

Psychological Well-being and Occupational Stress of Primary School teachers in Tinsukia District, Assam.

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ABSTRACT:

The present study aims to investigate psychological wellbeing and occupational stress of primary school teachers in Tinsukia District, Assam. The sample of the study comprised of 520 teachers (260 male and 260 female) which has been selected by using stratified random sampling technique. Descriptive and inferential statistics such as Mean, SD, t test and product moment correlation coefficient were used to analyse the data. The findings revealed that female teachers experienced higher occupational stress, however, no statistically significant gender differences were found in psychological wellbeing of male and female teacher. A strong negative correlation ($r = -0.77$) was found between occupational stress and psychological wellbeing. The findings of the study emphasised the need for effective strategies to manage stress and enhance psychological wellbeing among teachers.

Keywords: Psychological Wellbeing; Occupational stress; and Primary School Teachers.

1.0 Introduction

Teachers are among the most important contributors of educational, social and economic development of a nation. The effectiveness of teaching significantly influences the academic success of the students. However, teaching profession involves diverse responsibilities and challenges. Beyond their classroom teaching, teachers have to manage multiple academic, administrative and extracurricular duties that may increase their workload and contribute to stress and emotional burden. Patel, (2014) stated that, feeling of stress, dissatisfaction and unhappiness among teachers can negatively affect their personal and professional lives. Their happiness is directly influences students'

happiness which contribute to a positive leaning environment.

Psychological Wellbeing

Psychological well-being is a comprehensive concept about what it means to be mentally healthy and not merely the absence of psychological problem but also the ability to live a meaningful and satisfying life (Ryff & Keyes, 1995). Psychological well-being is a state of positive mental health that enables the individual to use their abilities effectively, cope with their daily stress and make meaningful contribution to the society (Ruggeri et al, 2020). Ryff (1989) divided the properties of psychological well-being into the number of areas such as Personal Growth, Environmental

Mastery, Self-Acceptance, Autonomy Purpose in Life and Positive Relations with others. Self-acceptance involves positive attitude towards self and recognizing one's strength and limitations; positive relationship with others, involves developing warm and trusting relationship with others; environmental mastery involves effective management of one's surroundings; autonomy refers to making independent decisions; purpose in life, refers to having meaningful direction and goals in life; and personal growth involves continuous development of one's abilities and potentialities (Ryff, 2021). According to Huppert (2009), "Psychological well-being refers to the quality of one's life".

Occupational Stress

The term stress was related to challenges and difficulties which is commonly understood as a sense of being anxious and fatigue leading to various physical and mental health problems. Baum (1990) described that stress is any uncomfortable emotional experience accompanied by predictable biochemical, physiological, and behavioural changes. Although, stress is often viewed negatively, if it can be managed correctly it can enhance the performance quality such as during exam or work deadline (Awada et al., 2024; and Maddock, 2023). However, excessive stress can hinder productivity, interrupt relationships, and negatively impact a person's life.

Occupational stress is a form of stress specifically linked to a person's job or his work environment. Occupational stress arises when job requirements exceed or conflict with a worker's capabilities, resources, or needs, leading to harmful physical and emotional responses (Kejriwal et al., 2024; and Setiawan et al., 2022). Many studies revealed that stress is the emotional, cognitive, behavioural physiological reactions to adverse aspects of work content, work organisation, and work environment (Narban et al., 2016; Thong et al., 2000). In many countries, teaching is often described as one of the most challenging professions. A survey published by Cooper, C. L., 2005 in the Journal of Managerial Psychology, ranked teaching as the

second most stressful occupation among the twenty-six that were evaluated, with only ambulance drivers reporting higher stress levels.

1.1 Review of Related Literature:

Many studies have revealed that teachers generally exhibit moderate to high level of psychological well-being, despite the challenges and demands of teaching profession (Zin et al., 2025; Violago & Fabella, 2023). Occupational stress is a common problem among teachers across countries, with studies reporting moderate to high stress levels (Tefaye et al., 2023; Carroll et al., 2022). Male teachers showed significantly greater stress than females in China (Ji et al., 2021), and India (Jahan & Sharma, 2017). On the other hand, several studies found female teachers experienced higher occupational stress than male, workload, and job-related demands (Tsubono et al., 2023; Ansari et al., 2024). Studies on gender differences teachers' psychological wellbeing have reported mixed findings. Some studies found better wellbeing among male teachers ((Xiao et al., 2025; Nwoko et al., 2025), while other studies reported poor wellbeing among female teachers (Tsubono et al., 2023; Zagkas & Chrousos, 2023). Studies conducted in recent years have reported a strong negative relationship between occupational stress and psychological wellbeing of a person (Corthorn et al., 2024 and Agyapong et al., 2022). Higher level of stress is associated with poor mental health, lower happiness, and increasing anxiety and burnout (Poormahmood et al., 2017; and Kaur et al., 2024).

