

## CAUSES OF WORK STRESS OF ACADEMICS IN HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS: AN EMPIRICAL STUDY

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### ABSTRACT

*The teacher is a very significant component, particularly in the educational system, and his pleasure can be quite helpful in attaining the educational system's aims. The teaching profession is often considered as a noble one, with parents placing great expectations on their children's education and growth. As a result, teachers in higher education institutions are expected to perform better. Faculty members have the primary role of preparing students for employment in a variety of fields. Only teachers who are stress-free at work and who are able to balance their professional and personal duties would be more satisfied in their jobs. When it comes to social welfare professions, it has been suggested that teachers are the ones who are most stressed. In light of this, the researcher studied the causes of work stress among academics in higher education institutions. A multi-stage sampling was employed to investigate causes of work stress among academics at higher education institutions in the Dharmapuri district. In the first stage, 25% of the institutions were chosen at random, including 7 arts and science colleges and 2 engineering colleges. At the final stage, 15 academics were chosen at random from each college. As a result, there are 135 academics and 9 colleges in the sample. The study is based on a survey method and is empirical in nature. A questionnaire was used to obtain primary data from 135 academics from nine higher education institutions. A questionnaire was developed using the Likert scale technique. The secondary data was gathered from journals, periodicals, books, and dissertations. According to this survey, teachers in higher education institutions have high levels of work stress. Teachers who are stressed are unable to generate balanced and holistic students who are prepared to meet the demands of the modern world. Therefore, it is suggested that individuals adopt particular coping skills to help them cope with stress. The most effective way to preventing work stress is often a combination of institutional change and stress treatment. It is critical to pay attention to the advice made in this study to lessen academic work stress in order to achieve a beneficial outcome.*

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**Keywords:** *Work Stress, Work Life Imbalance, Higher Education, Stress, Likert Scale.*

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### Introduction

Work is a major component of both individual and national development. Many adults devote half of their lives to work-related pursuits. With increased job expectations and individuals having to make the difficult decision to favour family over work, the modern work environment has become increasingly difficult. Globalization and privatization of education in various nations, including India, has caused higher education to become more competent in order to generate stakeholders with better knowledge, adaptability, skills, and competencies, all of which are necessary to survive in the global market. The Indian higher education system has seen tremendous transformations in terms of expansion, privatization, marketization, curricular reforms, and educational innovations in this environment. Higher education institutions have faced challenges in terms of quality education, teacher shortages, poor teaching methods, outdated curriculum and assessment systems, and a lack of teaching resources as a

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result of these developments. Furthermore, the growing importance of cutting-edge knowledge, skills, inventions, and research in economic growth and development, the emergence of the information society, and the need for quality education are putting further strain on higher education and, in particular, teachers. These factors, in turn, have an impact on the quality of higher education and cause stress among teachers, which negatively impacts their performance. Continuous stress causes strain, which causes the individual to burn out at work, which increases job dissatisfaction even more.

### **Concept of Work Stress**

Individuals may experience work-related stress as a result of job demands and pressures that are incompatible with their knowledge and talents. Work stress refers to stress that occurs in the workplace. Work stress is defined by French, et al. (1976) as "any feature of the job environment that poses a threat to the individual, either due to excessive demands or insufficient supply to meet his needs." Work-related stress is defined by the United States National Institute for Occupational Health and Safety in its 1999 publication "Stress at Work," as "adverse physical and emotional reactions that occur when work demands do not meet the worker's capabilities, resources, or requirements." Any pressure that surpasses an individual's ability to maintain physiological, psychological, and/or emotional stability is defined as stress.

