Original Article

A Relationship between Self-esteem and Perceived stress among Private School Teachers

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Abstract

Background: Teachers are faced with everyday stressful events such as overexposure to the media, family related issues and school. The self-esteem of a teacher as a person is very important, as the chances of a teacher's being of maximum benefit to the self-esteem of pupils are very small unless they maintain their own self-esteem at a high level. **Aims :**To analyze the relationship between self-esteem and perceived stress among private school teachers. **Methods:** In the current study, data from 100 teachers working in private schools in Delhi-NCR using random purposive sampling was collected. Self-esteem was assessed using the Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale, and the Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) was used to assess perceived stress. The data was analyzed using the statistical software SPSS (version 20.0). **Results and Conclusion:** The majority of the private school teachers had average self-esteem and perceived stress. Female teachers are far better at coping with stress than male teachers. It was also found that teachers of private schools who live in a joint family had better self-esteem and comparatively more perceived stress than teachers of private schools who live in a nuclear family. Further, unmarried teachers had better self-esteem than married and divorced teachers of private schools and divorced teachers had less perceived stress than married and unmarried teachers of private schools. We as a society need to take a proactive approach to help prospective teachers deal with the everyday problems they are being faced with.

Keywords: Self-esteem, Perceived stress, Teachers, Private Schools

Introduction

Education is one of the oldest and most award-winning professions. Like all other professions, teaching also went through significant changes. Hence, the effectiveness of teachers has been put continuously to test by the changing demands of society in its many phases of transition. The Indian Education Commission, 1966, stated: "The destiny of the country is being shaped in its classrooms," and the success of a school depends largely on the quality of its teachers. When the teachers are effective, students learn (Ewan, 2002). Tsunesaburo Makiguchi, a teacher during World War II, said that the value of creating society is in the hands of teachers. He started the pedagogy of Soka Kyoki Gakkai. In this VUCA world (Volatility, Uncertainty, Complexity, and Ambiguity), teaching is turning into a stressful job, especially in private schools where values have turned into measurable

outcomes rather than quality. Even now, teachers hold the responsibility of setting up as role models for many students and also establishing a suitable and healthy classroom environment. This has been put to a serious challenge with the ongoing COVID-19 crisis, as there has been a sudden change in the delivery model and a change in the contact process between teachers and students.

Self-esteem is a psychological trait related to a person's image of self-value and self confidence in total aspects of human activity (Rosenberg, 1965). The most outstanding feature of a person having high self-esteem is feeling of self-work, self-regards and self acceptance (Wylie, 1974, 1979). A favorable self-esteem is considered a fundamental aspect of personal well-being, happiness and adjustment (Brown, 1993). Stress is the psychological and physical state that results when the resources of the individual are not sufficient to cope with the demands and pressures of the situation. Some factors that cause increased stress at workplace include 'workload (both excessive and insufficient work), lack of participation and control in the workplace, monotonous or unpleasant tasks, lack of recognition at work, inequity, poor interpersonal relationships, poor working conditions, poor leadership and communication (Maulik, 2018).

Self-esteem is positively and negatively associated with self-respect and worthiness, according to Coopersmith (1967) and Rosenberg (1979) A person with low self-esteem feels a lack of respect for himself/herself and seeks him/her as an unworthy and inadequate or deficient person. Maslow's hierarchy of needs began with physiological needs of hunger and thirst, then moved on to safety and love, and ended with esteem and self-actualization.

Students with high self-esteem are less stressed than those who are low (Abouserie, 1994). The literature indicated that as the number of life events increased, the level of self esteem decreased (Youngs & Rathge, 1990). Teaching level (grade and high school) by sex showed those teaching regular classrooms in grade school experienced less burnout and stress than did high school teachers. There was no sex difference. In the institutional setting there was a significant difference in burnout scores between men and women who taught high school.(Beer & Beer ,1992)

Focusing on how it has impacted the lives of the teachers, this work has selected teachers in Delhi-NCR, where private schools play a significant role in the education system. The ongoing online delivery is a major cause of the increase in the stress level of the teachers. Moreover, in rural areas, many teachers undergo psychological distress due to online teaching. There is much uncertainty and ambiguity in the environment that leads to stress.

Objectives

To study the self-esteem of private school teachers in Delhi-NCR.(II) To study the Perceived stress among private school teachers in Delhi-NCR.(III)To study the relationship between self-esteem and perceived stress among private school teachers in Delhi-NCR.

