

A STUDY ON OCCUPATIONAL STRESS AMONG THE TEACHERS OF THE PRIMARY SCHOOLS IN DHARMAPURI DISTRICT

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ABSTRACT: The aim of the study is to determine the Occupational Stress level of Government and Aided Higher primary School Teachers living in different socio-cultural and economic situations. The scale used in the study has been developed by researches. 370 Aided school teachers and 240 Government teachers have participated in the present study. At the end of the study it was seen that Aided school teachers have more occupational stress levels than Government school teachers. There is a meaningful difference in the stress level points of Government and Aided Primary Teachers. Policy makers are advised to analyse the teacher training and assessment system with the assumption that personal and social characteristics and working conditions may have an effect on teacher occupational stress. Results also showed that teachers who reported greater stress were less satisfied with teaching, reported greater frequency of absences and a greater number of total days absent, were more likely to leave teaching (career intention), and less likely to take up a teaching career again (career commitment). Implications for further research are also discussed.

Keywords: Primary School Teachers, Inter-role distance, Role Ambiguity, Role Stagnation, Role Stress, Self-role distance, Teacher Occupational stress.

I. INTRODUCTION

Stress is a common feature in our lives, especially as the pace of development increases. Work is a common term which is applied for all sorts of occupation. It is a basic condition for most people and is an important component of the atmosphere for human survival. It is also a major element for the development of the individual as well as the economy of the nation.

In the old days there was no concept of property. The society was almost egalitarian and there was no specialization as the occupation is concerned. The society was economically independent and people got satisfied their hunger out of the natural fruits and vegetations which naturally grew on earth. Hence we can say that in olden days a person were almost free from the concept of occupational stress, but this world of ours, founded upon science and technology, is highly mechanized and materialistic. Thus, as a result the life has become quite challenging and competitive at all levels. Those who don't have money or resources try to find it and those who have, make efforts to get more. The executives are worried about low productions in the company, businessmen are worried about low profit and workers are worried about their job security and low wages.

An occupational stress is any force that pushes a psychological or physical factor behind its range of stability, producing a strain within the individuals. Knowledge that stress is likely to occur constitutes a threat to the individual. A threat can cause a strain because of what it signifies to the person. As occupational stress begins to take toll on the body and mind, a variety of symptoms can result.

1.1 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The education system in general and the Primary education system in particular are instruments to develop the human capital as economic assets for wealth generation and also as social assets for improving the quality of the life of the people. The education system should provide scope for understanding several major socio-economic changes affecting the society that include global economic integration, national economic reforms, changing demographic pattern, increased schools enrolment reduced drop-out rate, social norms favouring women and weaker sections, increasing environmental consciousness, changing family finances, demands of labour market and so on.

1.2 Scope of the Study

This study is limited to identify the occupational stress situation and perceived behaviour under such situations and also to assess the outcome of stress in the Primary teachers of Government and Aided Schools only. It does not include the partly aided and unaided Primary school teachers. A comparative study can be aimed between Government and Aided Primary teachers. Further it can be extended to those who are working in rural and urban area to obtain their perception too.

1.3 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study is carried out to analyse occupational stress among the teachers of primary schools in Dharmapuri District in Tamilnadu.

1. To analyze the factors influencing occupational stress among the Primary school teachers.
2. To study the demographic and academic characteristics among the Primary school teachers of Government and Aided Schools.
3. To measure the levels of occupational stress among the Primary teachers of Government and Aided Schools.

1.4 Hypothesis

The following null hypotheses were formulated

Null Hypothesis (H_0) - There is no significant relationship between the variables and level of occupational stress among the Aided and Government Primary school teachers.

Alternative Hypothesis (H_1) - There is a significant relationship between the variables and level of occupational stress among the Aided and Government Primary school teachers.

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Dr. Neelam Dhar & Dr. Ritu Magotra (2018), In the studies of occupational stress among various occupational groups, teaching profession was found to be on the top of the list of stress prone occupations. But prior studies were limited mostly to the variables like male and female, govt. and private, experienced and inexperienced, married and unmarried, locality of the school but no such study has been undertaken which deals with two educational boards as its variables. Therefore the present study was conducted to find and compare the level of stress among JKBOSE (schools affiliated to J&K state board of school education) and CBSE (schools affiliated to central board of school education) school teachers. A total of 180 school teachers from four JKBOSE and four CBSE schools of Jammu, India, participated in the study. Occupational Stress Index (OSI) developed by A. K Srivastava and A. P Singh's was administered for data collection. Data was collected by using simple random sampling method. The information obtained was subjected to statistical treatment by using Mean, Standard Deviation, Sedum and 'Z' test. The study revealed that teachers from JKBOSE and CBSE differ significantly on various stress related areas.

