

A STUDY ON STRESS AMONG FACULTIES OF HIGHER EDUCATION INSTITUTES AND ITS IMPACT ON THEIR PERFORMANCE

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Abstract

In today's uncertain world, stress is inevitable. It is considered as the mental and physical state that results when the resources of the person is not sufficient to handle the demands and pressures of the current situation. Persistent stress can have detrimental effects on a person's health and also hamper his performance. Job related stress is of rising concern for the organizations and Institutions nowadays because it not just affect them economically but also leads to many employee related problems like employee turnover, absenteeism, poor performance, negative attitude towards work and other employees which ultimately hinders an organization from achieving success. Due to highly dynamic and globally competitive work environment, the tasks of faculties have become more challenging. Their task is not just limited to teaching but they are also engaged in various institution building activities. These challenges can easily turn into stressors. Studies suggest that some amount of stress is good as it increases performance but only up to a certain extent after that the performance falls down drastically. Problem arises when the stress level becomes excessive and goes beyond the bearing capacity of an individual and starts producing negative results. A highly stressed teacher can deteriorate their health, quality of life and also teaching performance. Even students show lower level of acceptance and academic performance when a teacher is highly stressed. This paper shall throw light on the factors causing stress among faculties of higher education Institutes of Bhopal and its impact on their performance. A self-designed questionnaire is used to gather data from 63 faculties from various Colleges and Universities all across Bhopal. Percentage analysis is used as a tool for data analysis and interpretation of the results. It will also suggest measures to both management as well as faculties to deal with stress effectively and remain productive.

Keywords: Faculty Stress, Stressors, Higher Education Institutes, Stress Management, Employee Performance

INTRODUCTION :

The COVID 19 pandemic has brought a paradigm shift in many spheres of life especially in the education system. The teaching and learning methodology and pedagogy of course curriculum has resulted into a new beginning not just for students but also for teachers. The traditional classroom teaching has been replaced by virtual classes and adoption of newer ways of working online. Such unprecedented changes in the working environment, global competition, privatization of Higher Education Institutes has brought about lot of challenges on its teaching fraternity which can easily turn into stressors. Stress has been defined as a feeling of emotional or physical strain. It is the body's reaction to challenges or demands that are beyond the bearing capacity of an individual. Stress can be positive which helps us remain alert, motivated and energized. Stress becomes negative when an individual faces prolonged challenges without any relief or relaxation. This can have detrimental effects on a person's health as well as reduces his performance. Continuous work place stress can cause job dissatisfaction, negative attitude of an employee towards work and other coworkers, poor performance and employee turnover.

Teachers play a very important role in shaping a child's future. Due to ever changing work environment, the role of teachers have become more strenuous. Their role is not just limited to teaching but they are also involved in various administrative activities causing lot of strain and overburden on them. A highly stressed teacher deteriorates not just his health but also teaching performance and even there is lower level of acceptance from student's side and poor academic performance when a teacher is too stressed. This

Special Issue on COVID 19

GAP INTERDISCIPLINARITIES-VOLUME - III ISSUE IV

September -November 2020

23

emphasizes the need to find out the factors causing stress among faculties so as to redress those issues and encourage practices that motivates and empowers an individual. This paper focuses on the factors causing stress among faculties of higher education Institutes, its impact on their performance and shall also suggest measure to both management and faculties to cope with stress.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

(a) Objectives of Research Study

- (i) To determine the factors causing stress among faculties of Higher Education Institutes
- (ii) To study the impact of workplace stress on faculty's performance.
- (iii) To suggest measures to both management and faculties to cope with stress.

(b) Methodology

The research that has been taken up is both descriptive as well as exploratory in nature i.e., both primary as well as secondary data is used for the research work. The data has been collected through a self-designed questionnaire from 63 faculties of Higher Education Institutes across Bhopal. Data Analysis is done using percentage analysis method.

LITERATURE REVIEW

ShrivastavaAlka andShukla Narendra (2017) concluded through the study that stress has negative impact on faculties. As number of female faculties are increasing in education sector, they have to face lot of challenges like long hours of work, involvement in non-teaching activities, negative attitude of colleagues and students etc. It is not just essential to find out the causes of stress but also remove negative element of work and encourage a healthy working environment. Effective stress coping strategies should be adopted within the workplace.

Rahooliaquat Ali, Raza Syed Ali, Arain Muhammad Waqas and Memon Muhammad (2017) observed through the research that the major factors that cause job burnout and stress among teachers of private institutes were poor relationship with colleagues, less breaks, long hours of work, harassments, poor communication, poor wage, work change, lack of organizational support and improper training.

ShrivastavaAlka (2020) studied that factors and level of occupational stress among faculties of Autonomous Colleges in Madhya Pradesh. After the research it was found that faculties experience moderate level of stress and the factor found to be highly stressful was work overload or additional responsibilities due to insufficient staff in the department/ college.

Singh Indoo (2014) assessed the level and perception of job stressors among faculties of private medical and engineering colleges and found through the research that there exist moderate level of stress and factors perceived to cause maximum stress were role conflicts, group pressures, lack of participation opportunities, tight working condition and work overload. It was recommended that these issues should be incorporated under faculty development programme.

ShrivastavaAlka (2020) studied the level of occupational stress due to change in organizational climate among faculties working in autonomous colleges in Madhya Pradesh. The new teaching and learning environment brings new challenges on teaching professionals thus the researcher tried to find out the impact of college autonomy on faculties. The research revealed that there is moderate level of stress among teachers due to organizational change. The results also revealed that there is no significant difference on the level of stress experienced between faculties of government and private autonomous colleges and between male and female faculties.

