

# Balancing Passion and Pressure: A Conceptual Analysis of Job Satisfaction and Occupational Stress among Degree College Teachers in Assam

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## Abstract

The teaching profession in higher education has traditionally been associated with intellectual satisfaction, autonomy, and social prestige. However, in the contemporary academic environment, particularly in regions like Assam, degree college teachers are increasingly facing occupational stress due to expanding roles, institutional expectations, and policy reforms. The present study attempts to examine the relationship between job satisfaction and occupational stress among degree college teachers in Assam using secondary data. The study draws upon existing research, reports, and scholarly literature to identify major stressors and their implications on job satisfaction. Findings from the reviewed literature indicate that a considerable proportion of teachers in Assam experience moderate to high levels of occupational stress arising from workload, administrative responsibilities, infrastructural limitations, and performance pressure. At the same time, intrinsic motivation, such as commitment to teaching and student engagement, continues to contribute positively to job satisfaction. The study reveals an inverse relationship between occupational stress and job satisfaction, where increased stress tends to reduce professional fulfillment and effectiveness. The paper emphasizes the need for institutional reforms, supportive work environments, and effective stress management strategies to ensure teacher well-being and enhance the quality of higher education in Assam.

**Keywords:** Job Satisfaction, Occupational Stress, Degree College Teachers, Assam, Higher Education, Burnout, Work Environment

## Introduction

Higher education plays a major role in the socio-economic development of a region, and teachers are the backbone of this system. In Assam, the higher education sector has witnessed significant changes over the past few decades, with an increase in the number of provincialized and private degree colleges. Along with this expansion, the responsibilities of college teachers have also increased substantially.

Earlier, teaching was considered as a profession driven by intrinsic rewards such as intellectual growth, knowledge sharing, and social respect. However, the present educational

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scenario reflects a shift from purely academic roles to multifaceted responsibilities. Teachers are now expected to engage in teaching, research, administrative work, curriculum development, and student support services (Sharma & Jyoti, 2009). The implementation of reforms such as the Choice Based Credit System (CBCS) and the National Education Policy (NEP 2020) has further intensified these expectations.

In Assam, additional challenges such as limited infrastructure, shortage of teaching staff, and rural-urban disparities make the situation more complex. These factors contribute to occupational stress, which may adversely affect job satisfaction (Rana & Soodan, 2019), teaching effectiveness, and overall well-being of teachers.

Thus, the present paper attempts to conceptually analyze how degree college teachers in Assam balance their passion for teaching with the pressures of their profession.

### **Objectives of the Study**

The study is guided by the following objectives:

1. To examine the nature and sources of occupational stress among degree college teachers in Assam.
2. To analyze the relationship between occupational stress and job satisfaction among degree college teachers based on secondary evidence.

### **Review of Literature**

The relationship between job satisfaction and occupational stress has been widely studied in the field of education. However, region-specific studies focusing on Assam provide more contextual insights.

Begum and Das (2023), in their study conducted in Nalbari district of Assam, found that a majority of college teachers experience moderate to high levels of occupational stress, with nearly 43% reporting high stress levels. The study identified workload, lack of resources, and administrative pressure as major contributors to stress.

Rabha (2017) examined occupational stress among teachers in Tezpur and found that female teachers experienced higher stress levels, mainly due to dual responsibilities at home and workplace. This highlights the role of socio-cultural factors in influencing stress levels.

National-level studies also support these findings. Rana and Soodan (2019) reported that occupational stress significantly affects job satisfaction, leading to burnout, emotional exhaustion, and health issues among college teachers. Similarly, Klassen and Chiu (2010) emphasized that emotional stress negatively impacts teacher self-efficacy and job satisfaction.

Further, Spector (1997) defined job satisfaction as a multidimensional construct influenced by both intrinsic and extrinsic factors. Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory (1959) also explains that while intrinsic factors (achievement, recognition) lead to satisfaction, extrinsic factors (salary, working conditions) may cause dissatisfaction if not adequately addressed.

Studies also indicate that institutional environment plays a significant role. A supportive work culture, participative management, and adequate resources can enhance job satisfaction and reduce stress (Borg & Riding, 1991).

In the Indian context, research shows that increasing emphasis on research output, accreditation processes (NAAC), and administrative tasks has significantly increased stress levels among college teachers (Sharma & Jyoti, 2009).

Overall, the literature consistently indicates a negative correlation between occupational stress and job satisfaction, suggesting that higher stress leads to lower satisfaction levels.

### **Methodology**

The present study is descriptive and conceptual in nature, based entirely on secondary data.

### **Sources of Data**

The main source of data are Peer-reviewed journal articles, books and theoretical frameworks, government and policy reports, online academic databases (Google Scholar, ResearchGate, etc.)

### **Method of Analysis**

The study consist with thematic analysis of literature, comparative interpretation of findings, synthesis of Assam-specific and national-level studies, no primary data collection has been undertaken in this study.

### **Analysis and Interpretation**

The present section tries to show the secondary data on occupational stress and job satisfaction among degree college teachers in Assam. The discussion is divided into sections so that the issues can be understood more clearly, though some aspects overlap with each other.

