

Stress and Emotional Competence of Primary School Teachers

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ABSTRACT An ex-post-facto study on stress and emotional competence of 105 primary school teachers was conducted in Dharwad during 2008-09. Stress was assessed using Stress Inventory for Teachers (SIT) and emotional competence by EC-Scale. Results revealed that most of the teachers (64.7%) indicated average to high levels of stress and 35.2% with low stress. Majority of them (89.5%) showed average to competent levels of emotional competence, followed by 6.7% and 3.8% in incompetent and highly competent levels respectively. The stress of teachers showed negative and highly significant relationship with age and work experience whereas positive and highly significant relationship with education. Age and work experience were positively and significantly related with the emotional competence of teachers. Negative and highly significant relationship was observed between the stress and emotional competence of teachers. Thus, the study concluded that increase in the emotional competence reduced the stress levels of the primary teachers significantly.

INTRODUCTION

In modern society the status of women revealed that socio-cultural values hold considerable importance in women's inner-world, and so, the psychological processes occurring in the Indian cultural context determine the experiences and status of today's Indian women in many telling ways. The increase in the number of women at work may not only result in paucity of time of association with family members but also mark a change in the behavioral characteristics of women. Therefore, the working woman needs to have more competencies to carry out her job effectively as a wife, a daughter-in-law, mother and also as a good worker on the professional front.

Teaching is a profession in which majority of women are employed and it is a demanding job. The effectiveness of the educational system largely depends on active, resourceful and com-

petent teachers. The teachers carry out this role of moulding the life of children effectively, but at the same time face stress as they are dealing with young children who are difficult to handle along with their own family life. The dual roles that they are expected to perform leads to stress among teachers. An emotionally competent teacher learns and applies skills to manage stress, improve self-esteem, confidence, personal change, decision making, leadership, assertion, comfort and commitment which raises the quality of teaching along with health and well-being (Nelson et al. 2005). But unfortunately many teachers often experience negative emotions than positive ones. Negative emotions, such as, anxiety interferes in cognitive capacity for processing information, while positive emotions increase creative capacity for generating new ideas and ability to handle difficulties (Frederickson 2001). This is why the capacity to identify, understand and regulate both positive and negative emotions is indispensable in teaching profession, in order to use and generate emotions to favor well-being by overcoming stress. Mendes (2003) confirmed that teachers' ability to regulate emotions was related to their perceived level of depersonalization, self-realization and emotional wear. A study by Gaur and Dhawan (2000) reported that work-related stress of women professionals correlated negatively and significantly with adaptation patterns of having internal locus of control implying that lesser the control on emotions greater is the stress experienced. Hunt and Evans (2003) reported that individuals with higher emotional

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intelligence reported fewer psychological symptoms related to traumatic experiences. Therefore, stress is a negative attribute, while emotional competence is a positive personality factor which can act upon and reduce the harmful effects of stress. Very few studies deal with the interrelation between stress and emotional competence of working women. Hence, the present study is an attempt to focus on "Stress and Emotional Competence of Primary School Teachers."

Objectives

1. To study the stress and emotional competence of primary school teachers
2. To know the relation between selected demographic factors with stress and emotional competence of teachers
3. To identify the relationship between stress and emotional competence of teachers

MATERIAL AND METHODS

Out of 50 Government primary schools in Dharwad, 105 female teachers were randomly selected from 18 primary schools in the city in 2009. The married teachers more than 25 years of age and at least 5 years of teaching experience were considered for the study.

Stress Inventory for Teachers (SIT) developed by Sheeja (1999) was used to assess the stress levels of primary school teachers. This scale consists of 63 items divided into 4 components viz., physical and personal, occupational, familial and social, psychological and emotional stressors. It is a 3 point scale. For each statement, a score of 2, 1 and 0 is to be given for responses: always, sometimes and never respectively. The scores obtained for each of the statements will be added together to get the component score as well as the total score for stress. The total score of stress ranges from 0-126. Based on the stress score, the stressors as well as overall stress can be categorized into low, average and high levels.