### **Causes for Work Stress of Teachers**

The teacher is a very significant component, particularly in the educational system, and his pleasure can be quite helpful in attaining the educational system's aims. Teachers are important social agents that help students dream big, achieve their goals, and grow into responsible citizens. Teachers have an important role in the lives of children, but teaching has become increasingly stressful over time. Teaching has been recognized as one of the occupations associated with high to extremely high levels of work stress, which is unsurprising. Teaching is one of today's most stressful occupations. Teacher stress is defined as an unpleasant emotion experienced by a teacher as a result of some aspect of his or her profession as a teacher, such as tension, frustration, anger, or depression. A teacher's stress can be induced by a variety of external and internal reasons. Exogenous, or external to the individual, such as job demands and changes in workload or environment; and endogenous, or internal to the individual, such as the employee's physical and mental capacities and coping mechanisms. Institutional factors such as large mixed-capacity classes, a lack of student discipline and motivation, a lack of resources, overwork or uneven workload distribution, poor communication, high expectations, and inadequate rewards and recognition are examples of external causes. Chronic work stress is caused by factors such as the environment and organisational structure. It has an impact on teachers' stress levels in educational institutions. Economic uncertainty and technological change are two environmental stressors. A few institutions are fighting to survive in the present economic slump and fluctuating demand for programmes, which has produced survival issues for teachers inside the organisation. Multimodal education is becoming possible, curricula are evolving, and new types of online study and collaboration are emerging. As a result, teachers must adapt their talents to technological advances, or they will be forced to deal with unpleasant situations.

Organizational elements that create stress at work include task demands, role demands, and interpersonal demands. The need for tasks is related to the individual's work. Due to a layoff in the middle of the academic year, jobs become more demanding and need intense labour on the part of teachers; his work assignment is shifted to other faculty members who continue their work in the same place. As a result, teachers are put in a stressful predicament. Role demands refer to the pressures that are placed on a person based on their position in the institution. They are under pressure to meet upper management's expectations, trapping them in a stress cycle. The pressure put on him by his coworkers is known as interpersonal demand, especially when teachers have a strong desire for affiliation and teamwork but lack support from their peers. Poor interpersonal relationships can lead to stress at work in this scenario. One of the most significant sources of stress is a strained relationship with coworkers. Internal factors can include an aggressive, irritable, workaholic, negative attitude toward students, as well as unreasonable self-expectations. Teachers have financial difficulties as a result of individual issues such as dismissal, low pay, and a lack of promotion. Teachers must also work long hours and late into the night due to the workload. As a result, they struggle to strike a work-life balance and experience increased stress. Low self-esteem, a lack of in-service training opportunities, and a lack of access to fresh information and knowledge are the main sources of stress for teachers. Teachers deal with a variety of issues on a daily basis. Non-professional environmental factors that generate stress among teachers include family and personal issues, denigration of the profession by politicians and the media, and low public esteem. Teachers' effectiveness suffers as a result of their work stress.

### Statement of the Problem

People in India are becoming more conscious of the need of higher education, as well as the growing desires of young people for better job prospects. Most parents want a secure future for their children through better education. The teaching profession is often considered as a noble one, with parents placing great expectations on their children's education and growth. As a result, teachers in higher education institutions are expected to perform better. Keeping the rivalry in mind, management expects excellent performance from faculty members. Faculty members have the primary role of preparing students for employment in a variety of fields. Only teachers who are stress-free at work and who are able to balance their professional and personal duties would be more satisfied in their jobs. When it comes to social welfare professions, it has been suggested that teachers are the ones who are most stressed. Teachers in higher education institutions have a dual role; therefore, they should focus on managing social and family stressors as well as work-related stress in order to maintain their quality of life and health. Several teachers have been pushed into the heart of the frustration in this field of education as a result of increased demand for work, citing factors that cause stress such as inadequate wages, overwork, information problems arising from surrounding authorities, a lack of shared superior cognitive process, and unsatisfactory relationships with stakeholders as factors that cause stress. Teachers may struggle to understand crucial feelings of stress due to a lack of experience and training, low incomes, and difficult working conditions, which, when combined with the pressures inherent in the teaching profession, can make them less effective. In light of this, the researcher has tried to study the causes of work stress among academics in higher education institutions.

### Objectives of the Study

- To identify the causes of work stress of academics in higher education institutions in Dharmapuri district.
- To offer appropriate suggestions for reducing the level of work stress among academics at higher education institutions based on the results of the study.

### Hypothesis

The following null hypothesis was formulated and tested in order to examine academics' perceptions of causes of work stress in higher education institutions.  $H_{01}$ : Academics from various demographic groups have no significant relationship with the causes of work stress in higher education institutions.

### Sampling Design

As of December 31, 2020, Dharmapuri district has 26 arts and science colleges and 6 engineering colleges. A multi-stage sampling was employed to investigate causes of work stress among academics at higher education institutions in the Dharmapuri district. In the first stage, 25% of the institutions were chosen at random, including 7 arts and science colleges and 2 engineering colleges. At the final stage, 15 academics were chosen at random from each college. As a result, there are 135 academics and 9 colleges in the sample. The sampling distribution for this study is shown in Table 1.