Dr. Nain Sing & Anupama Katoch (2017), In the present study an attempt has been made to measure the occupational stress of secondary school teachers of district Mandi in Himachal Pradesh. A sample pool of 200 secondary school teachers from the government schools was randomly taken. The relevant information from the sampled subjects were collected through the standardize Occupational Stress Index. It was found that the secondary school teachers generally had occupational stress having high, moderate and low levels. Further significant differences were found in the occupational stress of male and female secondary school teachers.

Dr. Ansarul Hasan (2014), In the present study an attempt was made to compare teachers' occupational stress of primary government and private school teachers of Tehsil Laksar, District-Haridwar. A sample of 100 teachers was selected, 50 each from government and private schools. Teachers' Occupational Stress Scale constructed and standardized by Dr. Sajid Jamal and Dr. Abdul Raheem was administered. Findings revealed that in general, the primary school teachers have found to be highly stressed. Moreover, the private primary school teachers have also found to be highly stressed in comparison to their government primary school teacher counterparts.

III RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present study is based on both primary and secondary data. Primary data have been collected by conducting a survey among 30 sample Primary school teachers of Government and Aided schools. Secondary data have been collected from books, journals, newspapers, periodicals, reports, internet and unpublished records of Dharmapuri District of Tamil nadu. Initial instrument was developed by generating

108 items after a thorough understanding of occupational stress among Aided and Government primary school teachers of Dharmapuri district in the state of Tamil nadu. The first part of the questionnaire was related to personal details of Primary teachers, second part relates with measuring of occupational stress among the teachers with the help of Chi-square test. All the closed-ended questions were designed to generate responses on a five point likert scale to measure the occupational stress indicated as 1 strongly agree (SDA), 2 Disagree (DA), 3 Neutral (N), 4 Agree (A) and 5 Strongly Agree (SA). For the present study a pilot study was initiated with a sample of 50 primary teachers which in the elimination of some unrelated items.

3.1 Sampling Design

A sample of 30 teachers was taken to meet the sample adequacy, for conducting factor analysis number of sample teachers for the study were selected from the total population. For the purpose of the study (30 Teachers) 30% per cent of the samples were selected. Sample teachers were selected by using simple random sampling from three segments by using convenience sampling method because of easy accessibility and affordability. 30 completely filled in questionnaire were finalized, non response rate was negligible. Adequate care has been taken to avoid redundancy in data collection from the sample elements.

Table 1.1
Sample-size of Primary teachers and Head Masters

Category	Head Masters	Primary School Teachers	Total
Government Schools	46(19.20%)	194(80.8%)	240
Aided Schools	34(9.2%)	336(90.8%)	370
Total	80(13.2%)	530(86.8%)	610

Source: Primary Data.

Table 1.1 shows that out of 610 Primary school teachers, 530 (86.8 per cent) are teachers and the remaining 80 (13.2 per cent) are head masters. Among the total teachers, 240 are belonging to government schools and the remaining 370 are belonging to aided schools. Among the 240 government school teachers, 194 (80.8 per cent) are teachers and the remaining 46 (19.20 per cent) are head masters. Among the 370 aided school teachers, 336 (90.8 per cent) are teachers and 34 (9.2 per cent) are head masters.

V. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATIONS

5.1 Teachers' Personal Profile Out of the entire questionnaire filled in 60.7% was Aided primary teachers and 39.3% Government teachers. The percentage difference between Aided and Government teachers is more; this is due to the researcher more weight given to Aided school teachers than Government teachers. Of the total teachers 56.1% were male and 43.9% female. The percentage difference between male and female teachers is less. Of the total teachers 31.1% were in above 50 years of age group, 46.3% were between 40-50 years of age group, 20.9% were between 30-40 years of age group and the remaining 1.6% in below 30 years of age. The percentage of third group is given more than other age group because those groups of teachers are facing more stress related problems in their profession as well as family. 11.8% teachers responded that they were unmarried and the remaining 88.2% were married. The high percentages of unmarried teachers are having less stress than other groups like 40-50 years of age group. With regards to monthly incomes, 50.2% of the teachers reported to receiving the monthly income are less than Rs.20, 000 and the remaining 49.8% are getting more than Rs.20, 000. The low percentages of income group of teachers are facing more stress related problems especially not settled in economically.

