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A Study on Organisational Role Stress in Higher Education Colleges

Dr. Mani Shreshtha
Faculty,
HSB, GUJS&T,
Hisar, India

Abstract: Stress is the part and parcels every professional's life. Teaching as a profession is also comprises certain role related stress. The main purpose of this study is to provide an insight about the organizational role stress of teachers in the colleges of higher education. The study is conducted on teachers both from colleges imparting professional and nonprofessional education in Haryana.

I. ORGANISATIONAL ROLE STRESS

Role stress refers to the conflict and tension due to the roles being enacted by a person at any given point of time (Pareek, 2003). Enacted in the context of organizations, such role stresses are called organizational role stress. Any organization may be perceived as a system of roles. These roles are different from positions or offices in the organization. Office is concerned with the hierarchical positions and privileges, whereas role refers to the obligations attached to that office. Thus, office defines the power of the holder (Mintzberg, 1983). Role determines the obligation of the person holding that office. A role is not defined without the expectations of the role senders, including the role occupant. The concept of role is vital for the integration of the individual with an organization. The organization has its own structure and goal. Similarly, the individual has its personality and needs. All these aspects interact with each other and to some extent get integrated into a role. Role is also a central concept in work motivation as it is only through this that the individual and organization interact with each other. Role can be understood as the totality of formal tasks, informal tasks and acts as organized by an individual. Each individual is a member of social systems and the expectation as well as demand of one may put pressure on the other. There are two role systems: Role Space and Role Set. Both have a built in potential for conflict and stress (Pareek, 2003). It may be expected that organizational role stress will operate in interaction with the general ill being and well being. There is an expected high relationship of organizational role stress with these two. As organizations become more complex, the potentiality for stress increases. Stress is a consequence of socio-economic complexity and to some extent is a stimulant as well. Therefore, one should find ways of using stress productively, and reduce dysfunctional stress. The term "stress" will be used here to refer to such terms and concepts as strain and pressure. Role stress is a job-related source of organizational stress, where roles are ''the behaviours and demands that are associated with the job an individual performs'' (Cooper et al., 2001).Negative workplace stress (including that of downsizing and technological evolution) may adversely affect an employee's mental and physical health (Ivancevich & Matteson, 1982). The organizational costs of adverse stress reactions can include additional hiring and training costs, the costs of settling worker's compensation and/or tort claims, as well as the costs of decreased quality or efficiency (DeFrank & Ivancevich, 1998).

Role space is the dynamic relationship between the various role an individual occupies and his self. It has three main variables: self, the role under question, and the other role he occupies (Pareek, 2003). Any conflicts among these are referred to as role space conflict or stress. These conflicts may take several forms, namely

- **Self –Role distance**- This stress arises out of the conflict between the self- concept and the expectations from the role, as perceived by the role occupant. If a person occupies a role that he may subsequently find to be conflicting with the self- concept, he feels stressed.

- **Inter – Role distance**- when an individual occupies more than role there are bound to be conflicts between them. Such role conflicts are are quiet frequent in a modern society, where an individual increasingly occupying multiples roles in various organizations and groups.

- **Role stagnation**- As an individual grows older; he also grows in the role that he occupies in an organization. With the individual's advancement, the role changes and with the change in role, the need for taking on a new role becomes crucial. This problem of role growth becomes acute especially when an individual who has occupied a role for a long time enters another role he feels less secure. The new role demands that an individual outgrow the previous one and take charge of the new role effectively. This is bound to produce some stress.

- **Role isolation**- In a role set, the role occupant may feel that certain roles are psychologically closer to him, while others are at a much greater distance. The main criterion of distance is the frequency and ease of interaction. When linkage is strong, the role isolation will be low and vice versa. Role isolation can therefore be measured in terms of exciting and the desired linkage. The gap between them indicates the amount of role isolation.

