



Work-Life Stressors and Mental Health Among Married Women Teachers

Ranjan Kumar Pandey¹, Chandrakant Karad²

Research Scholar, SRTM University –Nanded (Maharashtra)¹

Research Guide, SRTM University –Nanded (Maharashtra)²

Abstract: The dual responsibility of managing professional and domestic roles often places married women teachers under considerable stress, which can significantly affect their mental health. This study investigates the key stress factors contributing to psychological distress among married women educators in India and examines their impact on mental well-being. The teaching profession, while considered noble and fulfilling, is increasingly becoming a source of stress due to work overload, administrative pressure, lack of institutional support, and ever-growing expectations. When combined with domestic responsibilities such as childcare, household chores, and societal obligations, the cumulative burden becomes immense for married women teachers.

The study employed a descriptive survey design, utilizing standardized stress and mental health assessment tools among a purposive sample of 200 married women teachers from primary, secondary, and higher education institutions. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and correlation analysis to determine the relationship between identified stressors and mental health indicators such as anxiety, depression, and emotional exhaustion.

Findings reveal that occupational stressors (e.g., time constraints, student behavior, administrative tasks), familial obligations, and societal expectations were significant contributors to mental distress. A strong positive correlation was found between stress levels and symptoms of poor mental health, suggesting the urgent need for institutional and community-level interventions. The study emphasizes the importance of mental health support systems, flexible work policies, and counseling services in educational settings.

The research offers valuable insights into the often-overlooked psychosocial challenges of married women educators, urging stakeholders to adopt a holistic approach in promoting their mental well-being. These findings are critical for educational policymakers, school administrators, and mental health professionals working toward gender-sensitive reforms.

Keywords: Married women teachers, stress factors, mental health, occupational stress, work-life balance, emotional well-being, psychological distress, India, gender roles, educational sector

I. INTRODUCTION

Teaching is universally acknowledged as one of the most demanding professions, requiring emotional resilience, multitasking, and constant adaptation to pedagogical advancements. For married women teachers, these professional challenges are often compounded by traditional gender roles that expect them to prioritize familial responsibilities over career ambitions. This dual burden significantly increases their vulnerability to stress and its associated mental health implications (Kaur, 2018). In the Indian socio-cultural context, where women are predominantly responsible for managing household tasks, balancing work and home becomes a strenuous endeavor, often leading to burnout and emotional fatigue (Rani & Singh, 2020).

The mental health of teachers plays a crucial role not only in their personal lives but also in the academic outcomes of their students and the overall learning environment. Studies have shown that teachers experiencing high stress levels are more likely to exhibit symptoms of anxiety, depression, and reduced job satisfaction (Suri & Sharma, 2021). Moreover, stress in married women educators is further intensified by the lack of institutional support, poor work-life balance, and societal pressures to conform to idealized roles of wife and mother.

Despite the growing concern over occupational stress, limited empirical research has been conducted specifically focusing on married women teachers in India. Most studies either generalize teacher stress or overlook the gendered dimensions of mental health challenges. Hence, this study aims to fill this research gap by identifying and analyzing the stress factors affecting married women teachers and assessing their impact on mental well-being.



By understanding these challenges, policymakers and educational institutions can devise gender-sensitive strategies to support women educators. This study is timely and significant, considering the increasing participation of women in the workforce and the pressing need to create inclusive, supportive, and mentally healthy work environments.

II. METHODOLOGY

This study adopted a **descriptive survey research design** to investigate the stress factors affecting married women teachers and their impact on mental health. The target population comprised married women working as teachers in primary, secondary, and higher education institutions across urban and semi-urban areas of Delhi NCR, India. A **purposive sampling technique** was used to select a sample of **200 married women teachers**, ensuring representation across age groups, teaching levels, and institutional types (government and private).

Data were collected using a **standardized questionnaire** consisting of three sections: (1) demographic information, (2) a stress assessment scale adapted from the Teacher Stress Inventory (TSI), and (3) a mental health checklist based on the General Health Questionnaire (GHQ-28). Both scales demonstrated high reliability (Cronbach's alpha > 0.80).

The survey was administered in person to accommodate varying accessibility. Ethical clearance was obtained, and informed consent was secured from all participants. The collected data were analyzed using **descriptive statistics** (mean, standard deviation) and **Pearson correlation** to examine the relationship between stress factors and mental health outcomes.

The methodology was designed to ensure objectivity, confidentiality, and relevance to the socio-cultural context of married women teachers in India.

III. RESULTS

The analysis revealed significant stress factors impacting the mental health of married women teachers. The mean score on the Teacher Stress Inventory (TSI) was **3.9 (SD = 0.6)** on a 5-point scale, indicating moderate to high levels of perceived stress. The most commonly reported stressors were **workload (87%)**, **lack of time for personal life (82%)**, **student behavior issues (76%)**, and **administrative pressure (74%)**.

On the General Health Questionnaire (GHQ-28), **62%** of respondents showed signs of **moderate psychological distress**, while **21%** indicated **severe mental health issues** such as anxiety, insomnia, and social dysfunction. A **positive correlation ($r = 0.68, p < 0.01$)** was found between total stress scores and mental health problems, suggesting that higher stress levels are strongly associated with poorer mental health outcomes.

