

Work Stress of Teachers from Government Girls' Secondary Schools Karachi

Dr. Syeda Tasneem Fatima

Assistant Professor, Department of Teachers' Education (HOD) Federal Urdu University Karachi

Dr. S Khurram Khan Alwi

Assistant Professor (Visiting), Department of Teachers' Education Federal Urdu University Karachi
Gulshan-iqbal campus

Syeda Aliya Fatima

M. Phil Scholar

Abstract

Teacher is a well-known profession all over the world. But now a days crisis of quality education can be prominently seen. Among elements effecting teachers' productivity "Stress" is one of the core elements raising poor productivity by the teachers. Stress is expanding due to various issues. Although, stress is not always playing a negative role in person's productivity, as at some levels stress tends to accelerate focus of a person, which makes the productivity better. But unfortunately, in secondary school teachers are confronting some common stress generating elements all over Karachi. Those elements are not impacting their professional life positively. The purpose of this study is to determine the common stress generating elements and their impacts on teachers' productivity. Going through both qualitative by teachers interview and on the bases of interviews developed lickert scale closed ended questionnaire, distributed to 50 male and female teachers, among which 45 teachers responded. Data was analyzed by SPSS. According to the results there is a need of betterment of some policies on management grounds in order to overcome the stress generating elements.

Keywords: Secondary school teachers, stress level, stressors.

DOI: 10.7176/RHSS/9-6-01

Publication date: March 31st 2019

INTRODUCTON:

With the passing time everything is going through a change, specifically in the area of skill development the change is prominent. Advancement of technology and changing scenarios including lifestyles, human behaviors, psychological and physical health, raising diversities and very wide expansion of different fields etc. all these kinds of factors are playing a significant role in order to generate the vital changes on various grounds in the area of skill development. Although the changes are positive as well as negative, but the negativity and positivity depend on different elements such as the point of consideration or the angle of looking or foreseeing the possibilities.

Specifically, considering the field of teaching, although the teaching style differ from person to person but still some common changes are visible. This is a known fact that changes are not always easy to accept. As Ridner, S. H. (2004) aptly observed, the more profound the change, the greater the possibility of stress. Even the prediction of change also appeared as the accelerating element of stress. As this century is considered as the century of changes some have called the 20th century the Age of Anxiety, the Age of Uncertainty or Future Shock (Albrecht, 1979; Coleman, 1980). Ferguson, K., Frost, L., & Hall, D. (2012) suggested the need for developing "a clear definition and model of teacher stress" before research can be conducted meaningfully. So, for better understand of the study, familiarization with the word stress is compulsory. The word stress is defined by so many definitions "Stress" as a concept conveys with it many undertones and perceptions resulting in a lack of a constant definition. Stress has been defined in many ways, with most definitions derived from the work of Hans Selye, a pioneer in stress research. Selye defined stress as "the nonspecific response of the body to any demand made on it". Rice, V. H. (2012). Similarly, Gold, Y., & Roth, R. A. (2013), defined stress as either an external or internal response, or a combination of both. Furthermore, the manner in which an individual respond to a situation or stressor may influence the degree of stress that the individual internalizes or externalizes. Stress is seen as not only the cause and effect of external pressures on an individual; it is the response, the interpretation, and the interaction among these factors, Rowden, P., Matthews, G., Watson, B., & Biggs, H. (2011). Kyriacou, C. (2011) leads the attention towards the need for developing "a clear definition and model of teacher stress" before research can be conducted meaningfully. Some of the definitions have been developed by several researchers, coming from one-word definition like "tension" or "pressure" to medically defined statements like McNerney (1974) defined stress as the "body's physical, mental and chemical reactions to circumstances that frighten, excite, confuse, endanger or irritate." It has also been defined by Graham-Bonnalie

(1972) as "an external force that exerts undesirable and unpleasant effects on an individual." Qureshi, R Jamil, M Iftikhar, S Arif, S Lodhi, having viewed stress from an organizational setting, defined it in terms of norms, role ambiguity, role conflict and their effects on the individual. "Burnout" is alternative term that is often used to define stress in the workplace. It is imperative to note that burnout is a term that is often used to describe the effects of stress, McCormick, J., & Barnett, K. (2011)