Materials And Methods

Setting and Participants

This study used a correlational research design. A total of 100 private school teachers both i.e. males and females who are between 25 and 60 years of age and having at least 6 months of teaching experience from Delhi-NCR region participated in this study. Participants were contacted online using email, whatsapp messages and personal call and prior consent of all the participants was taken prior to the filling of the questionnaires in the Google form. They were requested to cooperate fully and truthfully answer the items of each scale and were also assured that the information was being collected for purely research purposes and would be kept confidential. The data were collected between July and August of 2021.

Tools

The following tools were used to measure self-esteem and perceived stress among the private school teachers.

1. **Self-esteem scale:** The Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale (SES; Rosenberg,1989) is a 10-item self-report measure that uses a 4-point scale ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree. A 10-item scale that measures global self-worth by measuring both positive and negative feelings about the self. The scale is believed to be unidimensional. All items are answered using a 4-point Likert scale format representing the maximum score possible. High scores indicate high self-esteem, whereas low scores indicate low.

2. **Perceived Stress Scale:** The Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) is one of the most widely disseminated methods of assessing psychological stress has been the Perceived Stress Scale (PSS; Cohen et al., 1983). The scale also includes a number of direct queries about current levels of experienced stress. PSS scores are obtained by reversing responses (e.g., 0 = 4, 1 = 3, 2 = 2, 3 = 1 & 4 = 0) to the four positively stated items (items 4, 5, 7, & 8) and then summing across all scale items. A short 4 item scale can be made from questions 2, 4, 5 and 10 of the PSS 10 item scale.

Data Analysis

Descriptive statistical analyses were performed to analyze the data collected from the participants. Continuous variables were presented in the form of mean (±sd) and categorical variables were presented as number (%). Pearson correlation was used to quantify the relationship between domain specific Self-esteem scores and PSS. Statistical significance was considered at $p < 0.05$. A p value less than 0.05 was considered statistically significant. All statistical analyses were performed using statistical software SPSS (version 20.0).

Results

Descriptive Analysis

Before presenting the actual results pertaining to the hypotheses advanced in this study, it is deemed desirable to describe the nature of the variables and their distribution.

The description of all scores for continuous variables are presented in table 1, in terms of means, standard deviation, minimum and maximum. The description of all scores for categorical variables are presented in table 2, in terms of frequency and percentage. With a view to provide an analytical and comparative picture of descriptive statistics economically and conveniently, various statistics were organized in tabular form to present different variables.

Table 1

A Descriptive Analytic Picture of Total Sample (N=100) on the Variables of Perceived stress and Self-esteem

	Age	Teaching Experience	Self-Esteem	Perceived Stress
Mean	38.80	13.56	20.07	16.43
Std. Deviation	7.879	8.205	3.859	4.789
Minimum	25	3	12	6
Maximum	60	39	31	29

Discussion based on Means: Table 1 represents the grand means of age, teaching experience, self-esteem and perceived stress.

Mean of teacher's age was 38.80 (SD=7.87) years with minimum 25 years and maximum 60 years and the mean teaching experience was 13.56 (SD=8.20) years with minimum 03 years and maximum 39 years.

Mean value on the measure of self-esteem was 20.07 (SD=3.85) with minimum and maximum scores of 12 and 31 respectively, which indicates that teachers have moderate levels of self-esteem.

Mean value on the measure of perceived stress was 16.43 (SD=4.78) with minimum and maximum score of 06 and 29 respectively, which indicates that teachers have moderate levels of perceived stress.

Above mentioned results indicate that teachers have moderate levels of self-esteem and moderate levels of perceived stress.

Table 2

A Descriptive Analytic Picture of Total Sample (N=100) on the Variables of Gender, Marital Status, Educational Qualifications and Family Type

Variables		N	%
Gender	Female	73	73.0
	Male	27	27.0
Marital Status	Divorced	5	5.0
	Married	73	73.0
	Unmarried	22	22.0
Educational Qualifications	B.Ed.	4	4.0
	Graduate	31	31.0
	Ph.D.	6	6.0
	Post Graduate	59	59.0
Family Type	Joint	29	29.0
	Nuclear	71	71.0