5.2 Measurement of Occupational Stress among Aided and Government School Teachers

Table 1.2

Classification of Primary School Teachers (both Government and Aided) by their level of occupational stress)

Sl.No.	Level of Stress	No. of Teachers	Percentage
1.	Low	122	20.00
2.	Medium	380	62.30
3.	High	108	17.70
	Total	610	100.00

Source: Primary data.

From Table 1.2, it is observed that a majority of 380 (62.30%) teachers had a medium level of stress, 122 (20.0%) had a high level of stress and the remaining 108 (17.7%) had a low level of stress.

5.3 Level of Occupational Stress among Aided Primary School Teachers

Table 1.3

Classification of aided Primary teachers by their level of occupational stress

Sl.No.	Level of Stress	No. of Teachers	Percentage
1.	Low	58	15.70
2.	Medium	144	41.60
3.	High	158	42.70
	Total	360	100.00

Source: Primary data.

Table 1.3 shows that 158 (42.70 per cent) aided teachers had a high level of occupational stress, 144 (41.60 per cent) had a medium level of stress and the remaining 58 (15.70 per cent) had a low level of occupational stress.

5.4 Age and Level of Occupational Stress

Table 1.4

Classification of Aided Primary Teachers on the basis of their Age and level of Occupational Stress

Sl. No.	Age (in years)	Level of Stress			Total
		Low	Medium	High	
1	Below 30 years	0(0.0)	4(1.1)	0(0.0)	4 (1.1)
2	30 – 40	2(0.5)	50(13.5)	22 (5.9)	74 (20.00)
3	40 – 50	14(3.8)	62(16.8)	104(28.1)	180 (48.6)
4	Above 50	42(11.4)	38(10.3)	32 (8.6)	112 (30.3)
	Total	58(15.7)	154(41.6)	158(42.7)	370 (100.0)

Source: Primary data.

Table 1.4 reveals that out of 4(1.1 per cent) aided teachers, only 4 (1.1 per cent) had a medium level of stress in the age group of below 30 years. Of the 74 teachers, 2 (0.5 per cent) in the age group of 30-40 years had low level of stress, 50 (13.5 per cent) had a medium level stress and the remaining 22 (5.9 per cent) had a high level of stress.

Of the 370 teachers belong to the age group of 40-50 years, 14 (3.8 per cent) had a low level of stress, 62 (16.8 per cent) had a medium level of stress and the remaining 104 (28.1 per cent) had a high level of stress. Among the 112 teachers in to the age group of above 50 years, 42 (11.4 per cent) had a low level of stress, 38(10.3 per cent) had a medium level of stress and the remaining 32 (8.6 per cent) had high level of stress.

To test the hypothesis that age is independent of the level of occupational stress, the chi-square test has been applied and the calculated value is 44.14, table value at 5 per cent level of significance 9.488 and degrees of Freedom is 4. As the calculated chi-square value is much larger than the table value, therefore the null hypothesis is rejected. Thus it may be concluded that there is a significant relationship between age and the level of stress among the aided Primary teachers.

5.5 Gender and Level of Occupational Stress:

Table 1.5

Classification of Aided Primary Teaches on the basis of their Gender and level of Occupational Stress

Sl.No	Gender	Level of Stress			Total
		Low	Medium	High	
1.	Male	44(11.9)	74 (20.0)	84 (22.7)	202 (54.6)
2.	Female	14 (3.8)	80 (21.6)	54 (20.0)	168 (45.4)
	Total	58 (15.7)	154 (41.6)	158 (42.7)	370(100.0)

Source: Primary data.

