

**INNOVATIVE RESEARCH ORGANISATION****International Journal of Advance Research in Education, Technology & Management***(Scholarly Peer Review Publishing System)*

Stress among higher education Teachers: A Survey

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ABSTRACT

Stress means pressure. The term “stress” is borrowed from the discipline physics. In general we can say that pressure is: pressure or tension exerted on a material object. In this era of competition everyone wants to grow professionally. Some take shortcuts, when they are succeeding in their field then they come under the condition of stress. Other cause of stress among higher education teachers is job insecurity, low salaries etc. This paper is a brief survey of stress among higher education teachers.

KEYWORDS: Stress; Teachers; Job; Management.**INTRODUCTION**

Stress means pressure. The term “stress” is borrowed from the discipline physics. In general we can say that pressure is: pressure or tension exerted on a material object. Stress is your body's way of responding to any kind of demand. It can be caused by both good and bad experiences. When people feel stressed by something going on around them, their bodies react by releasing chemicals into the blood. stress symptoms were measured by items reflecting burnout, stress- related health problems, perceived work stress, productivity, job satisfaction and consideration for job change. Teachers also reported burnout, stress- related health problems, lowered work productivity, inability to cope with work stress and job change consideration. Heavy workload was the most frequently cited reason for considering job change. Female teachers were more likely to consider job change as a result of job stress. Research- related activities were considered to be more stressful than either teaching or service. A positive perception of ability to manage work stress was negatively correlated with stress symptoms. Preventive strategies are recommended for dealing with academic stress. Further study of the role of misfit between motivational style and job demands as a factor in developing occupational stress is needed, particularly in female teachers.[1]



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Stress therefore is not only the subject of psychology, management studies, HRM, and organizational behavioral studies. Medical field also study the dynamics of stress. Research on work-related stress was conducted by the European agency for safety and Health at Work OSHA in the year 2000. The study in detail discusses on the experience of stress at work which has undesirable consequences for the health and safety of individuals and health of their organization. The study of OSHA is more general compared to study of Friedman and Rosenman 2000 who tried and discovered link between stress and coronary heart disease. The sample was small yet it was a representative one and further the study proves that middle aged men who show symptoms of stress are more likely to develop depression.

Causes of Stress

Stress is a psychological and physiological response to events that upset our personal balance. The potential causes of stress are numerous. It may be linked to the outside factors such as the state of the world, environment in which one lives or works or the family. A Study on Personality Factors Causing Stress among School Teachers irresponsible behaviour, negative attitudes or feelings or unrealistic expectation. The causes of stress are highly individual. It depends on the personality general outlook on life, problem solving abilities, and social support system. Many different things causes stress-physical to emotional. Identifying what causes stress is the first step to deal with stress.[2]

Some other causes of stress in higher education teachers are:

1. Threat
2. Fear
3. Uncertainty
4. Cognitive Dissonance
5. Frustration
6. Conflicts
7. Pressure

Stress Management

Stress has to be maintained on a proper level. There needs to be an appropriate relationship between tension and relaxation. This balance - as Looker and Gregson (1993) recommend - can be achieved in two ways: by shedding some burdens or taking new ones and by improving abilities to manage stress.[6] Jerman (2005) further suggestss that attitude must be completely different: threats should be turned into challenges.[3]



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Mentoring is an efficient strategy against stressors like role ambiguity and conflicts, work overload, promoting and awarding; therefore it should be introduced and promoted. Furthermore, Demšar and Zabukovec (2009) add that mentoring has positive effects on mentors and their self-image as well and strengthens bonds among teachers. Interestingly, Weber and Ladkin (2008) explored the importance of mentorship as adjustments to workloads among tourism and hospitality academics from around the world.[8] They examined career advancement and career barriers and found that mentoring was not identified as an important career advancement tool among respondents, nevertheless they assumed that it might be the case that respondents benefited from a mentor in a more informal manner through personal network or contacts.[3]

To manage stress is an imperative for a normal life because we live in times of stress. Stress is caused by a number of sources and we encounter them everywhere. Stress in the workplace is usually connected to stress in our private lives. That is why there has to be a holistic approach to stress management including both components from work and private life.[3]

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