

The Level of Work-Related Stress Experienced by Primary School Teachers: A Quantitative Study of Public and Private School Teachers in Lahore, Pakistan



Sundas Mubeen ^a Aiman Sarwar ^b Afshan Naseem ^c

Abstract: Teaching is widely recognized as a demanding profession, and primary school teachers often experience work-related challenges that can affect their well-being and professional performance. In Pakistan, limited empirical research has explored the specific sources of stress among primary school teachers and its possible effects on their performance. This study aimed to examine the level of work-related stress experienced by primary school teachers in Lahore to explore its relationship with their professional performance. A quantitative cross-sectional survey design was used to collect data from 360 primary school teachers working in public and private schools in Lahore. Data were gathered through a structured 36-item questionnaire adapted from established instruments. The collected data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, independent samples *t*-test, and correlation analysis. The findings showed that primary school teachers experienced a moderate to high level of work-related stress. Workload and administrative responsibilities were identified as the most prominent sources of stress, indicating that teachers face considerable demands beyond their regular classroom responsibilities. Emotional effects of stress were also commonly reported. The findings further revealed that private school teachers experienced higher levels of work-related stress than public school teachers. Moreover, a significant positive relationship was found between work-related stress and negative effects on teachers' professional performance. The study concludes that work-related stress is a significant concern among primary school teachers in Lahore. It highlights the need for supportive school environments, manageable workloads, stress management initiatives, and organizational policies that promote teachers' well-being and professional effectiveness.

Keywords: Work-Related Stress, Primary School Teachers, Teacher Performance, Occupational Stress, Pakistan, Private Schools, Public Schools

Introduction

Teachers play a significant part in the education and progress of their students. Beyond transmitting knowledge, teachers act as key agents in shaping students' intellectual, emotional, social, and moral development, inspiring and guiding them toward their full potential (Baidya & Sasmal, 2026). The perception of teaching as a low-stress profession has drastically changed in the past few decades. According to the OECD (2023), around one in five teachers report experiencing 'a lot' of stress at work, while nearly half cite excessive administrative workload as a major stressor.

Teaching as a profession is known to be a very stressful one: in mainstream education and in special education. Academic focus in the profession of teaching is to discover stressors appearing (Alexandros-Stamatios et al., 2023) over the last three decades. According to Collie et al. (2012), stress is an internal or external situation that has adverse effects on the human being's physical and psychological state. The physical and mental health of teachers is negatively impacted due to the stress they face. For instance, unpleasant emotions may often impede teachers' working conditions. Such unpleasant circumstances are often caused by many other factors that lead teachers to try to escape their obligations (Latif et al., 2023).

^a M.Phil. Scholar, Department of Education, University of Management and Technology, Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan.

^b M.Phil. Scholar, Department of Education, University of Management and Technology, Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan.

^c Assistant Professor, Department of Education, University of Management and Technology, Lahore, Punjab, Pakistan.

Workers today encounter various stressors at work and require more and more emotional and organizational skills. These skills protect teachers from work-related stress (context). They are becoming the professional skills necessary to meet the growing and articulated demands made by the various stakeholders of the school system: pupils, families, internal organizations, and local communities (Arbia et al., 2023).

Occupational stress in teachers can be defined as the unpleasant negative emotions such as anger, anxiety, tension, frustration and depression experiences by an individual, due to any aspect of his work (Kyriacou, 2001). When the job demands an employee's capacity, negative emotions and reactions may follow. Teachers are stressed by working conditions, student characteristics, social relations, and personal factors. Stressors identified by factor analysis for Japanese school teachers include: time spent outside of work, self-assessment as a teacher, relationships with other teachers, social interactions outside of teaching (parents and community), and duties outside of teaching like school safety (Naono-Nagatomo et al., 2019).

In Pakistan, primary school teachers increasingly report high levels of work-related stress, driven by administrative responsibilities, pressure tied to students' academic performance, and the emotional demands of working with young children, with private school teachers reporting higher stress than their public-school counterparts (Muzahir et al., 2022). Teaching is an extremely stressful profession. Working in this field requires specific know-how and knowledge. Those teachers who go through specific professional courses somehow have more consistent career objectives, and they will fit into the same, but at the same time there are chances to be stressed in the same conditions too (Latif et al., 2023).

