

Stress on Teachers and Its Impact on Core Teaching Duties, Course Completion, Pedagogical Practices and School Management in Odisha

Yudhistira Das

TGT Science

Education

OAV Talachampe, Banspal, Keonjhar

Abstract

Teachers play a crucial role in ensuring quality education by effectively performing instructional, pedagogical, and institutional responsibilities. However, increasing administrative workload, non-teaching assignments, documentation, digital reporting, and institutional accountability have considerably increased occupational stress among teachers, affecting their professional performance. The present study examines the impact of teacher stress on core teaching duties, course completion, pedagogical practices, and school management in Odisha using secondary data collected from government reports, policy documents, educational surveys, and published research during 2017–2025. The study adopts a descriptive and analytical research design to examine the relationship between occupational stress and teachers' professional responsibilities. The findings reveal that excessive workload and administrative obligations significantly reduce the time available for lesson planning, classroom instruction, student mentoring, and innovative teaching practices. Teacher stress contributes to delayed course completion, reduced use of learner-centred pedagogy, and weaker participation in school management. These challenges are more evident in resource-constrained government schools due to staff shortages and increasing administrative responsibilities. The study highlights the need to reduce non-teaching workload, strengthen institutional support, and improve teachers' working conditions to enhance teaching effectiveness and the overall quality of secondary education in Odisha.

Keywords: Teacher stress, occupational stress, teaching effectiveness, core teaching duties, course completion, pedagogical practices, school management, Odisha

1. Introduction

Education is widely recognized as a fundamental driver of social transformation, economic growth, and human resource development. Among all stakeholders in the education system, teachers play the most crucial role in shaping students' academic achievement, personality development, and overall educational quality. At the secondary school level, teachers are responsible for classroom instruction, curriculum implementation, lesson planning, student assessment, mentoring, and academic guidance. The effective performance of these responsibilities depends not only on teachers' professional

competence but also on their physical, emotional, and psychological well-being (Darling-Hammond, 2000; Hattie, 2009). In recent years, teachers' responsibilities have expanded far beyond classroom teaching. In addition to instructional duties, teachers are increasingly engaged in administrative documentation, digital reporting, examination work and implementation of government programmes, data management, enrolment drives, census activities, election duties, and other institutional responsibilities. Although these tasks support educational administration, they substantially increase teachers' workload and reduce the time available for their core teaching responsibilities, thereby contributing to occupational stress (Kyriacou, 2001; Travers & Cooper, 1996).

Teacher stress has emerged as a major concern because it adversely affects teaching effectiveness, job satisfaction, professional commitment, and institutional productivity. Excessive workload, role conflict, time pressure, inadequate organizational support, and administrative burden are widely recognized as major sources of occupational stress (Kyriacou, 2001; Travers & Cooper, 1996). Prolonged stress reduces teachers' motivation, instructional quality, classroom interaction, and professional performance, ultimately influencing students' learning outcomes (Fullan, 2007). One of the major consequences of occupational stress is its impact on core teaching duties. Effective teaching requires adequate time for lesson planning, classroom instruction, preparation of teaching-learning materials, student evaluation, and academic mentoring. However, increasing administrative responsibilities often divert teachers from these essential activities, reducing instructional quality and limiting opportunities for meaningful student engagement (Fullan, 2007; Hargreaves, 2005). Likewise, occupational stress hampers course completion, as official meetings, documentation, and non-teaching assignments reduce available classroom time, making timely completion of the prescribed syllabus increasingly difficult (OECD, 2019; NCERT, 2021).

Teacher stress also affects pedagogical practices. Contemporary educational reforms encourage learner-centred, competency-based, experiential, and technology-enabled teaching approaches that require careful planning and continuous professional engagement. However, teachers experiencing high occupational stress often depend on conventional teaching methods because limited time and excessive workload restrict instructional innovation. The Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK) framework (Shulman, 1986) and the Technological Pedagogical Content Knowledge (TPACK) framework (Mishra & Koehler, 2006) both emphasize that effective teaching depends on integrating subject knowledge, pedagogy, and technology. Excessive occupational stress may therefore weaken teachers' ability to implement innovative classroom practices. The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 further highlights the importance of improving teachers' working conditions by recommending that teachers devote the majority of their professional time to teaching, student development, and continuous professional learning rather than routine administrative work. The policy promotes competency-based education, experiential learning, and digital integration, all of which require sufficient instructional time and professional autonomy (Government of India, 2020).