García-González, M. A., Torrano, F., & García-González, G. (2020) analysed the major stress factors female professors at online Universities face. The research revealed that out of the list of nine psychosocial risk factors female faculties at online universities are exposed to, the most important ones are mental overload, time bound tasks, lack of a schedule and emotional exhaustion. These factors are associated with usage and expansion of information and communication technology (ICT) and to the University system itself which emphasises the need to develop intervention programmes to improve the health of affected teachers and safeguard them from stress and other psychosocial risks.

Special Issue on COVID 19

GAP INTERDISCIPLINARITIES-VOLUME - III ISSUE IV

September -November 2020

Uniyal, A. K., Dixit, A. K., & Kanojia, P. (2019) analysed the factors and level of stress being experienced by faculties of Universities and colleges in Uttarakhand and also its impact. The research showed factors like work overload and role conflict are major factors causing stress among female faculties and factor like organisational politics are responsible for causing stress among faculties of both universities and colleges.

DATA ANALYSIS

Statements	Strongly Disagree (%)	Disagree (%)	Neutral (%)	Agree (%)	Strongly Agree (%)
1. I know what is expected of me at work.	1.6	1.6	1.6	28.6	66.7
2. There is extra workload/ additional responsibilities due to insufficient staff in the department/ College	7.9	7.9	12.7	31.7	39.7
3. I always get my work done before the deadline.	0	4.8	6.3	27	61.9
4. I experience difficulty in working with latest technology at my work.	23.8	17.5	22.2	19	17.5
5. There is negative attitude of colleagues and politics within the department.	25.4	11.1	17.5	15.9	30.2
6. I am not getting opportunities to utilize my training, knowledge and expertise in my role.	19	14.3	14.3	22.2	30.2
7. Students show poor behavior and negative attitude towards study.	22.2	7.9	34.9	20.6	14.3
8. My work interferes with my family demands.	31.7	19	11.1	19	19
9. There is lack of promotion/ career prospects.	9.5	6.3	19	27	38.1
10. I can communicate my grievances/ complaints to the management.	9.5	14.3	22.2	20.6	33.3

FINDINGS

- 66.7 % faculties strongly agree to the statement that they know what is expected of them at work while 28.6 % faculties have just agreed. It is very essential for the employees to know what their job roles and responsibilities are otherwise the performance will get affected. Thus, through proper job description and training, job roles of the employees should be made very clear.
- 39.7% faculties strongly agree to the statement that there is extra workload or additional responsibilities due to insufficient staff in the department/ college. Work overload can not only impact a person's potential to deliver the best but can also lead to job dissatisfaction due to excessive stress. Therefore, organisations should make sure that they have sufficient qualified staff and work is equally divided among the staff members.
- Only 61.9% faculties have strongly agreed to the statement that they get the work done before the deadline. For the remaining faculties, the issues they are facing should be enquired and solutions should be provided to them, may be they are overloaded with work or lack proper skills for doing the work.
- 22.2% faculties responded neutral to the statement that they experience difficulty in working with latest technology at work. This shows that they need training on how to use the technology for effectively teaching.
- 30.2% faculties have responded that there is negative attitude of colleagues and politics within the department. This should be seriously looked upon by the management as negative attitude between colleagues can have a bad impact on an employee's performance. It will also lead to job dissatisfaction

and employee turnover.

6. 30.2% faculties strongly agree to the statement that they are not getting opportunities to utilize their training, knowledge and expertise in their role.
7. 34.9% faculties gave neutral response to students showing negative attitude towards study. Effective teaching methods to keep students attentive should be taught through FDPs.
8. 19% faculties strongly agree to the statement that work interferes with their family demands.
9. 38.1% faculties strongly agree to the statement that there is lack of promotion or career prospects. Organization should provide proper growth opportunities to the faculties.
10. 22.2% faculties responded neutral to the statement that they can communicate their grievances and complaints to the management. An open environment where faculties can freely communicate their grievances and complaints should be encouraged.

SUGGESTIONS

1. Timely faculty development programmes incorporating issues faculties face while at work should be provided.
2. Management should take efforts in creating cohesive environment within the organization where everyone is given importance, recognized and rewarded for their efforts.
3. Proper career advancement opportunities should be provided to faculties to keep them motivated and satisfied.
4. Avoid role ambiguity by providing clear job descriptions to staffs.
5. Increased compensation and facilities according to job roles performed by faculties can have a positive impact on employees and on their performance.
6. Recreation activities and get together meetings once in a month can help in boosting morale and rejuvenate faculties.
7. Stress audit activity may be undertaken by the University management to identify the factors causing stress among faculties thereby improving the work condition.
8. Faculties must be encouraged to learn new teaching methodologies using latest technologies to enhance teaching effectiveness and meet future contingencies.
9. Faculties should not be overburdened with various other works like admission, administrative work and substitute classes as it leads to exhaustion and reduces efficiency.

CONCLUSION

Rapid change in the working environment has brought about lot of challenges on the teaching fraternity. Through the research it was found that faculties of higher education Institutes are facing moderate level of stress. Factors like role ambiguity, extra workload due to insufficient staff in the department, difficulty in working with latest technology, politics within the workplace, lack of growth opportunities and opportunities to utilize skills in their role and share complaints with management were found to be areas causing stress among faculties. To overcome these stressors organizations should provide proper HR practices that motivates and energizes the faculties to work with more efficiency. The issues faced by faculties should be discussed and incorporated in faculty development programmes. Management through their work practices should provide a sense of belongingness among employees where they would love working and deliver their best to see the organization and well as themselves grow. To improve the working condition, stress audits must be conducted to identify areas causing stress among faculties.

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Special Issue on COVID 19

GAP INTERDISCIPLINARITIES-VOLUME - III ISSUE IV

September -November 2020

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