The existing literature reveals that psychological wellbeing and occupational stress among teachers have been widely investigated across different countries and educational settings. However, the findings regarding gender differences remain inconsistent, with some studies found higher stress among male teachers while the others found higher stress among female teachers. Similarly, gender differences in psychological wellbeing vary across different educational and geographical context. Although a strong negative relationship between occupational stress and psychological wellbeing

has been reported in the previous studies, there is still a significant gap remains at the regional level. There is lack of research in Assam that specifically investigate the relationship between psychological wellbeing, its dimensions and occupational stress among teachers. Findings from other regions may not be directly applicable for the present context due to the variations in socio cultural condition, educational-administrative setup and availability of resources. Furthermore, primary school teachers have not received adequate attention in this area of research.

1.2. Significance of the study

Primary school teachers hold the most significant role in children's learning and their overall development. Many studies revealed that beyond teaching, primary school teachers now a days are burdened by lots of administrative work, documentation, and school management duties, which turn to over burden and teachers feel under extreme pressure (Tsubono & Ogawa, 2022; Arbia et al., 2023). They are responsible for laying the foundational stone in one's life. However, due to their increasing work load, they often face higher stress and job burnout. Very high rates of psychological distress, depression, anxiety, burnout are reported among teachers in different countries (Ozoemena et al., 2021; Arbia et al., 2023; Zagkas et al., 2023). The present study is significant as it focuses on the psychological wellbeing and occupational stress of the primary school teachers. The findings may assist educational authorities and policy makers in designing counselling services and work management programs for reducing occupational stress and promoting teachers' psychological wellbeing (Dhungana et al., 2025; and Nwoko et al., 2025).

1.3 Statement of the Problem

The title of the present study may be stated as follows –

“Psychological Well-being and Occupational Stress of Primary School Teachers in Tinsukia District, Assam.”

1.4. Objectives of the study

The following objectives have been formulated for present study are –

1. To study the level of Psychological Wellbeing and Occupational stress of Primary School teachers in Tinsukia District of Assam.
2. To compare the level of Psychological Wellbeing and Occupational Stress of Primary School teachers in Tinsukia District of Assam in relation to gender.
3. To study the relationship between psychological wellbeing (dimension wise) and occupational stress among the primary school teachers in Tinsukia District, Assam.

1.5 Operational Definitions

Psychological Wellbeing: In the present study the Psychological Wellbeing refers to the scores obtained by the primary school teachers of Tinsukia District in Ryff's Psychological Wellbeing Scale (Ryff et al., 2007; adopted from Ryff, 1989).

Occupational Stress: In the present study the Occupational Stress refers to the scores obtained by the primary school teachers of Tinsukia District in Occupational Stress Index constructed and standardised by Srivastava & Singh (1981).

Primary School Teachers: For this study, a primary school teacher is referred to as any individual certified to teach class 1 to 5.

2.0 Methodology

Based on the objectives of the study, the researcher has adopted descriptive survey method for the present investigation.

2.1 Population and Sample

The population of the study comprises of all the teachers working in the government primary schools. In Tinsukia District, there are currently 1112 primary schools with a total of 3064 teachers (Source: UDISE+736-744, Samagra Shiksha Assam). The present study was conducted on a sample of 520 primary school

teachers (260 male and 260 female) from government primary schools of Tinsukia District. The investigator used stratified random sampling technique for the present study.

