

IMPACT OF WORKPLACE DISCRIMINATION ON PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING AMONG TEACHERS: MEDIATING ROLE OF PERCEIVED STRESS

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ABSTRACT

The current study aims to investigate the impact of workplace discrimination on psychological well-being among teachers and to explore the mediating role of perceived stress. A total number of (N=300) participants out of which (N=150) male and (N= 150) female teachers from various schools, colleges, and universities were selected. Age range was 20 to 60 years. Cross-sectional design was used. Data was collected through purposive sampling technique. Chronic Work Discrimination Scale (Sternthal et al., 2011), Psychological Well-Being Scale (revised version) (Ryff, 2013) and Perceived Stress Scale (Cohen et al., 1983) were administered on the participants. Descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation, Independent sample t-test, Linear regression and Mediation analysis were used in the study. The findings revealed that workplace discrimination had a negative relationship with psychological well-being, while perceived stress was found to have a positive relationship with workplace discrimination. Moreover, workplace discrimination negatively predicted psychological well-being among teachers. Results of mediation analysis showed that perceived stress acts as a mediator between workplace discrimination and psychological well-being. Gender differences revealed that women scored higher on psychological well-being and perceived stress, while males scored higher on workplace discrimination. Educational institutions should develop and enforce clear anti-discrimination policies to foster an inclusive and respectful work environment. Providing access to mental health resources, such as counseling and stress management programs, can help teachers cope with the psychological strain caused by discrimination.

Key Words: Workplace discrimination, Psychological well-being, Perceived stress, Teachers, Gender differences.

INTRODUCTION

According to recent trends, increasing cultural diversity at work has forced employees from different ethnicities and backgrounds to collaborate in order to meet the company's goals. Unfortunately, differences between people lead to misunderstandings, conflicts, and acts of discrimination. In this regard, employers have a responsibility to protect workers against acts of discrimination or unfair treatment at

work. Discrimination has had significant negative effects from the beginning of human existence to the present. Every individual has experienced discrimination at some point (Phillips, 2012).

Discrimination is the act of making and carrying out unjust decisions that injure victims' rights and interests in an unequal manner. A group of choices and behaviors that constitute

discrimination need to be stopped and restrained. Discrimination is defined in a variety of ways, and numerous research have been conducted on the subject. Although promotion-stage discrimination is frequently seen in the workplace in real life due to a tactic known as managerial decision-making, it does not receive as much attention as other forms of discrimination (Yilmaz, 2021). In addition to age discrimination, gender discrimination is a crucial topic in the workplace and for entrepreneurship.

Perceived stress, one of the most important psychological variables, is the extent to which life events are viewed as stressful, uncertain, and out of control (Phillips, 2012).

However, how individuals perceive, assess, comprehend, and behave determines how powerful the everyday pains are (Sweeney, 2013). As per the transactional paradigm, psychological stress arises when an individual senses overstrain, estimates external and internal requirements as excessive, and mentally represents a situation that demands more resources than they possess. (Lazarus & Launier, 1978).

Put otherwise, any event can be stressful if it is seen as such; yet, the identical experience may not be stressful for one individual and stressful for another. According to Ababkov and Perret (2004), stressful situations have both objective and subjective aspects.

Personality traits and demographic variables like age and gender may moderate perceived stress. Researchers present conflicting findings regarding age differences in stress perception: some emphasize that younger adults experience higher levels of stress because life moves more quickly and there are more events overall, while others contend that older adults suffer more losses, health issues, and financial difficulties and are more susceptible to the negative effects of stress (Babakova, 2017). There is very little information available on middle-aged adults. In particular, we have shown in our earlier work that locus of control can attenuate perceived stress. According to certain studies, sensitivity to stressors can vary depending on the stage of life, as can the characteristics of the most significant stressors (Mroczek & Almeida, 2004).

A person's subjective perception of positive psychological states like joy, life fulfillment, and

a sense of purpose is referred to as psychological well-being. Positive connections, personal growth and development, positive self-esteem and self-acceptance, and a sense of control over one's life are all included in this comprehensive perspective of mental and emotional well-being (Dhanabhakym, 2023).

A crucial component of mental and emotional health that requires consistent attention and care is psychological well-being. By taking part in activities that foster personal development, uphold wholesome relationships, and give people a feeling of direction and meaning in life, people can enhance their psychological well-being. Additionally, if someone is having issues with their psychological well-being, they can seek help from mental health professionals. People can improve their general well-being and lead satisfying lives by promoting mental and emotional health holistically (Dhanabhakym, 2023).

WORKPLACE DISCRIMINATION

Unfair treatment of an individual or group of individuals in a variety of settings, including the workplace, is referred to as discrimination. In many instances, it is illegal, particularly under "The Equality Act," which forbids discrimination in the workplace (Noel et al., 2019). According to Donaldson (2017), employers have unfavorable attitudes, prejudices, and presumptions about other workers.

Disparate treatment during the hiring, job assignment, appraisal, and compensation processes is referred to as workplace discrimination. Workplace discrimination also includes a variety of forms of harassment. It entails treating people differently, primarily because to their gender, age, race, or physical characteristics (Devah, 2009).

Workplace discrimination is defined as any behavior or policy that unfairly treats an employee or coworker. Harassment, unfair treatment, rejection from employment chances due to discriminatory reasons, rudeness, or aggressive conduct are all examples of discrimination (Lombardo, 2023).

Hasan and Ali (2014) state that discrimination in the workplace can take several forms, including prejudice based on gender, religion, and ethnicity. Direct or indirect discrimination

may occur in the workplace. When an employer treats one employee worse than another, it is considered direct discrimination. However, when a regulation or set of working conditions disadvantages one group of people more than others that is known as indirect discrimination. According to SEEDA (2006), employment discrimination based on race or ethnicity has a significant effect on both individuals and organizations. Disability discrimination, sexual harassment, ethnic discrimination, race discrimination, sexual orientation discrimination, and gender discrimination are the six primary categories of discrimination (Hemphill & Haines, 1997).

