

Exploring Stress Factors among College Teachers of Pakistan

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Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to explore level of professional stress in college teachers and ways of minimizing stress among teachers. The major objective of the study is to investigate the factors affecting stress among college teachers. This comparative study comprises of 400 faculty members of colleges by using convenient sampling technique to collect the responses of targeted respondents. Both quantitative and qualitative techniques of data collection have been used as standardized questionnaires and semi structured interviews have been conducted to investigate the issue. Results have been evaluated by using simple means, standard deviation and t-scores. As most of the respondents of private colleges opined that lack of teachers' corporation could be major stressor however on the other according to respondents of public colleges feel that they feel most stress in planning the lessons for every day. This research is highly useful for management, administration and faculty members of colleges and indirectly students could be the beneficiaries of the recommendations and suggestions.

Introduction

Teaching is such a kind of unique profession in which the expectations of student's guardians are very high regarding to the student's educational progress, future carrier and about the establishment of the personalities of students along with education (Wilson, 2002). There exists a critical and worthy relation between an instructor and its pupils. At a time attitude of a teacher can adversely affect the progress of a student positively and negatively as well. There is a major relationship between stress and productivity. A negative correlation is found between job performance and the self motivation level in teachers. Statistical analysis shows that there is no special role of motivation in the job performance (Hanif and Rubina, 2004).

This is worthy to understand that stress can be essential as well as harmful. Stress has both pros and cons which can affect both mind and body. Teachers now a day are facing stress and the serious side of it is that 30% teachers are going to leave this occupation. The same kind of stress may be for each teacher but every person faces it in his own manner. Depression is also a result of high level of cholesterol in female staff or housewives. If turnover of teachers is compared with other professions it is regarded as high. Teachers have to know different



methods that how to control stress in order to be a good teacher. There are a less number of teachers and students are being enrolled day by day. Like many other situations in life where there are hurdles and people prepare themselves for future in advance than to face difficulties at the spot, teachers must follow this approach for managing stress. One of these techniques which are adopted at a larger scale is to acquire and establish a good healthy body through proper work out, healthy meals and sound sleep. Although they can do their best but their work was not recognized so they were less instinctive in such a way (Nayak, 2008). If teachers fail in coping stress even after following proactive techniques then they must look for another alternative which can provide them a thorough guidance. Teachers say that stress is also because of the reason that there is interference between their job and personal (family) duties (Nayak, 2008). College teachers don't pass through training sessions before starting job and even they are not trained when they are on the job (Brent & Felder, 2003). Most of the teachers utter that they are not under stress because of their tough routine work (Nayak, 2008). Teachers said in the research that they feel stress when they planned out to relax but could not so they were unable to get relaxed because remaining busy all the day with incomplete workload caused stress (Nayak, 2008). The level of stress in teachers is not the same in all the places but it is different to the level of job and the workplace. Stress level is different in both public and private sector colleges. Degree College teachers also claim that they are not being involved in process of making decisions so the fell themselves less responsible and accountable. As there is secrecy about the decisions made so teachers take it as hate able (Nayak, 2008). Qualified male members try to occupy as a teacher when they are unwaged but they at once favor to leave it as soon as they found any other chance is better and appreciated then teaching.

Objectives of the study

Authors have conducted this research to explore several objectives (a) to find out professional stress in college teachers of Bahawalpur (b) to explore what is stress in view of faculty of case study colleges and to explore causes and ways of minimizing stress among teachers and (c) to recommend certain measures to control the situation.

Literature review

Professional stress is a reaction which people show when they face burdened because they have less information to retrieve. They can't handle tasks this way hence moving towards stress (Liu, & Hu, 2010). Selye (1978) stated that stress is any outside force or internal intuition which force to change the balance of any living organism. Research defines that the intensity of stress which a teacher feels is directly related to the intensity of power of control which a teacher possesses over a threatening condition (Ravichandran and Rajendran, 2007). People who suffer from stress are supposed to make more mistakes in their work as compared to those people who are not suffered from stress (Firth-Cozens, 1992). Some of the strategies to avoid stress are taking things as they are, not expanding them beyond limits, remaining calm at the work place and avoiding confrontations (John stone, 1989, 1993).