Putting it in nut shell stress can be perceived individual's emotional, mental and physical responses to environmental scenarios. The elements generating stress are known as stressors. Moreover, stressors are defined as the "nonspecific response of the body to any demand" Wheaton, B., & Montazer, S. (2010). The interaction of an individual with the stressors negatively impact on regular personal and professional productivity of a person. While in a profession of teaching both mental and physical productivity is vital as the teacher has to cover several areas like covering all the significant aspects of the lesson, delivering of the lessons, pace creating with the students, utilizing management skills, maintaining discipline and many more; all these tasks should be done in a proper manner in order to gain effective productivity. Now for raising the level of productivity teacher must consume all of ones mental and physical energy otherwise the outcomes will be seen on a very distant point from the desired objective of teaching. So, in all this scenario if the teacher is confronting stressors of any kind which are there on continuous basis or their level is increasing day by day then the desired productivity of a teacher would become tough to achieve. As raising stress levels are one of the core causes of demotivating the person, which leads the teacher to lose one's patience more quickly as a result rapid exhaustion and lack of interest in profession will be engendered and this will obliterate all the capabilities and qualifications of the teacher. Thus, resisting the stressors and overcoming the stress of a teacher is very important in order to give a teacher proper work environment in which the teacher can consume all of one's proficiencies at maximum level.

Secondary level is very important stage for a student as it is leading to the level where they will be standing at the point of selecting their career. Students are at the part of their teenage which is a very crucial stage of life, both in psychological and physical ways, they are going through many mental and biological changes. Obviously, these changes impact each aspect of life profoundly. Education is in the list of key elements in student's life and when it comes to choosing a career student becomes more attentive towards their subjects. Now if they are not able to find a good teacher, then they may not be able to be on a proper track of choosing a career of their interest. Teachers feel pressured to perform on a daily basis as their performance directly impacts their students. (Van Der Linde, 2000). In this way the absence of quality teaching will lead the society with vacant rooms for good professionals in almost every field which will be a damaging future for the whole nation.

So, by overcoming the stressors, teachers can help the students in both ways i.e. educating and guiding them to a maximum extent. Which will allow the society to progress more efficiently and speedily.

SIGNIFICANCE

As teaching is the profession which cannot be neglected while talking about the betterment of the society, the productivity and impact of the teachers is highly concerned area in the progress of any nation. the utter attainment of skills, abilities and competencies, both mental and physical, as equipment for the individual to live in and contribute to the development of his or her society and the world at large, Gbenga, F., & Taye, O. R. (2011). The huge gap can be seen among the current teaching staff at secondary level and quality education in Karachi, and time to time expansion of this gap is the actual distress. Now while going through the list of the factors involving in the expansion of this gap somewhere work stress is among the most effective causes of poor productivity by the teachers. There are claims of stress management programs and policies, yet many reports indicate teachers are not given proper training in stress management and the term "stress" is deemed as an unspoken term on the job, Harlow, P. (2010).

The elements gathered in this research are seemingly responsible of effecting teachers in numerous ways such as bringing the moral down, raising professional apathy, minimizing physical and mental potential etc. The concern in this regard is vital in order to overcome the escalating crisis of quality teaching at secondary level. As the continuation and escalation of these crisis will have severe consequences for both students and teachers and all to gather a gap in a society will be evident with very harsh consequences.

Studying teachers' stress is a very thought-provoking due to the direct relation of teachers' stress and the crisis of quality education. The research deals with stressors effecting the productivity of the teachers and its impact on the students as well as on the society.

This research basically revolves around all the essential sections of the educational system which have different roles in either enhancing or resisting the stressors. Mostly considered sections are relative authorities and committee, management, principals, vice principals, coordinators etc. As by involving these factors in the research more accurate consequences can be obtained due to their direct involvement with the teachers. Making the hidden or obscure elements that are generating stress among the teachers will assist to enlighten the positive and effective ways to prevent stress. As causes are large in numbers due to different scenario and different teaching style of every teacher. For example, Younghusband (2003) and Guglielmi & Tatrow (1998) note

student attitudes, time management, workload, evaluation, and parent and administrative pressures as sources of stress. The relative authorities can be trained in such a way that they can set up some operative strategies in order to eliminate or at least minimize the stressors confronted by their teachers. No previous data on teachers' stress on secondary level in Karachi was found during the research so may be this work could be considered as the initiative in this regard. Nicholls, A. R., Polman, R. C., & Levy, A. R. (2012) appreciated the number of researches in this area but criticized its quality. However, research in this regard is considered to be the most profoundly studied topic in contemporary psychology McCarthy, C. J., Lambert, R. G., & Reiser, J. (2014).

