



## A STUDY ON ORGANISATIONAL STRESS AND CONFLICT HANDLING STYLES AMONG MANAGEMENT TEACHERS

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### ABSTRACT

*Teaching is no longer merely hard work; it has become a highly stressful profession. Teaching in professional institutes has to extend beyond the theoretical inputs. It has to focus on holistic personality development and endeavor towards enhancement of professional acumen and employability of students. This often leads to overwhelming pressures and challenges, which may lead to stress. Conflict is a natural, everyday phenomenon in all private and working spheres. It is an unavoidable component of human activity. Conflict is inevitable, and arises due to various reasons. The objective of the present paper was to study the reasons for organizational stress among the management teachers as affected by gender and experience. It attempted to identify the conflict handling styles used predominantly by teachers to resolve disputes that occur in the institute. It also aimed at identifying the correlation between organizational stress and conflict handling styles. Role stagnation was found to be the highest contributor to stress followed by role erosion. Competing style was found to be the most dominant style of conflict handling followed by the avoiding style among the management teachers of professional institutes.*

**KEYWORDS:** *stress, conflict handling, teachers.*

### 1. INTRODUCTION

Teaching has today become not only challenging but also highly competitive and a stressful occupation. Pressure due to the burden of paperwork, inadequate administrative support, poor working conditions, lack of participation in decision making, , and lack of resources have all been identified as factors that can cause stress among teachers (Hammond & Onikama, 1997).The daily interactions with diverse set of students and coworkers from different

backgrounds, the rising expectations raised by professional education increases the stress level. Kyriacou (1987) has defined teacher stress as “the experience by a teacher of unpleasant emotions, such as tension, frustration, anxiety, anger, and depression, resulting from aspects of work as a teacher”. Stress at work affects the personal life as well (Mehta, 2009).

Conflict at work place has become an inevitable and a common phenomenon. Though in case of conflict it is often considered that ‘prevention is better than cure’ but many a time it may just postpone the problem instead of resolving it. The unresolved conflict can further increase stress levels at work and at home. Conflict among teachers include interpersonal conflicts among colleagues and as well as the students.

## **2. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

Work stress is increasingly recognized as one of the most serious occupational health hazards reducing workers satisfaction and productivity, and increasing absenteeism and turnover (Gianakos,2001). Where work stress is unrelenting, some negative physiological, psychological, and behavioral consequences may result. (DeRobbio & Iwanicki,1996).In an organizational context the role set consists of important persons who have varying expectations from the role that an individual occupies. The conflicts which arise as a result of incompatibility among these expectations by the significant others are referred to as role sets. As organizations become more complex, the potentiality for stress increases. Stress is a consequence of socio-economic complexity and to some extent is a stimulant as well. Therefore, one should find ways of using stress productively, and reduce dysfunctional stress. The concept of role and its two related aspects, role space and role set, have a built-in potential for conflict and stress.

### **2.1. ROLE SPACE**

Role Space has three main variables: self, the role under question, and the other roles one occupies. Any conflict among these is referred to as role space conflict. These conflicts may take several forms as Inter-Role Distance, Self/Role Conflict, Role-Expectation Conflict, Personal Inadequacy, and Role Stagnation.

### **2.2. ROLE SET**

Role set is the role system within the organization of which roles are part and by which individual roles are defined. Role set conflicts take the forms of Role Ambiguity, Role Overload, Role Erosion, Resource Inadequacy, and Role Isolation. The above dimensions of conflict are worth considering in relation to organizational role stress.

### **2.3. BRIEF DEFINITION OF EACH DIMENSION**

**INTER-ROLE DISTANCE:** conflict between one's organizational role and other roles, e.g., between travel on the job and spending time with one's family.

**ROLE STAGNATION:** a feeling of stagnation and lack of growth in the job because of few opportunities for learning and growth.

**ROLE-EXPECTATION CONFLICT:** conflicting demands placed on one from others in the organization, e.g., producing excellent work but finishing under severe time restraints. Personal Inadequacy: lack of knowledge, skill, or preparation to be effective in a particular role.

**SELF/ROLE CONFLICT:** a conflict between one's personal values or interests and one's job requirements. Role Ambiguity: unclear feedback from others about one's responsibilities and performance.