A teacher is responsible for making new generations, and if a teacher is happy and contented, he will perform his duty well. When a teacher suffers from depression, the youth ultimately end up getting frustrated and under stress (Gulzar & Rashid, 2020). In an educational platform, teachers certainly play a very reliable role in students' success. Due to the lack of resources, the nature of teaching, and difficulties of the job, the level of stress has increased. It is stated that work level load, more enrolment targets, low budgeting for school-related problems, and a more consistent curriculum outlook have made teaching more stressful than ever (Jillson, 2020).

According to global teacher overload challenges, teachers perform their duties competently while justifying long working hours because of a very demanding job, having convenient social relations with colleagues and members of the community, managing safety responsibilities, and, in general, school environment activities. The research has provided sources of stress and compared the stress of elementary school teachers from government and private schools of Lahore, Pakistan. This study examines the difference in stress patterns of schooling in public and private schools.

Rationale

Elevated stress can negatively affect teachers' job satisfaction, instructional quality, and mental health, but the issue remains largely overlooked by educational authorities (Arbia et al., 2023). There is a clear need to investigate the extent, sources, and consequences of work-related stress among primary school teachers. Teachers can make a meaningful contribution to their students' academic success and development; teaching contains many occupational stressors. These stressors include a heavy workload, time pressure, administrative work, classroom discipline, insufficient resources, and high demands from parents and school authorities (O'Bryan, 2019). Stressors can affect teachers negatively on a physical, psychological, and job satisfaction level, and can affect their teaching quality.

Thus, identifying the work-related stressors perceived by teachers can be useful for school administrators and policymakers, such as stress management programs, professional development workshops for teachers, positive leadership behaviors, and improved working conditions. Previous research in Pakistan has also highlighted the importance of principals' emotional intelligence practices and teacher empowerment strategies in shaping teachers' organizational and professional experience (Bano et al., 2023; Khan et al., 2022).

The aims of this study were to explore and examine work-related stressors and physical-emotional symptoms among primary school teachers. The study's findings could provide useful information for teachers, school administrators, educational policymakers, and researchers to design and implement interventions to reduce physical-emotional symptoms and occupational stressors among teachers and improve teachers' health and performance.

Objectives

Objectives of the study were to:

1. Determine the level of work-related stress experienced by primary school teachers.
2. Examine the effects of work-related stress on teachers' performance.
3. Compare work-related stress levels between public and private primary school teachers.
4. Identify the most significant work-related stressors among primary school teachers.

Research Questions

1. What is the level of work-related stress experienced by primary school teachers?
2. What is the effect of work-related stress on teachers' performance?
3. Is there a significant difference in work-related stress between public and private primary school teachers?
4. What are the most significant work-related stressors reported by primary school teachers?

Hypothesis

H₀₁: There is no significant effect of work-related stress on teacher performance among primary school teachers.

H₀₂: There is no significant difference in work-related stress levels between public and private primary school teachers.

Significance of the Study

This study will be beneficial to school districts, teacher employers, teacher preparers, and teachers themselves in improving the job satisfaction of teachers and cutting down attrition (i.e., the number of teachers leaving the profession). This study aims to discover the most significant stressors that teachers experience in their teaching position, identify emotional and physical manifestations of work-related stress, and report the coping strategies teachers use.

This research will help teachers understand work-related stressors and how they affect teacher well-being and job performance. Thus, its findings will help teachers identify their work stressors and develop coping strategies. Furthermore, the results of the study may help school administrators and policymakers develop stress management programs for teachers.

From the theoretical standpoint, the study contributes to the literature on teacher occupational stress and provides a basis for future research. It also supports Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4: Quality Education, by adding well-being as a condition for quality education, and SDG 3: Good Health and Well-being by promoting work-related stress awareness and management.

Literature Review

Teacher Work-Related Stress

The term stress refers to an unpleasant emotive experience which brings about a change in one's physical, intellectual, or behavioural state. A modest amount of stress can be very useful and healthy. In fact, it can help with various results, including improved motivation and eagerness to succeed, but negative stress can cause serious biological, emotional, and social problems for people (Leavy & Bahpsyche, 2021). In the

workplace, stress becomes particularly important when professional demands exceed an individual's ability to cope effectively.

