

JOB-RELATED STRESSORS AND TEACHERS' PERFORMANCE: WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO PRIMARY SCHOOL TEACHERS IN AKKARAIPATTU EDUCATIONAL ZONE, SRI LANKA

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Abstract

Stressors at work are critical issues affecting workers' job performance, particularly among primary school teachers. Specifically, these stresses are job role conflict (JRC), work overload (WOL), inadequate reward policy (IRP) and job burnout (JBO). Thus, this study aimed to explore how these factors impact job performance in the context of primary school teachers in changing societal conditions. The research population included 280 primary school teachers from 40 primary schools working under the educational zone of Akkaraipattu. 162 teachers were selected as the sample according to Morgan's table. A structured questionnaire was used to collect data from these respondents. Out of the sample size of 162, 159 respondents responded and were used for analysis, which was 98.14%. The results revealed that there is a strong negative correlation between JRC and TJP, WOL and TJP and IRP and TJP. Also, a medium negative correlation between JBO and TJP. The multiple regression analysis disclosed that 73.5% of the total variance on TJP was explained by all four variables. The findings of the research provide a meaningful understanding of TJP and the importance of improving the TJP of primary school teachers as well as other employees. Moreover, this study will help future researchers to expand the investigation to larger sample sizes and include other government sectors, private sectors, and higher educational institutions. Further, the recommendation of the study would be to enlighten the primary school teachers, other working employees and administrators to attain the TJP through the effective management of JRC, WOL, IRP and JBO.

Keywords: *Job role conflict, Work overload, Inadequate reward policy, Job burnout, Teachers' job performance.*

Introduction

Human resource management (HRM) plays a vital role in managing people and the workplace environment to maximize employee performance and well-being. Key functions of HRM include recruitment and selection, training and development, performance management, compensation and benefits, and health and safety (Dessler, 2022). Work stress is a major issue that can negatively impact employee performance if not properly managed. Sources of stress include high job demands, role conflicts, lack

of control, poor interpersonal relationships, and organizational change. Chronic work stress can lead to burnout, absenteeism, and turnover (DeFrank & Ivancevich, 1998).

HRM practices can help prevent and alleviate employee stress. For example, clearly defined job roles, employee involvement, development opportunities, work-life balance policies, and health promotion can lower stress levels (Karanika-Murray et al., 2015). HRM also plays an important role in creating an ethical, supportive organizational culture. Effective HRM further boosts performance by

ensuring employees have the necessary knowledge, skills and abilities for their roles, providing performance feedback and coaching, analyzing performance metrics, and linking rewards to high performance (Sikora & Ferris, 2014).

The term "occupational stress" describes the physiological, psychological, and emotional responses of employees who believe their workload exceeds their capacity and/or available resources. Selye (1978) described stress as an internal force or external events that compromise an individual's stability.

Teaching is a difficult career; the nature of the work is more difficult, and there are many aspects of the job that teachers cannot control, such as the experiences that pupils bring to class. Additionally, the features of teaching that are beyond their control, e.g. lesson planning and effective classroom management, require extended workdays spent controlling emotions and extra, unpaid labour at night. Teachers are known to act differently depending on the circumstances (Obilade, 2000). The improvement of an individual is greatly aided by primary schooling. Children acquire fundamental information and abilities during their primary education, and instructors serve as the key role models for students in these grades (Baloğlu, 2001; Ko, 2003).

Teachers have a significant role in the development of countries as well (Klusmann et al., 2016). Because they educate new generations. Improving the working conditions in schools may positively affect teachers' physiological and psychological well-being (McCallum et al., 2017). That is why there has been an increasing interest in studies about the occupational stress of teachers. The study, therefore, seeks to establish the effects of job work-related stressors on job performance among primary school teachers in Akkaraipattu educational zone.

Research Problem

Currently, the teaching profession has become stressful due to school activities becoming much more competitive today than earlier, with the growth in other sectors of the economy. The introduction of so many innovations into school life has conspired to increase the tension in teaching. Primary school teachers frequently deal with a range of psychological and physical difficulties daily. Every person, however, has a bearing limit that, if surpassed, may cause stress. Stressful lifestyles have a terrible impact on people's performance in general and can cause illnesses that can kill a person or leave them worthless long after they pass away. Long-term stress can have a negative impact on a teacher's attitude towards teaching and students. Based on this context, the study aims to evaluate a few aspects related to job stress experienced by primary teachers in the educational zone of Akkaraipattu.