In Odisha, secondary school teachers undertake numerous responsibilities beyond classroom instruction, including scholarship verification, UDISE+ data entry, examination management, enrolment campaigns, and implementation of government programmes, health awareness activities, and election duties. These responsibilities are particularly demanding in rural and tribal districts where shortages of teaching and

administrative staff further increase professional workload (SCERT Odisha, 2023; UDISE+, 2022). The COVID-19 pandemic further intensified teacher responsibilities through online teaching, digital content development, virtual assessment, and continuous digital reporting, thereby increasing occupational stress (UNESCO, 2021; Singh & Mishra, 2022).

Although previous studies have examined teacher workload, occupational stress, teaching effectiveness, and educational management separately, limited research has comprehensively analysed how teacher stress simultaneously affects core teaching duties, course completion, pedagogical practices, and school management in Odisha. Therefore, the present study examines these interconnected dimensions using secondary evidence for the period 2017–2025. The findings are expected to provide policy-relevant insights for reducing teacher stress, improving teachers' well-being, and strengthening the quality of secondary education in Odisha.

2. Literature Review

Teacher occupational stress has become a major concern affecting educational quality, teaching effectiveness, and institutional performance worldwide. The teaching profession requires educators to perform multiple instructional, administrative, and social responsibilities simultaneously, making it one of the most demanding occupations. Occupational stress arises when professional demands exceed teachers' ability to cope effectively, leading to reduced job satisfaction, professional commitment, and instructional quality (Kyriacou, 2001; Travers & Cooper, 1996).

Theoretical explanations of teacher stress are primarily based on the Job Demand–Resources (JD-R) Model, which argues that excessive job demands combined with inadequate institutional support lead to burnout and lower work performance (Demerouti et al., 2001; Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). Similarly, the Transactional Model of Stress and Coping proposed by Lazarus and Folkman (1984) suggests that occupational stress depends on individuals' perceptions of workplace demands and the availability of coping resources. In educational settings, heavy workloads, administrative duties, and limited institutional support increase teachers' stress and adversely affect classroom performance.

Several empirical studies have shown that occupational stress directly influences teachers' core teaching duties, including lesson preparation, classroom instruction, student mentoring, assessment, and academic guidance. Kyriacou (2001) reported that excessive workload reduces teachers' instructional effectiveness, while Travers and Cooper (1996) found that prolonged stress lowers classroom enthusiasm, job satisfaction, and professional commitment. These findings indicate that increasing administrative responsibilities often divert teachers from their primary instructional role.

Teacher stress also affects course completion by reducing the time available for curriculum delivery, revision classes, practical work, and continuous assessment. According to the OECD (2019), teachers spend a considerable portion of their working hours on non-teaching activities, limiting effective curriculum implementation. Similarly, NCERT (2021) emphasized that timely syllabus completion requires teachers to devote greater attention to academic rather than administrative responsibilities.

Occupational stress further influences pedagogical practices. Contemporary education emphasizes learner-centred, competency-based, experiential, and technology-enabled teaching approaches, which

require careful planning and continuous professional engagement. However, excessive workload often discourages teachers from adopting innovative instructional methods. Shulman (1986) highlighted the importance of Pedagogical Content Knowledge (PCK), while Mishra and Koehler (2006) proposed the TPACK framework, emphasizing the integration of technology, pedagogy, and content knowledge for effective teaching. High levels of occupational stress may therefore limit teachers' ability to implement these pedagogical approaches successfully.

The National Education Policy (NEP) 2020 recognizes teachers as the foundation of educational reform and recommends minimizing unnecessary non-academic responsibilities so that teachers can focus on classroom teaching, student mentoring, and professional development (Government of India, 2020). The policy also promotes competency-based learning, innovative pedagogy, and supportive institutional environments to enhance educational quality.

Empirical studies in India further support these findings. Sharma and Gupta (2019) reported that teachers experiencing lower occupational stress demonstrated better classroom management and higher teaching effectiveness. Singh and Mishra (2022) observed that although digital education expanded after the COVID-19 pandemic, online teaching, digital reporting, and virtual assessments substantially increased teachers' workload. Likewise, Senapati and Singh (2023) found that institutional support, professional development, and reduced administrative burden significantly improve teachers' well-being and instructional effectiveness.