Researchers have defined teacher work-related stress, but the definitions given by them are different. According to Kyriacou (2001), a teacher's tension occurs when they begin to experience negative emotions concerning their jobs and the pressure and experiences related to teaching. Kyriacou also stated that the inability to cope would make teachers stressed at work, though the causes might differ. The teachers' work was stressful because of negative feelings caused by the job (O'Bryan, 2019). Further research suggested that while work-related stress is an inevitable concept for teachers, the individual causes of stress differ from one teacher to another, and defined teacher work-related stress as a response to demands and expectations that teachers feel unable to cope with.

Arbia et al. (2023) examined the professional well-being of 20 primary school teachers in Italy using a grounded theory approach. The findings indicated that increasing workload, unfair working conditions, and limited organizational support negatively affected teachers' well-being. The study emphasized the need for more flexible workload management and stronger organizational support to help teachers cope with professional demands. These findings suggest that working conditions and organizational factors are important contributors to teachers' work-related stress.

Teacher well-being may also depend on organizational conditions. School leadership and school climate can affect how teachers experience their work responsibilities. Within research within the context of Pakistan, principals' emotional intelligence practices, teacher empowerment, instructional management, and teachers' organizational experience and school culture have been studied (Bano et al., 2023; Khan et al., 2022; Mumtaz et al., 2024). School culture has also been explored vis-à-vis the professional commitment of teachers (Azmat & Naseem, 2026). It is likely that school organisational and interpersonal conditions are important with respect to teachers' work-related stress experiences.

Work-Related Stress Among Primary School Teachers in Pakistan

Stress is something that can definitely be seen. It is present in many situations we face every day; some are challenges, while others become inspiration. It all depends on humans to face the challenges confidently or escape. All of these situations are different for each individual. Educators often face anxiety and pressure. Succeeding in this field takes special capability and expertise. Teachers who go through specific vocational courses are likely to be well-fitted to the profession, but at the same time there are chances to not be in the same condition either. The health and effectiveness of teachers are directly influenced by their teaching work.

Teachers play an important role in grooming and character building of a new generation, and if a teacher is contented, he/she can perform his/her duty in a better way. If a teacher suffers from depression, then the youth may also not be able to de-stress (Gulzar & Rashid, 2020). Sahito and Vaisanen (2017) state that educators are not satisfied at all with their profession, and as a result, either they resign or they perform poorly. A suitable work environment also matters for enhancing performance. Teaching is said to be one of the toughest professions in the world.

The growing demands of work and constant economic pressures have made work stress an increasing phenomenon in the teaching profession. Teachers experience work-related stress which occurs when demand at work exceeds one's ability to cope. Teaching is said to be a very stressful profession as the teachers are frequently burdened with more than they can handle. In other words, the teachers are overloaded due to inadequate facilities, expanding curriculum demands, congested classrooms, and unfavorable workplace conditions. According to the OECD dataset, teachers are increasingly responsible for catering to the needs of diverse students and managing classroom behavior while still meeting the curriculum and deal with administrative requirements. Large shares report being stressed from work a lot. When the teaching profession goes under stress with various issues, it takes a toll on teachers' ability to teach effectively. Moreover, it is associated with severe job consequences. For instance, in an occupational health study of 2,588

public school teachers, it is reported that high stress, poor school climate as well as low organizational support were significantly related to the intending to leave the profession (Mack et al., 2019).

Theoretical Framework

The present study draws on the work of O'Bryan (2019) and Leavy and Bahpsyche (2021) to understand work-related stress among teachers. Work-related stress may occur when teachers experience occupational demands and pressures that exceed their ability to cope effectively. Teachers may also experience stress without being fully aware of its causes, symptoms, and possible long-term consequences (O'Bryan, 2019; Leavy & Bahpsyche, 2021).

According to the Occupational Stressors Framework, sustained exposure to the workload (persistent administrative tasks), duties (inadequate resources), and environment (unfavorable working conditions) has adverse effects on the teachers' wellbeing and effectiveness (Kabito et al., 2020; Latif et al., 2023; Muzahir et al., 2022). The framework further distinguishes between occupational stressors (sources of stress) and symptoms (emotional and physical), a distinction this study adopts to assess the level of work-related stress and its relationship with teacher performance.

