A STUDY ON JOB STRESS AMONG TEACHERS IN AUTONOMOUS COLLEGES AFFILIATED TO MADURAI KAMARAJ UNIVERSITY

SYNOPSIS

INTRODUCTION

In the past, teaching was mere preparing lessons, lecturing in the classes and evaluating the students. But teaching includes many aspects apart from the core activities, especially in higher studies. The ‘autonomy’ given to the colleges provides freedom with more responsibilities on the teachers. The heart of an autonomous college should be an internal examination system, grading system, framing the course, committed to excellence in teaching and mutual trust among teachers and between students and teachers. Since the colleges have autonomy, the functions under autonomy have increased to a large extent.

In this connection, the system for record-keeping need to be maintained by the teachers. The records relating to admission applications, admission list, attendance records, course registration records, autonomous assessment-records, final examination records, pass/fail statements, minutes of various autonomy bodies such as academic council, board of studies, senate, college examination committee, awards committee and other committees for liaison and communication with the university have to be maintained. Apart from this, the colleges have to go for National Academic Accreditation, ISO and Academic excellence. These imply more clerical workload on the teachers, in addition to their regular teaching work, which may lead to psycho-social
problems. These problems create stress and ultimately affect the performance of the teachers.

NEED FOR THE STUDY

Indian higher education is facing several challenges and the situation is desperate. The college autonomy was introduced to bring about academic excellence. But the total success of the autonomy rests on the involvement of teachers, which depends upon their attitude to autonomy. When the teachers are stressed because of more work, the advantages of academic freedom get easily reduced. Hence the present study makes an attempt to investigate how the job stress affects the college teachers in autonomous colleges.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Recently, India has witnessed turmoil in the education sector with ‘All India Education Bandh’ called by the Federation of Central Universities, Teachers Associations and College Teachers Organisations and school teachers organisations. Teachers struck work on August 13, 2002. The issues involved in the teachers agitation were sustained economy, maintenance of academic standards, greater availability and accessibility to deprived students. These are fundamental to the continued health of the higher education system of the country.¹

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The era of downsizing has resulted in a few forward thinking, cost-effective organizations but the accompanying work place upheaval has had unpleasant side effects. Heavy workloads, constant fear of job insecurity, the departure of co-worker and the conflicting demands of work and family have turned many downsized operations into modern day sweat shops. Stress and its manifestation include low morale, high turnover, burnout, excessive absenteeism, violence, substance abuse and hypertension. Teachers were reported to be an occupational group with psychiatric morbidity levels that ‘should give some cause for concern’. Unless the job stress among the teachers is reduced, it affects the production of quality student and also the establishment of academic excellence. Therefore, an indepth investigation on job stress among the college teachers especially in autonomous colleges is undertaken in the study.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The specific objectives of the present study are presented below:

1. To present the profile of the College teachers along with the social support received by them.

2. To identify and assess the level of job stress among the College teachers.

3. To measure the job satisfaction levels among the College teachers.

4. To examine the job stress and its correlates and their impact on job performance.
5. To analyse the discriminant variables among stressful and stressless groups of teachers and

6. To suggest remedial measures for job stress, in autonomous colleges.

**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

For this study, expost-facto research design has been followed. Singh\(^2\) defined expost-facto research as a design that draws the influences regarding the relationship between variables on the basis of such independent variables whose manifestations have already occurred. The researcher has no control over the independent variables because they occurred much prior to their producing effort.

**LOCATE OF RESEARCH**

While studying the job stress among college teachers, it is imperative to select the college teachers in autonomous colleges since the autonomy at colleges is granted for the purpose of academic excellence and also to serve as future models. Hence, it was decided to select both the college teachers working under regular Government aid as well as self-financing posts in autonomous colleges affiliated to Madurai Kamaraj University.