- **Role ambiguity**- When an individual is not clear about the various expectations that people have from his role he faces role ambiguity. Role ambiguity may be due to lack of information available to a role occupant, or his lack of understanding of the cues available to him. Role ambiguity may be in relation to activities, responsibilities, priorities, norms or general expectations. Generally, role ambiguity is experienced by persons occupying roles that are newly created in organizations, roles that are undergoing change, or process roles.

- **Role expectation conflict**- When there are conflicting expectations or demands by different role senders, the role occupant experiences this type of stress.

- **Role overload**- When a role occupant feels that there are too many expectations from the significant others in his role set, he experiences role overload. Role overload has been measured by asking questions about people's feeling on whether they can finish work they do might interfere with how well it is done.

- **Role erosion**- A role occupant may feel that the functions he would like to perform are being done by some other role. Role erosion is the individual's subjective feeling that some important expectations that he has from a role are shared by other roles with in the role set. Role erosion is likely to be experienced in an organization that is redefining its role and creating new roles.

- **Resource inadequacy**- Resources inadequacy stress is experienced when the resources required by a role occupant for performing his role effectively are not available.

- **Personal inadequacy**- When a role occupant feels that he does not have enough knowledge, skills or training to undertake a role effectively, or that he has not had time to prepare for the assigned roles he may experience stress. Persons who are assigned new roles without adequate preparation or orientation are likely to experience feeling of personal inadequacy.

These components of organizational role stress have been used as an integral part for achievement of one of the objectives of the study.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The purpose of this section is to provide a bird's eye view of few important studies in the field of organizational role stress both in corporate and educational setting.

Leung and Spector (2004) aimed at identifying the sources of stress and investigating their effects on job satisfaction and psychological distress among 106 university teachers (86 males and 20 females) from four tertiary institutes in Hong Kong. Another purpose of the study was to examine the moderating effect of locus of control on stressor-strain relationships. A factor analysis of the faculty stressors revealed six factors: recognition, perceived organizational practices, factors intrinsic to teaching, financial inadequacy, home/work interface and new challenge. A source of step-wise multiple regressions demonstrated that the first four were best predictors of job satisfaction and the last two factors were the best predictors of psychological distress. Further, external locus of control was associated with low job satisfaction and psychological distress.

Miller and Travers (2005)presented the findings of a nationwide investigation into the mental well-being of minority ethnic teachers in the U.K. Data were collected via a questionnaire containing both open and closed questions. The sample, totaling 208 participants was derived from the National Union of Teachers (NUT) database of minority ethnic teachers and an advertisement in the NUT's Teacher magazine. Univariate analysis of the results revealed that this group of teachers, as compared to other groups, was experiencing poorer mental health and lower job satisfaction. Multivariate analysis revealed four reliable factors regarding the 'sources of stress' these minority ethnic teachers perceived they were experiencing. These were: hierarchy and culture of the school, workload, cultural barriers and the lack of status and promotion. Some teachers reported that ethnic discrimination was a contributory factor in their experience of stress. Multiple regression analysis discovered that "total stress", "total self esteem, "working conditions" and "total discrimination" were the major predictors of mental ill health in the minority ethnic teachers.

LeRouge et al. (2006)conducted a study and results from surveys completed by IT developers in 12 Fortune 500 companies indicated that role stress fit was positively related to both job satisfaction and organizational commitment and that self-esteem significantly moderated the relationship between role stress fit and job satisfaction. The results of our research have provided insight into staff assignment and the design of coping interventions.

Amri (2007) in his study assessed the relationship between demographic and work variables and job stress. The subjects were 472 male teachers working in government schools in Riyadh City. The use of multiple regressions revealed that (i) there was negative relationship between demographic variables and job stress, (ii) there was positive relationship between work variables and job stress and (iii) the work variables affect job stress more than demographic variables.