The review of literature shows that, occupational stress among degree college teachers in Assam is not only present but seems to be increasing gradually. Studies conducted in places like Nalbari and Sonitpur show that many teachers comes under moderate to high stress categories, while only a small number report low stress. This is very interesting because earlier teaching in higher education was seen as less stressful, but now the situation has changed. The expansion of colleges without proper infrastructure and enough staff has increased the burden of teachers. Teachers often have to take multiple classes, sometimes even outside their specialization or knowledge, which creates both mental and professional pressure. Also, the shift towards continuous evaluation and outcome-based education has made teachers more accountable, and that adds more to stress.

Another, issue that repeatedly comes up is workload and role overload. Teachers are not only doing teaching, they are also doing exam duties like invigilation, checking answer scripts, tabulation work, etc. Along with this, administrative work such as preparing reports, attending meetings, and being part of committees also takes a lot of time. Also, they are expected to do research and publish papers. It becomes too much at times. In many

provincialized colleges, there is shortage of teachers, so the workload gets distributed unevenly. During exam time or NAAC assessment, the pressure becomes even more. Documentation work increases, and teachers feel tired and sometimes unable to balance personal and professional life properly.

Besides workload, institutional and administrative conditions also influence stress levels. Many colleges in Assam still face problems like poor infrastructure, lack of proper classrooms, limited ICT facilities, and insufficient academic resources. Administrative procedures are often slow and sometimes unnecessarily very complicated. Teachers have to follow strict instructions from authorities, which may not always match their academic priorities. This creates confusion and role conflict. Also, in many cases, teachers are not involved in decision-making processes, which reduces their sense of control. When they feel their opinions are not valued, frustration increases. It also affects their job satisfaction negatively.

Another source of stress is related to research and career advancement. According to UGC guidelines and CAS, teachers need to publish papers, attend seminars, and stay academically active for promotions. While this is good in theory, in practice it becomes difficult, especially in Assam where research facilities are limited. Funding is not easily available, and access to journals or databases is also restricted in many colleges. Teachers in rural or semi-urban areas face more difficulties. Because of this, they feel anxious about their career growth.

Even with all these problems, many teachers still experience some level of job satisfaction. This can be understood in two different ways—intrinsic and extrinsic. Intrinsic satisfaction comes from inside, like love for teaching, interaction with students, and the feeling that they are contributing to society. These things keep them motivated. On the other hand, extrinsic satisfaction depends on salary, promotions, work environment, and institutional support. It seems that intrinsic satisfaction is still strong among teachers in Assam, which is why they stay with the profession. But dissatisfaction is mostly related to external factors like delayed promotions, lack of facilities, and increasing administrative pressure.

One important point that comes out clearly is the inverse relationship between stress and job satisfaction. As stress increases, satisfaction tends to decrease. When teachers are overloaded with work, they cannot focus properly on teaching, which reduces their sense of achievement. Administrative pressure also limits their freedom in academic work. Over time, continuous stress leads to exhaustion and even burnout. This affects both personal life and professional commitment. Some teachers even start feeling detached from their work, and in extreme cases, they may think of leaving the profession.

In the context of Assam makes the situation more complex. Many colleges are in rural areas where connectivity is poor, and access to resources is limited. Teachers also deal with local socio-economic challenges. Mainly female teachers, in particular, face dual responsibilities of work and family, which adds another layer of stress. Environmental issues like floods also disturb academic schedules, creating extra pressure to complete syllabus. These factors make occupational stress in Assam somewhat different from other regions. To overcome from this situation, teachers adopt different coping strategies. Some try to manage time better and

prioritize tasks. Others depend on colleagues for informal support, which helps emotionally. Participation in academic or co-curricular activities also helps maintain interest in work. Personally, some teachers practice meditation, exercise, or other relaxation methods. However, these strategies are not always enough. Without proper institutional support, individual efforts may not reduce stress significantly.

Overall, the analysis shows that the professional life of degree college teachers in Assam is shaped by both passion and pressure. Teaching is still driven by intrinsic motivation like dedication to students and love for knowledge. But at the same time, increasing workload, administrative duties, and performance expectations create continuous pressure. The demand for research and accreditation processes has made the job more demanding than before. This combination of passion and pressure creates a kind of mixed experience. On one side, passion keeps teachers going despite difficulties. On the other side, too much pressure slowly reduces that passion. When external demands become too much, teachers start feeling tired, less interested, and less effective in their work.

Also, this balance between passion and pressure is not fixed. It keeps changing depending on the work environment, institutional support, and how individuals manage stress. If the institution is supportive and provides resources, teachers can maintain their motivation. But if support is lacking, stress increases and satisfaction decreases.

So, the interaction between these two factors—passion and pressure—is very important in understanding job satisfaction. Maintaining a proper balance is necessary, otherwise both teacher well-being and quality of education may get affected in the long run

### **Conclusion**

From the analysis, it becomes clear that job satisfaction and occupational stress are closely connected. Teaching is still a respected and meaningful profession, but the pressure associated with it is increasing day by day. In Assam, the problem becomes more serious due to infrastructural limitations and institutional challenges. Many teachers are working under stressful conditions, which affects their well-being as well as their professional performance. To improve the situation, there is a need for better institutional support, reduced administrative workload, and improved working conditions. Policies should focus not only on academic performance but also on the well-being of teachers. If teachers are able to maintain a balance between passion and pressure, it will not only benefit them but also improve the overall quality of higher education.

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