

INFLUENCE OF JOB STRESS ON COLLEGE TEACHER'S WORK PERFORMANCE

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Abstract

Many people think of stress as a simple problem. In reality however, stress is complex and often misunderstood. We all know that stress is the body's reaction to any demand on it. Perceptions of events, whether positive or negative, activate stress. It is, therefore, a highly individual affair. What is stressful to 'X' may not be so to another. But it is fairly easy to conclude that everyone lives under a certain amount of stress. In fact, the only people without stress are dead. At the same time it is certainly wrong to conclude that stress is always bad. Mild stress may improve the productivity. It may force people to focus more sharply on the problem and produce solutions. But if stress is severe and persist for long periods of time, it can be harmful. Stress can be disruptive to an individual as any accident.

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Introduction

Stress may be understood as a state of tension experienced by individuals facing extraordinary demands, constraints or opportunities.

Stress Defined as "Stress is an adaptive response to an external situation that results in physical, psychological and behavioral deviations for organizational participants." "Stress is a person's adaptive response to a stimulus that places excessive psychological or physical demands on that person"

Two Faces of Stress

There are actually two faces of stress, as depicted through figure:

- Constructive Stress (Eustress)
- Destructive Stress (Distress)

Constructive Stress (Eustress) acts in a positive manner for the individual and the organization, e.g., winning a contest, falling in love. Eustress is the pleasurable stress that accompanies positive events.

Destructive Stress (Distress) is not healthy for individual and organization. Distress would indicate effects that are out of balance or outside the tolerance limits. Distress is the unpleasant stress that accompanies negative events.

Review of Literature

African American college students and stress: School Racial composition self-Esteem and social support (source: college student journal, v41 p823-830 Dec. 2007)

College students are a very vulnerable group to experience stress, the latter of which is related to a variety of outcomes, such as health and academic performance. However, there is a dearth of research examining African American college students and stress. We first examined the relationship between self students stress using the students stress survey. A non-probability sample (N=344) of predominately African American students was collected at a Historically Black college & university(HBCU) while 165 students compromised the non-probability sample of white students from a predominately white institution (PWI).the top five reported sources of stress were :Death of family member (interpersonal stress) 82%, low grade(academic stress) 69%, time management (academic stress) 61%, boy friend/girlfriend problems (interpersonal stress) 57%, and missed classes (academic stress) 55%. In addition significant creations between self-esteem, social support and stress for all students except African American at PWI's were found. The study points out the needs for colleges and universities to develop stress intervention programs that address stress specifically based on race and school racial composition.

An Assessment of stress experienced by students in a prepharmacy curriculum (source: journal of instructional psychology, v 35 p 17-23 Mar 2008)

This study evaluated stress levels experienced by students in a pre-pharmacy curriculum. A survey was used to evaluate perceived levels of stress, factors that contribute to stress, and mechanisms used to cope with stress. Participants were first year students enrolled in a cooperative pharmacy program. Data were collected using an individual interview that consisted of both a demographic and stress questionnaire. The questionnaire includes items regarding perceived stress levels and methods used to reduce stress, factors that contribute to stress and levels of support from family, friends and faculty. Students rated stress to be average or above average; yet only 60% reported using some form of active approach to stress reduction. In addition 50% reported no awareness of campus resources to help reduce stress levels. Students may benefit from programs that teach coping strategies.

Perceived Stress by Students in a Pharmacy Curriculum (Source: Education, v129 p 139-146 Feb 2008)

This study evaluated stress levels experienced by students in a pharmacy curriculum. A survey was used to evaluate perceived levels of stress, factors that contribute to stress, and mechanism used to cope with stress. Participants were first, second, and third year students enrolled in pharmacy school. Data were collected using an individual interview that consisted of both a demographic and stress questionnaire. The

questionnaire included items to measure perceived stress levels and methods used to reduce stress, factor that contribute to stress, and levels of support from family, friends, and faculty. Students rated stress to be average or above average and 70.5% reported using some form of active approach to stress reduction. However, the remaining reported no awareness of campus resources to help manage stress levels and many students offered only passive coping strategies, despite the fact that these students had two to four years of academic experience. Findings demonstrate that students may benefit from programs that teach effective coping strategies.