The act of harassing everyone has the right to be shielded from unfair treatment or harassment at work. Behavior that is demeaning and intimidating to any employee within the company is considered harassment. Workers who have unique characteristics harass other workers by using slurs, jokes, or racial or sexist remarks to dehumanize, undermine, or torture the victim. For instance, mocking someone at work by posting a photo-shopped image of them on the wall and calling them a joker. Sexually harassing someone at work is also included. A condition known as victimization occurs when a victim reports experiencing discriminatory treatment. Because they complained, victims of workplace discrimination who spoke out against the system occasionally received unjust treatment in the form of false accusations, promotions being denied (Sharma, 2020).

PERCEIVED STRESS

A comprehensive concept, perceived stress examines how people perceive potentially dangerous situations in light of their coping mechanisms (Katsarou et al., 2012). Any real or imagined threat unique to childhood that overwhelms the kid and causes emotional, psychological, developmental, or physiological alterations is referred to as perceived stress (Davis & Soistmann, 2022).

Feelings about how unpredictable and uncontrollable life is, how frequently one must deal with annoying inconveniences, how much change is happening in one's life, and confidence in one's capacity to handle challenges are all components of perceived stress. How a person perceives the overall stress

in their life and their capacity to cope with it. Because of things like personality, coping mechanisms, and support, people may experience comparable unfavorable life events, but they may measure their impact or severity differently. Perceived stress thus influences how a person interacts with their surroundings, which they see as threatening or overpowering their resources, and will have an impact on their well-being (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984).

The way a person perceives the amount of stress they are subjected to over time is known as perceived stress (Paykel, 2003). It has to do with having faith in one's capacity to manage challenges and is associated with a sense of insecurity and uncertainty about life (Huh et al., 2021).

Both the individual and the circumstance contribute to perceived stress. The relative importance, attractiveness, controllability, and unexpectedness of the event are among the attributes linked to stress (Moschis, 2007).

PSYCHOLOGICAL WELL-BEING

Psychological well-being refers to a person's overall emotional and mental functioning, encompassing aspects such as life satisfaction, positive relationships, autonomy, purpose in life, and the ability to manage stress effectively. It is not merely the absence of mental illness, but a state of positive mental health and functioning (Ryff & Singer, 2021; Diener et al., 2018).

A person's subjective, social, and psychological aspects, as well as health-related behaviors and practices that give their life purpose and enable them to reach their full potential, are all components of psychological well-being (Brim et al., 2019). Since well-being is an indication of good psychological functioning that enhances one's life experience, it is viewed as a collection of elements that inspire individuals to work toward achieving their goals (Crous, 2017). The ability to perform at one's best, or to fully fulfill one's expectations in life, depends on psychological well-being, as a result, fulfilling expectations is often seen as a predictor of positive personal growth and is linked to high levels of general well-being (Reis et al., 2018).

According to Gungor and Perdu (2017), psychological well-being is a characteristic unique to each population that is influenced by

the obvious kinds of jobs and hobbies that motivate people.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The study investigates the impact of perceived stress on physical health and mental well-being in individuals of Mexican descent. It explores the relationship between perceived workplace discrimination and general stress levels, revealing that perceived prejudice negatively affects depression and overall health. The study also highlights that discrimination stress is a distinct cause of chronic stress, with men being more affected by perceived discrimination and women more affected by the combination of perceived stress and race on depression. Addressing both discrimination and general stress is crucial for meeting the mental and physical health needs of the minority community (Flores et al., 2008).

A study conducted by Boulet et al. (2022) aim to learn more about the variables that influence how discrimination is experienced and perceived by employees in the workplace, as well as how it affects their health in Canada. The study looked at the experiences of many workers using logistic regression models and cross-sectional data from the 2016 General Social Survey of Canadians at Work and Home. The findings indicate that, although immigration status has no bearing, female respondents and members of visible minorities are more likely to perceive discrimination at work.

The risks of discrimination vary by industry, with public administration showing a larger risk than other industries. Discrimination also varies by province. Once more experiencing discrimination at work, which has an impact on stress levels and self-reported mental health. In light of anti-discrimination laws and diversity management initiatives, the results show that felt prejudice has continued among the employees for the purposes of this study, particularly among women and minorities. Therefore, rather than waiting for the few people who would want to file formal complaints, the study suggests that organizations take proactive steps to try to combat perceived discrimination in their organizations (Boulet et al., 2022).

Examining the relationship between workplace discrimination and workers' health as well as

possible moderators and mediators of that relationship is the aim of this study. The study aims to determine how workplace discrimination affects health, but it also looks at how these impacts could be mitigated by perceived control, the Big Five personality traits (neuroticism, extraversion, and agreeableness), optimism, and support from coworkers and superiors. The findings show that although neuroticism, extraversion, and agreeableness have a moderating influence, employees with higher scores in these personality traits experience worse health outcomes as a result of workplace discrimination than those with lower values. Perceived control was another significant protective factor; even in situations when employment discrimination was widespread, people who reported having more control over their lives had fewer chronic health issues. These results also suggest that by looking at how employees experience and perceive prejudice at work, it is possible to measure their health (Xu & Chopik, 2020).

The study draws on theories of stress, stigma, and coping mechanisms to investigate the causes and effects of perceived discrimination (PD) in the workplace. The research review focuses on the effects of PD on employee's psychological and physical withdrawal behaviors in relation to demographic traits such race, sex, age, family obligations, and sexual orientation. Employee's coping strategies determine these consequences; if they attempt to change their surroundings or stay away from stresses. However, due to the cross-sectional study design, which makes it impossible to prove a causal association, the current results cannot be broadly applied. Lastly, while cross-sectional research like this one are helpful for finding trends and developing theories, a replication of the current studies for other types of discrimination might yield helpful suggestions for improving worker performance and well-being (Volpone & Avery, 2013).