Methodology

Research Design

For this study, a quantitative research approach was used. A cross-sectional survey research design was used to determine the level of work-related stress experienced by primary school teachers. According to Creswell (2014), the quantitative approach was suitable for this study since it allows the collection of numerical data and the analysis of it statistically. A cross-sectional survey research design is suitable for collecting information from a large number of participants through a structured questionnaire and describing the levels of stress. This design was used for the present study because it collects quantitative data on the level of work-related stress experienced by primary school teachers.

Population and Sample

The population of the study comprised primary school teachers working in public and private schools of Lahore, Pakistan. In this research, the multistage sampling technique was used (cluster sampling, convenience sampling). In the first stage of cluster sampling, general public and private schools in Lahore and male and female teachers were selected. In the second stage, 20 participants from each school through convenience sampling were selected. Therefore, the sample size was 360 from schools in Lahore (Kabir, 2016).

Instrumentation

The researchers collected the data using a structured questionnaire that was adapted from previously developed instruments on work-related stress of teachers. All 36 items in the questionnaire were on a five-point Likert scale. The questionnaire was designed to investigate (i) the work-related stressors teachers experience, (ii) the emotional and physical manifestations teachers experience due to work-related stressors, and (iii) the ways/strategies teachers cope with stress.

The sections consisted of five parts in the questionnaire. Section A collected demographic data such as gender, age, teaching experience, school size, and current class level taught by the teachers. Section B was made up of 21 items on work-related stressors dealing with time pressure, workload, administration responsibilities, recognition, salary, working conditions, relations with colleagues, class size, and behaviour of students (Leavy & Bahpsyche, 2021). There were four items in section C that measured the emotional expressions of work-related stress. The 7 items of section d measured physical symptoms like fatigue, tiredness, sickness, weakness, high BP, and stomach ache (O'Bryan, 2019). Section E comprised four items

related to coping strategies. It included exercise, support from colleagues, support from family and friends, and hobbies (O'Bryan, 2019). The questionnaire contained 36 items, excluding the demographic questions. In order to establish the internal consistency of the questionnaire, it was pilot-tested on a sample of 30 teachers (not involved in the main sample). The internal consistency obtained by the Cronbach's alpha for the work-related stressors was .89, for emotional manifestations it was .84, for the physical manifestations it was .87, and for the total scale it was .92.

Data Collection Procedure

Permission was obtained from school administrators and informed consent was secured from all participants. Questionnaires were distributed to teachers during school hours and collected after completion. A total of 400 questionnaires were distributed, and 360 were returned, yielding a response rate of 90%.

Data Analysis

Data were analyzed using SPSS version 26.0. Descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages, means, standard deviations) were computed to determine the level of work-related stress. Independent samples t-tests were used to compare stress levels between public and private school teachers. Pearson correlation was used to examine the relationship between work-related stress and teacher performance.

Results

Demographic Characteristics of Participants

Table 1 presents the demographic characteristics of the 360 primary school teachers who participated in the study.

Table 1

Demographic Characteristics of Participants (N = 360)

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	82	22.8
	Female	278	77.2
School Type	Public	162	45.0
	Private	198	55.0
Teaching Experience	1-2 years	87	24.2
	3-5 years	118	32.8
	6-10 years	96	26.7
	>10 years	59	16.4
Class Level Taught	Grade 1-2	68	18.9
	Grade 3-4	94	26.1
	Grade 5	112	31.1
	Multiple Grades	86	23.9
Subjects Taught	Single Subject	142	39.4
	Multiple Subjects	218	60.6

The sample comprised predominantly female teachers (77.2%), with private school teachers constituting 55% of the sample. The majority of teachers had 3-5 years of teaching experience (32.8%), and most taught Grade 5 (31.1%) or multiple grades (23.9%).

RQ1: What is the level of work-related stress experienced by primary school teachers?

Descriptive statistics were computed to determine the level of work-related stress among primary school teachers. Table 2 presents the overall stress levels and subscale scores.

