

## A Review of Literature Occupational Stress Amongst Faculty Members

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### **Abstract**

Academics are no longer a stress-free profession, according to the literature on faculty stress. With the emergence of business dynamics, academics are no longer a stress-free profession. As a result of increased globalization and competition, faculty members' roles have become more difficult. Their responsibilities do not stop with teaching; they must also participate in other activities that help to build the institution. The paper identifies various common stressors among faculty members after an extensive review of the literature. It also looks at how individual and organizational interventions can help faculty members deal with occupational stress.

**Keywords:** Occupational stress, stressors, faculty members, organizational intervention, individual intervention.

### **I. INTRODUCTION**

In competitive environments, stress is a natural occurrence, a physiological response to any change, good or bad. Good stress, also known as "eustress," gives us energy and motivates us to achieve our goals, whereas bad stress, also known as "distress," has negative consequences. According to studies, a certain degree of eustress is required for optimal functioning. Robert M. Yerkes and John D. Dodson, known as the Yerkes-Dodson law. According to it, when stress levels rise, efficiency rises to a degree, but after that, performance plummets substantially. "High levels of stress are an inherent and largely unavoidable component of work," according to Paine, but the issue emerges when that stress becomes excessive and has detrimental consequences (Endres and Wearden, 1996).

So, what exactly is stress? Hans Selye was the first to propose the notion of stress to the biological sciences in 1936. It was derived from the Latin word "stringere," which meant "to suffer bodily difficulty, hunger, agony, or suffering" (Nayak, 2008). Selye defined stress in 1936 as "the body's non-specific response to any demand placed upon it." Stress occurs when a person feels unprepared to deal

with the demands and challenges that life throws at them. (Eres et al. 2011) Whether one is damaged by this scenario or benefits from it is largely dependent on the individual, as stress can be either a physical or psychological threat to the organism or a source of energy for dealing with life (Baltaş, 2002). Some specialists believe that people who operate with a modest amount of stress perform better (Steers, 1981). Furthermore, if an individual's role comprehension is positive, a moderate stress level may have a motivating effect (Little, Simmons and Nelson, 2007).

Stress, as we all know, has become a common occurrence in our daily lives. Despite the popularity of "stress" as a research topic over the last few decades, scientists are still unable to agree on a uniform definition of this simple yet contentious notion (Rees and Redfern, 2000). Stress is now commonly characterized as a sensation of bodily or emotional tension and an inability to manage anxiety and discomfort, especially in the face of change (Vijayashree and Mund, 2011). It could be due to personal or professional (workplace) reasons. It has been discovered that it is a problem in developed information societies and developing countries and affects all professions equally. Each profession comes with its own set of stressors. According to studies, with today's rapid developments and changes, few occupations do not suffer from occupational stress and burnout.

Higher education institutions have grown rapidly in recent years, particularly in emerging nations, resulting in increased competition and a deteriorating organizational climate at most public and private universities (Rajarajeswari, 2010). Almost everyone who has examined the issue agrees that teacher stress is a severe problem (Phillips and Matthew, 1980). This research focuses on the stress experienced by university faculty members, with a special focus on India. The paper would be a literature review on the subject.

## **II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

EBSCOhost, Google Scholar, and Google were used to find the research publications. The stress level of faculty members was used as a search criterion. The conclusion resulted in a variety of repercussions, including stress among primary and secondary school instructors. This was taken out of the study. The focus of the search was on stress among university faculty personnel. It yielded stress references for countries such as the United States of America, the United Kingdom, Australia, Saudi Arabia, Macedonia, Turkey, Asian countries such as Pakistan and Malaysia, and a few studies for India. It also featured studies on stress in particular.

Stress worldwide, the literature on stress experienced by university faculty personnel is very sparse. Stress among university faculty members is a widely researched topic worldwide.

The paper plans to first focus on the occupational stress experienced by university faculty members,

both globally and specifically in India, various contributory factors leading to stress among university faculty members, coping strategies recommended by various studies, and a conclusion.

### **Occupational Stress amongst University Faculty Members**

Universities have traditionally been collegial communities with professional autonomy. Their members can determine their priorities and goals based on discipline-specific criteria rather than the institutional needs of their employers (Harley et al., 2004). Academics have always been held in high regard in most countries since they constitute a "key profession" (Locke and Teichler, 2007). The scholarly ideal embodied a quest for knowledge and a love of study that was not tainted by material concerns (Harley et al., 2004). According to Seldin (1987), the academic climate of the 1980s placed surprisingly high levels of occupational stress on academics, which would continue to rise in coming decades. Several significant changes in the higher education industry in recent years (Teichler, 2007) have dramatically altered the working conditions for university lecturers. Altbach claims that: (cited in Winefield et al., 2002)

It is also being argued that we are witnessing the "McDonaldization" of its dissemination (Parker and Jary, 1995; Ritzer, 1998, 2000), in which delivery is increasingly judged in terms of efficiency, value for money, and ability to attract large numbers of fee-paying students, who are being re-constituted as customers (Harley et al. 2004).

