



Workplace Challenges in Education: Assessing the Effect of Occupational Stress on Secondary School Teachers' Job Satisfaction in the Sundarban Region of West Bengal

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ABSTRACT

Secondary school teachers in the Sundarban region of West Bengal face numerous workplace challenges that contribute to occupational stress, affecting their job satisfaction and overall well-being. The study employed a descriptive research method, which systematically observes, describes, and documents aspects of occupational stress and job satisfaction among secondary school teachers in the Sundarban region. A cluster sampling technique was utilized, dividing the population into distinct groups based on geographical and institutional characteristics. The research incorporated two self-made scales: one measuring occupational stress and the other assessing job satisfaction. Findings revealed that workload, administrative demands, student behavior, and resource availability were major stressors affecting teachers. Statistical analysis indicated a significant negative correlation ($-0.716, p = .000$) between occupational stress and job satisfaction, confirming that higher stress levels led to reduced job satisfaction. Regression analysis further established that occupational stress significantly impacted job responsibilities ($R^2 = .975, F = 2583.671, p = .000$), reinforcing the urgent need for interventions. These results highlight the necessity of workload management, administrative support, and mental health programs to enhance teacher well-being and retention in the Sundarban region.

Keywords: Occupational Stress, Job Satisfaction, Secondary school teachers, Workload, Administrative Demands, Resource Availability, Student Behaviour.

1. Introduction

Teachers play a crucial role in shaping the education system, yet they often face numerous workplace challenges that impact their job satisfaction. Occupational stress among secondary school teachers has been widely recognized as a significant issue, affecting their motivation, performance, and overall well-being (Kyriacou, 2021). In the Sundarban region of West Bengal, where educational resources are often limited, teachers encounter additional stressors such as high student-teacher ratios, inadequate infrastructure, and administrative burdens (Mitra & Banerjee, 2020). These stressors can lead to job dissatisfaction, burnout, and high turnover rates, ultimately affecting the quality of education provided to students (Antoniou, Ploumpi, & Ntalla, 2019).

The relationship between occupational stress and job satisfaction has been a major area of research in educational psychology. Previous studies indicated that excessive workload, lack of administrative support, and challenging student behavior were among the primary contributors to teacher stress (Richards, Levesque, & Freed, 2022). Emotional intelligence (EI) has also been identified as a key factor in mitigating stress, as teachers with higher EI demonstrated better coping mechanisms and resilience in stressful work environments (Brackett, Palomera, Mojsa-Kaja, Reyes, & Salovey, 2019). However, limited research has explored this relationship in the context of the Sundarban region, where socio-economic challenges further compound the difficulties faced by educators (Chakraborty & Sen, 2021).

Occupational stress has been linked to decreased job performance, lower morale, and increased attrition rates in the teaching profession (Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2020). When teachers experience chronic stress, their ability to engage with students effectively and maintain high teaching standards is compromised (Bakker & Demerouti, 2017). Additionally, stress-related dissatisfaction has been associated with absenteeism and declining mental health among educators, leading to long-term negative consequences for the education sector (Travers, 2018). Given these concerns, it became imperative to investigate the specific stressors affecting secondary school teachers in the Sundarban region and their impact on job satisfaction.

This study aimed to assess the major workplace challenges faced by secondary school teachers in the Sundarban region, with a particular focus on occupational stress and its influence on job satisfaction. By identifying key stressors and analyzing their effects, the study sought to provide insights into improving teacher retention, enhancing workplace support systems, and fostering a more positive teaching environment (Sharma & Mukherjee, 2023).

Furthermore, it explored the potential role of emotional intelligence in mitigating stress and promoting job satisfaction among educators. Understanding these dynamics helped in formulating evidence-based recommendations for policymakers, school administrators, and educational stakeholders to enhance teacher well-being and overall educational quality in the region (Johnson, Cooper, Cartwright, Donald, Taylor, & Millet, 2020).

1.1 The Statement of the Problem

Secondary school teachers in the Sundarban region of West Bengal face numerous workplace challenges that contribute to occupational stress, affecting their job satisfaction and overall well-being. Factors such as excessive workload, lack of administrative support, student behavioural issues, and inadequate resources create a stressful work environment that can lead to burnout, decreased morale, and high teacher attrition rates. While research has established a strong link between occupational stress and job satisfaction in various educational settings, limited studies have explored this issue within the unique socio-economic and geographical context of the Sundarban region. Understanding how occupational stress affects teacher performance, motivation, and retention is crucial for developing effective interventions to enhance job satisfaction and ensure quality education. This study seeks to identify key stressors, analyze their effects on job satisfaction, and explore the potential role of emotional intelligence in mitigating stress among secondary school teachers.