Hence, through this study, the researchers are going to analyze what kinds of stress levels are suffered by primary school teachers at present and how they impact teachers' performance, which was studied empirically in this research.

Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the study were to find out the stress factors that affect the job performance of primary school teachers in Akkaraipattu educational zone; therefore, the study found out the influential relationship between the following factors and job performance.

1. To identify the relationship between role conflict and job performance of primary school teachers in the Akkaraipattu educational zone.
2. To identify the relationship between work overload and job performance of primary school teachers in the Akkaraipattu educational zone.
3. To examine the relationship between inadequate reward policy and job

performance of primary school teachers in the Akkaraipattu educational zone.

4. To investigate the relationship between job burnout and job performance of primary school teachers in Akkaraipattu educational zone.
5. To examine the impact of work-related stressors on the job performance of primary school teachers in the Akkaraipattu educational zone.

Literature Review

Job-Related Stressors

Job stress has become a common issue across many professions. This has caused several pressures to accumulate, which puts people in even more difficult and stressful situations. When someone understands that their circumstances may be beyond their capacity for endurance and uneven distribution of resources versus demand, stress becomes a status.

Numerous studies have demonstrated that job stress has a detrimental impact on employee performance. Ahmed and Ramzan (2013) have documented a harmful relationship between job stress and worker performance. Also, concludes that the main causes of stress that lower employee performance are role conflict, workload, insufficient pay and job burnout.

This study is guided by Person-Environment fit theory and Demands - Control Theory. The person-environment fit model's underlying general premise is that people's compatibility with their environments determines their positive attitudes and behaviours (Lee & Antonakis, 2007). According to demand-control theory, a mismatch between an employee's degree of control over their work and the demands of their job causes a stress response. The most stressful jobs are probably those that have little control and lots of demand (Karasek, 1979).

Job role conflict

Uncertain job responsibilities and a lack of motivation to complete required activities are causes of employment role conflict (Seller & Damas, 2002). According to Luthans (2013), three different types of role conflict can arise, the first type is when a person's values and attitudes do not align with their role obligations; the second is when there are conflicting expectations of the techniques of performing the role; and the third is when there are different requirements to perform two or more roles at the same time. Role conflicts can take many forms, such as minor, moderate and major (Fahmi, 2017). People who work in different organisations often suffer conflicts between their personal and professional lives. These conflicts can occur on an individual, group and organisational level (Luthans, 2006). Role conflicts can arise when people are expected to fulfil several tasks within a specific time.

Work overload

Work overload refers to the perception of having insufficient time and energy to fulfil demands placed on oneself by job (Leiter & Schaufeli, 1996). Work overload is the term used to describe when someone has too much work to perform or when job overload is doing too much challenging work to do at the same time (Ali & Farooqi, 2014). Overwork has a detrimental impact on employees' physical and emotional well-being, which in turn impacts the entire performance of any organisation.

Inadequate reward policy

Adequate incentive policies that employees gain based on time and effort invested in the company's growth are necessary for organisations to fulfil their objectives (Sutherland, 2004). Organisations can utilise a well-managed reward strategy to motivate and retain staff members (Carrel et al., 1992; Terera & Ngirande, 2014). Another study found that insufficient compensation causes nearly 45% of businesses to lose talented workers, and unjustified remuneration is cited

by 71% of workers as the main cause of resignation (White, 2006). Further, employers should prioritise improving the reward system, according to Sutherland (2004).

Job Burnout

Job burnout is one of the key criteria for determining the level of commitment to the organisation. There is a correlation, per Gemlik et al. (2010), between the degree of commitment to the organisation and job burnout. Job-related burnout is prevalent across all industries, leading to a decline in job satisfaction and job performance (Maslach & Leiter, 2008). Inequality in work resources and workload leads to burnout (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007).

