

## **Stress among Faculty Members in State Private Universities: With Special Reference to Private Universities of Himachal Pradesh**

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### **Abstract**

*There are a number of studies that have focused on management of job related stress for teachers in schools as well as universities. In most of the studies it was stated that the field of academics has not remained a stress free profession and in the post liberalization period a number of private players have entered the field of education and changed the game forever. As of now only teaching is not the sole expectation of employers, rather a number of other duties and roles are required to be performed by the respective teachers and in return the remuneration and facilities are decreasing. This scenario is giving ways to conditions of stress and the related situations are playing the role of stressors. This present study will evaluate the stress conditions of teachers from private universities of Himachal Pradesh, total sample size of the study is 200 respondents, SPSS Ver. 22.0 is used to analyze the data.*

**Keywords:** Job related stress, private universities, Himachal Pradesh.

## Introduction

In the present times stress is the normal routine of life and as an individual we cannot avoid the same. As a matter of fact it can be considered as a natural aspect of one's life and there are a number of reasons in support of this statement i.e. competition is rising, basic psychic of human being is changing, in the urban areas people want to touch the sky in minimum time, etc. profoundly stress is not always bad rather in certain situation it can also be considered as high end of motivation and directs the efforts of a person towards the achievement of life goals. This phenomenon can be defined as '*Eustress*' (positive stress) and '*Distress*' (negative stress) and out of these stresses negative of distress can be considered as harmful one. Till the last years of 20<sup>th</sup> century stress was not considered as an ailment, rather people use to connect the same with the state of boredom and excess of anything then in 1908 Dodson and Yerkes from Harward University conducted a series of experiments and published the results in the form of a journal, the findings of the sane were acclaimed everywhere and finally the phenomenon became popular as *Yerkes-Dodson Law* and remained the point of study for many of the future researchers.

In the above stated study the researchers have developed a relationship between stress conditions and performance of an individual i.e. to perform better a person undergoes a great amount of pressure and gradually this takes the form of a threat until the performance is over. In the process whatever a person feels can be stated as stress. The first ever formal definition of stress was coined by **Selye, Hans (1936)** he stated that '*stress is basically a non-specific response of human body against any demand from the external environment*' this was the smallest and most appropriate definition of stress ever stated. **Sorje et al (2014)** also considered stress as a harmful situation and stated that stress is already there i.e. stress conditions are aroused by the demand of external environment and it is up to the individual to take the benefit of the same by improving the respective performance or get harmed by underperforming, as a matter of fact the underperformance is again going to lead to other related issues.

Some of the researchers **Nelson et al (2015)**; **Kumar et al (2014)** and **Batal (2010)** have stated that a mild level of stress may motivate a person to perform better and give unexpected results and on the other hand it also exerts a positive effect on the elaboration of individual's role in the respective job. There are a number of other studies where the experts have continuously focused

on the merits and demerits of stress condition and the areas covered vary from household work to political deliberations.

### **Field of Education and Stress conditions**

Education is one of the noblest occupations and is considered as one of the professions where the level of stress is minimum but in the present scenario the situation is somewhat different. After 1995, when private sector was allowed to work in the higher education sector, a number of private institutions and universities have entered the market, as a matter of fact a number of corporate brands have expanded their arms in the education sector and as a result of the same work culture has also changed i.e. admission targets, 360<sup>0</sup> appraisal, pressure of self-development, real time feedback and a number of other situations have become common for teachers. Now the scenario is that even in the government universities teacher is considered as a multi-tasking employee and given a number of portfolios other than teaching load. **Abbas et al (2015)** it can be said that in the present times the university jobs are some of the most stressful jobs and there is a known attachment of occupational stress with the same.

**Kokash (2014); Kmar et al (2012)** stated that in last 10 years the education forum of the world has seen the greatest amount of development i.e. the number of HEIs (*Higher Education Institutes*), competition between the educational brands have increased, working of teaching staff has changed, multi-tasking has become the new way of working and even the working conditions have changed for a normal teacher or subject expert. This phenomenon of stress has been introduced in the last decade of 20<sup>th</sup> century and heat of the same is felt in India education fronts in the early years of 21<sup>st</sup> century **Raja M. (2010)**.

This present study will evaluate the symptoms of stress in teachers working in private universities of Himachal Pradesh and try to find the main stressors in process of the same. Other than this study will also try to suggest strong ways and means to deal with the stress related conditions.

## Literature Review

**Harley et al (2014)**the researchers have conducted this study on the teaching community of higher education institutions and evaluated the level of autonomy at professional level. Here the term autonomy refers to the freedom and upper hand of the respondents as far as setting of goals and priorities is concerned. The broad findings of the study stated that although line of actions for faculty members are set but then again when it comes to performance evaluation and appraisals the authorities use to consider the extra jobs performed by the teachers as a matter of fact academic part is less than 40% and about 60% weightage is given to jobs performed other than academics.

**Teckler (2016)**Compared the academic environment of pre and post liberalization, findings of the study stated that in the present scenario there are two major differences as compared to pre liberalization era i.e. with the advent of technology in the field of education students have become more versed and there is pressure of performance and advanced knowledge on the teacher then on the other hand load of responsibilities are given to teachers (*other than academics*) and this is done with a view to consolidate the working hours of the respective teachers. He also stated that practices are resulting in the recruitment of sub-standard teachers and dearth of excellence in the field of academics.