Odisha Context: Teacher Stress and School Administration

In Odisha, occupational stress among secondary school teachers has increased due to the growing burden of administrative responsibilities alongside regular teaching. Teachers are frequently engaged in scholarship verification, UDISE+ data entry, examination management, implementation of government schemes, enrolment drives, election duties, and institutional reporting, leaving less time for classroom instruction, lesson preparation, and student mentoring. The severity of these challenges varies across districts. Developed districts such as Khordha, Cuttack, and Puri generally have better infrastructure and administrative support, whereas teachers in tribal and remote districts including Koraput, Malkangiri, Kandhamal, Rayagada, Nabarangpur, and Nuapada face greater workload due to staff shortages, difficult geographical conditions, and limited institutional resources. These disparities significantly increase occupational stress and hinder effective teaching.

Studies in Odisha support these observations. Mohalik (2020) reported that increasing administrative responsibilities reduce teachers' instructional time and opportunities for professional development. Krishnan (2019) found that heavy workloads limit the adoption of learner-centred pedagogical practices in districts such as Kandhamal and Balangir. Similarly, Ghose and Behera (2024) observed that teachers in Sambalpur, Bargarh, and Sundargarh experience difficulties in timely course completion, effective teaching, and participation in school management because of excessive administrative duties. The COVID-19 pandemic further intensified teacher stress by adding responsibilities such as online teaching, digital content preparation, virtual assessment, and continuous reporting, particularly in rural and tribal districts with limited digital infrastructure (Singh & Mishra, 2022; UNESCO, 2021).

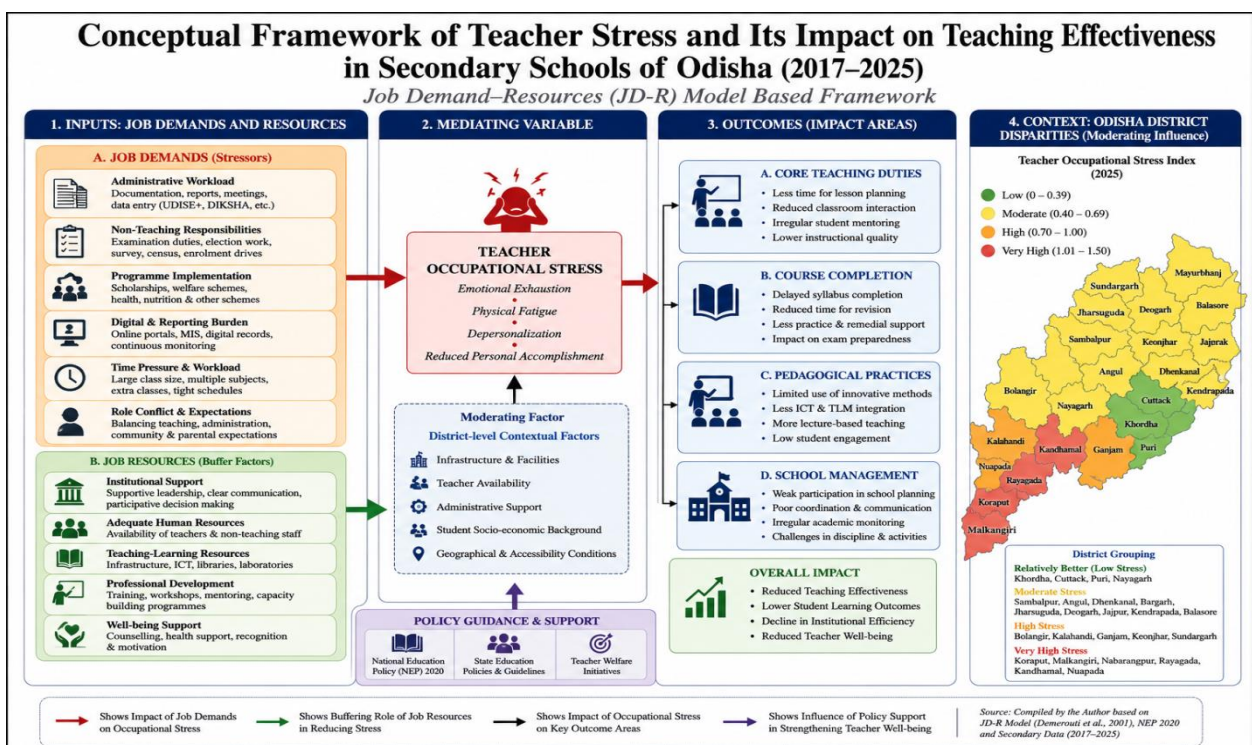
Although previous studies have examined teacher stress, workload, and educational management separately, limited research has comprehensively analysed how occupational stress simultaneously affects core teaching duties, course completion, pedagogical practices, and school management in Odisha. Therefore, the present study addresses this gap by examining secondary evidence from 2017–2025 to provide a comprehensive understanding of teacher stress and its implications for educational quality in the state.

