

# Digital Mental Health Interventions for Occupational Stress Management among College Teachers

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## ABSTRACT

Occupational stress among college educators has become a notable issue in higher education institutions due to escalating workload expectations, technological advancements, administrative duties, and work-life disparities. Digital mental health interventions have recently garnered attention as efficacious instruments for alleviating psychological stress and enhancing emotional well-being. Interventions encompass mobile health applications, online counseling services, teletherapy platforms, digital mindfulness programs, and psychological support systems. This study examines the effects of digital mental health treatments on the management of occupational stress among college educators. The study employed a quantitative correlational research design. Data were gathered from 133 college instructors using standardized questionnaires. Statistical methods, including percentage analysis, descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and multiple regression analysis, were used to interpret the data. The results demonstrate that digital mental health interventions markedly decrease occupational stress and enhance psychological well-being among educators. The research underscores the need to integrate digital mental health services into educational institutions to improve teachers' mental well-being and professional efficacy.

**Keywords:** *Digital Mental Health, Occupational Stress, University Educators, Psychological Well-being, Digital Interventions, Stress Management*

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## INTRODUCTION

Occupational stress has become a prominent concern for educators due to increasing academic responsibilities, technological progress, institutional expectations, and challenges in work-life balance (Kyriacou, 2001; Richardson & Rothstein, 2008). College educators are expected to fulfill instructional responsibilities and participate in research, administrative tasks, student mentorship, curriculum design, and ongoing professional development. The escalating demands frequently generate psychological stress that adversely impacts emotional health and occupational efficacy. In contemporary education, swift technological progress and digitalization have profoundly transformed pedagogical approaches and professional interactions. The incorporation of online teaching platforms, virtual classrooms, digital evaluations, and technological tools has augmented both the potential and the challenges for educators. Although technology enhances efficiency and accessibility, it also imposes additional obligations, such as adapting to new digital systems, overseeing online learning environments, and maintaining work-life balance. These elements lead to occupational stress in college educators.

Occupational stress refers to the psychological and physiological responses elicited when work demands exceed an individual's capacity to cope effectively. Extended occupational stress can lead to burnout, anxiety, emotional fatigue, depression, decreased job satisfaction, and impaired professional efficacy. Research demonstrates that chronic stress adversely impacts educators' mental well-being and may diminish the quality of instruction and educational results.

The growing awareness of mental health has spurred the development of new strategies for psychological support and stress management. The rise of digital mental health interventions is a notable development. Digital mental health interventions utilize technology-based tools and platforms to deliver mental healthcare services and psychological support. These interventions encompass mobile mental health applications, tele-counseling services, online therapy programs, virtual mental health platforms, artificial intelligence-driven support systems, and mindfulness applications.

Digital mental health therapies provide flexibility, accessibility, cost-effectiveness, and tailored support

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services (Andersson & Titov, 2014; Hilty et al., 2013). They provide adaptability, availability, economic efficiency, and tailored assistance. Educators can access counseling services, stress management programs, and mental health resources at any time and from any location based on their specific requirements. Moreover, internet platforms mitigate obstacles related to time limitations, societal shame, and the scarcity of mental health practitioners. Research studies have shown that digital mental health therapies effectively reduce stress, improve emotional regulation, strengthen coping mechanisms, and enhance psychological well-being. Educational institutions increasingly recognize the importance of integrating digital mental health support systems to bolster instructors' well-being and enhance professional efficacy. Nonetheless, studies focusing specifically on the impact of digital mental health interventions on alleviating occupational stress among college educators are scarce. This study aims to examine the impact of digital mental health treatments on the management of occupational stress among college educators. The study aims to investigate the extent to which technology-driven mental health interventions alleviate stress and enhance psychological well-being among educators.