**Ritzer (2017)**Coined the term of '*McDonaldization*' of education in the present scenario, he stated that everything is becoming instant whether it is education or it is a degree nobody is ready to spare time in learning and this deterioration is the result of high demand of working professionals in various industries and due to the same avenues like online and part time professional degrees are coming into picture. He also stated that in America alone only 37% of the students are willing to take admissions in regular degree courses and rest of the students are pursuing their degrees in part time or online mode. Now again this is exerting pressure on regular university jobs to a great extent, in the developing nations the situation is even worse.

## **Objective**

The main objective of the study is to evaluate the stress level of university teachers in the private universities of Himachal Pradesh and focus on the respective stressors. The study will also try to exert on finding ways and means to meet the stress conditions of the teachers in private universities.

## **Hypothesis**

H<sub>0</sub>: Change in working environment is having significant impact on generating stress conditions for teachers in private universities.

H<sub>1</sub>: Change in working environment is not having significant impact on generating stress conditions for teachers in private universities.

## **Research Methodology**

### ***Data Collection***

This present study is based on primary data but as a matter of fact to reach the objectives of the study and framing of hypothesis a trail of secondary data has been gathered and analyzed. As the present study is based on teacher from private universities in Himachal Pradesh hence the researcher has considered the following private universities for the selection of sample:

- ManavBharti University, Solan
- Sri Sai University, Palampur
- Indus International University, Una
- Baddi University of Emerging Science and Tech., Baddi

The total sample of the study is approximately 200 senior teachers and the basic parameter of same is the experience of minimum 5 years. Researcher has prepared a detailed questionnaire to contact the respondents and the mode of contact was face to face.

**Sample Size**

Data of 200 respondents was considered for the study.

**Tools of Study**

- Chi Square test.

**Data Analysis**

- SPSS Ver. 22.0

**Details of Chi Square Test**

Chi Square test (H1)								
Perception								
On the basis of Age					On the Basis of Designation			
	Research Options	Growth	Appraisal	Teaching Load	Research Options	Growth	Appraisal	Teaching Load
Calculate d Value	.110	.215	.109	.058	.120	.130	0.205	0.169
Table Value	2.154	1.105	2.99	1.911	1.125	1.811	1.599	1.822
Expectation								
On the basis of Age					On the Basis of Designation			
	Research Options	Growth	Appraisal	Teaching Load	Research Options	Growth	Appraisal	Teaching Load
Calculate d Value	0.056	0.109	0.108	0.125	0.587	.451	.249	.470
Table Value	2.163	1.277	1.997	1.353	1.581	2.214	1.980	2.295
Extra Work Load								
On the basis of Age					On the Basis of Designation			
	Admissions	Administ rative work	Profiling	Field Work	Admission s	Administr ative work	Profiling	Field Work
Calculate d Value	.581	.351	.249	.353	.249	.125	.139	.026
Table Value	1.901	2.571	2.199	2.519	2.995	2.191	2.381	2.911

	Support System							
	On the basis of Age				On the Basis of Designation			
	Good Team	Collective Growth	resources	Level of Students	Good Team	Collective Growth	resources	Level of Students
Calculated Value	.362	.107	.329	.459	.128	.329	.510	.345
Table Value	1.919	2.197	3.198	1.369	2.919	4.119	1.112	2.018

## Interpretation

As can be seen from the above table of chi square test, in most of the cases the test statistics is more than the significance value, this shows that for most of the queries the respondents were negative about the point in question. Then on the other hand there is minimum variation in case of perception and expectations of the respondents, this shows that on the basis of age and designation the respondents were satisfied with the working conditions but then again they also stated that the actual working conditions are different from those promised at the time of recruitment.

Then in case of working environment the teachers stated that the working conditions are becoming even more tense with every passing day and this is because of the reason that the management is not satisfied with the efforts of academic staff as they use to say that the total working hours are 8 to 9 and the respective teachers are comparatively free for 4 to 5 hours in a day. As per their version these 4 to 5 hours must be engaged in some other activity. This gap in the thought process creates a situation of stress for the teachers and becomes a major stressor.

Work load is another issue in the process i.e. the teachers in the private universities are given random workloads i.e. they have regular workload of teaching and apart from that they are also given the administrative jobs, engagement in admissions, different field work, etc. rather there are some teachers who are able to cope up with such phases but most of the teachers, specially female teachers, are not able to adjust with these issues. If these issues persist in the long term then these role reversals may take the shape of stressor and create conditions of stress.

Then comes the support system, here the term support system refers to the working team and resources provided from the side of management. In a given situation if the working team is

strong enough and cooperative then there are chances that collective growth is ensured on the other hand if the situation is reverse then it might happen that this whole situation takes the form of stress condition and the role of the teacher takes the form of stressor.

## **Result**

On the basis of above analysis and data interpretation it can be stated that the working environment exerts a great effect on the behavior of an individual and may take the form of a stressor and the same applies to teachers in private universities, hence the null hypothesis '*Change in working environment is having significant impact on generating stress conditions for teachers in private universities.*' Can be accepted and alternate hypothesis can be rejected.

## **Conclusion**

As this present study envisaged that the teachers working in private universities undergo a lot of stress and the major stressor are work related, even this can be related with performance related pressure. It is also found that competitive situations and dynamics of education in the form of business has made the role of a teacher more challenging and in lieu of the same they are expected to get engaged in a number of activities other than teaching. Some of the popular stressors found in these studies can be listed as follows:

- Lack of growth opportunities
- More challenging roles
- Inappropriate remuneration
- Less availability of adequate resources
- Level of students
- Technological changes
- Less research opportunities

There are a number of strategies for coping up with such stresses in case of teachers in private universities social meeting, friendly visits, sharing views on social media groups are some of the major sources of releasing work related stress.

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