The goal of the study was to ascertain the level of stress that employees of three different ethnic backgrounds experience in order to establish how racial discrimination contributes to stress and how it affects well-being. The study is to investigate the demographic and occupational antecedents of working stress among Bangladeshi, White, and Black African

Caribbean employees. Using a quota sample drawn from the household and a structured interviewing method, the study finds that black African-Caribbean respondents experience higher levels of work-related stress than either white or Bangladeshi respondents. The results demonstrated that racial discrimination has been linked to increased depressive symptoms and work stress, especially among Black African Caribbean women. According to the study, higher levels of WRS in this group may be explained by racial discrimination experiences, which may have an effect on participant's psychological well-being at work (Wadsworth et al., 2006).

The following was the goals of the study to investigate the impact of workplace micro-aggression on child welfare worker's quality of life; Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) employees are the focus of the second goal. It investigates whether the psychological well-being of caseworkers in the organization that handles public child welfare is impacted by workplace discrimination as well as the race and ethnicity of therapists. Based on psychological stressor-strain theory, 1,622 participant's self-collected data of whom 87.9% were women and 61.3% identified as BIPOC were subjected to hierarchical regression analysis. According to investigations, BIPOC employees experienced more workplace discrimination than white employees. Regardless of their race and ethnicity, participants who felt more discrimination at work reported worse job satisfaction, poorer psychological safety at work, and higher degrees of burnout when it came to R/EI. Essentially, the study concludes that workplace discrimination is a significant stressor that negatively impacts employees, suggesting that child welfare organizations should foresee and eliminate prejudice against applicants and promote candidates (He et al., 2021).

The study of workplace discrimination and its impact on psychological well-being reveals that perceived stress significantly mediates the relationship between discrimination and depressive symptoms among employees. This relationship is complex and multifaceted, involving various mediators and moderators that influence the extent of depressive symptoms experienced by individuals facing discrimination. The research highlights the

importance of addressing workplace discrimination to improve mental health outcomes for employees.

Perceived stress is a significant mediator in the relationship between discrimination and depressive symptoms. In a study examining racial discrimination, perceived stress was found to have a strong association with depressive symptoms, indicating its critical role in this dynamic (Cooper et al., 2023).

In a study of workplace experiences among marginalized populations, the researchers found that **perceived stress mediated** the impact of perceived discrimination on overall well-being (Lee & Turney, 2012).

Among nurses, job stress was identified as a partial mediator between workplace discrimination and depression, suggesting that stress management could mitigate depressive outcomes (Mosahab & Mosahab, 2022).

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

JOB DEMANDS-RESOURCES MODEL (JDR)

Job Demands-Resources (JDR) model offers a framework for comprehending the relationships between teachers' psychological health, perceived stress, and workplace discrimination (Demerouti & Bakker, 2018). The JDR model states that if job demands (like workload and discrimination) are not counterbalanced by sufficient job resources (like support and autonomy), psychological strain (like stress and burnout) may result. One major job need, workplace discrimination, can cause teachers to feel stressed out, which can drain their emotional reserves (Hobfoll, 1989). According to the JDR model, instructors who encounter discrimination may feel overburdened, unable to handle the situation, and without the tools necessary to deal with their stress (Demerouti & Bakker, 2018).

According to the JDR model of stress, discrimination at work fulfills the demand component and is a persistent source of stress. Discrimination also affects employee's mental and emotional resources, which leads to burnout and an overall decline in participation (Schaufeli & Taris, 2014). Discriminatory behaviors have the potential to lower teacher job satisfaction, raise mental exhaustion, and degrade the quality of the classroom environment.

Stress as a perceived experience of stressors acts as a variable through which job demands influence outcomes (Lazarus & Folkman, 1984). Following the JDR model, the JDR ratio implies that if job demands, such as discrimination on the work place exceed resources, perceived stress increases and is accompanied by adverse effects on employees' emotions and physiology (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007). According to this theory, educators who work in schools with high levels of discrimination are likely to experience high levels of stress, which may lead to mental health conditions and impair coping skills.

One more outcome that is represented in the JDR model of evaluation is mental well-being, which is a component of psychological health. According to Hakanen et al. (2006), working situations that involve the utilization of insufficient resources to achieve high job

expectations lower well-being. Teachers who experience discrimination at work are more likely to report higher levels of anxiety, emotional exhaustion, and more severe life satisfaction. To this end, adequate job resources that could minimize these adverse effects on the educators' health and recovery were also investigated.

Psychological pressure, such as anxiety, depression, and emotional tiredness, may arise from this (Maslach & Jackson, 1981). On the other hand, job resources, like assistance from coworkers and superiors, might mitigate the negative effects of prejudice on psychological health and perceived stress (Cohen & Wills, 1985). Another important tool that might help teachers manage their workload and lower stress levels is autonomy (Hackman & Oldham, 1976).

