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A STUDY ON THE IMPACT OF OCCUPATIONAL STRESS ON WORK-LIFE BALANCE AMONG SCHOOL TEACHERS IN JAMSHEDPUR

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Abstract:
This study focuses on the occupational stress and work–life balance of school teachers of Jamshedpur, India. Primary data were collected via a structured questionnaire from 385 private school teachers and analyzed through SPSS 17.0 and SmartPLS 4 employing Structural Equation Modeling. The constructs showed desirable reliability and validity as assessed by the measurement model. The influence of occupational stress on work–life balance among school teachers and reveals a significant effect ($\beta = 0.519$, $t = 11.577$, $p < 0.001$), thus, hypothesis H1 is accepted. The results of the study imply that teachers' ability to balance their professional and personal responsibilities is severely affected by stress related to the occupation. Burdensome workloads, administrative responsibilities, classroom management challenges and examination-related pressures make teachers more stressed. The findings highlight effective workload management along with institutional mechanisms and stress reduction strategies such as counselling approaches and organizational interventions to enhance teacher well-being and work–life balance.

Keywords: *Occupational Stress; Work–Life Balance; School Teachers; Private Schools; Teacher Well-being; Workplace Stress; Organizational Support*

Vol. 12 Issue 2s (May, 2026)
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1. Introduction

Teaching has always been regarded as one of the most challenging professions, plunging teachers deep into cognitive activation and emotional regulation, classroom management and administration. The role of school teachers has expanded considerably in the last two decades, from traditional teaching and mentoring to extensive documentation, evaluation duties for improving student learning outcomes, parental communication, and institutional reporting which has increased significantly work-related stress within the profession (Selye, Hans; 1976). Occupational stress arises when the demands of the job exceed an individual's ability to cope and, in educational settings typically relates to pressure from workload, time constraints, role ambiguity and student behavioral problems (Cooper, Cary L. & Marshall, Judi, 1976). A major factor which operates somewhat against teacher stress is that teachers who experience multiple role conflicts due to different functionings (Kyriacou, Chris, 1987). Sustained exposure to this type of stress has been strongly associated with burnout, emotional exhaustion, and lower professional performance in education professionals (Maslach, Christina, 1981). Moreover, accountability pressures in urban schools and similar performance-based education systems since then have added to the stress associated with teaching (Day, Christopher, 2002). Work-life balance is the ability to maintain equilibrium between professional job responsibilities and personal life responsibilities. On the contrary, a major disruption of this balance, Work related stress has been identified due to overflow of excessive workload and emotional demand into private life (Greenhaus, Jeffrey H. & Beutell, Nicholas J., 1985). Furthermore, studies have shown that organizational factors such as insufficient resources, large class sizes and the impact of a demanding bureaucratic role compounding stress in teachers (Griffith, J., Steptoe, Andrew, & Cropley, Mark 1999), while emotional demands due to negative student behavior and parental expectations increases the psychological burdens experienced by academic professionals (Hargreaves Andy 2000). We use the Job Demands–Resources model which states that excessive job demands united with low resources (e.g. support) cause stress and decline in employee well-being as individuals directly facing high job stress are likely to find it hard to sustain a work-life balance (Bakker, Arnold B. & Demerouti, Evangelia, 2007; Klassen, Robert M. & Chiu, Ming Ming, 2010). In developing urban scenarios like Jamshedpur, these distress are aggravated at an ever-increasing rate owing to the stiffest academic rivalry and institutional pressures, thus having a closer look into the connection of work-life balance on occupational stress among school teachers is imperative.