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SAMPLING PROCEDURE

In the present study, ten autonomous colleges (science and arts) affiliated to Madurai Kamaraj University have been purposively selected. The colleges are The American College, Fatima College, Lady Doak College, Thiagarajar Arts College, Arul Anandar College, Sri Meenakshi College, Vivekanantha College, Ayya Nadar Janakiammal College, S.F.R. College and Madura College. The teachers working under regular Government aid and self-financing have been included for the study. The total population of the study came to 1258. Out of the total population, 50 per cent of the teachers have been selected as the sample for the present study. So the sample size came to 629. This sample size have been distributed to all 10 colleges at proportionately. In each colleges, the samples are selected at random. Out of the 629 teachers, only 64.71 per cent properly responded to the mailed questionnaire within a stipulated period. The total sample size included for the present study is confined to only 407 teachers. Hence the applied sampling technique is proportionate random sampling.

Framework of Analysis

The following tools have been used in the study:

1. T-Test
2. Oneway Analysis of Variance
3. Factor Analysis
4. Multiple Regression
5. Discriminant Analysis (A Two-Group Model)
FINDINGS

The important social support for the teachers, as revealed by factor analysis are support for emotional exhaustion, support from supervisor, support from co-worker, support from administration, personal accomplishment, support from family and depersonalization. The first two important social support factors are support for emotional exhaustion and support from supervisor. The important variables in emotional exhaustion are emotionally drained by work and the feeling of used up at the end of the working day. In the case of support from co-workers, the first two important variables are reliable co-workers and their willingness to listen to the problems of others.

The job stress among the teachers is divided into ten important dimensions namely self-role distance, role stagnation, role ambiguity, role conflict, role overload, role erosion, lack of group cohesiveness and supervisory support, personal/resource inadequacy, constraint to accept change and inadequacy of role authority. The first two important dimensions of job stress are self-role distance and role stagnation since they consist of eight and seven variables with higher eigen values respectively.

Among the male teachers, the important job stress creating factors are self role distance, lack of group cohesiveness and supervisory support and role stagnation. Among the female teachers, these are role overload, self-role distance and inadequacy of role authority. Regarding the perception on various dimensions of job stress, the significant differences among the male and female teachers are identified in the perception on self-role distance, role stagnation, role over load, role erosion, lack of
group cohesiveness and supervisory support, constraint to accept change and inadequacy of role authority.

Among the aided teachers, the important job stress factors are inadequacy of role authority, self-role distance and constraint to accept change, whereas among the self-financing teachers, these are constraint to accept change, self role distance and role overload. In total, job stress among the self-financing teachers is more than the job stress among aided staff. The significant difference between the aided and self-financing teachers are identified in different dimensions of job stress like self-role distance, role ambiguity, role conflict, role overload, each of group cohesiveness and supervisory support, constraint to accept change and adequacy of role authority.

Among the teachers, the significantly associating profile variables with the job stress index are age, educational qualification, department, nature of placement, category of placement, lecture hours, number of subjects handled, number of earning members per family, personal income, family income and distance travelled to reach the institution. Among the female teachers, the significantly associating profile variables with the job stress are educational qualification, marital status, department, nature of placement, category of placement, lecture hours, number of subjects handled, family size, number of earning members per family, spouse education, personal income, family income and distance travelled to reach the institution. The significantly associating organisation variables with their job stress among the male and female staff are types of management and location of the institution.
The important work stresses revealed by the factor analysis are teaching, examination work, administration and committee work. The most important work stressors are teaching and examination work. The significant difference between the male and female teachers are seen in their perception on the work stress factor namely examination work. The female teachers found examination work as less stressful than their male counterparts.

The important factors arrived at from the 25 variables in job satisfaction by factor analysis are satisfaction with regard to work, pay, supervisor, co-worker and promotion. The most important factors in job satisfaction are work and pay since the respective eigen values are high. The important variables in work are job description and work load whereas the important variables in pay are the salary and fringe benefits. Among the men, the satisfied factor is only pay whereas among the females it is co-workers and promotion. Regarding job satisfaction, the significant difference between male and female teachers is identified in the case of attitude towards co-workers. The female teachers are satisfied with their co-workers whereas the male teachers are only moderately satisfied.

