

A Survey on Work Related Stress in Higher Education of Uttarakhand (India)

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Abstract

Purpose: In the present study an attempt is made to compare faculty's occupational/ work related stress of government and private universities and colleges of Uttarakhand state.

Design/methodology/approach: A sample of 204 faculty is selected, 100 from government and 104 from private sector. This study is conducted keeping in view different criterion and comparison is made by applying the concept of t-statistics and further conclusion is drawn by the application of ANOVA in two sectors.

Findings: This study clearly portrays the amount of difference in the stress level in government and private sectors. Initially the study was started with an impression that there is a big difference of stress level in both the sectors but to our surprise the results drawn showed a low significant difference in the stress level among the faculty of both, Government and Private sectors.

Research limitations/implications: An attempt was made to cover the whole state of Uttarakhand but the study was restricted due to the limitation of sample size and non-availability of faculty. Few questionnaires were uninterestingly filled and may have affected the results. Few questionnaires were wasted because of incomplete information.

Practical implications: The study can be used by both government and private sector educational institutes in framing their HR policies and to improve work culture in higher education by reducing the stress at workplace and its causes.

Social implications: Present study can help the private universities and colleges to make such policies to retain their good faculty and attract more employment.

Originality/value: So far no study has been conducted in Uttarakhand to measure and compare workplace stress level of faculty in higher education.

Keywords: Stress, Government, Private, Educational institutes, Faculty, HR policies.

INTRODUCTION

Stress is present in all domains but it is a sort of a new phenomenon. It is related to one's personal experience which is caused by pressure or demands which an individual undergoes, due to which an individual's ability is highly affected (1). Work related stress is a sort of a mismatch

between the demands of the job and of employees in order to meet those demands. The studies that have been conducted and reports in this regard show that stress has its greatest effect on those who are at the very top level and those who are at the very bottom of the socio-economic ladder. There is a demarcating difference between stress and pressure. Pressure is a subjective feeling of tension and when the individual is unable to cope up with this pressure, the final result is stress. Work related stress is a hot topic in the field of research these days (2). There is a rapid increase in stress in the present days. It can be clearly seen that people are more stressed and less happy in the present times than they used to be in earlier days.

A challenging work environment is a sort of motivation for most of the people. But, an increased pressure because of work demands, and other factors becomes excessive and prolonged and do not match the perceived ability of an individual to cope with the situation, generally leading to stress (3). Challenges faced by individuals at work, may energize them physically and psychologically, and encourages them to learn new skills. Having a challenging work environment forms an important ingredient in developing and sustaining a psychologically healthy environment. Though there should not be excessive and prolonged pressure on the mind of an individual, which he/she cannot cope up with, as it cannot be regarded as a new challenge rather it is a kind of mental burden on an individual.(4)

In the present era stress is regarded as a negative psychological state in which there are cognitive and emotional components which have an adverse effect on the health of both the individual and the organization. There are a lot of factors which lead to the generation of stress, it may be due to a dynamic interaction between the individuals and the environment in which they are working and often arises due to the existence of a problematic personal environment and the emotional reactions which underpin those interactions. Along with this there are a lot of environmental factors, like, the role of psychosocial and organizational factors, play a key role in the work related stress. People develop quitting tendencies out of work related stress. (5) Stress has its long lasting effect on the job satisfaction which discourage the employee working capability and force them silently to withdraw from the work. (6)

World Health Organization defines work related stress as 'the response people may have when presented with work demands and pressures that are not matched to their knowledge and abilities and which challenge their ability to cope.'(7)

The employees have to undergo various stressors that are imposed on them at the work place and their response to this may be positive or negative. Though people are able to cope up with such short term stressors and are even able to perform their normal job duties in a perfect manner but the stress that develops in a long term, affects a person's physical and psychological health. (4) Such stressful situations are the most complicated for an individual and should be treated with immense care because if such a situation lasts for too long, or if the period between stressful situations is too short, then the body has no time to repair itself, and this further results in fatigue and damage. Stress hormones are very harmful for the human body, they literally destroy the body, so over time, it has a lot of adverse effects on the physical and mental health and quality of life in just the similar way as exposure to industrial toxins. (8)