Anitha Devi (2007) aimed at identifying the degree of life stress and role stress experienced by professional women. A total sample of 180 women professionals belonging to six occupations were chosen for the study. The results revealed that, the older person experience lower life stress and role stress. Younger people experience more stress as compared to older people. The greater the numbers of years of service the greater life and role stress. The lower the income, greater stress experienced *i.e.* stress decreases with increase in income.

Chand and Monga (2007) examined the correlates of job stress and burn out among100 faculty members from two universities. He found that, higher education can combat stress and burn out related problems among the faculty members.

Lehal (2007) in a study reveals that in case of ORS and JS both, the results of public sector are better than private sector. The study includes two important variables related to behavioral science viz. Organizational role stress and Job satisfaction. It includes the whole State of Punjab and200 executives (men and women) from both public and private sector units. Further in

public sector, female executives are more stressful than males. But in case of JS, in the same sector, female executives are more satisfied with their jobs. The correlation analysis brings to light that there is a strong but negative relationship between two variables. The t-test also confirms the significance of studying the two variables together.

Nayak and Sawkar (2008) conducted a research on a random sample of 200 (100 each of male and female) degree college teachers of Dharwad city. Questionnaire for Demographic characteristic and Coping Strategies were used along with Employment Organization Sources of Stressors scale. For the analysis frequency, percentage, t-test, correlation and step wise regression were used. Results indicated that the factors causing stress always were mainly due to the interference of the employment organizational responsibilities with their family organizational role, lack of their involvement indecision making that reduced their responsibilities and the participatory model in their organizational set up which enhanced their responsibilities to the point of exhaustion. Majority of the teachers revealed that stress was basically due to their laziness and also they were happy with fewer responsibilities. The overall results of stress level revealed that, higher percentage of teachers was in low stress category. Gender wise significant difference was observed in case of personal development stressor and inter-personal relation stressors, while it was non significant in case of work, role and organizational climate stressors. Age was the influencing factor on the total stressors which was statistically highly significant. Offering prayer, positive thinking, working in-group, avoiding painful reminders, delegating the tasks and listening songs were practiced when they were mentally stressed. There was no significant gender difference found with respect to physical stress management where as it was significant in case of mental stress management strategies.

Alam (2009) in his study investigated the relationship between job stress and job satisfaction. The determinants of job stress which were examined under the study included, management role, relationship with others, workload pressure, role ambiguity and performance pressure. The sample of the study consisted of 300 university academicians from Klang Valley area in Malaysia. The results showed that workload pressure, role ambiguity and performance pressure were the predictors of job stress. But managerial role and relationship with others had no significant direct effect on job stress. The results also showed significant negative relationship between job stress and job satisfaction.

Fako (2010) investigate the extent to which they experienced occupational stress, the factors associated with occupational stress and the factors that could be used to predict occupational stress among university employees. The study used a sample of 360 university employees in Botswana to investigate the extent to which they experienced occupational stress, the factors associated with occupational stress and the factors that could be used to predict occupational stress among university employees. Results point to the importance of role clarity, a reasonable workload, the need for employees to maintain a healthy diet, and the need to avoid regularly putting in extra hours at work in order to reduce or avoid occupational stress. The results also show that the odds of a citizen experiencing occupational stress were twice those of an expatriate employee. It is argued that successful adaptation and coping with work demands results in effective movement through the ranks that mediates the effect of objective stressors.

III. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

Keeping in view the above gaps, this study has been carried out to achieve the objective of identifying the organizational role stress among the teachers of colleges offering Professional and Non Professional education in Haryana.

IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

For the purpose of the present study, both primary as well as secondary data have been collected. The secondary data has been collected from related journals, magazines, relevant expert blogs, and websites of concerned bodies. Help of internet has been taken wherever necessary. Like for obtaining list of professional and non professional colleges, official websites of Directorate of Technical Education, Haryana and Department of Higher Education, Haryana has been accessed. The general demographic information like age, gender, designation, qualification etc. about the respondents has also been collected.