Stress and Professional Stress

Stress is an extrinsic or intrinsic desire to change the make a balanced life pattern (Selye, 1978). Stress also defined as the exterior, supervisory, individual or internal desire of any human being which forces to diversify the life pattern according to the dynamics of surrounding (Nayak, 2008). Professional stress is the stress happens at the workplace or during the operational activities; it is a physio-psychological feedback of certain stimuli. Factors of



professional stress can be behavior of superior, co worker, performance activity or may be due to environmental factors (Nayak, 2008).

Effects of Stress

Consequences of the professional stress on the teaching staff of the college effects individually or effects the individuals life by disturbing relations and it may leads toward risk for the repute of organization in which employees performance poorly or it may effects the working activities of students due to the less efficient teaching motivation of the teachers of college due suffering with stress, their poor teaching methods, unprepared lectures, low application or any other cause which usually harmful for students (Wilson, 2002).

Effects of stress on the individual level effects psychologically individual results in the falling health due to work load and unhygienic environment, absenteeism occurs due to un health environment causes illness etc. (Wilson, 2002). Stress causes teaching staff low motivation level results in low performance on the work site and motivate them to retire and there may be some other domestic problems which forces an employees to retire from the job and it may force a teacher to remain stick with the organization due to any reason which leads toward any lose which can occur by leaving existing institute (Wilson, 2002).

Stress Factors

It is the usual practice the stress assume as a multidimensional and multi level process which occur in the response of major stressors due to situational and personal factors. In case of college teachers or teaching staff of college there are some other reasons also cause a source of stress for them. Some are; Studies indicate that two of the major causes are work overload and lack of proper communication between teachers and students (Wilson, 2002). Poor behavior of students, lack of proper working environment, lack of pleasant relations with the colleagues and the work overload are the major causes of the stress in teaching staff (Wilson, 2002). In the earlier studies of stress Johnstone (1989) find some of the factors influencing emotionally and mentally. These psychological factors include; expectation, worry, accountability and feelings of pleasure. All mentioned factors are very well contributing in stress creation. Expectation is the more sever reason in stress creation rather than situation. It is being determined that it will become worse when don't cope up with proper releasing skills at proper time (Lazarus, 1966). Worry, accountability and expectations are the most explored and identified factors of stress but there exists certain other fourteen causes of stress as follows:

- Workload
- Communication
- Home work balance
- Team working
- Performance feedback
- Role ambiguity
- Training and development

Significant factors which are specially associated with teaching staff are;

- Job insecurity
- Job design
- Management support
- Skill under utilization
- Effort reward imbalance
- Tools and equipment



• Hours of work

On the other hand quality and quantity of performance, time pressure for the work and the casual dealing with the people are also determined as the prime factors of the stress creation during performance (Nayak, 2008). According to Johnstone et al. (1989) explored some other factors of stress for teaching staff are:

- Behavior of students to work poorly, behave poorly or don't work.
- Poor working environment or relations with colleagues.
- Workload or overload or tough routine work.
- Poor culture of colleges to work.

Travers and Cooper (1996) explored the top five causes of job stress due to which all the problems occur. These include;

- No support from government side.
- Low uncertainty or consistency in a job.
- Lack of information system for the implication of changes.
- Lacking of teachers respect.
- Leading toward national curriculum.

Demographic Factors and Stress

- Age
- Education
- Occupation and position
- Experience
- Type of family
- Organizational factors and stress
- Work stressors
- Role stressors
- Personal development stressors
- Interpersonal relationship stressors
- Organizational climate

Most of the teachers who are new in the teaching staff have to help themselves out on their own how to arrange for the research and how to finance it out. They themselves have to understand how to pursue other students to get them think in the terms in which a teacher must have to (Brent & Felder, 2000). To remove stress and to excel in teaching profession, college teachers have to consider a lot of factors and to follow upon them. A teacher has to keep in mind that he should guide his students as they expect from teachers (Bain, 2004).

A teacher can only perform his part the best when he tries to give some thoughtful knowledge to his students (Bain, 2004). They must understand how to make subjects easy for the students. Teachers can avoid stress by having faith in the abilities of the students so that they can test their own performance to make them satisfied. But they have to understand their students first for this (Bain, 2004). Teachers must be appreciated to get a good start by seeking the help from others. It is from those professions where no particular kind of training is there but college teaching is somewhat skilled (Brent & Felder 2000). Teachers have to work on other aspects as how to learn for working in a group setting, how to deal with other ones and how to interact with matters to get them solved in a proper manner (Brent & Felder, 2000).

