

## THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TEACHERS' PERCEPTION TOWARDS ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE AND OCCUPATIONAL STRESS AT NO.2 BASIC EDUCATION HIGH SCHOOL, IN INSEIN TOWNSHIP, MYANMAR

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**Abstract:** The main purpose of this study was to determine the relationship between teachers' perception towards organizational culture and occupational stress at No.2 Basic Education High School, in Insein Township, Myanmar in the academic year 2015-2016. A total of 91 full-time teachers from No.2 Basic Education High School, in Insein Township, Myanmar were surveyed for this study. The research instrument was the questionnaire that investigated the teachers' perception towards organizational culture and occupational stress. The collected data were analyzed by using the mean, standard deviation and Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient. The study found out that level of teachers' perception towards organizational culture was moderate in the school, and the level of teachers' perception towards occupational stress was low for the school. Therefore, the hypothesis was accepted as the study discovered that a moderate negative relationship between teachers' perception towards organizational culture and occupational stress was existing at No.2 Basic Education High School, in Insein Township, Myanmar.

**Keywords:** Teachers' Perception, Organizational Culture, Occupational Stress, No.2 Basic Education High School.

### Introduction

The world we are living in now is transforming and developing every day. People need to be competitive to succeed. It is time for the school system to be concerned with the improvement and development of teachers and their classroom performance. Thereby, schools can help to lessen the effect of negative school environments.

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School culture plays an important role in a school's efficiency and success. Behaviors and beliefs are a hidden culture that deeply impacts the flow of life (Miller & Dess, 1996). In recent years, according to Xi (2007), Chinese scholars have observed that it is important to build the school culture by evaluating and diagnosing the present situation within a school's organizational culture and solving its problems.

Flint (2000) identified that Culture is a kind of powerful issue to determine the response of organizational members who try for the changes in the environment. Dension (1990) also stated that culture plays an important role for the organizational effectiveness according to a variety of studies.

Every job position has its own type of behavior that is directly related to the diversity of the people who work in various sectors. Therefore, there may be conflict when the requirements and expectations of the individual do not match the organization's requirements and expectations. Likewise, stress can occur when the 'exercise' of a role is absent within an organization.

Stress in the workplace can be experienced in relation to the work nature, working conditions, or relationships between colleagues. Thus, both work culture and employee relationship well-being are considerably important regarding stress.

On both individual and organizational levels, stress is not as much about a person's situation, but about how the person responds to the stressful situation. Stress levels can be elevated by a person's perception, processing and responding to information which are engaged in individual or workplace relationships.

Hendrickson (1979) described that several teachers decide to leave their profession, because they cannot handle the stress related to their job. But for some teachers, they stay with their job by counting their working days to the weekends and eventually until their retirement. Physical, emotional and mental exhaustion of teachers is called burnout, which starts from the feeling of uneasiness and leads to lose the joy of teaching.

Working environments nowadays can provide help, or lessen the negative outcomes of workplace stress. Moreover, the negative situations and employees' stress level in their jobs can be reduced by utilizing strategies of organizational culture.

An effective, comprehensive strategy for reduction stress involves not only ongoing training and practice in effective employee coping skills, but also identifying and addressing sources of stress in business practices and processes, organizational structure, and the role of organizational culture in the work stress framework. Foster-Fisherman and Keys (1997) has indicated that the impact of organizational change on employee stress levels has received very little attention.

Pasula (2004) claimed that in workplaces there should be an organizational structure of interdependence, mutual interest, interconnecting contributions, and recreation between leaders and followers. Part of the responsibility of the organization is to see that this common bond is maintained and strengthened in all facets of the workplace including stress reduction programs. To sum up, good management and good in-house organization are the best forms of stress prevention.

In Myanmar society, teachers are regarded as one of the "five gems"; the Buddha, the monk, the scriptures, parents and teachers. Therefore, teachers are on the same plane of five reverences. Moreover, teachers are mostly considered as the

community leaders in both rural and urban communities. In accordance with this, teachers are considered key players in the educational sector who have great potential to change the system. As Kavinda (2014) stated that teachers play an important role in educating people. The highest quality of education needs the teachers having the highest quality and skills in teaching. Teachers prepare good citizens for future in every country to develop knowledge, skills and other characteristics which are very basic, both at the professional and personal level.