2. Review of Earlier Literature

Occupational stress is well studied among employees of many professions, especially teachers. Selye, Hans (1976) proposed early foundational theory simple stress as physio psychological towards stimuli from environment establishing background for later research of occupational stress. Expanding upon this, Cooper, Cary L. and Marshall (1978) noted that work overload, role conflict and lack of social support are examples of stressors in the organizational environment such as work. Kyriacou, Chris (2001) has stressed that in the context of education, teacher stress is mainly due to factors such as workload pressure, time constraints and classroom management difficulties which directly affect job satisfaction and performance

Farber, Barry A. (1991) in a report pointed out that prolonged stress in teaching create emotional exhaustion and lack of effort (burnout). In the same vein, and in a global context, Day et al (2004) found that stress levels amongst teachers have increased due to heightened accountability systems and performance expectations driven by policy. Secondly, Travers, Cheryl J. and Cooper, Cary L. (1996) concluded that there is a significant association between teacher stress and organizational climate, pupil behaviour, management workload etc.

The outcome variable of interest examined in this analysis is work-life balance, which has been identified as a significant consequence affected by occupational stress. Work-Life balance was defined by Clark, Sue C. (2000) as the "satisfaction and good functioning at work and in family roles, with a minimum of role conflict". This is a tough balance for teachers to be expected of as their workload increases in an educational setting. Research by Greenhaus, Jeffrey H., and Allen, Tammy D. (2011) supports this statement as they find a strong association between high job demands and work-family conflict, poor psychological well-being and low job satisfaction.

Schaufeli, Wilmar B. and Bakker, Arnold B. (2004) - Empirical studies have found that burnout develops when exposure to job demands exceeds recovery time, adversely affecting work-related and non-work-related domains of life alike. Jeton Mfarrej Qureshi (2020) found in their study that a teacher with high level of stress reported less work-life balance and lesser cope to it, as explained by Pithers, Robert T. and Fogarty, Gerald J (1995).

Vol. 12 Issue 2s (May, 2026)
ISSN: 2208-2190 Pages- 83-92
DOI:https://doi.org/10.69980/23936f17

Moreover, research in educational contexts of developing countries has shown that contextually limited infrastructure and huge class sizes can compel teachers to experience greater stress and administrative burden. Sharma, Jyoti (2012) therefore has concluded that Indian school teachers suffer from a high stress level due to their work area and this endangers their personal health along with the professional efficiency. Another important study, Kaur, Manpreet (2015) said that teachers are facing issue of work-life balance mainly due to less support from Institutions and higher academic pressure.

In general, the findings of this literature confirm that occupational stress is among the most important determinants of work-life imbalance among teachers leading to negative outcomes in terms of psychological well-being and job satisfaction as well as performance efficiency. This underscore the necessity of having some measures aimed at addressing stress and work-life balance in teaching careers.

3. Hypotheses Development

Occupational stress is defined as the psychological and physical strain experienced by the individual due to work related demands in form of workload pressure, time pressures, role ambiguity, administrative burden or interpersonal interferences. Occupational stress is critical among school teachers as they have to undertake a series of cognitive, emotional and administrative tasks along with managing students' behavior, expectations of student outcomes in learning, progress in cognitive domains and institutional demands of teaching. Work-life balance, however, is concerned with the individuals ability to manage and maintain a equilibrium between work commitments and areas of life (e.g., family, leisure, self-care) that exist outside the workplace. It is unavoidable in a teaching job but work-life balance is the key to job satisfaction and mental health, while continuing to perform well at their task. But higher job demand and chronic stress exposure can throw off this balance, resulting in burnout, emotional fatigue, and lower employee productivity. Previous studies have repeatedly demonstrated that occupational stress risk factors are strong predictors of unsatisfactory work-related lifestyle balance in teachers, as high levels of workload and emotional demands limit the ability to detach from work-initiated pressures (Kyriacou, 2001; Klassen & Chiu, 2010). Our findings also indicate that higher stress levels make both teachers and their profession leave with dissatisfaction in the professional and personal states, affecting the quality of life of individuals at home (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). Moreover, research in education suggests that teachers are also subject to secondary stressors those proximate to the work environment (e.g. administrative demands, class size, lack of support) which contribute to an imbalance between work and life for teachers (Ahsan et al., 2009). In developing settings, such as India, these issues are magnified owing to resource constraints and rising academic competition. The above empirical and theoretical background reveals that occupational stress would significantly affect on work-life balance of school teachers at Jamshedpur.