They do it all but with stress. They try their level best to equate their activities that are related to their research projects, teaching profession and domestic life. This is not easy to acquire these habits in a shorter span of time (Brent & Felder, 2000). Mentoring may help the teachers to be proficient but if this is done in an inappropriate manner it may cause some problems rather that solving the problems (Brent & Felder, 2000). Inquiries tell that around 70% of teachers in china feel adversely exhausted because they are under pressure situations and they show its response



through their gestures and this is the form of professional stress. Many of the researchers think that teachers show a response through their feelings when they are on working and show their behavior which is exerted by their psychological and physiological states (Liu & Hu, 2010). Teachers who are new in teaching faculty often are found stressed in initial three to four years of their career. Five factors are identified to examine the stress of the teachers who are new in the faculty. They are as follows:

- 1- Inadequate time
- 2- No realization of work activities
- 3- Less knowledge about self
- 4- No information about college
- 5- Inefficiency in handling domestic and professional life (Brent & Felder, 2000).

Performance evaluation to the students must be provided on time but there are a number of factors that can't be met easily and are as follows:

- 1- Academic autonomy
- 2- Allocating Ranks
- 3- Choices
- 4- Scholarly liberty
- 5- Classroom supervision
- 6- Discretion
- 7- Interpersonal Associations
- 8- Academic integrity
- 9- An Antagonistic Erudition Upbringing
- 10-Rational Belongings
- 11- Correspondence Of Recommendations
- 12-Morality of Making Inquiries.

Nigerian teachers are supposed to show their self what they actually are. Teachers may find it good that stress helps them but at a certain level when this stress is increased and starts pressurizing them and they then feel that their performance is being disturbed and this is just because of the extra stress which they have been facing since far. Difference in gender and the places where there are different work environments a high stress is seen in teachers of Nigeria. It is suggested that if teachers are given rights to take an active part in the phase of making decisions. In this way is supposed that teachers will be more improved and talented in their interactions. It is said in Nigeria that organizations are the places where stress is created for the workers and if these institutions want they may decrease the level of stress among their teachers. These institutes must have to think about those campaigns and the other sources that may assist that teacher to come out of stress. Teachers who are living in turkey and Macedonian cultures are facing entirely different kind of stress and they are having strains on their nerves which are of diverse nature. A research is made to compare the stress level of the teacher living in both these areas of the world. Culture has also an impact on the mental and stress level of teachers and it was made clear when there was a distinctive study was elaborated and the results were shown that teachers of Turkey are less stressful while more stress was seen in the teachers of Macedonian and this was the result of the diverse nature of the culture.

It is advised to the researchers that as the culture of the countries is different so there must be different methods and educational procedures so that the discrepancy which the teachers of different regions in the world are facing may be addressed and an equally important educational policy will be no longer to achieve and it will resultantly decrease the depression among all the teachers of the world. Talking specifically about women it is considered that they think themselves as feeble part of the society. Although women hold a part in society as well as they perform their day to day activities in their domestic lives. They have attained a position



where they are standing with those of male members. Women have to create stability between their domestic and professional life. Profession of teaching is one that has a lot of options for women to progress and to go ahead. To be in teaching profession for women is an additional burden on them as they are handling both their career and their professional life. Education is a continuous procedure and teachers are significant role players as they perform their role in the grooming of the students. Teachers are supposed to convey educational and other everyday knowledge to their students so females are depressed whether they are performing their best part or not because they face difficulties on the job as well as in their household problems. Playing double role certainly causes affects on both sides of lives of female teachers. It is viewed that the earning that is being provided in the public sector of our country is not significantly of good approach. The reasons to this failure are many. The basic element of this is that kids are brought up with the view that they have to cram the subject courses so that they can get good marks and distinct position. The drawback of educational side in public sector is seen when teachers who are trained but don't show their contribution for after and before comparisons of the performance of the students. Teachers are made liable for this poor result ultimately as what students show as output is the fruit on the part of their teachers.

Research Methodology

The major focus of the study is to find out stress factors in college teachers. Questionnaire and interview were considered for getting primary information from the respondents from both public and private college teachers. Three public and three private colleges and the sampled population consists of 400 teachers. Both quantitative and qualitative data was analyzed using SPSS software through which simple means, standard deviations and t-scores have been used as analysis techniques. In the first part simple biographical information has been extracted from the target including factors as age, type of institute, and working experience. However, descriptive statistics are used to analyze data regarding factors in question. Authors have used 5 point Likert scale that ranges as 5 for strongly agree to 1 for strongly disagrees. Moreover, level of significance for this study is 5% that is 0.05. Research findings are as follows.