OBJECTIVES

To give understanding of several stress generating elements observed by the secondary teachers in Karachi. The entanglement of stress in teaching is explained by the involvement of numerous many factors. The basic aim here is to focus on the causes of stress in teaching at a secondary level. Previously some studies have been done in which the profound and close comparison between the senior teachers and the newly entered teachers to the field was done. The basic objective of the research is to consider, analyze and understand the personal experiences of the newly entered teachers to the field along with the senior teacher at this level and then their acuity about stress in the work environment. Further to present the causes of the occurrence of the stressors and the possibly effective ways to resist and overcome these stressors. The inferences by the recognition of the stress generating elements for the teachers and the preventions by stress management has been considered here.

METHODOLOGY

The study surveyed teachers at different girls' secondary schools in Karachi. Stratified deliberate sampling technique is being used to trace teachers. Appropriate parameters are being designed such as institute, teaching positions, age, educational qualification, marital status and work experience. A total of 43 respondents taken out from 50. Total 30 of them are female and 13 of them are male. 31 of them are married and 12 are unmarried.

A survey has been done for this study. 23 job stressors are recognized through interviews and literature reviews. Results have been obtained from 43 teachers through questionnaire. Initially, questionnaire is piloted with a group of 3 employees from managing departments.

Comparing with 6 months r and one year ago, 91.6% and 97.3% of the respondents reported raise in stress levels in Table 1. The difference of ten years has also been observed here but no significant change has been seen.

In table 2 causes of work stress reported by the teachers has been presented. At secondary level teachers were confronting heavy work load and time pressure (72.09%), education reforms (73.53%) Pursuing further education (60.9%), maintaining class discipline and learning (51.6%) as the most frequent stressors. The results of Pearson Chi-square tests showed that female school teachers were more likely to get effected than male school teachers in career ups and downs, continuing their education, requirement of language proficiency, coping up with work environment and salary cut as stress triggers.

At secondary level, female teachers have higher percentage than male teachers reportedly in managing students' behavior, guidance and discipline work, coping up with work environment and salary cut downs.

NAGLECTABLE AND UNNEGLECTABLE STRESS VARIABLES

The study comprises of analyzation of neglectable and unneglectable stress variables. The questionnaire is well-designed to gain prompt and appropriate information about stress variables. According to the outcomes apparently, interpersonal work relations, issues existing between personal and professional life, unevenness in job can be considered as the neglectable stress variables. On the other hand unneglectable stress variables like workplace politics and absence of coordination from management authorities, inappropriate pay scales are playing a role of triggers for generating stressors.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on study and analyzation, majors can be taken on levels, firstly authorities should reconsider the factors triggering stress among teachers and take steps in order to minimize the stressors such as:

- heavy workload can be minimized by providing appropriate assistance
- educational reforms are needed in order to motivate their teachers for better productivity
- policies regarding the teachers who wants to pursue their education like to give them half days or other pay leaves opportunities.
- in managing student's behavior strict policies should be made by the management and management should keep an eye on the students themselves by doing this, students will be alert about the discipline in the class.
- Arranging workshops and conferences to guide the teachers on regular basis.
- Good work environment should be maintained and discriminative attitudes among staff members.

- Maintaining good pay scales also increase motivation and interest.

Secondly teachers should consider the stressors vigilantly that which of them lies in the category of neglectable elements in order to minimize the work stress impact on their productivity. And for the elements which are not neglectable try to avoid them by adjusting yourself in the circumstances. Always try to accept and remember the fact that no body is perfect even you. There is always a room for betterment and learning. So, try to consider positive surroundings.

CONCLUSION

In recent years the crisis of quality teaching is getting severe day by day, and one of the core elements impacting teachers' productivity found is work stress. That is actually collapsing the educational system. Due to this collapsing educational system, professional teachers are losing interest in their profession and are not looking forward to pursuing their career as a teacher.

At secondary level, where a teacher should play a vital role as students are in a severe need of guidance as after secondary education, their next step is to make a choice of their profession educational. now at this sensitive stage of a student unfortunately the educational system is not able to present any effective and practical majors in the regard of the betterment of quality teaching.

By the study it can be concluded that by reducing work stress on secondary school teacher's educational system would be able to increase the productivity of quality education. Selye pointed out that stress itself is not bad, that a life free from total stress can be disastrous. He suggested, however, that excessive stress must be avoided Szabo, S., Tache, Y., & Somogyi, A. (2012). So, there is an extreme need of betterment of some policies on management grounds, some changes in at academic levels are also getting mandatory in order to overcome the stress generating elements. After taking these majors a good future in educational sector can be seen.