Relationship Between Work-Related Stressors and Job Performance

Regarding the relationship between work performance and workplace stress, a variety of findings have been observed. The effect of needless work demands on job performance was investigated by Westman and Eden (1996).

Teachers should operate in a competitive setting where they must find ways to organize complicated performance characteristics to lower stress levels associated with their jobs and to challenge themselves to perform at a high level of resourcefulness (Bolwijn & Kumpe, 1990).

Job Role Conflict and Teachers' Performance

Rizzo, House, and Lirtzman (1970) conducted a study on "role conflict and ambiguity in complex organizations" They found, with the help of available data, that there is a negative relationship between role conflict or role ambiguity and job performance.

Jackson and Schuler (1985), conducted a study on a topic entitled "A meta-analysis and conceptual critique of research on role ambiguity and role conflict in work settings",

they discovered that studies concentrating on cognitive and motivational processes can account for the negative correlations shown between role ambiguity, role conflict, and job performance.

Work Overload and Teachers' Performance

Osaat and Ekechukwu (2017) conducted a study entitled "Managing Workload of Academic Staff for Job Effectiveness in Nigeria Universities: A Study of University of Port Harcourt in South-South Geopolitical Zone of Nigeria, they discovered that academic staff members' workloads typically increase as a result of these extra assignments. As a result, lecturers' effectiveness at work is impacted by the stress and related health issues that come with these administrative tasks.

Santavirta and Solovieva (2007) conducted a study on the association between job strain and emotional exhaustion in a cohort of 1,028 Finnish teachers. They stated that teachers experience emotional exhaustion when they are given work that is either too much for them to perform in the time allotted or too much for them to handle.

Inadequate Reward Policy and Teachers' Performance

Armstrong (2010) conducted a study entitled "Armstrong's Essential Human Resource Management Practice: A Guide to People Management ". He argued that one of the most important, if not the most important, of the responsibilities undertaken by managers of organizations is to ensure that members of their entities achieve high levels of performance. These justifications support the idea that employee performance affects an organization's performance and that an organization's performance is positively correlated with employee performance.

Agwu (2013) conducted a study entitled "Impact of Fair Reward System in Employees' Job Performance in Nigerian Agip Oil Company" and discovered that one of the key instruments that management

employs to affect employee motivation is a reward system.

Job Burnout and Teachers' Performance

According to Maslach et al. (2001) conducted a study entitled "Job burnout. Annual Review of Psychology" and discovered that burnout consists of three dimensions: (a) emotional exhaustion, which involves feelings of being depleted of one's emotional and physical resources, as a consequence of intense physical, affective and cognitive strain, i.e. as a long-term consequence of prolonged exposure to certain job demands; (b) depersonalization, which originally refers to distancing oneself emotionally from service recipients, it is a state of detachment from students, parents, and other teachers that disturbs a teacher's personal and professional life; and (c) a reduced sense of personal accomplishment which is described as a

person's negative self-evaluation regarding his or her job performance.

Methodology

Research Framework

The conceptual framework included two variables, independent variables and dependent variables, and focused on the relationship between job-related stressors and teachers' performance. Based on that, job role conflict, work overload, inadequate reward policy and job burnout were independent variables, and the dependent variable was teachers' performance. The teachers' performance is considered here, particularly the teachers' performance of primary schools in the Akkaraipattu educational zone. The previous literature studies help to develop the conceptual framework below, and it can be used to show the connection between dependent and independent variables used in this study.