Results and Discussion

Authors have find out various variables by performing in-depth literature review of previous researches and further these variables are explored through quantitative and qualitative methods of data collection. The results of findings are as follows.

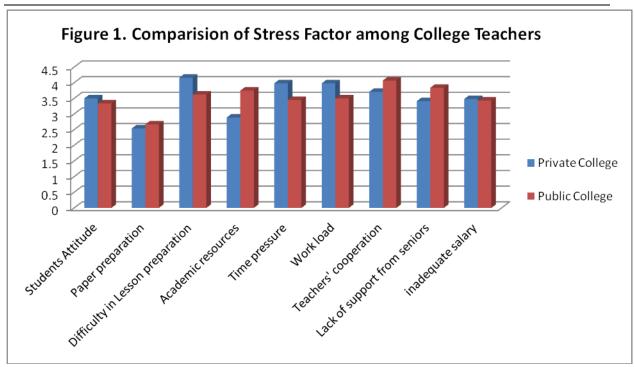
	Type of Institution					
Statement	Private		Public		t-value	p-value
	Means	S.D	Means	S.D		
Students Attitude	3.50	0.746	3.34	0.718	0.894	0.374
Paper preparation	2.54	1.006	2.67	.816	.008	.993
Difficulty in Lesson preparation	4.16	.805	3.62	1.019	2.846	.005
Academic resources	2.89	1.233	3.75	1.164	0.663	0.509
Time pressure	3.98	1.014	3.45	0.903	1.626	.107
Work load	3.98	1.160	3.50	0.990	0.540	0.590
Teachers' cooperation	3.71	0.967	4.07	1.149	1.672	.98
Lack of support from seniors	3.41	.058	3.84	1.010	2.059	.042
inadequate salary	3.48	1.191	3.43	1.169	211	.833

Table 1: Stress Factor among College Teachers

The results of table 1 indicate that the mean score for private colleges is 3.50 and for public universities is 3.34 and the standard deviation is 0.746 and 0.718 respectively. The t-score for equality of means is 0.894 with p-value 0.374. This shows that respondents somehow agreed



with the statement that students' attitude matters if we talk about stress in college teachers. Further results indicate that the mean score of both private and public colleges respectively is 2.54 and 2.67 in preparing paper while the standard deviation is 1.014 and 0.816 respectively. The t-score for equality of means is 0.008 with p-value 0.993. Data reveals that most of the participants feel difficulty in preparing lesson. Means score of private and public colleges is 4.16 and 3.62 respectively. This comparative analysis shows that private college teachers are facing more difficulty than public college. The standard deviation is 0.805 and 1.019 respectively. The t-score for equality of means is 2.846 with p-value 0.005. Results indicate that the mean score for private colleges is 2.89 and for public colleges is 3.75 and the standard deviation 1.233 is and 1.164 respectively. The t-score for equality of means is 0.663 with p-value 0.509. There is significant difference between the two means scores. Respondents in public colleges are of the view that academic resources are also important to consider as it adds stress to the work life of teachers. It is clear from the table that private colleges is 3.98 and for public colleges is 3.45 and the standard deviation is 1.014 and 0.903 respectively. The t-score for equality of means is 1.626 with p-value 0.107. Comparative analysis identified that private college teacher's work under time pressure than the public college teacher. In the light of the analysis of the study it is quite clear that the mean score for private colleges is 3.98 while public colleges is 3.50 regarding work load and the standard deviation is 1.014 and 0.903 respectively. The t-score for equality of means is 1.626 with p-value 0.107. It is indicated that teachers of both public and private colleges are highly affected from work load hence the private college teachers are more effected than public college teachers. The mean score of 3.71 private colleges and 4.07 public college shows that public college teachers are more cooperative than private college teachers and the standard deviation is 0.967 and 1.149 respectively. The t-score for equality of means is 1.672 with p-value .98. There is no significant difference between the two mean scores. Further results indicate that the mean score for private colleges is 3.41 who faced lack of support from senior and for public colleges is 3.84 and the standard deviation is 0.058 and 1.010 respectively. The t-score for equality of means is 2.059 with p-value 0.042. The comparative analysis shows those public college senior teachers are less supportive with their junior. Empirically, it is quite clear from the data the most of the college teachers opined that their salary is inadequate. The mean score for private colleges is 3.48 and for public colleges is 3.43 and the standard deviation is 1.191 and 1.169 respectively. The t-score for equality of means is -.211 with p-value 0.883. There is no significant difference between the two means scores. Respondents of private colleges revealed that salary packages in private colleges are not sufficient to compensate their efforts. Also respondents of public colleges revealed that compensation given to them is not suitable and there should be more fanatical and non-financial rewards that could compensate their efforts. Further in detail comparison can be seen under figure 1.