Many researchers conducted their studies and made several comparisons between teaching and other occupations (Iqbal and Kokash, 2011). Johnson et al. (2005) found that teaching is one of the most stressful employment after conducting comparative research of 26 occupations.

In a study conducted in Malaysia, Ahsan et al. (2009) discovered that the number of universities in Malaysia had expanded dramatically in recent years, causing university academic personnel to confront additional difficulties in their jobs. Almost all universities are currently establishing new goals to compete with other universities, and academic staff are actively involved in achieving the ultimate aim. This may put university academic personnel under a great deal of stress, affecting their contentment as well as their physical and mental health (Ahsan et al., 2009).

In India, the scenario is similar to the ones described above. It has been discovered that academics in India are also stressed due to most of the variables outlined in other nations' studies. Faculty members are expected to assume several duties other than teaching due to the arrival of private institutions and international universities, particularly at the higher education level. As a result, faculty members are required to do more clerical work in addition to teaching. It has an impact on their performance and contributes to a stressful lifestyle (Kavitha, 2012).

### III. FACTORS CAUSING OCCUPATIONAL STRESS TO FACULTY MEMBERS

To be effective in the classroom, faculty must rely on physical, emotional, and intellectual resources. Faculty, like all other professionals, are confronted with numerous and complex issues. Academic exposure to new difficulties has increased faculty stress levels, which has prompted education management academics to investigate the relationship between work stress and other outcomes.

Characteristics relating to university professors. Its significance stems from the fact that job happiness, employee commitment, employee turnover, organizational success, and productivity are linked to occupational stress. (2013, Chaudhry)

Many identified stressors appear regularly in contemporary research on teacher stress and maybe subsumed under the broader areas of environmental and personality-based stressors (Bertoch et al.). Student discipline and attitude issues, instructor competence, and teacher-administrator relations are all examples of environmental stressors. Accountability laws, large classes, poor incomes, severe pupil dependence, and dwindling community support are additional stressors. Personality-related stressors are linked to one's self-perception. Unpleasant self-perception, negative life events, low morale, and the battle to uphold personal ideals and standards in the classroom all impact (Goodman, 1980; Schnacke, 1982; Schwanke, 1981; Bertoch et al.).

In a study of academic careers in the United Kingdom, Harley et al. (2004) found that universities are pursuing human resource strategies aimed at improving institutional rankings rather than providing the opportunities that all academics require to improve their knowledge and skills, and thus their reputation.

Boyd and Wylie (1994) found that increasing workloads and work-related stress resulted in less academic time spent on research, publishing, and professional development, lower teaching and research standards, and increased interpersonal conduct in academic staff relationships in a study of New Zealand universities (Gillespie et al., 2001).

In a study conducted in Pakistan, Abbas et al. (2012) discovered that role ambiguity (where responsibilities are not clearly defined or have changed over time (Srivastava 2007) has a substantial impact on both stress and burnout, namely lack of personal accomplishment.

According to Kavitha (2012)'s study on Organizational Role Stress in India, college faculty members are doing several jobs and teaching, resulting in increased workplace stress. As a result, the faculties have a greater sole-role distance. It also has an impact on educational quality (Kavitha, 2012). According to her, self-role distance, role conflict, role overload, lack of group cohesiveness, and supervisors' support are the main contributing organizational role pressures on total job stress among faculty.

Job significance, workload, work politics, interpersonal interactions at work, work circumstances, and university rearrangement are six groups of stresses identified by factor analysis, according to Dua. He also discovered that younger employees were more stressed than older employees and that there was some evidence that employees with higher job levels were less stressed than those with lower work levels.

(Gillespie et al., 2001) identified the following sources of stress in the first part of their longitudinal analysis of occupational stress, which was undertaken at 15 Australian universities:

Academics become disheartened and disillusioned about performing research due to a lack of financing resources and support services, such as research funding and merit-based cash distribution to attend conferences and travel for research reasons. Another source of stress found under this heading was a decrease in staff numbers, which meant there were no longer enough people to do the work.

Work overload causes a significant amount of unpaid overtime hours to be worked. The rise in student numbers has resulted in a significant increase in the student-staff ratio and faculty burden. In terms of teaching, the increasing number of courses that faculty are expected to design and teach, as well as the introduction of new teaching modalities (e.g., web-based), rapid continuous advances in research knowledge, and, in some universities, the introduction of year-round teaching, have all contributed to a significant increase in workload. Academics are also dealing with an increase in the administrative aspect of their jobs, which causes stress.

Poor management practises, which result in a lack of chance to participate in crucial decisions that affect faculty members, make them feel powerless and helpless.

Stress is caused by a lack of recognition and incentive, such as restricted prospects for advancement and a high level of rivalry within their workplace.

Job uncertainty, such as staff redundancy, contractual status for a select few, implies there is no guarantee that the contract will be renewed. A cutthroat "look after number one" competitive environment among coworkers all contributed to academic stress.