Table 1.5 shows that among the total teachers, 202 teachers were male, 44 (11.9 per cent) had a low level of stress, 74 (20.0 per cent) had a medium level of stress and the remaining 84(22.7 per cent) had high level of stress. Of the 168 female teachers, 14(3.8 per cent) had a low level of stress, 80 (21.6 per cent) had medium level of stress and the remaining 54 (20.0 per cent) teachers had a high level of stress. The chi-square test has been applied and the calculated value 6.69, table value at 5 per cent level of significance is 5.991 in degrees of freedom is 2. As the calculated chi-square value is more than the table value the null

hypothesis is rejected. Thus it may be concluded that there is an association between gender and their level of occupational stress among aided primary teachers.

5.6 Location Of The School And Level of Occupational Stress

Table 1.6

Classification of Aided Primary Teachers on the basis of their School Location and level of Occupational Stress

Sl. No.	Location of School	Level of Stress			Total
		Low	Medium	High	
1	Rural	36 (9.7)	62 (16.8)	102(27.6)	200 (54.1)
2	Urban	18 (4.9)	42 (11.4)	18 (4.9)	78(21.1)
3	Semi-Urban	4 (1.1)	50(13.5)	38 (10.3)	92(24.9)
	Total	54 (15.7)	154 (41.6)	158 (42.7)	370(100.0)

Source: Primary data.

Table 1.10 shows that out of 200 aided school teachers, 36 (9.7 per cent) working in the schools located in rural areas had a low level of stress, 62 (16.8 per cent) had a medium level of stress and the remaining 102 (27.6 per cent) had a high level of stress. Of the 78 teachers working in urban areas, 18 (4.9 per cent) had a low level of stress, 42 (11.4 per cent) had a medium level of stress and the remaining 18 (4.9 per cent) had a high level of stress. Out of 92 teachers working in semi-urban areas, 4 (1.1 per cent) had a low level of stress, 50 (13.5 per cent) had a medium level of stress and 38 (10.3 per cent) had a high level of stress. The calculated value is 16.52 and table value at 5 per cent level of significance 9.488 in degrees of freedom is 4. As the calculated chi-square value is more than the table, the null hypothesis is rejected. Therefore, it may be concluded that there is an association between location of school and their level of occupational stress among the aided primary teachers.

5.7 Factor Analysis of Aided primary Teacher

For the present study, to find an important factor which would affect stress applied factor analysis and found important variables below the table 1.6. It was identified as tool to identify suitable dimensions and related items. Data was analysed using principal component extraction with Data collected from 370 aided school teachers were subjected to principal – component factor analysis with Varimax Rotation by using the criterion that factors with Eigen value greater than 1.00 were retained. Loadings exceeding 0.4 were considered for determining the factors.

Table 1.7

Statement Loadings of Occupational Stress Level for the Varimax Rotated Principal Components (370 Aided Teachers)

Sl. No.	Statements	Loadings	Eigen Value	% of Variance
1	Work is neither interesting nor prestigious.	0.885	20.88	19.339
2	Heavy and continuous noise in the premises creates trouble.	0.876	15.91	14.736
3	Good work for teacher's recognition.	0.813	6.047	5.599
4	Teachers are responsible for the features of a number of teachers.	0.837	5.516	5.107
5	Lack of freedom to define one's job, otherwise, would do differently from the way they do.	0.737	4.757	4.405
6	Co-operation among the staff helps to solve administrative problems.	0.788	4.733	4.382
7	The new occupation demands training and expertise of a new career.	0.828	3.994	3.698
8	The teacher complicated problems.	0.768	3.921	3.630
9	Teacher get worried, they would not be able to progress.	0.701	3.847	3.562
10	Institutional responsibilities interfere with extra organisation career.	0.785	3.370	3.121

11	Teachers have given more importance in the institution than others.	0.841	3.284	3.041
12	No free time to get refreshment and to prepare for the next classes.	0.857	3.086	2.857
13	Frequent transfer gives great trouble.	0.815	2.987	2.765
14	Mistakes of other teachers are shifted to the Shoulders and teachers who are free from defect.	0.768	2.772	2.567
15	Family members interfere into career.	0.572	2.430	2.250
16	Seating arrangements in the class rooms are distract and affect concentration.	0.468	2.260	2.092
17	School is understaffed.	0.729	2.111	1.955
18	Peers, juniors demand in varying degrees which are unable to satisfy.	0.631	1.870	1.732

5.8 Factor Analysis of Government primary Teacher

For the present study, to find an important factor which would affect stress applied factor analysis and found important variables below the table 1.15. It was identified as tool to identify suitable dimensions and related items. Data was analysed using principal component extraction with Data collected from 240 government school teachers were subjected to principal – component factor analysis with Varimax Rotation by using the criterion that factors with Eigen value greater than 1.00 were retained. Loadings exceeding 0.4 were considered for determining the factors.