Priyasha Jain et al identified the level of frequency of the job stressors for corporate individuals surveyed and pointed out the distressing factor that affects individuals. They investigated into the areas where changes can be made by the employees, managers, and the HR department so as to reduce the stress factors. (9) In a study, Teuta Agai-Demjaha et al identified the level of self-perceived work-related stress among teachers in elementary schools. They found that the majority of teachers perceived their work-related stress as high or very high. They concluded that the level of work-related stress is significantly high in relation to gender, age, levels of grades taught as well as working experience, and significant relation to the level of education. (10) Another Study suggests that employing stress as an individualized category suppresses employees' flexibility and encourages both teachers and employers to take measures to manage it at a psychological level, rather than engaging in proper debate about the state of the profession. (11)

Another paper worked to compare teachers' occupational stress of government and private school teachers of Laksar, Haridwar and results revealed that primary school teachers are highly stressed as comparison to government primary school teachers (12). As far as stress is concerned it is not an injury or disease, however the presence of a stressful situation may lead to the development of physical as well as psychological injuries.

The paper aims to find out the prevailing work related stress among Government sector faculty and Private sector faculty as well as to find out the prevailing work related stress lying in different age groups. It aims to compare the work related stress in different age groups of Government sector and to compare the work related stress in different age groups in Private sector.

METHODOLOGY

A well designed questionnaire on nominal scale was distributed to 204 faculty, 100 from Government and 104 from private sector. The questionnaires were distributed to randomly selected faculty on the basis of age groups. Four age groups were taken as 20-30 years, 30-40 years, 40-50 years and 50-60 years. In case of Government sector there are 25 faculty in each age group whereas in case of Private sector there are 26 faculty in each age group. Normally people can join higher education as faculty not before 24 years of age and retirement age is 60 years. So we distributed the age groups among 4 groups lying between 25 years to 60 years. Five subscales are taken for stress measurements, i.e. control, demands, job security, physical exertion and social support. Each of them have questions, i.e. question no 1 to 4 belong to control, question no 5 and 6 belong to Demand, question no 7 belongs to Job Security, question no 8 belongs to physical exertion and question no 9 to 11 belong to Social support. A questionnaire made on nominal scale with yes or no option is as follows:

Questionnaire on Work related stress

- Q 1. You learn new things in your job.
- Q 2. High level skill is required in your job
- Q 3. You have freedom to decide your way of working
- Q 4. Your job includes repetition of work
- Q 5. Your job is very hectic
- Q 6. You are free from conflicting demands of others
- Q 7. You have job security
- Q 8. Your job requires physical efforts
- Q 9. You are exposed to hostility or conflict from the people you work with
- Q 10. Your supervisor is helpful in getting the job done
- Q 11. The co-workers are helpful in getting the job done

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Responses from faculty are shown in the form of Bar Chart in figure 1 for different age groups. There is no doubt that private jobs require skills. In private sector, higher level skill is equally required throughout the job tenure i.e. in all age groups whereas in Government sector high level skill is required with increase in age or by attaining seniority.