On account of that when the policy of education for the entire country is reviewed and evaluated by the government; ordinary teachers' voices should be included, because through their insight and experience they can give advice for the preparation of an education plan.

Therefore, the researcher intends to study teachers' perception toward organization culture and occupational stress so that the administrators and teachers can cast light on the current occupational stress and to find solutions to reduce stress by developing clear policies and procedures that will guide their stress reduction programs.

### **Objectives**

There are three objectives:

1. To identify the teachers' perceptions towards organizational culture in the school.
2. To identify the teachers' perceptions towards occupational stress in the school.
3. To determine the relationship between teachers' perception towards organizational culture and occupational stress in the school.

### **Literature Review**

#### *Organizational culture*

Organizational culture defines that how the employees' thoughts, feelings and behaviors are influenced by the organizational shared values, beliefs, and norms in the workplace in accordance of Schein (2011). Culture is transmitted to an organization's members by means of socialization and training, rites and rituals, communication networks, and symbols.

#### *Saravanan (2013) Factors of Organizational Culture*

##### Physical Factors

Physical factors of the organization means what individuals can see on the surface of the organization? Physical conformity such as symbolic, artifacts, architectural design, technology etc. can be stated in this part. These are aspects that people see, hear or feel when interacting within an organization. People can sense it from what employees' wear, the way the furniture is arranged, how employees or volunteers behave towards one another, etc. Porras (1987) and Porras and Robertson (1992) suggest four major categories of work settings that are targets for change: organizing arrangements, social factors, technology, and physical settings. Physical settings include spatial configuration, interior design, and physical ambiance factors such as temperature, lighting, and noise.

### Social Factors

Social factors are the social situation within the organization which also states that how people behave and relate in their work environment using different leadership styles. It can be also the stand of relationship among all staffs in school which practices the just and righteous rules and regulations. Social factors include management style, informal social networks, and interaction processes (e.g., problem-solving, decision-making, conflict resolution). The social environment of any organization is heavily influenced by the levels of satisfaction experienced by individuals.

### Organizational Commitment Factors

Organizational commitment can be viewed as an organizational member's psychological attachment to the organization. Organizational commitment plays a very large role in determining whether a member will stay with the organization and zealously work towards organizational goals. According to Meyer and Allen (1991), there are three component models of commitment; Affective Commitment which can also be known as affection for the job, Continuance Commitment which can also be known as fear of job and Normative commitment which is also known as sense of obligation to stay.

### Cultural Factors

The culture of an organization greatly influences its numerous decisions and actions. An organization's fundamental ideas, values, attitudes, and beliefs guide the way in which its employees think, feel, and act quite often unconsciously. Schmitz (2012) stated that organizations need to change their culture to respond to changing conditions in the environment, to remain competitive, and to avoid complacency. Culture change often begins by the creation of a sense of urgency.

### Stress

Stress is a state of mental or emotional strain or tension resulting from adverse or very demanding circumstances. The definitions of stress become from several point of views of human condition. Stress can be mentioned as lacking of inner peace in Eastern culture. In Western philosophies, stress is described to be a loss of control.

### *Tintamusil (2001) Occupational Stress Theory*

Tintamusil (2001)'s occupational stress theory was used for this study as well. According to him, a stressor is the stimulus that causes stress and is an event that requires a response from an individual. Stressors are those actions, situations, or events that place special demands on a person. The stressors within organization involved 5 elements in the climate of the organization:

### Work variance

Work variance factor will be operationalized by delegating work according to people's abilities and balance the amount of work with people abilities. In workload variance, Mondy and Noe (1999) defined that there are job overload and under load

to deal with. Job overload can be mentioned for employees who have to work more than they afford and beyond their limit.

Job under load can also be a cause of job related stress. This type especially impacts the employee who has high competency that is willing to face the challenges in work environment. When they face with boring or menial task to do, they are stressed.