Conceptual Framework

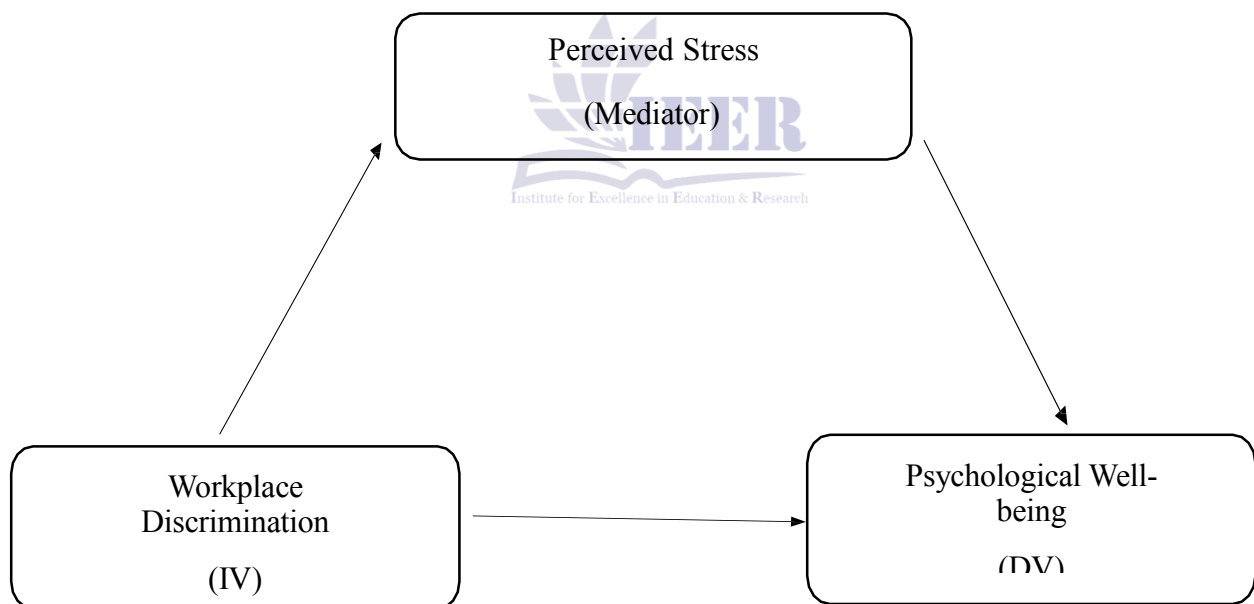


Figure 1 (conceptual framework)

Rationale

In addition to playing a critical role in educating future generations, teachers frequently deal with a number of issues that can negatively impact their well-being. Whether it be discrimination based on race, gender, age, or other factors, workplace discrimination is a serious issue that can lead to high levels of perceived stress among teachers, which can negatively impact their psychological well-being, job satisfaction, and effectiveness in the classroom.

The present study aimed to find out the relationship between workplace discrimination, perceived stress and psychological well-being among teachers. Discrimination in the workplace has a negative correlation with teacher's mental health and job performance and a good correlation with workplace stress (Pandey et al., 2021).

Many researchers have examined workplace discrimination, perceived stress, and psychological well-being among teachers; however, the majority of these studies concentrate on male or female teachers at specific educational levels. There is a lack of research that assesses these factors simultaneously among male and female teachers across Pakistani schools, colleges, and universities, and the analysis of workplace challenges across education levels is still lacking in the literature, creating gaps in our understanding of the effects of mental health on teachers. This research provides valuable

insights into educational challenges that affect teachers across various educational levels.

This study examining how employment discrimination affects teacher's reported stress and psychological health, despite the crucial role they play in society. Major sources of data revealed that perceived stress among the teachers as well as lower self-rated subjective well-being (SWB) correlates positively with automatic cognitive processes. Such patterns were driven even sharper during the COVID-19 pandemic, revealing the importance of intervention which aimed at stress reduction and SWB to reduce such biases (Primack et al., 2023).

Methodology

OBJECTIVES

1. To find out the relationship between workplace discrimination, psychological well-being and perceived stress among teachers.
2. To determine the impact of workplace discrimination on psychological well-being among teachers.
3. To explore the mediating role of perceived stress between workplace discrimination and psychological well-being among teachers.
4. To explore the differences on gender between workplace discrimination, psychological well-being and perceived stress among teachers.

HYPOTHESES

1. There will be a negative relationship between workplace discrimination and psychological well-being and positive relationship between workplace discrimination and perceived stress among teachers.
2. Workplace discrimination will negatively predict psychological well-being among teachers.
3. Perceived stress will act as a mediator between workplace discrimination and psychological well-being among teachers.
4. Females will score high on workplace

discrimination, perceived stress and psychological well-being as compared to males.

RESEARCH DESIGN

Cross sectional design was used.

Sample

Data was collected from (N=300) participants out of which (N=150) males and (N=150) female teachers were selected from different schools, colleges and universities of Islamabad and Rawalpindi. Age range was 20 to 60 years. Cross-sectional design was used. Data was collected through purposive sampling technique.

Inclusion criteria

1. Only teachers were included in the study.
2. Teachers from schools, colleges and universities were included in this study.

Exclusion criteria

1. Participants with physical or mental issues were not included in the study.
2. Retired teachers were also excluded from this study.

Operational Definitions Workplace

Discrimination

Sternthal et al. (2011) define workplace discrimination as the unequal treatment or systemic disadvantage experienced by individuals or groups within a work environment, based on racial or ethnic status. To measure workplace discrimination, Chronic Workplace Discrimination Scale (Sternthal et al., 2011) was used. **High scores** indicate that a person frequently experiences discrimination or bias at work, suggesting exposure to a hostile or inequitable work environment. **Low scores** suggest that the individual rarely or never encounters discriminatory treatment, implying a more respectful and inclusive workplace.

Perceived Stress

The extent to which a person perceives stressful

condition in their life is referred to as perceived stress (Cohen et al., 1983). To measure perceived stress, Perceived Stress Scale (Cohen et al., 1983) was used. **High score** suggests that the individual is experiencing elevated levels of stress, often feeling unable to manage life's demands, which can be associated with poor mental health outcomes such as anxiety, depression, and emotional exhaustion. **Low score** indicates a lower perception of stress, suggesting that the person feels more in control, confident in handling challenges, and emotionally balanced.

Psychological well-being

A positive and fulfilling state of being, characterized by positive emotions, engagement, relationships, meaning, accomplishment, and self-acceptance (Ryff, 2010). To measure psychological well-being, Psychological well-being scale (revised) (Ryff, 2010) was used. **High score** on the scale indicates strong psychological well-being, suggesting that the individual feels confident, purposeful, self-accepting, and capable of managing life's demands while maintaining meaningful relationships. **Low score** reflects lower psychological well-being, often characterized by feelings of aimlessness, low self-esteem, emotional instability, difficulty handling life challenges, and strained social relationships.

Instruments

Demographic Characteristics

It includes age, gender, education, department, type of institution, socio-economic status and marital status.

