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Stress Management for Teachers

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INTRODUCTION

“By education i mean all sound drawing out of the best in child and man – body, mind, and spirit --- M.K. Gandhi

Education plays a key role in human development. It is an instrument of social change. In education process, the school is an agency of education. The teacher plays a very important role in the social reconstruction and the transmission of knowledge and all-round development of his students. The teachers should learn continuously and update their knowledge. The future of any nation will be shaped in class rooms. The quality of nation depends on the quality of teaching in class rooms. The quality of teaching depends on the quality of teachers. Teaching profession is considered as noble profession amongst all professions. We cannot expect the quality of teaching from stressful teachers. The main cause of teachers stress is dealing with students in daily life.

Concept of Stress

The concept of stress was first introduced in the life sciences by Hans Selye in 1936. It is the concept borrowed from the natural sciences, derived from Latin word “stringer”. Stress is a state of imbalance between demands made on individuals from outside sources and their capabilities to cope with stressors. Stress is evitable. Distress may be prevented or can be effectively controlled.

Definition of Stress

“Stress as a condition or feeling experienced when a person perceives that demands exceed the personal and social resources the individual is able to mobilize” --- **Richard S. Lazarus**

Types of Stress

There are two kinds of stress namely eustress and distress. Eustress is helpful to achieve the goals and creates motivation in high. When the goal is achieved the stress disappears. So eustress is considered as positive stress. Distress is the feeling of frustration and helplessness to achieve the goals. In this condition, success is seen as impossible. So this distress considered as negative stress.

Stressors

The sources of stress are called stressors. The four basic sources of stress are categorized into the environmental stressors (e.g. weather, pollution, and traffic), social stressors (e.g. divorce, financial problems, and interviews, loss of loved one, co-parenting, and relations with neighbourhoods), physiological stressors (e.g. poor nutrition, aging, lack of exercise, sleep disturbances) and psychological stressors (e.g. phobias, compulsive behaviours, eating disorders, lack of mental health).

Medical professionals call the body’s reaction to stress as General Adaptation Syndrome (GAS). Hans Selye discovered that tissue damage is a nonspecific response to virtually all noxious stimuli. This phenomenon called by him as General Adaptation Syndrome (GAS). The GAS model represented the physiological approach to stress. The three stages of ‘GAS’ are an alarm, resistance, and exhaustion.

Stage I: Alarm Reaction

The alarm reaction is the immediate reaction to stressors. This is the “Fight or Flight” response that prepares the body for immediate action.

Stage II: Adaptation Reaction

This stage is common and not necessarily harmful, but must include periods of relaxation and rest to counter balance the stress response. Fatigue, concentration lapses, irritability and lethargy result as the stress turns negative.

Stage III: Exhaustion Reaction

In this stage, the stress is chronic and severe. In this stage emotional, physical and mental resources suffer heavily. The prolonged physical stress causes death.

CAUSES OF TEACHERS STRESS

Stress appears at every level and in every profession. There is no exception for the teaching profession. The school is a major source of stress in the lives of teachers. The major causes of teacher stress categorized into academic, administrative, govt. policies, personal problems, and time management.

1. Academic Stressors

- (a) **Work Load:** It refers to a preparation of record work, lesson plans, and class teacher responsibility, extra classes during holidays, remedial classes for slow learners and other working responsibilities are the causes of stress.
- (b) **Student's Behaviour:** It refers to students behavioural attitude, respect towards teachers, class room discipline, students interests, lethargic of students, no seriousness at studies, lack of values in students, negligence, maintenance of class room teaching, use of teaching aids and use of technology in teaching are the causes of stress.
- (c) **Qualitative and Quantitative Result:** The authorities give the target to teachers to produce qualitative and quantitative result irrespective of the quality of the knowledge of the students. In the process of achievement of the qualitative and quantitative result in the external and internal examinations, the teachers lead the stressful life.
- (d) **Updating the Knowledge:** The teachers learn continuously and the teachers should update their knowledge due to professional competency. Without the updating the knowledge, the teachers are unable to achieve their goal. In the process of updating knowledge the teachers in stress.