#### Role Ambiguity

Role ambiguity factor will be operationalized by knowing what to expect from supervisors and supervisors must be clear about job objectives. Role ambiguity occurs when individuals do not know what is expected of them, what tasks to perform, or what their responsibilities are in the context of their work.

#### Role Conflict

Role conflict factor will be operationalized by clarifying job related activities and supervisors clearly state their job demands. Role Conflict creates expectations that may be hard to satisfy. Differing expectations of, or demands on a person's role at work produce role conflict as Wright and Noe (1996) said.

#### Working Conditions

Working conditions will be operationalized by pleasant environmental factors and providing adequate tools and equipment. According to Robin (1996), the physical characteristics of the workplace including the machines and tools used, can create stress. An unhealthy physical environment and difficult working conditions have also often been associated with work-related mental health problems.

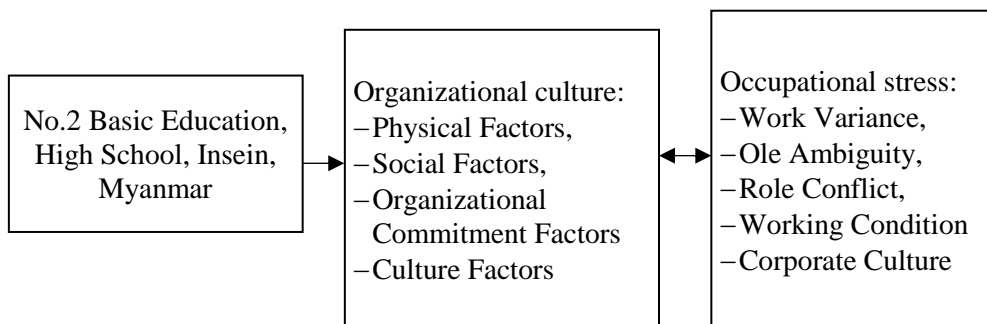
#### Corporate Culture

Corporate culture will be operationalized by setting up systems of recognition and rewards, being supportive in work problems and being concerned with person-job fit. Mondy, Noe, and Premeaux (1999), stated that corporate culture has a lot to do with stress. Management leadership style often sets the tone. Each individual forms perceptions of job and organization over the period of time as he or she works under the general guidance and a set of organizational policies. A firm's culture has an impact on employee stress as well as on the level and quality of employee's performance.

### **Conceptual Framework**

This study mainly aimed to identify the relationship between teachers' perceptions towards Organizational culture and Occupational stress in No.2 Basic Education, High School, Insein, Myanmar.

Figure 1 below shows the conceptual framework of this study. The factors from left side are based on Saravanan (2013) about the organizational culture which include physical factors, social factors, organizational commitment factors and culture factors; the right side stressors are based on Tintamusil (2001) about the occupational stress including work variance, role ambiguity, role conflict, working condition and corporate culture.



**Figure 1: Conceptual Framework of This Study**

### **Method/Procedure**

The purposes of this study were to identify the teachers' perceptions towards organizational culture, to identify the teachers' perceptions towards occupational stress and to determine the relationship between teachers' perception towards organizational culture and occupational stress at No.2 Basic Education High School, in Insein Township, Myanmar.

This research was a quantitative and relationship study, which used the Saravanan's (2013) Organizational Culture in Tamilnadu Newsprint and Papers Limited Questionnaire and Tintamusik (2001) Stressors on performance and Job satisfaction of Full- Time faculty Questionnaire as the major research instruments for the data collection. Pearson Product Moment Correlation was used to determine the relationship between teachers' perceptions toward organizational culture and occupational stress.

To be able to implement and achieve the objectives, the researcher firstly got the permission from the principal and school board members of No.2, Basic Education High School, Insein Township, Myanmar to conduct this study in this school. Then, the researcher distributed the questionnaire to the teachers from school by herself and with the help of her coworker. The researcher and her coworker picked the questionnaires up from the participants. The researcher distributed questionnaires in the first week of January, 2016 and finished in the second week of January, 2016.

### **Findings/Results**

#### *Research Objective One*

Research Objective One was to identify the teachers' perceptions towards organizational culture in the school. Means and Standard Deviation were used to identify teachers' perceptions towards organizational culture in the school. The Table 1 showed that the overall result of the mean score was 3.19, in the range of 2.51-3.50, which meant the teachers' perception towards organizational culture is moderate.

