

COMPARATIVE INVESTIGATION OF ORGANIZATIONAL FACTORS CREATING OCCUPATIONAL STRESS AMONG HIGH SCHOOL PRINCIPALS IN ZAHEDAN

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ABSTRACT

Present research aims to determine the amount of occupational stress and to identify organizational factors creating occupational stress among high school Principals in Zahedan. Research used was a descriptivesurveying method. Statistical population of research involved all high school principals of Zahedan city. The sample contained 150 principals (78 female, 72 male) who had been selected by stratified-random sampling. Data-collecting tool consisted of :Wiliam Dyer's" questionnaire of occupational stress and researcher made questionnaire of effective organizational factors in creating stress with 29 questions on "Lickert's" five-optional scale. For testing the questions and hypotheses of the research; single-sample T-test, independent t-test and F-test were used. Attained results showed that the high school principals were under occupational stress, and that all four organizational factors, namely occupational necessities¹, physical necessities, role necessities and interactive necessities were effective in creation of occupational stress in high school principals of Zahedan city. The results also showed that excepting the sort of institution, there were identical insights among principals, based on gender, years of service and their course of study, into the effect of studied factors.

Key Words: Occupational stress, Organizational factors, Occupational necessities, physical necessities, role necessities, interactive necessities.

INTRODUCTION

People and organizations built by them face different factors both inside and outside the organization at present time. Individual's personality and mentality are, continually, under influence of various factors and gradually become worn out. worn out bodies and the tensions that target peoples' bodies are recognizable and easily curable, however the tensions, affecting the soul and mentality of organizational people, are not observable, so they can n't be examined and treated easily, so that, these tensions have undesirable effects on trained human force. Although this mental strain, also known as stress, has a long background in medicine, it has prevailed in the science of management and organizational behavior, and due to it's prevalence in social life of workers, a part of organizational discussions has been devoted to stress (Ghafoorian, 1998:37). Obviously, occupational stresses have harmful effects on employees and managers, too.

Individuals, affected by occupational stress, certainly face problems in decision-making, planning and intrusting with others that lead to poor effectiveness and productivity. On other hand, a stressed employee puts stress on other stuff, as a result, stress in organizations, like a disaster, exhausts the forces and makes the efforts in fertile (Alavi, 1993:7-8).

¹ - Requirements, requisites demands-obligations-needs

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therefore, for providing a proper and desirable mental bed in order to study the stress an its' originating factors, from an organizational view pint, it sounds reasonable that at first according to "Morehed and Griefine's" method, I have to give a definition for stress: "individual's adaptive response or reaction to a stimulus which causes a wide range of mental and physical necessities for him. According to organizational approach and the provided definition, they are potential resources such as environmental organizational and individual factors that induce stress.

some cases such as 60 percent of absences from work place in England, and 150 billion dollars annual costs for treatment in American organizations (Hindelniem,1383:p.p5) that imply decline of organizations' functions and job-dissatisfaction among (public) workers, are considerable examining effective factors on management and organization failure. There after, some questions arises in the mind, like whether a poor management can be a consequence of occupational stress and which organizational factors cause occupational stress in managers. Of course, stress exits in all people lives; however some stress- creating factors associate with individuals in different organizations such as schools. If stress exceeds beyond the reasonable bounds, it will affect individual's performance in the organization, and its undesirable state of stress. Now, with respect to abovementioned issues, the questions, set by researcher can be expressed as follows: Do organizational factors that were proved by "Morhed" and "Griefine", namely occupational necessities, physical necessities, interactive necessities and role necessities, cause occupational stress in principals? If so, which factor is the most effective?

Regarding the importance of the percent research, it should be said that improving mental health in work place is considered as on of the most important factors of development and optimization of human resources in organizations. for growth and advancement of country in all fields: productive, wise and healthy human force should be utilized firstly, because the use of mentally and physically healthy forces in various economic, service- providing, educational and industrial institution, has a considerable effect on raising the level of productivity and exploitation (Gafoorian, 1999:37). Identifying and avoiding occupational stress- creating organizational factors can prevent the loss of human resources, and economic negative consequences such as decrease in production and deficiency of production. The managers are under influence of social and organizational environment and have become responsible for acquiring and meeting the aims of organization. Then, if they get stressed, negative effects will rapidly interfere with organizational performances (Toosi, 1989:74).