Relationship among stress coping, secure attachment, and the trait of resilience among Taiwanese College Students (Sources: College Students Journal, v42 p312-325 Jun 2008)

College students often have stressful lives, yet some college students appear adapt better than their peers in similar situations. Active coping appears to be a vital factor that contributes to a successful adaptation. This study explored relative effectiveness among stress, secure attachment, and the trait of resilience in predicting active coping in high, general, and low stress situations. General stress situations are referred to as a combination of high and low stress situation. Multiple regressions were applied to explore effective predictor of effective coping. Whereas stress was not significantly correlated with active coping, the trait of resilience was the most effective predictors of active coping in high, general, and low stress situations. Secure attachment was an affective predictor of acting coping in general situations but not in high or low stressful situations. Two-way ANOVA was applied to detect interaction effect of stress and the trait of resilience on active coping. No interaction effects of stress and resilience on active coping was found. Findings suggest that counselors can help college students to actively cope with stressful situations by enhancing more students' resilience than their secure attachment, regardless of students stress level.

Social support and stress among university students in Jordan (source: international journal of mental health and addiction, v6 p442-450 Jul 2009)

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between perception of social support and perceived stress among university students in Jordan. A sample of 241 university students from private and government universities in Jordan answered self-report questionnaires including the perceived social support scale. The results showed that university students have moderate perception of social support and stress. Female university students had higher perception of stress and social support than male university students. Perceived stress had a negative correlation with perceived social support from family (-0.29, p less than 0.05) the perceived social support from family was a better predictor of perceived life event as stressful situations than perceived life event as stressful

situations than perceived social support from friends. The study implications for research and intervention were discussed.

Supporting assessment stress in key stage 4 students (sources: Educational studies, v.34 p.83-95 may 2008)

Research has indicated that 13% of students in the UK experience a high degree of assessment-related stress/anxiety, which may have debilitating health, emotional and educational effects. Recent policy initiatives have attempted to encourage a responsibility for promoting well being in schools; however at present there is little known about what, if any, support is provided for students over assessment stress/anxiety. The purpose of this exploratory study was to gather data on the conceptualization and understanding of assessment stress/ anxiety in key stage for students and what current policy and practices are adopted to support students experiencing a high degree of assessment stress/ anxiety. Data were collected from semi structured interviews conducted with 34 students and nine members of staff from six schools in the north of England and analyzed. Teachers conceptualized assessment stress/anxiety as resulting from assessment demands requiring skills and knowledge beyond the current capabilities of students. Support was mostly structured along academic lines, theorized as reducing stress by increasing the student's ability to cope with assessment demands. Students who experienced a strong degree of manifest anxiety during examinations were moved to alternative venues, but students were not routinely identified in all schools. Staff and students also emphasized the importance of a good relationship in receiving both emotional and academic forms of support. These strategies were theorized as "bolt-on" policies. Schools had few specific strategies for dealing with assessment stress/ anxiety directly but used existing policies related to behavior management and the promotion of achievement

The sources and manifestations stress amongst school-Aged Dyslexics, compared with sibling controls (sources: dyslexia, v14 p291-313 Nov 2009)

This study investigates whether dyslexic children, by way of their educational and social difficulties, experienced higher levels of stress at school. The school situation survey was used to investigate both the sources and manifestation of stress amongst dyslexic children and non-dyslexic in academic years 3-5 experiencing the highest stress level, specifically in interactions with teachers, worries over academic examinations (SATs) and performance testing, causing emotional (fear, shyness and loneliness) and psychological (nausea, tremors or rapid heartbeat) manifestation. Results also suggest that dyslexics in larger families (3-4 sibling families) experiences greater stress in interactions with their peers, than those in smaller families (two sibling families)-possibility from unfair sibling comparison.

A structural equation modeling approach to study of stress and psychological adjustment in emerging adults (source: child psychiatry and human development, v39 p481-501 dec 2008)

Today' society puts constant demands on the time and resources of all individuals, with the resulting stress promoting a decline in psychological adjustment. Emerging adults are not exempt from this experience, with an alarming number reporting excessive level of stress and stress-related problem. As a result, the present study addresses the need for a comprehensive model of emerging adult adjustment in the context of stress and coping variables and highlights the importance of accounting for differences males and females in research concerning stress, social support, coping, and adjustment. Participants for this study are 239 college students (122 males and 117 females). Results of structural equation modeling suggest that stress, social support, coping, and adjustment show unique pattern of relationship for males versus females. For both males and females, stress and social support show similar relationship to adjustment. In contrast, social support is related only to coping behaviors in females. Females, social support appears to be an important variable for female adjustment, whereas other coping behaviors appears to be more pertinent to male adjustment.