H1: There is a significant impact of occupational stress on work-life balance among school teachers in Jamshedpur.

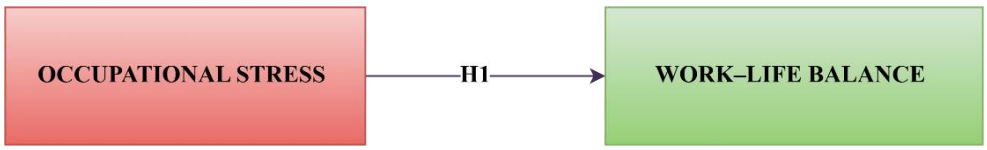

Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

4. Statement of the Problem

The teaching profession has become one of the most stressful jobs due to increasing academic expectations, administrative duties in schools, performance-based evaluation system and the difficulty of maintaining classroom control all of which lead to have high levels of work related stress amongst school teachers. For instance, teachers in private schools of Jamshedpur are overloaded with work, managing time is a challenge, student-teacher ratio is not appropriate for many schools, examinations happen regularly making it harder for the students to cope up and maintaining constant communication with parents and management takes away your personal life. These stressors and affect teachers´ psychological well- being and sensibly alter their work-life balance, decreasing job satisfaction, emotional exhaustion or even having limited efficiency. Several studies have been investigated in context of occupational stress and work-life balance, both independently (Varghese & Wani 2021) and jointly across cultures (Kim et al.2017; Li et al.2016), yet empirical study is quiet

Vol. 12 Issue 2s (May, 2026)
ISSN: 2208-2190 Pages- 83-92
DOI:https://doi.org/10.69980/23936f17

limited for the population of school teachers in Jamshedpur. This gap in literature indicates the lack of research on how much, if at all, occupational stress affects a school teacher's work-life balance in the area being studied.

5. Objectives of the Study

1. To validate the measurement model of occupational stress and work-life balance among school teachers in Jamshedpur.
2. To assess the reliability and validity of the constructs (occupational stress and work-life balance) through the measurement model.
3. To examine the impact of occupational stress on work-life balance among school teachers in Jamshedpur.

6. Hypothesis of the Study

1. **H1:** There is a significant impact of occupational stress on work-life balance among school teachers in Jamshedpur.

7. Research Methodology

Table 1: Research Methodology

Research Design	Quantitative and Descriptive Research Design
Type of Data	Primary Data & Secondary Data
Data Collection Method	Structured Questionnaire
Respondents	Private school teachers working in Jamshedpur, Jharkhand
Sample Size	385 respondents
Sampling Technique	Convenience Sampling
Study Area	Jamshedpur, Jharkhand, India
Independent Variable	Occupational Stress
Dependent Variable	Work-Life Balance
Instrument Used	Structured Questionnaire
Data Analysis Tools	SPSS 17.0 and SmartPLS 4
Statistical Techniques Applied	Reliability and Validity Analysis, Measurement Model Assessment, Structural Model Assessment

8. Analysis of the Study

Table 2: Outer Loading – Matrix

	OCCUPATIONAL STRESS	WORK–LIFE BALANCE
OS1	0.667	
OS2	0.676	
OS3	0.763	
OS4	0.745	
OS5	0.775	
OS6	0.765	
OS7	0.812	
WLB1		0.745
WLB2		0.853
WLB3		0.716
WLB4		0.635
WLB5		0.795

Note: OS: Occupational Stress; WLB: Work–Life Balance. OS1–OS7 represent Occupational Stress indicators; WLB1–WLB5 represent Work–Life Balance indicators.