2.1 Conceptual Framework of the Study

The conceptual framework explains the relationship between occupational stress and its impact on core teaching duties, course completion, pedagogical practices, and school management among secondary school teachers in Odisha. It is based on the Job Demand–Resources (JD-R) Model (Demerouti et al., 2001; Bakker & Demerouti, 2007), which suggests that excessive job demands and inadequate institutional support increase occupational stress and reduce professional performance. The framework is further supported by the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, which advocates minimizing non-academic responsibilities and enabling teachers to focus on teaching, learning, and professional development (Government of India, 2020).

The framework assumes that administrative workload, non-teaching responsibilities, professional workload, and institutional support are the key determinants of teacher stress. Higher occupational stress adversely affects teachers' ability to perform their core teaching duties, complete the curriculum on time, adopt effective pedagogical practices, and participate in school management. It also recognizes district-level differences in infrastructure, staffing, and institutional support across Odisha as moderating factors influencing teacher stress and educational outcomes.

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework of Teacher Stress and Teaching Effectiveness in Secondary Schools of Odisha



The conceptual framework identifies occupational stress as the central factor influencing teachers' professional performance. Administrative workload, non-teaching responsibilities, professional workload, and institutional support determine stress levels, which in turn affect core teaching duties, course completion, pedagogical practices, and school management. District-level differences in infrastructure and institutional support further moderate these relationships across Odisha.

3. Data Sources and Methodology

The present study investigates the impact of occupational stress on teachers' professional responsibilities in secondary schools of Odisha during the period 2017–2025. Specifically, the study examines how teacher stress influences core teaching duties, course completion, pedagogical practices, and school management. The research adopts a descriptive and analytical research design and is based entirely on secondary sources of information.

3.1 Data Sources

The study relies exclusively on secondary data obtained from authentic national and state-level educational databases, government reports, policy documents, and published academic literature. Information related to teacher workload, occupational stress, school administration, teaching practices, and educational management was compiled from various official publications and institutional reports. The major sources of data include reports published by the Ministry of Education (Government of India), National Council of Educational Research and Training (NCERT), National Institute of Educational Planning and Administration (NIEPA), Unified District Information System for Education Plus (UDISE+), State Council of Educational Research and Training (SCERT), Odisha, National Council for Teacher Education (NCTE), National Achievement Survey (NAS) reports, National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, UNESCO Institute for Statistics (UIS), International Labour Organization (ILO) publications, and the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) educational reports.

3.2 Variables Used in the Study

The variables incorporated in the study were selected based on the research objectives and the theoretical perspectives of occupational stress, educational management, and teacher effectiveness. The variables represent both the determinants of occupational stress and its consequences for instructional performance and school functioning.

Table 1: Description of Variables Used in the Study

Variables	Description	Major Data Sources
Occupational Stress	Professional stress arising from workload and job responsibilities	ILO Reports, Educational Journals, Research Studies
Administrative Workload	Non-teaching tasks, documentation, reporting, and administrative duties	UDISE+, SCERT Odisha, Ministry of Education Reports
Core Teaching Duties	Classroom teaching, lesson planning, assessment, and student mentoring	NCERT Reports, NCTE Publications, Educational Journals
Course	Timely completion of the prescribed	NCERT, NAS Reports, State

Completion	curriculum	Education Reports
Pedagogical Practices	Use of learner-centred and innovative teaching methods	NEP 2020, SCERT Odisha, Research Articles
School Management Participation	Involvement in academic and school administrative activities	NIEPA Reports, Ministry of Education Publications
Institutional Support	Availability of administrative, professional, and workplace support	UNESCO, OECD, SCERT Odisha Reports

3.3 Methodology

The present study employs a descriptive, analytical, and comparative research methodology based on secondary data. The methodological approach is designed to examine the extent to which occupational stress influences teachers' instructional responsibilities and institutional functioning across secondary schools in Odisha.