**Table 1: Sampling Distribution**

S. No.	College	No. of Colleges in Operation	Samples	
			Colleges	Academics
1	Arts and Science College	26	7	105
2	Engineering College	6	2	35
	Total	31	9	135

### Methodology

The study is based on a survey method and is empirical in nature. A questionnaire was used to obtain primary data from 135 academics from nine higher education institutions. A questionnaire was developed using the Likert scale technique. In December 2020, a pilot study of the questionnaire was conducted with 25 academics to determine the relevance of the questions. The essential revisions were incorporated into the revised questionnaire as a result of the pilot study. The secondary data was gathered from journals, periodicals, books, and dissertations. Primary data was collected throughout a three-month period from January to March 2021 as part of the research. Student t test, analysis of one-way variance, coefficient of variation, multiple regression analysis, and percentage analysis were used to analyse the data.

## Analysis and Discussions

### Demographic Profile of Respondents

Table 2 presents academic demographics such as gender, age, education, designation, work experience, monthly salary, college category, type of college, nature of employment, marital status, family pattern, number of family members, and college affiliation.

**Table 2: Demographic Profile of Respondents**

Demographic Profile		No. of Respondents	Percentage
Gender	Male	104	77.04
	Female	31	22.96
Age (years)	Below 30	11	08.15
	31-40	36	26.67
	41-50	62	45.93
	Above 50	26	19.26
Education	PG	18	13.33
	M.Phil	81	60.00
	Ph.D.	36	26.67
Designation	Assistant professor	112	82.96
	Associate professor	16	11.85
	Professor	7	05.19
Work experience (years)	Below 5	20	14.81
	6 - 10	34	25.19
	11-15	65	48.15
	Above 15	16	11.85
Monthly salary (Rs.)	Below 20000	57	42.22
	20001-40000	32	23.70
	40001-60000	6	04.44
	Above 60000	40	29.63
College category	Arts and science college	105	77.78
	Engineering college	30	22.22
Type of college	Self-financing college	105	77.78
	Government college	30	22.22
Nature of employment	Temporary	105	77.78
	Permanent	30	22.22
Marital status	Married	114	84.44
	Unmarried	21	15.56
Family pattern	Nuclear family	107	79.26
	Joint family	28	20.74
No. of family members	Upto 3	79	58.52
	4 and 5	35	25.93
	6 and above	21	15.56
Area of residence	Rural	112	82.97
	Urban	23	17.04
College belonging to	Sri Vijay Vidyalaya	15	11.11
	Jayam Arts and Science	15	11.11
	Kamadhenu College	15	11.11
	Sri Arunachalaa College	15	11.11
	Morappur Kongu	15	11.11
	Jayalakshmi Institute of Tech.	15	11.11
	VVIT	15	11.11
	Govt. Arts College, Dharmapuri	15	11.11
Govt. Arts College, Harur	15	11.11	

Source: Primary Data.

Male made up 77.04 percent of the 135 respondents, while female made up 22.96 percent. It is obvious that 8.15 percent of those surveyed are under the age of 30, 26.67 percent are between the ages of 31 and 40, and 45.93 percent are over 50. A total of 135 people responded, with 13.33 percent having a postgraduate degree, 60 percent having an M.Phil degree, and 26.67 percent having a Ph.D. Assistant professors account for 82.96 percent of the respondents, associate professors for 11.85 percent, and professors for 5.19 percent. 14.81 percent of respondents have no more than 5 years of teaching experience, 25.19 percent have 6 to 10 years of teaching experience, and 48.15 percent have 11 to 15 years of teaching experience. Over 15 years of experience is represented by 11.85% of respondents. The majority of respondents (42.22 percent) earn less than Rs. 20000 per month, while 23.70 percent earn between Rs. 20000 and Rs. 40000 per month. 4.44 percent and 29.63 percent of respondents, respectively, had a monthly salary of Rs.40001-60000 and more than Rs. 60000. 77.78 percent of the 135 respondents work in arts and science colleges, while 22.22 percent work in engineering colleges. Self-financing colleges employ 77.78 percent of respondents, while government colleges employ 22.22 percent. In terms of nature of employment, 77.78 percent of respondents work as temporary teachers, while 22.22 percent work as permanent teachers. A total of 84.44 percent of respondents are married, while 15.56 percent are unmarried. The majority of respondents (79.26 percent) belong to a nuclear family, while 20.74 percent belong to a joint family. There are 58.52 percent who have up to three family members, 25.93 percent who have four to five family members, and 15.56 percent who have six or more family members. In terms of place of residence, 82.97 percent of teachers were from rural areas, while 17.04 percent of respondents were from urban areas. Sri Vijay Vidyalaya College of Arts and Science, Jayam Arts and Science, Kamadhenu College of Arts and Science, Sri Arunachalaa College of Arts and Science, Morappur Kongu Arts and Science College, Jayalakshmi Institute of Technology, Varuvan Vadivelan Institute of Technology, Government Arts College, Dharmapuri, and Government Arts College, Harur were selected for this study. A total of 15 teachers were chosen from each college.

