

Studies on Reduction of Stress Among the Teaching Faculties

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SUMMARY

The teaching profession is one of the most impactful and rewarding careers, playing a pivotal role in shaping the minds and future of individuals. Now-a-days, the most stressful profession is undoubtedly, teaching profession. It has the unique advantages which build the society and disadvantages which are needed to be reduced. Thus, this study dealt with importance of teacher's mental health, causes for the stress and some practical techniques to reduce the stress among teaching faculties.

INTRODUCTION

The heart of teaching lies in the ability to communicate complex ideas, encourage critical thinking and support students in their personal and academic growth. Teachers are not only educators but also mentors, guides and role models who inspire curiosity and foster a love for learning. They are the central character in education, facilitators of learning and knowledge. Teacher's character, competence and their moral commitment deeply affect the students.

Today's life is full of challenges. People experience lot of stress in their life and also at work place. Kyriacou (2001) define stress as, "An unpleasant emotional state fraught with tension, frustration, anxiety and emotional exhaustion". Stress is very unpleasant state which brings lot of tension, frustration and irritation that effects on work, relationships and daily life style. The work of a teacher is a physically and mentally challenging. A teacher needs to use a lot of energy in his daily chores in the classroom coupled with his personal and family commitments. This trend which is a routine for a teacher forwards a lot of stress to the teaching professionals. It is because of the dramatic changes that have taken place in society over the last decade or two that work and life stress have become more immediate focal points of interest.

Sources of the stress are poor working conditions, lack of infrastructure, low salary, heavy work load, lack of cooperation and student's behaviour etc. Stress is a normal psychological and physical reaction to the demands of life. Excessive stress is harmful for the individual as it causes mental and physical disequilibrium and subsequently leads to physical and mental disturbance. For examples, suffer from high blood pressure, heart attack when stress is beyond control of the human beings etc. That's why it is necessary to identify causes of stress and reduce it through modifying behaviour. Stress management is a large number of techniques which can be used to help people to deal with stress. These techniques range from methods to reduce the occurrence of stress to techniques which can be used by people who feel overwhelmed by stress.

Importance of the Study:

Teaching profession has traditionally been regarded as low stress but during the past two decades the situation is somersaulted. Teaching becoming a more challenging profession worldwide according to the surveys conducted so far. Before 1970s, teaching was considered as a noble profession. However, in the recent years, researches have proved that teaching profession is one of the stressful professions. The studies on stress management techniques among teaching staff are crucial for several reasons such as:

- The studies on reduction of stress significantly improve teacher's mental health, helping them cope better with the challenges of the profession.
- Stress management techniques can help reduce feelings of frustration and exhaustion which leads to greater job satisfaction, as teachers feel more balanced and supported in their roles.
- Teachers who manage stress effectively are more likely to create a positive, productive learning environment for their students.
- Teachers are role models and how they manage stress can influence how students learn to deal with their own stress which results in healthy and positive society.
- A balanced life leads to more energy and enthusiasm, both at work and outside of it, making teachers more effective and satisfied in all areas of their lives.

- Effective stress management can help teachers stay organized, manage their time better, and remain focused on their tasks. This leads to improved productivity, both in lesson planning and in the classroom, benefiting both the teachers and their students.

Because of these reasons, understanding and implementing stress management techniques among teaching staff is very essential and can create a healthier, more supportive work environment, ensuring to inspire and educate students effectively.