## REVIEW LITERATURE

### **Lazarus and Folkman (1984) – Transactional Model of Stress and Coping**

Richard S. Lazarus and Susan Folkman formulated the Transactional Theory of Stress and Coping, which posits that stress is a dynamic interplay between an individual and their environment. The theory posits that stress arises when external demands surpass an individual's coping resources and capabilities. The idea emphasizes the significance of cognitive appraisal in shaping individuals' perceptions and responses to stressful circumstances. Individuals who employ effective coping strategies generally achieve better psychological outcomes and enhanced emotional well-being. This theory offers a robust framework for understanding occupational stress among college educators and supports the efficacy of digital mental health interventions in enhancing adaptive coping mechanisms.

### **Cohen, Kamarck, and Mermelstein (1983) - Scale of Perceived Stress**

Sheldon Cohen and associates developed the Perceived Stress Scale (PSS) to assess individuals' perceptions of stress in everyday situations. The research demonstrated that perceived stress significantly influences psychological and emotional health outcomes. Elevated levels of perceived stress correlated with anxiety, emotional fatigue, and diminished mental well-being. Their research emphasized that effective interventions and coping strategies might alleviate stress and enhance psychological functioning.

### **Goleman (1998) – Emotional Intelligence and Professional Performance**

Daniel Goleman highlighted that emotional intelligence plays a crucial role in personal performance and psychological well-being. The research found self-awareness, emotional regulation, motivation, empathy, and social skills as key components of emotional intelligence. Individuals possessing high emotional intelligence exhibit exceptional stress management skills and improved success in the workplace. Educators with emotional competence may effectively manage occupational challenges and emotional pressures.

### **Kyriacou (2001) – Educator Stress and Professional Obstacles**

Chris Kyriacou examined occupational stress in educators and identified workload, student conduct, institutional expectations, and administrative duties as primary stressors. The results demonstrated that chronic occupational stress adversely impacts teachers' mental well-being, work satisfaction, and teaching efficacy. The research advocated for institutional support mechanisms and stress management strategies to enhance educators' well-being.

### **Bakker and Demerouti (2007) – Job Demands-Resources Framework**

Arnold Bakker and Evangelia Demerouti introduced the Job Needs–Resources Model, which elucidates that occupational stress arises when workplace needs surpass available resources. Overwhelming workloads, emotional strain, and role ambiguities contribute to stress and burnout. In contrast, organizational resources include support systems, technical aid, and psychological therapies that mitigate stress and enhance employee well-being.

### **Gaggioli et al. (2013) – Digital Technologies and Mental Health Assistance**

Gaggioli and colleagues investigated the impact of digital technologies on mental health interventions and concluded that technology-driven solutions enhance emotional regulation and stress management. Digital interventions facilitate users in tracking emotional states, obtaining support resources, and employing adaptive coping strategies. The research indicated that digital mental health systems can efficiently enhance psychological well-being.

### **Andersson and Titov (2014) – Online Psychological Interventions**

Gerhard Andersson and Nickolai Titov examined internet-based psychological interventions and determined that online therapy markedly alleviates symptoms of stress, despair, and anxiety. The results demonstrated that internet-based mental healthcare services provide cost-effective and accessible psychological assistance for individuals facing emotional challenges.

### **Firth et al. (2017) - Mobile Mental Health Applications**

Firth and associates investigated the efficacy of smartphone-based mental health applications in enhancing emotional well-being and alleviating psychological stress. The study indicated that mobile applications provide real-time assistance, tailored interventions, and self-monitoring

features that facilitate successful stress management for users.

**Heber et al. (2017) - Digital Stress Management Initiatives**

Heber and colleagues investigated online stress-management strategies for working professionals. The research indicated that digital programs markedly lowered stress levels and enhanced psychological functioning. Participants who consistently used online mental health programs reported greater emotional stability and improved coping mechanisms.

**Schueller et al. (2018) - Availability of Digital Mental Health Services**

Stephen Schueller and associates examined the accessibility of internet-based mental health services and concluded that digital platforms enhance access to healthcare by mitigating geographical, financial, and social barriers. The research found that digital treatments increase the use of mental healthcare and yield better emotional outcomes.

