

Demographic Variation and Stress Management Skills

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Abstract

The objectives of the study were focused on the demographic factor-based comparison of stress management skills of university-level teachers. 1362 teachers from faculty of Social Sciences serving in universities of Islamabad were taken as target population for the study. 412 teachers were selected as samples by using stratified sampling technique. Data was collected through a self-developed questionnaire that was based on seven stress management strategies. In accordance with the objectives t-test and ANOVA were applied. Results revealed that university employees with 15-20 years of experience in (Public sector) were more skilled in managing stressful situations. Stress management skills were found better in females than males. Furthermore, teachers serving in public sector universities were found more capable of dealing with stress. The study recommended that top management of educational institutions may redesign their workplace environment as making it more conducive for employees with reference to occupational stress management.

Key Words

Stress Management, Job Experience, Gender, Work Experience, Demographic Variation

Introduction

The term “Stress” is denoted with fatigue and feelings of anxieties. Stress is one of the permanent parts of a human’s routine life. In context of workplace, stress is defined as exhaustion in result of excessive workload. At the same time, at workplace, stress may cause improvement, inspiration, and performance of an individual as well (Mathewman, Rose and Hetherington, 2009). This is the stress which is viewed as any burden which surpasses the person’s ability to keep up physiological, mental and additionally passionate steadiness (Furnham, 2005). stress was characterized as any outside occasions or inner effort which compromises to agitate the organismic balance (Selye, 1979). A few people have large amounts of resilience for stress and flourish greatly notwithstanding a few stressors in the earth. Then again a few people are not ready to perform well with the exception of when substance to a dimension of stress that enacts or stimulates them to advance their earnest attempts (Sekaran, 2004). This demonstrates when particular contrasts may translate these stressors as positive stress (which intricate them), while other negative stress experiences or distress (which cheapens their endeavors). Such experiences’ impact might be for the current moment and reduce rapidly, another way is to keep going long time (Newstrom, 2007). As per Dura (2002) instructor’s job is multifaceted than just passing on information. Distinctive employment-related exercises and undertakings can make stress among the instructors. Kyriako (2001) revealed substantial outstanding burden alongside terrible conduct as key stressors for educators. Boyle, Borg, Falzon, and Baglioni (1995) recognized that troublesome understudies’ conduct is the principle stressor for educators that compromises their order and control. These stressors can seriously influence classroom execution and passionate soundness of the educator (Greenwood, Olenjnik and Parkay, 1990; Yoon, 2002). Concentrates on occupation stress have featured the effect of stress on representative wellbeing Jonge, Bosma, Diminish and Siegrist, 2000; Kudielka, Hanebuth, Känel, Gander, Grande, and Fischer, 2005). Instructors who have poor adapting aptitudes have more truancy at occupation and have more odds of leaving their showing vocation (Thickets, 2004). Noor and Ismail (2016) announced very critical effect of college educators’ work stress as it influenced the instructors themselves, yet in addition their understudies.

Statement of Problem

In the present research the researcher’s main focus is to compare the stress management skills of teachers in three dimensions; teaching experience, gender and university type (public & private)

Literature Review

Due to globalization education sector also faces lots of challenges and opportunities. These challenges and opportunities sometimes create pressure on educational managers as well as on teachers. Initially, the term "Stress" was identified by Smith and Milstein in 1930 and later on in 1955. For the first time the history of changes in educational process and impact of these changes on teacher's stress was documented by Travers and Cooper. Job productivity effects in a negative way due to rapid changes in the field of education system across the world (Alberta Teachers' Association, 2011) Furthermore, a study conducted by Johnson et al. in (2005) they compare teaching profession with 25 topmost challenging professions adopted by the professionals, their study showed a very interesting and quite amazing results, they conclude that teaching profession is a 2nd most stressful profession.