Discussion of the study

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Stress is one of the major factors which are usually considered in the working organization now a day (Wilson, M. 2002). Factors or causes of the stress are explored by Pestonjee (1992) which are performance, individual development, interpersonal associations and the organizational environment causing above mentioned stress (Nayak, 2008). Attitude hinders the performance of the teachers and they are directly influenced if students are a major cause. Empirically it is clear that students are sometimes serious towards their studies and sometimes they are not. Whenever they are less serious, it results in the form of stress. Students develop attitude towards their studies and their teachers, most of the time bad impression is created about both. This happens because of the reason that students don't cooperate with their teachers and lack of association dissatisfies the teachers that they are not putting their efforts on the right side and in a proper manner. During data collection it was respondents in private colleges opined that preparation of papers is an issue for the college teachers and often this creates stress among them because they face lot of burden while doing this task. This factor increases stress further if the class is large and a phase after preparing paper comes and that is checking those papers. These respondents said that they have to report to higher authorities or college principal and hence it affects these teachers. Everyone is interested in the work where he gets money but when teachers find that they have to do this non routine task in a minimum salary, they lose their interest and this lethargy causes stress in them. Respondents in public colleges revealed that they have to prepare papers after the same interval of time and this is because of the reason that educational cycle for all the college is similar and every teacher has to prepare papers at the same time whether he is from public or private sector. Further data discussed that respondents in private colleges said that most of the private teachers are provided with the lesson plans that they have to deliver in their classes but still there are tensions regarding their lessons and when they realize that they are not good at, they feel depressed and this is an indicator of stress among teachers. Teachers are often given the facility to use labs in the college and sometimes they are made bound to prepare their lesson by sitting in the labs of the college and giving some extra time to the preparation of the lessons that are to be delivered in the classes. This extra time that is spent, creates stress. Respondents in Public sector were highly agreed that they

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encounter stress because they have to face problem in preparing their lessons and they find it difficult to have a control over this. This is also because there is a lack of trainings which are necessary to provide to the teachers in order to make them efficient and effective at the same time. There are no proper channels to get data to prepare lessons in an effective manner. They are facing lack of resources in fact. There is less internet availability and not any awareness to use these modes for searching of data. Another problem revealed by the teachers is that they don't find any silent and comfortable place to prepare lesson for their classes. Respondents revealed that in their free time they can easily prepare lectures, can discuss their work related issues with colleagues and seniors, and can check their assignments as well but they don't have any separated place to do all this work. They further added that in staffrooms there is lot of disturbance and noise and most of the staff keep on busy in chit chat and gossips. The ones who really want to do work cannot perform this work easily. Sometimes there are a lot of academic resources that are provided to the teachers in private colleges but they fail at handling these resources by not creating a balance among these all factors. These resources may include the form of highly competitive scientific labs, libraries with fresh and up to date knowledgeable reading stuff, on the job trainings and workshops, regular meetings to enhance coordination and healthy competition. When they cannot manage these resources in the meaningful way, they encounter stress. Unfamiliarity with these resources is a component which tells that stress is also caused by this unique factor. Respondents in public colleges said that more stress is seen in the teachers of public colleges due to academics resources because there are no adequate resources for the public college teachers. When they compare themselves with the private college teachers they feel that they are not fully equipped with the resources that are necessary to be in teaching line. If we talk about those resources that they possess, they are not aware with the use of these methods and hence no output can be generated this way. This is also a stress. Private teachers show that they agree with the statement that stress may come due to time management. Time pressure is a stress factor in these teachers because they often have a shortage of time due to longer hours of classes, formal and informal meeting schedule, spending time for management and maintaining their level by giving their extra time to the college to get improved in the eyes of both management and principal. Burden of work and completing the tasks in a limited amount of time brings stress in teachers. Similarly, respondents of public colleges revealed that they are suffering from stress because they have shortage of time and hence more time pressure is there on them as they are not much accountable. They show their interest in giving tuitions rather than giving attention to their job at college. Average respondents in private sector are agreed that stress is also caused by work load. When they perform a lot of duties what are expected to them and what actually mean to them. They are supposed to perform extra duties in their routine. They are compared with those of public college teachers in performance but as compare to teachers of public colleges, teachers of private colleges are paid less and have to perform grater amount of work than them. Respondents in public colleges are highly agreed that stress is also created by workload. They think that they have to teach to larger classes as compared with private college teachers. In this regard they find themselves more stressed that they have to face more students in the class, control more students and to take care of their results at a satisfactory level. They say that strength of the students increases the workload for them and this class if gets too larger, it can't be handled in a good manner and stress becomes the part of work life. Most of the respondents of private colleges agreed with the statement and show their inclination toward lack of teachers' cooperation as respondents are more concerned about building working relationship between teachers and this relationship improve performance and productivity of teaching staff and can be proved helpful in reducing stress as through this relationship teachers can take help and guidance of each other in the time of need. Respondents from Public institutes gave their opinion that their institutes are less focused about human relationship and don't focus on the

