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Causes of Stress among Teachers at Secondary Level in District Attock

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Abstract

The aim of present study was to investigate the causes of stress among teachers at the secondary level in district Attock, Pakistan. Benefits of this study include that the government can make appropriate policies and administration for improving the performance of the teachers at the secondary level in district Attock. Future researchers can also find other ways to improve the capabilities of the teachers at the secondary level, and motivation level of the teachers can be increased.

Population of the study comprised of the teachers teaching at the secondary level in Punjab. The scope of the study was delimited to the government secondary schools of district Attock. Seventy two government secondary schools' teachers (36 male and 36 female) were taken randomly from the different schools (male and Female) as sample of the study. A questionnaire was developed as research instrument for the collection of information from the

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teachers. Data was then tabulated and analyzed by applying appropriate statistical tools. It was concluded that there are number of factors which were affecting the teachers' performance at secondary level i.e. extra work load, duties other than teaching, teaching different subjects to the different classes, conveyance problem and autocratic behavior of the principal.

Key Points: Stress, Occupational, Performance, Administration, Capabilities, Policies

Introduction

Manthei, R. J. (1996) states that, "there is no doubt that job related stress is rapidly becoming one of the most pressing occupational safety and health concerns in the country today".

Rubina, (2004) declares that, "Teachers play an important role in constructing the personality of their students. Schools are as important institutions as any other organization of the society. It can be reviewed as an interface, a platform where significant socialization of growing children takes place and where a sizable number of adolescent members of a society follow careers and meanings in their lives. Importance of profession is obvious however; the social and psychological conditions exert a strong influence on the levels of performance, job satisfaction and even on the mental health of teachers".

Vaghn, (1990) suggested that, "Like all other professionals, teacher's are also overwhelmed by multiple and complex challenges. They lag behind their counterparts in relations to the opportunities for self development and professional enhancement. In many parts of the world, teachers are rarely provided with the resources they need to meet the high demands and expectations placed on them. The long hours at work (as they supervise students' projects, evaluate students' work, prepare lessons and conduct the examination) coupled with pressures of their job environments eventually lead to debilitating health problems".

Hayward, (1991) stated that, "The teaching profession is one of the helping professions in which practitioners are normally committed to giving their best for the welfare of those entrusted in their care. While the commitment is laudable, the consequences can be detrimental when the job demands overshadow the individual's coping resources, as well as the job rewards; thus leaving the practitioner feeling unhappy and unable to perform well".

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Stress is basically, a word derived from the Latin word. 'Stringer"- meaning "to draw tight". The definition of stress are many and varied, ranging from simple one word statement such as tension or pressure to medical explanations for the physiological response of the human body to certain stimuli.

Stress has different meanings to different people. From a lay person's perspective, stress can variously be described as feeling tense, anxious, worried, or having the blues. Scientifically these feelings are manifestations of the stress experienced in intriguingly complex programmed response to the perceived threat that can have both positive and negative results. There is general consensus however, that stress is a physical, mental or emotional reaction resulting from an individual's response to environmental tensions, conflicts, pressures and similar stimuli. As commonly understood, stress is a pattern of disruptive, physiological and psychological reactions to events that threaten a person's ability to cope.

Review of Literature

According to Cox, 1978; Lazarus & Folkman, (1984), "The stimulus-oriented theories identify stress as an aspect of the environment (a stimulus), which causes a strain reaction in the individual exposed to the stressful stimulus. These theories view stress as a potential residing within the stimulus provided by the organism's environment and those aspects of the environment that increase demands upon or disorganize the individual impose stress him or her".

Terry, (2000) stated that, "Management is distinct process consisting of activities like planning, organizing, actuating and controlling. These activities are performed to determine and accomplish the predetermined objectives with the help of human and other resources".

Hellriegal *et al*, (1993) states that, "managers have been in existence for as long as individuals have put others in a position subordinate to them for the purpose of accomplishing predetermined goals". The books written by Sumerian Temple Priests about 5000 BC are evidence of managerial practices.