**ROLE OVERLOAD:** too much to do and too many responsibilities to do everything well.

**ROLE EROSION:** a decrease in one's level of responsibility or a feeling of not being fully utilized.

**RESOURCE INADEQUACY:** lack of resources or information necessary to perform well in a role.

**ROLE ISOLATION:** feelings of being isolated from channels of information and not being part of what is happening.

Conflict is a natural, everyday phenomenon in all private and working spheres. It is an unavoidable component of human activity (Brahnam et al., 2005) that may be viewed as a situation in which the concerns of two or more individuals appear to be incompatible (Darling & Fogliasso, 1999), and which tends to occur when individuals or groups perceive that others are preventing them from attaining their goals (Antonioni, 1998). Conflict can be defined as an expressed struggle between at least two interdependent parties who perceive that incompatible goals, scarce resources, and interference from others are preventing them from achieving their goals (Wilmot & Hocker, 2001). The behavioral approaches used to resolve conflict are referred to as conflict management styles. Used together over time, these behaviors become a patterned response. These behaviors are a result of both external conditions and the person's own approach to people and problems (Friedman, Tidd, Currall, & Tsai, 2000) and are chosen depending upon the relative importance of one's concern for self versus concern for others. People tend to use the same patterns over and over again in a wide range of conflicts. In some situations, the patterned responses may effectively resolve the conflict. However, in other circumstances, the same pattern of behavior may only escalate it. To be effective in conflict management, one must be able to consciously choose the behaviors that best fit the circumstances, rather than automatically using one style consistently regardless of the situation. Blake and Mouton (1974), Thomas and Kilmann (1978), and Rahim and Bonoma (1979) have described five behavioral patterns or management styles that might be used in a conflict. Despite multiple changes in individuals and organizational environments, these five styles are still used to describe the variety of ways in which people respond to conflict (Wilmot & Hocker, 2001).

### 3. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Stress among faculty has received considerable attention in past decades (Dua, 1994). According to Harden(1999)"Alarming statements have been issued in the education literature about the growing prevalence of teacher stress and burnout and the adverse effect this has on the

learning environment and on the achievement of the educational goals". He also mentioned that in a conflict of roles medical teachers were confronted by demands and expectations from a number of sources, and those cannot all be met within a given time. Fisher (1994) noted that university staffs were expected to teach, meet tutorial, laboratory or seminar commitments and at the same time carry out research, run experiments, obtain research funds, and write papers and books. Levels of stress and depression in teachers and instructors have been shown to be high or higher than those in doctors and dentists (Rutter, Herzberg & Paice, 2002). Many of the stressors are similar: workload, lack of resources, poor relationships with colleagues, and unrealistic expectations from seniors (Mehta & Kaur, 2007). According to Lackritz (2004) university faculty members were not exempt from problems associated with role stress and burnout. A study of organizational role stress in relation to job burnout among university teachers was conducted by (Pestonjee & Azeem, 2001). The results of the study indicated that organizational role stress is highly correlated with job burnout among all ranks of faculty members, and sources of stress included excessively high self-expectations, the pressure to secure financial support for research, insufficient time to keep up with developments in the field, inadequate salary, manuscript preparation, role overload, conflicting job demands, slow progress on career advancement, frequent interruptions, and long meetings. Klenke-Hamel et al(1990), in a study that included university faculty, revealed the relationship between role strains, tension, job satisfaction, and the propensity to leave the job. Faculty who were experiencing more stress than they could cope with were more likely to withdraw from student-professor interactions, were less accessible to students, and were less involved in the departmental decision making and committee work. Research has revealed that there were many causes correlated to work stress found within worker personality and within the work environment (Newman and Beehr,1979).Previous studies have revealed positive association between work stress and the number of errors. (Perry et al, 2000). Role ambiguity, role conflict and clarity of organizational roles were also found to be of significant relationship with work stress among 433 employees of seven Kuwaiti governmental sectors (Al-Fadli, 1999). Role ambiguity and role conflict were also correlated with work stress among 50 emergency doctors working in nine hospitals of the northern areas of Jordan (Nusair and Deibageh, 1997).

The present research was guided by a proposition that there is a paucity of research on studies related to organizational role stress and conflict handling styles of management teachers. Though a number of studies have been conducted in academic settings but a few have been undertaken for management faculty.

#### **4. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY**

- To study the organizational factors affecting stress among the management teachers?
- To study the organizational factors affecting stress among male and female teachers' management teachers?
- To study the organizational factors affecting stress among teachers with respect to experience
- To study the conflict handling styles used predominantly by teachers to resolve disputes that occur in the college?