As per an investigation by Pettigrew and Wolf, directed in (1982), there are two sorts of stress which are which may, at last, have an effect on educators: stress depends on work-related errands and stress-dependent on the work environment job. Stress dependent on work associated duties, for example, managing *disobedient learners*, addresses the issues related to various explicit assignments that educators must execute as a component of their occupation and expected set of responsibilities. Stress dependent on the working environment tasks, for example, absence of vital assets for appropriate instructing, alludes to how the desires for educators about their job in the work environment fit with their genuine obligations that are vital for instructors to satisfy their jobs.

Stress can be depicted as the unfriendly response, individuals need to extreme burden or different sorts of interest attacking them at the same time (Health & Safety Executive, 2005). Thus, the type of occupation can decide itself the sort, level, and intensity of stress. That stress can be actuated. Numerous employments may be viewed as stressful, yet does not really imply that they will affect a person's mental prosperity.

University worker assumes a fundamental job is the creation and scattering of information and advancement in addition to educational growth and development, especially at teaching sector. The above-quoted research showed that large amounts of work-related stress, whenever remained unchecked and unmanaged, will weaken the final product in terms quality, quantity, and Creativity of employee's work and workers' prosperity (Gillispie et al., 2001).

Coping is portrayed as the contemplations and practices utilized to deal with the inward and outer requests of circumstances that are assessed as stressful or surpassing the assets of the individual (Folkman, 2000 & Lazarus, 1993). An individual or family to watch involvement, characterize, comprehend, or potentially act in light of a testing knowledge (Dyk, & Schvaneveldt, 1987). Through factor examination portrayed four kinds of adapting systems: 1) Active Avoidance Coping: Dynamic Evasion Adapting procedures seem to reflect dynamic endeavor to avoid stress indicators or escape from its liabilities. 2) Problem Focused Adapting: Issue, Concentrated Adapting procedures depend on dynamic adapting, arranging, looking for instrumental social help, and looking for enthusiastic social help scale. This methodology used a dynamic endeavor for dispensing with the stressor or its impact. 3) Positive Coping: Optimistic Adapting comprises of utilization of silliness and positive reframing and enthusiastic social help. The method exerts to receive positive adapting systems. 4) Refusal Adapting: Denial Adapting depends on religious practice if there should arise an occurrence of stress or troublesome circumstance and denies the truth (Hastings, et.al. 2005)

There are many studies addressing these coping techniques with reference to different demographic variations (sexual orientation, work involvement) which were directed by numerous significant analysts; found critical distinction among females & males instructors in utilization of problem-centered coping component and demonstrated that the male contrasted with the female educators had higher issue centered managing system (Mohammadi, Danesh, and Shejwal, 2009). According to Sud, and Sharma (n.d) Male educators had been observed to utilize some other problems centered coping systems and females had been observed to utilize more feeling centered coping techniques. Ladies got altogether higher scores as compared to gents on the basis of emotional and avoidance styles and less score on separation and objective coping (M. P., 2004.) It was additionally discovered that males scored higher on emotional restraint than the ladies. There is a huge contrast among males and females as far as commitment to coping procedures and academic performance. Lawrence, Ashford, & Dent, (2006) said that especially, guys uncovered more noteworthy capacity to disengage themselves from the emotions of a circumstance, and were progressively disposed to show emotional hindrance or overturning of sentiments.

Struthers et al. (2000) justified problem-centered as most important stress managing techniques (practically identical to Dombeck's methodology technique) that actually made people more confident and logical in their performances. They further highlighted emotional way out as better option after problem-centered approach (practically identical to Dombeck's shirking approach), which they considered being increasingly impeding to individual drive and resulting scholarly execution. Symptoms of emotional dominance for the sake of stress management incorporates eating more and crying (Klinic People group Wellbeing Center, 2010; National Foundation of Psychological wellness, 2003). As indicated by Adam and Epel (2007) people having more eating

habits as method for managing stress really use nourishment to actuate their physiological reward framework; they keep on utilizing this technique since they start to feel better. Donatelle (2012) structures the positive stress-free option of crying which leads that men may have diverse methods for dealing with stress (Misra and Castillo, 2004). Suppose, ladies will in general showcase their sentiments all the more obviously/transparently, and more established (instead of more youthful) men are bound to cry before their friends and family (Fox, 2004).