Chronic Work Discrimination Scale (CWDS)

It was developed by Sternthal et al. (2011). It is used to assess the individual's experiences of **ongoing, unfair treatment in the workplace**. It is a 12 item scale consisting of a 5-point Likert-type (1=once a week or more and 5=never). The scale demonstrated acceptable internal consistency with a Cronbach's alpha of .73, indicating reliable measurement of the construct.

Perceived Stress Scale (PSS)

This scale was developed by Cohen et al. (1983). It is used to assess the degree to which individuals perceive their lives as stressful. It is a

10-item scale consisting of a 5-point Likert-type (0 = never and 4 = very often). Item number 4, 5, 7 and 8 are reverse-scored. The scale demonstrated acceptable internal consistency with a Cronbach's alpha of .78, indicating reliable measurement of the construct.

Psychological Well-being Scale (PWS)

It was developed by Carol D. Ryff (2010). It is used to assess multiple dimensions of positive psychological functioning beyond just happiness or life satisfaction. It is an 18-item revised version scale consisting of a 7-point Likert type (1 = strongly agree and 7 = strongly disagree). It has 6 dimensions/sub-scales: autonomy, environmental mastery, personal growth, positive relation with others, purpose in life, self-acceptance. The scale demonstrated acceptable internal consistency with a Cronbach's alpha of .70, indicating reliable measurement of the construct.

Procedure

A total number of (N=300) participants out of which (N=150) males and (N=150) female teachers were selected from different schools, colleges and universities of Rawalpindi and Islamabad. Age range was 20 to 60 years. Chronic work discrimination scale (Sternthal et al., 2011), Perceived stress scale (Cohen et al., 1983) and Psychological well-being scale; revised version (Ryff, 2010) scales were administered on the participants. They were briefed about the nature and purpose of the study. It was assured that their information will be kept confidential and would be used for research purposes only. They were given the right to withdraw at any point if they feel uncomfortable. Informed consent was also taken from them. No physical or psychological harm was caused to them.

Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics, Pearson correlation, Independent sample t-test, Linear regression, and Mediation analysis were used in the study.

Results

PRELIMINARY ANALYSIS

The study was conducted to investigate the impact of workplace discrimination on psychological well-being among teachers and to explore the mediating role of perceived stress. It

was necessary to screen the data before doing the statistical analysis. There was a 100% response rate. Two responses were eliminated after data screening because they had an effect on the perceived reliability of the stress scale.

DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS

The results were calculated using four steps, which are included in the analysis. Prior to reliability testing, the initial step was to verify reliability analyses. Descriptive statistics were then used to identify any missing values. Some elements were converted to inverted coding for this purpose in accordance with the instructions

in the scale, after which descriptive statistics were used to calculate each scale and subscale. Cronbach's alpha values were used to assess each scale's reliability. To determine the relationship between the variables and their subscales, Pearson correlation analysis was performed in the second stage. In the third phase, the difference between the two groups females and males was determined using the independent sample t-test. Linear regression and Mediation was used as the final stage to verify the model of the relationship between the variables.

TABLE 1
Frequencies and Percentages of Demographic Variables (N = 300)

Characteristics	F	(%)
Age		
20-30	118	39.3
31-40	117	39.0
41-50	63	21.0
51-60	2	0.7
Gender		
Male	150	50.0
Female	150	50.0
Socioeconomic status		
Upper Class	17	
Middle Class		5.7
Lower Class	248	82.7
	35	11.7
Education		
Intermediate	76	25.3
	224	74.7
Bachelor/Master/Phd		

Note: f= Frequency, %= Percentage

In Table 1, an overview of the demographic data for the participants is given.

Only 0.7% of participants were older than 51, while the majority (68.3%) were between the ages of 20 and 40, 39.3% between the ages of 20 and 30, and 39.0% between the ages of

31 and 40. Additionally, 21.0% of participants were between the ages of 41 and 50. With 50.0% of the sample being male and 50.0% being female, the gender distribution was almost equal. 167 (82.7%) of them belonged to the middle class, 45 (11.7%) to the lower class, and 25 (5.7%) to the upper class. In terms of

education, the majority of participants (74.7%) held a bachelor's or master's or PhD degree, 25.3% held an intermediate degree. Additionally, the distribution of marital status was 44.7% single and 55.3% married.

TABLE 2

Psychometric properties of the Scales of the study (N=300)

Scales	k	α	M	SD	Range		Skewness	Kurtosis
					Actual	Potential		
WPD	12	0.92	35.68	11.60	16-56	12-60	-.47	.79
PS	10	0.94	21.64	8.63	6-36	0-40	.12	.15
PWB	18	0.78	64.40	17.26	31-100	18-126	.15	.50
AM	3	.61	12.31	3.68	3-21	3-21	-.67	.28
EM	3	.52	12.84	3.8	6-21	3-21	-.06	-1.08
PG	3	.61	14.21	4.69	4-21	3-21	-.18	-1.16
PR	3	.77	12.07	5.30	4-21	3-21	.19	-1.5
PL	3	.80	12.61	2.67	6-21	3-21	.76	.42
SA	3	.88	13.48	5.66	4-21	3-21	-.33	-1.32

Note: WPD= Work-Place Discrimination; PS= Perceived Stress; PWB= Psychological Well Being; EM=Environmental Mastery; AM= Autonomy; PG= Personal Growth; PL; Purpose in Life; SE= Self- Acceptance; PR= Positive Relations; k= total number of items; M= Mean, SD= Standard Deviation, α =Alpha reliability Table 2 shows the reliability and descriptive statistics for the scales used in the study are displayed in the table. The mean score on the Workplace Discrimination scale is 35.68, with a standard deviation of 11.60. In reality, the scores varied from 16 to 56. Because of its high reliability (α = 0.92), this scale evaluates workplace discrimination consistently. The mean score on the Perceived Stress scale is 21.64, with a standard deviation of 8.63. Because of its great reliability (α = 0.94), the scale is guaranteed to measure subjective stress

accurately. On this scale, the actual ratings varied from 6 to 36. The mean score on the Psychological Well-Being scale is 64.40, with a standard deviation of 17.26. The actual scores were between 31 and 100. This scale measures psychological well-being consistently, as evidenced by its strong reliability (α = 0.78).