Vol. 12 Issue 2s (May, 2026)
ISSN: 2208-2190 Pages- 83-92
DOI:https://doi.org/10.69980/23936f17

Item Statements:

Occupational Stress (OS):

OS1: I often feel there is not enough time to complete my work.
OS2: My workload as a teacher is excessive.
OS3: I feel pressure to meet academic performance targets.
OS4: Managing student behavior is stressful.
OS5: I feel stressed due to pressure from parents regarding students' performance.
OS6: I receive unclear or conflicting instructions from authorities.
OS7: Preparing students for board examinations causes stress.

Work–Life Balance (WLB):

WLB1: I am satisfied with my work–life balance.
WLB2: I have sufficient time for my family.
WLB3: I can disconnect from work during non-working hours.
WLB4: I am able to balance my professional and personal responsibilities.
WLB5: I am satisfied with the time I spend on leisure activities.

Table 2 represents Outer Loading – Matrix reveals that all the indicator of Occupational Stress (OS1–OS7) and Work–Life Balance (WLB1–WLB5) are beyond the minimum acceptable threshold, hence qualify for further analysis. Fornell & Larcker (1981) confirmed that outer loadings above 0.50 are adequate to confirm convergent validity in social science studies. For the current study, all items are above this threshold with Occupational Stress loadings from 0.667 to 0.812 and Work–Life Balance loadings from 0.635 to 0.853 respectively OS7 (0.812) and WLB2 (0.853) are the strongest indicators of their respective constructs, while WLB4 (0.635) is also acceptable compared to other items but relatively lower score In general, the results indicate that all indicators show adequate convergent validity and reliability in measuring the latent constructs in the model.

Table 3: Construct Reliability and Validity

	Cronbach's alpha	Composite reliability (rho_a)	Composite reliability (rho_c)	Average variance extracted (AVE)
OCCUPATIONAL STRESS	0.866	0.870	0.897	0.555
WORK–LIFE BALANCE	0.808	0.829	0.866	0.566

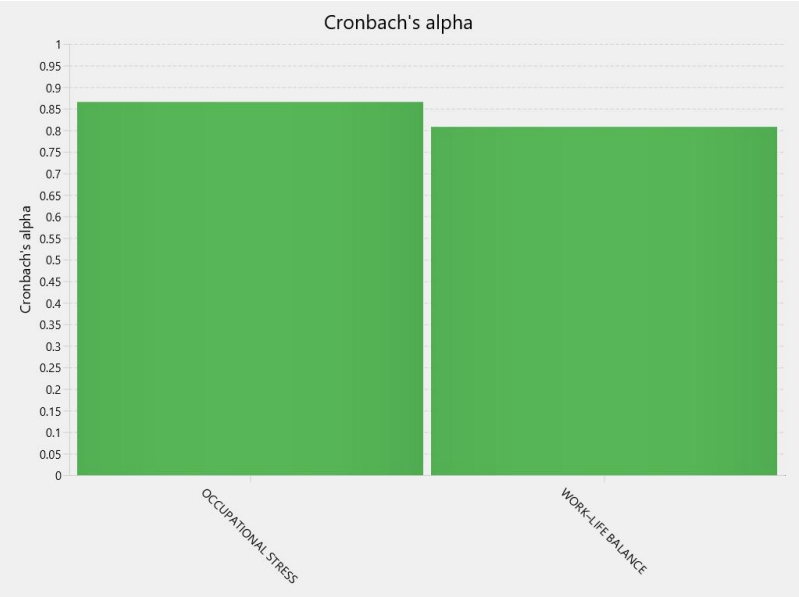

Figure 2: Cronbach's alpha

Vol. 12 Issue 2s (May, 2026)
ISSN: 2208-2190 Pages- 83-92
DOI:https://doi.org/10.69980/23936f17