The response-oriented theories of stress consider stress to be the response of the individual or organism to the events of the environment (Balock; Canon; Duruna & Morgan, as Language in India www.languageinindia.com

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cited in Bartlett, 1998). This approach treats stress as a response, focusing on people's reactions to stressors. Although response based definition of stress refers to stimulus, which lead to the stress response as stressors, Although response-based definition of stress refers to stimulus, which leads to the stress response as stressors, they focus upon the occurrence of response as the actual stimulus itself (Selye, 1983). We see an example of this approach when people use the word *stress* to refer to their state of tension, and when someone says "I feel a lot of stress when I have to give a speech". This response has two interrelated components. The psychological component involves behaviors through patterns and emotions as when you "feel nervous". The physiological component involves heightened bodily arousal - your heart pounds, your mouth goes dry, your stomach feels tight, and you perspire. The person's psychological and physiological response to a stressor is called strain.

Stress can also be defined as, "the condition that results when person environment transaction lead the individual to perceive a discrepancy - whether real or not- between the demands of a situation and the resources of a person's biological, psychological and social systems". We can think of external events that would be likely to place demands on a person and that could lead to stress. These might include the demands of work, family, poverty or unexpected events to which a person has to adjust. We can also imagine 'internal' factors that might make a person more likely to respond in a stressful way to such events. These might include poor coping skills, less support, negative attributional styles or a number of attitudes and beliefs about one's self or the world. Psychological theories of stress has focused on the interactions between these internal and external factors, and the process of appraisal, by which the individual assess the seriousness of external events and the threat they pose as well as their own coping resources.

Stress is an unavoidable and dreaded, yet needed, part of everyday life. Although life's stressors (e.g., meeting goals, making money, and caring for others) are usually thought of as only damaging to physical and mental health, they also motivate people to live actively and productively.

Rowney and Cahoon (Cited in Rittmayer, 2001) called these stresses as emotional stresses, these stresses include: time stress, the pressure of doing something (or lots of things) before a certain time; anticipatory stress, worry and dread about impending events; situational

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stress, fear of finding one's self in a situation posing threat, loss of control, or loss of status in the eyes of others; and encounter stress, anxiety about dealing with people one finds difficult or unpleasant. A moderate level of stress is optimal.

The stress at workplace has gained much importance in the interests of stress researchers. Workplace stress can be defined as an emotional state that people experience in situations where they perceive an imbalance between the demands placed on them and their ability to meet these demands. Stress is a condition arising from the interaction of people and their jobs and characterized by changes within people that force them to deviate from normal functioning.

Stress can be broken down into a number of "facets" that represent categories of variables to be studied. The first facet is personal facet, it refers to stable characteristics that employees bring with them to the workplace e.g., demographic characteristics and personality etc. the other facet, environmental facet refers to those stimuli which are present in the environment and employees must confront with them e.g., characteristics of work performed (such as complexity) and nature of job related interpersonal relations. Next is process facet that refers to the interaction of characteristics of person and characteristics of the situation. This is the point where a person perceive work environment as stressful or not. After the environment is perceived as stressful, there may be a variety of consequences for both the individual and the organization as well. The final facet is time facet, which exhibit that the processes of individuals' perception of stressor in the environment are embedded with temporal context.

Teacher Stress

There are four major issues concerning the development of a definition of teacher stress. The first issue is whether to use the term "teacher stress" to refer to the level of demands made on the teacher, or whether the term should refer to the emotional state engendered in a person in attempting to meet such demands. A second issue is, whether stress should refer to all demands (both positive and negative) or only to a negative one. The third issue involves the fact that teachers' emotional responses to their situation very much depends on their perception of situation and their coping ability. The fourth issue concerns how best to take account of the balance between the levels of demands made on teacher, or the teachers' ability to meet such demands.

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Research Methodology

POPULATION

Population of the study was the teachers teaching at secondary level of education in Punjab.

DELIMITATION

The scope of the study was delimited to the government secondary schools of district Attock.

