

ORGANISATIONAL STRESS AMONG TEACHING FACULTIES OF SELF -FINANCING COLLEGES IN COIMBATORE: AN EXPLORATIVE STUDY

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Abstract: Stress has become a major concern of the modern times as it can cause harm to employee's health and performance. Teaching profession was once viewed as a 'low stress occupation' and they have been envied for light workload, flexibility etc. However, some recent studies suggest that the teaching faculty is among the most stressed occupational group in the society. The present study was conducted to explore the faculty perception towards occupational stress using structured questionnaire, data collected from various private colleges in and around Coimbatore.

Index Terms - Stress, Impact of stress and Managing Stress.

INTRODUCTION

Stress has become a major concern of the modern times as it can cause harm to employee's health and performance. In simple words, stress refers to pressure or tensions people feel in life. Stress is, therefore, a natural and unavoidable feature of human life. Stress is a body reaction to any demands or changes in its internal and external environment.

Teaching profession was once viewed as a 'low stress occupation' and they have been envied for light workload, flexibility etc. However, some recent studies suggest that the teaching faculty is among the most stressed occupational group in the society. Today, many faculties who are working in private colleges are experiencing the effects of stress on work performance usually associated with work overload or overly demanding work. In our fast paced world, it is impossible to live without stress, whether you are a student or a working adult. The effects of stress can be either positive or negative. What is perceived as positive stress by one person may be perceived as negative stress by another, since everyone perceives situations differently.

According to Barden (2001), negative stress is becoming a major illness in the work environment, and it can debilitate the faculties. The scope of this study is to examine the level of stress faced by the faculties and to provide solutions according to it. The objectives of this study are:

- i. To identify the causes of work stress that affects the faculty in the college atmosphere.
- ii. To explore impact of stress on individual's efficiency & effectiveness.
- iii. To determine the techniques used by the College teachers to manage work stress.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study is based on primary data. A total of 15 colleges in Coimbatore were taken for the study. A structured questionnaire was given to 10 respondents from each college, a total of 150 samples were taken using simple random sampling. Percentage method has been used to analyze and interpret the data.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Jeffrey M. Stanton had undergone a study on a General Measure of Work Stress. His study focused on the development and validation of scores on the Stress in General scale. Three diverse samples of workers ($n = 4,342$, $n = 572$, $n = 36$) provided psychometric and validity evidence. All evidence converged on the existence of two distinct subscales, each of which measured a different aspect of general work stress. The studies also resulted in meaningful patterns of correlations with stressor measures, a physiological measure of chronic stress (blood-pressure reactivity), general job attitude measures, and intentions to quit.

Joseph Sharithas undertook a study Occupational Stress. He focuses on the measurement, sources, and management of stress, as well as the relationship between stress and coronary heart disease. Concepts related to stress (mental load, fatigue, and arousal) are defined and differentiated.

Daniel C. Ganster and Johnhad underwent a research on Work Stress and Employee Health. They reviewed and summarized on the literature on work stress with particular emphasis on those studies that examined the effects of work characteristics on employee health. Although there is not convincing evidence that job stressors cause health effects, the indirect evidence is strongly suggestive of a work stress effect. This evidence comes from occupational studies that show differences in

health and mortality that are not easily explained by other factors and within-subject studies that demonstrate a causal effect of work experiences on physiological and emotional responses. They argue that studies relying on self-report of working conditions and outcomes, whether cross-sectional or longitudinal, are unlikely to add significantly to the accumulated evidence. Finally, they make recommendations for how organizational researchers are most likely to contribute to this knowledge.