A longitudinal study of negative life Events, Stress, and School Experience of Gifted Youth (source: Gifted child quarterly, v53 p34-49 2009)

An 11 year mixed- method, cross sectional longitudinal study began with a group of 121 children, identified as gifted, and followed them until high-school graduation. Parents annually identified negative life events experienced by child and family and at graduation; students completed an open-ended retrospective questionnaire, focusing on events, impact of events, supports and hindrance during the school years. As a result of attrition, participants became increasingly homogeneous over time. School data were available for 59 students (of 63 family units who sustained involvement) at the end. They usually cited academic challenges, school transition, peer relationship, and over commitment as their most challenging experiences, not life events. Almost without exception, they maintained high achievement. Putting the research to use: Gifted students may not communicate their distress to adults who are invested in their achievements or non-achievements. Though habits of achievements may help them to maintain high grades and high levels of extra-curricular performance, achievers might quietly experience high level of stress from their heavy involvements in or outside of school. Low achievements and a high number of absences may also reflect personal stress in gifted students. Showing non-voyeuristic, holistic interest in gifted students as complex individuals, and offering credible comments about personal strengths and resilience might offer crucial support at a time of vulnerability.

Prof. Robbins

According to Prof. Robbins stress is a condition in which an individual is confronted with an opportunity, constrain or demand related to what he/she desires and for which the outcome is perceived to both uncertain and important. So, stress is associated with:

- Constraints or demand
- Uncertainty over the outcome which is regarded as important

Miller and Hester (1986)

Miller and Hester reviewed stress management training techniques and found they included such approaches as relaxation training, biofeedback and systematic desensitization (i.e., focusing on environmental factors to reduce anxiety). Miller (1992) also identified aerobic training as a stress management approach. Other approaches have included meditation, muscle relaxation and transcendental meditation.

Fletcher (1988)

It has been shown how the further down the skill level in the 'job chain' one looks the worse off the mental health of those groups becomes. Further it has also been shown how.... "Conditions of work most adverse to workers" health is to be found in blue collar professions and in some health care positions such as nursing. A common and possibly decisive denominator of these work conditions is that they expose the worker to a combination of high psychological stress and physical workload and a low level of decision latitude."

Brown Et Al (1990)

A recent study by Brown Et Al examined the relationship between stressful life events and drinking outcome among male alcoholics who had completed an alcohol treatment program. Approximately 40% of the pre-treatment stressors were found to be directly or indirectly related to alcohol use. Results showed that men who returned to drinking after treatment experienced more severe or highly threatening stress before their relapse than men who re

Spector & Connell (1994)

As an individual, the issues of 'Locus of Control'(LOC), whereby one may perceive oneself as a victim or an agent of control in one's own life(external or internal LOC), appears to be one of three key personality facts linked to how an individual reacts to stressful situation. The other two are: Negative Affectivity or the tendency to experience a variety of negative emotions across time and situations; and type A personalities who seem to be hyper- reaction to uncontrollable stressors and more reactive than type B.

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Research Methodology

Purpose

The main purpose of this research is to determine the important drivers of job stress and to analyze the effect of job stress on the performance of the college teachers.

Research Design

The survey method is the basic research design. The structured questionnaire was administered to the respondents, which solicits information about their level of job stress.

Sample Size

A survey of approximately 150 college professors working in different colleges provided the database for this study. The sampling technique used here was simple random sampling.

Data Collection

The purpose of research was explained to the respondents and questionnaires were being administered accordingly.

Evaluation

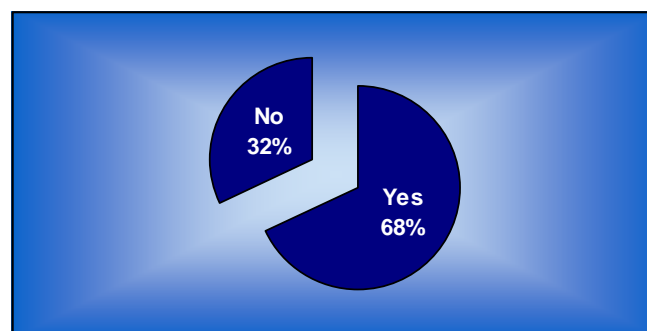
After scoring the questions, the raw data are used to draw charts. These charts are further analyzed to draw inferences and deductions about the impact of job stress and to identify the main methods to remove stress.

Objectives

1. To identify the main reasons of stress among management people.
2. To study the effect of stress on their performance
3. To find the methods of removing stress and the effectiveness of methods

Q1. Do you believe that your job is a stressful job?