Emotional Competence (EC- Scale) developed by Bharadwaj and Sharma (1995) was used to assess the emotional competence of primary school teachers. This scale consists of 30 statements divided into five components with 6 items in each component. It is a five point scale having five alternatives to each and scoring of 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5 from upper to lower end. The

components of emotional competence are adequate depth of feeling (ADF), adequate expression and control of emotions (AEC), ability to function with emotions (AFE), ability to cope with problems emotions (ACPE), and encouragement of positive emotions (EPE). The total score of each component ranges from 6-30 and total emotional competence score ranges from 30-150. The raw score of all the components are converted into 'Z' scores with the help of the 'Z' table. Based on the 'Z' scores the components as well as the overall emotional competence can be classified as highly incompetent, incompetent, average, competent and highly competent.

The teachers were contacted personally, requested to spare some time for filling the questionnaires individually.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Types of stressors and overall stress were judged on the basis of frequency and percentage scores obtained by the teachers and presented in Table 1. It was clearly indicated that 40 per cent of teachers had average and low stress, while 20 per cent showed high physical and personal stress. The physical and personal factors causing stress for teachers include teaching difficult topics, boredom, no convenient transfer facility, improper sleep, poor health, organizational pressure and low status at the work place. It is interesting to note that as high as 30.5 per cent of teachers expressed high stress, while 34.3 per cent and 35.2 per cent indicated average and low occupational stress, respectively. The occupational factors that cause stress are fatigue due to long hours of teaching, heavy workload, overcrowded classrooms, less salary, and clerical work. In case of familial and social stressors, 44.8 per cent of teachers showed low level, whereas 38.1 per cent and 17.1 per cent average and high stress levels, respectively. The teachers also face familial and social stressors such as dissatisfaction in the family setup, burden in attending family duties, lack of time to spend with the family, lack of respect, and conflict with relatives. With respect to psychological and emotional stressors, 41 per cent of teachers had low stress, followed by 39 per cent and 20 per cent indicating average and high stress levels, respectively. The psychological and emotional factors causing stress are lack of relaxed atmosphere in the staffroom, lack of re-

spect from the students, anxiety in maintaining good pass percentage, and lack of emotional support by the family members and colleagues.

Table 1: Stress of the primary school teachers (N=105)

S. No.	Types of stressors	Low	Average	High
1	Physical and personal	42(40.0)	42(40.0)	21(20.0)
2	Occupational	37(35.2)	36(34.3)	32(30.5)
3	Familial and social	47(44.8)	40(38.1)	18(17.1)
4	Psychological and emotional	43(41.0)	41(39.0)	21(20.0)
	Overall stress	37(35.2)	33(31.4)	35(33.3)

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentages

The results of Table 1 clearly pointed out that 35.2 per cent of teachers had low stress, followed by 33.3 per cent and 31.4 per cent indicated high and average overall stress, respectively. The average to high level of stress observed in 65 per cent of teachers highlighted difficulty to cope up with physical and personal, occupational, psychological and emotional and familial and social stressors. Bharati and Reddy (2002) observed that 79 per cent of teachers showed average to high levels and only 22 per cent had low levels of job stress. There was no significant difference between the government and missionary school teachers with respect to overall job stress. Devi (2002) observed that 72.0 per cent of primary and high school teachers from Tirupati expressed physical and mental exhaustion due to difficulty in balancing work at home and school.

The results of emotional competence of the teachers in five components as well as overall emotional competence are presented in Table 2. It is interesting to note that only one teacher showed highly incompetent and highly competent level with adequate depth of feeling, whereas 46.7 per cent had average, followed by 44.8 per cent and 6.7 per cent with competent and incompetent levels respectively. With respect to adequate expression and control of emotions (AEC), 77.1 per cent of the teachers showed average levels, followed by 9.5 per cent in incompetent as well as competent levels and only 3.8 per cent in highly incompetent level. But none showed highly competent level in the second component of emotional competence. In case of ability to function with emotions (AFE), more than three-fourth of the teachers (77.1%) expressed average level, whereas 16.2 per cent