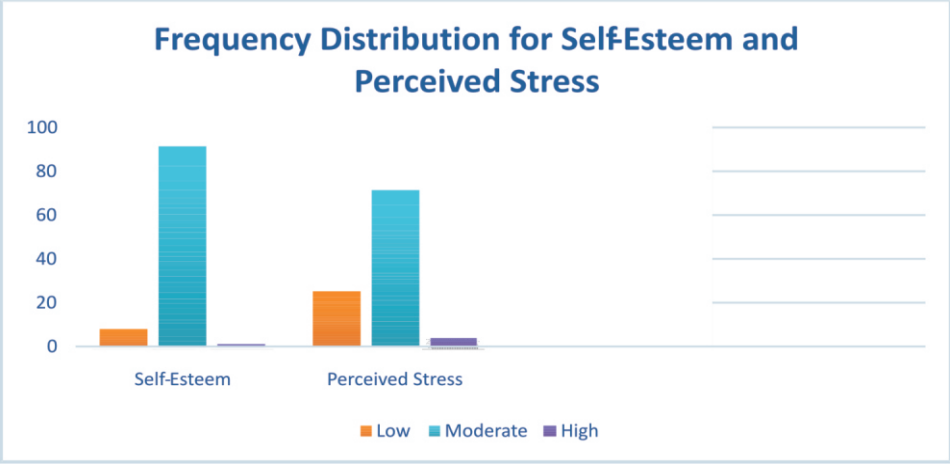
Discussion based on Demographics: Among 100 private school teachers who participated in this study, 73% were females and 27% were males. Further, 5% of the participants were divorced, 73% were married and 22% were unmarried. Educational qualifications showed that 59% of the teachers were post graduates, 31% were graduates, 6% were doctorates and 4% were B.Ed.

Table 3

A Descriptive Analytic Picture of Total Sample (N=100) on the Levels of Self-Esteem and Perceived Stress

Variables		N	%
Esteem	High	1	1.0
	Low	8	8.0
	Moderate	91	91.0
Perceived Stress	High	4	4.0
Self -	Low	25	25.0
	Moderate	71	71.0

Discussion based on Levels of Self-Esteem and Perceived Stress: Table 3 shows that the majority (91%) of the participants had a moderate level of self-esteem, 8% had low self-esteem and only 1% of the teachers had a high level of self-esteem. Similarly, 71% of teachers had a moderate level of perceived stress, 25% had a low level of perceived stress and only 4% of teachers had a high level of perceived stress.



Differential Analysis

In continuation of the descriptive analysis of data in the preceding section of this chapter, efforts have been made to compare various groups through differential analysis.

Table 4

Gender-wise mean and standard deviation for the Variables of Self-esteem and Perceived Stress

	Gender	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	df	t	*p*
Self-Esteem	Female	73	19.95	3.818	98	-.530	0.88
	Male	27	20.41	4.022			
Perceived Stress	Female	73	16.37	4.692	98	-.205	0.56
	Male	27	16.59	5.131			

Discussion based on Comparison of Self-Esteem of Male and Female Teachers: The mean score of female teachers (N=73) for self-esteem was 19.95 (SD=3.81) and the mean score of male teachers (N=27) was 20.41 (SD=4.02). It indicates that male teachers of private schools had higher self-esteem than female teachers of private schools.

Discussion based on Comparison of Perceived Stress of Male and Female Teachers: The mean score of female teachers (N=73) for perceived stress was 16.37 (SD=4.69) and the mean score of male teachers (N=27) was 16.59 (SD=5.13). It indicates that male teachers of private schools had higher perceived stress than female teachers of private schools.

Discussion based on Comparison of t-values for Male and Female Teachers on Self-Esteem Scale: Since p =0.88 (Table-5) is greater than our chosen significance level ? = 0.05, we can accept the null

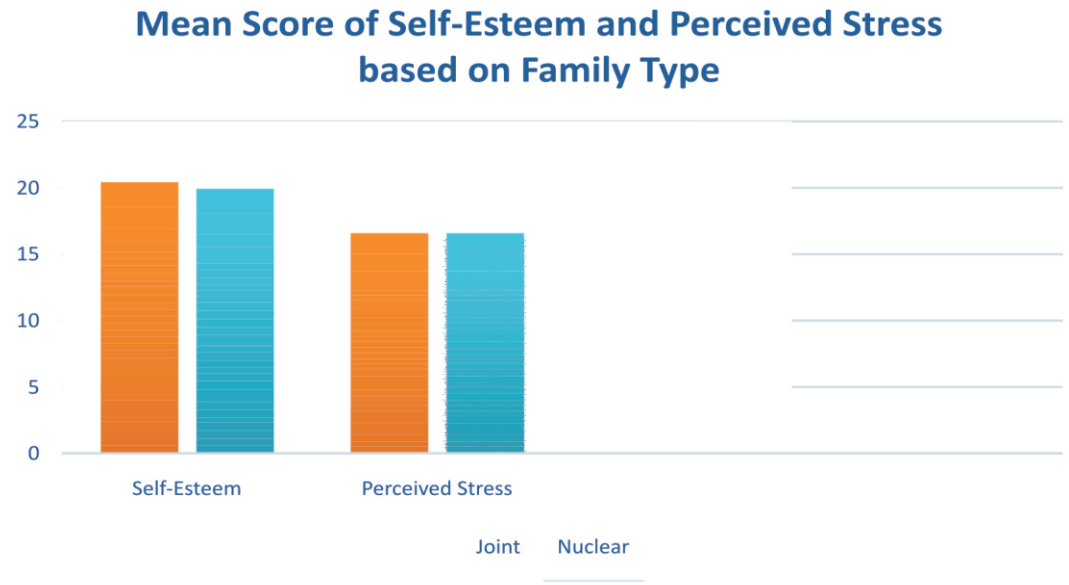
hypothesis and conclude that the mean self-esteem for male and female teachers is not significantly different.

