

A STUDY ON OCCUPATIONAL STRESS AMONG COLLEGE TEACHERS IN SELF-FINANCING COLLEGE IN COIMBATORE DISTRICT

Mr. A. Sukumar¹ and Dr. M. Kanagarathinam²

ABSTRACT

The genesis of stress research was in 1914, when Walter Cannon – a noted physiologist an early pioneer of stress for the first time described body’s reaction to stress. He identified stress reaction as “fight or flight,” an involuntary response that occurs in an emergency situation in which an individual must either confront or escape from a dangerous situation. Teaching profession was once viewed as a ‘low stress occupation’ and they have been envied for tenure, light workload, flexibility and other perks such as foreign trips for study and conference. However, some recent studies suggest that college faculty is among the most stressed occupational group. The present study was conducted to explore the faculty perception towards occupational stress using established questionnaire, data collected from five departments in the private colleges. To find opinion about teaching and handling students, to find out the stress creators, to find out techniques applied by the College faculties for managing stress.

Keywords: *Occupational Stress, Stress in Academic, Managing Stress, Stress managing techniques, Dis-stress.*

INTRODUCTION:

Stress is a term commonly used to describe feelings of tensions or exhaustion usually associated with work overload or overly demanding work. Stress is natural phenomenon in an individual’s daily life. . Stress refers to the strain from the conflict between our external environment and us, leading to emotional and physical pressure. In our fast paced world, it is impossible to live without stress, whether you are a student or a working adult. There is both positive and negative stress, depending on each individual’s unique perception of the tension between the two forces. Stress bears deliberating effects on both the employees and the employer. In the workplace, it can serve to enhance an individual’s motivation, performance, satisfaction and personal achievement. In other words, stress is considered to be any pressure which exceeds the individual’s capacity to maintain physiological, psychological and/or emotional stability. Some people have high levels of tolerance for stress and thrive very well in the face of several stressors in the environment. On the other hand some individuals are not able to perform well except when subject to a level of stress that activates and energizes them to put forth their best efforts (Sekaran, 2004). This shows that individual differences may cause some to interpret these stressors as positive stress or Eustress (which stimulate them), while other experience negative stress or distress (which detracts from their efforts). These effects may be short term and diminish quickly or they may last long time (Newstrom, 2007).

This interest has reflected itself in an ever increasing research orientation into occupational stress, the impact of life events, stress with a burgeoning and desperate range of investigations being undertaken into the sources and manifestation of stress, it was felt that we should ‘step back’ and reflect on what should or needs to be done, that is to focus on priorities or issues or problem areas of importance.

¹ Mr. A. Sukumar, Ph.D Research Scholar, PG and Research Department of Commerce, Nehru Arts and Science College, Coimbatore

² Dr. M. Kanagarathinam, Head, PG and Research Department of Commerce, Nehru Arts and Science College.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To know the causes of work stress that affects faculties in the college atmosphere.
2. To workout techniques used by the College faculties to manage work stress.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study is based on primary data as well as secondary data. A total of 120 questionnaires were distributed among 120 faculties of different self-financing colleges in Coimbatore district of TamilNadu. Percentile method has been used to analyze & interpretation of data. Hendry Garratt Ranking technique was used to analyze the ranked data.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Gardner, Sallie has undergone a study Stress among Prospective Teachers on Student-teacher distress has the potential to impact on the individuals who are to become teachers, the profession and the education system. This review examines what is known of psychological distress among university students, teachers and student-teachers, the demands associated with their practical experiences and the known impact of psychological distress. A brief overview of contemporary stress management approaches is also presented. The reviewer contends that the potential problem for prospective teachers requires a holistic approach, beginning through understanding contemporary strategies available to individual university students, and preventative stress management programs provided within tertiary education, which may be made available to future student-teachers.

