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Teachers' Stress And It's Management

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Introduction

Education is the backbone of a nation and the national progress takes place through education. Since independence, India has made several attempts to bring changes in educational system. Through proper education, the achievement of economic and social development can be facilitated and expedited. Human Resource Development has a multiplier effect on the utilization of all other resources.

Teacher is the most important element in any educational program. It is the teacher who is mainly responsible for implementation of the educational process at any stage. No amount of investment in improving the physical and educational facilities can improve education unless there are adequate willing to implement the educational process in such a way that it brings about the desired educational development of the students.

For quality improvement and management of the educational institutions, teachers play a key role. At present educational institutions are not being used properly. Lack of social audit and assessment of teacher's performance make them less interested in professional growth. Lack of reward for excellent teachers also makes them uninterested. And it is creating stress among the teachers. But teachers must free from stress by understanding the causes, types and Ways of Managing Teacher Stress. Because success of educational program solely depends upon teachers.

Teachers' Stress

In common, the term "Stress" and "Strain" are used synonymously in a non-scientific manner. But what really stress refers to and what does it mean in the real sense? Derived from the Latin word "Stringere", stress was popularly used in the seventeenth century to mean hardship, strain, adversity or affliction

Stress is any demand or set of demands requiring adaptation. The word "stress" derives from the Latin stringere, "to stretch". The term implies a stretching of physical and psychological resources to meet demands placed on an organism. In eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, it was used to denote force, pressure, strain or strong effort with reference to an object or person.

Teacher stress can be defined as the experience by a teacher of unpleasant negative emotions such as anger, frustration, anxiety, depression and nervousness, resulting from some aspect of their work (Kyriacou 2000).

Some Causes of Teachers' Stress

In many ways, teachers' stress is no different to stress for anyone else. Stress can be defined as: 'The reaction people have to excessive pressures or other types of demand placed upon them.' Just like anyone else, teachers get stressed when they feel they are not coping with their workload or other pressures of the job.

Researchers have highlighted a long list of common causes of teacher stress. Turning specifically to teachers' stress, John Stone (1989) argued that many researchers attributed the major causes of stress to;

- Pupils failure to work or behave
- Poor working conditions, generally, in terms of relations with colleagues
- Workload, in terms of overload, under load, or routine work
- Poor school ethos

Preventive Measures of Stress in Teaching

There is widespread perception that teaching is a stressful job but a paucity of reliable evidence of its prevalence. However, some tentative comparisons between teaching and other professions can be made. These indicate that:

- Absenteeism and early retrials from the teaching profession can act as proxy measure of stress. However, both are under –developed sources of information.
- Teacher retrial rates have declined over the past decade in Scottish schools but this may not reflect a true demand. A study in England indicates that psychiatric is the largest single cause of teachers' early retrials.
- The study suggested that employees in Britain work on average more hours per week then workers in the rest of Europe. In addition, a higher proportion of their safety representations report that teaching is stressful, second only to the baking and finance industry.
- There are few studies, which have compared teachers' stress to that experienced by other professionals. However, two studies in Scotland indicate that teachers' level were within the norm for the Occupational Stress Index.

Although each teacher has a unique personality and therefore will find some idiosyncratic coping methods for negotiating stress, two key stress reduction strategies are recommended in current studies. First, social support appears to be one effective means of reducing stress.

Managing Teacher Stress

For nearly thirty years, interest has slowly increased among researchers to examine the phenomenon of stress in the teaching profession.

Unfortunately, it is often difficult to integrate stress management strategies into teacher preparation curricula to help future teachers mitigate these real or perceived stressors (Brown and Nagel, unpublished manuscript). This article will describe the ABCs of stress management for teachers and will include strategies that can be easily employed to lessen the impact of stress.

A is for Acknowledge: The first approach teachers may use to manage their stress is to acknowledge the role they play in exacerbating their stress. Common stressors emerge daily in the lives of teachers. There are, in the course of educators' days, week or school year, a potentially overwhelming number of stressors. Teachers may mitigate some stress by first **Acknowledging** and then targeting sources of stress that they perceive to most stressful to them. Once the situation is ameliorated, other stressors may seem more manageable and, therefore, balance will be more easily restored in the life of a teacher.

B is for Behavior Modification: The second approach that can lessen teacher stress is to use **Behavior modification** strategies that help them reach a state of homeostasis. Exercise provides multiple benefits that build a teacher's resiliency to stress. A short term effect includes the burning of stress hormones during times of stress. There appears to exist a long term effect of exercise in terms of preventing future stress episodes.

C is for Communication: The third approach, **Communication**, provides an avenue for teachers to prevent stress and, when that is impossible, minimize the impact of that stress. This communication may not necessarily be verbal on the part of the teacher. This point is critical in managing stress, particularly in the context of desired student behavior. Our body language, as teachers, is a form of communication that impacts student behavior and self-regulation.

Steps of Destressing

1. To nip the effects of stress in the bud and halt the accumulation of tension, following steps has to be followed:
2. Recognize that stress is unavoidable. Everyone needs to learn the basics of stress management, because stress will always be a part of our life.
3. Realize that one has a choice about how to react to a stressful situation. One cannot get rid of stress, but one can change the perception of it, and recondition the responses. When reacting to a stressful situation--such as when a classroom science experiment goes awry--teacher probably tense up, fly off the handle, or withdraw. But there are many other ways of reacting--one of them is staying calm and collected.
4. Listen to what body is telling. The next time a parent confronts car breaks down on the way to school, one has to ask self, "Where am I holding tension?" Whether one is tensing neck, shoulders, or stomach, identify the hot spot and consciously try to let go of the tension there.
5. Listen to how one talks to oneself. Start listening to some of the words one repeat to oneself, such as, "I can't stand cafeteria duty," "That student is driving me crazy," or "I'm never going to be able to teach math." Challenge our own assumptions and reword our self-talk to erase the self-defeating tapes one have been replaying in the mind.
6. Make a habit of relaxing is important. One probably perfected the art of stressing but haven't cultivated the skill of relaxing. If one regularly practice basic relaxation techniques to quiet our mind, will actually stay calmer under stress and avoid accumulating tension, too. Five or ten minutes a day is all it takes.
7. Remember the whole us. Any one stress-buster isn't going to be effective unless exercise regularly, eat three healthy meals a day, avoid too much caffeine, keep consumption of alcohol moderate, get

enough sleep, carve out time for leisure, and so on. Regular physical and dental checkups are important, too. If one feel they can't cope, counsellor is necessary for guidance.

Conclusion

Teacher constitutes the real dynamic force in the school and in any educational system. The energy and forceful personality of teacher has direct and indirect impact on the coming generations and it is teacher who broadens the outlook of the youth under his charge, thus demolishing the international and geographical barriers. It is said that the progress of the nation and of the mankind depends substantially on the teacher in a system of education.

Teachers have a key role in the improvement of education. Therefore, it is important that their best efforts be devoted to it. Since there is so much flexibility in the work they are required to do, and the manner in which they can do it, the contribution they make to the field will depend in part on their involvement in their work and the satisfactions they derive from it. Hence, it was decided to study the teacher stress with respect to different work values.

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