MAJOR RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

DEMOGRAPHICAL CLASSIFICATION

	Classification	No. of respondents	Percentage
Age	Below 30	23	15.3
	31-40	76	50.7
	41-50	36	24.0
	Above 50	15	10.0
Gender	Male	64	42.7
	Women	86	57.3
Experience	0-6 years	13	8.7
	6.1-10 years	74	49.3
	10.1-15 years	55	36.7
	More than 15 years	8	5.3
Income	Below Rs.10,000	27	18.0
	Rs.10,001- Rs.15,000	26	17.3
	Rs.15001-Rs. 20000	64	42.7
	Rs.20001-Rs.25000	23	15.3
	Above Rs.25000	10	6.7
Area of Living	Urban	48	32.0
	Semi Urban	67	44.7
	Rural	35	23.3

Source: Primary Data

Majority of the respondents belongs to the age group of 31-40. More than 50% of the respondents are female. Nearly 50% of the respondents are having a major of 6.1 to 10 years of experience. 42.7 % of the respondents are drawing the salary of Rs.15,001 to Rs.20000. 44.7% of respondents are residing in Semi Urban area.

ANALYSIS OF STRESS CREATOR FACTORS

Stress Creator Factors	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly Disagree	
	No. of Resp	%	No. of Resp	%	No. of Resp	%	No. of Resp	%	No. of Resp	%
Job Insecurity	8	5.3	59	39.3	58	38.7	13	8.7	12	8
Poor students behavior and their negative attitude towards Study	6	4	14	9.3	84	56	46	30.7	0	0
Ineffective leadership at Department Level/ Management Politics	4	2.7	13	8.7	13	8.7	98	65.3	22	14.7
Lack of Motivation	0	0	80	53.3	40	26.7	30	20	0	0
Negative Attitude of Colleagues	0	0	12	8	46	30.7	34	22.7	58	38.7
Excessive Additional duty	89	59.3	23	15.3	24	16	14	9.3	0	0
Involvement in non-teaching duty	12	8	132	88	0	0	6	4	0	0
Lack of Research & Personal Growth Opportunities	41	27.3	69	46	28	18.7	12	8	0	0
Work-home conflicts	32	21.3	112	74.7	6	4	0	0	0	0
Pressure of Producing Good Students' Results	31	20.7	96	64	11	7.3	12	8	0	0
Time Pressures (too many deadlines)	86	57.3	34	22.7	23	15.3	7	4.7	0	0

Managing Faculties	0	0	21	14	122	81.3	7	4.7	0	0
Failure of Staff to perform their duties	5	3.3	31	20.7	99	66	3	2	12	8
Inadequate teaching staff	21	14	81	54	32	21.3	12	8	4	2.7
Poor Communication system	19	12.7	45	30	67	44.7	12	8	7	4.7
Lack of performance appraisal practices	21	14	74	49.3	13	8.7	14	9.3	28	18.7
Salary Inadequacy	12	8	134	89.3	3	2	1	0.7	0	0

Source: Field Data

The above table shows the stress creator factors. Majority of the respondents strongly agree that excessive additional duty, Time Pressures (too many deadlines) creates stress.

The respondents agreed that job insecurity, lack of motivation, Involvement in non-teaching duty, Lack of Research & Personal Growth Opportunities, Salary Inadequacy, Work-home conflicts, Pressure of Producing Good Students' Results, Inadequate teaching staff, Poor communication system, Lack of performance appraisal practices creates stress.

Regarding the stress creating factors respondents feel neutralized on the Poor students behavior and their negative attitude towards study, Managing Faculties, Failure of staff to perform their duties. Respondents disagree on Ineffective leadership at Department Level / Management Politics and lack of motivation which creates stress. It says that they feel motivated and they don't find any ineffective leadership.