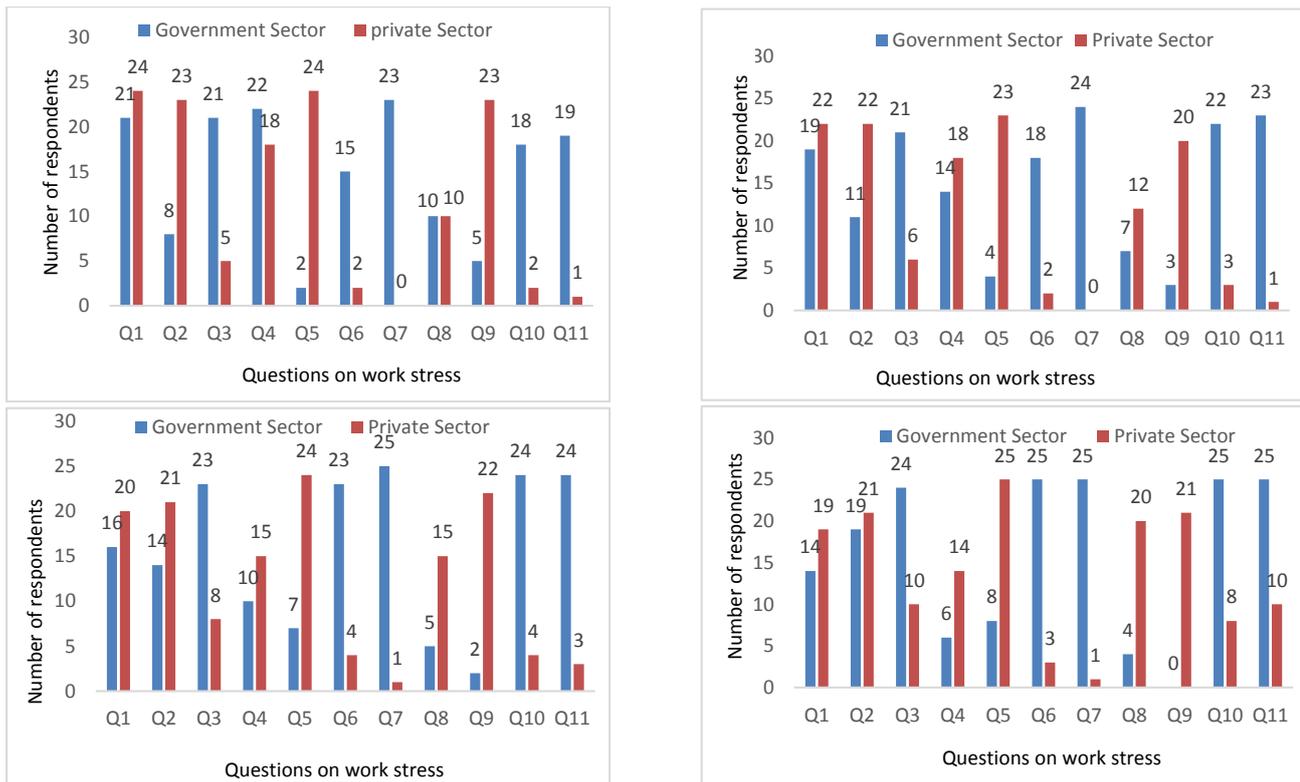


Figure 1. Responses for questionnaire by government and private sector faculty of age group (a) 20-30, (b) 30-40, (c) 40-50, (d) 50-60.

Observing the responses for question no 7, gives a bad picture of private sector educational institutions. Private sector ensures no job security to its faculty, which discourages them to work. Faculty keep hunting for job and hence it restricts them to give their best to the work assigned. On the contrary, government sector grant job security to its employees which in turn motivates the faculty to do justice to their jobs.

Responses with regard to question no 8 helps to conclude that, with increase in age, more physical efforts are required in private sector jobs whereas in government sector less physical efforts are demanded with increase in age or gaining seniority. The gap between government and private sector is increasing with the passage of time.

It is also observed in both the sectors that in initial years of job, cooperation from supervisors and co-workers is less whereas on gaining seniority the supervisors and co-workers start co-operating. For all other questions, the response pattern is almost the same in government and private sector.

Statistical Analysis

Age group 20-30 years

Null Hypothesis: There is no significance difference between the work related stress levels of Government and Private sector faculty in the age group 20- 30 years.

Table 1

Y_1	$Y_1 - \bar{Y}_1$	$(Y_1 - \bar{Y}_1)^2$	Y_2	$Y_2 - \bar{Y}_2$	$(Y_2 - \bar{Y}_2)^2$
21	6.1	37.21	24	12	144
8	-6.9	47.61	23	11	121
21	6.1	37.21	5	-7	49
22	7.1	50.41	18	6	36
2	-12.9	166.41	24	12	144
15	0.1	.01	2	-10	100
23	8.1	65.61	0	-12	144
10	-4.9	24.01	10	-2	4
5	-9.9	98.01	23	-11	121
18	3.1	9.61	2	-10	100
19	4.1	16.81	1	-11	121
		$\sum(Y_1 - \bar{Y}_1)^2 = 552.91$			$\sum(Y_2 - \bar{Y}_2)^2 = 1084$

Y_1 represents the respondents opting “yes” option for each individual question related to an individual parameter for Government sector.