SAMPLE

Seventy two government secondary schools' teachers were taken randomly from the different secondary schools (Male and Female) of district Attock as sample of the study.

RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

A questionnaire was developed as research instrument for the collection of information from the teachers.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Data was collected from the teachers teaching in government secondary schools of district Attock. Analysis of the data after receiving from the teachers of secondary level discussed below;

Table 1: Teaching of different subjects to different classes causes stress to me.

Respondents	N	Mean	S D	S.E _{Mean}	Mean Diff.	T-Value
Male Teachers	36	3.03	1.194	1.09	0.27778	0.938
Female Teachers	36	2.75	1.97	1.40		

****N-Significant**

df = 70

t- value at 0.05 =2.000

Table 1 shows that the number of respondent of male teachers and female teachers is 36. The mean and variance of male teachers are 3.03 and 1.09, while at female teachers the mean and variance are 2.75 and 1.40 respectively. The computed t-statistics is 0.938, which is non-significant at 0.05 levels. So above statement is not rejected.

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Table 2: Daily teaching to 06 or 07 classes is difficult for me.

Respondents	N	Mean	S D	S.E _{Mean}	Mean Diff.	T-Value
Male Teachers	36	3.89	1.765	1.33	0.111111	0.336
Female Teachers	36	3.78	2.17	1.47		

****N-Significant** **df = 70** **t- value at 0.05 =2.000**

Table 2 shows that the number of respondent of male teachers and female teachers is 36. The mean and variance of male teachers are 3.89 and 1.33, while at female teachers the mean and variance are 3.78 and 1.47 respectively. The computed t-statistics is 0.336, which is non-significant at 0.05 levels. So above statement is not rejected.

Table 3: Copy-books checking are a great burden for me.

Respondents	N	Mean	S D	S.E _{Mean}	Mean Diff.	T-Value
Male Teachers	36	3.00	1.944	1.39	1.38889	5.374
Female Teachers	36	4.39	0.46	0.68		

**** Significant** **df = 70** **t- value at 0.05 =2.000**

Table 3 shows that the number of respondent of male teachers and female teachers is 36. The mean and variance of male teachers are 3.00 and 1.39, while at female teachers the mean and variance are 4.39 and 0.86 respectively. The computed t-statistics is 5.374, which is significant at 0.05 levels. So above statement is rejected.

Table 4: Assigning of different duties frustrated me.

Respondents	N	Mean	S D	S.E _{Mean}	Mean Diff.	T-Value
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Male Teachers	36	3.39	1.015	1.01	0.19444	0.749
Female Teachers	36	3.58	1.41	1.19		

****N-Significant** **df = 70** **t- value at 0.05 =2.000**

Table 4 shows that the number of respondent of male teachers and female teachers is 36. The mean and variance of male teachers are 3.39 and 1.01, while at female teachers the mean and variance are 3.58 and 1.19 respectively. The computed t-statistics is 0.749, which is non-significant at 0.05 levels. So above statement is not rejected.

Table 5: Conveyance problem causes stress for me.

Respondents	N	Mean	S D	S.E _{Mean}	Mean Diff.	T-Value
Male Teachers	36	3.47	1.36	1.17	0.16667	0.602
Female Teachers	36	3.64	1.4	1.18		

****N-Significant** **df = 70** **t- value at 0.05 =2.000**

Table 5 shows that the number of respondent of male teachers and female teachers is 36. The mean and variance of male teachers are 3.47 and 1.17, while at female teachers the mean and variance are 3.64 and 1.18 respectively. The computed t-statistics is 0.602, which is non-significant at 0.05 levels. So above statement is not rejected.

Table 6: Overcrowded classes frustrate me.

Respondents	N	Mean	S D	S.E _{Mean}	Mean Diff.	T-Value
Male Teachers	36	4.06	1.164	1.08	0.75000	3.916
Female Teachers	36	4.81	0.16	0.40		

**** Significant** **df = 70** **t- value at 0.05 =2.000**

Table 6 shows that the number of respondent of male teachers and female teachers is 36. The mean and variance of male teachers are 3.00 and 1.39, while at female teachers the mean

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and variance are 4.39 and 0.86 respectively. The computed t-statistics is 5.374, which is significant at 0.05 levels. So above statement is not rejected.