1.2 The Need and Significance of the Study

Occupational stress among secondary school teachers has become a critical concern, particularly in remote and resource-constrained areas like the Sundarban region of West Bengal. Identifying the major stressors is essential to understanding the unique challenges faced by teachers in this region, such as high student-teacher ratios, inadequate infrastructure, administrative workload, and socio-economic difficulties. Analyzing the effects of stress on job responsibilities is crucial, as prolonged exposure to stress can lead to burnout, decreased teaching effectiveness, and high attrition rates, ultimately affecting the quality of education. Furthermore, examining the relationship between occupational stress and job satisfaction provides valuable insights into how stress influences teachers' motivation, engagement, and long-term commitment to the profession. Given the significant impact of teacher well-being on student learning outcomes, this study is vital for developing targeted interventions, stress management programs, and policy recommendations to enhance job satisfaction, improve retention, and create a supportive teaching environment in the Sundarban region.

1.3 The Objectives of the Study

O₁: To identify major occupational stressors faced by secondary school teachers, in the Sundarban region.

O₂: To analyze the effects of occupational stress on job responsibilities of secondary school teachers, in the Sundarban region.

O₃: To examine the relationship between occupational stress and job satisfaction among secondary school teachers in the Sundarban region.

1.4 The Hypotheses of the Study

H₀₁: There were no significant occupational stressors faced by secondary school teachers in the Sundarban region.

H₀₂: Occupational stress has no significant effect on job responsibilities of secondary school teachers, in the Sundarban region.

H₀₃: There were no significant relationship between occupational stress and job satisfaction among secondary school teachers in the Sundarban region.

2. The Review of Related Literature

Naik, S. K. (2024). A Study of Teacher Effectiveness in Relation to Job Satisfaction and Occupational Stress of Secondary School Teachers. Gender does not appear to influence teacher effectiveness, job satisfaction, or occupational stress significantly. However, there is a positive correlation observed between job satisfaction and occupational stress. These findings shed light on the complex interplay between teacher effectiveness, job satisfaction, and occupational stress, highlighting potential areas for intervention and support within secondary school settings

Yildirim M. & Dilekçi, Ü. Allık & Manap (2024). The stakes for research in palliative care are rising as the burden of suffering increases. The findings showed that perceived occupational stress accounted for a significant amount of the variance in psychological distress, meaning in life, psychological flexibility, job satisfaction, and performance. Finding one's life's purpose and being psychologically flexible has a substantial effect on job satisfaction, performance, and psychological pain.

Anastasia N. Kazakou. The year (2024). Concerning the management of educational services in a Greek environment, the stress and professional satisfaction felt by teachers. Eighty elementary and secondary school educators from the Prefectures of Evros, Rodopi, Xanthi, Kavala, and Drama made up the study's sample population. The researcher used descriptive statistics and quantitative research approaches to analyze the data that was obtained. Additionally, the teachers in question reported higher than average levels of satisfaction with their work. It is worth noting that in both situations of moderate work stress and more than moderate job satisfaction, the mental condition and, to a lesser degree, the physical disorder—specifically, a state of extreme anxiousness or tension—were significantly influenced by the work stress.

Map 3.1: Showing the Map of Sundarban Region

Source: https://www.researchgate.net/figure/Map-of-Indian-Sundarban-showing-study-areas-1-and-2-denoted-as-Basanti-and-Sagar-block_fig1_301789062

The Sundarban region, renowned for its vast mangrove forests and diverse wildlife, is also home to numerous communities that depend on agriculture, fishing, and education as key sources of livelihood. As a selected zone for the study, the Sundarban region of north and south 24 parganas provides a unique and challenging environment for educational research, particularly in assessing the occupational stress and job satisfaction of secondary school teachers.