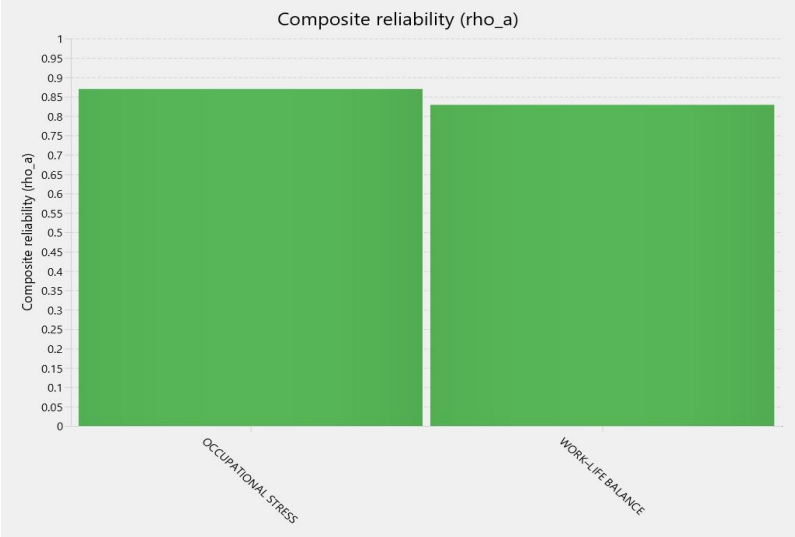

Figure 3: Composite reliability (rho_a)

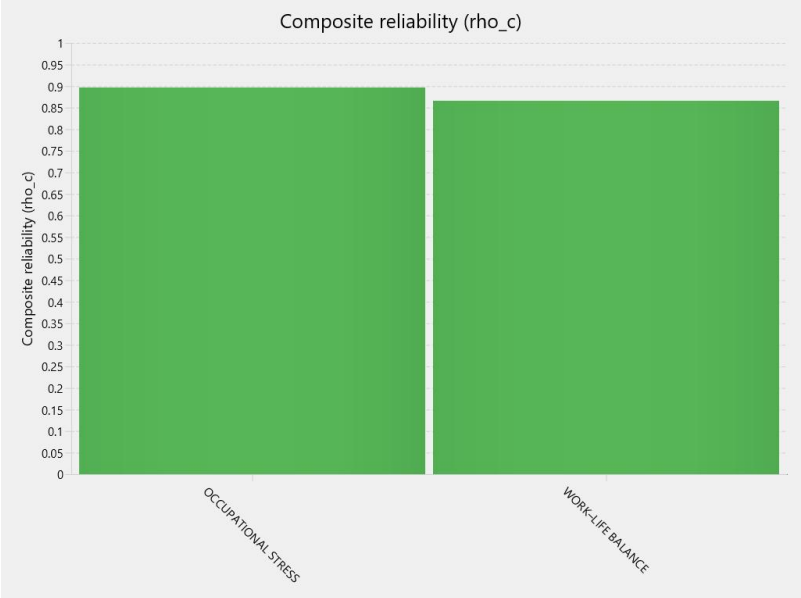

Figure 4: Composite reliability (rho_c)

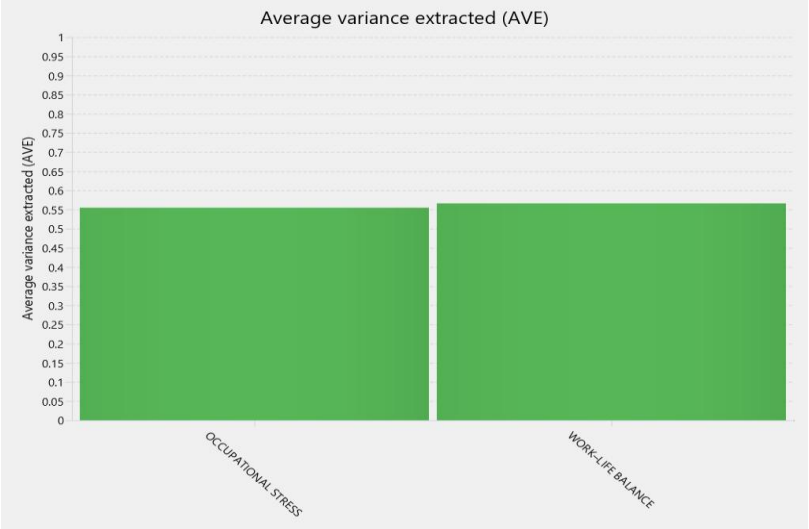

Figure 5: Average variance extracted (AVE)