For the purpose to collect the data regarding job satisfaction, an instrument Organizational Role Stress (ORS) scale (Pareek, 1999) is used. It has been used to measure ten role stresses to a subordinate, i.e. self-role distance (SRD), inter-role distance (IRD), role stagnation (RS), role isolation (RI), role ambiguity (RA), role expectation conflict (REC), role overload (RO), role erosion (RE), resource inadequacy (RIn) and personal inadequacy (PI). It is a 5-point scale (0-4), containing five items for each role and a total of fifty statements. Thus the total scores on each role stress range from 0 to 20. To get the total scores for each role stress, the ratings given are totalled horizontally (for five items).

The respondents comprise of members of teaching staff pertaining to colleges offering professional and non professional programs in Haryana. The study was carried out through Descriptive Survey Method on a sample of 425 teachers. A brief profile of respondents is shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Respondent Profile for N = 425

Sr No	Particulars	Sub-Group	Type of College			
			Professional	%	Non Professional	%
1	Number of Respondents		216	50.82	209	49.18
2	Age	Below 30	87	40.28	62	29.67
		31-40	79	36.57	92	44.02
		41-50	35	16.20	30	14.35
		50-60	13	6.02	21	10.05
		Above 60	02	0.93	04	1.91
3	Gender	Female	122	56.48	98	46.89
		Male	94	43.52	111	53.11
4	Highest Qualification	Ph D/ M Phil	39	18.06	85	40.67
		M Tech/ MBA	114	52.78	12	5.74
		MA/MSc/MCom	-	-	112	53.59
		B Tech	63	29.17	-	-
5	Designation	Professor	22	10.19	14	6.70
		Associate Professor	41	18.98	27	12.92
		Assistant Professor	153	70.83	168	80.38
6	Teaching Experience (in Years)	Below 1	17	7.87	13	6.22
		1-5	60	27.78	78	37.32
		6-10	81	37.50	65	31.10
		11-20	41	18.98	28	13.40
		Above 20	17	7.87	25	11.96

Source: Primary Survey

From the above table it can be observed that the respondents' profile is a balanced mix of teachers from different type of college, age group, gender, possession of highest qualification, designation, and teaching experience make them eligible to reply the study related questions and become the representative part of the study.

1. Organizational Role Stress of Subordinates

In general Organisational Role Stress (ORS) is the state of tension experienced by the subordinates working in an organization due to presence of role space and role set conflicts. As organizations become more complex potential for stress increases. Urbanization, industrialization and increase in scale of operations are some of the reasons for rising stress. A role can be understood as a set of functions, which an individual performs in response to the expectation of the significant members of a social system, and his own expectations about the position he occupies in it. Employees experiencing such kind of role stress feel a loss of complete control over what happens to their lives. Such kind of stress has to be identified on a regular basis in an organization and remedial actions have to be taken whenever a need arise. This section explains the status of organizational role stress experienced by the subordinates working in various colleges across categories and sub categories. Data has also been analysed by giving due consideration to organizational role stress dimensions.

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5.1 Overall Organizational Role Stress: Descriptive Statistics and t-ratio

The analysis of overall organizational role stress as experienced by the respondents' highlights their stress level arising out of their roles performed in the organization. It also focuses on an overall feeling an employee is having towards controlling the situation in performing his job. Level of role stress has been examined on ten dimensions namely Inter Role Distance, Role Stagnation, Role Expectation Conflict, Role Erosion, Role Overload, Role Isolation, Personal Inadequacy, Self Role Distance, Role Ambiguity, and Resource Inadequacy. The respondents were asked to rate their different role stresses experienced while performing the job on a 50 item and five point scale pertaining to examine respondents overall organizational role stress and stress on various role stress dimensions. The descriptive analysis of overall organizational role stress on the basis of college type has been presented in Table 2.