According to Gudrun et al. (2012) is of the opinion that socialization goes about as a stress cradle. In any case, an excess of socialization can be hindering (Swim et al., 2011) and can result in diversion, net bungle of time, and expanded stress.

Research Objectives

1. To compare university teachers' stress management strategies on the basis of their gender.
2. To compare university teachers' stress management strategies on the basis of their university wise.
3. To compare university teachers' stress management strategies on the basis of their work experience

Research Hypotheses

H₀1: There is no significant difference among university teachers' stress management strategies with reference to their gender

H₀2: There is no significant difference among university teachers' stress management strategies with reference to their university types (public & private)

H₀3: There is no significant difference among university teachers' stress management strategies with reference to their work experience

The Rationale of the Study

In this advance and dynamic era, life is becoming too fast. Everyone is approaching life targets in a very sharp, quick and crisp manner. Ultimately, this change in lifestyle and thinking approach is greatly affecting workplace scenarios as well. Organizations are eventually converting into machine with their more efficient goals, speedy executions, competitive environment, and predefined unique outputs. Current, organizational structures and expectations pose a heavy load of high-quality work performed on the shoulders of workers. Fast and technological advancements are challenge for employees' skills and abilities now a day. At the same time, along with the benefits and learning, employees are facing multiple kinds of stress at workplaces. Stress is like a threat to both employees' personal and professional growth. For the sake of employees' job satisfaction, mental health, motivation and professional grooming stress management is unavoidable. In this context, this study was framed for university teachers with special emphasis to assess their abilities to cope up with occupational stress management. It is assumed that the extent they will be equipped with stress management skills, can be sustained at workplace successfully.

Significance of The Study

Teaching is no longer merely hard work; it has become a highly stressful profession. The nature and organization of work make teaching very difficult. Professors face new challenges and opportunities for the student's population is increasingly diverse and needy. The demand for faculty members in developing new knowledge and skills to perform new tasks rapidly for student's development. This often leads to overwhelming pressures and challenges for the faculty, which consequently leads to conflict and stress.

Educators in advanced educational systems can better equip themselves through this study. Furthermore, they can save their mental, physical, personal and social life from dangerous effects of occupational stress.

Management of an educational organization can also get an idea of reshaping employee (teachers) behavior by addressing their core issues on priority basis. Stress-free attitude may enrich employee performance therefore top management of higher education institutes may treat teachers on the basis of their stress types.

Teacher training programs need to be refurbished with reference to theory and practices in light of stress management skill development among teachers at all levels.

Executive bodies/policymakers may consult the study for the estimation and facilitation of teachers at higher education levels incorporating findings of the study regarding occupational stress.

Delimitation

Keeping in view all the resources, time and procedures necessary for holding this study following aspects were considered as boundaries;

- Teaching faculty serving in Faculty of Social Sciences
- Teaching faculty serving in universities situated in Islamabad city
- Both public and private HEIs
- Comparative analysis of respondents' stress management skills

Methodology

Research Design

A descriptive type of research was picked for this study because of its main theme, "exploration of university teachers' stress management strategies". For the sake of possibly accurate information gathering and drawing tangible conclusion, quantitative approach was applied to the data.

Population

A total 15 universities from both sectors (public & private) as per data available on the official website of Higher Education Commission (2017) existing in territory of Islamabad only were focused as participants of the study. Targeted universities (15) were comprised of eleven (11) universities from public sector while other four universities were taken from private sector. Further, all the employees working in Faculty of Social Sciences from the above-mentioned universities were chosen as population of the study. Data provided by HEC (2017) faculty of social sciences was 1375 in both sectors (public sector = 765, private sector = 610)

Sampling

In the present study as mentioned above, the population consisted of university teachers serving in faculty of Social Sciences from both kinds of universities of Islamabad (public & private). Public sector teachers were bit more in numbers (765) than private sector (610). For the sake of stress management skill assessment, stratified sampling technique was used. Type of universities was considered as strata (public & private) 412 teachers (30%) were taken as desired samples of the study (229 from public and 183 teachers from private sector).