The included sixteen variables in job performance are classified as into student orientation, research and academic factors by factor analysis. The most important factor in job performance is student orientation since the respective eigen value is high. The important variables in the student orientation factor are frequency of placement arranged, frequency of international tie up organised and frequency of class discipline. Among the
male teachers, it is ‘research’ whereas among the female teachers, it is ‘student orientation’ and academics. Regarding the perception on job performance, the significant differences between the male and female teachers are identified in the case of student orientation, research and academics since the respective ‘t’ statistics are significant at five per cent level. The significant profile variables regarding the perception on research performance are, age, educational qualification, department, category of placement, working hours, number of subjects handled, personal income, family income and distance travelled to reach the institution. Regarding the perception on academic performance, these profile variables are category of placement, working hours, number of subjects handled, personal income and distance travelled to reach the institution.

The significantly influencing social supports on job stress among the male teachers are support for emotional exhaustion, support from administration and personal accomplishment whereas among the female teachers, these factors are support for emotional exhaustion, support from superior, support from co-workers and support from family.

The significantly influencing profile variables on job stress among the male employees are age, designation, nature of placement, category of placement, teaching experience, working hours, number of earning members per family and personal income. Among the female teachers, these profile variables are marital status, designation, category of placement, working hours, number of earning members per family, personal income and family income. Among the male teachers, the significantly
influencing organisation variables on job stress are type of management, number of staff and period of existence of the institution, whereas among the female teachers, it is only type of management.

The significant factors in job stress influencing job satisfaction among the male teachers are role stagnation, role conflict and personal/resource inadequacy whereas among the female teachers, these factors are role conflict, role overload, and lack of group cohesiveness and supervisory support.

The significantly influencing job satisfaction factors on job stress among the male teachers are satisfaction with work and pay whereas among females these factors are satisfaction with work, supervisors and co-workers.

The significant factors in job stress influencing job stress index among the male teachers are self-role distance, role conflict, lack of group cohesiveness and supervisory support and personal/resource inadequacy. Among the female teachers, these job stress factors are role ambiguity, role conflict, role overload and lack of group cohesiveness and supervisory support.

The significant mean differences among the stressful and the stressless groups of teachers are identified in the job stress factors namely self-role distance, role stagnation, role ambiguity, role conflict, role overload, lack of group cohesiveness and supervisory support and inadequacy of role authority. The important discriminant factors among the two groups are self-role distance, role conflict and role overload.
The significant mean differences among the aided and self-financing teachers are identified in more job stress dimensions namely self-role distance, role ambiguity, role conflict, role overload, lack of group cohesiveness and supervisory support, constraint to accept change and inadequacy of authority. The important discriminant factors among the above said groups of teachers are role overload and role conflict.

The important consequences of job stress on physical health among the males are diabetics and loss of memory whereas among the females, these are diabetics and blood pressure. Regarding the perception on the physical health caused by job stress, the significant difference between male and female teachers are identified in the perception of the diseases namely neck pain, back pain and skin problem.

The important measures identified by the male teachers to reduce their job stress are inter-personal relationships, good organisational climate and frequent get-together whereas among the female teachers, these measures are prayer, good organisational climate and meditation. Regarding the perception on the measures to reduce job stress, the significant differences among male and female teachers are identified in case of meditation, prayer, walking regularly and frequent get-together.

**Conclusion**

The study reveals that most of the teachers at autonomous colleges experience medium level of job stress. The important job stress dimensions among the males are
self-role distance, lack of group cohesiveness and role stagnation whereas among the females, these are role overload and inadequacy of role authority. The job stress among the self-financing teachers is identified to be more than their counterparts in Government colleges. Higher job stress in caused by role overload, role conflict and role ambiguity. The important work stressors in the job are committee work and administration work. Majority of the teachers experience medium to low level of job stress because of poor pay and more work load in autonomous colleges. The consistent and medium job stress influences job behaviour, job attitude, physical as well as mental health. Poor organisational climate, poor inter personal relationships, work overload, role ambiguity and self-role distance have been found as the stress producing factors.

On the basis of these findings, it is concluded that there is a need to eliminate all dimensions of job stress one by one since stress has its own impact on job satisfaction, job performance, and physical and mental health of the teachers. If the job stress is minimized, excellence can be achieved with in a short span of time.

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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the thesis entitled “A STUDY ON JOB STRESS AMONG TEACHERS