**Carolan et al. (2017) – Digital Mental Health and Occupational Well-being**

Carolan and associates investigated the implementation of digital mental health interventions in professional environments and noted beneficial outcomes on emotional well-being and job productivity. Their findings demonstrated that technology-assisted therapies can enhance stress management and alleviate burnout symptoms in employees.

**Harrer et al. (2019) - Digital Interventions for Alleviating Stress**

Harrer and associates conducted a meta-analysis of digital therapies and determined that internet-based stress management programs significantly enhance mental health outcomes. Their research indicated that digital therapies alleviate stress symptoms and improve emotional resilience.

**Connor and Davidson (2003) - Psychological Resilience**

Kathryn Connor and Jonathan Davidson created a resilience scale indicating that resilience functions as a protective factor against occupational stress. Individuals with heightened resilience are more adept in adapting to difficult circumstances and preserving psychological stability.

**Masten (2001) – Theory of Resilience**

Ann Masten characterized resilience as “ordinary magic,” highlighting that individuals have innate abilities to recuperate from stressful circumstances. The research emphasized resilience as a crucial determinant of emotional well-being and proficient stress management.

**Mérida-López and Extremera (2017) – Emotional Intelligence and Educator Well-being**

Mérida-López and Extremera reviewed research on emotional intelligence among educators and found that emotionally intelligent teachers exhibit lower stress levels and greater work engagement. The research indicated that emotional competencies enhance occupational adaptability and psychological well-being.

**OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

1. To assess the degree of occupational stress experienced by college educators.
2. To evaluate the implementation of digital mental health interventions among university faculty.
3. To examine the correlation between digital mental health interventions and the management of work stress.
4. To evaluate the effects of digital mental health interventions on the psychological well-being of college educators.
5. To assess the efficacy of digital mental health interventions in alleviating occupational stress.
6. To propose enhancements for digital mental health support systems within educational institutions.

**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This study employed a quantitative correlational research design to investigate the impact of digital mental health interventions on occupational stress management among college educators. The study population comprised educators employed in Government, Government-Aided, and Self-Financing Arts and Science colleges affiliated with the University of Calicut. A sample of 133 respondents was selected through stratified random sampling, categorising the population into strata based on institution type: Government colleges, Government-Aided colleges, and Self-Financing colleges, to ensure sufficient representation from each category. Primary data were gathered through a structured questionnaire using a five-point Likert scale (strongly agree to strongly disagree) to assess variables such as digital mental health intervention utilization, occupational stress, psychological well-being, and the efficacy of stress management. Secondary data were gathered from books, research journals, papers, websites, and prior studies to substantiate the research's theoretical framework. The gathered data were examined utilizing statistical methods, including percentage analysis for demographic traits, mean and standard deviation for evaluating central tendency and variability, reliability analysis for assessing internal consistency, correlation analysis for uncovering relationships among variables, and multiple regression analysis for evaluating the predictive influence of digital mental health interventions on stress management and psychological well-being. Statistical analysis was performed using SPSS to ensure the precision and reliability of the results. Ethical criteria, including confidentiality, anonymity, informed consent, and voluntary involvement, were upheld throughout the study.

**Data Analysis & Interpretation**

**Table 1: Demographic Profile of Respondents**

Variables	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	42	31.6
	Female	91	68.4
Age	Below 30 years	24	18.0
	31–40 years	49	36.8
	41–50 years	38	28.6
	Above 50 years	22	16.6
Institution Type	Government	32	24.1
	Government Aided	46	34.6
	Self-Financing	55	41.3
Teaching Experience	Below 5 years	28	21.1
	6–10 years	44	33.1
	Above 10 years	61	45.8

**Interpretation:** The demographic analysis reveals that, of the 133 respondents, female teachers comprised 68.4% and male teachers 31.6%. The age distribution revealed that the majority of respondents (36.8%) were in the 31–40 years age bracket, signifying that middle-career educators constituted a significant segment of the participants. According to institutional classifications,

41.3% of respondents were affiliated with Self-Financing colleges, followed by Government-Aided colleges at 34.6% and Government colleges at 24.1%. The majority of responders (45.8%) had more than 10 years of teaching experience, indicating substantial professional exposure and expertise.