Autonomy is one of the psychological well-being subscales with the moderate reliability (α = 0.61), indicating inconsistent measurement of autonomy. Its mean is 12.31 with a standard deviation of 3.68. With a mean score of 12.84 and a standard deviation of 3.80, Environmental Mastery exhibits moderate dependability (α = 0.52). With a mean of 14.21 and a standard deviation of 4.69, Personal Growth exhibits moderate reliability (α = 0.61). With a mean of 12.07 and a standard deviation of 5.30, Positive Relations exhibits a

comparatively high level of dependability ($\alpha = 0.77$). The reliability of Purpose in Life is good ($\alpha = 0.80$), while having a mean of 12.61 and a standard deviation of 2.67. The reliability of self-acceptance is strong ($\alpha = 0.88$), and its mean is 13.48 with a standard deviation of 5.66.

Table 3

Pearson correlation between Workplace Discrimination, Perceived Stress and Psychological Well-being among Teachers (N=300)

Variables	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
1 Workplace Discrimination	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
2 Perceived Stress	.77**	–	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
3 Psychological Well Being	.70**	-.87**	–	–	–	–	–	–	–
4 Autonomy	.34**	-.62**	.78**	–	–	–	–	–	–
5 Environmental Mastery	.57**	-.77**	.84**	.66**	–	–	–	–	–
6 Personal growth	.67**	-.82**	.94**	.67**	.73**	–	–	–	–
7 Positive relations	.67**	-.85**	.91**	.61**	.77**	.85**	–	–	–
8 Purpose in life	.56**	-.50**	.67**	.43**	.36**	.63**	.56**	–	–
9 Self-acceptance	.71**	-.82**	.93**	.70**	.75**	.87**	.78**	.64**	–

Note: $p < 0.00^{**}$, $p < 0.05^{*}$

Table 3 shows the relationships among psychological well-being, autonomy, environmental Mastery, purpose in life, personal growth, self-acceptance, positive relations, perceived stress, and workplace discrimination:

The results illustrate the relationships between various elements. Discrimination at work is associated with increased stress and decreased psychological well-being. People's psychological well-being decreases with increased stress, which makes them feel less in

control of their lives, less capable of personal growth, and less satisfied with who they are. However, having a strong sense of purpose in life, being independent, and having positive connections are all strongly associated with psychological well-being. People who have strong relationships, accept who they are, and feel more in control of their surroundings are generally happier. However, these beneficial aspects are impacted by stress and discrimination, making it more difficult for people to maintain a healthy psychological state.

TABLE 4

Linear Regression Analysis for Workplace Discrimination on Psychological Well-being among Teachers (N = 300)

	B	SE	B	p
Constant	30.91	–		.00
WD	1.41	0.09	0.69	.00

R	0.69
R ²	0.47
ΔF	270.57

Note: WD = Workplace Discrimination, B = Unstandardized Coefficient, β = Standardized Coefficient, SE = Standard Error, p = Significant Value, R = Correlation, R² = Variance Explained; ΔF= F statistics

In Table 4, the predicting role workplace discrimination on psychological well-being was examined using a linear regression analysis. The findings suggested that psychological well-being is strongly and

psychological well-being can be explained by discrimination at work. The whole model fits well, as indicated by the F value (ΔF = 270.57, p = .00).

significantly impacted by job discrimination. According to the unstandardized coefficient (B= 1.41), psychological well-being increases by 1.41 units in along with discrimination at work. The p- value (.00) indicates that this result is statistically significant, and the beta value (β = 0.69), which indicates a strong influence. The two variables have a good association (R = 0.69), and the R² value (0.47) indicates that 47% of the variations in

TABLE 5

By Using Process Method to identify the Mediating Role of Perceived Stress between Workplace Discrimination and Psychological Well-being among Teachers (N=300)

Variables	Model 1	Model 2	SE	95% CI	
	B	B		LL	UL
Constant	42.09	125.06	5.83	113.58	136.54
Workplace Discrimination	-.57**	.13	.10	-.06	.32
Perceived Stress		-2.24**	.13	-2.49	-1.99
R ²	.59	.74			
F	432.45**	426.54**			

Note: **p < .01; CI = Confidence Interval; LL = Lower Limit; UL = Upper Limit

In Table 5, the mediation analysis show that the impact of workplace discrimination on psychological well-being is mediated by perceived stress. According to Model 1, psychological well-being is significantly predicted by discrimination at work (B = -0.57, p < .01). The direct impact of workplace discrimination on psychological well-being is no longer significant (B = 0.13, p = .1726) in Model 2, where perceived stress is added as a mediator. However, psychological well-being is strongly predicted by perceived stress (B = -2.24, p < .01). This suggests that the mediation effect is complete. There is a statistically significant indirect effect through perceived stress (Effect = 1.29, 95% CI [1.13, 1.46]).