#### Perceptions of Academics on the Causes of Work Stress

The researcher set out to investigate the perspectives of academics from various demographic groups on the causes of work stress among teachers at select higher education institutions in the Dharmapuri district.

**Table 3: Relationship between Demographics of Academics and Causes of Work Stress: Student t-Test**

Demographics of Academics	Calculated Vale	Table Value	DF	Result
Gender	1.449	1.978	133	Ns
College category	0.123	1.978	133	Ns
Type of college	1.711	1.978	133	Ns
Nature of employment	1.711	1.978	133	Ns
Marital status	0.951	1.978	133	Ns
Family pattern	2.498	1.978	133	*
Area of residence	0.742	1.978	133	Ns

Source: Primary Data.

Ns Not Significant \* Significant at 5% Level

At the 5% level of significance, the calculated t value for gender is (1.449) smaller than the table value (1.978). Hence, there is no significant difference in the causes of work stress between male and female teachers. At 5% significance level, the calculated t value for the college category is (0.123) less than the value in the table (1.978). Thus, there is no significant difference in the causes of work stress between teachers in arts and science colleges and teachers in engineering colleges. At the 5% level of significance, the calculated t value for college type is (1.711) smaller than the table value (1.978). So, there is no significant difference in the causes of work stress between self-financing college teachers and government college teachers. At 5% significance level, the calculated t value (1.711) is less than the table value (1.978). There is no significant difference in the causes of work stress between temporary and permanent teachers. At the 5% level of significance, the calculated t value for marital status is (0.951) smaller than the table value (1.978). Hence, there is no significant difference between married and unmarried teachers when it comes to the causes of work stress. At the 5% level of significance, the calculated t value for the area of residence is (0.742) smaller than the table value (1.978). Hence, there is no significant difference in the causes of work stress among teachers from rural and urban locations. Therefore, the null hypothesis ( $H_{01}$ ) that there is no significant relationship between the causes of work

stress and academics from various demographic categories (gender, college category, type of college, nature of employment, marital status, and place of residence) is accepted. The calculated t value, on the other hand, is (2.498) larger than the table value (1.978) at the 5% significance level. Hence, there is a significant difference between nuclear and joint family teachers when it comes to the causes of work stress. Therefore, the null hypothesis ( $H_{01}$ ) is rejected.

**Table 4: Relationship between Demographics of Academics and Causes of Work Stress: F Test**

	Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	DF	Mean Square	F	Result
Age	Between groups	343.180	3	114.393	0.511	Ns
	Within groups	29334.702	131	223.929		
	Total	29677.881	134			
Education	Between groups	39.131	2	19.566	0.087	Ns
	Within groups	29638.750	132	224.536		
	Total	29677.881	134			
Designation	Between groups	11.024	2	5.512	0.025	Ns
	Within groups	29666.857	132	224.749		
	Total	29677.881	134			
Work Experience	Between groups	994.520	3	331.507	1.514	Ns
	Within groups	28683.361	131	218.957		
	Total	29677.881	134			
Monthly salary	Between groups	600.257	3	200.086	0.901	Ns
	Within groups	29077.624	131	221.967		
	Total	29677.881	134			
College Belongs to	Between groups	2522.131	8	315.266	1.463	Ns
	Within groups	27155.750	126	215.522		
	Total	29677.881	134			