2.2 Description of the Tool

Tools used for the present study are-

1. **Psychological Wellbeing Scale:** For the present study the investigator used Psychological Wellbeing Scale developed by Carol. D. Ryff (Ryff et al., 2007; adopted from Ryff, 1989). The scale contains 42 items that evaluates six dimensions of wellbeing- autonomy, mastery of the environment, personal growth, positive relationship with others, life purpose and self-acceptance.
2. **Occupational Stress Index:** The investigator used occupational stress index, constructed and developed by Srivastava and Singh (1981) to measure occupational stress of the teachers. The scale consists of 46 items that covers work related stressors like role overload, role ambiguity, role conflict, political pressure, responsibility for others, lack of participation, powerlessness, poor peer relations, low professional status, unfavourable working condition.

2.3 Procedure for Data Collection

First, the investigator obtained permission from District Elementary Education Officer of Tinsukia District. After getting the proper authorization the investigator visited each selected primary school to collect of required data for the study. During these visits researcher briefly explain the purpose of the visit to the teachers and distribute questionnaires among them. The investigator then provide instructions on how the teachers should put their responses based on their perception and understanding. After completion the investigator collected the questionnaires from the teachers.

2.4 Statistical Techniques used

Descriptive statistics viz. Mean, Median, Standard Deviation and Normality test was used for the present study. One of the Inferential statistics that is t-test was used to compare the variables. To find out the relationship between the variables Product Moment Coefficient of Correlation (r) was calculated.

3.0 Results

Objective 1: To study the level of Psychological Wellbeing and Occupational stress of Primary School teachers in Tinsukia District, Assam.

Table- 1: Level of Psychological Wellbeing and Occupational Stress of primary school teachers of Tinsukia District.

Variables	No. of Teachers	Mean	Median	Standard Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis
Psychological wellbeing	520	152.02	152	19.41	0.06	-0.02
Occupational Stress	520	150	149	23.91	0.006	-0.01

From the above table 1 it can be observed that Mean, SD and Median of Psychological wellbeing was found to be 152.02, 19.41 and 152 respectively. Skewness (0.06) and Kurtosis (-0.02) value suggests that the data are

approximately normal. Mean, SD and Median of occupational stress was found to be 150, 23.91 and 149 respectively. Skewness (0.006) and Kurtosis (-0.01) value suggests that the data are approximately normal.

Table 2: Level of Psychological Well-Being and Occupational Stress of Primary School Teachers in Tinsukia District, Assam, Based on Percentile Ranks (N = 520)

Variable	Level	Percentile Range	Score Range	Frequency	Percentage
Psychological Well-being	Low	Below 25 th	<139	127	24.42%
	Moderate	25 th -75 th	736-744.25	263	50.58%
	High	Above 75 th	>164.25	130	25%
Occupational Stress	Low	Below 25 th	<134	127	24.42%
	Moderate	25 th -75 th	736-744	268	51.54%
	High	Above 75 th	>166	125	24.04%

Table 2 presents the distribution of primary school teachers according to their level of psychological wellbeing based on percentile ranks. The data reveal that 24.42% of teachers were classified as having low psychological wellbeing, 50.58% as having moderate level of psychological wellbeing, and 25% as having high psychological wellbeing. The findings indicate that over half of the teachers exhibited moderate level of psychological wellbeing whereas, nearly one fourth of the teachers each classified under low and high psychological wellbeing categories.

The table also showed that among 520 primary school teachers 127 (24.42%) had low occupational stress, 268 (51.54%) had moderate occupational stress and 125 (24.04%) had high occupational stress. Thus, majority of the primary school teachers (51.54%) exhibited a moderate level of occupational stress.

Objective 2: To compare the level of Psychological Wellbeing and Occupational Stress of Primary School teachers in Tinsukia District, Assam, in relation to gender.

Table- 3: Comparison of the Level of Psychological Wellbeing and Occupational Stress of Primary School Teachers of Tinsukia District, Assam, in relation to Gender.

Variable	Gender	N	Mean	SD	Critical Ratio	df	Remark
Psychological Wellbeing	Male	260	151.29	18.74	0.85	518	Not significant at 0.05 level
	Female	260	152.74	20.07			
Occupational Stress	Male	260	147.35	22.43	2.55	518	Significant at 0.05 level
	Female	260	152.74	25.07			

Table 3 indicates that the calculated Critical Ratio (CR) of psychological well-being was found to be 0.85 which is smaller than the tabulated value 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance. This means that there is no significant difference between psychological wellbeing of male and female primary school teachers. The table also revealed that the calculated Critical Ratio (CR) of Occupational Stress was found to be 2.55 which

is larger than the tabulated value 1.96 at 0.05 level of significance. This means that there is significant difference between occupational stress of male and female primary school teachers in Tinsukia district, Assam.