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics of Work-Related Stress and Subscales (N = 360)

Variable	M	SD	Range	Interpretation
Work-Related Stressors (WRS)	4.36	0.43	2.47-4.95	High
Workload	4.51	0.58	2.00-5.00	Very High
Administrative Responsibilities	4.43	0.62	2.00-5.00	High
Time Pressure	4.38	0.65	2.00-5.00	High
Student Behavior	4.21	0.71	2.00-5.00	High
Working Conditions	4.19	0.74	2.00-5.00	High
Recognition/Salary	4.32	0.68	2.00-5.00	High
Emotional Manifestations (EM)	18.86	2.15	11-20	High
Physical Manifestations (PM)	50.12	5.23	36-55	Moderate-High
Total Stress Score	153.08	14.52	121-169	High

Table 2 highlights that the teachers reported high stress overall (M = 4.36, SD = 0.43). Workload was the biggest stressor (M = 4.51, SD = 0.58), followed by administrative responsibilities (M = 4.43, SD = 0.62). Emotional Manifestations (M = 18.86, SD = 2.15) were more common than Physical Manifestations (M = 50.12, SD = 5.23). These results suggest that job-related demands, rather than personal factors, were the main source of teacher stress. Addressing workload and administrative burden may therefore be a useful starting point for intervention.

Table 3

Frequency Distribution of Work-Related Stress Levels

Stress Level	Score Range	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Low	1.00-2.33	12	3.3
Moderate	2.34-3.66	68	18.9
High	3.67-4.33	142	39.4
Very High	4.34-5.00	138	38.3

As shown in Table 3, the majority of teachers reported high (39.4%) or very high (38.3%) levels of work-related stress, with only 3.3% reporting low stress levels.

RQ2: *What is the effect of work-related stress on teacher performance?*

H₀₁: *There is no significant effect of work-related stress on teacher performance among primary school teachers.* To test this hypothesis, Pearson correlation analysis was performed between work-related stress and teacher performance (based on items that affect performance). Table 4 displays the findings.

Table 4

Correlation Between Work-Related Stress and Teacher Performance (N = 360)

Variable	1	2	3	4	5
1. Work-Related Stressors	1.00				
2. Emotional Manifestations	.62**	1.00			
3. Physical Manifestations	.55**	.48**	1.00		
4. Total Stress	.71**	.65**	.59**	1.00	
5. Teacher Performance Impact	.68**	.58**	.53**	.63**	1.00

**p < .01

The correlation analysis revealed a strong positive correlation between total work-related stress and negative impact on teacher performance ($r = .63$, $p < .01$), indicating that higher stress levels were associated with greater negative effects on teacher performance. Therefore, H_{01} is rejected.

Table 5

Regression Analysis: Work-Related Stress as Predictor of Teacher Performance

Predictor	B	SE	β	t	p
Constant	1.24	0.18		6.89	<.001
Work-Related Stressors	0.52	0.04	0.68	13.00	<.001

$p < .001$

The regression analysis showed that work-related stress significantly predicted negative effects on teacher performance, accounting for 46% of the variance $R^2 = .46$, $F(1, 358) = 169.0$, $p < .001$.

RQ 3: *Is there a significant difference in work-related stress between public and private primary school teachers?*

H₀₂: *There is no significant difference in work-related stress levels between public and private primary school teachers.*

Independent samples t-tests were conducted to compare stress levels between public and private school teachers. Table 6 presents the results.

Table 6

Comparison of Work-Related Stress Between Public and Private School Teachers

Variable	School Type	n	M	SD	t	df	p
Total WRS	Public	162	4.18	0.42	-4.82	358	<.001
	Private	198	4.51	0.39			
Emotional Manifestations	Public	162	17.25	2.28	-5.31	358	<.001
	Private	198	20.11	1.92			
Physical Manifestations	Public	162	47.86	5.12	-3.78	358	<.001
	Private	198	52.18	4.98			

Private school teachers reported significantly higher levels of work-related stress ($M = 4.51$, $SD = 0.39$) compared to public school teachers ($M = 4.18$, $SD = 0.42$), $t(358) = -4.82$, $p < .001$. Significant differences were also found in emotional and physical manifestations of stress. Therefore, H_{02} is rejected.