At the 5% level of significance, the calculated F value for age is (0.511) smaller than the table value (2.674). Hence, there is no significant relationship between academics of various ages and the causes of work stress. At the 5% significance level, the calculated F value for education is (0.087) less than the table value (3.065). Therefore, there is no significant relationship between education and the causes of work stress. At 5% significance level, the calculated F value is (0.025) smaller than the table value (3.065) in the instance of designation. Hence, there is no significant relationship between academics of various designations and the causes of work stress. At 5% significance level, the calculated F value is (1.514) smaller than the table value (2.674). Hence, there is no significant relationship between academics with varied experience and the causes of workplace stress. At 5% significance level, the calculated F value (0.901) is less than the table value (2.674) in the case of monthly salary. Thus, there is no significant relationship between academics from various pay categories and the causes of work stress. At a 5% level of significance, the calculated F value (1.463) is less than the table value (2.013) in the case of the college. Therefore, there is no significant relationship between the causes of work stress and teachers from various colleges. Thus, the null hypothesis ( $H_{01}$ ) that there is no significant relationship between the causes of work stress and academics belonging to various demographic categories (age, education, designation, work experience, monthly salary, and college affiliation) is accepted.

**Table 5: Consistency in the Level of Respondents' Acceptance of the Causes of Work Stress**

Personal Variables		No. of Respondents	Mean	Standard Deviation	CV
Gender	Male	104	103.96	15.53	14.94
	Female	31	108.35	12.09	11.16
	Total	135	104.97	14.88	14.18
Age (years)	Below 30	11	101.09	13.87	13.72
	31-40	36	105.67	12.59	11.91
	41-50	62	104.31	17.26	16.55
	Above 50	26	107.23	12.15	11.33
	Total	135	104.97	14.88	14.18

Education	PG	18	103.78	16.46	15.86
	M.Phil	81	104.96	14.72	14.02
	Ph.D.	36	105.58	14.83	14.05
	Total	135	104.97	14.88	14.18
Designation	Assistant professor	112	104.94	14.69	14.00
	Associate professor	16	104.69	18.49	17.66
	Professor	7	106.14	9.96	9.38
	Total	135	104.97	14.88	14.18
Work experience (years)	Below 5	20	100.65	13.00	12.92
	6 - 10	34	102.91	16.76	16.29
	11-15	65	107.63	14.41	13.39
	Above 15	16	103.94	13.91	13.38
	Total	135	104.97	14.88	14.18
Monthly salary (Rs.)	Below 20000	57	107.32	16.69	15.55
	20001-40000	32	103.69	14.89	14.36
	40001-60000	6	100.33	12.94	12.90
	Above 60000	40	103.35	12.17	11.78
	Total	135	104.97	14.88	14.18
College category	Arts and science college	105	104.89	14.66	13.98
	Engineering college	30	105.27	15.89	15.09
	Total	135	104.97	14.88	14.18
Type of college	Self-financing college	105	106.13	15.31	14.43
	Government college	30	100.90	12.66	12.55
	Total	135	104.97	14.88	14.18
Nature of employment	Temporary	105	106.13	15.31	14.43
	Permanent	30	100.90	12.66	12.55
	Total	135	104.97	14.88	14.18
Marital status	Married	114	104.45	14.69	14.06
	Unmarried	21	107.81	15.95	14.79
	Total	135	104.97	14.88	14.18
Family pattern	Nuclear family	107	103.36	14.49	14.02
	Joint family	28	111.11	15.03	13.53
	Total	135	104.97	14.88	14.18
Area of residence	Rural	112	105.40	15.32	14.54
	Urban	23	102.87	12.61	12.26
	Total	135	104.97	14.88	14.18
College belongs to	Sri Vijay Vidyalaya	15	113.00	15.58	13.79
	Jayam Arts and Science	15	102.20	17.76	17.38
	Kamadhenu College	15	105.80	15.53	14.68
	Sri Arunachalaa College	15	108.85	12.18	11.19
	Morappur Kongu	15	107.13	16.21	15.13
	Jayalakshmi Tech	15	103.27	14.35	13.90
	VVIT	15	101.40	13.63	13.44
	Govt. Arts College, Dharmapuri	15	102.53	12.34	12.04
	Govt. Arts College, Harur	15	96.40	14.36	14.90
Total	135	104.97	14.88	14.18	

Source: Primary Data.