Mediation

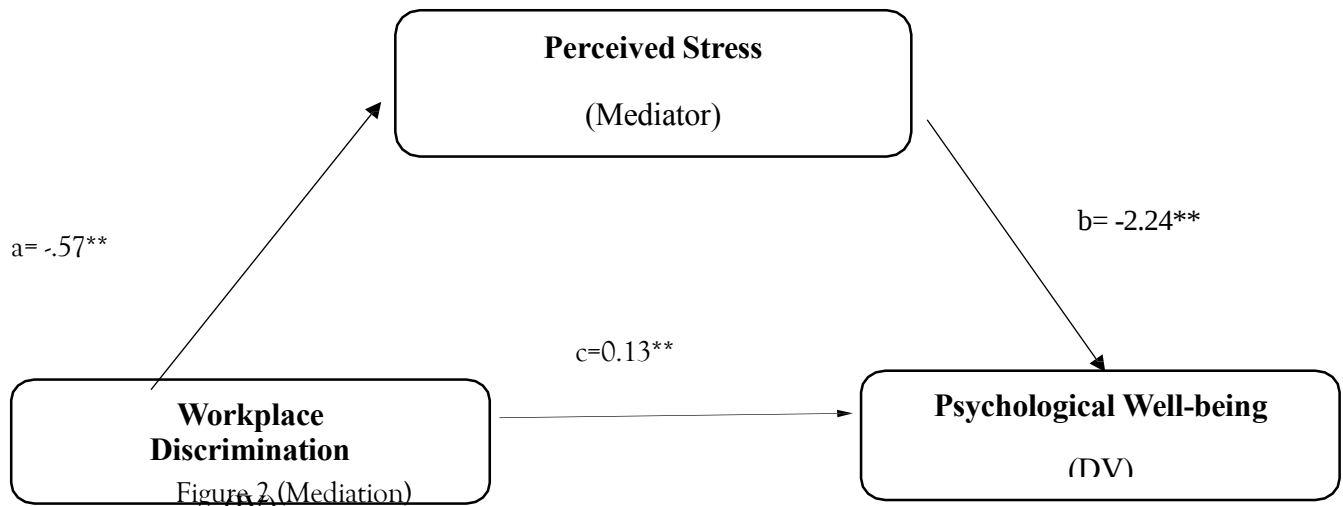


TABLE 6

Gender differences on Workplace Discrimination, Perceived Stress and Psychological Well-being among Teachers (N=300)

Variables	Male n= (150)		Female n= (150)		t (298)	p	95%CI		Cohen's d
	M	SD	M	SD			LL	UL	
Workplace discrimination	43.28	9.87	28.07	7.79	-15.01	.00	-17.20	-13.21	8.77
Perceived Stress	14.10	4.55	32.41	6.87	31.90	.00	14.24	16.12	4.09
Psychological Well-being	96.59	10.92	58.48	13.00	-27.48	.00	-40.84	-35.38	12.00
Environmental Mastery	15.7	1.89	9.91	2.98	-20.28	.00	-6.43	-5.29	2.50
Autonomy	14.84	2.00	9.78	3.21	-16.36	.00	-5.66	-4.45	2.67
Personal growth	17.81	2.63	10.61	3.33	-20.75	.00	-7.88	-6.51	3.00
Positive relations	16.12	3.77	8.02	3.02	-20.48	.00	-8.88	-7.32	3.42
Purpose in life	13.98	2.75	11.24	1.73	-10.32	.00	-3.27	-2.22	2.30
Self-acceptance	18.05	2.31	8.91	4.13	-23.63	.00	-9.90	-8.37	3.3

Note: CI= Confidence Interval; LL= Lower Limit; UL; Upper Limit. M=mean; SD= standard deviation; t= the degree of freedom; $p < 0.05$

In Table 6, the findings of an independent sample t-test comparing males and females on the research variables are reported. While female teachers reported significantly higher levels of perceived stress ($p < .001$) than male

teachers, male teachers scored significantly higher than female teachers ($p < .001$) on psychological well-being, indicating that they felt more in control of their lives, had stronger relationships, and experienced greater self-acceptance. The results also show that male teachers experienced significantly more workplace discrimination than female teachers ($p < .001$).

Regarding of psychological well-being, male teachers reported significantly higher levels of autonomy ($p < .001$), which indicated that they felt more independent in their decision-making; greater environmental mastery ($p < .001$), which indicated that they felt more capable of handling life's challenges; significantly higher levels of personal growth ($p < .001$) and positive relations ($p < .001$), which indicated that they were more likely to see personal improvement and have meaningful social connections; and significantly higher levels of self-acceptance ($p < .001$) compared to female teachers, which meant that they felt a greater satisfaction with themselves and had a more apparent naturally in life. Overall, female teachers scored high on perceived stress and psychological well-being while male teachers scored high on workplace discrimination.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to find out the impact of workplace discrimination on psychological well-being and the mediating role of perceived stress among teachers. Discrimination in the workplace is defined as unequal treatment based on a variety of standards, which can lead to increased stress and have negative impacts on psychological well-being. Psychological well-being includes pleasant emotions, self-acceptance, and life satisfaction. Perceived stress is a person's assessment of stressful situations in their life. A sample of $N = 300$ teachers out of which $N = 150$ males and $N = 150$ females from schools, colleges, and universities were selected for the study. Chronic work discrimination scale (Sternthal et al., 2011), Perceived stress scale (Cohen et al., 1983) and Psychological well-being scale (Ryff, 2010) were administered on the participants. Cross-sectional design was used. Purposive sampling technique was used.

The first hypothesis of the study is that there will be a negative relationship between workplace discrimination and psychological well-being among teachers. The findings of the study showed a negative correlation between psychological well-being and workplace discrimination. According to the results of two meta-analyses, psychological well-being and perceived discrimination are significantly correlated negatively. This negative impact is

particularly significant for disadvantaged populations, individual discrimination, and poor health outcomes like anxiety and despair (Schmitt et al., 2014).

Higher levels of discrimination in the workplace were associated with more psychological discomfort, according to the study, which used data from the MIDUS dataset. The negative correlation between discrimination and mental health well-being even after controlling demographic, socioeconomic, and health characteristics (Keller et al., 2024). Perceived discrimination has a significant negative effect on mental health, including increased stress and psychological distress, according to the study's meta-analysis. Both acute and long-term negative experiences are associated with these negative effects, indicating their role as social stressors that gradually impair psychological health (Pascoe & Richman, 2009). Current study results are supported by the findings of these studies.

The study's hypothesis is that there will be a positive relationship between workplace discrimination and perceived stress. The results of the study showed a strong correlation between perceived stress and discrimination at work. Xu and Chopik (2020) study identified a positive correlation between perceived stress and workplace discrimination, suggesting that employees who experience higher levels of discrimination at work also experience higher levels of stress. Volpone and Avery (2013) study showed a positive correlation between perceived stress and workplace discrimination, indicating that discrimination correlates decreased engagement and more burnout. Higher stress levels and withdrawal symptoms including tardiness, missing work, and quit intentions follow from this.