**Table 2: Reliability Analysis**

Variable	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha
Digital Mental Health Intervention	8	0.872
Occupational Stress	10	0.846
Psychological Well-being	7	0.821
Stress Management Effectiveness	6	0.854

**Interpretation:** A reliability analysis was conducted to assess the internal consistency of the measurement scales using Cronbach's alpha. The findings revealed that all variables demonstrated reliability values above 0.80, indicating excellent internal consistency. The Digital

Mental Health Intervention scale exhibited the highest reliability coefficient (0.872), indicating high consistency across its items. Since all values exceeded the recommended threshold value of 0.70, the instrument was considered reliable for further statistical analysis.

**Table 3: Descriptive Statistics**

Variable	Mean	Standard Deviation
Digital Mental Health Intervention	74.65	11.52
Occupational Stress	65.48	12.24
Psychological Well-being	76.84	13.16
Stress Management Effectiveness	71.33	10.85

**Interpretation:** Descriptive statistics indicated that respondents exhibited moderate to high levels of engagement with digital mental health interventions, with a mean of 74.65. The average occupational stress score (65.48) indicated moderate levels of stress among college

educators. The mean psychological well-being score was notably high (76.84), indicating acceptable mental health among respondents. The stress management effectiveness score of 71.33 indicated moderate coping abilities and adaptive stress management strategies.

**Table 4: Correlation Analysis**

Variables	DMHI	Occupational Stress	Psychological Well-being
Digital Mental Health Intervention	1		
Occupational Stress	-0.59**	1	
Psychological Well-being	0.63**	-0.57**	1

**Interpretation:** The correlation analysis indicated a significant negative association between digital mental

health interventions and occupational stress ( $r = -0.59, p < 0.01$ ), suggesting that greater use of these interventions is

associated with lower occupational stress among teachers. A positive association was observed between digital mental health interventions and psychological well-being ( $r = 0.63, p < 0.01$ ), suggesting that digital support systems improve emotional and psychological outcomes.

Occupational stress demonstrated a negative association with psychological well-being ( $r = -0.57, p < 0.01$ ), implying that higher stress levels negatively influence mental health.

**Table 5: Multiple Regression Analysis**

Predictor Variable	$\beta$	t-value	p-value
Digital Mental Health Intervention	0.51	6.92	<0.001
Stress Management Effectiveness	0.43	5.74	<0.001

Model Statistics	Value
R	0.75
R <sup>2</sup>	0.56
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	0.54
F-value	39.82
Significance	<0.001

**Interpretation:** A multiple regression analysis was performed to assess the predictive impact of Digital Mental Health Intervention and Stress Management Effectiveness on the psychological well-being of college educators. The findings demonstrate that Digital Mental Health Intervention is a significant predictor of psychological well-being ( $\beta = 0.51, t = 6.92, p < 0.001$ ), indicating that greater use of digital mental health services is associated with better mental health outcomes for educators. Likewise, the effectiveness of stress management markedly affects psychological well-being ( $\beta = 0.43, t = 5.74, p < 0.001$ ), suggesting that adaptive coping methods and proficient stress management procedures enhance educators' emotional health. The model summary indicates an R<sup>2</sup> of 0.56, indicating that roughly 56% of the variance in psychological well-being is explained by the predictor variables in the study. The Adjusted R<sup>2</sup> score of 0.54 indicates that the model remains robust despite the number of predictors used. The F-value (39.82,  $p < 0.001$ ) indicates that the total regression model is statistically significant.