Monotony, change of technology, excessive workload, job security, ergonomics, management problems (Cooper and Davidson, 1987; Sutherland and Cooper, 1990, Chaudhry, 2013), and individual characteristics (Quick and Quick, 1984) were found to be factored in a study conducted between Turkey and Macedonia by Eres and Atanasoska (2011). (Ivancevich et al 1990, Chaudhry, 2013).

However, according to a study conducted in Pakistan by Usman et al. (2011), academics face the following stressors:

Role conflict is defined as opposing expectations within a single role or between numerous responsibilities (Gupta & Jenkins, 1985). Several research have shown that role conflict causes workplace stress (Fisher & Gittleson, 1983; Johnston et al., 1990a; Netemeyer et al., 1990).

When position expectations aren't clear and the employee isn't sure what he or she is supposed to do, this is known as role ambiguity (Robbins et al., 2009). The ambiguity of one's function becomes a major source of stress.

Both role conflict and role ambiguity are positively related to work stress experienced by teachers, according to Usman et al (2011). Still, work stress is negatively related to both job satisfaction and the organizational commitment of teachers.

In a study of academic careers in the United Kingdom, Harley et al. (2004) found that universities are pursuing human resource strategies aimed at improving institutional rankings rather than providing the opportunities that all academics require to improve their knowledge and skills, and thus their reputation.

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These studies show that universities are becoming more competitive as a result of changing market realities. As Darwin put it in 1869, the survival of the fittest will be a good analogy (a term coined by Herbert Spencer). As a result, those mentioned above and a few other researchers have offered various ways for overcoming stress and leading a calm life.

#### **IV. STRATEGIES TO COPE WITH OCCUPATIONAL STRESS**

Iqbal and Kokash (2011) conducted a study on faculty at a Saudi Arabian private university to learn about their stress management strategies. According to their findings, faculty used indoor games, gym and aerobics, yoga spirituality, time management, and spending time with family to cope with stress.

Support from coworkers and management, recognition and achievement, high morale, and flexible



working conditions such as being able to work from home one day a week, not having to clock in and out, working part-time, and taking study leave were all found to help them cope with work-related stress by Gillespie et al., 2001. They also stressed the importance of relying on coworker support when dealing with stress. This included talking about work with coworkers and sharing a whinge and a laugh, sharing one's workload with coworkers, asking for help, and relying on support staff and services. Conference attendance was also mentioned as a stress reliever and morale booster.

Gillespie et al., 2001 also discussed faculty members' strategies for dealing with work-related stress. This included stress management techniques like learning to recognize and understand stress, managing expectations, planning and prioritizing, taking regular breaks from the workstation, exercising regularly and seeking alternative stress relief therapies (e.g. yoga, massage). Maintaining a balance between work and non-work included making a clear distinction between work and personal life (e.g., leaving work on time, not taking work home), switching off from work, and focusing on non-work-related interests as another personal stress coping strategy (e.g. gardening and sport).

In an Australian university study, Winefield et al. (2002) found that workplace interventions such as reviewing the fairness of procedures and processes rIn order to be effective in the classroom. Faculty must rely on physical, emotional, and intellectual resources. Faculty, like all other professionals, must deal with a wide range of issues. In terms of opportunities for personal growth and professional advancement, they lag behind their peers. In many parts of the world, faculty are rarely provided with the resources they need to meet the high demands and expectations placed on them (Bakshi and Kochchar, 2012). Faculty stress levels have increased due to new challenges, prompting education management academics to look into the link between work stress and other outcomes.

Its importance stems from the fact that occupational stress is linked to job satisfaction, employee commitment, employee turnover, organizational success, and productivity. Chaudhry, Chaudhry, Chaudhry, Chaudhry, Chaudh

Harley et al. (2004) found that universities are pursuing human resource strategies aimed at improving institutional rankings rather than providing the opportunities that all academics require to improve their knowledge and skills, and thus their reputation, in a study of academic careers in the United Kingdom.

## **V. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION**

The literature on faculty stress demonstrates that academics are no more a stress-free career with the emergence of commercial dynamics. Faculty members' roles have become more complex as a result of increased globalization and competition. Their responsibilities do not end with teaching; they must also contribute to other institution-building activities. Work Overload, Time Constraint, Lack of Promotion



Opportunities, Inadequate Recognition, Inadequate Salary, Changing Job Role, Inadequate Participation in Management, Inadequate Resources and Funding, Student Interaction, Publish or Perish, Professional Development, Poor Standard of Students, Job Insecurity, Intense Competition, Work Overload, Time Constraint, Lack of Promotion Opportunities, Inadequate Recognition, Inadequate Salary, Inadequate

Various studies have revealed various stressors and coping strategies. However, the fact remains that stress cannot be eliminated from organizations. It can only be lowered to an optimal level with workplace and personal interventions without jeopardizing the individual's productivity and contribution to the company.

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