Table 2 Means and SDs of Overall Organizational Role Stress of Teachers on the basis of College Type

College Type	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Professional	216	2.39	0.31
Non- Professional	209	1.94	0.11

From Table 2 it can be inferred that overall organizational role stress experienced by the respondents of colleges offering professional education is relatively higher than the respondents belonging to colleges imparting non- professional education. It can also be deduced that professional college type teachers have shown a moderate level of role stress as compared to a low level of role stress experienced by non- professional college type teachers. In order to examine whether this difference between these two groups is significant, a t test has been applied on overall organizational role stress and its ten dimensions. The analysis has been presented in Table 3.

Table 3 t-ratio's for Dimensions of Organizational Role Stress of Teachers on the basis of College Type

ORS Dimensions	College Type	t- ratio	Mean Difference	df	Std. Error Difference
Inter Role Distance	Professional	15.01**	0.83	423	0.05
	Non- Professional				
Role Stagnation	Professional	13.86**	0.64	423	0.04
	Non- Professional				
Role Expectation Conflict	Professional	3.92**	0.02	423	0.05
	Non- Professional				
Role Erosion	Professional	8.56**	0.63	423	0.07
	Non- Professional				
Role Overload	Professional	14.71**	0.78	423	0.05
	Non- Professional				
Role Isolation	Professional	3.77**	0.23	423	0.06
	Non- Professional				
Personal Inadequacy	Professional	15.23**	0.67	423	0.04
	Non- Professional				
Self Role Distance	Professional	2.91**	0.13	423	0.04
	Non- Professional				
Role Ambiguity	Professional	1.48	0.07	423	0.05
	Non- Professional				
Resource Inadequacy	Professional	1.84	0.06	423	0.07
	Non- Professional				
Overall Organizational Role Stress	Professional	6.25**	0.18	423	0.02
	Non- Professional				

$**p < 0.01, *p < 0.05$

The results presented in the Table above reveals that t value of 6.25 found to be higher than the tabulated value at 0.01 level of confidence. So, there exists a significant difference between the mean scores of overall organizational role stress in the employees of professional and non- professional college types. A further analysis on ten organizational role stress dimensions indicates that respondents belonging to colleges offering professional education significantly differ in their perception on almost all the dimensions except role ambiguity and resource inadequacy from the respondents pertaining to non- professional college

type. This difference is significant (p< 0.01). So, these respondents see a difference in inter role distance, role stagnation, role expectation conflict, role erosion, role overload, role isolation, personal inadequacy, and self role distance as evident from the significant t values of 15.01, 13.86, 3.92, 8.56, 14.71, 3.77, 15.23, and 2.91 respectively. The following sub sections present the data analysis regarding organizational role stress of teachers according to college sub types.

Faculty from professional colleges are more stressed in comparison to faculty from non- professional colleges. The stressfulness of professional teachers is widely recognised. Causes of workplace stress can be attributed to job content and how the work is organised. Stressful situation occurs when there is an imbalance in the demands and perceived pressures of the work environment and as an individual ability to cope with it. An individual's experience of stress at work is to a large extent affected by the level of control they have over their working condition, directions they receive from others at the work place and strategies they adopt in response to meet their work place demands.

V. DISCUSSION AND SUGGESTIONS

With the analysis presented above it can be inferred A strong need has felt for redefining their role by teachers themselves. Every teacher should think in terms of improving the overall effectiveness of teaching learning process. They should stop fighting the system and try to improve the system so that available resources can better be utilised in improving the quality of higher education. So, if self effort from teachers will be present there would be lesser requirement for making stricter rules and policies to guide them. This might result into creation of healthy working environment leading to better job satisfaction.

Organizational role stress is a factor, which has a negative role to play especially in private college category. To reduce the stress level in these colleges, work overload should be controlled and clarity about what role has to be performed should be given. Also, educational administrators should work on avoiding role erosion and role isolation. An individual should not feel exhausted, when he comes out of his office. Institutions should try to use techniques like meditation and yoga to help in relieving the teachers from a feeling of frustration and tension.

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