Objective 3: To study the relationship between psychological wellbeing and occupational stress of primary school teachers in Tinsukia District, Assam.

Table- 4: Relationship between psychological wellbeing (Dimension wise) and occupational stress of primary school teachers in Tinsukia District, Assam.

PWB Dimensions	Occupational Stress (<i>r</i>)	<i>p</i> -value	Remark
Autonomy	-0.51	<.001	Significant
Environmental Mastery	-0.48	<.001	Significant
Personal Growth	-0.46	<.001	Significant
Positive Relations	-0.50	<.001	Significant
Purpose in life	-0.54	<.001	Significant
Self-Acceptance	-0.49	<.001	Significant
Overall PWB	-0.77	<.001	Significant

Table 4 showed significant negative relationships between all six dimensions of psychological well-being and occupational stress among primary school teachers ($p < .001$). Autonomy ($r = -0.51$), environmental mastery ($r = -0.48$), personal growth ($r = -0.46$), Positive Relations ($r = -0.50$), Purpose in life ($r = -0.54$), Self-Acceptance ($r = -0.49$) were negatively associated with occupational stress. Overall psychological wellbeing had a strong negative relationship ($r = -0.77$) with occupational stress.

4.0 Discussion

From the above discussion it can be observed that 50.58 % primary school teachers exhibited moderate psychological wellbeing and 51.54% primary school teachers exhibited moderate occupational stress. The studies of Zin et al (2025), and Violago & Fabella (2023) also reported moderate to high psychological wellbeing among teachers. There was no significant difference in male and female psychological wellbeing of primary school teachers. This finding is consistent with the studies of Kamaruzaman & Surat (2021), Chaudhari & Parikh (2019), and Singh & Devi (2025), who also reported no significant gender differences in teachers' psychological well-being. However, female teachers experienced significantly higher occupational stress than the male teachers. Similar results were found by Kyriacou and Sutcliffe (1977), Agyapong et al.

(2022), and Corbett et al. (2023), which also reported higher levels of occupational stress among female teachers. All the six dimensions of psychological well-being had significant negative correlation with occupational stress with overall psychological well-being showing strong negative correlation ($r = -0.77$, $p < .001$). This finding is supported by Corthorn et al. (2024) and Agyapong et al. (2022) that higher occupational stress was associated with lower well-being.

Educational Implications

School should reduce teacher's administrative duties, excessive paperwork and other non-academic responsibilities that contribute to occupational stress and burnout (Nwoko et al., 2023; Agyapong et al., 2023; Nwoko et al., 2025). School should promote teamwork, regular communication, peer support, and a positive school climate to improve teachers' psychological wellbeing (Herman et al., 2018; Ghasemi et al., 2025). Preservice and in-service teacher education programmes should include training in resilience, adaptive coping and self-efficacy so that teachers are better prepared to manage occupational stress effectively (Li, 2023; Wang et al., 2024; Zhang et al., 2023). Counselling, stress management programmes should be provided to the teachers experiencing high levels of occupational stress or low

psychological wellbeing (Herman et al., 2018; Li, 2023; Agyapong et al., 2023).

Limitations of the Study:

- The study was confined to Tinsukia district of Assam, that may limit the generalizability of findings to other district or states.
- The study was restricted to only government primary school teachers and did not include private primary school teachers.
- The study only focused on gender differences and did not examine variables like- age, teaching experience, rural urban location.

5.0 Conclusion

The present study revealed that more than half of the primary school teachers in Tinsukia District, Assam exhibited moderate levels of psychological well-being and occupational stress. It was

observed that female teachers experienced significantly higher occupational stress than the male teachers, whereas, no significant gender difference was found in psychological well-being. Significant negative correlations were found between occupational stress and all six dimensions of psychological wellbeing. Overall psychological wellbeing showed a strong negative correlation with occupational stress ($r = -0.77$, $p < .001$). Therefore, emphasis should be given on promoting teachers' psychological wellbeing through effective stress management strategies, supportive school environment and institutional support measures.

6. Author Declaration

We confirm that this manuscript is original, has not been published previously, and is not currently under consideration for publication elsewhere.

The authors declare that they have no conflict of interest.

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