According to the results of the aforementioned analysis, female teachers had the highest mean score (108.35), followed by male teachers (103.96). This indicates that female teachers are more accepting of the causes of work stress. Academics over 50 have the highest mean score (107.23), followed by those between the ages of 31 and 40 (105.67). Academics under the age of 30 have a low mean score (101.09). Hence, academics over 50 are more accepting of the causes of work stress. Doctorates have the highest average score (105.58), followed by academics with an M.Phil (104.96). Academics with a PG qualification have a low mean score (103.78). Therefore, academics with a Ph.D.

have a higher acceptance of the causes of work stress. Professors had the highest mean score (106.16), followed by assistant professors (104.94). Associate professors have a low average score (104.69). Hence, professors are more accepting of the causes of work stress. Teachers with 11 to 15 years of experience had the highest mean score (107.63), followed by teachers with more than 15 years of experience (103.94). Teachers with less than 5 years of experience have a low mean score (100.65). Thus, teachers with 11 to 15 years of experience accept the causes of work stress. Teachers earning less than Rs. 20000 had the highest mean score (107.32), followed by teachers earning more than Rs. 60000 (103.35). Teachers who earn a salary of Rs. 40001-60000 have a low mean score (100.33). Hence, teachers earning less than Rs. 20000 per month have a higher level of acceptance of the causes of work stress.

Teachers in engineering colleges have the highest mean score (105.27), followed by teachers in arts and science colleges (104.89). It means that engineering college teachers are more accepting of the causes of work stress. Teachers in self-financing colleges have the highest mean score (106.13), followed by teachers in government colleges (100.90). Therefore, teachers at self-financing colleges are more accepting of the causes of work stress. Temporary teachers have the highest mean score (106.13), followed by permanent teachers (100.90). Hence, temporary teachers are more accepting of the causes of work stress. Unmarried teachers have the highest mean score (107.81), followed by married teachers (104.45). Therefore, unmarried teachers are more accepting of the causes of work stress. Joint family teachers have the highest mean score (111.11), followed by nuclear family teachers (103.36). Therefore, joint family teachers are more accepting of the causes of work stress. Teachers from rural areas have the highest mean score (105.40), followed by teachers from urban areas (102.87). Therefore, teachers who work in rural areas are more accepting of the causes of work stress. Teachers from Sri Vijay Vidyalaya College of Arts and Science had the highest mean score (113), followed by teachers from Sri Arunachalaa College of Arts and Science (108.85). Teachers at Government Arts College, Harur, have a low mean score (96.40). Hence, teachers at Sri Vijay Vidyalaya College of Arts and Science accept the causes of work stress more readily. There is consistency in the level of acceptance of female teachers (11.16 percent), academics over 50 years old (11.33 percent), academics with an M. Phil qualification (14.02 percent), professors (9.38 percent), academics with less than 5 years of experience (12.92 percent), teachers with a monthly salary of more than Rs. 60000 (11.78 percent), teachers of arts and science colleges (13.98 percent), teachers from government colleges (12.55 percent), permanent teachers (12.55 percent), married teachers (14.06 percent), teachers from a joint family (13.53 percent), teachers from urban areas (12.26 percent), and teachers from Sri Arunachalaa College of Arts and Science (11.19 percent) for causes of work stress in higher education institutions.

**Table 6: Effect of Academic Demographics on the Causes of Work Stress**

Personal Variables	Regression Coefficients (B)	Std. Error	t	Result
(Constant)	95.793	12.119	-	-
Gender	2.984	3.157	0.945	Ns
Age	0.431	1.543	0.279	Ns
Education	0.861	1.787	0.482	Ns
Designation	0.375	2.487	0.151	Ns
Work experience	1.341	1.517	0.884	Ns
Monthly salary	-1.625	1.440	-1.129	Ns
College category	-0.771	3.237	-0.238	Ns
Nature of employment	-5.838	3.203	-1.823	Ns
Marital status	2.765	3.730	0.741	Ns
Family pattern	7.043	3.283	2.145	*
Area of residence	-1.831	3.432	-0.534	Ns

Source: Primary Data.