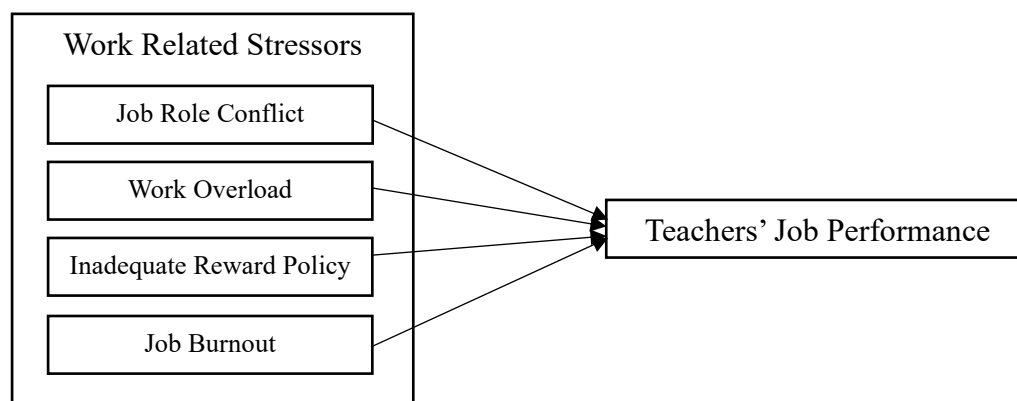


Figure 1: Conceptual framework

Hypotheses

According to the developed conceptual framework, the hypotheses relevant to each construct are given below.

- H1: There is a significant negative relation between job role conflict and teachers' job performance.
- H2: There is a significant negative relation between work overload and teachers' job performance.
- H3: There is a significant negative relation between inadequate reward policy and teachers' job performance.

H4: There is a significant negative relation between job burnout and teachers' job performance.

H5: There is a significant negative relation between work-related stressors and teachers' job performance.

Instrumentation

The primary data were gathered through the use of the survey questionnaire instrument. All questionnaires were self-administered and consisted of three parts. The first part was structurally made by the researchers, covering

the socio-demographic characteristics. The second part delved into perceived sources of job stress measures from (Price & Mueller, 1986), (Rizzo, House & Lirtzman, 1970), (Bates, 1968) and (Kahn et al., 1964), while the last part was the measures of teachers' job performance of the respondents by using (Koech, 2014) questionnaire.

Population and Sample of the Study

The research considers job-related stressors and their impact on primary school teachers' performance in Akkaraipattu educational zone. The population of the study was selected from all primary schools functioning in Akkaraipattu educational zone selected for the study, and out of the 280 primary school teachers, 162 were selected according to Morgan's Table. Then, 162 questionnaires

were distributed strategically on a random sampling basis to collect the data.

Methods of Data Analysis

The data obtained from survey questionnaires were appraised through reliability and validity analysis, univariate, bivariate and regression analysis. The Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) 26.0 was used to simplify the analysis of data.

Results and Discussion

Response Rate

This method ensured that the respondents' queries concerning clarity were addressed at the point of data collection; however, caution was exercised so as not to introduce bias in the process.

Table 1: Response Rate

No. of questionnaires issued	No. of questionnaires returned	Response rate (%)
162	159	98.14%

Reliability analysis

Table 2: Reliability analysis

Variables	No. of scale items	Cronbach's Alpha value
Job Role Conflict	10	0.773
Work Overload	10	0.931
Inadequate Reward Policy	05	0.902
Job Burnout	07	0.615
Teachers' Job Performance	09	0.964

According to this study, Cronbach's alpha coefficient of reliability analysis for job role conflict is 0.773, work overload is 0.931, inadequate reward policy is 0.902, job burnout is 0.615 and teachers' job performance is 0.964. Based on the decision attributes of reliability analysis developed by George and Mallery (2003), when the CAC

value is above 0.70 is considered acceptable and above 0.80 is considered as good. It indicates the alpha values of variables included in this study are quite high. So, this instrument seems to be a fairly reliable measure of evaluating the impact of job-related stressors on teachers' job performance.

Factor Analysis

Table 3: KMO and Bartlett's Test

Variables	KMO	Bartlett's Test of Sphericity		
		Approx. Chi-Square	df	Sig
Job Role Conflict (JRC)	0.800	781.684	45	.000
Work Overload (WOL)	0.908	1031.693	45	.000
Inadequate Reward Policy (IRP)	0.859	484.446	10	.000
Job Burnout (JBO)	0.637	220.556	21	.000
Teachers' Job Performance (TJP)	0.909	1621.068	36	.000

KMO values of JRC, WOL, IRP, JBO and TJP are 0.800, 0.908, 0.859, 0.637 and 0.909, respectively, which are more than the cutoff value of 0.5. C chi-square values resulting from the use of Bartlett's test of sphericity recorded regarding JRC, WOL, IRP, JBO and TJP are 781.684 (df = 45), 1031.693 (df = 45), 484.446 (df = 10), 220.556 (df = 21) and 1621.068 (df = 36) respectively at the significant level of $p < 0.000$.