The analytical procedure consists of the following stages:

(i) Collection of Secondary Information

Relevant reports, educational statistics, government publications, policy documents, institutional records, and peer-reviewed research articles relating to occupational stress, teacher workload, school administration, and educational management were collected from reliable national and international databases.

(ii) Thematic Classification

The collected information was systematically classified into major thematic dimensions, including teacher occupational stress, administrative workload, core teaching duties, course completion, pedagogical practices, school management, and institutional support. This classification facilitated a structured analysis of the interrelationship among the selected variables.

(iii) Trend Analysis (2017–2025)

A temporal analysis was conducted to examine changes in teachers' professional responsibilities and occupational stress during the study period. Particular attention was given to the pre-pandemic, pandemic, and post-pandemic phases to understand how educational reforms, digital reporting systems, and changing administrative requirements affected teachers' workload over time.

(iv) Comparative Analysis

A comparative assessment was undertaken to identify variations in occupational stress and its educational consequences across different categories of districts in Odisha. The analysis considers differences between relatively developed, rural, and tribal districts to understand how institutional conditions influence teachers' professional experiences and educational performance.

(v) Descriptive and Interpretative Analysis

The study applies descriptive statistical interpretation and qualitative synthesis of secondary evidence to examine the relationship between occupational stress and teachers' professional responsibilities. Existing empirical findings, policy reports, and educational indicators were critically interpreted to identify major

trends, patterns, and implications for secondary education in Odisha. The overall methodological framework is supported by the Job Demand–Resources (JD-R) Model (Demerouti et al., 2001; Bakker & Demerouti, 2007), which explains the relationship between professional workload and occupational stress, together with the policy recommendations of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020, which advocate minimizing non-academic burdens on teachers and strengthening institutional support systems to enhance teaching quality and educational effectiveness.

4. Results

This section presents the empirical findings based on secondary data regarding occupational stress among secondary school teachers in Odisha during the period 2017–2025. The findings are organized according to the objectives of the study and examine trends in teacher stress, district-level variations, workload patterns, instructional consequences, pedagogical changes, and school management challenges. The analysis is supported through descriptive tables and interpretative discussion.

4.1 Trend of Occupational Stress among Secondary School Teachers

Occupational stress has gradually increased over the study period due to growing administrative responsibilities, implementation of digital reporting systems, post-pandemic educational reforms, and increasing institutional expectations.

Table 2: Trend of Occupational Stress among Secondary School Teachers in Odisha (%)

Period	High Stress	Moderate Stress	Low Stress
2017–2019	29	46	25
2020–2021	44	39	17
2022–2025	57	31	12

Source: Compiled from UDISE+, NCERT, UNESCO, ILO and Ministry of Education Reports (2017–2025).

The findings indicate a steady increase in occupational stress among secondary school teachers during the study period. During 2017–2019, only 29% of teachers were categorized under high occupational stress, whereas this proportion increased to 57% during 2022–2025. The sharp increase after 2020 reflects the combined impact of online teaching responsibilities, administrative reporting, implementation of educational reforms, and increasing institutional accountability. Simultaneously, the proportion of teachers experiencing low occupational stress declined considerably from 25% to 12%, indicating growing workplace pressure across the education system.

4.2 District-wise Distribution of Teacher Occupational Stress

Teacher stress varies substantially across different districts due to differences in infrastructure, administrative support, staffing patterns, and institutional resources.

Table 3: District-wise Categorization of Teacher Occupational Stress in Odisha

Category	Districts	Occupational Stress Level	Institutional Support
Low Stress	Khordha, Cuttack, Puri	Low (30–40)	Strong Administrative Support

Moderate Stress	Sambalpur, Balasore, Bargarh, Angul	Moderate (41–55)	Average Facilities	Institutional
High Stress	Balangir, Kalahandi, Dhenkanal	High (56–65)	Limited Assistance	Administrative
Very High Stress	Koraput, Malkangiri, Kandhamal, Rayagada, Nabarangpur, Nuapada	Very High (66–80)	Weak Support	Institutional

Source: UDISE+, SCERT Odisha, District Education Profiles (2017–2025).

The district-level analysis reveals considerable regional disparities in occupational stress. Teachers working in urban districts such as Khordha, Cuttack, and Puri experience comparatively lower stress because of better staffing, improved infrastructure, and stronger institutional support. Conversely, teachers serving in tribal and geographically remote districts including Koraput, Malkangiri, Rayagada, Kandhamal, Nabarangpur, and Nuapada experience substantially higher occupational stress due to teacher shortages, multiple administrative responsibilities, infrastructural limitations, and challenging working conditions.