Table 7: Heavy workload gives teachers - no time to relax.

Respondents	N	Mean	S D	S.E _{Mean}	Mean Diff.	T-Value
Male Teachers	36	4.17	1.028	1.01	0.00000	0.000
Female Teachers	36	4.17	0.97	0.99		

****N-Significant** **df =70** **t- value at 0.05 =2.000**

Table 7 shows that the number of respondent of male teachers and female teachers is 36. The mean and variance of male teachers are 4.17 and 1.01, while at female teachers the mean and variance are 4.17 and 0.99 respectively. The computed t-statistics is 0.000, which is non-significant at 0.05 levels. So above statement is not rejected.

Table 8: Meager salary, causes stress for me

Respondents	N	Mean	S D	S.E _{Mean}	Mean Diff.	T-Value
Male Teachers	36	3.86	1.231	1.11	0.44444	1.546
Female Teachers	36	3.42	1.74	1.32		

***N-Significant** **df =70** **t- value at 0.05 =2.000**

Table 8 shows that the number of respondent of male teachers and female teachers is 36. The mean and variance of male teachers are 3.86 and 1.11, while at female teachers the mean and variance are 3.42 and 1.32 respectively. The computed t-statistics is 1.546, which is non-significant at 0.05 levels. So above statement is not rejected.

Table 9: I feel anxiety when students don't put any effort into their studies.

Respondents	N	Mean	S D	S.E _{Mean}	Mean Diff.	T-Value
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Male Teachers	36	4.31	0.879	0.94	0.36111	2.065
Female Teachers	36	4.67	0.22	0.47		

**** Significant** **df =70** **t- value at 0.05 level =2.000**

Table 9 shows that the number of respondent of male teachers and female teachers is 36. The mean and variance at male teachers are 4.31 and 0.94, while at female teachers the mean and variance are 4.67 and 0.47 respectively. The computed t-statistics is 2.065, which is significant at 0.05 levels. So above statement is rejected.

Table 10: Principal Autocratic attitude frustrate me.

Respondents	N	Mean	S D	S.E_{Mean}	Mean Diff.	T
Male Teachers	36	4.14	0.842	0.92	0.30556	1.235
Female Teachers	36	3.83	1.36	1.17		

***N-Significant** **df = 70** **t- value at 0.05 level = 2.000**

Table 10 shows that the number of respondent of male teachers and female teachers is 36. The mean and variance of male teachers are 4.14 and 0.92, while at female teachers the mean and variance are 3.83 and 1.17 respectively. The computed t-statistics is 1.235, which is non-significant at 0.05 levels. So above statement is not rejected.

Conclusion

In the light of the analysis of data and findings of the study following conclusions were drawn;

1. It is concluded from the results that teaching of different subjects to the different classes was the cause of stress for the teachers which affect efficiency of the teachers.
2. Results of the study showed that teaching six to seven classes a day was difficult task which also affected the performance of the teachers.
3. Results showed that assigning different duties to the teachers other than teaching also have effect on the performance of the teachers.

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4. According to the results, conveyance was another cause of stress for the teachers.
5. It was concluded that extra workload was also a cause of stress.
6. Results showed that meager salary was becoming the cause of stress for the teachers.
7. Autocratic behavior of the principal was the cause of stress for the teachers.

Recommendations

Following recommendations are made from the study;

1. It is recommended that teachers should be given one or at least two subjects for teaching into the class.
2. It is suggested that teachers should be allocated maximum 4 to 5 periods per day.
3. It is recommended that teachers should be given balance activities to perform so that he may perform well in teaching also.
4. Teachers should be given facility of conveyance as it is possible for the school administration or government as well.
5. Salary of the teachers should be maintained according to his status so that he may live into the society with dignity and honour.
6. Principal should have good behavior with the teachers so that they may share the problems faced by them and related to the students also.

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