The necessity and importance of this research can be summarized as that the result of the research help the decision- markers and policy- makers to be aware of stress among high schools principals, and to determine organizational factors that create stress, so that they may prevent occupational stress from occurring by planning and cooperating with other stuff of organization and eventually, provide a proper ground for creating a stress- free and safe environment for manager and other stuff to improve their performances.

This research aims to determine the degree of occupational stress and also, to examine occupational stresscreating organizational factors.

Questions of the research

- 1- How is the rate of high school principals' occupational stress in city of Zahedan?
- 2- Dose principals' occupational stress varies with respect to their demographic characteristics?
- 3- Are occupational necessities effects in creating occupational stress among high school principals?
- 4- Are physical necessities effects in creating occupational stress among high school principals?
- 5- Are role necessities effects in creating occupational stress among high school principals?
- 6- Are interactive necessities effects in creating occupational stress among high school principals?



Background of research

In a research on "management and mental pressures", Abtahi (1991) carried out a research, examining the reasons, consequence and coping with exiting pressures in the society, based on, not only library data but scientific and field data. The study involved 30 interviews and 40 completed questionnaires out of 70 distributed questionnaires. The result show that 100 present of those who completed the questionnaires (had) experienced these kinds of pressure to some extent. In a research under the title of "investigation and compares on of principals' supportive behavior, job maintaining factors and occupational stress full factors in sport and physical training department of pubic universities", Ramzani Zegud (2001) concludes that female coaches are more subjected to occupational stress full factors than male coaches.

Hajibabai (2004) carried out a research under the title of "identifying and preferring the most important factors of increase in high school principals' stress in city of Qom" the results of which show that cultural, social and personal factors in men and occupational factors in women are the most important stress full factors. There is no relation among such variables as age, gender, field of study and the type of school, while there is a relation among principals' degree of education, years of occupation and the number of students and teachers.

Ahmad (1995) in a research, examining principals' sources of stress and comparing them between men and women, concludes that due to multiple roles, lack of appropriate social relations in work place, conditions and nature of work, male principals have more stress and mental pressure than female. And multiple role is the most stress full factor in female principals.

Moshtaghifar (1998) in a research, investigating the cause of occupational stress and approaches to reducing it from principals' points of view in high schools of the province of "KohKilooye – va – Boer Ahmad", states that there is no difference between male and female principals, regarding the origins of occupational stress. Also, no significant difference exits between principals' occupational stress full factors and variables of years of management, size of organization and age of principals.

In a research, "Yegane" and "Alizadeh" (2003), identifying the occupational stresses in teachers of the province of "Lurestan", conclude that there is no difference among the teachers with different occupational backgrounds. Teachers' average stress among three stages of study (primary- high school, and middle guidance school) is different and highest level of stress belongs to the teachers of guidance schools.

Jamshidnajad (1996), in a research of n "investigation of occupational stress and comparison of job- satisfaction between teachers of primary and high school suggests that a significant difference wasn't observed between high and low- experienced occupational stress.

Kashawarz (2001) performed a research, examining the relation of organizational skill of time management with occupational stress among the principals of "Firoozabad" schools. The results show that mean scores of female principals are higher significantly from that of male principals in occupational stress. but regarding the variables including spatiality and non- spatiality, being high or low experienced; triple- stages of study (primary, guidance and high schools) are not effective in the level of stress.

In a research, under the title of "the relation between the styles of leadership and principals' stress in schools of the city of Khorramabad, Walizade (200) concludes that male principals are more stressed than female principles.



METHOD OF RESEARCH

With respect to the nature of subject and aims of the research, it has a surveying- descriptive method. Statistical population of the research involves all high school principals, from which 150 principals (78 female and 72 male) were selected by stratified – random sampling method.

To collect the needed information, two questionnaires were used: first, for investigating the level of occupational stress, William dayer's standard questionnaire was used (In this questionnaire score, 100 or above is the sign of occupational stress).

Second, for determining the organizational factors effecting occupational stress, based on likert's range, fiveoptional researcher- made questionnaire (close ended response) was used. these two kinds of questionnaire were distributed among the subjects to determine the expressiveness of tools, content- expressive method was used and to estimate the reliability of the questionnaires, kroonbakh's alpha method was used, which was attained as: a=0.89 that implies the high accuracy of test. technical statistics, used in the present research include descriptive statistics which were used to describe the data and involved tables arrangement, mean and standard deviations, and inferential statistics which were used to test the hypotheses of research, and involved single- sample (t) test, independent t and F-test.