Table 1.8
Statement Loadings of Occupational Stress Level for the Varimax Rotated Principal Components (370 Aided Teachers)

Sl. No	Statements	Loadings	Eigen Value	% of Variance
1.	Teaches cannot express their ability and competency independently	0.819	21.418	19.832
2.	Lack of inner satisfaction through this work	0.729	8.633	7.993
3.	Job has enhanced social status	0.714	6.008	5.563
4.	Fairly old buildings mild panic all the time	0.804	5.872	5.437
5.	Teachers who have less educational qualification get more pay	0.767	5.226	4.839
6.	Training programmes of the teachers are given their due significance	0.787	4.979	4.610
7.	Teachers are doing the work with full responsibility	0.777	3.580	3.315
8.	Many problems working in rural areas	0.716	3.285	3.042
9.	Time limit to cover the syllabus and conduct test are not enough	0.694	2.912	2.697
10	Teaching gives all facility but not status	0.740	2.875	2.662
11	Institutional responsibilities interfere extra organization	0.621	2.757	2.553
12	Exists sufficient and mutual co-operation and team spirit among the teachers of the department	0.699	2.676	2.477
13	No place of principle expressing honesty and equality	0.630	2.610	2.417
14	Work load of the teacher is too heavy	0.564	2.513	2.320
15	Career demands more consultation with other career	0.478	2.189	2.026

5.9 Government Primary School Teacher

- ✓ Among the two designation groups of government school teachers, 19.20 per cent of teachers felt that the occupational stress level under government school was extremely low.
- ✓ Among the four age groups 10.0 per cent of those who fall under the age group between 40-50 years who feel that the occupational stress is tolerable.
- ✓ Between the two gender groups, 12.50 per cent of women teachers feel that the occupational stress level is low.
- ✓ It is higher than the others.
- ✓ Among the four income groups, 8.30 per cent of those who fall under the monthly income between Rs.20, 000-Rs.25, 000 whose opinion about the occupational stress level are low.
- ✓ Among the four experience groups, 8.30 per cent of those who have the teaching experience between 5-10 years the occupational stress level are low.
- ✓ Between the two marital status groups, 17.50 per cent of those belonging to unmarried felt that the occupational stress is low.
- ✓ Between the two family groups, 14.20 per cent of those who fall under the category of nuclear family feel that the occupational stress level is low.
- ✓ Among the three groups, 10.8 per cent of those who have dependents in the family comprising below 3 felt that the occupational stress level is low.
- ✓ Among the three groups, 10.9 per cent of those who are handling science subjects felt that the occupational stress level is low.
- ✓ Among the three training programme groups of teachers, 9.8 per cent of those who have attended the training programmes below 5 felt that the stress level in the school is low.
- ✓ Among the three groups, 16.70 per cent of those whose schools are located at rural areas felt that the occupational stress level is low.

5.10 Recommendations and Suggestions of Aided and Government Primary School Teacher

Aided Primary School Teachers

- ✓ Among the two designation groups aided school teachers, 14.6 per cent of those designated as teachers felt that the occupational stress level was extremely low.
- ✓ Among the four age groups, 11.4 per cent of those above 50 years felt that the occupational stress level is extremely low.
- ✓ Between the two gender groups, 11.9 per cent of those belonging to male group felt that the occupational stress level is extremely low.
- ✓ Among the four salary groups, 10.3 per cent of those who fall under the group of Rs.20, 000-Rs.25, 000 felt that the occupational stress was extremely low.
- ✓ Among the four experienced groups, 8.6 per cent of those fall under the teaching experience above 15 years felt that the occupational stress was extremely low.
- ✓ Between the two marital status groups, 15.70 per cent of those who are unmarried felt that the occupational stress was extremely low.
- ✓ Between the two family groups, 10.80 per cent of those who fall under the category of nuclear family felt that the stress level is low.
- ✓ Among the aided school teachers with dependent, 9.40 per cent of those who have dependents below 3 felt that the occupational stress level is low.
- ✓ Among the three subjects handling groups, 8.10 per cent of those who are handling science subjects felt that the occupational stress level is low.
- ✓ Among the three groups, 9.00 per cent of those who have attended training programme above eight felt that the occupational stress level is low.
- ✓ Among the three groups, 9.70 per cent of those who are working in the schools located at rural areas felt that the occupational stress level is low but higher than the other groups.