For example. 21 individuals opted yes to the first question i.e. you learn new things in your job.

Y_2 represents the respondents opting “yes” option for each individual question related to an individual parameter for Private sector.

For example. 24 individuals opted yes to the first question i.e. you learn new things in your job as indicated in Table No. 1

$$\bar{Y}_1 = 14.9, \bar{Y}_2 = 12$$

$$\text{Standard deviation} = \sqrt{\frac{552.91+1084}{20}} = 9.047$$

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Standard error} &= 9.0447 \times \sqrt{\frac{1}{n_1} + \frac{1}{n_2}} \\ &= 9.0447 \times \sqrt{\frac{1}{11} + \frac{1}{11}} \end{aligned}$$

$$\begin{aligned} &= 3.858 \\ \text{Degrees of freedom} &= n_1 + n_2 - 2 = 20 \\ \text{T- stastic} &= \sqrt{\frac{|\bar{Y}_1 - \bar{Y}_2|}{S.E}} = 0.867 \end{aligned}$$

The tabulated value of t at 5% level of significance at 20 degrees of freedom is 1.725

Since the calculated value of t is less than the tabulated value of t ($0.867 < 1.725$), therefore we accept the null hypothesis.

Hence we conclude that there is no significant difference between the work related stress levels of Government and Private sector faculty lying in the age group of 20- 30 years.

Age group 30-40 years

Null hypothesis: There is no significant difference between the work related stress levels of Government and Private sector faculty in the age group 30- 40 years.

Table 2

Y_1	$Y_1 - \bar{Y}_1$	$(Y_1 - \bar{Y}_1)^2$	Y_2	$Y_2 - \bar{Y}_2$	$(Y_2 - \bar{Y}_2)^2$
19	3.9	15.21	22	10.3	106.09
11	-4.1	16.81	22	10.3	106.09
21	5.9	34.81	6	-5.7	32.49
14	-1.1	1.21	18	6.3	39.69
4	-11.1	123.21	23	11.3	127.69
18	2.9	8.41	2	-9.7	94.069
24	8.9	79.21	0	-11.7	136.89
7	-8.1	65.61	12	..3	.09
3	-12.1	146.41	20	8.3	68.89
22	6.9	47.61	3	-8.7	75.69
23	7.9	62.41	1	-10.7	114.49
		$\Sigma(Y_1 - \bar{Y}_1)^2 = 600.51$			$\Sigma(Y_2 - \bar{Y}_2)^2 = 990.3$

Y_1 represents the respondents opting “yes” option for each individual question related to an individual parameter for Government sector. For eg. 19 individuals opted yes to the first question i.e. you learn new things in your job. Y_2 represents the respondents opting “yes” option for each individual question related to an individual parameter for Private sector. For eg. 22 individuals opted yes to the first question i.e. you learn new things in your job.

$$\bar{Y}_1 = 15.1, \bar{Y}_2 = 11.7$$

$$\text{Standard deviation} = \sqrt{\frac{600.51+990.3}{20}} = 8.919$$

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Standard error} &= 8.919 \times \sqrt{\frac{1}{n_1} + \frac{1}{n_2}} \\ &= 8.919 \times \sqrt{\frac{1}{11} + \frac{1}{11}} \\ &= 3.803 \end{aligned}$$

$$\text{Degrees of freedom} = n_1 + n_2 - 2 = 20$$

$$\text{T- stastic} = \sqrt{\frac{|\bar{Y}_1 - \bar{Y}_2|}{S.E}} = 0.9455$$

The tabulated value of t at 5% level of significance at 20 degrees of freedom is 1.725 Since the calculated value of t is less than the tabulated value of t ($0.9455 < 1.725$), therefore we accept the null hypothesis.

