

Job Stress Among Teachers Working in B.Ed Colleges

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Abstract

Education in any society does not depend so much on any one else as on the teacher. Importance and key position of the teacher in an educational system is recognized by everyone. Swami Vivekananda has said, "The true teacher is who can immediately come down to the level of student and transfer his soul to the student's soul and understand through his mind such as teacher can really teach and none else." It is the responsibility of a teacher to impart quality education. If the teachers enjoy with their profession their work will be easier. It is come to know for every teacher should have professional satisfaction to achieve their objective and aims. At the same time teachers working conditions are important for professional satisfaction. If all working conditions are not favorable to teacher-educators, they get professional dis-satisfaction. The objective of the paper is to highlight 1) The Job-Stress among teacher-educators working in B.Ed Colleges and Coping Mechanism.

Introduction

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According to Tagore, "If the teacher does not himself possess learning, how can he impart it to others? He is like a lamp, lighting other lamps. But a lamp cannot put light in to other lamps if it does not itself burn and shed light. The teacher who merely repeats bookish knowledge mechanically, can never teach anything and can never inspire, without proper inspiration independent creative facilities can never develop".

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Teaching as Stressful Occupation

Education is an instrument to develop the cognitive qualities, tolerance and understanding of people, it should prepare future teachers to face the realities of globalization. Teachers' in today's educational system face excessive expectations and demands such as increased accountability, lack of available resources, lack of parental support and involvement, negative student attitudes, low status of the profession, and low paying salaries. As a result of these demands, many teachers experience job dissatisfaction. According to Colbert and Wolff (1992),



50% of new teachers drop out of the profession during the first five years. Teacher is characterized as a high stress occupation.

At present, due to the increasing complexities in the teaching-learning process, demanding attitude of “smart teachers” vs. traditional teachers and an increasing demand of using ICT etc. turns the role a traditional teacher to a stress-prone teacher. The objective of the paper is to highlight 1) the job-stress among teacher-educators working in B.Ed Colleges.

Teacher and Stress

Teaching like many other professions is progressively becoming a stressful occupation (Hepburn & Brown, 2001; Johnson et. al., 2005) as teachers have to shoulder multiple roles and responsibilities keeping in mind the deadlines. These roles may include as an assessor, planner, curriculum developer, information provider, role model, facilitator, and resource generator. The responsibilities may include planning lessons, effective teaching, class supervision, maintenance of discipline, evaluation, assessment and accountability of student performance or achievements, conducting co-curricular activities, etc. Despite performing these roles and responsibilities they have to be cordial with the administration, principal and colleagues on the one hand and on the other hand, they have to take due care of their family life. Keeping a balance in all these situations often leads to increase in stress thus affecting their physical and mental health.

Stress is a complex phenomenon. It is very subjective experience. What may be challenge for one will be a stressor for another. It depends largely on background experiences, temperament and environmental conditions. Stress is a part of life and is generated by constantly changing situations that a person must face. The term stress refers to an internal state, which results from frustrating or unsatisfying conditions. A certain level of stress is unavoidable. Stress is any action or situation that places special physical or psychological demands upon a person, anything that can imbalance his individual equilibrium. In today’s typical workplace, stress is seen as becoming increasingly more common.

Job stress in teaching environment centered around the idea of a perceived imbalance in the interface between an individual, the environment and other individuals. Job stress can be defined as the harmful physical and emotional responses that occur when the requirements of the job do not match the capabilities, resources, or needs of the institution. Job stress can lead to poor health and even injury. Teachers appear to be working longer hours, taking on higher level of responsibilities and exerting themselves even more strenuously to meet rising expectations about teaching performance. Competition is sharp. There is always someone else ready to “step into one’s shoes” should one be found wanting. According to Kyriacou (1987), defines “Teacher stress as the experience by a teacher of unpleasant emotions such as tension, frustration, anger and depression resulting from aspects of his work as a teacher”. According to Brog (1990), conceptualizes teacher stress as a negative and potentially harmful to teachers’ health. Teachers’ stress is based on three aspects dwelling in teacher education institutions.

1. That demands are being made on him.
2. That he is unable to meet or has difficulty in meeting these demands.
3. That failure to meet these demands threatens his mental/physical well being.