Vol. 12 Issue 2s (May, 2026)
ISSN: 2208-2190 Pages- 83-92
DOI:https://doi.org/10.69980/23936f17

Construct reliability and validity results for Occupational Stress and Work–Life Balance are presented in Table 3 as well as Figures 2 to 5. The results show that both constructs exhibit adequate internal consistency and convergent validity. For Occupational Stress, values of Cronbach's alpha (0.866) as well as composite reliability rho_a (0.870) and rho_c (0.897) are clearly above the cut-off value for good reliability (> 0.70). An AVE value of 0.555 also exceeds the acceptable threshold of 0.50, confirming sufficient evidence for convergent validity. In the same vein, Work–Life Balance yields Cronbach's alpha (0.808), rho_a (0.829), and rho_c (0.866) that also exceed the acceptable limits; thus, showing good reliability. This is indicated by the AVE value of 0.566 which is higher than 0.5 (i.e., more than half of variance in the indicators explained by the underlying construct). Final results theoretically support that both constructs be considered acceptable to use in any further structural analysis (Hair et al., 2019).

Table 4: Path Coefficients - Mean, STDEV, T values, p values

	Original sample (O)	Sample mean (M)	Standard deviation (STDEV)	T statistics (|O/STDEV|)	P values
H1: OCCUPATIONAL STRESS -> WORK–LIFE BALANCE	0.519	0.522	0.045	11.577	0.000

The results of path coefficient for occupational stress and work–life balance are presented in Table 4. The results reveal that Work–Life Balance of school teachers in Jamshedpur is significantly affected by Occupational Stress. The path coefficient indicates a relevant link between the two variables, while the high t-statistics value sustains that this relationship is statistically significant. Additionally, the p-value shows extreme significance, so hypothesis H1 is accepted. Thus, this indicates that occupational stress is an important indicator of WLB of school teachers as the ability or adequacy to maintain a balance within professionalism and their personal life is highly dependent on individual levels of different types of occupational stress.