**Table 1: Means and Standard Deviations for Teachers' Perceptions towards Organizational Culture in the School**

Item	N	Mean	S.D.	Interpretation
Physical Factors	91	3.03	0.46	Moderate
Social Factors	91	3.42	0.46	Moderate
Organizational Commitment Factors	91	2.95	0.30	Moderate
Cultural Factors	91	3.36	0.56	Moderate
Total	91	3.19	0.32	Moderate

*Research Objective Two*

Research Objective Two was to identify the teachers' perceptions towards occupational stress in the school. Means and Standard Deviation were used to identify teachers' perceptions towards occupational stress in the school. The Table 2 showed that the total mean score of teachers' perception towards occupational stress was 3.51 in the range of 3.51-4.50, which meant the level of teachers' perception towards occupational stress was low for the school.

**Table 2: Means and Standard Deviations for Teachers' Perceptions towards Organizational Stress in the School**

Item	N	Mean	S.D.	Interpretation
Work Variance	91	3.49	0.55	Moderate
Role Ambiguity	91	3.64	0.51	Low Stress
Role Conflict	91	3.46	0.45	Moderate
Work Condition	91	3.54	0.49	Low Stress
Corporate Culture	91	3.43	0.46	Moderate
Total	91	3.51	0.38	Low Stress

*Research Objective Three*

Research Objective Three was to determine the relationship between teachers' perception towards organizational culture and occupational stress at No.2 Basic Education High School, in Insein Township, Myanmar.

There was significant relationship between teachers' perception towards organizational culture and occupational stress at No.2 Basic Education High School, in Insein Township, Myanmar. Person correlation  $r$  is  $-.579$ , which mean the relationship between teachers' perception towards organizational culture and occupational stress is moderate negative.

**Table 3: Person Correlation between Teachers' Perception towards Organizational Culture and Occupational Stress at No.2 Basic Education High School**

		Occupational Stress	Conclusion
Teachers' perception towards Organizational Culture	Pearson Correlation Sig.(2 - tailed)	$-.579^{**}$ .000	There is a significant relationship.

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

## Discussion

### *1. Organizational Culture*

According to the data analysis result, the total mean score of teachers' perception towards organizational culture at No.2 Basic Education High School was 3.19 in the range of 2.51-3.50, level of teachers' perception towards organizational culture was moderate for the school. This indicated that the level of teachers perception towards organizational culture at No.2 Basic Education High School, in Insein Township were moderate and it implied that the organizational culture in this school was not strong enough and need to be improved.

In depth analysis, on they have the cordial relationship with their colleagues and they are proud to work with the school were regarded as high. Therefore it was observed that they can build a healthier communication among the teachers and can help in the process of continuous improvement as well as teachers are happy and proud to work in the school. The attitude of teachers towards the school is also positive.

In certain factors the teachers expressed their dissatisfaction, factors like working environment, quality of provided material and proper appreciation in the current situation. If these factors are altered by ensuring recognizing and rewarding teachers according to their performance and creativities, and encouraging innovation in school, the teachers can be made to perform well with a higher level of participatory team at well-equipped school.

### *2. Occupational Stress*

The total mean score of teachers' perception towards occupational stress at No.2 Basic Education High School, was 3.51 in the range of 3.51-4.50 levels of teachers' perception towards occupational stress level was low in this school. This indicated that the level of teachers' perception towards occupational stress at No.2 Basic Education High School were low and it meant that the teachers had sense of control over circumstances and situations happened in their school.

But there are some factors which the management and teachers need to have concern on them. In the depth analysis of occupational stress, the teachers scored in the lowest on they have plenty of free time after work. Therefore, it could mean that they had work overload or had to work overtime due to their financial problem.

There was the second lowest score on their supervisors support them in the accomplishment of their job, which revealed that the school should be arranged as appropriate in order to motivate the job accomplishment of teachers. Moreover attractive rewards and recognition is the area that needs to be reviewed. As the proper rewards can help motivate creativity and hard work of employees while mentally maintaining a high performance teacher to stay engaged with the school as they feel important and would like to establish best practices and role models to others.