Discussion based on Comparison of t-values for Male and Female Teachers on Perceived Stress Scale: Since p =0.56 (Table-5) is greater than our chosen significance level ? = 0.05, we can accept the null hypothesis and conclude that the mean perceived stress for male and female teachers is not significantly different.

Table 5

Mean and standard deviation for the Variables of Self-esteem and Perceived Stress based on Family Type

	Type of Family	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Df	t	*p*
Self-Esteem	Joint	29	20.41	3.689	98	0.56	0.31
	Nuclear	71	19.93	3.944			
Perceived Stress	Joint	29	16.59	4.982	98	0.20	0.93
	Nuclear	71	16.37	4.743			



Discussion based on Comparison of Self-Esteem based on Family type: The mean score of teachers living in a joint family environment (N=29) for self-esteem was 20.41 (SD=3.68) and the mean score of teachers living in a nuclear family (N=71) was 19.93 (SD=3.94). It indicates that teachers of private schools who live in a joint family have better self-esteem than teachers of private schools who live in a nuclear family.

Discussion based on Comparison of Perceived Stress based on Family type: The mean score of teachers living in a joint family environment (N=29) for perceived stress was 16.59 (SD=4.98) and the

mean score of teachers living in a nuclear family (N=71) was 16.37 (SD=4.74). It indicates that teachers of private schools who live in a joint family had comparatively more perceived stress than the teachers of private schools who live in a nuclear family.

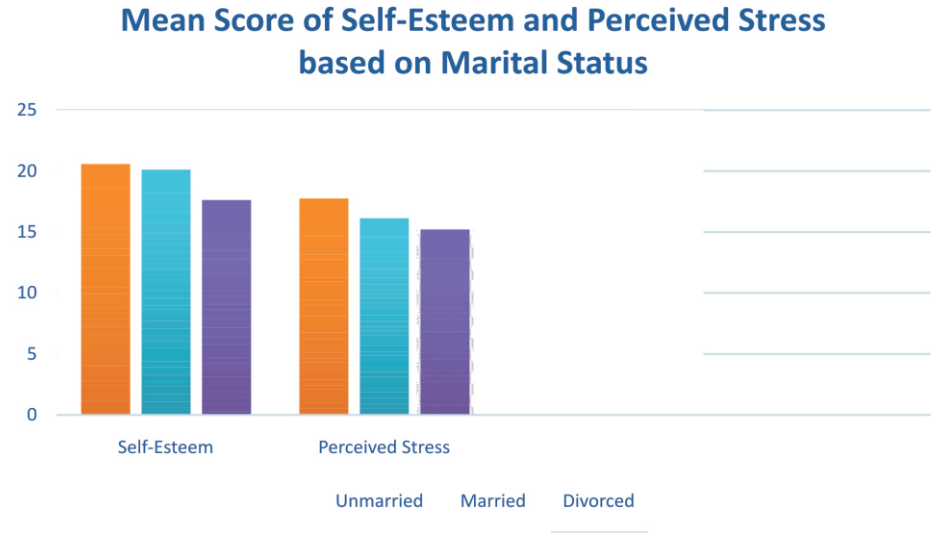
Discussion based on Comparison of t-values for Family Type on Self-Esteem Scale: Since p =0.31 (Table-7) is greater than our chosen significance level α = 0.05, we can accept the null hypothesis and conclude that the mean self-esteem for the private school teachers who live in joint or nuclear family is not significantly different.