showed competent level, followed by 4.8 per cent and 1.9 per cent incompetent and highly competent levels respectively. Regarding the ability to cope with problem emotions (ACPE), 1-2 per cent of teachers showed highly incompetent and highly competent levels. Whereas 59 per cent of teachers had average ability to cope with problem emotions, followed by 35.2 per cent and 2.9 per cent competent and incompetent levels, respectively. With respect to fifth component of emotional competence, viz., encouragement of positive emotions (EPE), none of the teachers were highly competent and only one per cent fell in highly incompetent level. 70.5 per cent of the teachers showed average level, followed by 15.2 per cent and 13.3 per cent competent and incompetent levels, respectively. On the whole, with regard to overall emotional competence, none of the teachers indicated highly incompetent level and only 3.8 per cent showed highly competent level. It was interesting to note that half of the teachers (50.5%) were competent, whereas 39 per cent and 6.7 per cent expressed average and incompetent levels respectively in overall emotional competence. The probable reason may be with the change in the social scenario, exposure of women to various situations, socio-economic empowerment, and independent decisions regarding family and health matters created awareness among women and improved their emotional competence. The knowledge, education and work experience of teachers help them to develop the ability to cope with problems, have adequate depth, expression and control of emotions, ability to function with and encourage positive emotions and in turn help them to develop better emotional competence. Similar findings were reported by Ramganesha and Johnson (2008) that the teacher educators in Pondicherry and Karaikal regions had average emotional quotient.

The relationship between age and types of stressors of teachers is presented in Table 3. The teachers belonging to 25-34 years age group showed high physical and personal, occupational, familial and social and psychological and emotional stressors in 47.4 per cent, 63.2 per cent, 42.1 per cent and 47.4 per cent respectively, followed by 36.8 per cent, 26.3 per cent, 42.1 per cent and 31.6 per cent average and 15.8 per cent, 10.5 per cent, 15.8 per cent and 21.1 per cent low level of stressors, respectively.

It was highlighted that 44.4 per cent of the teachers belonging to 35-44 years age group

Table 2: Emotional Competence of the primary school teachers (N=105)

S. No.	Components of emotional competence	Highly incompetent	Incompetent	Average	Competent	Highly competent
1	ADF	01(1.0)	07 (6.7)	49(46.7)	47(44.8)	01(1.0)
2	AEC	04(3.8)	10 (9.5)	81(77.1)	10 (9.5)	-
3	AFE	-	05 (4.8)	81(77.1)	17(16.2)	02(1.9)
4	ACPE	02(1.9)	03 (2.9)	62(59.0)	37(35.2)	01(1.0)
5	EPE	01(1.0)	14(13.3)	74(70.5)	16(15.2)	-
	Overall Emotional Competence	-	07 (6.7)	41(39.0)	53(50.5)	04(3.8)

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentages

ADF – Adequate depth of feeling
 AEC – Adequate expression and control of emotions
 AFE – Ability to function with emotions
 ACPE – Ability to cope with problem emotions
 EPE – Encouragement of positive emotions

showed low as well as average physical and personal, low occupational as well as psychological and emotional stressors along with average familial and social stressors. 11.1 per cent of teachers of the same age range indicated high physical and personal, while 27.8 per cent fell in both average and high levels of occupational stressors. With respect to familial and social stressors, 38.9 per cent teachers belonged to low and 16.7 per cent high stressor level, whereas, 52.8 per cent of the teachers showed average psychological and emotional stressors and only 2.8 per cent high level.

Among the teachers belonging to 45-54 years age group, average physical and personal and occupational stressors showed by 44.7 per cent and 42.1 per cent respectively, followed by 39.5 per cent and 34.2 per cent low and 15.8 per cent

and 23.7 per cent indicated high levels, respectively. 52.6 per cent and 39.5 per cent of teachers documented low familial and social, and psychological and emotional stressors, respectively, whereas 36.8 per cent and 31.6 per cent average and 10.5 per cent and 28.9 per cent showed high stressors, respectively.