From the outcomes of KMO and Bartlett's Test, it is possible to conclude that, questionnaire statements were effectively related and factor analysis was suitable for the data set since the value of KMO is higher than the recommended range (0.5) as well as Bartlett's Test of Sphericity test confirmed the appropriateness of the of factor analysis for the data set in this study.

Correlation Analysis

Table 4: Correlation analysis

Variables	No. of response	r	Sig.
JRC - TJP	159	-.784	.000
WOL - TJP	159	-.820	.000
IRP - TJP	159	-.760	.000
JBO - TJP	159	-.524	.000

There is a strong negative correlation between JRC and TJP ($r = -0.784$ and $p < 0.01$), a strong negative correlation between WOL and TJP ($r = -0.820$, $p < 0.01$), a strong negative correlation between IRP and TJP (r

$= -0.760$, $p < 0.01$) and a moderate negative correlation between JBO and TJP ($r = -0.524$, $p < 0.01$). It shows that the found relationships are statistically significant at the 0.01 level, which is ($p < 0.05$).

Multiple Regression Analysis

Table 5: Model Summary of Simple Linear Regression

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.861 ^a	.741	.735	.45749

a. Predictors: (Constant), JBO, JRC, IRP, WOL

R Square and adjusted R Square were discovered to have values of 0.741 and 0.735, respectively. The core information is the adjusted R^2 value of 0.735. This shows that nearly 73% of the variation in teachers' performance is explained by the model

containing variables. This is quite high, so calculations from the regression equation are fairly reliable. It also means that 27 % of the variation is still unexplained; thus, adding other independent variables might further improve the fit of the model.

Table 6: ANOVA

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	92.370	4	23.092	110.333	.000 ^b
	Residual	32.232	154	.209		
	Total	124.602	158			

a. Dependent Variable: TJP

b. Predictors: (Constant), JBO, JRC, IRP, WOL

Based on the result of ANOVA, the sum of squares regression is 124.602, which refers to the sum of squares explained by the regression equation. The regression residual value is 32.232, which refers to variability in all four independent variables, which is left unexplained by the regression equation of the study, and the total value is 124.602 with 4,

154 and 158 degrees of freedom. The mean square and mean residual values are 23.092 and 0.209, respectively. F-value is gained when the regression value is divided by the residual value. F value is 110.333, which is significant in this study with p-value (Sig.) reflecting that the value is significant at a 99% confidence level as $p = 0.000 < 0.05$. Thus, the

results specify that all four independent variables have a linear relationship with TJP when it is combined. Regression equations

allow us to predict dependent variables (TJP) at an adequate level.

Table 7: Coefficient

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	T	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	7.016	.211		33.282	.000
	JRC	-.656	.133	-.343	-4.947	.000
	WOL	-.460	.109	-.377	-4.201	.000
	IRP	-.134	.095	-.113	-1.404	.162
	JBO	-.352	.114	-.147	-3.074	.003

a. Dependent Variable: TJP

Standardized beta values for JRC, WOL, IRP and JBO are -.343, -.377, -.113 and -.147 respectively with significant levels of 0.000 for JRC, WOL and 0.162 for IRP and 0.003 for JBO. These statistics delineated that all four variables have a significant impact on TJP. Unstandardized coefficient beta values and constant values for four independent variables are -.656, -.460, -.134, and -.352, respectively, which denotes the level of impact of all four variables on TJP. A linear regression equation of the study is formed as follows:

$$Y = a + Bx$$

a= constant value

$$Y = \text{TJP}$$

x =Independent variables (JRC, WOL, IRP, JBO)

$$\text{TJP} = a + b (\text{JRC} + \text{WOL} + \text{IRP} + \text{JBO})$$

The Linear Regression equation is formulated as:

$$\text{TJP} = 7.016 - 0.656 (\text{JRC}) - 0.460 (\text{WOL}) - 0.134 (\text{IRP}) - 0.352 (\text{JBO})$$