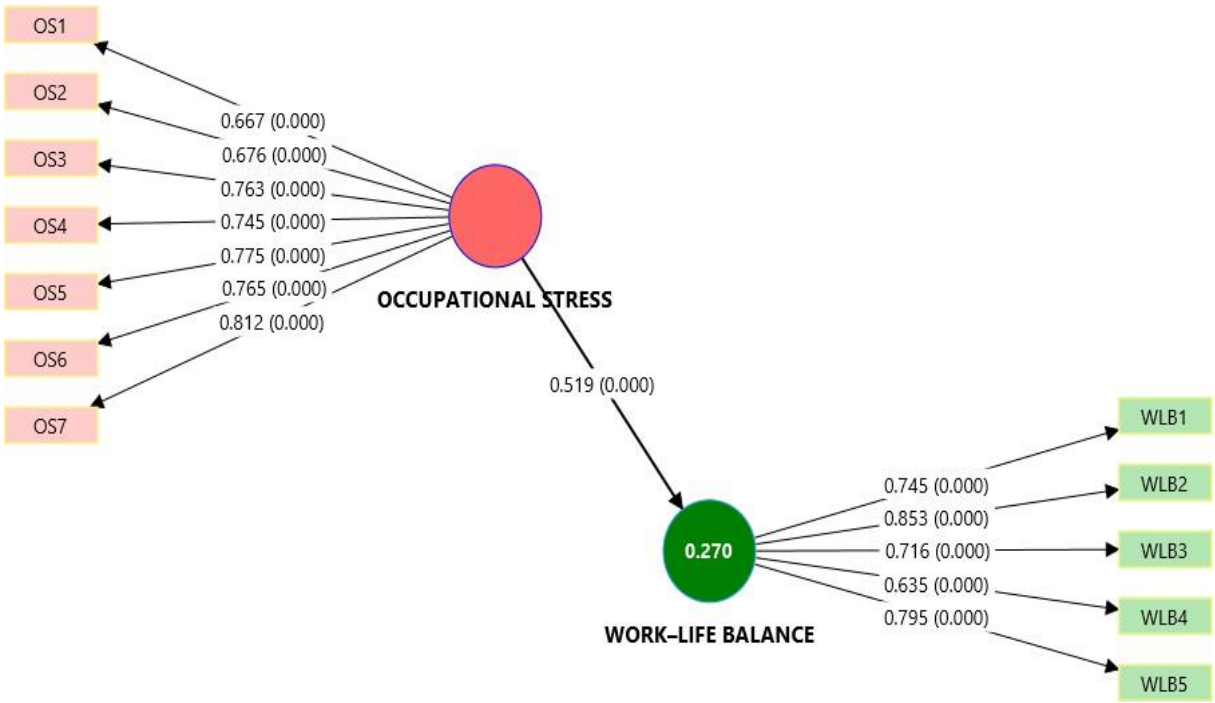

Figure 6: Measurement and Structural Model (Outer and Inner Model) showing factor loadings and path coefficients

Vol. 12 Issue 2s (May, 2026)
ISSN: 2208-2190 Pages- 83-92
DOI:https://doi.org/10.69980/23936f17

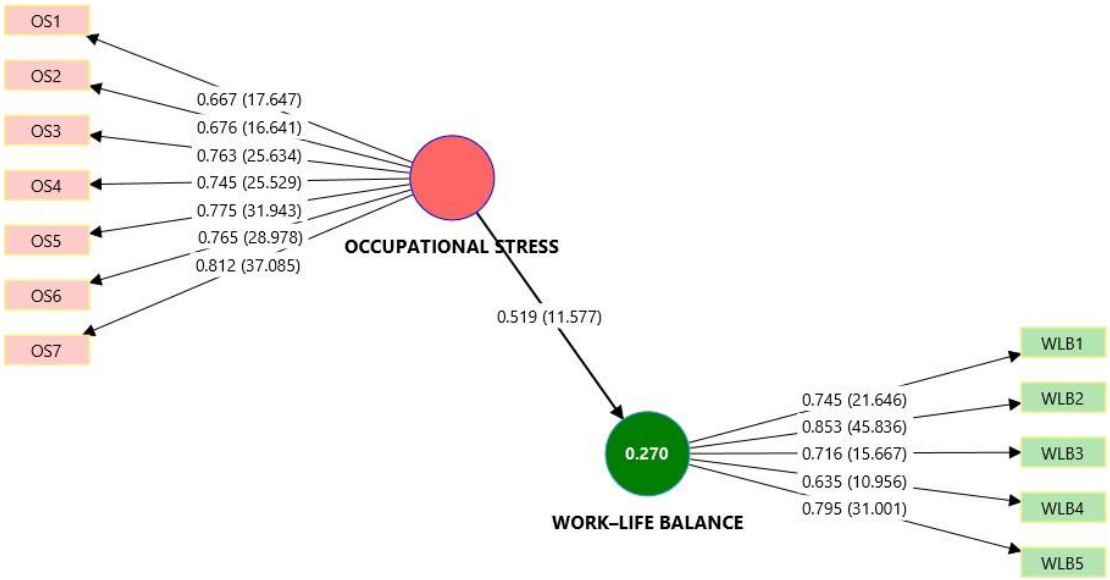

Figure 7: Measurement and Structural Model (Outer and Inner Model) showing factor loadings, t-values, and path coefficients