Sharron SK Leung has undergone Occupational stress, mental health status and stress management behaviors among secondary school teachers in Hong Kong. This study aimed to examine occupational stress and mental health among secondary school teachers in Hong Kong, and to identify the differences between those actively engaged in stress management behaviors and those who were not. Secondary teachers in Hong Kong have high occupational stress but insufficient stress coping resources. Cognitive-behavioral programs to enhance teachers' stress management resources are recommended.

Ravinder kaur has undergone a study on psycho-social problems of women teachers working in schools and colleges of Punjab. This paper is a study of the psycho-social problems of women teachers due to institution. Administrators, policymakers should help to create a work environment that conveys caring and promotes fairness. If employees feel that the work place climate supports balancing work and family responsibilities, they may experience higher levels of work/family enrichment as well as work and family satisfaction. Family support organizational policies may be designed to provide assistance to employees coping with psycho-social problems.

ANALYSIS AND RESULTS:

Table – 1

DEMOGRAPHIC FACTORS WISE CLASSIFICATION OF RESPONDENTS

| | | Count | Percent |
|----------------|---------------------|-----------|-------------|
| Age Group | Below 30 Yrs | 41 | 34.2 |
| | 31 to 40 Yrs | 55 | 45.8 |
| | Above 40 Yrs | 24 | 20.0 |
| Marital Status | Married | 71 | 59.2 |
| | Single | 49 | 40.8 |
| Educational | PG | 48 | 40.0 |

| | | Count | Percent |
|----------------|-------------------------|-----------|-------------|
| Qualification | M.Phil. | 40 | 33.3 |
| | Ph.D. | 24 | 20.0 |
| | Others | 8 | 6.7 |
| Designation | Asst. Professor | 87 | 72.5 |
| | Asso. Professor | 17 | 14.2 |
| | HoD | 11 | 9.2 |
| | Others | 5 | 4.2 |
| Experience | Upto 3 Years | 47 | 39.2 |
| | 3 to 6 Years | 44 | 36.7 |
| | Above 6 Years | 29 | 24.2 |
| Monthly Income | Below Rs.10,000 | 46 | 38.3 |
| | Rs.10,001 to Rs. 20,000 | 40 | 33.3 |
| | Rs.20,001 to Rs.30,000 | 19 | 15.8 |
| | Above Rs.30,000 | 15 | 12.5 |
| Family Size | Upto 4 Members | 69 | 57.5 |
| | 5 to 6 Members | 39 | 32.5 |
| | Above 6 Members | 12 | 10.0 |
| | Total | 120 | 100.0 |

Source: Primary Data

Interpretation:

The above table disclosed that 45.8% of respondents are in the age group of 31 to 40 years 59.2% of respondents are married, 40% of respondents are with PG as their educational qualification, 72.5% of respondents are Assistant Professors, 39.2% of respondents are earn Below Rs.10,000 as their salary and 57.5% of respondents are from the family contains upto 4 members.

Table 2:
ANALYSIS OF STRESS CREATING FACTORS

| S.No. | Factors | Agree | | Disagree | | No Response | | Total | |
|-------|--|-------|-------|----------|-------|-------------|------|-------|------|
| | | Count | % | Count | % | Count | % | Count | % |
| 1 | Job Insecurity | 97 | 80.8% | 15 | 12.5% | 8 | 6.7% | 120 | 100% |
| 2 | Poor students behavior and their negative attitude towards Study | 102 | 85% | 11 | 9.2% | 7 | 5.8% | 120 | 100% |
| 3 | Ineffective leadership at Department Level/ Management Politics | 88 | 73.3% | 27 | 22.5% | 5 | 4.2% | 120 | 100% |
| 4 | Lack of Motivation | 78 | 65% | 38 | 31.7% | 4 | 3.3% | 120 | 100% |
| 5 | Negative Attitude of Colleagues | 81 | 67.5% | 30 | 25% | 9 | 7.5% | 120 | 100% |
| 6 | Excessive Additional duty | 104 | 86.7% | 12 | 10% | 4 | 3.3% | 120 | 100% |
| 7 | Involvement in non-teaching duty | 92 | 76.7% | 22 | 18.3% | 6 | 5% | 120 | 100% |