The events and situations that produce stress are called stressors. Stressors that interfere with teacher efforts can be student apathy, student disruption or indiscipline, poor student



attendance, low achievement, large number of students in a class, heavy paper or prep work, indifferent attitude of colleagues, obtrusive administrator, ineffective leadership of principals, denial of opportunities for professional development, low salary, unsatisfactory relationships with students, non involvement in decision making, accountability of student progress, fatigue, frustration, helplessness, stagnation, boredom, and loss of motivation or enthusiasm and unsupportive parents, etc. (Blase,1986; Travers & Cooper, 1996; Pithers & Sodon, 1998; Butt et al., 2005). All these stressors are various job conditions or compulsions that generally a teacher encounters while working in an institution and often they are uncertain in dealing with them. As a result, it leads to disinterest, negligence, bitterness, and absenteeism among teachers, the learning environment of the teacher gets affected and thus, prevents achievement of educational goals. Ultimately, the teacher is left with no other alternative than leaving the profession thus, creating shortage of qualified and talented teachers.

Causes of Job-stress among teachers

- In teacher training institutions where work load is the cause of the stress. The teachers find that they have to take time to off to deal with the stress, only to return to work to find that the already unmanageable workload has substantially increased in their absence, thereby increasing the source of the stress and fuelling a vicious cycle which may ultimately lead to a complete breakdown in health.
- It is found that the amount of stress and degree of job satisfaction experience by teachers directly the quality of teacher work life and performance work.
- Excessive paper work and lack of administrative support are consistently the major sources of stress, dissatisfaction and attrition.
- Role preparedness, job satisfaction, life satisfaction, illness symptoms (such as migraine and sinus headaches; allergies; colds; post nasal drip; hypertension, bladder, kidney and bowel disorders; colitis; nervous stomach; acne; and weight problems), locus of control and self esteem are the internal characteristics that tend to influence teacher stress and the way teacher handles the stress they face.
- Divergent demands and increasing complexities of work become a prominent and pervading feature of the teacher education institutions.
- A poor fit between their skills and jobs they are performing is insufficient. They are facing boredom and under utilization of their skills and their career is not progressive and has little future.
- Teachers report no clear sense of what they should do to get ahead.
- In respect to physical environment, they are exposed to high level of noise, heat, cold and light, dust and wetness.
- There is a significant difference of job stress among less and more experienced teachers.
- Teachers are facing job insecurity in the teacher education institutions. Management prefers adhoc teacher-educators rather than regular teachers. Adhoc teachers have not qualified NET examination, so they are willing to get a job only for Rs. 8000.



- Regular teachers are not being paid according to the NCTE norms. Their salaries are negotiated between the management persons. They are just drawing Rs. 15000 and lower than this. Stress is consistent from their economical point of view.
- Even P.hd qualified teachers are working in teacher training institutions only on a nominal amount suggested by administrators. There is a stagnation point in the minds of the Ph.d qualified teachers, what to do further.
- Number of increasing teacher training institutions does not prove any qualitative approach to the teachers. Their approach is commercial to a great extent that they insist their teachers to get more admissions for the institutions where they are working, is a big source of stress.
- Initiation to faculty development programmes, research work, attending seminars and conferences, there is an obstruction to pursue it, because there is no provision of duty leaves for the teachers.

Coping Mechanism

Technological advancements had brought so many revolutions all over the sphere including the education system. These revolutions had posed numerous challenges for the teaching community thus, generating lot of stress for the teachers. Teacher stress has to be seriously dealt otherwise it can have detrimental emotional, cognitive, physiological, and behavioural impact on their health, work, and personal lives further accelerating a gamut of problems in the education system. In order to prevent the teacher of adverse consequences the policy makers, stake holders, educationists, administrators, managements must find ways to lessen their stress levels such as providing congenial working environments, less work load, job securities, maximum provision of facilities, etc. They must also be familiarized with the various coping strategies to be followed whenever they experience stress like, exercise, meditation, walking, listening to music, yoga, social networking, etc.

Conclusion

There is a need to care a teacher as an individual. There must be a balance between work and family or personal life. A support network of friends and coworkers and a relaxed and positive outlook can help to reduce the effects of stressful working conditions in the teacher training institutions. We cannot eliminate stress but can try to manage or cope with it to an optimal level. To keep the teacher at bay from stress it becomes pertinent to scan out ways to minimize the stress levels. A stress free teacher can teach effectively in the class room and can provide better quality of environment to make an institution a challenging and interesting centre for the students. A teacher teaching in a teacher training institute has to prepare future teachers and if the teacher educator is stressful she/he no doubt will directly or indirectly transduce that stress to the student teachers also which can further hamper the future students who come in their contact, after placement. It is important to highlight so that imperative steps can be taken to enable these teachers to handle stress more effectively through positive coping mechanism.

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