- To study whether the conflict handling styles used by teachers to resolve disputes is related to their demographic work characteristics, precisely their gender and experience?

## **5. HYPOTHESIS OF THE STUDY**

H1. There will be significant difference in the organizational role stress (ORS) dimensions between male and female teachers

H1.1. There will be significant difference in the ORS dimensions between male and female teachers for experience depending on their experience.

H2. There will be significant difference between male and female teachers' conflict handling styles.

H2.1: There will be significant difference between conflict handling styles of teachers depending on their experience.

H3. There will be positive correlation between organizational role stress (ORS) and conflict handling styles for female teachers depending on their experience

H3.1. There will be positive correlation between organizational role stress (ORS) and conflict handling styles for male teachers depending on their experience

## **6. DATA COLLECTION**

The data was collected by administering two instruments in this study: the organizational role stress (ORS) scale by Pareek Udai and Thomas–Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument (TKI) by Thomas Kilnman.

The Organizational Role Stress Scale (ORSS) by Pareek(1991) was used to measure individuals' role stress and several forms of conflict within an organization. The instrument is relevant for measuring job stress in and has confirmed reliability and validity. It comprised of the following dimensions: Inter-Role Distance (IRD), Role Stagnation (RS), Role-Expectation Conflict (REC), Role Erosion (RE), Role Overload (RO), Role Isolation (RIs), Personal Inadequacy (PI), Self/Role conflict (S/RC), Role Ambiguity (RA), and Resource Inadequacy (RIn). Part one of the questionnaire consisted of demographic items: subjects were asked to identify themselves according to the department at which they work, their rank, length of service, employment position, gender, and age. Part two consisted of ORSS which has 50 statements with five-point Likert scale regarding role stress and anchored by: 'If you never or rarely feel that way', 'If you occasionally feel that way', 'If you sometimes feel that way', 'If you frequently feel that way', and 'If you always feel that way', respectively. The scores for each role stress dimension ranged from a minimum of 0 to a maximum of 20 and total scores ranged from 0 to 200, as the scale has ten dimensions and each dimension has five items.

Another tool known as the Thomas–Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument (TKI) was used to identify the conflict handling style of the teachers. The TKI is a forced-choice instrument composed of 30 statement pairs, which reflect each of the five conflict management styles

identified by Thomas (1976). Respondents must choose the statement from each pair that is most characteristic of what they believe to be their behavior during conflicts. The TKI is composed of 30 pairs of responses with each response illustrating one of the five conflict management styles. Each style is paired with each of the other four styles and appears 12 times across the 30 TKI items. A score for each style is simply the sum of the times that style was preferred over another style in a pair of styles. Thus, the maximum score of 12 is reached by consistently preferring a style over all of its alternatives.

## 7. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The following research methodology was used:

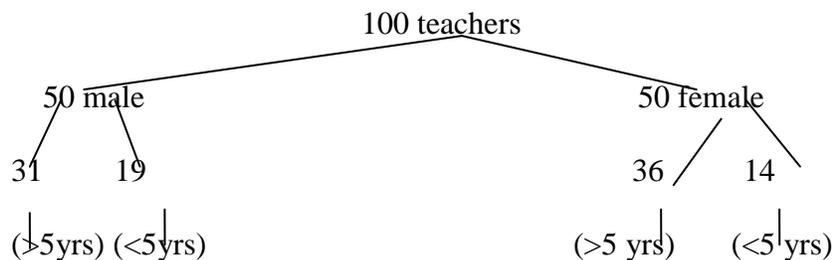
### 7.1. STATISTICAL TOOLS

Mean, Median, Standard deviation of the scores on ORS scale and TKI were calculated to verify the normality of the data. Later on t- test was applied to test the significance of difference in the mean scores of various groups and sub groups. The correlation between organizational role stress and conflict was calculated in order to study the relationship between the two.