Discussion based on Comparison of t-values for Family Type on Perceived Stress Scale: Since p =0.93 (Table-7) is greater than our chosen significance level α = 0.05, we can accept the null hypothesis and conclude that the mean perceived stress for the private school teachers who live in joint or nuclear family is not significantly different.

Table 6

Mean and standard deviation for the Variables of Self-esteem and Perceived Stress based on Marital Status

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
						Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Self Esteem	Unmarried	22	20.55	3.839	.818	18.84	22.25	12	25
	Married	73	20.10	3.790	.444	19.21	20.98	12	31
	Divorced	5	17.60	4.879	2.182	11.54	23.66	13	24
	Total	100	20.07	3.859	.386	19.30	20.84	12	31
Perceived Stress	Unmarried	22	17.73	5.675	1.210	15.21	20.24	8	29
	Married	73	16.12	4.491	.526	15.08	17.17	6	28
	Divorced	5	15.20	4.764	2.131	9.28	21.12	11	22
	Total	100	16.43	4.789	.479	15.48	17.38	6	29



Discussion based on Comparison of Self-Esteem based on Marital Status of teachers: The mean score of unmarried teachers (N=22) for self-esteem was 20.55 (SD=3.83), the mean score of married teachers (N=73) for self-esteem was 20.10 (SD=3.79) and the mean score of divorced teachers (N=5) was 17.60 (SD=4.87). It indicates that unmarried teachers had better self-esteem than married and divorced teachers of private schools.

Discussion based on Comparison of Perceived Stress based on Marital Status of teachers: The mean score of unmarried teachers (N=22) for perceived stress was 17.73 (SD=5.67), the mean score of married teachers (N=73) for perceived stress was 16.12 (SD=4.49) and the mean score of divorced teachers (N=5) was 15.20 (SD=4.46). It indicates that divorced teachers had less perceived stress than married and unmarried teachers of private schools.

Table 7

The F-values for the difference between the Mean of unmarried teachers (N=22), married teachers (N=73) and divorced teachers (N=5) on Variables of Self-esteem and Perceived Stress

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Squar	F	Sig.
Self-Esteem	Between Groups	35.527	2	17.763	1.197	.306
	Within Groups	1438.983	97	14.835		
	Total	1474.510	99			
Perceived Stress	Between Groups	51.456	2	25.728	1.125	.329
	Within Groups	2219.054	97	22.877		
	Total	2270.510	99			

Discussion based on Comparison of F-values for Marital Status on Self-Esteem Scale: Since p =0.30 (Table-9) is greater than our chosen significance level α = 0.05, we can accept the null hypothesis and conclude that the mean self-esteem for the married, unmarried and divorced teachers is not significantly different.

Discussion based on Comparison of F-values for Marital Status on Perceived Stress Scale: Since p =0.32 (Table-9) is greater than our chosen significance level α = 0.05, we can accept the null hypothesis and conclude that the mean perceived stress for the married, unmarried and divorced teachers is not significantly different.

Table 8

Correlation between Self-esteem, Perceived Stress, Age and Teaching Experience

	1	2	3	4
1. Age	-	-	-	-
2. Teaching Experience	.765**	-	-	-
3. Self-Esteem	-.217*	-.211*	-	-
4. Perceived Stress	-.178	-.154	.553**	-

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Self-esteem and age have a statistically significant linear relationship (r= -.217, p < .005). The direction of the relationship is negative (i.e., self-esteem and age are negatively correlated), meaning that these variables tend to increase inversely (i.e., greater age is associated with lower self-esteem).

Self-esteem and teaching experience have a statistically significant linear relationship (r= -.211, p < .005). The direction of the relationship is negative (i.e., self-esteem and teaching experience are negatively correlated), meaning that these variables tend to increase inversely (i.e., greater teaching experience is associated with lower self-esteem).

Perceived stress and age have no statistically significant linear relationship (r= -.178, p > .005). The direction of the relationship is negative (i.e., perceived stress and age are negatively correlated), meaning that these variables tend to increase inversely (i.e., greater age is associated with lower perceived stress).

Perceived stress and teaching experience have no statistically significant linear relationship (r= -.154, p > .005). The direction of the relationship is negative (i.e., perceived stress and teaching experience are negatively correlated), meaning that these variables tend to increase inversely (i.e., greater teaching experience is associated with lower perceived stress).

Self-esteem and perceived stress have a statistically significant linear relationship (r= .553, p < .001). The direction of the relationship is positive (i.e., self-esteem and perceived stress are positively correlated), meaning that these variables tend to increase together (i.e., greater self-esteem is associated with higher perceived stress).