The teachers above 55 years age group indicated low physical and personal, occupational, familial and social, and psychological and emotional stressors in 66.7 per cent, 50.0 per cent, 83.3 per cent and 66.7 per cent respectively, whereas, 16.7 per cent, 41.7 per cent, 16.7 per cent and 33.3 per cent fell in average level of all the four stressors. Only 16.7 per cent and 8.3 per cent of teachers showed high level in two types of stressors viz., physical and personal, and occupational respectively. None of them

Table 3: Relationship between age and types of stressors of teachers (N=105)

S. No.	Type of stressors	Category	Age range (years)				'r' value
			25-34 (n=19)	35-44 (n=45)	45-54 (n=31)	>55 (n=10)	
I	Physical and personal	Low	03(15.8)	16(44.4)	15(39.5)	08(66.7)	-0.272**
		Average	07(36.8)	16(44.4)	17(44.7)	02(16.7)	
		High	09(47.4)	04(11.1)	06(15.8)	02(16.7)	
II	Occupational	Low	02(10.5)	16(44.4)	13(34.2)	06(50.0)	-0.3**
		Average	05(26.3)	10(27.8)	16(42.1)	05(41.7)	
		High	12(63.2)	10(27.8)	09(23.7)	01(8.3)	
III	Familial and social	Low	03(15.8)	14(38.9)	20(52.6)	10(83.3)	-0.386**
		Average	08(42.1)	16(44.4)	14(36.8)	02(16.7)	
		High	08(42.1)	06(16.7)	04(10.5)	-	
IV	Psychological and emotional	Low	04(21.1)	16(44.4)	15(39.5)	08(66.7)	-0.237*
		Average	06(31.6)	19(52.8)	12(31.6)	04(33.3)	
		High	09(47.4)	01(2.8)	11(28.9)	-	
	Overall stress	Low	03(15.8)	14(38.9)	13(34.2)	08(66.7)	-0.362**
		Average	03(15.8)	12(33.3)	16(42.1)	03(25.0)	
		High	13(68.4)	10(27.8)	09(23.7)	01(8.3)	

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentages, * - Significant at 0.05 level

** - Significant at 0.01 level

belonged to other two types of stressors viz., familial and social, and psychological and emotional.

With respect to the overall stress, 68.4 per cent of teachers belonging to 25-34 years age group showed high, followed by 15.8 per cent each in low and average categories of stress, respectively. 38.9 per cent and 66.7 per cent of teachers from 35-44 years and above 55 years age group indicated low, followed by 33.3 per cent and 25 per cent average and 27.8 per cent and 8.3 per cent high stress levels respectively. On the other hand, 42.1 per cent teachers of 45-54 years age group expressed average overall stress, followed by 34.2 per cent and 23.7 per cent with low and high stress levels respectively. The coefficient of correlation between age and physical and personal, occupational, familial and social, psychological and emotional stressors and overall stress was -0.272, -0.3, -0.386, -0.237 and -0.362 respectively. There was negative and highly significant relationship between age and all types of stressors as well as overall stress of the teachers indicating that increased age reduced the physical and personal, occupational, familial and social, and psychological and emotional stressors as well as overall stress. It was also interesting to note that teachers less than 35 years of age showed high occupational stressors than older teachers, thus indicating the adaptability and adjustability to the occupation by senior teachers. The younger teachers experi-

encing more stress may be because of young children in the family. Rastogi and Kashyap (2003) observed that matured and experienced working women ignore the stress and maintain smooth adjustment in the organization. Alka and Asthana (2004) observed that older teachers showed higher job satisfaction compared to middle and younger age groups.

The relationship between educational level and types of stressors of teachers is indicated in Table 4. Among the teachers who completed SSLC with diploma courses, most of them showed low physical and personal, occupational, familial and social, and psychological and emotional stressors in 60 per cent, 53.3 per cent, 66.7 per cent and 50 per cent respectively, whereas, 23.3 per cent, 36.7 per cent, 23.3 per cent and 33.3 per cent indicated average and 16.7 per cent, 10.0 per cent, 10 per cent and 16.7 per cent with high levels, respectively. Among the teachers who completed PUC with diploma courses, 51.5 per cent showed average physical and personal stressors, followed by 36.4 per cent and 12.1 per cent low and high levels, respectively. 36.4 per cent of teachers with PUC and additional education fell in both low and average levels of occupational stressors and only 27.3 per cent in high levels. It is interesting to note that 42.4 per cent of teachers with same educational level fell in low and average levels of familial and social, as well as psychological and emotional stressors with 15.2 per cent in high level.