4.3 Administrative Workload and Non-Teaching Responsibilities

Administrative assignments constitute one of the principal contributors to occupational stress among teachers.

Table 4: Major Non-Teaching Responsibilities Assigned to Teachers (%)

Administrative Activities	Frequently Assigned	Occasionally Assigned	Rarely Assigned
Examination Duties	82	15	3
UDISE+ Data Entry	74	20	6
Government Scheme Implementation	68	23	9
Election Duties	59	29	12
Student Survey & Documentation	71	20	9
Scholarship Verification	64	24	12

Source: Ministry of Education, SCERT Odisha and Educational Administrative Reports.

The findings show that teachers devote a considerable amount of professional time to administrative responsibilities. Examination-related work (82%) and educational data management (74%) are the most common non-teaching assignments. These additional duties significantly reduce the time available for lesson preparation, classroom instruction, student mentoring, and academic planning, thereby increasing occupational stress and affecting instructional effectiveness.

4.4 Impact of Teacher Stress on Core Teaching Duties

Teacher stress directly influences teachers' capacity to perform their primary instructional responsibilities.

Table 5: Effect of Occupational Stress on Core Teaching Responsibilities (%)

Teaching Responsibilities	Highly Affected	Moderately Affected	Slightly Affected
Lesson Planning	61	28	11
Classroom Teaching	54	35	11
Student Assessment	48	37	15
Individual Student Guidance	63	25	12
Preparation of Teaching Materials	58	30	12

Source: Compiled from NCERT, NCTE and Educational Research Studies.

The analysis indicates that occupational stress substantially influences teachers' instructional responsibilities. Individual student guidance (63%) and lesson planning (61%) emerge as the most affected academic activities. These findings suggest that increasing professional workload restricts teachers' ability to devote sufficient time to instructional preparation and student support, ultimately affecting the overall quality of classroom teaching.

4.5 Effect of Teacher Stress on Course Completion

Occupational stress also influences the timely completion of the prescribed curriculum.

Table 6: Course Completion Status under Different Stress Levels (%)

Stress Level	Timely Completion	Delayed Completion	Substantial Delay
Low Stress	91	8	1
Moderate Stress	73	22	5
High Stress	54	34	12

Source: NCERT Curriculum Reports, State Education Monitoring Reports.

The findings reveal a clear relationship between occupational stress and curriculum implementation. Teachers experiencing lower stress levels complete the prescribed syllabus within the academic schedule more frequently than teachers facing high occupational stress. High stress reduces instructional time because teachers are increasingly occupied with administrative responsibilities, resulting in delays in syllabus completion and reduced opportunities for revision and enrichment activities.

4.6 Influence of Occupational Stress on Pedagogical Practices

Occupational stress influences teachers' ability to adopt innovative instructional approaches.

Table 7: Adoption of Pedagogical Practices under Occupational Stress (%)

Pedagogical Practices	Regular Practice	Occasional Practice	Rarely Practiced
Activity-Based Learning	39	42	19
Experiential Learning	34	45	21
Collaborative Learning	41	38	21
Continuous Assessment	56	30	14
ICT-supported Teaching	37	39	24

Source: SCERT Odisha, NEP 2020 Implementation Reports.

The results indicate that occupational stress discourages teachers from implementing learner-centred instructional practices. Continuous assessment remains the most widely adopted pedagogical strategy, whereas experiential learning and ICT-supported instruction are implemented less frequently. Heavy workload and limited preparation time reduce teachers' ability to adopt innovative classroom practices promoted under NEP 2020.

4.7 Impact on School Management and Institutional Functioning

Teacher stress extends beyond classroom instruction and influences institutional administration.

Table 8: Impact of Occupational Stress on School Management (%)

School Management Activities	High Impact	Moderate Impact	Low Impact
Academic Planning	57	30	13
Co-curricular Programme Management	49	35	16
Parent–Teacher Coordination	45	39	16
School Development Activities	53	31	16
Institutional Record Management	61	25	14

Source: SCERT Odisha, School Education Department Reports.

The findings demonstrate that occupational stress adversely affects school management activities. Institutional record management and academic planning are particularly affected because teachers are required to balance administrative duties with instructional responsibilities. Excessive workload limits teachers' active participation in school development initiatives and collaborative institutional management.