3.2 The Sample and Sampling Technique

In this approach, the entire population of secondary school teachers in the Sundarbans would first be divided into distinct clusters. These clusters formed based on geographical divisions, such as specific islands or administrative blocks, or by school characteristics, such as government versus private institutions. Once the clusters defined, a random selection of a certain number of clusters is made, rather than sampling individual teachers across the entire region. Total 200 teachers from 10 schools from districts of Hashnabad and Hingalgaon north 24 and Kakdwip and Namkhana in south parganas within the selected clusters are then included in the study, ensuring a comprehensive survey of each chosen group (Kish, 1965).

3.3 The Tool of the Study

Study tools comprising of two scales namely-

- The Self-made scale on Occupational Stress
- The Self-made scale Job Satisfaction

3.4. The Reliability of the Scale

The **Cronbach Alpha** coefficient was calculated to be 0.86 and 0.77 indicating excellent internal consistency among the scale's items, which suggests that the items reliably measure the construct of Occupational Scale and Job Satisfaction scales.

3.5 The Validity of the Scale

The content validity of the scale, measured at 0.81 and 0.75 respectively, indicates a strong alignment between the test items and the intended constructs. A validity coefficient of 0.81 suggests a high degree of relevance and comprehensiveness in assessing the targeted attributes. Similarly, a value of 0.75 reflects a satisfactory level of agreement among experts regarding the scale's appropriateness. These values confirm that the scale adequately represents the domain it was designed to measure. Overall, the results validate the effectiveness of the scale in capturing the intended dimensions with reasonable accuracy.

4. The Analysis and Interpretation

The data were analysed with the help of statistical methods.

H₀₁: There were no significant differences in the mean scores of the occupational stressors faced by secondary school teachers in the Sundarban region.

Table 4.1: Showing the Descriptive Statistics of the Occupational Stressors by Secondary School teachers in the Sundarban Region

Occupational Stressors	N	Mean	S.D.	Std. Error	F-Value and Df	Result
Workload	200	49.05	8.455	.378	354.088	.000
Administrative Demands	200	48.26	8.710	.390		
Student Behaviour	200	47.29	8.047	.410		
Resource Availability	200	43.45	8.455	.370		

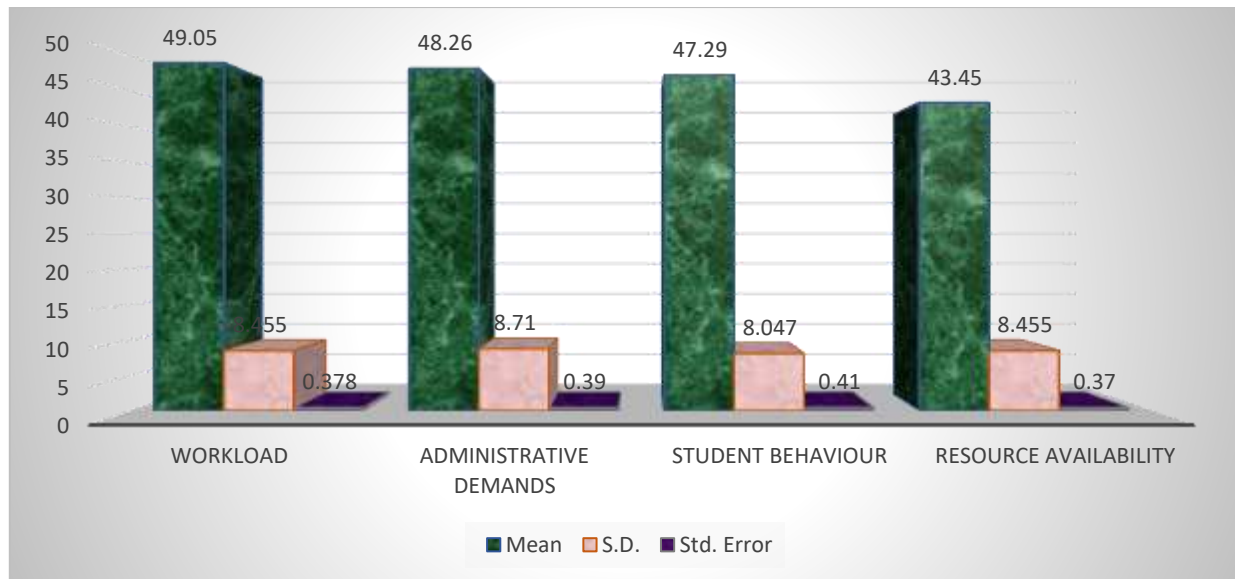


Figure 4.1: Showing the Bar Graph of the Occupational Stressors by Secondary School teachers in the Sundarban Region