Table 1. Description of Sample Size of the Study

University Type -wise Teachers from FSS (30%)	Male (110)	Female (119)	Sample Size (27% out of 30%)
Public Universities Teachers (229)	93	98	191/229
Private University Teachers (183)	89	90	179/183
Total Sample size Sector-wise (412)	182	188	370 /412

Note: from respondents, the rate of return was 27%

Data Collection Tool

In this study survey method was used and the questionnaire opted as study instrument. This research tool was based on coping strategies. Focused stress management strategies were taken out of thorough study of following researches and related literature about stress management.

Table 2. Studies Consulted in Tool Development

Year	Researcher	Study Title
2012	Jan Richards	Teacher Stress and Coping Strategies: A National Snapshot
2011	Jeffrey Sprenger	Anxiety and their control over approaches
2010	Ying Ming Lin & FarnShing Chen, 2010	Strain regulating tool for higher education students
1984-2001	David L.Tobin	Employer Guidebook for the Managing Approaches

The questionnaire was finally included stress management strategies given below.

1. Physical Rest

2. Pray/Mediation
3. Problem-Solving
4. Compensating Attitude
5. Positive Attitude
6. Denial/Refusal
7. Social support

The questionnaire as study tool was considered reliable .89 at Cronbach alpha.

Data Analysis

The vital part of the study was the analysis of the obtained data. For making is more and more reliable and worthwhile, as a first step data was collected through personal involvement of the researcher. Later on, careful scrutiny was done for seriously, responsibly and completely filled questionnaires from respondents which were 370. For extracting and interpreting data, Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) v.20 was incorporated. In accordance with the nature of objectives, two tests of statistics named as t-test and ANOVA were applied.

Results

Table 3. Stress Management Strategies (Gender-Wise)

Variable	Groups	Respondents (N)	Mean Value	t-value	df	Sig.
Stress Management Strategies	Male	182	199.53	1.019	368	.30
	Female	188	202.23			

**p < 0.05 **p < 0.01*

Gender-based comparison of university teaching faculty with reference to their strategies of stress management was carried out. According to table above, no significant difference was found between male (M=199.53) and female (M=202.23,) teachers; $t(368) = -1.019$, $p = .30$. Results reflected that female and male teachers were used to adopt stress management strategies at their workplace.

Table 4. Comparison among University Teachers (University Type-Wise)

Variable	Groups	Respondents (N)	Mean	t-value	Df	Sig.
Stress Management Strategies	Public	191	205.18	8.291	368	.001
	Private	179	180.76			

**p < 0.05 **p < 0.01*

Comparison among university teachers' Stress Management Strategies was done on the basis of their university types. Results showed a significant difference among teachers of both public and private universities like teachers (M=205.18) and Private sector university teachers (M=180.76) teachers; $t(368) = 8.291$, P-value = .00. Results discovered that Public sector university teachers were better stress managers in comparison with private sector university teachers.

Table 5. Comparison among University Teachers' Stress Management Strategies (Work-Experience Wise)

Variable	Groups	Respondents (N)	Mean	t-value	Df	Sig.
Stress Management Strategies	1-5	185	198.45	2.384	365	.05
	5-10	97	203.63			
	10-15	47	198.30			
	15-20	37	217.08			
	20-25	04	213.00			
	Total	370	200.43			

**p < 0.05, **p < 0.01*

Comparison carried out among teachers of universities with reference to their stress management strategies on basis of work experience. The difference between teachers' stress management strategies was significant ($p = .05$).

Furthermore, employees with teaching experience of 15-20 having mean value (217.08) declared them more efficient stress managers while teachers with experience of 10-15 years considered low-stress management strategies.

Conclusion

The study was initiated with the aim of stress management strategies assessment among teaching faculty, serving in both public and private universities of Islamabad. In this context, a comparative analysis was done on multiple bases. Quantitative analysis of data reflected following conclusions;

Results highlighted that both males and females were used to incorporate strategies from given options for making themselves free from stress equally. No significant difference was established between both genders. It is evident that everyone wants to release stress through possible tactics.