RQ 4: *What are the most significant work-related stressors reported by primary school teachers?*

Table 7

Mean Scores of Work-Related Stressor Items (N = 360)

Item	M	SD
WRS1: Heavy workload	4.72	0.58
WRS2: Administrative demands	4.68	0.62
WRS3: Time pressure to complete tasks	4.55	0.65
WRS4: Student behavioral issues	4.42	0.71
WRS5: Insufficient resources	4.38	0.74
WRS6: Low salary and recognition	4.35	0.68
WRS7: Unfavorable working conditions	4.28	0.73
WRS8: Relationships with colleagues	4.18	0.76
WRS9: Large class sizes	4.15	0.79
WRS10: Parental demands	4.02	0.81

The highest-ranked stressors were heavy workload ($M = 4.72$, $SD = 0.58$), administrative demands ($M = 4.68$, $SD = 0.62$), and time pressure ($M = 4.55$, $SD = 0.65$). Student behavioral issues and insufficient resources also emerged as significant stressors.

Emotional and Physical Manifestations

Table 8

Emotional Manifestations of Work-Related Stress

Item	M	SD
EMWRS20: Feeling anxious	4.84	0.45
EMWRS21: Feeling depressed	4.72	0.52
EMWRS22: Feeling angry/frustrated	4.68	0.58
EMWRS23: Feeling insecure	4.62	0.62

Table 9

Physical Manifestations of Work-Related Stress

Item	M	SD
PMWRS24: Exhaustion	4.78	0.48
PMWRS25: Frequent tiredness	4.72	0.52
PMWRS26: Physical weakness	4.65	0.58
PMWRS27: Frequent illness	4.58	0.62
PMWRS28: Increased blood pressure	4.42	0.68
PMWRS29: Stomach discomfort	4.38	0.72
PMWRS30: Sleep disturbances	4.35	0.74

The most frequently reported emotional manifestation was anxiety ($M = 4.84$, $SD = 0.45$), while exhaustion ($M = 4.78$, $SD = 0.48$) was the most commonly reported physical symptom.

Discussion

The present study examines the relationship between work-related stress among primary school teachers of Lahore, Pakistan, and teacher performance. The findings revealed that teachers experience significant levels of occupational stress, corroborating earlier studies at the international and Pakistan levels, which revealed that teaching is a highly demanding profession (Alexandros-Stamatios et al., 2023; Latif et al., 2023; Muzahir et al., 2022; OECD, 2023). A considerable percentage of teachers indicated that their stress and pre-stress levels were high or very high, which signals a serious problem in primary schooling.

The most common source of stress was workload, followed by administrative duties and others. The finding corresponds to Arbia et al. (2023), who states that overwork is one of the main causes of teacher stress. Teachers in primary schools are expected to tackle multiple services like lesson planning, assessment, classroom management, extracurricular activities, and administrative tasks simultaneously. When educators regularly receive more responsibilities than time and resources provide, this contributes to emotional fatigue and reduces professional effectiveness.

The study also found a strong positive relationship between teacher performance and work-related stress, with a negative effect on teacher performance. These findings correspond to O'Bryan (2019) and Kabito et al. (2020), who state that teacher occupational stress is not only a problem for the teacher but might also contribute to the quality of the job. High levels of stress diminish the concentration, patience, creativity, and motivation of teachers. Further, they are unable to maintain productive relations with students. The regression results also revealed that teacher performance could be explained by job stress in a significant proportion.

Consistent with past evidence from Pakistan (Muzahir et al., 2022), it was revealed that Private school teachers had significantly higher work-related stress as compared to public school teachers. Private schools may have greater performance expectations, longer hours, and increased institutional demands, all of which can lead to greater stress. An earlier study in Pakistan has pointed out the role of school heads in empowering teachers. Moreover, the emotional intelligence of principals plays an important role in determining the organizational experiences of teachers (Bano et al., 2023; Khan et al., 2022). These may also be contributing factors. As a result, stress levels in teachers in public and private schools may depend on workload expectations, recognition, organizational support, and perceived job security. Yet, these organizational aspects were not directly analyzed in the current study; thus, they warrant further analysis.

Similarly, anxiety, low mood, feeling overwhelmed, exhaustion, tiredness, and sleep-related issues were highlighted as issues stemming from the stress. The findings indicate that teacher stress can spill over into their home life and well-being. According to research on teacher burnout and occupational health, the same concerns were raised (Naono-Nagatomo et al., 2019).