| S.No. | Factors | Agree | | Disagree | | No Response | | Total | |
|-------|--|-------|-------|----------|-------|-------------|------|-------|------|
| | | Count | % | Count | % | Count | % | Count | % |
| 8 | Lack of Research & Personal Growth Opportunities | 71 | 59.2% | 40 | 33.3% | 9 | 7.5% | 120 | 100% |
| 9 | Work-home conflicts | 68 | 56.7% | 40 | 33.3% | 12 | 10% | 120 | 100% |

Source: Primary data

Interpretation:

From the above table we come to know that 86.7% of respondents declares that 'Excessive Additional duty' is the reason for stress, 85% of respondents says that 'Poor students behavior and their negative attitude towards Study' is the reason for stress, 80.8% of respondents agreed that 'Job Insecurity' is the reason for stress, 76.7% of respondents accepts that 'Involvement in non-teaching duty' is the reason for stress, 73.3% of respondents state that 'Ineffective leadership at Department Level/ Management Politics' is the reason for stress, 67.5% of respondents opined that 'Negative Attitude of Colleagues', 65% of respondents hold that 'Lack of Motivation' is the reason for stress, 59.2% of respondents accepts that 'Lack of Research & Personal Growth Opportunities' is the reason for stress and 56.7% of respondents are says that 'Work-home conflict' is the reason for the stress.

This to conclude that Excessive Additional duty given to staff is having greater influence on the stress.

Table – 3
TECHNIQUES ADOPTED TO MANAGE STRESS

| Techniques | Total | Percentage | Total |
|---------------------------------------|-------|------------|-------|
| Yoga and exercise | 5302 | 44.18 | V |
| Believe in actions rather than fruits | 5575 | 46.46 | II |
| Playing with children | 5528 | 46.07 | III |
| Interaction with positive Colleagues | 5107 | 42.56 | VI |
| Reading Motivational Books | 4722 | 39.35 | VII |
| Rest | 5421 | 45.18 | IV |
| Positive Attitude | 5665 | 47.21 | I |

Source: Computed Data

Table 3 indicates the stress managing techniques. From the given 7 techniques the first rank was given to 'Positive Attitude', it was followed by 'Believe in actions rather than fruits' with second rank, third and fourth ranks were shared by 'playing with children' and 'Rest' respectively, 'Yoga and exercise' gets fifth rank, sixth rank given to 'Interactive with positive colleagues' and 'Reading Motivational Books' given with seventh rank.

From the above it is concluded that Positive attitude and Believe in actions rather than fruits are the most common techniques used by the college faculties to manage stress.

FINDINGS

- From the study it is found that 45.8% of respondents are in the age group of 31 to 40 years 59.2% of respondents are married, 40% of respondents are with PG as their educational qualification, 72.5% of respondents are Assistant Professors, 39.2% of respondents are earn Below Rs.10,000 as their salary and 57.5% of respondents are from the family contains upto 4 members.
- The key factors of stress like Excessive Additional duty, Poor students behavior and their negative attitude towards study, Job insecurity, Involvement in non-teaching duty, Ineffective leadership at Department Level/ Management, Negative Attitude of colleagues, Lack of Motivation, Lack of Research & Personal Growth , Work-home conflicts has been observed.

- Positive attitude and Believe in actions rather than fruits are the most common techniques used by the college faculties to manage stress..

CONCLUSION:

Stress issue has become contemporary, being an occupational hazard in education profession, needs to be addressed without delay. Stress can make an individual productive and constructive when it is identified and well managed. In times of great stress or adversity, it's always best to keep busy, to plow anger and energy into something positive. Positive attitude and meditation will be helpful for coping the stress. Having broader perspective of life will definitely change the perception of stress. Let us hope that we will be successful in making distress into stress for our healthy lifestyle as well as organizational well being.

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