**FINDINGS**

1. The demographic profile of the respondents revealed that a significant majority were female, and most participants had extensive teaching experience, thus offering valuable insights into occupational stress and mental health issues in higher education institutions.
2. The reliability analysis revealed adequate internal consistency for all study variables, with Cronbach's Alpha values surpassing the specified threshold, signifying that the measurement instrument employed in the study was dependable and appropriate for subsequent statistical analysis.
3. The descriptive analysis indicated that college educators exhibited moderate to high levels of engagement with digital mental health interventions, reflecting a growing knowledge and acceptance of technology-assisted mental health support systems among faculty.

4. The results indicated that occupational stress levels among college educators were moderate, implying that professional responsibilities, workload demands, administrative tasks, and technological adaptation significantly contribute to stress experiences.
5. Correlation analysis revealed a strong negative relationship between digital mental health interventions and occupational stress, suggesting that greater use of digital mental health platforms leads to decreased stress levels among educators.
6. A notable positive correlation was identified between digital mental health interventions and psychological well-being, indicating that these services improve emotional stability, coping skills, and general psychological health among college educators.
7. Occupational stress had an inverse correlation with psychological well-being, suggesting that heightened stress detrimentally impacts mental health and professional performance.
8. Multiple regression analysis indicated that digital mental health interventions significantly forecasted psychological well-being among participants, implying that technology-driven mental health support systems substantially enhance mental health outcomes.
9. The effectiveness of stress management emerged as a crucial predictor of psychological well-being, suggesting that adaptive coping strategies enhance emotional resilience and occupational adaptability.
10. The comprehensive regression model accounted for a significant percentage of the variance in psychological well-being, suggesting that digital mental health treatments and stress management jointly affect educators' mental health outcomes.

**RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. Higher education institutions should establish organized digital mental health initiatives designed to

- enhance emotional well-being and alleviate occupational stress among educators.
2. Colleges must to implement accessible online counselling and tele-mental health services to deliver prompt psychological help for educators facing stress-related difficulties.
  3. Educational institutions ought to implement mobile-based mental health applications and digital wellness platforms to enable ongoing monitoring and control of psychological well-being among educators.
  4. Regular workshops and training sessions should be conducted to improve understanding of the utilization and advantages of digital mental health interventions among educators.
  5. Institutional administrators ought to formulate policies that incorporate mental health promotion initiatives into organizational structures to enhance faculty well-being.
  6. Mindfulness-based digital therapies, stress reduction programmes, and virtual therapeutic practices have to be integrated into faculty development initiatives to enhance emotional regulation and coping skills.
  7. Educational institutions ought to create peer-support networks and collaborative digital communities that promote emotional assistance and professional engagement among educators.
  8. Regular psychological evaluations and screening procedures must be instituted to detect early indicators of stress, burnout, and emotional fatigue among faculty members.
  9. Policymakers must develop comprehensive mental health policies that prioritize prevention and intervention techniques to enhance educators' quality of life and professional efficacy.
  10. Subsequent research should incorporate bigger sample sizes and additional variables, including resilience, organizational support, job satisfaction, and technology acceptability, to enhance the comprehension of occupational stress and digital mental health effects among college educators.

## DISCUSSION

This study studied the impact of digital mental health interventions on occupational stress management in college educators and assessed their role in enhancing psychological well-being. The study's findings demonstrate that digital mental health interventions substantially alleviate occupational stress and enhance psychological outcomes for educators. The findings indicate that technology-driven mental health support systems can effectively address the emotional and occupational obstacles faced by educators. The descriptive analysis indicated that college educators exhibited moderate to high levels of engagement with digital mental health interventions, reflecting growing knowledge of and

acceptance of technology-assisted psychological support systems. This discovery indicates that educators are progressively acknowledging the significance of digital platforms, including online counseling services, teletherapy systems, mental health applications, and digital stress management programs. The growing use of these technologies can be attributed to their accessibility, adaptability, and ease of delivering psychological assistance.