Analysis of data

Question 1: How is the level of "Zahedan's" high school principals' occupational stress?

group	N	Μ	SD	test value	t	d.f	sig
principals	150	107.27	27.73	100	3.33	149	0.001

Table 1: the results of single- group t-test, regarding the level of principals' occupational stress

The results of table (1) show that principals' mean and standard deviation in questionnaire of occupational stress are 107.50 and 33.48 respectively. Estimated values are as follows: , $p\langle 0.01, df = 149$ and t = 3.33, so, the difference of mean occupational stress with norm of the questionnaire (100) is significant, therefore, it can be concluded that "Zahedan" high school principals have a high level of occupational stress.

Question 2 : Does occupational stress vary among principals, regarding their demographic characteristics?
Table 2 : The results of t-test, relating to the status of principals occupational stress, distinguishing the gender.

Teachers	characteristics	N	N Mean SD		t	df	Sig.
der	woman	78	110.81	37.62		110	
gender	men	72	103.92	28.14	1.26	148	.209

The results shoo that the mean and standard deviation of female principal's occupational Stress are 110.81 and 37.62, respectively.



While these values for male principals are 103.91 and 28.14, respectively. Estimated statistics are as follows: $p\langle 0.209 \rangle$, df = 148 and t = 1.26. These values imply that female principals suffer more stress than male. However, the difference between two groups is not statistically significant.

Table 3: The results of t-test, regarding the status of principal's occupational stress.

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Teachers characteristics		N	Mean	SD	t	df	Sig.
f tion	Well- equipped	87	116.21	31.82	3.92	148	.001
Kind of institution	Poorly enquired	63	95.48	32.18			

Distinguishing the kind of institution

The results show that mean and standard deviation of principal's occupational stress in well-equipped schools are 116.21 and 31.82, respectively.

While these values in poorly- equipped schools are 95.48 and 32.18. Estimated statistics are as follow; $p\langle 0.01, df = 148 \text{ and } t = 3.92 \text{ so, observed difference between two groups of study is significant.}$ Principals of well-equipped schools experience more stress than those of poorly – equipped schools.

Teachers c	haracteristics	Ν	М	SD	ŜS	df	MS	F	Sig.
service	1- 10	69	101.61	36.40				2 44	
s of ser	11 - 20	64	110.67	32.87	5371.82 161621.7	2 147	2686.91 1099.47		.090
Years of	21 - 30	17	119.12	14.65					

Table 4: Results of F-test, regarding principal's occupational stress, distinguishing the years of service.

The results of above table, indicate that mean and standard deviation of principals occupational stress, with i-io years of experience are 101.61 and 36.40, and for those who have 11-20 years experience the values are 110.67 and 32.87 and for the most experienced principals these are 119.12 and 14.65, respectively. Estimated statistics are as follows: $p\langle 0.09, df = 2and147$ and F = 2.44 the results show that the difference among occupational stress of three studied Groups is not significant statistically so the principals with different years of experience suffer from stress identically.

Question 3: Are occupational necessities effective in creation of principal's occupational stress?

Table 5: The results of single group t-test regarding occupational necessities in creation of occupational stress.

Variable	N	М	SD	T.value	t	d.f	Sig.	Eta^2
Kind of job security	150	20.13	5.05	20	2.006	149	.047	.05
Work	150	9.36	3.03	7.5	7.53	149	.000	.27
Volume	150	2.59	1.24	2.5	.86	149	.393	.005
Total Occupational Necessities	150	32.77	7.23	30	4.695	149	.000	.129



The results show that subjects mean and standard deviation, regarding the effect of organizational factor of job necessities on principal's occupational stress is 32.77 and 7.23, respectively. It is more than the mean of test (T.3), and this difference is significant with 99% probability and $p\langle 0.01, df = 149$ and t = 4.695The results also show that sub – component of job security with $p\langle 0.05, df = 149$ and t = 2.006 at 95% probability, and kind of work with $p\langle 0.01, df = 149$ and t = 7.53, at 99% level of probability are significant. While, volume of work with $p\rangle 0.05$, df = 149 and t = .86 at 95% probability is not significant. So, it can be concluded that the factor of occupational necessities and factor of work kind has relatively strong effect ($Eta^2 = 0.129$, $Eta^2 = 0.27$ respectively), and factor of sub – component of security has medium effect ($Eta^2 = 0.05$) on high schools principals occupational stress. How ever, factor of work volume has not considerable effect on occupational stress in zahedan, high school principals ($Eta^2 = 0.005$). Question 4: Are physical necessities effects in creating occupational stress among high school principals?