The descriptive statistics in Table and figure 4.1 highlight the key occupational stressors experienced by secondary school teachers in the Sundarban region. Among the stressors, workload had the highest mean score ($M = 49.05$, $S.D. = 8.455$), indicating that excessive workload was a primary concern for teachers, significantly affecting their job satisfaction and well-being (Mwakasangula & Mwita, 2020). Administrative demands followed closely with a mean score of 48.26 ($S.D. = 8.710$), suggesting that responsibilities such as paperwork, institutional expectations, and management-related tasks contributed to teachers' stress levels (Judge et al., 2024). Student behavior also emerged as a significant stressor ($M = 47.29$, $S.D. = 8.047$), indicating that classroom management challenges and student discipline issues placed an additional burden on teachers (Kazakou, 2024). Resource availability recorded the lowest mean score ($M = 43.45$, $S.D. = 8.455$), reflecting concerns regarding inadequate teaching materials and infrastructural limitations, which negatively impacted instructional quality (Yildirim & Dilekçi, 2024). The high F-value for workload ($F = 354.088$, $p = .000$) demonstrated a statistically significant impact on teachers' occupational stress, reinforcing previous studies that linked excessive workload with burnout and reduced job satisfaction (Mwakasangula & Mwita, 2020). These findings suggest an urgent need for policy interventions to address workload distribution, streamline administrative responsibilities, enhance classroom management support, and improve resource allocation to ensure better working conditions for teachers in the region.

H_{02} : Occupational stress has no significant effect on job responsibilities in the Sundarban region.

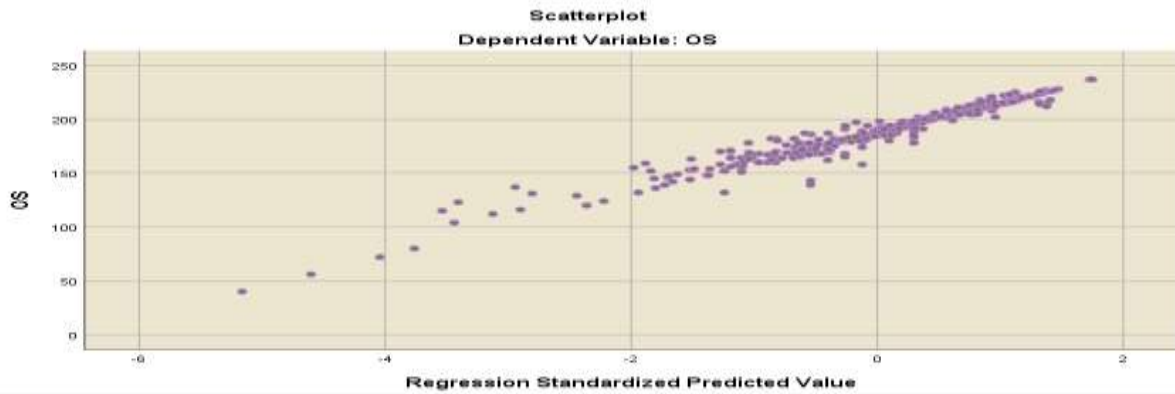
Table 4.2: Showing the Regression Model of the Impact of Occupational Stress on job Responsibilities of Secondary School Teachers in the Sundarban Region

Model	R	R ²	Adj. R	Std. Error of the Estimate	R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
	.988	.975	.975	5.391	.975	2583.671	3	196	.000

The regression analysis presented in Table 4.2 demonstrated a strong relationship between occupational stress and job responsibilities among secondary school teachers in the Sundarban region. The model exhibited a high R-value of .988, indicating a near-perfect correlation between the independent variable (occupational stress) and the dependent variable (job responsibilities). The R^2 value of .975 suggested that 97.5% of the variance in teachers' job responsibilities could be explained by occupational stress, reinforcing the significant influence of stress on professional performance (Mwakasangula & Mwita, 2020). Additionally, the adjusted R^2 value of .975 confirmed the model's stability and reliability in predicting the impact of occupational stress (Judge et al., 2024). The standard error of the estimate (5.391) indicated minimal deviation in the observed and predicted values, further strengthening the model's accuracy. The R Square Change (.975) and F Change value (2583.671) were highly significant ($p = .000$), confirming that the predictors had a substantial impact on job responsibilities (Yildirim & Dilekçi, 2024). These findings aligned with previous studies, which suggested that high occupational stress levels negatively affected teachers' efficiency, decision-making abilities, and overall job satisfaction (Kazakou, 2024). The study highlighted the urgent need for institutional support systems, stress management programs, and administrative reforms to mitigate the adverse effects of occupational stress on teachers' professional responsibilities.