The correlation study revealed a strong inverse association between digital mental health treatments and occupational stress, suggesting that greater use of digital mental health systems is associated with lower stress levels among college educators. This study corroborates previous studies that indicated the efficacy of digital therapies in alleviating psychological distress and enhancing emotional regulation among working professionals. The findings suggest that digital mental health programs promote adaptive coping mechanisms and empower educators to handle work-related stressors more efficiently. The results demonstrated a substantial, favorable correlation between digital mental health interventions and psychological well-being. This indicates that educators who actively use digital mental health services experience improved emotional stability, psychological resilience, and mental health outcomes. The availability of technology-driven therapies enables individuals to access support without geographical or social constraints, thereby enhancing emotional well-being and mental health.

The multiple regression analysis revealed that digital mental health interventions significantly predict psychological well-being in educators. The results indicate that integrating digital mental health support systems into educational settings can significantly improve teachers' emotional well-being and professional adaptation. Furthermore, the efficacy of stress management surfaced as a significant determinant of mental health outcomes, suggesting that adaptive coping methods and stress alleviation techniques are essential in enhancing educators' psychological well-being. The findings underscore the need for educational institutions to implement technology-assisted mental health initiatives and to incorporate digital mental health services into institutional policies and faculty development programs.

## CONCLUSION

The study suggests that occupational stress is a considerable issue for college educators, attributed to escalating professional obligations, academic expectations, technology adaption, and institutional demands. The results demonstrate that digital mental health interventions significantly alleviate professional stress and enhance psychological well-being in educators. Technology-assisted mental health services, including online counseling platforms, mobile mental health applications, teletherapy systems, and digital stress-management programs, offer accessible and effective psychological assistance for educators. The statistical results indicated that digital mental health interventions significantly affect

mental health outcomes and enhance emotional regulation and stress management efficacy. The research also confirms that educators who employ digital mental health offerings exhibit enhanced coping skills and superior psychological functioning.

The study underscores the need to incorporate digital mental health care systems into educational institutions to enhance teachers' emotional welfare and professional efficacy. Educational administrators and policymakers must prioritize methods for mental health promotion and provide institutional support mechanisms that facilitate the utilization of digital mental health treatments. Such initiatives may contribute to improved quality of life, enhanced professional productivity, and sustainable psychological well-being among educators. Future research may use larger sample sizes and incorporate additional variables to gain a more comprehensive understanding of digital mental health interventions and their enduring effects on professional stress management.

#### Authorship Contribution Statement

Girija C (First Author, Research Scholar, Mother Teresa Women's University, Kodaikanal, Tamil Nadu, India): Conceptualization, literature review, research design, methodology development, data collection, statistical analysis, interpretation of results, manuscript preparation, writing of original draft, and revision of the manuscript.

Dr. D. Ramani (Second Author, Professor and Research Supervisor, Department of Commerce, Mother Teresa Women's University, Kodaikanal, Tamil Nadu, India): Supervision, validation, methodological guidance, critical review of the manuscript, interpretation of findings, editing, and final approval of the manuscript for publication.

#### Ethical Statement

This study was conducted in accordance with established ethical principles and guidelines for research involving human participants. Ethical standards regarding confidentiality, anonymity, voluntary participation, privacy protection, and respondents' rights were strictly upheld throughout the study. Participants were informed about the purpose and objectives of the research before data collection. The study ensured that no participant experienced any form of physical, psychological, social, or emotional harm during the research process.

#### Informed Consent

Informed consent was obtained from all participants included in the study prior to data collection. Participants were clearly informed about the objectives of the study, the voluntary nature of participation, and the confidentiality of their responses. Participants were also assured that the collected information would be used solely for academic and research purposes.

#### Conflict of Interest Statement

The authors declare that there are no conflicts of interest regarding the publication of this manuscript. The authors confirm that no financial, personal, or professional

relationships influenced the research findings or interpretation of results.

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#### Data Availability Statement

The data supporting the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author upon reasonable request. The data are not publicly available due to privacy and confidentiality considerations relating to participant information.

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