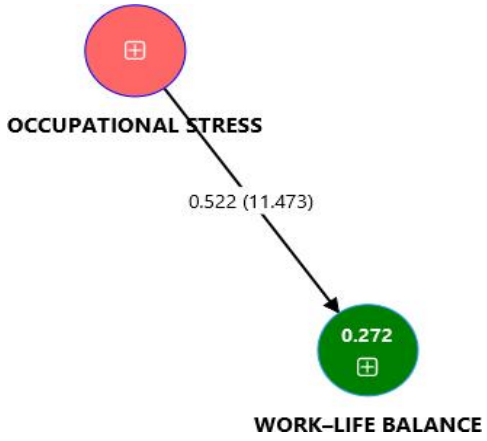

Figure 8: Structural Model (Inner Model) showing path coefficients and t-values

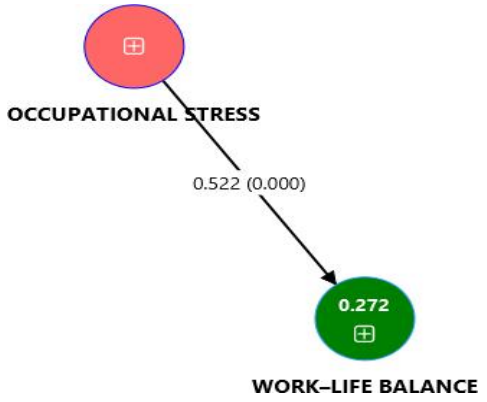

Figure 9: Structural Model (Inner Model) showing path coefficients and significance levels

Vol. 12 Issue 2s (May, 2026)
ISSN: 2208-2190 Pages- 83-92
DOI:https://doi.org/10.69980/23936f17

Figure 6 presents the measurement and structural model (outer and inner model) showing factor loadings and path coefficients, indicating the initial assessment of construct validity and structural relationships. Figure 7 further illustrates the measurement and structural model by including factor loadings, t-values, and path coefficients, providing a more detailed assessment of statistical significance. Figure 8 focuses on the structural model (inner model) and highlights path coefficients along with t-values, confirming the strength of the hypothesized relationship. Figure 9 presents the structural model (inner model) showing path coefficients and significance levels, reinforcing the statistical validity of the relationship between Occupational Stress and Work–Life Balance among school teachers in Jamshedpur.

9. Suggestions

The study recommends that school management distribute the workload among teachers and reduce administrative pressure through adequate supporting staff. Stress coping initiatives such as counselling, yoga and meditation sessions should be organized at regular interval to manage occupational stress of teachers. Employing more flexible hours, sensible working patterns and sufficient breaks can help alleviate pressure at work and promote a better work-life balance. Also, teachers should be trained through well organised training programs to develop coping skills to handle the gaps of such classroom issues. School authorities need to work towards an organizational climate where human side of a teacher is taken care as sense of belongingness and motivation in our society also brings down stress level. In addition, teachers should be regularly given feedback about their job performance and easy grievance redressal system to rectify their grievances on time to increase job satisfaction, psychological well-being and performance.

10. Conclusion

In conclusion, the present study reveals that occupational stress in school teachers significantly affects their work–life balance in Jamshedpur. Results indicated clearly that their workload, administration work, class management and pressure from examination as well as institution demotivates the teachers to maintain a healthy equilibrium between their professional and personal life. The results Conclusion confirm the hypothesis that there is a significant association between occupational stress and work-life balance A high level of occupational stress can affect the performance of teachers in family, personal, and leisure activities and it is well understood that commitment to class load affects quality of life.

The paper also indicates that prolonged exposure to stress in the absence of supportive systems could lead to burnout, decreased motivation and lower levels of job satisfaction among educators. It is therefore imperative that the school management as well as educational authorities introduce proper stress management systems, sufficient back up, and equitable distribution of workload among teachers. Improving working conditions, reinforcing institutional support, and promoting mental well-being can help teachers improve their work-life balance and excel in their capabilities. These findings provide insight into teacher wellbeing and indicate that policy work at the level of organisations is needed within the education sector.

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Vol. 12 Issue 2s (May, 2026)
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