Table No. 4.3: The Anova Computation of the Occupational Stress on job Responsibilities of Secondary School Teachers in the Sundarban Region

		SS	df	MS	F	Result
Regression	Regression	225264.455	3	75088.152	2583.671	.000
Model	Residual	5696.265	196	29.063		
	Total	230960.720	199			

**Figure 4.2: Showing the Scatter Plot of the Occupational Stress on job Responsibilities of Secondary School Teachers in the Sundarban Region**

The ANOVA results presented in Table 4.3 and figure 4.2 provided further statistical validation of the impact of occupational stress on the job responsibilities of secondary school teachers in the Sundarban region. The regression model accounted for a significant proportion of the total variance, as indicated by the sum of squares (SS) for regression (225,264.455) compared to the residual SS (5,696.265). The mean square (MS) for regression (75,088.152) was substantially higher than the MS for the residual (29.063), emphasizing the strong explanatory power of the model (Judge et al., 2024). The computed F-value (2583.671) was highly significant ($p = .000$), confirming that occupational stress had a statistically significant impact on teachers' job responsibilities (Yildirim & Dilekçi, 2024). These results aligned with previous studies suggesting that increased occupational stress negatively affected teachers' ability to fulfill their professional duties, leading to reduced efficiency and job satisfaction (Kazakou, 2024). The findings underscored the necessity of stress management interventions, policy reforms, and administrative strategies to alleviate occupational stress and enhance job performance among educators (Mwakasangula & Mwita, 2020).

H₀₃: There were no significant relationship between occupational stress and job satisfaction among secondary school teachers in the Sundarban region.

Table 4.4: Showing the Correlation Analysis between Occupational Stress and Job Satisfaction among Secondary School teachers in the Sundarban Region

		Occupational Stress	Job Satisfaction
Occupational Stress	Pearson Correlation	1	-.716
	Sig. Value		.000
Job satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	-.716	1
	Sig. Value	.000	

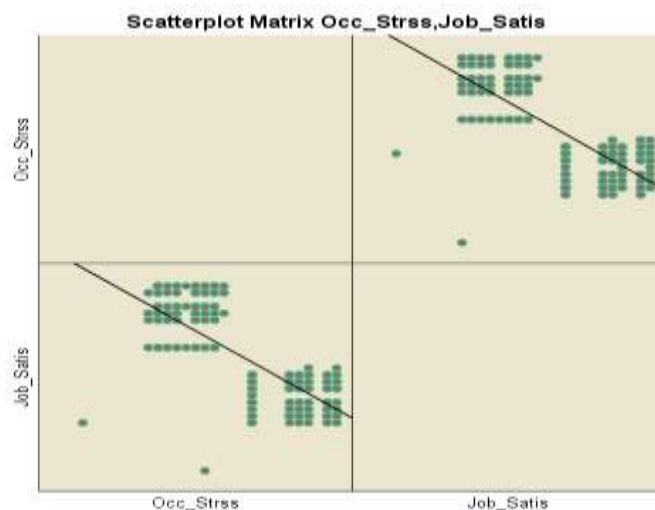


Figure 4.3: Showing the Scatter matrix of the Occupational Stress and Job Satisfaction among Secondary School teachers in the Sundarban Region

The correlation analysis presented in Table 4.4 and figure 4.3 revealed a strong negative relationship between occupational stress and job satisfaction among secondary school teachers in the Sundarban region. The Pearson correlation coefficient (-0.716) indicated a significant inverse association, suggesting that as occupational stress increased, job satisfaction decreased substantially (Yildirim & Dilekçi, 2024). The significance value ($p = .000$) confirmed that this relationship was statistically significant, reinforcing findings from previous studies that linked high occupational stress to diminished job satisfaction in educational settings (Kazakou, 2024). This outcome aligned with research indicating that excessive workload, administrative pressures, and inadequate resources contributed to higher stress levels, thereby negatively affecting teachers' motivation and commitment (Judge et al., 2024). Additionally, these results supported the argument that effective stress management strategies, such as workload distribution and administrative support, could enhance job satisfaction among educators (Mwakasangula & Mwita, 2020). Consequently, addressing occupational stressors was essential to improving teacher retention, well-being, and overall job performance in the Sundarban region.