Causes for Stress among Teaching Staffs:

Stress is silent killer which does not allow people to have good bond between the people and the environment. Teachers face various sources of stress that can impact their well-being and effectiveness. Some common causes of stress among teachers include:



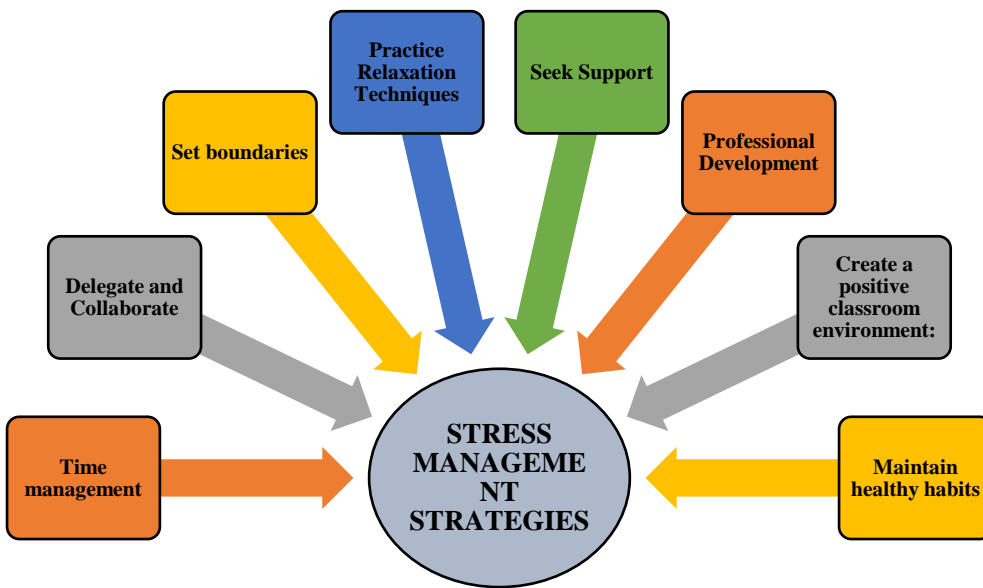
- Long hours, lesson planning, grading, and managing classroom activities can create an overwhelming workload.
- Dealing with disruptive or challenging student behaviour can be mentally exhausting and stressful.
- Insufficient teaching materials, outdated technology, or inadequate classroom resources can add pressure to teaching responsibilities.
- Balancing the expectations and demands of parents with the needs of students can create stress, especially when parents are not satisfied with their child’s progress.
- The pressure to ensure students perform well on standardized tests can create anxiety for teachers, especially when their performance is evaluated based on test results.
- Managing a large or diverse class with varying learning needs and behaviours can be challenging and stressful.
- Teachers often deal with student’s personal issues and emotional struggles, which can be emotionally draining.

- Limited support from administration, colleagues, or the education system can leave teachers feeling isolated and unsupported.
- Concerns about job stability, budget cuts, or potential layoffs can add anxiety.
- The demands of teaching, including after-school commitments and continuing education, can interfere with personal life, leading to stress and burnout.
- Teachers are expected to meet high academic standards, be mentors and contribute to extracurricular activities, which can feel overwhelming.

These stressors collectively induce dissatisfaction of job, lack of mental peace etc. So, it is important for teachers to learn how to manage and cope with them to maintain their health and job satisfaction.

RESULTS:

By creating an inclusive and nurturing environment, teachers empower their students to explore their potential, build confidence and develop essential life skills. The teaching profession is about making a difference in the lives of others, contributing to the community and helping to build a better future for generations to come. Reducing stress among teachers is essential for their well-being and effectiveness in the classroom. Here are some practical strategies:



1. Time management:

Time management is the foremost technique to reduce stress by prioritize tasks and set realistic goals. This happens by breaking tasks into smaller, manageable chunks to avoid feeling overwhelmed, in some cases use tools like planners or digital apps to stay organized.

2. Delegate and Collaborate:

It is mainly focus on sharing responsibilities with colleagues, whether it's lesson planning or classroom management. Encourage participation of colleagues in teamwork or study groups to reduce individual pressure.

3. Set boundaries:

The teachers should set clear work-life boundaries by limiting work outside of school hours. It is making time for breaks during the school day to recharge.

4. Practice Relaxation Techniques:

Practical relaxation techniques include physical and mental involvement of the faculties to reduce their stress. The following are some of the practical techniques:

4.1 Mindfulness and Meditation Sessions: Organize regular mindfulness or meditation sessions where teachers can practice breathing exercises, guided relaxation and mental focus. Even short 5-10 minutes sessions can help reduce stress and increase calmness.