### *3. Relationship between Organizational Culture and Occupational Stress at No.2 Basic Education High School, in Insein Township, Myanmar.*

The testing of research hypothesis results showed that the probability significance was .000, is less than .05, therefore, the research hypothesis was accepted, which



means there were significant relationship between teachers' perception towards organizational culture and occupational stress at No.2 Basic Education High School, in Insein, Myanmar. Pearson correlation  $r$  is  $-.579$ , which mean the relationship between teachers' perception towards organizational culture and occupational stress is moderate negative.

Organizational culture is one of the key factors in determining how successful an organization will be in managing work stress. Organizational culture is reflected in the attitudes of staff, their shared beliefs about the organization, their shared value systems and common and approved ways of behaving at work. Organization culture also concerns how problems are recognized and solved. It can affect what is experienced as stressful, how stress are reported and how the organization responds to such report. (Cox, Griffiths &, Leka 2003)

The study found a moderate negative relationship between teachers' perception towards organizational culture and occupational stress at No.2 Basic Education High School, in Insein Township, Myanmar. Therefore, teachers and school leaders must aware of the culture of the school and explore it in relation to the management of work stress. If necessary, these people must engage in culture change activities as an important aspect of improving the management of the stress at work.

## **Recommendations**

### *Recommendation for Teachers*

Teachers are recommended to scrutinize the different perception towards organizational culture and occupational stress among them, and to find out how they can work more closely than ever before by knowing the job related stress and how to develop to have high productivity and good performance to achieve organization goals.

Stress affects the efficiency of the individual. So, there is a need to provide proper encouraging environment and support to teachers to lessen individual stress at their workplace. Teachers should be positive in facing their challenges, which will help them in improving their functional skills and reduce stress, so that their profession is not affected. It is recommended that regular assessment of stress level should be conducted for preventive measures.

The most important is that the teachers learn to be aware and prepare for the change. "Change brings both opportunities and challenges. Change can empower us to create and invent new and different ways of solving problems", according to Aung (2013). Therefore, if the teachers are always ready for the change, the management can lead the school for improvement easier and better than before. Moreover, the better the teachers are able to handle and manage occupational stressors, the better the balance of physical and mental condition that lead to further improvement of productivity and performance the teachers have.

### *Recommendation for Administrators*

The administrators are recommended to analyze the different perceptions of teachers towards organizational culture and occupational stress, so that they can prepare for proper facilitation and supervision in their school. It is important that the

administrators pay attention to relationship among colleagues and peers and makes sure that the teachers feel that the job that they do is important to the school, regardless of the level or position they are taking.

Besides that, the institution or management should check that, supervision, support and relationship with the teachers is properly taken care of and enhanced most strongly. Most importantly, it is recommended that principals and supervisors should investigate the causes for stress and evaluate the organizational culture of the school, in order to develop a better situation in the school. They should also suggest ways, like educational workshops and seminars on issues relating to new knowledge and capabilities in the field of provision of services to lessen and cope with stress.

Nevertheless, the school leaders or administrators are recommended to offer several types of rewards to increase the likelihood that each person's needs will be met somehow and the outcome is their job satisfaction and performance. It is important because the school objective is to develop better teaching skills as well as learning skills of students who are under their care. Therefore rewards are part of the system and should not be viewed as a cost but rather as a future benefit.

#### *Recommendation for Future Researchers*

This relationship study on teachers' perception towards organizational culture and occupational stress was 91 full-time teachers at No.2 Basic Education High School, in Insein Township, Myanmar in the academic year 2015-2016. The data presented in this study cannot be used to make generalizations for another school. Future researchers are recommended to continue their studies in other schools, for a better understanding of the impact of stress as well as studies on stress-reduction techniques.

Future researchers should also combine qualitative and quantitative research design for relationship between organizational culture and occupational stress. The mixed approaches give a greater depth to the findings and will improve understanding of school's organizational culture and teachers' occupational stress. Finally, the study can be extended even further to include the other public schools in other states or divisions in Myanmar.

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