Hence we conclude that there is no significant difference between the work related stress levels of Government and Private sector faculty lying in the age group of 30- 40 years.

Age group 40-50 years

Null hypothesis: There is no significant difference between the work related stress levels of Government and Private sector faculty lying in the age group of 40- 50 years.

Table 3

Y_1	$Y_1 - \bar{Y}_1$	$(Y_1 - \bar{Y}_1)^2$	Y_2	$Y_2 - \bar{Y}_2$	$(Y_2 - \bar{Y}_2)^2$
16	0.3	0.09	20	7.5	563.25
14	-1.7	2.89	21	8.5	72.25
23	7.3	53.29	8	-4.5	20.25
10	-5.7	32.49	15	2.5	6.25
7	-8.7	75.69	24	11.5	132.25
23	7.3	53.29	4	-8.5	72.25
25	9.3	86.49	1	-11.52	132.25
5	-10.7	114.49	15	2.5	6.25
2	-13.7	187.69	22	9.5	90.25
24	8.3	68.89	4	-8.5	72.25
24	8.3	68.89	3	-9.5	90.25
		$\sum(Y_1 - \bar{Y}_1)^2 = 744.019$			$\sum(Y_2 - \bar{Y}_2)^2 = 750.75$

Y_1 represents the respondents opting “yes” option for each individual question related to an individual parameter for Government sector. For eg. 16 individuals opted yes to the first question i.e. you learn new things in your job.

Y_2 represents the respondents opting “yes” option for each individual question related to an individual parameter for Private sector. For eg. 20 individuals opted yes to the first question i.e. you learn new things in your job.

$$\bar{Y}_1 = 15.7, \bar{Y}_2 = 12.5$$

$$\text{Standard deviation} = \sqrt{\frac{744.19+750.75}{20}} = 8.6456$$

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Standard error} &= 8.6456 \times \sqrt{\frac{1}{n_1} + \frac{1}{n_2}} \\ &= 8.6456 \times \sqrt{\frac{1}{11} + \frac{1}{11}} \\ &= 3.686 \end{aligned}$$

$$\text{Degrees of freedom} = n_1 + n_2 - 2 = 20$$

$$\text{T- stastic} = \sqrt{\frac{|\bar{Y}_1 - \bar{Y}_2|}{S.E}} = 0.932$$

The tabulated value of t at 5% level of significance at 20 degrees of freedom is 1.725 Since the calculated value of t is

less than the tabulated value of t (0.932 < 1.725), therefore we accept the null hypothesis.

Hence we conclude that there is no significant difference between the work related stress levels of Government and Private sector faculty lying in the age group of 40- 50 years.

Age group 50-60 years

Null hypothesis: There is no significant difference between the work related stress levels of Government and Private sector faculty in the age group 50- 60 years

Y_1 represents the respondents opting “yes” option for each individual question related to an individual parameter for Government sector. For eg. 14 individuals opted yes to the first question i.e. you learn new things in your job.

Y_2 represents the respondents opting “yes” option for each individual question related to an individual parameter for Private sector. For eg. 19 individuals opted yes to the first question i.e. you learn new things in your job.

$$\bar{Y}_1 = 15.9, \bar{Y}_2 = 13.8$$

$$\text{Standard deviation} = \sqrt{\frac{964.91+637.64}{20}} = 8.95$$

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Standard error} &= 8.95 \times \sqrt{\frac{1}{n_1} + \frac{1}{n_2}} \\ &= 8.95 \times \sqrt{\frac{1}{11} + \frac{1}{11}} \\ &= 3.816 \end{aligned}$$

$$\text{Degrees of freedom} = n_1 + n_2 - 2 = 20$$

$$\text{T- stastic} = \sqrt{\frac{|\bar{Y}_1 - \bar{Y}_2|}{S.E}} = 0.7416$$

The tabulated value of t at 5% level of significance at 20 degrees of freedom is 1.725 Since the calculated value of t is less than the tabulated value of t (0.7416 < 1.725), therefore we accept the null hypothesis.