### 7.2. SAMPLE

The sample comprised management teachers teaching in various engineering and management institutes located in and around Ludhiana affiliated to Punjab Technical University. There were seven colleges in total. The researcher contacted 10-12 teachers in every college. A sample of 100 teachers was taken into consideration comprising 50 male and 50 females. The sample design was as follows

#### SAMPLE DESIGN



## 8. ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The detailed analysis of the data collected has been explained below:

**TABLE:1 MEAN AND STANDARD DEVIATION OF ORS(ORGANIZATIONAL ROLE STRESS) DIMENSIONS FOR TEACHERS**

S.NO.	Dimensions of ORS	Mean N=100	S.D
1	Inter role distance	5.47	7.06
2	Role stagnation	7.68	9.26
3	Role expectation conflict	4.99	5.68
4	Role erosion	6.71	8.2
5	Role overload	5.6	7.0
6	Role isolation	5.21	6.42
7	Personal inadequacy	4.28	5.72
8	Self-role distance	5.91	6.87
9	Role ambiguity	3.42	4.72
10	Resource inadequacy	5.21	6.28

The table depicts the mean scores of all teachers. The highest mean scores with respect to Role stagnation show that it is the highest contributor to stress followed by role erosion.

**TABLE 2: SIGNIFICANCE OF DIFFERENCES IN ORS(ORGANIZATIONAL ROLE STRESS) DIMENSIONS BETWEEN MALE AND FEMALE TEACHERS**

S. No.	Dimensions of ORS	Type	Mean	S.D.	t-value
1	Inter role distance	Male (n=50)	4.24	5.86	0.47
		Female (n=50)	6.27	7.71	
2	Role stagnation	Male	6.56	2.54	1.06
		Female	8.32	10.23	
3	Role expectation conflict	Male	4.219	4.99	1.07
		Female	5.46	6.07	
4	Role erosion	Male	6	8.41	0.68
		Female	7.15	8.13	
5	Role overload	Male	4.8	6.03	0.95
		Female	6.13	7.45	
6	Role isolation	Male	4.73	6.14	0.60
		Female	5.51	6.59	
7	Personal inadequacy	Male	4.04	5.55	0.38
		Female	4.43	5.82	
8	Self-role distance	Male	3.7	4.64	1.40
		Female	5.66	7.95	
9	Role ambiguity	Male	2.6	3.8	1.34
		Female	3.92	5.22	
10	Resource inadequacy	Male	4.68	5.82	0.67
		Female	5.54	6.54	

The calculated value of 't' for all the dimensions is less than tabulated value at 0.05 level of significance which shows there is no significant difference in all the ORS dimensions between male and female teachers. Hence the hypothesis stating that there will be significant difference in the ORS dimensions between male and female teachers does not hold true.

**TABLE 3 :SIGNIFICANCE OF DIFFERENCES IN ORS(ORGANIZATIONAL ROLE STRESS) DIMENSIONS BETWEEN MALE AND FEMALE TEACHERS WITH EXPERIENCE LESS THAN 5 YEARS**

S. No.	Dimensions of ORS	Type	Mean	S.D.	t-value
1	Inter role distance	Male (n=31)	2.3	6.46	3.37*
		Female (n=36)	5.98	7.66	
2	Role stagnation	Male	3.5	7.85	4.88*
		Female	8.32	10.51	
3	Role expectation conflict	Male	3.26	5.04	3.6*
		Female	5.54	6.18	
4	Role erosion	Male	2.83	6.92	4.43*
		Female	7.26	6.79	
5	Role overload	Male	2.43	6.6	3.47*
		Female	6.2	7.65	
6	Role isolation	Male	2.2	5.75	4.0*
		Female	5.7	6.77	
7	Personal inadequacy	Male	1.6	5.46	3.24*
		Female	4.78	6.19	
8	Self-role distance	Male	1.9	4.75	4.74*
		Female	5.48	8.2	
9	Role ambiguity	Male	1.23	3.719	3.68*

		Female	4.14	5.48	
10	Resource inadequacy	Male	2.3	6.01	3.65*
		Female	5.7	6.7	

The calculated value of t for all the dimensions is more than tabulated value at 0.05 level of significance which shows that there is significant difference in all the ORS dimensions between male and female teachers for experience less than 5 years. Hence the hypothesis stating that there will be significant difference in the ORS dimensions between male and female teachers for experience less than 5 years holds true .