PHYSICAL AND MENTAL IMPACT OF STRESS

Impact Factors	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	No. of Resp	%	No. of Resp	%	No. of Resp	%	No. of Resp	%	No. of Resp	%
Mood disturbance	119	79.3	23	15.3	7	4.7	1	0.7	0	0
Psychological distress	75	50	45	30	21	14	9	6	0	0
Negative about career	12	8	57	38	32	21.3	37	24.7	12	8
Lower efficiency	2	1.3	123	82	12	8	7	4.7	6	4
Anxiety	0	0	4	2.7	132	88	5	3.3	9	6
Lowered morale	12	8	109	72.7	23	15.3	6	4	0	0
Depression	26	17.3	97	64.7	23	15.3	4	2.7	0	0
Cardiovascular disease	16	10.7	88	58.7	45	30	1	0.7	0	0
Fatigue	103	68.7	24	16	23	15.3	0	0	0	0
Increased efficiency	0	0	12	8	101	67.3	24	16	13	8.7
Increased Effectiveness	0	0	2	1.3	144	96	4	2.7	0	0

Source: Field Data

Majority of respondents strongly agree that the stress impacts on Mood disturbance, Psychological distress and Fatigue. They also Agree that stress impacts them to think Negative about career, Lowered efficiency, Lowered morale, Depression, Cardiovascular disease. Other factors they feel neutralized.

TECHNIQUES ADOPTED TO MANAGE STRESS

Opinion	Number of respondents	Percentage	Ranking
Yoga and exercise	123	82.0	III
Believe in actions rather than fruits	32	21.3	X
Playing with children	21	14.0	XIII
Reading Motivational Books	12	8.0	XIV
Rest	107	71.3	V
Positive Attitude towards things	32	21.3	X
Work in group	54	36.0	VIII
Talk to someone	117	78.0	IV
Attend parties	24	16.0	XII
Take counseling	43	28.7	IX
Postponing certain tasks	26	17.3	XI
Avoid disliked tasks	57	38.0	VII
Painting	11	7.3	XV
Listening to songs	147	98.0	I
Singing	65	43.3	VI
Watching T. V	127	84.7	II
Going for shopping / parking	32	21.3	X

Source: Field Data

The above table indicates the stress managing techniques by the respondents and the ranking which they give respectively to each technique.

WEIGHTED AVERAGE METHOD FOR THE FACTORS WHICH REDUCES THE STRESS LEVEL IN WORK ENVIRONMENT

Insights	Rank (1-6)						Total
	1	2	3	4	5	6	
Better salary and other benefits payment	2	15	22	43	15	53	150
Proper recognition	2	36	33	13	45	21	150
Flexible working hours	2	5	69	23	16	35	150
Friendly Co-respondents	44	48	3	14	20	21	150
Effective training and developments	76	23	8	5	21	17	150
Chance to participate in administrative decision	24	23	15	52	33	3	150

Weighted Average method = $(X1W1 + X2W2 + X3W3 + \dots)/N$

WEIGHTED AVERAGE SCORE

Rank	Weighted Average	Attributes
I	22.50	Effective training and developments
II	20.23	Friendly Co-respondents
III	19.11	Flexible working hours
IV	14.12	Chance to participate in administrative decision
V	12.65	Proper recognition
VI	11.39	Better salary and other benefits payment

Weighted Average Calculation Result:

- From the Weighted Average method, it is clear that among the stress reducing factors such as Effective training and developments ranks the top with an average of 22.50 followed by Friendly Co-respondents weighing an average of 20.23 and Flexible working hours weighing an average of 19.11. It reveals that both the management and the respondents are in mutual understanding as the training and developments ranks high and the Friendly Co-respondents goes next. Respondent's recognition is also at high level.
- The factors like Chance to participate in administrative decision, Proper recognition and Better salary and other benefits payment rank less than the general average of 17. It envisages that the management needs concentration on recognizing people and in paying salary and can provide chances to participate in decision making to make the work life an excellence one.

CONCLUSION

Stress issue has become contemporary, being an occupational hazard in fast pacing teaching profession, needs to be addressed without delay. Hence the importance of the study of stress at various levels, among the teaching faculties is growing. 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 institutional well being. At the end, we can conclude that though there are signs of stress among the faculties and such stress is affecting their behaviors, it can be controlled & reduced effectively. This can be done by giving counseling & incorporating the suggestions given in at individual and group level

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