Hence we conclude that there is no significant difference between the work related stress levels of Government and Private sector faculty lying in the age group of 50- 60 years.

ANOVA

Government Sector

In order to compare the work related stress among higher education faculty of government sector belonging to different age group, an ANOVA study has been conducted.

Table 4

Y_1	$Y_1 - \bar{Y}_1$	$(Y_1 - \bar{Y}_1)^2$	Y_2	$Y_2 - \bar{Y}_2$	$(Y_2 - \bar{Y}_2)^2$
14	1.9	3.61	19	5.2	27.04
19	3.1	9.61	21	7.2	51.84
24	8.1	65.61	10	3.8	14.44
6	9.9	98.01	14	0.2	0.04
8	7.9	62.41	25	11.2	125.44
25	9.1	82.81	3	10.8	116.64
25	9.1	82.81	1	12.8	163.84
4	11.9	141.61	20	6.2	38.44
0	15.9	252.81	21	7.2	51.84
25	9.1	82.81	8	5.8	33.64
25	9.1	82.81	10	3.8	14.44
		$\sum(Y_1 - \bar{Y}_1)^2 = 964.91$			$\sum(Y_2 - \bar{Y}_2)^2 = 637.64$

Table 5

X_1 (Age gp 20 – 30)	$(X_1)^2$	X_2 (Age gp 30 – 40)	$(X_2)^2$	X_3 (Age gp 40 – 50)	$(X_3)^2$	X_4 (Age gp 50 – 60)	$(X_4)^2$
21	441	19	361	16	256	14	196
8	64	11	121	14	196	19	361
21	441	21	441	23	529	24	576
22	484	14	196	10	100	6	36
2	4	4	16	7	49	8	64
15	225	18	324	23	529	25	625
23	529	24	576	25	625	25	625
10	100	7	49	5	25	4	16
5	25	3	9	2	4	0	0
18	324	22	484	24	576	25	625
19	361	23	529	24	576	25	625
$\Sigma X_1=164$	$\Sigma(X_1)^2 = 2998$	$\Sigma X_2= 166$	$\Sigma(X_2)^2 = 3106$	$\Sigma X_3= 173$	$\Sigma(X_3)^2 = 3465$	$\Sigma X_4= 175$	$\Sigma(X_4)^2 = 3479$

$\bar{X}_1 = 14.69 \quad \bar{X}_2 = 15.1 \quad \bar{X}_3 = 15.7 \quad \bar{X}_4 = 15.9$

Null hypothesis: There is no significant difference between the stress levels among different age groups of government sector.

$T = 164 + 166 + 173 + 175 = 678$

$\frac{T^2}{N} = \frac{678^2}{44} = \frac{459684}{44} = 10447.36$

$TSS = 2998 + 3106 + 3465 + 3749 - 10447.36$
 $= 13318 - 10447.36$
 $= 2870.64$

$SSB = \frac{164^2}{11} + \frac{166^2}{11} + \frac{173^2}{11} + \frac{175^2}{11} - 10447.36$
 $= 2445.1 + 2505.1 + 2720.82 + 2784.1 - 10447.36$
 $= 7.76$

Degrees of freedom = 4 - 1 = 3 = V_1

$MSB = \frac{SSB}{V_1} = \frac{7.76}{3} = 2.59$

$SSW = TSS - SSB$
 $= 2870.64 - 7.76$
 $= 2862.88$

Degrees of freedom = 44 - 4 = 40 = V_2

$MSW = \frac{SSW}{V_2} = \frac{2862.88}{40} = 71.57$

$F = \frac{MSB}{MSW} = \frac{2.59}{71.57} = 0.036$

The tabulated value of F at 5% level of significance and (3, 40) degrees of freedom is 2.84. Since the calculated value of F is less than the tabulated value of F (0.036 < 2.84), therefore

we accept the null hypothesis. There is no significant difference between the work related stresses among higher education faculty of government sector as per the age groups.

According to the study, we can conclude that there is no significant difference between the work related stresses among higher education faculty of government sector as per age group. All the employees of different age groups are working under the same stress level.