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Table 6	5: The results of single	group t-test regard	ling role	necessities	in creation	of occ	upational	stress ar	nong

principais.									
Variable	Ν	М	SD	T.value	t	d.f	Sig.	Eta^2	
Temperature	150	3.22	1.39	2.5	6.32	149	.000	.211	
Office Arrangement	150	5.81	2.23	5	4.44	149	.000	.117	
Total Physical Necessities	150	9.03	3.36	7.5	5.57	149	.000	.172	

The results indicate that mean and standard deviation of subjects relating to the effect of organizational factor of physical necessities in creation of stress among high school principals are 9.03 and 3.36, respectively, which is more than mean of test (7.5). This difference is significant at 99% of probability and with df = 149, t = 5.57 and $p\langle 0.01$

0.172,
$$Eta^2 = 0.211$$
 and $Eta^2 = 0.117$ respectively)

Question 5: Are role necessities effects in creating occupational stress among high school principals? Table 7: The results of single group t-test, regarding role necessities in creation of occupational stress among the principals of zabedan high schools

Variable	N	М	SD	T.value	t	d.f	Sig.	Eta^2		
Role ambiguity	150	15.43	4.52	12.5	7.93	149	.000	.297		
Role contradiction	150	5.46	2.37	5	2.37	149	.019	.036		
Role necessities (total)	150	20.89	6.38	17.5	6/503	149	.000	.221		

The results of above table suggest that mean and standard deviation of subjects, regarding the effect of organizational factor of role necessities in creation of occupational stress among high school principals are 20.89 and 6.38 which is more than mean of test (17.5).

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principals



This difference is significant with df = 149, t = 6.503 and $p\langle 0.01$ at 99% of probability. The results also show that sub-component of role ambiguity and role contradiction with df = 149, t = 7.93 and $p\langle 0.01$ at 99% probability and t = 2.37, df = 149 and $p\langle 0.01$ at level of 95% probability are significant respectively. So, it can be concluded that the effects of organizational factor of role necessities and sub-component of role ambiguity have been highly effective ($Eta^2 = 0.221$ and $Eta^2 = 0.297$), while the effect of role contradiction has been lower ($Eta^2 = 0.036$).

Variable	N	М	SD	T.value	t	d.f	Sig.	Eta ²
Group pressure	150	7.93	2.89	7.5	1.84	149	.068	.022
Style of leadership	150	6.73	2.39	5	8.85	149	.000	.344
personality	150	5.49	2.40	5	2.48	149	.014	.039
Interactive Necessities	150	20.15	6.53	17.5	4.96	149	.000	.143

Question 6: Are interactive necessities effects in creating occupational stress among high school principals? Table 8: The results of single group t-test, regarding the interactive necessities effect on creation of

The results of above table suggest that mean and standard deviation of subjects toward the effect of organizational factor of interactive necessities in the creation of occupational stress among the high school principals are 20.15 and 6.53, which is more than the mean of test (17.5) this difference is significant with t = 4.96, df = 149 and $p\langle 0.01$ at probability level of 99%. The results also show that sub – component of leadership style and personality with t = 8.85, df = 149 and $p\langle 0.01$, at 99% of probability and t = 2.48, df = 149 and $p\langle 0.05$ with 95% level of probability , respectively are significant, while group pressure with t = 1.84, df = 149 and $p\rangle 0.05$ at 95% level of probability is not significant so , it can be concluded that organizational factor of interactive necessities and sub- components of leadership style and personality have been effective in creation of occupational stress in principals , while the group pressure has had no considerable effect on aeration of stress.

Also, it can be concluded that the effects of interactive necessities, sub-component of leadership style and component of personality have been, respectively, relatively strong ($Eta^2 = 0.143$, $Eta^2 = 0.344$) and weak ($Eta^2 = 0.039$), however, group pressure has had no special role in creation of occupational stress among Zahedan high schools principals ($Eta^2 = 0.022$).

CONCLUSION

in the recent decade, the issue of mental pressure or stress and its effects in organization have been received a lot of attention. Several of generational factors can create occupational stress and influence the performance and activities of organization. Main goal of the present research is to investigate stress-creating organizational factors among high school principals.