According to the findings of the current study, perceived stress is positively correlated with workplace discrimination. Zafra and Santhiveeran (2023) study revealed the positive relationships between perceived stress and discrimination by finding that among Asian American healthcare professionals during the COVID-19 epidemic, workplace discrimination significantly predicted greater levels of workplace stress. He et al. (2021) study showed the positive relationship between perceived stress and workplace discrimination by finding

that it significantly predicted greater levels of stress among child welfare personnel. Both these studies support the current study findings.

The second hypothesis of this research is that workplace discrimination will negatively predict psychological well-being among teachers. The results of this study indicated that psychological well-being is negatively predicted by discrimination in the workplace. Boulet et al. (2022) study's results show that lower levels of self-reported mental health among Canadian workers are linked to perceived workplace discrimination. It means that psychological well-being is negatively predicted by discrimination at work, with women and visible minorities more likely to suffer these negative consequences. Lee (2019) study, self-reported mental health has a negative relationship with perceived workplace discrimination, suggesting that workplace discrimination is a negatively predictor of psychological well-being among Canadian workers. Both these studies are supporter of the current study results. Another study result showed that perceived stress significantly mediated the relationship between weight-related discrimination and both physical and psychological well-being in individuals with type 2 diabetes. Higher discrimination was linked to greater stress, which in turn predicted poorer well-being outcomes (Akyirem et al., 2024).

The third hypothesis of the study is that perceived stress will act as a mediator between workplace discrimination and psychological well-being among teachers. Xu and Chopik (2020) study result revealed that perceived stress fully mediated the relationship between workplace discrimination and psychological well-being among teachers. The direct effect became non-significant when perceived stress was included, and the indirect effect was significant.

The fourth hypothesis of this study is that females will score high on workplace discrimination, perceived stress and psychological well-being as compared to males. Results of the study shows that men scored high on workplace discrimination as compared to females, and females score high on psychological well-being and perceived stress than males. Miller and Katz (2018) study, compared to their male colleagues, female anesthesiology residents expressed higher levels of experienced workplace discrimination. In

addition to reporting sexist conduct and discrimination from peers, attending physicians, and patients, women were more likely to feel disadvantaged because of their gender. This study contradicts current study results.

There are many reasons behind these results; somehow the study's setting or cultural elements may be the reason why men scored higher in this area. Men may perceive or encounter particular types of workplace discrimination, such as unfulfilled career expectations or biases in particular industries. Males may have greater autonomy, authority, and leadership opportunities at work, all of which can enhance wellbeing. Women, on the other hand, frequently manage work and home responsibilities, which results in increased stress and decreased wellness. While women may experience greater emotional suffering as a result of social expectations and professional challenges, males may also manage stress in ways that preserve their psychological well-being. Cultural factors are important in this case since men are typically encouraged to appear strong and resilient by traditional gender standards, while women may experience pressure from society to play various roles, which can have an adverse effect on their mental health.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND LIMITATIONS

1. The sample was limited to institutions or locations and may not be representative of all teachers, the study may not be as generalizable as it could be. Since the data was gathered all at once, it was challenging to determine causality. While individuals may over report or underreport their experiences and emotions, the use of self-reported measures may introduce bias.
2. The study focused basically on teachers, limiting generalizability to other professions.
3. The study collected data from participants with different education levels, but it did not specify which data belonged to which level of education, making it difficult to interpret the findings based on educational differences.
4. Potential factors that might have affected the results were left out, such as workload, organizational culture, or individual coping mechanisms.
5. To improve generalizability, future research

should take with it a comparative study to look at psychological well-being, perceived stress, and workplace discrimination across various professions.

6. To determine causal linkages and evaluate how these characteristics change over time, longitudinal study would be appropriate.
7. A qualitative study may also help identify underlying causes by offering greater insights into instructors' individual experiences with stress and discrimination.
8. In order to understand how stress and workplace discrimination affect teachers at different career stages and to enable more focused intervention, it would also be beneficial to compare different age groups.

IMPLICATIONS

The study suggests preventing workplace discrimination and promote an inclusive work environment, schools and other educational institutions should set up specific policies and procedures. Policymakers and educational institutions should make consideration of the study's conclusions. To minimize workplace discrimination against teachers, schools, colleges, and universities should put anti-discrimination regulations into place and promote a more welcoming workplace. To assist teachers in efficiently managing workplace stress, stress management programs and services for mental health support are to be implemented. By encouraging open communication, offering chances for professional growth, and making sure all educators are treated fairly, administrators can concentrate on enhancing working circumstances. Furthermore, teachers' psychological well-being can be improved by well-being programs like peer support groups, counseling, and flexible work schedules, which will ultimately increase their job happiness and productivity.

Conclusion

This study investigated the relation between teacher's psychological health, perceived stress, and workplace discrimination. Discrimination in the workplace can produce an adverse environment that raises stress levels and has a detrimental effect on general wellbeing. People's reactions to difficult circumstances are reflected

in their perceived stress, but psychological well-being includes mental balance, self-acceptance, and life satisfaction. Purposive sampling was utilized to select N= 300 teachers (N= 150 men and N= 150 women) from colleges, schools, and universities for the cross-sectional study. It was revealed that discrimination at work had a significant negative impact on teacher's mental health. According to the results, workplace discrimination has a positive relationship with teacher's perceived stress and a negative correlation with psychological well-being. Additionally, they verified the opposite relationships, showing that discrimination had a major positive effect on stress levels and negative effects on psychological well-being. The results showed that while women scored higher on perceived stress and psychological well-being, men reported greater levels of workplace discrimination than women. Since the results showed the negative impact of workplace discrimination on teachers, these issues had to be resolved in order to enhance working conditions. To assist teachers in efficiently managing workplace stress, stress management programs and services for mental health support are to be implemented.

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