REFERENCE

1. Albrecht, K. (1979). *Stress and the manager*. Englewood Cliffs, New Jersey: Prentice Hall.
2. Coleman, J., Butcher, J., & Carlson, R. (eds.). (1980). *Abnormal psychology and modern life*. Glenview, 111: Scott, Foresman & Co.
3. Ferguson, K., Frost, L., & Hall, D. (2012). Predicting teacher anxiety, depression, and job satisfaction. *Journal of teaching and learning*.
4. Gbenga, F., & Taye, O. R. (2011). *Phenomenal Characters of Mental States and Emerging Issues in African Philosophy of Mind*. Thought and Practice.
5. Gold, Y., & Roth, R. A. (2013). *Teachers managing stress & preventing burnout*. Routledge.
6. Graham-Bonnalie, F.E. (1972). *The doctor's guide to living with stress*. New York: Drake Publishers.
7. Guglielmi, R.S. & Tatrow, K. (1998). *Occupational Stress, Burnout, and Health in Teachers: A Methodological and Theoretical Analysis*. Review of Educational Research.
8. Harlow, P. (2010). *Stress, coping, job satisfaction, and experience in teachers* (Doctoral dissertation).
9. Job stress, workload, environment and employees turnover intentions: Destiny or choice Qureshi, R Jamil, M Iftikhar, S Arif, S Lodhi... - Archives of Sciences, 2012.
10. Kyriacou, C. (2011). Teacher stress: From prevalence to resilience. *Handbook of stress in the occupations*, 161-173.
11. McNerney, W.J. (1974). *Learning to live successfully in today's world*. Stress: Blue print for health. Chicago: Blue Cross Association.
12. McCarthy, C. J., Lambert, R. G., & Reiser, J. (2014). Vocational concerns of elementary teachers: Stress, job satisfaction, and occupational commitment. *Journal of Employment Counsel*.
13. McCormick, J., & Barnett, K. (2011). Teachers' attributions for stress and their relationships with burnout. *International journal of educational management*.
14. Ridner, S. H. (2004). Psychological distress: concept analysis. *Journal of advanced nursing*.
15. Rice, V. H. (2012). Theories of stress and its relationship to health. *Handbook of stress, coping, and health: Implications for nursing research, theory, and practice*.
16. Rowden, P., Matthews, G., Watson, B., & Biggs, H. (2011). The relative impact of work-related stress, life stress and driving environment stress on driving outcomes. *Accident Analysis & Prevention*.
17. Nicholls, A. R., Polman, R. C., & Levy, A. R. (2012). A path analysis of stress appraisals, emotions, coping, and performance satisfaction among athletes. *Psychology of sport and exercise*, A path analysis of stress appraisals, emotions, coping, and performance satisfaction among athletes. *Psychology of sport and exercise*.
18. Szabo, S., Tache, Y., & Somogyi, A. (2012). The legacy of Hans Selye and the origins of stress research: a retrospective 75 years after his landmark brief "letter" to the editor# of nature. *Stress*.
19. Van Der Linde, C. (2000). The teacher's stress and its implications for the school as an organization: how can TQM help? *Education*.

20. Wheaton, B., & Montazer, S. (2010). Stressors, stress, and distress. A handbook for the study of mental health: Social contexts, theories, and systems.
21. Younghusband, Garlin, & Church (2003). High School Teacher Stress in Newfoundland. Retrieved on June 30, 2004. Presented at the Hawaii International Conference on Education, presented January 7-10,2003.

TABLE 1: comparison between 6 months and one year teaching staff

Independent variable	6 months	1 year ago
Gender	0.76	0.67
Age	0.015	0.002
Marital status	0.168	0.425
Teaching Experience	0.143	0.095
Discipline & Guidance team	0.021	0.094
Class Teacher	0.948	0.436
Secondary school	0.002	0

TABLE 2 : causes of work stress reported by teachers

Causes of work stress	Overall frequency	%
Heavy work load & time pressure	31	72.09
Education reforms	31.62	73.53
Pursuing further education	18	60.90
Managing student's behavior learning	22	51.61
Guidance and work discipline	12.5	29.07
Coping up with work environment	13	30.23
Salary cut	11.62	27.02