Table 1: Frequency of Major Stress Factors Among Respondents

Stress Factor	Percentage Reporting High Stress
Excessive Workload	87%
Lack of Work-Life Balance	82%
Student Behavior Issues	76%
Administrative Pressure	74%
Lack of Support at Home	68%
Inadequate Salary or Incentives	59%

Table 2: Correlation Between Stress Factors and Mental Health Variables (N = 200)

Variables	Anxiety	Depression	Social Dysfunction	Overall Mental Health
Workload Stress	0.62**	0.59**	0.48**	0.65**
Work-Life Balance Issues	0.58**	0.61**	0.54**	0.63**
Administrative Pressure	0.55**	0.53**	0.45**	0.57**
Student Behavior-Related Stress	0.50**	0.48**	0.42**	0.52**
Lack of Support at Home	0.49**	0.52**	0.43**	0.56**



- **All correlations are significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).**
- Higher scores in stress variables are positively correlated with higher scores in negative mental health outcomes, indicating a direct relationship between stress and psychological distress.

IV. DISCUSSION

The findings of the study underscore the multifaceted nature of stress experienced by married women teachers in India. The high prevalence of workload-related stress and lack of work-life balance is consistent with existing literature (Kaur, 2018; Suri & Sharma, 2021), reinforcing the notion that teachers often operate under significant emotional and professional strain. The dual roles of educator and homemaker create constant pressure, leading to emotional exhaustion and mental health deterioration.

The correlation analysis revealed a strong and statistically significant relationship between occupational stress and poor mental health outcomes. This aligns with the biopsychosocial model of health, which suggests that continuous psychological stress can lead to anxiety, depression, and social withdrawal (Rani & Singh, 2020).

Notably, the data also show that institutional factors—such as administrative burden and student behavior—play a major role in stress generation, often compounded by personal life challenges like lack of support from spouses or extended families. Teachers working in private institutions reported slightly higher stress due to job insecurity and performance-based pressure.

This research contributes to the growing body of evidence urging for gender-sensitive workplace policies. Flexible working hours, mental health counseling, and professional development opportunities could help alleviate some of the stressors identified. The study calls for urgent action by educational administrators and policymakers to prioritize teacher well-being, especially among married women who represent a significant portion of the workforce.

V. CONCLUSION

This study highlights the significant stress factors faced by married women teachers and their detrimental effects on mental health. The findings demonstrate that occupational stressors—particularly workload, administrative demands, and student behavior—are major contributors to psychological distress among female educators. Additionally, the pressure to maintain familial responsibilities and societal expectations further amplifies their stress levels. The study found a strong positive correlation between stress and adverse mental health outcomes, including anxiety, depression, and emotional exhaustion.

These results underscore the urgent need to address gender-specific stress factors within educational institutions. The mental well-being of teachers is crucial not only for their personal health but also for maintaining a productive and supportive learning environment for students. If left unaddressed, chronic stress among women teachers could lead to burnout, absenteeism, and lower quality of education.

This research calls for comprehensive policy reforms and institutional interventions that prioritize the mental health of married women teachers, including the provision of counseling, flexible schedules, and supportive administrative frameworks. Creating a balanced work environment will not only empower teachers but also contribute positively to the broader goals of educational excellence and gender equity.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

1. **Introduce Mental Health Support Services:** Establish on-site or online counseling programs in schools and colleges to help teachers manage stress effectively.
2. **Promote Work-Life Balance:** Implement flexible work schedules, especially for married women with young children.
3. **Strengthen Administrative Support:** Minimize bureaucratic burdens and provide adequate support staff to reduce the non-teaching workload.
4. **Conduct Regular Stress Audits:** Periodically assess teacher stress levels and tailor wellness programs accordingly.
5. **Encourage Peer Support Groups:** Create platforms for teachers to share experiences and strategies for stress management.
6. **Include Gender-Sensitive Policies:** Institutional policies must recognize and accommodate the unique challenges faced by married women teachers.



VII. LIMITATIONS

This study is limited by its **sample size** and **geographical scope**, which focused primarily on urban and semi-urban areas in Delhi NCR. Therefore, the findings may not be fully generalizable to rural regions or other states in India. Furthermore, the study relied on self-reported data, which may involve some degree of bias or underreporting due to social desirability. Future research should include longitudinal methods and larger, more diverse samples to better understand the long-term impact of stress and mental health among women educators.

REFERENCES

- [1]. Cooper, C. L., & Marshall, J. (2013). Occupational sources of stress: A review of the literature relating to coronary heart disease and mental ill health. *Journal of Occupational Psychology*, 49(1), 11–28.
- [2]. Kaur, R. (2018). Work-life balance and stress among married women teachers in India. *International Journal of Humanities and Social Science Research*, 6(4), 22–28.
- [3]. Kyriacou, C. (2001). Teacher stress: Directions for future research. *Educational Review*, 53(1), 27–35.
- [4]. Rani, S., & Singh, A. (2020). Mental health and job stress among female teachers: A sociological perspective. *Indian Journal of Psychology*, 95(3), 211–217.
- [5]. Suri, M., & Sharma, A. (2021). Occupational stress and its impact on teachers' performance. *Education and Society*, 31(2), 45–60.