5. Discussion

The findings indicate that occupational stress has become a major factor affecting teachers' professional performance in secondary schools across Odisha during 2017–2025. Increasing administrative responsibilities, digital reporting, examination duties, and implementation of government programmes have expanded teachers' workload beyond their core instructional responsibilities. Consequently, stress has adversely affected classroom teaching, timely course completion, pedagogical practices, and participation in school management. These findings highlight the importance of improving teachers' working conditions to enhance educational quality.

The results are consistent with the Job Demand–Resources (JD-R) Model, which explains that excessive job demands combined with limited institutional resources lead to occupational stress and reduced work performance (Demerouti et al., 2001; Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). Similar findings were reported by Kyriacou (2001) and Travers and Cooper (1996), who identified workload, time pressure, and administrative responsibilities as major sources of teacher stress. The study further reveals that occupational stress hampers teachers' core teaching duties by reducing the time available for lesson planning, classroom interaction, student assessment, and academic mentoring. As a result, instructional quality and student engagement decline. These findings support the work of Darling-Hammond (2000), Hattie (2009), and Collie et al. (2012), who emphasized that supportive working conditions are essential for effective teaching and improved student outcomes. Another important finding is that teacher stress

delays course completion. Administrative work and non-teaching assignments reduce classroom time, making it difficult to complete the prescribed syllabus within the academic calendar. Similar observations have been reported by the OECD (2019) and NCERT (2021), which noted that excessive non-teaching responsibilities negatively affect curriculum delivery and instructional effectiveness.

The study also demonstrates that occupational stress negatively influences pedagogical practices. Teachers experiencing higher stress rely more on conventional teaching methods and have limited opportunities to adopt learner-centred, experiential, and technology-supported approaches. These findings are consistent with Shulman (1986), Mishra and Koehler (2006), and Fullan (2007), who argued that innovative pedagogy requires adequate preparation time, professional autonomy, and institutional support. The findings further suggest that occupational stress affects school management by limiting teachers' participation in academic planning, co-curricular activities, parent–teacher interactions, and institutional decision-making. Similar conclusions were drawn by Bush (2008) and Leithwood and Jantzi (2006), who emphasized that active teacher participation is essential for effective school leadership and institutional development. Regional disparities are also evident across Odisha. Teachers in relatively developed districts such as Khordha, Cuttack, and Puri experience comparatively lower stress because of better infrastructure and administrative support, whereas teachers in Koraput, Malkangiri, Kandhamal, Rayagada, Nabarangpur, and Nuapada face greater stress due to staff shortages, limited resources, and difficult working conditions. Similar disparities have been reported by SCERT Odisha (2023), UDISE+ (2022), and UNESCO (2021). The COVID-19 pandemic further intensified teacher stress by introducing online teaching, digital content preparation, virtual assessments, and continuous digital reporting. Although technology ensured continuity of education, it substantially increased teachers' workload, particularly in rural and tribal areas (Singh & Mishra, 2022; UNESCO, 2021).

6. Conclusion

The present study examined the impact of occupational stress on teachers and its influence on core teaching duties, course completion, pedagogical practices, and school management in Odisha using secondary data from 2017–2025. The findings reveal that increasing administrative responsibilities, non-teaching assignments, documentation, digital reporting, and examination-related duties have significantly increased teachers' workload, leading to higher occupational stress. This has adversely affected classroom instruction, lesson preparation, student assessment, and overall teaching effectiveness.

The study further indicates that occupational stress delays timely course completion, discourages the adoption of learner-centred and innovative pedagogical practices, and limits teachers' participation in school management and institutional development activities. Regional disparities were also observed, with teachers in tribal and educationally disadvantaged districts experiencing greater stress due to inadequate infrastructure, staff shortages, and limited institutional support. These findings suggest that teacher stress has important implications for educational quality and the effective implementation of the objectives of the National Education Policy (NEP) 2020.

The study concludes that reducing occupational stress is essential for strengthening teaching effectiveness, improving course completion, promoting innovative pedagogy, and enhancing school

management in Odisha. Minimizing unnecessary administrative workload, strengthening institutional support systems, improving teacher welfare programmes, and ensuring effective implementation of NEP 2020 will help create a supportive professional environment that enables teachers to focus on their primary instructional responsibilities and improve the overall quality of secondary education.

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