VI SUGGESTIONS

Based on the findings of the study and from the opinions of the primary school teachers, the following suggestions are made for due consideration and timely and suitable action by the authorities concerned.

It is found that the total teachers of Government and Aided schools (17.70 per cent) express that they had been victims of high level of occupational stress. Among the two cadres of Primary school teachers a high percentage of the aided school teachers (17.70 per cent) compared to government teachers (15.80 per cent) felt that the occupational stress level is high. It is perceived that, lack of interaction, time pressure for

completing the syllabus, social status, heavy work load, poor working conditions, sufficient and mutual co-operations are the major sources of occupational stress. Hence it is suggested that the government and aided school recognize early the individual symptoms which cause occupational stress and take steps like counseling to reduce the occupational stress level.

Among the total teachers, 40-50 years of age group, had the medium and high level of stress. The government and aided primary schools should be given normal workload, and by understanding their family responsibilities sympathetically their stress level could be considerably reduced.

The Government and Aided schools should try to offer transport facilities to the teachers who are coming from distant places so as to reduce the level of occupational stress. The government and aided schools should often organize get together programmes and create good organizational climate in order to boost up the feelings of the teachers leading to reduction in occupational stress. The government and aided schools should provide support (internally or externally) for teachers who have complex occupational stress issues.

The government and aided schools should provide teachers with opportunities to socialize issues pertaining to the teachers. The government and aided schools should take steps to create interaction among the teachers and higher authorities. The government and aided schools, wherever possible, should give the teachers the chance to be involved in decisions and actions that affect their occupation.

The aided schools should follow directions of higher education department regarding recruitment, promotion, and termination of services of teachers. The Government of Tamil Nadu should establish a separate Board for primary Education. The Government of Tamil Nadu Education Department should modify the structure of syllabus for all the disciplines. The Government and Aided schools should provide job security to the teachers U/s 17(A) and 17(B). The Education Department should restrict the student teacher ratio (1:40). The government should provide medical facilities to the students as well as staff in a residential school. The Government of Tamil Nadu and aided school management should jointly organise personality development courses, yoga courses and refresher courses for the teachers to enhance their personality traits and reduce their occupational stress.

It is found that the teachers are not happy with the lack of co-ordination among the staff. They should be provided practical training in human relations to achieve good rapport with their colleagues. Aided school teachers have no possibility for transfer. At the same time the management can help them if it has got more than one school under its administration. Aided school teachers feel that there is no possibility for promotional policy in the career development compared to the government teachers. Aided school teachers personally feel that there is a lack of association for their activities, so the government should give permission to them to form unions to ventilate their grievances.

VII CONCLUSION

From the results of the study it is clear that the primary school teachers as a whole are found to be highly stressed. This finding support the past research that the teaching profession has become one of the most stressful professions. Similarly, private school, male and female primary school teachers have been found to differ non-significantly in the level of occupational stress. The private school male teachers have found to be significantly more stressed than their government school male teacher counterparts. Similarly, here also, as in the case of private school male teachers, the private school female teachers have also found to be significantly highly stressed than their government school female counterparts.

The present study has provided comprehensive information about occupational stress among the teachers of Government and aided schools in Dharmapuri District in the state of Tamilnadu. Occupational stress in the workplace is becoming a major concern for all teachers, Headmasters and government, owing to the occupational health and safety legislations requiring employers to practice duty of care by providing teachers with safe working environments which also cover the psychological well being of their staff. The reduction of occupational stress will induce the teachers to provide efficient and effective service to the society. As a result of the benefits of a systematic and joint approach to reducing stress there can be increased Education standard, decrease in absenteeism, increased schools enrolment, reduced drop-out rate, improved teachers morale, decrease in compensation claim and reduction in workplace accidents.

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