**TABLE 4: SIGNIFICANCE OF DIFFERENCES IN ORS(ORGANIZATIONAL ROLE STRESS) DIMENSIONS FOR MALE AND FEMALE TEACHERS WITH EXPERIENCE MORE THAN 5 YEARS**

S. No.	Dimensions of ORS	Type	Mean Male (n=19) Female(n=14)	S.D.	t-value
1	Inter role distance	Male	2.9	3.81	3.08*
		Female	7.06	7.89	
2	Role stagnation	Male	4.72	6.12	2.3*
		Female	8.56	9.29	
3	Role expectation conflict	Male	3.27	4.7	1.5
		Female	5.25	5.71	
4	Role erosion	Male	4.9	6.75	.97
		Female	6.81	7.78	
5	Role overload	Male	3.09	4.06	1.92
		Female	5.93	6.79	
6	Role isolation	Male	4.36	7.17	.38
		Female	4.93	6	

7	Personal inadequacy	Male	3.81	5.79	.27
		Female	3.37	4.47	
8	Self-role distance	Male	3.09	4.32	.44
		Female	3.25	7.14	
9	Role ambiguity	Male	2.72	4.022	.42
		Female	3.25	4.24	
10	Resource inadequacy	Male	3.63	5.3	.93
		Female	5	5.84	

The calculated value of t for all the dimensions is less than tabulated value at 0.05 level of significance except for inter role distance and role stagnation. It shows there was no significant difference in all the ORS dimensions between male and female teachers for experience more than five years except with respect to Inter role distance and Role stagnation. Hence the hypothesis stating that there will be significant difference in the ORS dimensions between male and female teachers for experience more than five years holds true with respect to Inter role distance and Role stagnation dimensions of organizational role stress.

**TABLE 5: CONFLICT HANDLING STYLES OF TEACHERS**

conflict handling styles	Mean N=100	S.D
Competing	9.22	2.39
Accommodating	7.9	1.28
Compromising	7.81	1.99

Avoiding	8.29	1.69
Collaborating	8.02	1.84

The table depicts the conflict handling styles of teachers both male and female. The high mean scores of the competing style depict that it is the most dominant among the teachers followed by the avoiding style.

**TABLE 6: SIGNIFICANCE OF DIFFERENCES IN CONFLICT HANDLING STYLES OF MALE AND FEMALE TEACHERS**

S.No.	Dimensions of conflict handling styles	Type	Mean Male (n=50) Female(n=50)	S.D.	t-value
1	Competing	Male	9.71	5.58	1.2
		Female	8.55	2.18	
2	Accommodating	Male	7.75	.829	1.3
		Female	8.01	1.54	
3	Compromising	Male	8.40	1.89	1.28
		Female	7.33	2.01	
4	Avoiding	Male	7.75	1.55	0.61
		Female	8.34	1.77	
5	Collaborating	Male	7.62	5.28	2.12*
		Female	7.94	1.41	

The calculated value of t for all the dimensions is less than tabulated value at 0.05 level of significance which shows There were no significant differences in conflict handling styles of male and female teachers except with respect to collaborating style. The higher mean scores of

female teachers showed that they were higher on collaborative style as compared to their male counterpart. Hence the hypothesis stating that there will be significant differences in conflict handling styles of male and female teachers did not hold true for all conflict handling styles except collaborating style.

**TABLE 7: SIGNIFICANCE OF DIFFERENCES IN CONFLICT HANDLING STYLES OF MALE AND FEMALE TEACHERS WITH EXPERIENCE MORE THAN 5 YEARS**

S.No.	conflict handling styles	Type	Mean	S.D.	t-value
			Male (n=19) Female(n=14)		
1	Competing	Male	9.71	5.58	1.7
		Female	8.21	2.2	
2	Accommodating	Male	7.75	0.829	.15
		Female	7.5	1.45	
3	Compromising	Male	9.07	4.818	.62
		Female	7.1	2.01	
4	Avoiding	Male	7.625	1.6	1.2
		Female	8.22	1.872	
5	Collaborating	Male	7.625	5.28	1.5
		Female	7.42	1.33	

There were no significant differences in conflict handling styles of male and female teachers with experience more than 5 years. Hence the hypothesis stating that there will be significant differences in conflict handling styles of male and female teachers with experience more than 5 years did not hold true.