4.2 Group Discussions and Peer Support Groups: Hold informal gatherings or support groups where teachers can share their challenges and stressors with colleagues. Sometimes, just talking to others who can understand and relieve a lot of stress; Peer mentoring programs where experienced teachers support newer teachers can also help ease anxiety.

4.3 Exercise and Physical Activities: Organize stress-relief activities such as yoga, stretching or aerobic exercises. Regular physical activity can reduce anxiety and improve mood. A walking group after school or during breaks can also be a great way for teachers to relax and socialize.

4.4 Art and Creative Expression: Set up art or craft sessions where teachers can engage in creative activities, such as painting, pottery or colouring. These creative outlets allow teachers to express themselves and de-stress.

4.5 Breathing and Relaxation Exercises: Teach the teachers simple breathing exercises (like deep breathing or progressive muscle relaxation) that they can do quickly in between classes or during breaks to calm their nerves.

4.6 In-School Wellness Programs: Develop in-school wellness initiatives like “wellness Wednesdays,” where teachers engage in activities like stretching, guided relaxation or have access to wellness resources. Also provide stress-relief kits in the staffroom, including items like essential oils, calming teas, and stress balls.

4.7 Workshops on Stress Management: Organize professional development workshops that focus specifically on stress management techniques, time management and healthy coping strategies. Inviting experts to conduct workshops on self-care, emotional regulation and building resilience.

4.8 Celebrating Milestones: Celebrate small victories, such as completing a challenging project or reaching a teaching milestone. This could involve a small gathering, a lunch, or a recognition program that makes teachers feel appreciated. “Teacher Appreciation Days” or “Thank You” notes from students and parents can also be uplifting.

4.9 Outdoor Activities or Field Trips: Take a field trip or outdoor excursion with teachers to allow them to step out of their regular environment and experience something refreshing and relaxing. Outdoor activities like a picnic, nature walk or hiking trip can provide teachers with a chance to decompress.

4.10 Time Management Workshops: Organize workshops or training sessions on how to balance workload, manage time effectively and set boundaries between work and personal life. Effective time management can significantly reduce work-related stress.

4.11 Quiet Rooms or Relaxation Spaces: Set up a designated quiet room or relaxation space in the school where teachers can take short breaks, meditate, or simply relax during the day. A space away from the classroom can help teachers unwind.

5. Seek Support:

It plays an important role in connection with fellow teachers, counsellors or administrators for emotional support. Don't hesitate to ask for help when you feel overwhelmed.

6. Professional Development:

Professional skill development programmes or workshops or courses on stress management and self-care. Learn new classroom management techniques to improve your teaching experience.

7. Create a positive classroom environment:

The teachers should foster a supportive and respectful atmosphere to reduce classroom tension. Also establish clear expectations and routines for students to minimize disruptions.

8. Maintain healthy habits:

Teachers should get regular physical activity, eat healthily and sleep enough to keep your body and mind in good shape. Avoid overworking yourself and listen to your body when it needs rest.

CONCLUSION:

Various departments, groups and external environment factors affect individual behaviour. Minimal level of stress is required for organizations to operate effectively. This interest has reflected itself in an ever-increasing research orientation into occupational stress, the impact of life events and range of investigations being undertaken into the sources and manifestation of stress, it was felt that we should ‘step back’ and reflect on what should or needs to be done, that is to focus on priorities or issues or problem areas of importance.

Educators should strive to foster a supportive work environment by connecting with colleagues and embracing feedback from others. To further support the journey towards a stress-free and thriving career, offer professional development workshops, courses, keynotes, and coaching services tailored to enhance teacher well-being and student success. The problems related to stress should be reduced to have a peaceful and effective mind of teachers whose characters, responsiveness, activities reflects on students who are the future of the nation.

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