In essence, findings suggest that schools should consider the well-being of teachers an important factor of educational quality. Stress management programs, supportive administrators, appropriate workload management, proper administrative assistance, and improved working conditions may reduce occupational stress and improve the performance of teachers. It is essential to take these issues into consideration, especially among private schools. In this study, teachers reported greater levels of stress.

Theoretical Implications

The findings from this study support the theoretical framework developed by O'Bryan (2019) and Leavy and Bahpsyche (2021). The research study revealed that when teachers experience occupational demands exceeding their ability to cope, it is called work stress. The significant physical and emotional symptoms experienced by classroom teachers reveal a huge number actively coping with the various demands of the profession. Research findings also back up the theory about distinctions of stressors (workload, administrative, interpersonal) and the differential impact on teachers. The major source of stress is the workload; thus, it should be targeted for intervention efforts.

Practical Implications

The results of this research have several practical ramifications for school principals, educational policymakers, and teacher training institutions. To start with, teachers must be given stress management programs urgently. Workshops on stress reduction techniques, mindfulness, and work-life balance can be included in such programs. Schools must start conducting regular wellness activities and providing counselling services for teachers who are under high stress. Moreover, the school heads should examine the distribution of workload and look for measures to lessen the load of the administrators on the teachers. To take over the paperwork load of teachers, they might have administrative staff to help with the various paperwork. The difference between the teachers' practices in public and private schools indicates the need for a policy overhaul in private education. This may include regulations on hours of work, job security provisions, and minimum standards for the working conditions of teachers. Teacher training institutions should include in-service teacher education to help young people manage stress and care. New teachers should be made aware of the challenges they will encounter. New teachers should also have coping strategies to stop stress and anxiety from escalating.

Conclusion

This study investigated the level of work-related stress among primary school teachers in Lahore, Pakistan, and examined its effects on teacher performance. The analysis illustrates that stress in the workplace is a significant stressor. In this regard, the plight of primary school teachers is the predominant social problem. It was found that private sector teachers experienced considerably greater stress compared to their public

sector colleagues. Similarly, teacher performance was found to have a large negative effect on stress. The high levels of emotional and physical manifestations reported, in particular, anxiety and exhaustion (fatigue), suggest that many teachers experience a level of stress so high that it can impact their health or their effectiveness at work. Stress negatively impacts all human activity, and it is clear that as stress intensifies, performance diminishes. Thus, teacher stress is not just a teacher issue but a quality education issue. The research validates that teachers working in primary schools in Lahore suffer from stress as an alarming problem and can be helpful for initiating an intervention to fix the problem. The results suggest the immediate need for stress management programs, workload reduction measures, and policy reforms to enhance teacher working conditions and well-being.

Limitations

This research has a few limitations. To start with, its cross-sectional design does not permit the establishment of a causal relationship between work stress and teacher performance. A longitudinal study may allow for better comprehension of stress and performance as they occur. Secondly, social desirability bias could have affected respondents due to using self-report measures in this study. In future research, including objective measures such as classroom observation would bolster findings. Thirdly, the study was confined to primary school teachers of Lahore, which may limit the generalizability of findings for other regions of Pakistan. Future studies should consider educators from different geographic and educational contexts. Fourthly, the coping strategies included in the questionnaire were not examined in detail. Alternative research studies could reveal which coping strategies actually reduce teachers' stress. Individual factors that may influence how teachers experience and respond to work-related stress include (but were not examined) such things as resilience, personality and social support.

Recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

- Schools should regularly review teachers' workloads and reduce unnecessary administrative and non-teaching duties to allow sufficient time for lesson planning and classroom responsibilities.
- Schools should provide accessible stress-management support, including brief workshops on coping strategies, resilience, and work-life balance, along with confidential counseling for teachers experiencing high stress.
- Private schools should strengthen teacher support by ensuring reasonable working hours, job security, fair workload distribution, and adequate opportunities for professional development.
- School officials should create a positive work environment by regularly acknowledging and recognizing teachers, organizing peer mentoring, planning collaboratively, and communicating about workload and workplace issues.
- The teacher education and training programs should include practical preparation in stress management, resilience, and coping strategies, while the Education authorities should provide clear guidelines on reasonable teacher workload and working conditions.

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