**TABLE 8 :SIGNIFICANCE OF DIFFERENCES IN CONFLICT HANDLING STYLES OF TEACHERS WITH EXPERIENCE LESS THAN 5 YEARS**

S.No.	Dimensions of ORS	Type	Mean	S.D.	t-value
			Male (n=31) Female(n=36)		
1	Competing	Male	0	0	2.0*
		Female	9.33	1.36	
2	Accommodating	Male	0	0	2.1*
		Female	40.5	0	
3	Compromising	Male	0	0	2.5*
		Female	8.5	.70	
4	Avoiding	Male	8.25	.95	2.10*
		Female	8.6	.51	
5	Collaborating	Male	11.5	.70	1.8*
		Female	8.6	1.15	

There was a significant difference in the conflict handling style of male and female teachers with experience less than five years of experience with respect to competing style, accommodating style, compromising and avoiding style. The female teachers showed to be adopting more of accommodating style as compared with their male counterparts. Hence the hypothesis holds true w.r.t all types except the collaborating

**TABLE 9: CORRELATION BETWEEN CONFLICT HANDLING STYLES AND ORGANIZATIONAL ROLE STRESS OF FEMALE TEACHERS**

Variables	Coefficient of correlation for ORS in females with less than 5 years	Coefficient of correlation for ORS in females with more than 5 years	Level of significance
Competing	-0.63	0.17	0.01
Accommodating	0.00	-0.32	0.01
Compromising	0.19	-0.03	0.01
Avoiding	-0.50	-0.08	0.01
Collaborating	0.08	-1.01	0.01

The coefficient of correlation between organizational role stress(ORS) and conflict handling style for female teachers with less than five years of service was positive only with respect to compromising style of conflict . The coefficient of correlation for female teachers with more than five years of service was positive only with respect to competing style of conflict .

Hence the hypothesis stating that there will be positive correlation between organizational role stress (ORS) and conflict handling styles for female teachers with less than five years of service did not hold true for all styles of conflict handling except for compromising style of conflict handling.

On the contrary the hypothesis stating that there will be positive correlation between organizational role stress (ORS) and conflict handling styles for female teachers with more than five years of service did not hold true for all styles of conflict handling hence the hypothesis was proven wrong for all styles of conflict handling.

**TABLE 10: CORRELATION BETWEEN CONFLICT HANDLING STYLES AND ORGANIZATIONAL ROLE STRESS OF MALE TEACHERS**

Variables	Coefficient for correlation for ORS in males with less than 5 years	Coefficient of correlation for ORS in males with more than 5 years	Level of significance
Competing	-0.08	-0.63	0.01
Accommodating	-0.84	-0.51	0.01
Compromising	-0.25	0.97	0.01
Avoiding	-0.08	0.87	0.01
Collaborating	-1.00	-0.80	0.01

The coefficient of correlation between organizational role stress (ORS) and conflict handling style for male teachers with less than five years of service was negative with respect to all the styles of conflict. The coefficient of correlation for male teachers with more than five years of service was positive only with respect to compromising and avoiding styles of conflict.

Hence the hypothesis stating that there will be positive correlation between organizational role stress (ORS) and conflict handling styles for male teachers with less than five years of service did not hold true for all styles of conflict handling.

On the contrary the hypothesis stating that there will be positive correlation between organizational role stress (ORS) and conflict handling styles for male teachers with more than five years of service did not hold true for some styles of conflict handling but the hypothesis was proven right for the compromising and avoiding styles of conflict handling.

## 9. RESULTS & DISCUSSION

The final results can be broadly categorized into three categories:

### **A) RELATING TO ORGANIZATIONAL ROLE STRESS**

The table 1. depicts the mean scores of all teachers. The highest mean scores with respect to Role stagnation showed that it is the highest contributor to stress followed by role erosion. It could be due to the reason that as an individual grows older; he also grows in the role that he occupies in an organization. With the individual's advancement, the role changes; and with his change in role, the need for taking on a new role becomes crucial. This problem of role growth becomes acute especially when an individual who has occupied a role for a long time enters another role in which he feels less secure. The new role demands that an individual outgrows the previous one and takes charge of the new role effectively. This is bound to produce some stress. In organizations that are fast expanding, and which do not have any systematic strategy of human resource development, managers are likely to experience this stress of role stagnation when they are promoted. In case of Role Erosion, a teacher may feel that the functions he would like to perform are being done by some other role. Role erosion is the individual's subjective feeling that some important expectations that he has from a role are shared by other roles within the role set. Role erosion is likely to be experienced in an organization that is redefining its role and creating new roles. Studies indicate that in several such organizations the stress of role erosion was inevitably felt. In one organization, a particular role was abolished and in its place two were created to cater to executive and planning needs. This led to great erosion, and a feeling that the new roles were less important than the previous role.