These factors are put in four sets which are the hypotheses of research , based on "morhead and grlefin" theory , namely occupational necessities , physical necessities, role necessities and interactive necessities-first, we deal with the results of research questions , and then , we will provide some suggestions based on the results of data analysis are as follows with respect to first question, that is how is the level of zahedan high schools principals occupational stress , the results of table (1) suggest that mean occupational stress of



principals is 107.27, which is significantly more than the norm of wiliam dyer's questionnaire (the scores equal or more than 100 imply stress) [107.27 > 100]. So, the principals suffer from occupational stress.

The results of independent t-test (table 2) showing whether principal's occupational stress is different with respect to their demographic features, suggest that despite highly stress among female principals, the difference is not significant statistically. It means that the difference between mean stress of male and female principals is a matter of chance and accident. However, regarding the kind of situations, the results show that the mean occupational stress in principals of well-equipped schools is more than those of poorly equipped schools (table 3). The difference

Regarding the first question, table (1) suggests that mean occupational stress of high school principals is 107.27, which is more than "William dayer's" questionnaire [(107.27>100), equal or more than 100 implies the stress], hence, principals are under stress.

results of independent t-test (table 2), regarding quetion2 saying whether occupational stress among principals is different with respect to demographic characteristics, show that despite the fact that occupational stress among female principals is more than male ones, it is not, however, significant statistically. That is, observed difference between the means, stress is male and a female principal is caused by the factor of chance and accidence. while, regarding the kind of institution, results suggest that mean stress among will- equipped schools principals is more than that of poorly- equipped ones (table 3). Observed difference is significant statistically. That is, well- equipped school principals are under more stress. Also, the results of f-test show that between the principal of different level years of experience the difference is not significant (table 4) although the principals of more years of experience are more stressed, the reason is that factor of chance or accidence. Regarding question 3 saying the effect of job necessities on creation of stress among principals, the results of table (5) indicate that this factor is effective in creating stress. Investigation of the effects of three subcomponents (kind of job, job security and volume of job) shows that sub-factors of job kind and security of the most effective in creating occupational stress, where as volume of job has no effect.

according the findings of research by "Alawan" (1999) on identifying the sources of mental pressure in principals of "Khoozestan" province, as well as by "Nozhat" (1996) on examining occupational stress in principals of "Fars" province, velum of work or "magnitude of functions" is a stress- creating factor among primary school principal, which is not consistent with the results of present study. According to finding of a research carried out by "Ahmadi" 1995 on sources of stress in principals and comparing it between men and women, the factor of work nature and conditions was considered as an important stress creating factor. These findings are in full adaptation present research considering the factor of "kind of work" as one of stress-creating factors.

The results of a research by "Mohammadi" (2002) on examining occupational stress full factors in physical training teachers of "Rasht city" show that job responsibility is one of stress- creating factors among teachers. It is compatible with or results.

Regarding question 4, about the effect of physical necessities in creating stress, the results (table 6) indicate that physical necessities are effective significantly in creating occupational stress. By examining two sub-factors of temperature and office arrangement, it was found out that they were effective significantly. According to the findings of a research by "Dabbagh Yarimshali" (1994) on determining stress full factors among the managers on ministry of Jahad Sazandegi (=reconstruction of war), environmental or place of work was considered as stress full factor. It is consistent with the results of second hypothesis of research. "Alwani" (2009), in a research on "Physical conditions of school" considered them as stress full factors.

This finding is suited with the results of present research based on findings or a research by "Majtahedi" (2004) on investigating occupational stress full factor and their relation with general health of researchers of primary

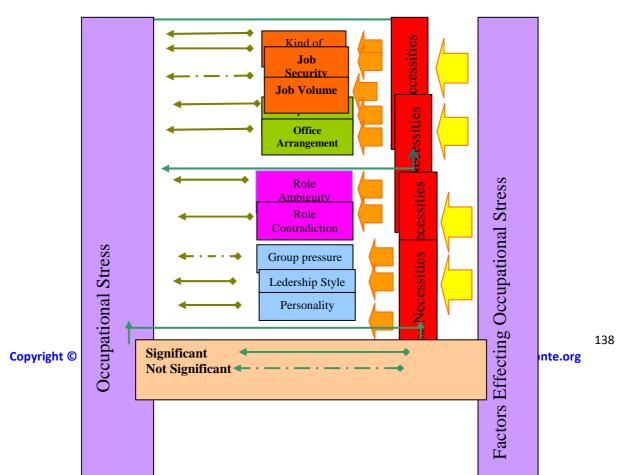


and guidance schools of "Hamedan", the factor of "Physical conditions of school" was known as stress full. This finding is compatible with our result. Regarding question 5 about the effect of role necessities in creating stress among principals, the results (table 7) show that the role necessities have been highly effective in creating stress. Examining two sub-factor of role ambiguity and role contradiction showed that the effects of than were significant statistically and role ambiguity had the most influence on creation of occupational stress.