Ns Not Significant \* Significant at 5% Level

**Multiple Correlation Coefficients between Academic Demographics and the Causes of Work Stress**

R	R Square	F	Result
0.332	0.110	1.386	Not significant

The causes of work stress and the demographics of the selected academics have a low correlation (0.332). The R-square found that the demographics of academics jointly explained 11% of the variation in the causes of work stress. The multiple correlation coefficients are not significant, as indicated



by the value of F. Gender, age, education, designation, work experience, monthly salary, college category, nature of employment, marital status, and place of residence have no effect on the causes of work stress. Academics' family patterns, on the other hand, have a considerable impact on the causes of work stress at higher education institutions.

**Table 7: Level of Respondents' Acceptance of the Causes of Work Stress**

Causes	Level of Acceptance					Total	Mean Score
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree		
Excessive workload	47 (34.81)	21 (15.56)	18 (13.33)	38 (28.15)	11 (8.15)	135 (100.00)	3.41
Poor working conditions	34 (25.19)	27 (20.00)	17 (12.59)	37 (27.41)	20 (14.81)	135 (100.00)	3.13
Having to work more at home	40 (29.63)	19 (14.07)	22 (16.30)	35 (25.93)	19 (14.07)	135 (100.00)	3.19
Lack of sufficient support staff	37 (27.41)	19 (14.07)	7 (5.19)	51 (37.78)	21 (15.56)	135 (100.00)	3.00
Lack of educational accessories	48 (35.56)	25 (18.52)	13 (9.63)	35 (25.93)	14 (10.37)	135 (100.00)	3.43
Physical exhaustion from extra work	53 (39.26)	19 (14.07)	18 (13.33)	28 (20.74)	17 (12.59)	135 (100.00)	3.47
Poorly organized weekly schedule	33 (24.44)	50 (37.04)	11 (8.15)	27 (20.00)	14 (10.37)	135 (100.00)	3.45
No rewards for extra work	44 (32.59)	22 (16.30)	17 (12.59)	21 (15.56)	31 (22.96)	135 (100.00)	3.20
Low status of teachers	54 (40.00)	35 (25.93)	5 (3.70)	13 (9.63)	28 (20.74)	135 (100.00)	3.55
Role ambiguity	46 (34.07)	43 (31.85)	21 (15.56)	7 (5.19)	18 (13.33)	135 (100.00)	3.68
Work pressure in the workplace	51 (37.77)	47 (34.81)	27 (20.00)	8 (5.93)	2 (1.48)	135 (100.00)	4.01
Difficulty dealing with colleagues	47 (34.81)	29 (21.48)	22 (16.30)	11 (8.15)	26 (19.26)	135 (100.00)	3.44
Lack of respect from others	41 (30.37)	35 (25.93)	20 (14.81)	10 (7.41)	29 (21.48)	135 (100.00)	3.36
Job insecurity	49 (36.30)	33 (24.44)	15 (11.11)	9 (6.67)	29 (21.48)	135 (100.00)	3.47
Family issues	48 (35.56)	38 (28.15)	16 (11.85)	11 (8.15)	22 (16.30)	135 (100.00)	3.59
Unruly students	48 (35.56)	28 (20.74)	18 (13.33)	10 (7.41)	31 (22.96)	135 (100.00)	3.39
Poor relationship with colleagues	43 (31.85)	36 (26.67)	26 (19.26)	10 (7.41)	20 (14.81)	135 (100.00)	3.53
Too much administrative work	44 (32.59)	30 (22.22)	23 (17.04)	13 (9.63)	25 (18.52)	135 (100.00)	3.41
Inadequate salary	40 (29.63)	62 (45.93)	13 (9.63)	14 (10.37)	6 (4.44)	135 (100.00)	3.86
Ineffective leadership	43 (31.85)	54 (40.00)	17 (12.59)	15 (11.11)	6 (4.44)	135 (100.00)	3.84
Lack of motivation	50 (37.04)	39 (28.89)	24 (17.78)	9 (6.67)	13 (9.63)	135 (100.00)	3.77
Lack of opportunities for personal growth	38 (28.15)	61 (45.19)	17 (12.59)	10 (7.41)	9 (6.67)	135 (100.00)	3.81
Work-home conflicts	38 (28.15)	51 (37.77)	6 (4.44)	28 (20.74)	12 (8.89)	135 (100.00)	3.56
Sub-optimal work performance	31 (22.96)	71 (52.59)	10 (7.41)	13 (9.63)	10 (7.41)	135 (100.00)	3.74