As far as university type-wise comparison is concerned, teachers from public sector universities were more habitual in terms of stress management. In light of results, finding that stress managing strategies were comparatively more practiced by public sector employees leads towards stressful work environment in public universities.

The third indicator of stress management taken for this study was work experience. Five commonly available ranges of work experiences were incorporated into the study for analysis. Out of those five ranges, stress management strategies were significantly more in practice of teachers having 15 to 20 years of experience. It shows that they were more capable to use strategies with ease. While other employees like teachers with 10 to 15 years of experience were less customized with stress coping strategies offered to them.

Discussion

Faculty from public and private universities of Islamabad was targeted as an investigation group for the study aimed at stress managing technique assessment. For data accumulation researcher constructed a poll after broad investigation of various researches with respect to techniques of stress handling. The examination was comparative in nature. The study based on comparative assessment was done through respondent's gender, university type, and work related experience. Data was gathered through survey technique. Related literature and statistical package for social studies (SPSS) were consulted for data interpretation. The investigation was grounded on three objectives which introduced the reason for study. For examining every factor of the investigation, a thorough analysis of hypotheses was carried out.

An investigation initiated by Vingerhoets and Van Hell (1990) revealed that men are bound to opt issue-centered strategy of stress management mostly like; arranging and justifying their activities, positive reasoning, assurance, adjustment, and advancement. While on the other side, females usually prefer to use feeling-centered options like; self-accusing and unrealistic reasoning as stress management strategies.

Results also found out that teachers having more job experience were excellent in terms of stress coping as compared to newly induct workforce in universities. Various studies strengthened the findings of this research, (Gold, Y., & Roth, R.A. 1993) likewise concluded that newly induct teachers seem like to be extra defenseless to the pressures of the job as compared to experienced teachers. Maylor (2001) provided details regarding moderately youthful educators who experienced such abnormal state of stress and tension that they considered suicide. Nagel and Dark (1989) found that educators with five to ten years' experience felt more stress than old age instructors with more experience. A comparative study led by Qadir (2017) on postgraduate educators found that female encouraging personnel was better at coping stress at their workplace as contrast with male instructors. Her discoveries likewise demonstrate that instructors having 20-25 years appreciate work at work spot and their own life at home. Similarly Martin and Toms (2004) coordinated that Men of any institution may have marginally abnormal amounts of stressed male than female administrators.

Stress at the workplace is commonly observed phenomenon in both kinds of organizations private and public. But important thing is to deal with the stress which indirectly connected with workplace environment also. In this context, comparison between employees of both sectors of universities was also incorporated in the study. The reason behind this finding was, maybe job insecurity, heavy workload and frequent changes in policies give stress to workers. According to the study of Hussain, Kumar, & Husain, (2008) degree of educational stress was significantly greater among the non-public school understudies whereas Government school understudies were significantly better as far as their dimension of alteration coping methodologies. Another investigation identified with the conclusion of this examination which was directed by Tomar et.al (2014) they cleared up that understudies expected to experience the effects of extreme mental syndromes were 3% in private school and 2% in government school because of their scholastic pressure, association with guardians and companions.

Recommendations

1. The nature of work assignments may be delegated according to employees' gender specifications.
2. Short but frequent training sessions need to be conducted on stress management tactics by both public and private universities.
3. Employees working in public universities found more engaged in stress management activities which in fact reflected that they were facing more stressful situations. In this context, public university management needs to be more sensitive about their employee's work environment.
4. The transparent and justified monitoring system may be introduced in public universities for measuring work performances. And employees may be acknowledged accordingly.
5. Work assignments may be given to beginners in the form of team; they may be attached to seniors for learning mature experiences.
6. Lastly, there is a recommendation for recreational programs that should be regular part of organizational calendar. Excursion trips, get-to-gather function, teamwork, competitions provide energetic and refreshing feelings.

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