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stress create due to the behavior of teachers. Respondents in public sector said that behavior creates stress in the form of low coordination and tips/suggestion from colleagues in any situation in with a colleague teacher needs help from fellows. There is lack of friendly environment between the college teachers of government colleges. Respondents of private colleges revealed that salary packages in private colleges are not sufficient to compensate their efforts. Respondents of public colleges revealed that compensation given to them is not suitable and there should be more fanatical and non-financial rewards that could compensate their efforts.

Recommendation and conclusion

The study recommended following suggestions:

- Students' attitude is a major cause of stress for the teachers because most of the time teachers face behavior of the students which is not serious towards their studies and this attitude of the students makes teachers feel that there lies some problem either on the part of students or the teachers. Students' attitude is seen more where there is less fear of the teachers, especially in the case of public colleges. Students have a natural inclination of showing carelessness towards their studies. Even if they don't willingly show this kind of attitude, they start exhibiting in the form of non serious behavior.
- Moreover paper preparation and lesson preparation is necessary to check the performance of the students so its importance cannot be denied and to avoid preparing papers is not a solution and it is in the duties of the teachers as well so each and every teacher must feel the essence of this stress if they want an excellence in the performance of their students and in theirs as well. Some help may also be sought through some outside people if teachers trust the other one that he/she can prepare a paper with true dedication and the paper prepared by him/hr can exactly judge the stamina of the students in the same manner as their teacher would have judged. If a teacher is satisfied with this ability then he may definitely go for such a plan and may seek the help of an outsider during high stress periods.
- Further college teachers face a stressor that is shortage or absence of academic resources. These resources include the availability of internet facilities, labs and libraries and many other factors like these. This is a stressor because of the reason that in the absence of these all, teachers feel disappointed and can find less means to excel in the particular field and start using shortcuts to complete their tasks and even they use unfair means in order to come in the competitive wars. College administration must step forward to provide their teachers with all the necessary resources that are crucial for the success of teachers' success and for the institutes' success as well.
- Also Increasing time pressure and work load is also one of the major reasons of stress. To manage time easily and to complete the syllabus easily, a map following is necessary and this should be made at the start of the educational year or a term. Scheduling is necessary because if teachers want things to remain their control, they must give attention to them and should realize the responsibilities to accomplish the tasks in an accurate manner. What else they can do is that they may try to divide their tasks for the different days in the weeks or different hours of the day.
- As both public and private college teachers suffer with stress as there is lack of cooperation in staff and there is lack of friendly environment by which fellows are reluctant to help or guide each others in any situation, if there exist any conflict between teachers, any problem between teachers and students or between teachers and administration and there's no idea to resolve then lower conflict resolution create stress



for teachers. Mainly there is lack of cooperation level in staff members based verily. Head should organize proper meeting on regular basis to know about the problems confront with Teachers; everyone in meeting should participate in the presenting solution to get rid of issues. There should be the creation of friendly environment in which fellows are responsible to guide each other to lower stress level for teachers which occur in the form of low solutions or guidance.

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