There was no significant difference in all the ORS dimensions between male and female teachers. Hence the hypothesis stating that there will be significant difference in the ORS dimensions between male and female teachers does not hold true. Jick and Mitz(1995) reviewed the empirical evidence for sex differences in work stress from 19 studies and found that women tend to report higher rates of psychological distress than men, but that men are more prone to more severe physical illness. Further, a review conducted by Nelson and Quick(1995) indicated that employed women experience greater stress than both non-employed women and men because of several unique stressors faced by employed women. Baruch, Biener and Barnett(1987) on the other hand, found that non-employed women experience greater stress than employed women, while Martocchio and O'Leary(1989) who undertook a meta-analysis of 15 studies that examined sex differences in occupational stress, found no differences in experienced and perceived work stress

There was significant difference in all the ORS dimensions between male and female teachers for experience less than 5 years. Hence the hypothesis stating that there will be significant difference in the ORS dimensions between male and female teachers for experience less than 5 years holds true.

There was no significant difference in all the ORS dimensions between male and female teachers for experience more than five years except with respect to Inter role distance and Role stagnation. Hence the hypothesis stating that there will be significant difference in the ORS dimensions between male and female teachers for experience more than five years holds true with respect to Inter role distance and Role stagnation dimensions of ORS.

**B) RELATING TO CONFLICT HANDLING STYLES**

The table depicts the conflict handling styles of teachers both male and female. The high mean scores of the competing style depict that it is the most dominant among the teachers followed by the avoiding style. Among the five styles for the resolution of conflict described, literature appears to favor the use of collaborative style and points out that collaborative management strategy generate higher quality decisions (Bettenhausen, 1991; Lovelace et al., 2001; Brahnam et al., 2005). There were no significant differences in conflict handling styles of male and female teachers except with respect to collaborating style. The higher mean scores of female teachers showed that they were higher on collaborative style as compared to their male counterpart. Hence the hypothesis stating that there will be significant differences in conflict handling styles of male and female teachers did not hold true for all conflict handling styles except collaborating style. According to Valentine, (1995) conflict seems to indicate that women may respond differently to conflict than men. Research using the Thomas–Kilmann Conflict Mode Instrument (TKI) has also identified that men and women responded differently to conflict (Thomas & Kilmann, 1974). Women were more likely to take their partner’s interest into consideration, preferring more compromising and tactful strategies, whereas men prefer competitive, unyielding, and aggressive strategies (Valentine, 1995). Many researches have been held about the relationship gender and conflict handling styles (Rosenthal & Hautaluoma, 1988; McKenna & Richardson, 1995; Sorenson et al., 1995; Brewer et al., 2002; Pinto & Ferrer, 2002; Cetin & Hacifazlioglu, 2004; Brahnam et al., 2005; Chan et al., 2006). Not all contemporary findings are consistent. Researchers found women more avoiding (Brewer et al., 2002; McKenna & Richardson, 1995; Chan et al., 2006), men having a significantly higher accommodating score (Sorenson et al., 1995), men to use the compromising style more than women (McKenna & Richardson, 1995), as well as no clear gender differences to conflict resolution (Sorenson et al., 1995; Pinto & Ferrer, 2002).

There were no significant differences in conflict handling styles of male and female teachers with experience more than 5 years. Hence the hypothesis stating that there will be significant differences in conflict handling styles of male and female teachers with experience more than 5 years did not hold true.

There was a significant difference in the conflict handling style of male and female teachers with experience less than five years of experience with respect to competing style, accommodating style, compromising and avoiding style. The female teachers showed to be adopting more of accommodating style as compared with their male counterparts. Hence the hypothesis holds true w.r.t all types except the collaborating.

Studies acknowledge that preferences for conflict styles differ across hierarchical levels. Upper organizational status individuals are found to be higher on the competitive (Drory & Ritov, 1997; Watson, 1994 in Brewer et al., 2002) and collaborating style (Brewer et al., 2002), while lower status while lower status individuals prefer and report greater use of avoiding, accommodating and compromising (Drory & Ritov, 1997; Brewer et al., 2002). Individuals prefer and report greater use of avoiding, accommodating and compromising (Putnam and Poole, 1987 in Drory & Ritov, 1997; Brewer et al., 2002).