Discussion

The results of this study revealed that majority of the private school teachers had moderate level of self-esteem (91% of the participants) and moderate level of perceived stress (71% of the participants) with mean score of 19.95 (SD=3.81) for female teachers (N=73) and the mean score of 20.41 (SD=4.02) for male teachers (N=27) for self-esteem which clearly indicates that male teachers had higher self-esteem than of female teachers.

The mean score of female teachers (N=73) for perceived stress was 16.37 (SD=4.69) and the mean score of male teachers (N=27) was 16.59 (SD=5.13) which indicates that male teachers had higher perceived stress than female teachers. These results

further indicate that female teachers, even on having lesser self-esteem as compared to the male teachers, had lower perceived stress which further indicates that female teachers are far better in coping the stress than male teachers. This finding is in contrast with the finding of Nielsen (2011) who revealed that Indian women are the most stressed in the world.

The data analysis also revealed that there was no significant difference in mean self-esteem ($p > .05$) and mean perceived stress ($p>.05$) based on gender (i.e. male and female). This finding supports the finding of Beer & Beer (1992) who concluded that there was no sex difference in prevalence of stress.

It was also found that teachers of private schools who live in a joint family had better self-esteem and comparatively more perceived stress than teachers of private schools who live in a nuclear family. There was no significant difference in mean self-esteem and perceived stress for the private school teachers who live in joint or nuclear family ($p > .005$).

Further, unmarried teachers had better self-esteem than married and divorced teachers of private schools and divorced teachers had less perceived stress than married and unmarried teachers of private schools. No significant difference was found between marital status, self-esteem and perceived stress.

Self-esteem had a statistically significant negative relationship with age and teaching experience, meaning that these variables tend to increase inversely (i.e., greater age and teaching experience were associated with lower self-esteem).

Perceived stress had no statistically significant linear relationship with age and teaching experience. But, the direction of the relationship was found to be negative, meaning that these variables tend to increase inversely (i.e., greater age and teaching experience were associated with lower perceived stress).

Self-esteem and perceived stress had a statistically significant linear relationship ($r= .553$, $p < .001$). The direction of the relationship is positive, meaning that these variables tend to increase together (i.e., greater self-esteem is associated with higher perceived stress). Study done by Aung (2018) to investigate the relationship between stress and self-esteem among prospective teachers revealed that the majority of the prospective teachers had moderate self-esteem level and the intrapersonal/ self-stress was the most common among the prospective teachers. The prospective teachers with low self-esteem felt more stress than those in moderate and high self-esteem levels. The self-esteem of the prospective teachers was negatively correlated with their stress. Hence, our findings do not support the finding of Aung (2018).

Implications:(I) Put the focus of mental health experts on the mental health issues faced by private school teachers.(II)Convincing school administrations to design special training programmes that can help teachers optimize their perceived stress and improve self-esteem. (III)**.**Evolve training modules for the private school teachers and help enhance the performance as well as bring a positive personality trait leading to better mental well-being and quality of life.

Limitations: (I) The sample size for the study covered only 100 teachers(II)The study was confined to private school teachers working in Delhi-NCR region(III)Majority of the participants were females.

Suggestions for Further Study: (I) Similar studies can be conducted by taking a larger sample which can include private and government school teachers from other regions also.(II)Similar studies can be conducted by using different psychological tools.

Conclusion

This study revealed that the majority of the private school teachers had a moderate level of self-esteem and perceived stress. Male teachers had

comparatively higher self-esteem and perceived stress than the female teachers. It was also observed that the female teachers are far better at coping with stress than male teachers. There was no significant difference in self-esteem and perceived stress based on gender. It was also found that teachers of private schools who live in a joint family had better self-esteem and comparatively more perceived stress than teachers of private schools who live in a nuclear family. But, there was no significant difference in mean self-esteem and perceived stress for the private school teachers who live in joint or nuclear families. Further, unmarried teachers had better self-esteem than married and divorced teachers of private schools and divorced teachers had less perceived stress than married and unmarried teachers of private schools. There was no significant difference between marital status, self-esteem and perceived stress. Self-esteem had a statistically significant negative relationship with age and teaching experience, perceived stress had no statistically significant linear relationship with age and teaching experience. But, the direction of the relationship was found to be negative. Self-esteem and perceived stress had a statistically significant positive relationship i.e., greater self-esteem is associated with higher perceived stress.

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