2. Administrative Stressors

- (a) **Organisational Problems:** It refers to poor administration, relation with colleagues, relation with higher officials, maintaining the values, participation in decision making, lack of providing the resources, lack of appreciation towards innovative work, the attitude of authorities towards teachers are causes of stress.
 - (b) **Non-academic Responsibilities:** The teacher plays an important role in academic responsibilities as well as in administrative responsibilities. The teachers are responsible some other responsibilities allotted by authorities other than academic like timetable preparation, conduction of co-curricular activities, examinations work related to invigilation, marks upload and analysis of students, admission of students, various club activities, conduction of programmes, and celebration of important days etc are the causes of stress.
3. **Financial Sources of Stress:** The teachers are doing more work and getting less salary as well as less increment. Due to this, their demands are not fulfilled in their personal lives. Financial problems may be considered as a major source of stress.
 4. **Personal Problems:** The teacher has no exception for personal problems. The personal problems like health problems, relation with colleagues, relatives, and friends, lack of values etc are the causes of stress.
 5. **Environmental Stressors:** It refers school environment, family, society, pollution, traffic, weather, safety, and security of family members, crime causes to teachers stress
 6. **Social stressors:** It refers to socialization, demands of the different social rules, , relation with neighbours, social status and lack of values in society, competition with new comers in the profession, professional growth, devotion to work, making decisions, parent teacher meetings and family problems are caused to teacher stress.
 7. **Physiological Stressors:** It refers to job dissatisfaction, anger, frustration, helplessness are caused to teachers stress.
 8. **Psychological Stressors:** It refers phobias, compulsive behaviours, adjustment problems, conflicts, pressure, attitude relations, mental illness, interests, ego and unhealthy life style causes to teachers stress.
 9. **Lack of Time Management:** Due to more work load in school, the teachers has an imbalance between professional work and personal work. The teachers are unable to manage time due to more work. The teachers have more professional work compare to personal works. Almost they are unable to complete in time their personal works because the teachers are busy with school works after completion of school hours. Lack of time management skill causes to teachers stress.

- 10. Government Policies:** Government policies also causes to teachers stress. Frequent changes in curriculum, the scheme of examination and educational policies cause to teacher stress. Responsibilities during elections, responsibilities during population census and involvement of the teachers promoting the programmes like swatch Bharat, digital India, and less recruitment of teachers etc. are causes to teacher stress.

TECHNIQUES FOR TEACHERS TO REDUCE STRESS MANAGEMENT

The teacher's stress is a negative impact on the teaching-learning process. Long term stress on teachers destroys the all-round development of the students. Therefore the teachers adopt the skills to manage the stress by using different techniques.

- 1. Develop a Positive Attitude:** The positive attitude creates high level energy and motivation in any situation. Develop a positive attitude towards relatives, friends, colleagues, and students.
- 2. Keep away the conflicts:** The teachers avoid gossips in the school environment. To avoid conflicts maintain a good relation with others, control emotions, keep away from the people who have the habit of arguments.
- 3. The balance between Professional and Personal Work:** now a days there is no boundary between professional work and personal work. The teachers' separates the work time from personal time.
- 4. Self-discipline:** self-discipline is a major factor to reduce stress. By maintaining self-discipline, every teacher will be moral to others.
- 5. Time Management:** Time pressure and work overload are always very high in the teaching profession. Prioritization of work helps to teachers to organize time effectively. The workload will be given to the teachers depends on their efficiency.
- 6. Sufficient diet and Enough Sleep:** By maintaining diet balance and enough sleep the teachers perform at their best.
- 7. Relaxation Techniques:** Relaxation is a stress reliever but also increases the quality of work of the teachers. Relaxation techniques refer to listening music, reading, dancing, playing games, chatting, gardening etc. are reduces the stress.
- 8. Regular Exercise:** Exercise is a great technique to reduce stress. Aerobic or cardiovascular exercise is a great form of exercise to feel good and to attain good physical health.
- 9. Meditation:** Meditation helps to reduce the stress and attain a good physical mental health as well as mental health.
- 10. Yoga:** Now a day's yoga plays a key role in the life of human beings. The Govt. of India also gave high priority to yoga. Yoga helps us psychological and physical well-being.
- 11. Increasing of Employment:** The Government should recruit the teachers regularly according to vacancy position. Hence the involvement of employees increased to share the responsibilities in school works.
- 12. Wellness Programmes:** school will conduct wellness programmes to reduce the teacher's stress.
- 13. Stress Management through Promotion of Mental Health:** The teachers who are mentally healthy, they are able to manage stress. So, each and every teacher should be mentally well-being.
- 14. Enjoy the Teaching:** The stress in little amount is beneficial to get quality of work. The teachers enjoy the teaching, leading a happy life without tensions and setting goals in reality.

Teacher stress is a special type of job stress. Teaching profession considered as psychologically stressful occupation. Stress among teachers arises from an imbalance between resources in their institutions and demands. Stress related to mental health problems ranging from depression, anxiety, sleep disorders and suicidal tendencies. To reduce the stress on teachers the government as well as school authorities conduct stress management programmes and awareness programmes like yoga, meditation, exercise, games etc. The future of the nation depends on the quality of the students. The quality and all-round development of the students depends on the quality of teachers who are free from stress. India is a developing country, but when the teachers free from stress, India will become developed country very soon.

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