Table 4: Relationship between education and types of stressors of teachers (N=105)

S. No.	Type of stressors	Category	Education				'r' value
			SSLC+ diploma (n=30)	PUC+ diploma (n=33)	Degree+ diploma (n=25)	PG+ diploma (n=17)	
I	Physical and personal	Low	18(60.0)	12(36.4)	09(36.0)	03(17.6)	0.195*
		Average	07(23.3)	17(51.5)	10(40.0)	08(47.1)	
		High	05(16.7)	04(12.1)	06(24.0)	06(35.3)	
II	Occupational	Low	16(53.3)	12(36.4)	07(28.0)	02(11.8)	0.29**
		Average	11(36.7)	12(36.4)	05(20.0)	08(47.1)	
		High	03(10.0)	09(27.3)	13(52.0)	07(41.2)	
III	Familial and social	Low	20.0(66.7)	14(42.4)	09(36.0)	04(23.5)	0.228*
		Average	07(23.3)	14(42.4)	10(40.0)	09(52.9)	
		High	03(10.0)	05(15.2)	06(24.0)	04(23.5)	
IV	Psychological and emotional	Low	15(50.0)	14(42.4)	09(36.0)	05(29.4)	0.167
		Average	10(33.3)	14(42.4)	09(36.0)	08(47.1)	
		High	05(16.7)	05(15.2)	07(28.0)	04(23.5)	
	Overall stress	Low	16(53.3)	12(36.4)	07(28.0)	03(17.6)	0.281**
		Average	10(33.3)	12(36.4)	06(24.0)	06(35.3)	
		High	04(13.3)	09(27.3)	12(48.0)	08(47.1)	

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentages

* - Significant at 0.05 level, ** - Significant at 0.01 level

Fifty two per cent of teachers who completed degree with diploma courses indicated high occupational stressors, followed by 28 per cent and 20 per cent with low and average levels, respectively. In case of physical and personal as well as familial and social stressors, 40 per cent of teachers showed average, followed by 36 per cent and 24 per cent low and high categories, respectively. With respect to psychological and emotional stressors, 36 per cent of teachers fell in both low and average levels and only 28 per cent in high level. Those teachers who completed PG with diploma courses, 47.1 per cent of teachers showed average physical and personal as well as occupational stressors, followed by 35.3 per cent and 41.2 per cent high levels and only 17.6 per cent and 11.8 per cent low levels, respectively. 52.9 per cent of teachers indicated average, whereas, 23.5 per cent each with low and high levels of familial and social stressors. On the other hand, 47.1 per cent of them showed average psychological and emotional stressors, followed by 29.4 per cent and 23.5 per cent with low and high levels, respectively.

In conclusion, with respect to the overall stress, the teachers who completed degree and PG with diploma courses (48% and 47.1% respectively) showed high stress. Among the teachers with highest educational level, 35.3 per cent showed average and 17.6 per cent low stress levels. In case of teachers with degree and additional qualification 28 per cent showed low and 24 per cent average overall stress. 36.4 per cent of teachers possessing PUC with diploma education showed low as well as average level of overall stress, followed by 27.3 per cent high level. In another group of teachers possessing SSLC with diploma education, 53.3 per cent indicated low overall stress, followed by 33.3 per cent and 13.3 per cent average and high stress, respectively. The coefficient of correlation between education and types of stressors as well as overall stress was 0.195, 0.29, 0.228, 0.167 and 0.281 respectively. There was significant positive relation between education and all types of stressors and overall stress except psychological and emotional stressors indicating that the education of teachers increased their stressors as well as overall stress. This may be due to sharing of more responsibilities of the school, heavy workload and managerial duties. The highly educated teachers may also aspire higher achievements and efficiency from the

students and family members which lead to high stress. Rastogi and Kashyap (2001) observed high occupational stress among teachers compared to nurses and clerks indicating teachers are more qualified than nurses and clerks and their expectations from the organization are higher because of higher qualification.