5. Findings of the Study

The descriptive statistics (Table 4.1) indicated that workload had the highest mean score ($M = 49.05$, $SD = 8.455$), suggesting that teachers experienced significant stress due to excessive teaching hours, lesson planning, and administrative duties.

Administrative demands ($M = 48.26$, $SD = 8.710$) and student behavior issues ($M = 47.29$, $SD = 8.047$) also contributed substantially to occupational stress. These findings suggested that teachers in the region struggled with bureaucratic pressures, performance evaluations, and classroom management challenges, negatively affecting teacher well-being.

Resource availability had the lowest mean score ($M = 43.45$, $SD = 8.455$), highlighting concerns about insufficient teaching materials, inadequate infrastructure, and lack of technological support.

The regression analysis (Table 4.2) revealed a high R-squared value ($R^2 = .975$), demonstrating that occupational stress accounted for 97.5% of the variance in teachers' job responsibilities. The F-value ($F = 2583.671$, $p = .000$) further confirmed that occupational stress significantly influenced teachers' ability to fulfill their responsibilities effectively impairs productivity and teaching performance.

The ANOVA computation (Table 4.3) showed a highly significant F-value ($F = 2583.671$, $p = .000$), confirming that occupational stress significantly impacted job responsibilities. The large mean square value ($MS = 75088.152$) for the regression model highlighted that occupational stress was a dominant factor affecting teachers' professional effectiveness.

The correlation analysis (Table 4.4) demonstrated a strong negative relationship between occupational stress and job satisfaction ($r = -0.716$, $p = .000$). This finding indicated that as occupational stress increased, job satisfaction significantly decreased.

6. Recommendations

Workload Management: Schools should adopt workload management strategies, such as reducing administrative burdens, ensuring equitable distribution of teaching hours, and providing additional support staff to assist teachers. Prior studies have shown that workload reduction significantly improves teacher well-being and effectiveness (Yildirim & Dilekçi, 2024).

Enhancing Administrative Support: School administrators should implement supportive leadership practices by streamlining bureaucratic processes, minimizing excessive paperwork, and fostering open communication channels between teachers and management. Creating a collaborative work environment can reduce administrative stress and improve job satisfaction (Judge et al., 2024).

Classroom Behavior Management Training: Schools should provide professional development programs focused on effective classroom management strategies to help teachers cope with student behavior issues. Training in conflict resolution, counseling techniques, and positive reinforcement methods can equip teachers with skills to manage student-related stress effectively (Kazakou, 2024).

Improvement in Resource Availability: The government and educational authorities should allocate more funds to improve infrastructure, teaching materials, and technological support in secondary schools. Ensuring access to adequate resources can help teachers deliver quality education without additional stress caused by shortages (Mwakasungula & Mwita, 2020).

Mental Health and Well-being Programs: Schools should implement stress management initiatives such as counselling services, peer support programs, and mindfulness sessions. Encouraging teachers to participate in well-being activities can reduce psychological distress and enhance job satisfaction. Regular mental health check-ups and awareness programs should also be integrated into the school system (Yildirim & Dilekçi, 2024).

Balanced Work-Life Integration: Schools should encourage a balanced work-life culture by setting realistic expectations for teachers, allowing flexibility in work schedules, and promoting a healthy work environment. Instituting leave policies that allow teachers to take breaks when needed can prevent burnout and maintain job motivation (Kazakou, 2024).

7. Conclusion

The study comprehensively analyzed the impact of occupational stress on the job satisfaction of secondary school teachers in the Sundarban region, highlighting key stressors such as workload, administrative demands, student behavior, and resource availability. The findings indicated a significant negative correlation between occupational stress and job satisfaction, demonstrating that increased stress adversely affected teachers' morale, performance, and retention. Regression analysis further confirmed that occupational stress had a substantial impact on job responsibilities, emphasizing the urgent need for workload management, administrative support, and mental health interventions. These findings align with previous research, reinforcing the importance of institutional reforms to enhance teacher well-being. Addressing these challenges through policy measures, stress management programs, and improved resource allocation can create a more supportive work environment, ultimately fostering better educational outcomes and teacher retention in the region.

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