Excessive working hours	28 (20.74)	71 (52.59)	17 (12.59)	7 (5.19)	12 (8.89)	135 (100.00)	3.71
Bullying at work	37 (27.41)	51 (37.77)	14 (10.37)	12 (8.89)	21 (15.56)	135 (100.00)	3.53
Poor communication	30 (22.22)	22 (16.30)	33 (24.44)	29 (21.48)	21 (15.56)	135 (100.00)	3.08
Lack of freedom	22 (16.30)	55 (40.74)	27 (20.00)	19 (14.07)	12 (8.89)	135 (100.00)	3.41
Curriculum and course changes	49 (36.30)	9 (6.67)	45 (33.33)	8 (5.93)	24 (17.78)	135 (100.00)	3.38
Disparity in rewards and recognition	50 (37.04)	21 (15.56)	38 (28.15)	8 (5.93)	18 (13.33)	135 (100.00)	3.57
Total	42 (31.11)	38 (28.15)	19 (14.07)	18 (13.33)	18 (13.33)	135 (100.00)	3.50

Source: Primary Data.

The majority of respondents strongly agree (31.11 percent), agree (28.15 percent), and neither agree nor disagree with the causes of work stress (14.07 percent). The causes of work stress are disagreed upon by 13.33 percent of respondents and strongly disagreed upon by 13.33 percent of respondents. Academics had a greater level of acceptance (4.01) of workplace job pressure, followed by inadequate salary (3.86), ineffective leadership (3.84), lack of opportunities for personal growth (3.81), and lack of motivation (3.77). Respondents show a low degree of acceptance of a lack of sufficient support staff (3.00), poor communication (3.08), and poor working conditions (3.13).

### Suggestions

- Academics' workloads should be decreased, and additional responsibilities should be explicitly stated to avoid organisational role conflicts. Teachers in self-financing colleges are overworked as a result of heavy administrative responsibilities in addition to teaching. Therefore, management must plan and reform the system, as well as enhance the work schedule. These issues can be addressed by simplifying the workload.
- Higher education institutions should organise and encourage teachers to attend seminars and trainings where new and beneficial ways for reducing work stress will be introduced. Higher education institutions should hold stress management workshops for teachers in order to improve their mental health. In addition, to promote healthy interpersonal relationships, seminars and workshops for team building and conflict resolution should be held.
- A permanent councilor seat should be made accessible to teachers in order to assist them in living better and healthier lives. Thus, higher education institutions can provide advice to teachers in order to lessen their stress and assist them in balancing their professional and personal obligations. Further, experienced teachers can mentor and assist their junior colleagues in completing assigned tasks while maintaining a pleasant working environment.
- Support staff can be hired at the department level to help with documents for NAAC, NIRF, AISHE, and other accreditations. Academics' stress levels will be decreased as a result, and they will have more time to spend with family members or to fulfill family commitments.
- Higher education institutions should assign a suitable number of faculty members in accordance with criteria so that they do not have to deal with an excessive workload, which reduces stress and allows them to spend more time with their families.
- When academics need to work long hours, free transportation can be provided, which can assist reduce the burden of arriving home late. The class's strength should be reduced. This ensures that academics keep complete control of the classroom and give each student their undivided attention.
- Academic stress at work can be reduced by taking advantage of career development opportunities. Staff should be encouraged to be productive by providing training programmes on new technology and educational challenges, offering study leave and financial support for career progression, and ensuring employment security, especially in self-financing colleges.
- Staff members should be involved in the decision-making process by higher education management and heads of departments. Further, rather than being powerful, higher education administrators should be supportive and facilitating.

### Conclusion

Stress is a personal experience that can vary greatly even within the same situation due to a variety of factors. Workstress can signify a variety of things to different people. Long hours at work, anxieties about job security, and too much responsibility are all significant sources of stress for some people. With a sample of 135 teachers from 9 colleges in Dharmapuri district, the current study looked into causes of work stress among teachers. According to this survey, teachers in higher education institutions have high levels of work stress. Teachers who are stressed are unable to generate balanced and holistic students who are prepared to meet the demands of the modern world. Therefore, it is suggested that individuals adopt particular coping skills to help them cope with stress. The most effective way to preventing work stress is often a combination of institutional change and stress treatment. It is critical to pay attention to the advice made in this study to lessen academic work stress in order to achieve a beneficial outcome.

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