Private Sector

In order to compare the work related stress among higher education faculty of private sector belonging to different age group, an ANOVA study has been conducted.

Table 6

X_1 (Age gp 20 – 30)	$(X_1)^2$	X_2 (Age gp 30 – 40)	$(X_2)^2$	X_3 (Age gp 40 – 50)	$(X_3)^2$	X_4 (Age gp 50 – 60)	$(X_4)^2$
24	576	22	484	20	400	16	361
23	529	22	484	21	441	21	441
5	25	6	36	8	64	10	100
18	324	18	324	15	225	14	196
24	576	23	529	24	576	25	625
2	4	2	4	4	16	3	9
0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1
10	100	12	144	15	225	20	400
23	529	20	400	22	484	21	441
2	4	3	9	4	16	8	64
1	1	1	1	3	9	10	100
$\Sigma X_1=132$	$\Sigma(X_1)^2 = 2668$	$\Sigma X_2=129$	$\Sigma(X_2)^2 = 2415$	$\Sigma X_3=137$	$\Sigma(X_3)^2 = 2457$	$\Sigma X_4=152$	$\Sigma(X_4)^2 = 2738$

$\bar{X}_1 = 12$ $\bar{X}_2 = 11.7$

$\bar{X}_3 = 12.5$ $\bar{X}_4 = 13.8$

Null hypothesis: There is no significant difference between the stress levels among different age groups of private sector.

$T = 132 + 129 + 137 + 152 = 550$

$$\frac{T^2}{N} = \frac{550^2}{44} = 6875$$

$TSS = 2668 + 2415 + 2457 + 2738 - 6875$
 $= 3403$

$SSB = \frac{132^2}{11} + \frac{129^2}{11} + \frac{137^2}{11} + \frac{152^2}{11} - 10447.36$
 $= 1584 + 1512.82 + 1706.27 + 2100.36 - 6875$
 $= 28.45$

Degrees of freedom = 4 - 1 = 3 = V_1

$MSB = \frac{SSB}{V_1} = \frac{28.45}{3} = 9.48$

$SSW = TSS - SSB$
 $= 3403 - 28.45$
 $= 3374.55$

Degrees of freedom = 44 - 4 = 40

$MSW = \frac{MSB}{V_2} = \frac{3374.55}{40} = 84.36$

$F = \frac{MSB}{MSW} = \frac{9.48}{84.36} = 0.112$

The tabulated value of F at 5% level of significance and (3, 40) degrees of freedom is 2.84. Since the calculated value of F is less than the tabulated value of F (0.112 < 2.84), therefore we accept the null hypothesis. There is no significant difference between the work related stresses among higher education faculty of private sector as per the age groups.

According to the study, we can conclude that there is no significant difference between the work related stresses among higher education faculty of private sector as per age group.

All the employees of different age groups are working under the same stress level.

If the results obtained by the application of ANOVA study are rounded off to one decimal place, we find that the value of F-statistic in case of government sector comes out to be

equivalent to 0 (zero) whereas the value of F- statistic in case of private sector comes out to be equivalent to 0.1 .

This clearly shows that F statistics shrinks to zero value in case of government sector where as it is equal to 0.1 for private sector .Hence we can conclude that there is little amount of work related stress in private sector where as no such work related stress is observed in government sector .

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

As far as different age groups are concerned, data concluded that there is almost same stress level in both government and private sector but there is difference in their stress pattern. Government employees feel relaxed and secure because of the job security they enjoy.

According to F- statistics the difference in stress level in government and private sector is negligible as the value of F statistics is 0 and 0.1 for government and private sector institutions respectively.

The study suggests that faculty working in private colleges and universities are unable to give their 100% to the job because of the absence of job security. We wish to suggest that the private sector should review the HR policy and provides job security to the faculty. The Heads and seniors should help and guide junior and new faculty out of the experience they have. Management should check that there should be no hostility and conflict among all different levels as well as among different employees at same level. To have good quality of work, management should make sure that the work assigned to faculty should not be a burden or hectic to them. Competitive environment within and outside should be replaced by feeling of cooperation and harmony among the faculty members.

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