### **C) RELATING TO CORRELATION BETWEEN ORGANIZATIONAL ROLE STRESS (ORS) AND CONFLICT HANDLING STYLE**

The coefficient of correlation between organizational role stress (ORS) and conflict handling style for female teachers with less than five years of service was positive only with respect to compromising style of conflict handling which depicted that there existed a relationship between the female teachers with less than five years of service and the compromising style of conflict handling. The coefficient of correlation for female teachers with more than five years of service was positive only with respect to competing style of conflict handling. Hence the hypothesis stating that there will be positive correlation between organizational role stress (ORS) and conflict handling styles for female teachers with less than five years of service did not hold true for all styles of conflict handling except for compromising style of conflict handling. On the contrary the hypothesis stating that there will be positive correlation between organizational role stress (ORS) and conflict handling styles for female teachers with more than five years of service did not hold true for all styles of conflict handling except for compromising style of conflict handling.

The coefficient of correlation between organizational role stress (ORS) and conflict handling style for male teachers with less than five years of service was negative with respect to all the styles of conflict. The coefficient of correlation for male teachers with more than five years of service was positive only with respect to compromising and avoiding styles of conflict.

Hence the hypothesis stating that there will be positive correlation between organizational role stress (ORS) and conflict handling styles for male teachers with less than five years of service did not hold true for all styles of conflict handling. On the contrary the hypothesis stating that there will be positive correlation between organizational role stress (ORS) and conflict handling styles for male teachers with more than five years of service did not hold true for some styles of conflict handling but the hypothesis was proven right for the compromising and avoiding styles of conflict handling.

Researches reveal that younger people tend to make more use of the dominating conflict handling style (Havenga, 2006), while older generations prefer compromising (Pinto & Ferrer, 2002), and use more collaborating (Cetin & Hacifazlioglu, 2004). Results from empirical studies show that men and women tend to endorse conflict handling strategies that complement gender role expectations: in handling conflict, women, unlike men, favor accommodating strategies, whereas men, unlike women, prefer to be more confrontational, aggressive, and competitive (Brahnam et al., 2005).

## **10. SUGGESTIONS**

-Training may be provided to faculty in stress coping techniques.

-Faculty development programmes on emotional intelligence may be organized in which faculty may be trained in handling emotions: looking closely at how emotions such as frustration, anxiety, and fear contribute to stress. Emotionally Intelligent teachers help students with improved motivation, enhanced innovation, increased performance, effective use of time and resources, improved leadership qualities and improved team work (Mehta, 2011).

Such training would provide cognitive, emotional, and behavioral insights that facilitates stress coping. This can help in developing empathy which can further help as a guide in collaborative conflict resolution

- Cultural induction programs for new teachers can help them adapting to the organizational culture can hence contribute in combating stress (Mehta & Kaur, 2008).

-Seminars, conferences and symposia for the faculty cadre in the field of educational management and stress management should be organized from time to time.

- Courses in conflict management and human relations should be included in the curriculum for teachers in training as a way of preparing them for conflict management and stress management. Personal development programmes should be made a part of the curriculum so that the students hone their human skills (Mehta 2011)

-Training sessions on Collaborative style of conflict handling should be organized from time to time.

-various social activities including the families of the teachers may be organized from time to time. It would help in healthy culture building and de-stressing.

-training on team building and interpersonal skills can be beneficial

## **11. CONCLUSION**

Role stagnation showed that it is the highest contributor to stress followed by role erosion with no significant difference in all the dimensions of organizational stress between male and female teachers. Male and female teachers with experience more than five years differed only with respect to Inter role distance and Role stagnation. Competing style was found to be the most dominant among the teachers followed by the avoiding style with no significant differences in conflict handling styles of male and female teachers with experience more than 5 years.

There was a significant difference in the conflict handling style of male and female teachers with experience less than five years of experience with respect to all conflict handling styles except collaborating style. The female teachers showed to be adopting more of accommodating style as compared with their male counterparts. The coefficient of correlation between organizational role stress (ORS) and conflict handling style for female teachers with less than five years of service was positive only with respect to compromising style of conflict handling. The coefficient of correlation for female teachers with more than five years of service was positive only with respect to competing style of conflict handling. The hypothesis stating that there will be positive correlation between organizational role stress (ORS) and conflict handling styles for male teachers with less than five years of service did not hold true for all styles of conflict handling. On the contrary the hypothesis stating that there will be positive correlation between organizational role stress (ORS) and conflict handling styles for male teachers with more than five years of service did not hold true for some styles of conflict handling but the hypothesis was proven right for the compromising and avoiding styles of conflict handling.

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