Table 5 reveals the relationship between work experience and types of stressors of teachers. Among the teachers having less than 10 years work experience, 42.1 per cent fell in both high and average levels and 15.8 per cent low levels of physical and personal stressors. 57.9 per cent and 42.1 per cent of them had high occupational, and psychological and emotional stressors, whereas 36.8 per cent and 31.6 per cent fell in average level and only 5.3 per cent and 26.3 per cent in low levels, respectively. On the other hand, 47.4 per cent of the teachers had average familial and social stressors, followed by 36.8 per cent and 15.8 per cent high and low levels, respectively.

Among those having 11-20 years work experience, 40 per cent had low, 33.3 per cent high and 26.7 per cent average levels of occupational stressors. On the other hand, 44.4 per cent, 46.7 per cent and 46.7 per cent of teachers showed average level of physical and personal, familial and social, and psychological and emotional stressors, respectively, followed by 40 per cent, 33.3 per cent and 37.8 per cent low and 15.6 per cent, 20 per cent and 15.6 per cent high levels, respectively.

In another group of teachers with 21-30 years work experience, 45.2 per cent showed average levels of occupational stressors, followed by 35.5 per cent low and only 16.1 per cent high levels, respectively. On the other hand, 45.2 per cent, 67.7 per cent and 41.9 per cent of teachers depicted low levels of physical and personal, familial and social, and psychological and emotional stressors, respectively, whereas 38.7 per cent, 25.8 per cent and 38.7 per cent average levels and 16.1 per cent, 6.5 per cent and 19.4 per cent high levels of above stressors, respectively.

In case of teachers having more than 31 years work experience, most of them showed low levels of all the four types of stressors ranging between 70-80 per cent followed by 20-30 per cent ranged in average levels. None of the teachers showed high levels of stressors except 10 per cent documented in physical and personal stressors.

Table 5: Relationship between work experience and types of stressors of teachers (N=105)

S. No.	Types of stressors	Category	Work experience (years)				'r' value
			<10 (n=19)	11-20 (n=45)	21-30 (n=31)	>31 (n=10)	
I	Physical and personal	Low	03(15.8)	18(40.0)	14(45.2)	07(70.0)	-0.257**
		Average	08(42.1)	20(44.4)	12(38.7)	02(20.0)	
		High	08(42.1)	07(15.6)	05(16.1)	01(10.0)	
II	Occupational	Low	01 (5.3)	18(40.0)	11(35.5)	07(70.0)	-0.369**
		Average	07(36.8)	12(26.7)	14(45.2)	03(30.0)	
		High	11(57.9)	15(33.3)	06(19.4)	-	
III	Familial and social	Low	03(15.8)	15(33.3)	21(67.7)	08(80.0)	-0.418**
		Average	09(47.4)	21(46.7)	08(25.8)	02(20.0)	
		High	07(36.8)	09(20.0)	02 (6.5)	-	
IV	Psychological and emotional	Low	05(26.3)	17(37.8)	13(41.9)	08(80.0)	-0.310**
		Average	06(31.6)	21(46.7)	12(38.7)	02(20.0)	
		High	08(42.1)	07(15.6)	06(19.4)	-	
	Overall stress	Low	03(15.8)	15(33.3)	13(41.9)	07(70.0)	-0.391**
		Average	04(21.1)	14(31.1)	13(41.9)	03(30.0)	
		High	12(63.2)	16(35.6)	05(16.1)	-	

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentages, ** - Significant at 0.01 level

On the whole, 63.2 per cent of the teachers having less than 10 years experience indicated high overall stress, followed by 21.1 per cent and 15.8 per cent average and low stress, respectively. In case of teachers having 11-20 years experience, 35.6 per cent possessed high levels of overall stress, 33.3 per cent low and 31.1 per cent average overall stress. 41.9 per cent of teachers having 21-30 years experience fell in both average and low levels of overall stress and only 16.1 per cent in high stress level. Lastly, 70 per cent of teachers having an experience of more than 31 years documented low overall stress with remaining 30 per cent average level. None of them had high levels of overall stress. The coefficient of correlation between experience and four types of stressors as well as overall stress of teachers was -0.257, -0.369, -0.418, -0.310 and -0.391 respectively, indicating negative and highly significant relationship. It was interesting to note that increase in experience decreased the percentage of teachers with high stress in physical and personal, occupational, familial and social and psychological and emotional factors. With increase in the experience, the teachers learn to tackle all the stressors effectively. Hence, 70-80 per cent of the teachers with more than 31 years of work experience indicated low stress with respect to all the stressors and overall stress. Ravichandran and Rajendran (2007) reported that experience of higher secondary teachers was found significant with personal stress, lack of support from parents, organizational policy and parental expectations.