Based on findings of a research by "Alwani' (1999), such factors as ambiguity of functions and different expectation of staff were considered as sress ful. The results of question 5 have proved this fact and the factor of role ambiguity was known as occupational stress- creating. According to a research by "Ahmadi" (1995), the factor "Multiple- roles of principals" was considered as a stress full factor. Similarly, the results of the present research verified this fact, and factor of "role contradiction" was known as stress full.

The results of question 6, with respect to the information of table 8, imply the effected of interaction necessities in stress creation among the principals. examination of the effects of three sub- factors (group pressure, leadership style, and personality) shows that they are significant statistically, in which leadership style and group pressure are ranked as more effective than personality in occupational stress creation among principals.

According to findings of a research carried out by "Haji babae" (2004) on identification and preference of main factors in raising the stress among "Qom" city high schools principals, the factor of "lack of support by authorities in removing the problems of principals "was known as stress full. The results of the present research verify this fact. The factor of "leadership style" was considered as one of stress- creating factors. Based on the results of a research by "Organi" (1999), "Improper relations between manager and workers" has been known as one of the stress full factors. The results of question 6 of present research verify this fact. And the factor of personality was considered as stress full. based on Ahmad's research (1995) "Lack of desirable social relatios" has been know as stress full factor, which is consistent with our results.



The results of research is displyed, briefly as fallow



Figure 1: Brief illustration of research results

DISCUSSION

This research shows that "Zahedan" high school principals are on the sever stress. This problem is more obvious in female principals, will- equipped school principals and low- experienced male principals than poorly-equipped school principals and principals with more years of experience. Organizational factors, known as stress full by "Morhad & Grifine" have been effective is "Zaheden" high school principals. presence of occupational stress among principals, exposes them to many problems in their performance., e.g.planning, decision- making, coordination, supervision, having skills in establishing humen relations, group relations, leadership, and ... when principals is under stress, hence all stuff of school including teachers, students and servants will suffer stress, as a result, the organization of school can n't full fill its aims and objectives and the role of aducation department fades away. Then, the authorities should pay a certain attention to this issue.

Suggestions

By taking account these results of research, the following points are proposed in order to increase the performance and to raise the level of efficiency and effectivity of schools:

1- Some plans showed be designed and implemented in different and proper ways to increase the level of knowledge of principals about stress full organizational factors.

2- Since lack of compatibility among equipments of physical space of school such as classes, laboratory, and workshop and physical space of work of principals (office of principals) is itself a cause of stress, so more and dynamic interaction between school and organization of school is necessary and inevitable for coordination and planning.

3- In the domain of implementation, the functions of stuff including principals and assistants, office keeper and servant should be apparent and distinct.

4- Since, safe- keeping and immunity of students is a serious and considerable responsibility of principals and a problem in this issue makes the principals stressed, then, cooperation of principals with stuff of school to save the lives of students is critical and considerable.

5- Independent of principals work place (office) should be maintained and effective propertied such as light and ventilation should be regarded.

6- Since, raising the quality level of educational activities and evaluating the results of learning and teaching activities of teachers in given intervals, result is reduction of students' educational drop in success of them in final exams, it seams that principals' effort in this field is not ineffective.

7- Establishment of work groups and councils to achieve a Joint insight and a certain destination by principals and teachers may cause a decrease in stress, because it is helpful in apparency and remove of uncertainly in current activities of schools.

8- Regarding the fact that communication in organization is as nerve system of organization, mental and physical health and professional and ethical health of organization, as well as respectful interactions between individuals in educational environment can result in stress declination.

9- Extence of different thoughts, view points and interest in human societies, although in small level and small population such as school, is investable. Therefore, ability of principal in accepting agreed and disagreed thoughts and viewpoints and principal's skill in managing disagreements and contradictions, certainly are



effective in advancing school activities as well as in decreasing occupational stress among all stuff including the principal.

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