknown Fear	23	76.67
10.	Lack of job satisfaction	22	73.33

#### Problems related to Physical health

The perceived problems faced by the respondents revealed that about 36.67 percent had headache regularly due to work stress during pandemic. The reason of headache may due to pressure of teaching and finishing syllabus within short time while managing household work simultaneously. Some of them also agreed that watching monitor for long hours created headache. About 63.33 per cent of the respondents complained about pain in neck and shoulders. This was due to adopting static sitting postures with bending of neck and shoulders for long time while teaching online. About half of the respondents expressed that watching PCs / laptops/ mobile for long times are responsible for pain or discomfort in eyes. About 63.33 respondents were having pain in lower and upper back due to static sitting posture. Aperribai L, 2020 conducted an online survey to collect quantitative and qualitative data on Teacher's physical activity and mental health during lockdown due to the COVID-2019 Pandemic. Results showed that indoor physical activity acts as preventive in lockdown situations, whereas the level of activity does not affect mental

health. Also, teachers have experienced higher levels of distress due to the workload generated during the lockdown.

#### Problems related to Psychological health

It was observed ( Table 3) that there were some problems related to psychological or mental health during pandemic which affect their day to day life. Maximum participants (90%) reported feeling vulnerable because of physical and mental health stress along with family burden and unknown fear factor of consequences of corona disease. About 73.33 per cent respondents reported lack of job satisfactions. They were not comfortable with online teaching system. At the same time they were doing hard work but not getting salary at right time or received less amount of remuneration. There was unknown fear of losing job at any time among private school teachers (76.67%) which may affect their livelihood and economy. Stress of teaching at adverse situations created frequent irritation among the teachers (56.67%). About 70.00 per cent respondents expressed that they were experiencing pressure of the family for livelihood and due to all

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**Table 3. Identification of the Intensity of Stress Parameters.**

(N= 30)

Sr. No.	Parameter for stress	Intensity of problems (%)			Mean score	Rank
		Less	Moderate	High		
1.	Impact of fear of Covid 19 on physical and psychological health	0(0.0)	3(10.0)	27(90.0)	2.90	I
2.	Very hectic schedules	0(0.0)	4(13.3)	26(86.67)	2.87	II
3.	Difficulties while teaching with PCs or mobiles for long hours	0(0.0)	5(16.67)	25(83.33)	2.83	III
4.	Feeling anxiety and fear leading to mental stress	1(3.3)	7(23.33)	22(73.33)	2.70	IV
5.	Dissatisfaction with online teaching	3(10.0)	5(16.67)	21(70.0)	2.53	V
6.	Facing problems while adopting COVID appropriate behaviour	1(3.3)	8(26.67)	21(70.0)	2.67	V
7.	Dissatisfaction with irregular or less salary	4(13.3)	10(33.33)	16(53.33)	2.40	VI
8.	Fear of losing job and economic insecurity	7(23.3)	11(36.67)	12(40.0)	2.17	VII

these factors, they were not able to concentrate on their job. About 63.33 per cent respondents reported lack of concentration while doing teaching during pandemic. These physical and psychological health problems were responsible for occupational stress and health hazards of teacher during pandemic. Vatta and Tewari (2020) reported that only 22 per cent respondents were able to visit their doctor on regular basis, though in the situation of pandemic it was not considered to be safe to hospital but also many of the women were dependent on male member so they did not go. Keeping surface, body and stuff virus free was the only way to be safe from COVID-19 so women were more concerned for same (90%) but due to this concern their economic burden and manual work load increased (74%).

### Identification of the Intensity of Stress Parameters Responsible for Occupational Stress

Some of the problems highlighted by the respondents were selected carefully to measure the severity or intensity. Impact of fear of Covid 19 on physical and psychological health was got the highest mean rank which was reported by 90 percent of the respondents. The effect of very hectic schedules of job created stress as expressed by 86.67 per cent respondents considered in mean rank II. About 83.33 per cent respondents gave rank-III with 3<sup>rd</sup> highest mean score for facing difficulties while teaching with PCs or mobiles for long hours. Feeling anxiety and fear leading to mental stress during teaching in lock down got rank-IV which was

also responsible for occupational stress as reported by 73.33 per cent respondents. About 70 per cent teachers facing problems while adopting COVID appropriate behaviour as these were very difficult to follow according to their perceptions leading to stress (rank V). The severity of dissatisfaction level also got mean rank V as expressed by 70 per cent teachers with online teaching. About half of the respondents showed dissatisfaction with irregular or less salary due to pandemic. Fear of losing job and economic insecurity got lowest rank which was also another factor responsible for occupational stress (Table 3).

### CONCLUSION

Stress is not always associated in physical conditions. It may sometimes consider as a positive or constant force, motivating people to devise solutions to problems and providing stimulation. The stress has not general meaning; some avoided the term altogether, or preferred to talk about frustration, anxiety or worry. Here in online teaching during pandemic showed a number of stressors, and had clear analytical distinction. Considering these in terms of aspects that there were intrinsic stressors to the teaching than extrinsic features which directly depicted the work-related characteristics of stress. These may be due to the work-related digital teaching and working environment, work load, lifestyles etc. involving family tensions and financial insecurities. These may develop a number

of problems such as anxiety, depression or stress. These were the responsible for occupational stress among teachers during Covid 19 pandemic.

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