The relationship between age and emotional competence of teachers is shown in Table 6. 47.4

per cent teachers with age range of 25-34 years fell in average level, followed by 26.3 per cent both in competent and incompetent levels. Among the teachers of 35-44 years age group, 58.3 per cent showed competent, followed by 36.1 per cent average and 2.8 per cent highly competent as well as incompetent levels. Among the teachers from 45-54 years age group, 47.4 per cent indicated average level, followed by 39.5 per cent competent, 7.9 per cent highly competent and only 5.3 per cent incompetent level of emotional competence. Lastly, with respect to above 55 years age group, 83.3 per cent of teachers were competent, while 16.7 per cent showed average emotional competence. The correlation coefficient between age and emotional competence of teachers was positive and highly significant (0.29) indicating that with the increase in age the emotional competence of the teachers also increased. The elder teachers handled the emotions competently compared to the younger teachers. The incompetence level was also observed upto 26.3 per cent among young teachers (25-34 years). Sridhar and Badiei (2007) reported that older teachers (41-50 years) had more emotional intelligence compared to the younger ones (below 30 years). Bansibihari et al. (2004) observed that emotional quotient can be developed and increased through learning and experience in life span of teachers, higher EQ is linked with higher age.

The relationship between work experience and emotional competence of teachers is shown in Table 7. Among the teachers possessing less than 10 years work experience, 42.1 per cent showed average competence, followed by 26.3 per cent both competent and incompetent lev-

Table 6: Relationship between age and emotional competence of teachers (N=105)

<i>Emotional competence</i>	<i>Age range (years)</i>				<i>'r' value</i>
	25-34 (n=19)	35-44 (n=36)	45-54 (n=38)	>55 (n=12)	
Incompetent	05(26.3)	01 (2.8)	02 (5.3)	-	0.290**
Average	09(47.4)	13(36.1)	18(47.4)	02(16.7)	
Competent	05(26.3)	21(58.3)	15(39.5)	10(83.3)	
Highly competent	-	01 (2.8)	03 (7.9)	-	

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentages, ** - Significant at 0.01 level

els and only 5.3 per cent highly competent level of emotional competence. 55.6 per cent of teachers having 11-20 years work experience showed competent level, 40 per cent average and only 4.4 per cent incompetent level. Among the teachers of 21-30 years work experience, 45.2 per cent indicated average as well as competent level, followed by 6.5 per cent and 3.2 per cent highly competent and incompetent levels respectively. Most of the teachers (70%) having more than 31 years work experience documented competent level, 20.0 per cent average and 10.0 per cent highly competent level of emotional competence. There was positive and highly significant relationship between work experience and emotional competence of the teachers (0.275) indicating that as the experience increased the emotional competence also increased. All the experienced teachers indicated more than average emotional competence. The percentage of teachers having incompetent level of emotional competence decreased considerably with increase in work experience (from 26% to 3%). This may be because of initial adjustment time required for less experienced teachers. As experience increases, the teachers learn to cope up with the school as well as familial problems. Bansibihari et al. (2004) reported that emotional intelligence developed and increased with the increase in experience of the teachers. The higher emotional quotient linked with higher job experience.

Correlation coefficient between types of stressors and components of emotional competence of teachers has been depicted in Table 8. The

relationship between physical and personal stressors and adequate depth of feeling, adequate expression and control of emotions, ability to function with emotions, ability to cope with problem emotions and encouragement of positive emotions as well as overall emotional competence was -0.302, -0.395, -0.347, -0.465, -0.177 and -0.431 respectively. These results indicated that there was significant negative relationship between physical and personal stressors and all components and overall emotional competence. Thus increase in emotional competence decreased physical and personal stressors of teachers.