Concerning the above equation, interpretations are: When JRC changes by a single unit, TJP will change by -0.656 units and denoted negative coefficient shows that the direct negative impact of JRC on TJP; when WOL is changed by one unit, TJP will be changed by -0.460, which means WOL has a direct negative impact on TJP; Changes in one unit of IRP will change the TJP by -0.134 units in a negative way. Thus, if JBO is changed by one unit, TJP will be negatively changed by -0.352. The 't' value shown in the table above represents whether the JRC,

WOL, IRP and JBO are significant predictors of the TJP or not. If the $p = 0.000 < 0.05$, it will be concluded as a predictor. Based on study outcomes, JRC ($t = -4.947$, $p = 0.000 < 0.05$), WOL ($t = -4.201$, $p = 0.000 < 0.05$), IRP ($t = -1.404$, $p = 0.000 < 0.05$) and JBO ($t = -3.074$, $p = 0.000 < 0.05$) are significant predictors of TJP.

Hypothesis Testing

To continue the study, the researchers framed the five alternative hypotheses as there is a significant relationship between the JRC and TJP, WOL and TJP, IRP and TJP and JBO and TJP. Also, there is an impact of all four variables on TJP. To analyse the alternative hypothesis, the Pearson correlation coefficient test and multiple regression analysis were conducted by the researchers; for this analysis, the acceptable level of significance was 0.05.

According to the current study, there is a significant relationship between JRC and TJP, WOL and TJP, IRP and TJP, and JBO and TJP, which is proven by correlation analysis results. Correlation coefficient 'r' delineated that all JRC, WOL, IRP and variables are negatively related to the TJP at 0.000 significant level, Table 7 and regression analysis disclosed that there is an impact of JRC, WOL, IRP and JBO on TJP, which is illustrated by standard beta values -0.656, -0.460, -0.134, -0.352 at significance level 0.000 (Table 7). By using statistical results, researchers conclude by providing answers to the hypotheses.

Table 8: Hypotheses Tested

Hypothesis	standard beta value/r / r	P value	Decision
H1. There is a significant impact of job-related stressors on teachers' performance.	JRC = -0.343 WOL = -0.377 IRP = -0.113 JBO = -0.147	0.000 0.000 0.000 0.000	Supported
H1a. There is a significant impact of job role conflict on teachers' performance.	-0.784	0.000	Supported
H1b. There is a significant impact of work overload on teachers' performance.	0-.820	0.000	Supported
H1c. There is a significant impact of inadequate reward policy on teachers' performance.	-0.760	0.000	Supported
H1d. There is a significant impact of job burnout on teachers' performance.	-0.524	0.000	Supported

Conclusion and Recommendation

The data was collected from the primary school teachers in Akkaraipattu educational zone. Findings from the collected data show that management of primary schools should be focused more on resolving the issues of job role conflict, work overload, inadequate reward policy and job burnout have best-performing teachers because job role conflict, work overload and inadequate reward policy show strong negative relation to teachers' job performance while job burnout shows moderate negative relation with teachers' job performance. According to the research, these four factors are the major reasons for work-related stress among teachers of primary schools, which affects their job outcomes.

Recommendation

From the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

- The study recommends that the Ministry of Education should develop a policy on stress management to guide the induction, operation, and counselling of primary school teachers in their day-to-day duties to sufficiently support them.
- Stress affects the efficiency of teachers. So, there is a need to provide a proper conducive environment and support to teachers to

- maintain individual occupational stress at their stations. Teachers should be positive in facing their challenges, which will help them improve their functional skills and reduce occupational stress so that their performance is not affected.

- It is recommended that regular assessment of occupational stress levels should be conducted for preventive measures. Direct physiological measures of occupational stress, like diagnostic tests and consultation, should be conducted by the individuals' schools' guidance and counselling units.

- The government should recruit more teachers to counteract the high enrolment rate because of the free primary education to reduce understaffing situations in schools, and hence reduce the overload on the teachers' side, which has caused occupational stress

- Terms and conditions of service, including teachers' salaries, housing allowance, medical allowances and commuter allowances, among others, should be improved by the government to increase teachers' job performance and hence reduce possible job-related stressors.

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