Yes - 102 No- 48



Q2. How much job stress do you feel at job?

High- 51 Low-23 Moderate- 34

A very high percentage of the respondents i.e. 68% believe that engineering is a stressful job. From these, 48% respondents feel high job stress; 21% feel low job stress and 31% feel moderate job stress.

Q3. Do your junior and colleague make your job stressful?

Yes- 46 No- 104

Only 31% respondents say that their junior employees and colleague make their job stressful. The remaining 69% are not in favoring this statement.

Q4. According to you, which things make your job stressful?

Workload- 70 Excessive rules of Organization- 28

Interpersonal relationship- 4 Daily changes in work Schedule- 48

According to 46% respondents' workload is major cause of stress; 32% are agree with daily changes in work schedules; 19% say that excessive rules of organization is a cause of stress; Only 3% are in favor of interpersonal relationships.

Q5. Do you feel that your management shows lack of interest or focus in your work?

Yes- 42 No-108

Only 28% are agreeing with this fact that their management shows lack of interest in their work.

Q6. Does your job interfere with other responsibilities?

Always- 16 Sometimes-128 Often- 6

11% respondents say that their job always interferes with other responsibilities; 85% says sometimes and only 4% say often in the response of this statement.

Q7. Do you become upset when an emergency work arises in your job?

Strongly agree-10 Agree-44 Neutral-80

Disagree-12 Strongly disagree- 4

3% say strongly agree; 29% say agree; 53% say neutral; 8% say disagree and 7% say strongly disagree with this statement.

Q8. Do you frustrate when things don't run smoothly or according to you?

Always- 52 Never- 10 Sometimes- 88

Only 7% never get frustrated when things don't run smoothly or according to them; but 35% Always and 58% seldom get frustrated.

Q9. Do you feel that problems at home interfere with your performance at work?

Always- 8 Never- 38 Sometimes- 104

5% feel that it happen always when their home problems interfere with their work performance; 70% feel that it happens sometimes but 25% say never in the response of statement.

Q10. Do you feel sometimes that you are unpleasant with job conditions?

Yes- 80 No-70

53% respondents are unpleasant with the job conditions but 47% are happy with the conditions provided by their organizations.

Q11. Do you think that your performance is affected by stress?

Always- 46 Never- 44 Sometimes- 60

31% say always; 40% say sometimes but 29% never feel that their performance is affected by stress.

Q12. Are the bureaucratic rules of any organization work as source of stress for employees?

Strongly agree-26 Agree- 88 Neutral- 24

Disagree- 12 Strongly disagree- 0

17% are strongly agreed; 59% are agreed; 24% say neutral in favor of this fact. But 8% are disagree i.e. they don't think that bureaucratic rules of any organization work as source of stress for employees.

Q13. Do you think that low job security is also a cause of job stress?

Strongly agree- 48 Agree- 70 Neutral- 24

Disagree- 8 Strongly disagree- 0

32% are strongly agreed that low job security is also a cause of stress; 47% are agreed; 16% gave neutral response; and 5% are disagreeing with this fact.

Q14. How would you say you are with your job?

Very much satisfied-28 Some what satisfied- 48

Not too satisfied- 68 Not at all satisfied- 6

In the response of this statement, 19% say very much satisfied; 32% say somewhat satisfied; 45% say not too satisfied and only 4% say not at all satisfied with their job.

Suggestions

- To successfully attract and relieve job stress among the teachers the institutions need to examine their programs and policies for coping stress - to see where they stand compared to other institutions. By employing and implementing various management programs to relieve stress, the institutions can cope with job stress among their employees. The following strategies are important to remember while making stress coping programs:
 1. Proper work schedule should be there
 2. Ensure high job security to the employees
 3. There should some employee fitness programs and setting of health clubs
- The management should show interest in the work of employee. There should be friendly and supportive relation between the management and the teachers. There should be an informal meeting between management and teachers in a month so

that they can discuss about the work performance. The management should give positive motivations to employee for his/her good performance.

- There should proper timings of tea break and lunch break.
- The rules of institution should not be bureaucratic so that the employees feel pleasant working with the organization.
- The institutions should conduct some seminars by professionals to relieve the stress among the employees.
- The management should give the job rewards and recognition to the teachers and committed that their service would go a long way. This may be higher compensation, performance bonus etc.
- There should be training and development programs for the teachers so that the never feel stressed doing their job.
- The management should adopt job enrichment and counseling strategies.
- It is the responsibility of management that there should be good interpersonal relationships in the environment of organization.

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