Coefficient of correlation between occupational stressors and components as well as overall emotional competence was -0.241, -0.345, -0.333, -0.371, -0.195 and -0.379 respectively. This revealed that there was significant negative relationship between occupational stress and emotional competence of teachers, indicating that as the emotional competence increased the occupational stressors faced by them also reduced.

Coefficient of correlation between familial and social stressors and five components as well as overall emotional competence of teachers was -0.379, -0.256, -0.180, -0.393, -0.168 and -0.357 respectively. It was highlighted that there was significant negative relationship between familial and social factors and 3 components of emotional competence. It indicated that with increase in adequate depth of feeling, adequate expression and control of emotions and ability to cope

Table 7: Relationship between work experience and emotional competence of teachers (N=105)

<i>Emotional competence</i>	<i>Work experience (years)</i>				<i>'r' value</i>
	<10 (n=19)	11-20 (n=45)	21-30 (n=31)	>31 (n=10)	
Incompetent	05(26.3)	02(4.4)	01(3.2)	-	0.275**
Average	08(42.1)	18(40.0)	14(45.2)	02(20.0)	
Competent	05(26.3)	25(55.6)	14(45.2)	07(70.0)	
Highly competent	01(5.3)	-	02(6.5)	01(10.0)	

Figures in parenthesis indicate percentages, ** - Significant at 0.01 level

Table 8: Correlation coefficient between stress and emotional competence of teachers

Types of stressors	Components of emotional competence					Overall emotional competence
	ADF	AEC	AFE	ACPE	EPE	
Physical and personal	-0.302**	-0.395**	-0.347**	-0.465**	-0.177	-0.431**
Occupational	-0.241*	-0.345**	-0.333**	-0.371**	-0.195*	-0.379**
Familial and social	-0.379**	-0.256**	-0.180	-0.393**	-0.168	-0.357**
Psychological and emotional	-0.410**	-0.536**	-0.351**	-0.516**	-0.225*	-0.522**
Overall stress	-0.350**	-0.428**	-0.364**	-0.484**	-0.222*	-0.473**

* - Significant at 0.05 level

** - Significant at 0.01 level

ADF – Adequate depth of feeling

AEC – Adequate expression and control of emotions

AFE – Ability to function with emotions

ACPE – Ability to cope with problem emotions

EPE – Encouragement of positive emotions

with problem emotions the familial and social stressors reduced and vice versa.

Coefficient of correlation between psychological and emotional stressors and components as well as overall emotional competence was -0.410, -0.536, -0.351, -0.516, -0.225 and -0.522 respectively. There was significant negative relationship between psychological and emotional stressors and emotional competence, highlighting that higher emotional competence reduced the psychological and emotional stressors of teachers.

Correlation coefficient between overall stress and overall emotional competence along with its five components was -0.473, -0.350, -0.428, -0.364, -0.484 and -0.222 respectively, indicating negative and significant relationship. All the stressors were negatively and significantly related to the emotional competence of teachers. This indicated that with an increase in the adequate depth of feeling, expression and control of emotions, ability to function and cope with emotions and encouragement of positive emotions, the physical and personal, occupational, familial and social, and psychological and emotional stressors as well as the overall stress decreased significantly. Khan et al. (2006) reported that male and female teachers considered all coping strategies effective to cope with job strain, irrespective of type of coping (active or passive).

CONCLUSION

Most of the teachers indicated average to high levels of stress and majority of them showed average to competent level of emotional competence. Age and work experience were negatively and highly significantly related to stress

whereas education showed positive and highly significant relationship. The emotional competence of teachers showed positive and highly significant relationship with age and work experience. There was negative and highly significant relation between the stress and emotional competence of teachers. Thus increase in the emotional competence reduced the stress levels of teachers significantly.

RECOMMENDATIONS

There is a need to take up appropriate measures to reduce the stress among teachers. Most of the young teachers indicated heavy work load, clerical work, anxiety in maintaining good pass percentage, overcrowded classrooms, organizational pressure, lack of experience and authoritarian type of management as factors creating stress. Therefore there is a need to reduce the workload of teachers as well as to maintain proper teacher-pupil ratio in classrooms to reduce the stress faced. In general, stress management programme and encouragement of emotional competence is required for young women.

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